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A LETTER TO A YOUNG POET

VIRGINIA WOOLF

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'So long as you and you and you, venerable and ancient representatives of Sappho, Shakespeare and Shelley, are aged precisely twenty-three and propose... to spend the next fifty years of your lives in writing poetry, I refuse to think that the art is dead.'

Penned in response to a letter about her novel *The Waves* from a young poet, John Lehmann, *A Letter to a Young Poet* answers a request for Woolf to set down her views on modern poetry.

Written with observational humour and empathy, the letter leaves the reader laughing in recognition of the errors depicted, with the words 'And for heaven's sake, publish nothing before you are thirty' ringing in their ears.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Virginia Woolf (1882–1941) was a Modernist writer, widely considered to be one of the most important of the twentieth century. She and her husband Leonard bought a hand-printing press in 1917, and they set up Hogarth Press in their house in Richmond, which published much of Virginia's work, as well as those of friends and fellow luminaries. Today she is best remembered for her novels – in particular *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs Dalloway* – and her essay *A Room of One's Own*.

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