

Ceremony's a Name for the Rich Horn, And Custom for the Spreading Laurel Tree"

Generated: Jan 26, 2026

Analyze the meaning of "ceremony's a name for the rich horn, / And custom for the spreading laurel tree" in the context of the poem.

W.B. Yeats's (1865–1939) "A Prayer for My Daughter" (1921) is a beautiful poem about a father's wishes for his little girl. The poet looks at the storm outside and thinks about the troubles in life. He hopes his daughter will grow up to be happy and live a peaceful life. In the last stanza, he talks about the importance of "ceremony" and "custom" for a good life.

The line **"Ceremony's a name for the rich horn, / And custom for the spreading laurel tree"** uses simple but deep images. The "rich horn" is the Cornucopia, a symbol of plenty and good fortune. Here, "ceremony" means following traditions and showing respect to others. Yeats believes traditions bring beauty and peace to life. The "spreading laurel tree" stands for strength and success. In the poem, "custom" means daily habits or old ways of life that connect us to our past. Customs, like the laurel tree, give life support and make it strong.

Yeats wants his daughter to value these things. He believes the world is full of hatred and pride, which can ruin people's happiness. But if his daughter follows ceremony and customs, she can live a calm and happy life. In simple words, Yeats says that "ceremony" brings richness to life, like the horn, and "custom" gives stability, like the laurel tree. These two things help create a peaceful and good life.