

Mr. VINODKUMAR ASHOK PRADHAN

[M.A. (Eng., Subject Commⁿ.), B.Ed., NET, PGCTE]

Assistant Professor,
Department of English,
Sadashivrao Mandlik Mahavidyalaya, Murgud
Tal. Kagal, Dist. Kolhapur - 416 219.
pradhanvinod99@yahoo.com



9960733174

William Butler Yeats

(13 June 1865 - 28 January 1939)



- * Born in Sandymunt, Ireland
- * A Poet and a Playwright
- * Started writing at the age of 17
- * Influenced by W. Blake & Shelley
- * Fell in love with Maud Gonne, an Irish Nationalist
- * Then met Lady Gregory
- * He lived at Coole Park - symbol of joy, elegance, aristocracy in his poems
- * Was manager of Abbey Theatre for 8 years
- * His poetry became obscure, metaphysical & symbolic
- * Poetry is a mixture of the sensuous & metaphysical, lyrical & realistic, concrete & subtle
- * His contemporaries were Eliot, Auden & Pound
- * Died in Menton, France

A Prayer for My Daughter

Lets read the
poem...

A Prayer for My Daughter

STANZA 1

Once more the storm is howling, and half hid
Under this cradle-hood and coverlid
My child sleeps on. There is no obstacle
But Gregory's wood and one bare hill
Whereby the haystack- and roof-levelling wind,
Bred on the Atlantic, can be stayed;
And for an hour I have walked and prayed
Because of the great gloom that is in my mind.

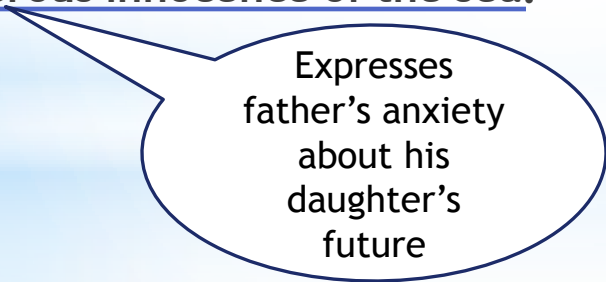
- * Howling - roaring
- * Cradle-hood - childhood
- * Coverlid - covered
- * Gregory's Wood - Coole Park near poet's house
- * Haystack - heap of grass
- * Bred (pp of breed) - produced
- * Gloom - sorrow

A Prayer for My Daughter

STANZA 2

I have walked and prayed for this young child an hour
And heard the sea-wind scream upon the tower,
And under the arches of the bridge, and scream
In the elms above the flooded stream;
Imagining in excited reverie
That the future years had come,
Dancing to a frenzied drum,
Out of the murderous innocence of the sea.

- * The tower: Thoor Ballylee, name of Yeats' residence
- * Arch: bow-like structure of bridge
- * Elm: a type of a tree
- * Reverie: imagination
- * Frenzy: excitement
- * Murderous innocence: danger



Expresses
father's anxiety
about his
daughter's
future

A Prayer for My Daughter

STANZA 3

May she be granted beauty and yet not
Beauty to make a stranger's eye distraught,
Or hers before a looking-glass, for such,
Being made beautiful overmuch,
Consider beauty a sufficient end,
Lose natural kindness and maybe
The heart-revealing intimacy
That chooses right, and never find a friend.

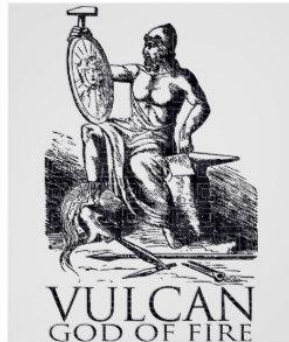
* Distraught: distracted

A Prayer for My Daughter

STANZA 4

Helen being chosen found life flat and dull
And later had much trouble from a fool,
While that great Queen, that rose out of the spray,
Being fatherless could have her way
Yet chose a bandy-legged smith for man.
It's certain that fine women eat
A crazy salad with their meat
Whereby the Horn of Plenty is undone.

- * Helen: Queen of Sparta
- * Great Queen: Aphrodite, Greek Goddess of Love and beauty, believed to be born out of the sea foam
- * Bandy-legged smith: Vulcan the god of fire, Aphrodite's husband
- * Horn of Plenty: the mythical horn of a sheep from which God Zeus drank milk; hence a source of inexhaustible wealth



A Prayer for My Daughter

STANZA 5

In courtesy I'd have her chiefly learned;
Hearts are not had as a gift but hearts are earned
By those that are not entirely beautiful;
Yet many, that have played the fool
For beauty's very self, has charm made wise,
And many a poor man that has roved,
Loved and thought himself beloved,
From a glad kindness cannot take his eyes.

* Rove: travel aimlessly

A Prayer for My Daughter

Let's have a quick recap...

- ✓ What is the storm once again doing?
- ✓ What is meant by cradle-hood?
- ✓ What does Gregory's wood indicate?
- ✓ Where the wind has bred?
- ✓ Why the poet has walked and prayed?
- ✓ For how much time the poet walked & prayed for his daughter?
- ✓ For what does the poet pray in this stanza?
- ✓ What are the adjectives used for the sea in the last stanza?
- ✓ What kind of beauty the poet doesn't want for his daughter?
- ✓ The beauty that should not make a stranger's eye distraught.
- ✓ What kind of beauty the poet wants then?
- ✓ The beauty with sufficient end
- ✓ Who is Helen?
- ✓ Who is the Great Queen?
- ✓ Who is bandy-legged smith?
- ✓ Whom does the poet indirectly address as 'fine women'?
- ✓ Who used to drink milk from Horn of Plenty?

