

**ENGLISH**

## ON KILLING A TREE

~Summary~

**-by Gieve Patel****Stanza- 1**

It takes much time to kill a tree  
Upon its crust, absorbing  
Not a simple jab of the knife  
Years of sunlight, air, water,  
Will do it. It has grown  
And out of its leprous hide  
Slowly consuming the earth,  
Sprouting leaves.  
Rising out of it, feeding

**Explanation:** In this stanza, the poet comments on the way a person cuts down a tree in order to serve his purpose. The poet says that it is not easy to cut down a tree because a simple jab of the knife is never enough to wipe out its existence. The reason behind its strength is its consuming the resources which it has got from the earth's crust so powerfully. Years of absorption of sunlight, air and water from which the earth has made its growth so perfect that a jab of knife won't do much. It will come out with leaves again and will grow as ever.

**Stanza- 2**

So hack and chop  
Will rise curled green twigs,  
But this alone wont do it.  
Miniature boughs

Not so much pain will do it.  
Which if unchecked will expand again  
The bleeding bark will heal  
To former size  
And from close to the ground

**Explanation:** In this stanza, the poet further states the ways of cutting a tree. As the jab of the knife was not sufficient, the poet advises us to hit the tree severely in the form of hacking and chopping. But, the poet contrasts that even that won't be enough to kill the tree. This hacking and chopping would raise a pain to the tree but not good enough to kill it. The bark will ooze leak) out with the liquid secretion, but over a period of time, it gets healed. Then, the fighting spirit of the tree will make it alive again. From close to the ground, it will start a new life again by giving rise to new leaves and small boughs. These will make the tree so glorious again that it will acquire its former size. Therefore, it is not easy to cut or kill a tree.

### Stanza- 3

No, The root is to be pulled out  
Out of the anchoring earth;  
It is to be roped, tied,  
And pulled out-snapped out  
Or pulled out entirely,  
Out from the earth-cave,  
And the strength of the tree exposed  
The source, white and wet,  
The most sensitive, hidden  
For years inside the earth.

**Explanation:** In the previous stanzas, the poet has discussed the various ways of killing the tree, but still the tree has managed to survive so the poet came up with another idea.

He says that the root needs to be pulled out of the earth where it has stocked its strength. To do this, one needs to rope the roots, then pull out the whole mass outside. When the roots are out of the earth cave, then the actual strength of the tree i.e. the roots are exposed to the sun or environment. The source of life of the tree which is roots, is now exposed and out and its root matter is white and wet with absorption of water. It is now subjected to the outside world. This is the actual start of the death of the tree as the life-source of free, its roots, are exposed.

#### Stanza- 4

Then the matter  
Browning, hardening,  
Of scorching and choking  
Twisting, withering,  
In sun and air,  
And then it is done.

**Explanation:** In the previous stanza, the poet discussed the way a tree is uprooted and exposed to the surrounding. When the tree is uprooted and left open in the surrounding, then the sun starts drying it up with the burning heat. This intense heat makes the root of the tree getting choked in the air and sunlight. Heat makes the root brown which was white earlier and hardens it by soaking all the moisture content. Then, the root starts twisting from its original shape and finally gets withered from its parts. This brings the actual end to the life of the tree and that is how it is done in the end. The poet takes us into a detailed account of how we kill a tree, what suffering does it have to face and how harsh our attitude is for the ones which is the breath of our lives.

#### Conclusion of On Killing a Tree

On Killing a Tree Summary discusses how to completely kill a tree in quite an ironical sense that touches the heart of readers.