# Audio file – “When You Are Old”

[22-Track-22.mp3](https://neagov-my.sharepoint.com/personal/travisd_arts_gov/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/22-Track-22.mp3)

Dana Gioia

Now the poet Diane Thiel.

Diane Thiel

This Yeats poem, “When You Are Old,” is an old favorite of mine, because of the way it imagines the future. I remember when I first read this poem, the line “one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,” I felt as if the poem was written directly for me, and I think that's one of the experiences that I really love about poetry, how we can read certain lines and feel as if the poet was looking right into our lives.

William Butler Yeats “When You Are Old”

When you are old and grey 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.