

1893

**WHEN YOU ARE OLD**

(From The Rose)

William Butler Yeats

**Yeats, William Butler** (1865-1939) - Irish poet and dramatist, widely considered one of the greatest English-speaking poets of the 20th century. He was a leader of the Irish Renaissance and later a devoted spiritualist. Yeats received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1923. *When You are Old* (1893) - Opening lines:  
When you are old and gray and full of sleep, / And nodding by the fire, take  
down this book, ...

## WHEN YOU ARE OLD

When you are old and gray and full of sleep,  
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,  
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look  
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;

How many loved your moments of glad grace,  
And loved your beauty with love false or true  
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,  
And loved the sorrows of your changing face.

And bending down beside the glowing bars  
Murmur, a little sadly, how love fled  
And paced upon the mountains overhead  
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

**THE END**