

Fare Well

by Walter de la Mare

**Look thy last on all things lovely,
Every hour.
Let no night
Seal thy sense in deathly slumber
Till to delight
Thou have paid thy utmost blessing;
Since that all things thou wouldest praise
Beauty took from those who loved them
In old days.**

The first two lines of de la Mare's poem is a reflection on the ephemerality of our lives and a call for everyday appreciation of what we have. It is a profound reminder of the fleeting nature of life and beauty. It calls upon us to live with a sense of awareness, reverence, and gratitude for the present moment, urging us to see every experience, every sight, and every loved one as potentially the last time we may encounter them. At its heart, this quote emphasises the impermanence of life and the importance of conscious appreciation.

This is not merely poetic but philosophical. It echoes a theme present in many cultural and spiritual traditions—the recognition that nothing lasts forever. In a world that is constantly changing, where time moves forward without pause and seasons of life pass in a blink, the quote urges us to pause and truly see what surrounds us: the kindness in

someone's eyes, the beauty of a sunset, the innocence of a child's laughter, the rustle of leaves in the wind.

By encouraging us to "look thy last," the quote doesn't foster despair but rather awakens a deeper sense of presence. If we were to treat each moment as if it were our last chance to witness its beauty, how much more vivid and meaningful would our experiences become? We would listen more intently, speak kindlier, and savour more deeply. Beauty, then, is not only found in grand things but in the subtle—the ordinary moments made extraordinary through mindful attention.

Moreover, these lines are a gentle prompt toward emotional maturity. It asks us to reconcile with the reality of loss and change—not to fear them, but to let them sharpen our perception of what matters. When we acknowledge that we won't always have what we love, we begin to love more fully.

In our fast-paced, future-oriented world, it's easy to overlook the loveliness of now. We chase what's next, often at the cost of appreciating what is. The quote serves as an antidote to this restlessness, drawing us back into the present with humility and grace.

In conclusion, "Look thy last on all things lovely every hour" is not a statement of sorrow, but one of wisdom. It calls for a mindful embrace of the ephemeral beauty that surrounds us. By living with this awareness, we don't diminish our joy—we deepen it.