A Prayer for My Daughter

STANZA 6



May she become a flourishing hidden tree
That all her thoughts may like the linnet be,
And have no business but dispensing round
Their magnanimities of sound,
Nor but in merriment begin a chase,
Nor but in merriment a quarrel.
O may she live like some green laurel
Rooted in one dear perpetual place.

- * Linnet: a tiny song bird
- * Dispensing: managing
- * Magnanimity: charity, benevolence
- * Merriment: fun
- * Laurel: an aromatic evergreen shrub related to the bay tree, several kinds of which form forests in tropical and warm countries



A Prayer for My Daughter

STANZA 7

My mind, because the minds that I have loved,
The sort of beauty that I have approved,
Prosper but little, has dried up of late,
Yet knows that to be choked with hate
May well be of all evil chances chief.
If there's no hatred in a mind
Assault and battery of the wind
Can never tear the linnet from the leaf.

- * Assault: a physical attack
- * Battery: guns



A Prayer for My Daughter

STANZA 8

An intellectual hatred is the worst,
So let her think opinions are accursed.
Have I not seen the loveliest woman born
Out of the mouth of Plenty's horn,
Because of her opinionated mind
Barter that horn and every good
By quiet natures understood
For an old bellows full of angry wind?



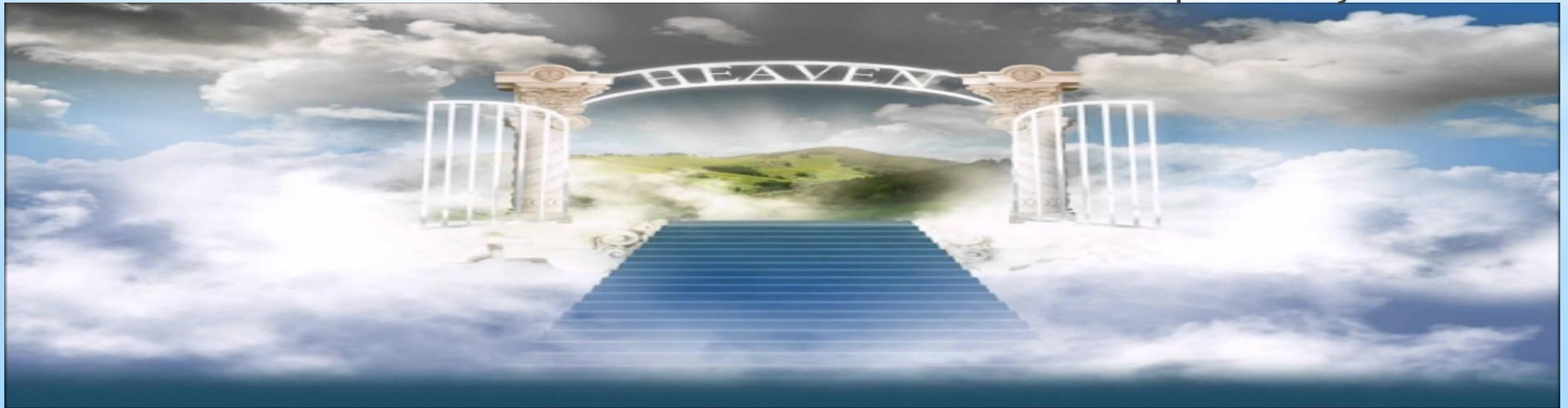
- * Accursed: very annoying
- * Opinionated: one who express their opinions strongly and often
- * Barter: to exchange goods for things rather than for money
- * Bellows: a tool used to blow air

A Prayer for My Daughter

STANZA 9

Considering that, all hatred driven hence,
The soul recovers radical innocence
And learns at last that it is self-delighting,
Self-appeasing, self-affrighting,
And that its own sweet will is Heaven's will;
She can, though every face should scowl
And every windy quarter howl
Or every bellows burst, be happy still.

- * **Radical:** a person who advocates thorough or complete political or social reform; a member of a political party or part of a party pursuing such aims
- * **Appeasing:** satisfying
- * **Affrighting:** fearful
- * **Scowl:** frown in an angry or bad-tempered way



A Prayer for My Daughter

STANZA 10

And may her bridegroom bring her to a house
Where all's accustomed, ceremonious;
For arrogance and hatred are the wares
Peddled in the thoroughfares.
How but in custom and in ceremony
Are innocence and beauty born?
Ceremony's a name for the rich horn,
And custom for the spreading laurel tree.

- * **Accustomed:** familiar
- * **Ceremonious:** relating or appropriate to grand and formal occasions, impressive
- * **Ware:** small products for selling
- * **Peddle:** try to sell (something, especially small goods) by going from place to place.
- * **Thoroughfares:** a main road in a town



A Prayer for My Daughter

* A Quick Recap...

- At what level of age the poet started his writing career?
- SEVENTEEN
- Name the three contemporary poets of Yeats.
- ELIOT, AUDEN & POUND
- Where is the poet's daughter in the poem?
- IN THE CRADLE
- In stanza 3, what does the poet demand from God for his daughter?
- BEAUTY
- Through the lines: *It's certain that fine women eat / A crazy salad with their meat* - towards whom the poet is pointing?
- MAUD GONNE
- What does the poet demand for his daughter from God in stanza 5?
- KINDNESS
- With which bird does the poet compare his daughter in stanza 6?
- LINNET
- From which mythology the poet has taken references in this poem?
- GREEK
- Who was Helen?
- THE DAUGHTER OF LEDA AND ZEUS (SWAN)
- How many stanzas are there in the poem?
- TEN

Thank You!!!