

Why Does the Poet Pray that his Daughter Should Have Beauty but not Excessive Beauty?

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W.B. Yeats's (1865–1939) "A Prayer for My Daughter" (1921) is filled with love and wisdom. The poet prays for his daughter's happiness and strength in life. He wants her to have beauty, but not excessive beauty. He believes too much beauty can create problems in her life. Below are the reasons why the poet wishes for balanced beauty:

Avoiding Vanity: The poet worries that too much beauty might make his daughter vain. If she becomes too focused on her appearance, she may forget the importance of kindness and wisdom. The poet fears that,

"Beauty to make a stranger's eye distraught"

This might lead his daughter to become proud. He wants her to value inner qualities over physical beauty.

To Stay Safe from Trouble: The poet reflects on how excessive beauty has brought unhappiness to others. He mentions Helen of Troy, whose beauty caused the Trojan War. He fears that excessive beauty might attract trouble and harm instead of peace and joy. Yeats says about her,

"Helen being chosen found life flat and dull"

Encouraging True Friendship:

The poet wants his daughter to find real friends and love. Excessive beauty might make people admire her for her looks alone, not for her true self. He believes that balanced beauty will help her build strong and meaningful relationships.

The poet's prayer is thoughtful and full of care. He does not want his daughter to face problems because of her beauty. Instead, he hopes she will live a happy, balanced, and kind life. Through

this prayer, Yeats shows how much he wishes the best for his daughter's future.

Lx Notes