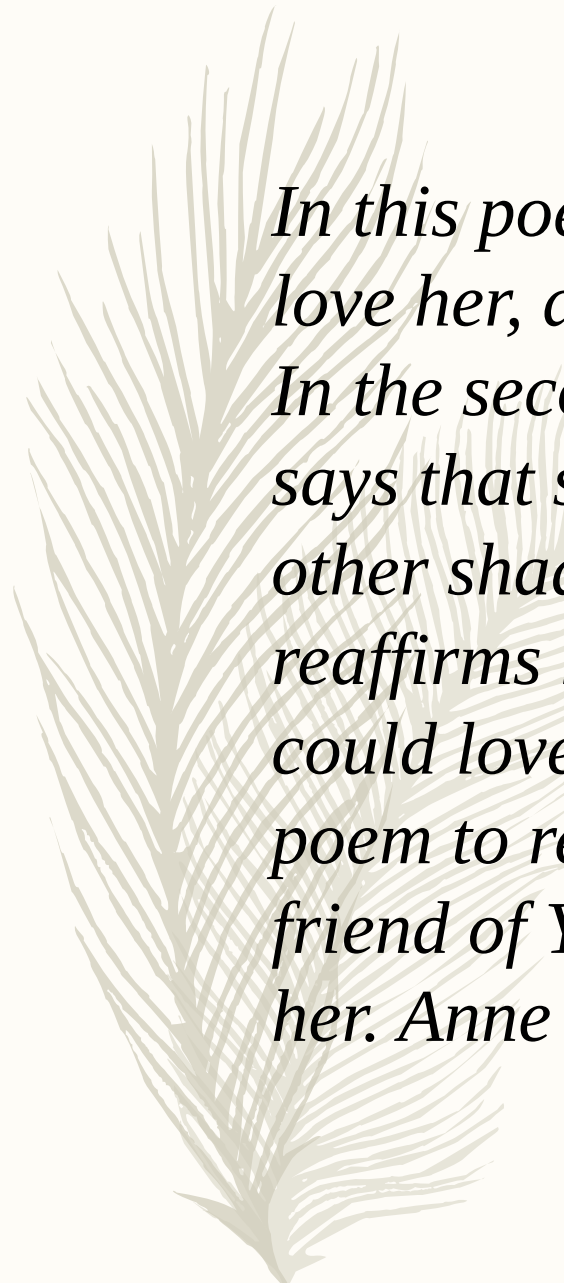




For Anne Gregory

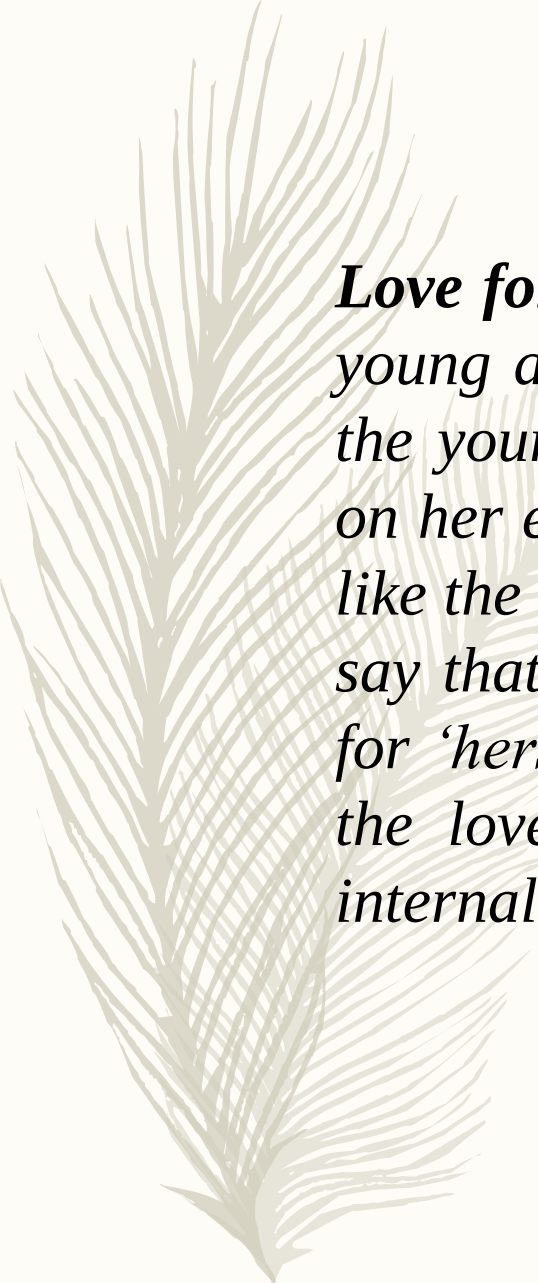
WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS



In this poem, the poet is telling a young girl that most men who love her, do so only because of her yellow hair (external beauty). In the second stanza, The young girl, who believes in humanity, says that she would be loved even if she would dye her hair in other shades, which are less pleasant. In the third stanza, the poet reaffirms his point by stating that it was proven that only God could love someone for what they truly are. If we correlate the poem to real events, Anne Gregory was the daughter of a close friend of Yeats, so Yeats may have written the poem as an advice to her. Anne was also the name of Yeats' own daughter.



