

ANDRINA

George Mackay Brown

Plot Summary

An elderly ex-seaman, **Torvald**, lives alone in Orkney. A young girl named **Andrina** visits daily, tending to him kindly. When she fails to appear, he goes to the village — but no one knows her. Through a fevered dream/flashback, Torvald remembers a woman he once loved and betrayed; Andrina is revealed to be her **ghost** or a symbolic figure forcing him to confront past guilt.

[\[studylib.net\]](https://www.studylib.net)

Themes

Love, Betrayal & Regret

- Torvald's past betrayal resurfaces; Andrina represents unresolved guilt.
[\[studylib.net\]](https://www.studylib.net)

The Supernatural

- Andrina's impossibility creates mystery and emotional haunting.

Isolation & Old Age

- Torvald is lonely, self-pitying, and nostalgic.
- His illness triggers memories and visions.
[\[studylib.net\]](https://www.studylib.net), [\[studylib.net\]](https://www.studylib.net)

Seasons / Cycles of Life

- Winter to February hints at rebirth; the story is shaped by natural cycles.
[\[studylib.net\]](https://www.studylib.net)
-

Narrative Style

- First-person reflective narration.
 - Dream-like quality; present-day illness frames flashbacks.
 - Orkney dialect and landscapes create atmosphere.
-

Symbols

- **The sea:** memory, life's journey, longing.
 - **The lamp/fire:** warmth Andrina brings vs Torvald's inner coldness.
 - **Ghostly imagery:** unresolved past returning.
-

Key Quotations

- "That good Andrina..." (patronising tone)
 - "like a ghost in a hollow stone"
[\[studylib.net\]](https://www.studylib.net)
-