

A Prayer for my Daughter Quotes

Writer: William Butler Yeats | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

1. *"I have walked and prayed for this young child an hour"*

Exp:

Yeats says he is walking and praying for his baby daughter. The storm outside makes him worried about her future. He prays that she will grow up safe, peaceful, and happy in a world full of troubles.

2. *"May she be granted beauty and yet not...*

Being made beautiful overmuch,"

Exp:

Yeats prays that his daughter should be beautiful, but not too much. He believes that too much beauty can bring pride and pain. He wants her beauty to be gentle, with kindness and wisdom inside.

3. *"Helen being chosen found life flat and dull*

And later had much trouble from a fool."

Exp:

Yeats remembers Helen of Troy, whose beauty caused war and sadness. Through her story, he warns that beauty without wisdom brings problems. He does not want his daughter to suffer like Helen.

4. *"It's certain that fine women eat*

A crazy salad with their meat"

Exp:

This funny line means that very beautiful women often make foolish choices in love. Yeats shows that this became true for Helen, Aphrodite, and also Maud Gonne.

5. *"In courtesy I'd have her chiefly learned;"*

Exp:

Yeats wishes his daughter to be polite, kind, and gentle. He thinks manners and good nature are more valuable than beauty. Courtesy will help her earn love and respect from others.

6. *"That all her thoughts may like the linnet be,"*

Exp:

The linnet is a small, happy bird that sings sweetly. Yeats wants his daughter's thoughts to be joyful and peaceful like the linnet's song. He prays she will always spread happiness through her thoughts.

7. *"An intellectual hatred is the worst,"*

Exp:

Yeats warns against hatred that comes from pride and stubborn opinions. He has seen how such hatred can destroy peace and love. He prays his daughter will never be proud or hateful but stay innocent and kind.