

## Sheila Wellehan

### Good Day

They say to stop  
while the week has more good days than bad days –  
four to three, don't wait for three to four.  
I vowed to let my dog leave this world  
with his dignity, but I've changed my position.  
Because once you're dead,

that's it, you're dead.  
Guthrie woke up to a frigid night-morning  
with a terrible case of the runs.  
He napped till noon,  
then had trouble rising,  
and needed help to stand in front of his bowls.

By 2 p.m., he's revived and restless,  
and says with a weak bark it's time to walk.  
We'll need to hustle – just two hours to sunset –  
to push today into the column marked *good*.  
We drive to his favorite island,  
Guthrie knows each tree and rock,

every single grain of sand.  
We walk ninety minutes,  
studying changes since our last visit.  
Not bad for a dog past fifteen.  
Lingering after dark in the parking lot,  
he sniffs the ocean and smiles

at everyone who walks by.  
When the attendant drags out the *Closed* sign,  
I lift Guthrie gently into the car.  
He wags his tail as he settles in the back seat,  
welcoming help with grace and good humor –  
my dog's never been more dignified.

**Sheila Wellehan's** poetry is featured in *MockingHeart Review*, *Rust + Moth*, *Thimble Literary Magazine*, *Tinderbox Poetry Journal*, *Whale Road Review*, and many other journals and anthologies. She lives in Cape Elizabeth, Maine. Visit her online at [www.sheilawellehan.com](http://www.sheilawellehan.com).