

Do you Think the Speaker's Beloved is Old at the Time of Writing the Poem?

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Do you think the speaker's beloved is old at the time of writing the poem? Why do you think so?

In the poem "When You Are Old," (1893) William Butler Yeats (1865-1939) talks about love and growing old. The speaker speaks to someone he loves deeply. The poem makes us think about what happens when we get older.

The speaker's beloved is not old at the time of writing the poem. Yeats imagines the beloved becoming old in the future. He writes, ***"When you are old and grey and full of sleep."*** These words suggest that the speaker is thinking about a time when the person will be much older. The beloved is young at the moment, but Yeats is imagining her in her later years. He asks her to take down the book when she is old and to read it slowly, remembering her youth.

The speaker also talks about how time changes people. The beloved's beauty will fade, and her face will show signs of age. Yet, the speaker loves not only her beauty but her "pilgrim soul." He loves her deeply, beyond her looks. The poem suggests that while others loved her for her beauty, the speaker loved her for who she truly was.

In the final lines, the speaker imagines Love leaving and hiding in the stars. This shows how love changes with time, but also how it remains constant in the speaker's heart. Overall, Yeats shows that love is not just about appearance but about deeper, lasting feelings. Yeats beautifully reminds us that true love is timeless, and even when someone grows old, love can stay strong and pure.