The theme of “One of These Days” is that acting on vengeance lowers one to the level of the person they are acting on. During the story, the Mayor has an abscessed tooth, however, he is informed, “It has to be without anesthesia” (Marquez). By lowering himself to the Mayor’s level, the dentist is no better than the “bad guy.” This is demonstrated through the lack of anesthesia is unnecessary and the vengeful nature of the dentist. Contrary to what seems immediately clear, the story isn’t about the dentist’s odd attributes, but about the common man falling at opportunity of corruption. Ultimately, this story proves that this is true (at least, in this case), proving that providing opportunity to act on revenge will lead people to the level of those they are hateful towards.

“If,” a poem by Rudyard Kipling, presents the theme that not complaining through life and remaining humble will give you the ability to do anything. During the listing of perfect attributes in a man, Kipling iterates, “…and start again at your beginnings. And never breathe a world about your loss.” Later, he visits the concept of, “Yours is the Earth and everything that’s in it,” also touching on other moral human attributes. Consequently, one can draw that Kipling inspires us to be remain a “perfect” human, leading us towards the goal of being able to do anything on Earth. From this, a concept of inner peace leading to total confidence and an ability to “conquer the world” can also be connected. It is debatable what Kipling truly means when he talks about having the Earth, but it is most likely not a property ownership. Most of the poem’s positive attributes about a man describe someone not materialistic, but right and just. In summary, this leads us to the theme of remaining just throughout your life will allow you to do anything on Earth.

The theme of “Invictus” is that a relentless spirit will lead to inner peace and self-control. After describing his hardships, William Ernest Henley describes, “My head is bloody, but unbowed…It matters not…how charged the punishments the scroll. I am the master of my fate…” From this excerpt, one can picture the unwilling-to-compromise attitude Henley possesses. Consequently, his self-control and awareness that he is in control of his destiny is on display. Through his hardships, he has been able to steady himself and realize he has the power to change course. In the summary of the poem, Henley’s true resolution is revealed, demonstrating his steadfastness and the ultimate message: relentlessness and strength will lead to an inner peace and a realization of self-control.

“Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night” offers a message that one should never give in to the end without a struggle. A fiery Dylan Thomas prescribes, “Old age should burn and rave at close of day; Rage, rage against the dying of the light.” Regardless of whether his motivations are selfish or not, he calls for a fight to refuse death. The same argument can also be interpreted as fighting against simply any ending. Thomas merely advocates for the refusal to give in easily, suggesting complacency is required for a death, in his opinion. He cites others who have fought, and the success they have as aids to his arguments. Regardless of his motives, Dylan Thomas advocates for a fight against endings, or death, in his poem, “Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night.”