THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE



Alfred Lord Tennyson

WHAT HAPPENS? Soldiers follow a disastrous command and are commemorated for their courage.

BIG IDEA **Public honour celebrates the soldiers while the poem also records the failure that endangered them.**

FOUR EVIDENCE FRAGMENTS · ZOOM IN, THEN EXPLAIN

“Into the valley of Death”

Biblical allusion

The landscape frames the charge as an encounter with mortality.

“Some one had blunder’d:”

Plain statement

A brief admission separates command error from soldiers’ bravery.

“Into the jaws of Death,”

Personification

Danger becomes a consuming creature.

“Honour the Light Brigade,”

Imperative

The ending makes remembrance an audience responsibility.

FORM

Six stanzas with a strong driving rhythm, including dactylic movement, and recurrent phrases.

CONTEXT

The poem commemorates the 1854 cavalry charge during the Crimean War, prompted by a disastrous order.

COMPARE IT WITH…

Bayonet Charge: a different experience of battle. Exposure: the cost of military duty.

VOICE, TONE & FEELINGS · FOLLOW THE SHIFTS

Advance

URGENT AND OMINOUS

Repetition propels the cavalry towards danger already known to the reader.

Battle and return

ADMIRING BUT COSTLY

Encirclement and violent action make courage visible; returning numbers are diminished.

Final address

COMMEMORATIVE

The speaker turns to the audience and asks that the soldiers be honoured.

FULL POEM: use your anthology. Evidence fragments are prompts for close reading.