

What Qualities Does the Poet Pray His Daughter Will Possess Besides Beauty?

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In "A Prayer for My Daughter" (1921), W.B. Yeats (1865–1939) prays for his daughter to grow up with good qualities. He hopes these traits will help her live a happy and peaceful life. The poet knows beauty is not enough. He wishes for her to have balance, strength, and wisdom. Below are the qualities Yeats prays for:

Moderate Beauty: Yeats prays his daughter has beauty, but not too much. Excessive beauty can make people proud or selfish. He wants her to value her heart more than her looks. Yeats prays,

*"May she be granted beauty and yet not
Beauty to make a stranger's eye distraught."*

Kindness:

The poet hopes she will be kind and gentle. He believes kindness can win true friends and love. He wants her to choose what is right and live with a pure heart.

Courtesy: Yeats values manners and politeness. He prays that his daughter will be respectful and considerate. Courtesy, he says, earns hearts and creates harmony in life.

Wisdom in Love: The poet warns against foolish choices in love, as seen in his examples of Helen and the sea-born Queen. He hopes his daughter will have wisdom to avoid such mistakes, saying,

"Hearts are not had as a gift but hearts are earned."

Inner Peace and Strength:

The poet prays for her soul to be strong and free from hatred. He believes hatred weakens the mind. Instead, he wants her to find joy in herself and stay rooted in goodness.

Yeats' prayer reflects his deep care for his daughter. He dreams of a life where she will thrive with love, wisdom, and peace.

LxNotes