

Tom Lehrer

"When You Are Old & Grey"

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The most popular type of popular song is of course the love song, and I'd like to illustrate several subspecies of this form during the evening. First of all, the type of love song where the fellow tells the girl that although the years ahead will almost certainly destroy every vestige of her already dubious charms, that nonetheless his love for her will shine on forever through the years, you know. Another example of stark realism in the popular song.

This particular example is called When You Are Old And Gray, and I'd like to dedicate it to anyone in the audience who is still in love with each other.

Since I still appreciate you,
Let's find love while we may.
Because I know I'll hate you
When you are old and gray.

So say you love me here and now,
I'll make the most of that.
Say you love and trust me,
For I know you'll disgust me
When you're old and getting fat.

An awful debility,
A lessened utility,
A loss of mobility
Is a strong possibility.
In all probability
I'll lose my virility
And you your fertility
And desirability,
And this liability
Of total sterility
Will lead to hostility
And a sense of futility,
So let's act with agility
While we still have facility,
For we'll soon reach senility
And lose the ability.

Your teeth will start to go, dear,
Your waist will start to spread.
In twenty years or so, dear,
I'll wish that you were dead.

I'll never love you then at all
The way I do today.
So please remember,
When I leave in December,
I told you so in May.

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