

A Woman is a Poem

by [Justin Wong](#) (March 2024)



Lady in White, by Thomas Dewing, 1901

There she is:
Presence defined by word
Space interrupted by form
Letters mirroring flesh
Syllables graceful as steps,
Imperceptible rhythm
Voice severed by silence.

Here she is: an essence
Reality beneath the appearance
Meaning outside the word
Existence beyond matter
Psyche within sound.

The poem is:
The germ of inspiration
Nursed in inscription;
The flower of imagination
Sunned in studium.

It need not matter what it is:
The smoke-filled metropolis—sumptuous underworld,
Or the abandoned Elysium in a blossomed field,
The illumined moon from its firmamental heights,
Or the mysterious fortuity and grace of beauty: a woman.

Underlying essence,
The poem, an afterthought
Before experience is sonified into word,
Or emotion transposed to a pulse,
Before inspiration is visible in form,
Or the world transfigures into meaning.

Underlying essence,
The poem, a forethought
Before all is made in the mould of a book,
Or reality, an omen told in meter,

Before vision becomes historicised,
Or beauty assumes a flesh that bleeds.

The poem:

Articulation of the ineffable;
Credence to the unseeable;
Word map of the world to be;
Rock in an ocean of peril ... a woman.

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Justin Wong is originally from Wembley, though is presently based in the West Midlands. He has been passionate about the English language and literature since a young age. Previously, he lived in China working as an English teacher. His novel, *Millie's Dream*, is available [here](#).

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