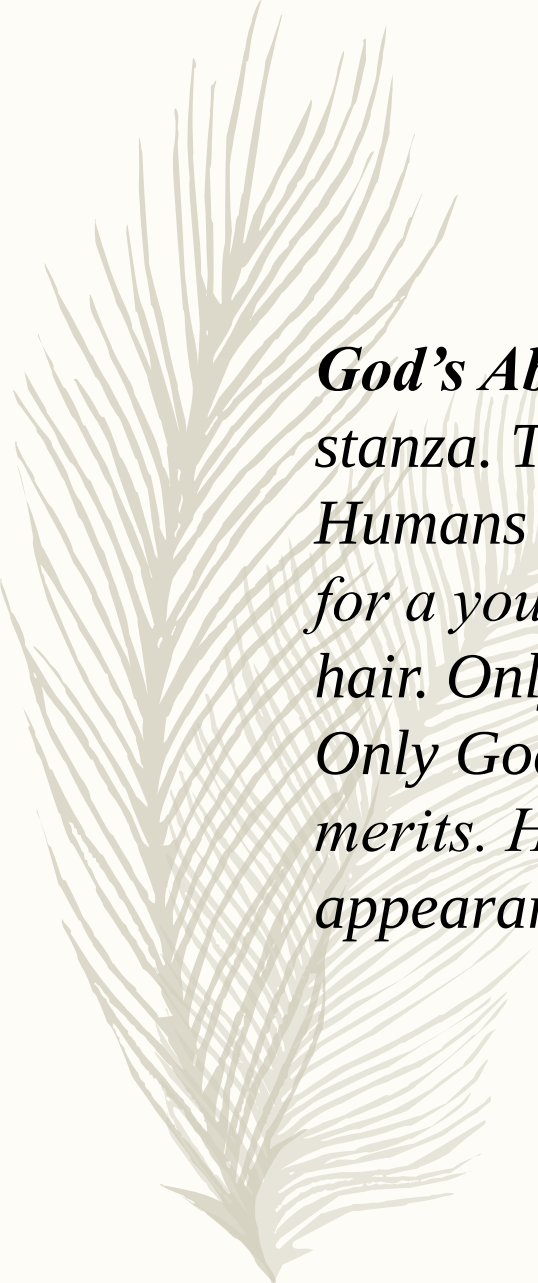
In this poem, Yeats describes the ways of human nature. How the human beings are incapable of seeing the inner beauty of people. They can only distinguish the exterior features of mankind. In the first stanza, he is himself, telling Anne Gregory that she will never be loved for herself, only her hair. In the second stanza, the speaker is Anne defending herself saying that she believes in men and that they can see what is on the inside. The third stanza, is spoken by the poet again, reaffirming what was said in the first stanza.



Love for Yellow Hair: This poem of W.B. Yeats has been addressed to a young and beautiful lady, named Anne Gregory. The physical charm of the young lady is irresistible. Her honey—coloured blonde hair falling on her ear easily attract the onlookers. The hair falling on the ears look like the ramparts or wide walls around a castle. However, it is difficult to say that a young man is thrown into despair and starts loving her only for ‘herself alone’. The physical beauty of her hair is so irresistible that the lover doesn’t even bother to know whether the young lady has internal beauty and possesses nobility of the soul.



Superficial Physical Appearance: Anne Gregory's response in the second stanza is quite expected one. She wants to say that she can get a hair-dye of any kind or colour. It depends on her if she colours her hair brown, or black or of carrot colour. She explodes the myth of physical beauty. She asks why should a young man fall in love with her and sigh In despair only after seeing the colour of her hair? If at all, any young man shows his love for her, then, that love should be based on her merits. She should be loved, not for her outward appearance but for what her inner beauty or personality is. Her character, personality and inner beauty must be the cause of attraction and not her yellow hair.



God's Ability to Look Inside: The poet resolves the conflict in the third stanza. The poet quotes a religious text to prove his point. Men are men. Humans will fall to physical attractions quite easily. It is quite possible for a young man to be attracted by the beauty of Anne Gregory's blonde hair. Only God has the ability to resist outwardly physical temptations. Only God can judge a man or a woman by what he or she is or his or her merits. Human beings, without God's strength, can't look beyond outward appearances and physical beauty.



MESSAGE

We should love a person not for her external features but for her inner beauty, her actions and her inner qualities.