

Conquest

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



On the Trail (Winslow Homer, 1892)

I desired to be covered from the rains,
So I built a shelter with rooves and drains,
I was scared to trip down from the wall,
I stepped carefully in case that I might fall,
I may've been rocked to an undreamt shore,
So I dropped an anchor to the floor,
And desiring to protect my soul from grief,
I found the ploy of love to my relief.

I desired the babe not die an early death,
So I washed my hands before it took a breath,

Not wishing to be mauled by a wand'ring bear,
To protect myself, I laid a snare,
I grafted a seed upon a vine,
And upon my lips the sweetest wine,
And in case I was scorned by my beau,
I poured venom on she who loved me so.

I foresaw a future in which I might starve,
So I reared some sucklings, lambs and calves,
And in case in winter I'd not eat,
Within fields I planted rows of wheat,
I thought I'd freeze within my home,
So I built within a vast hearthstone,
But I was scared that I'd bore of things routine,
So I preached the creed of libertines.

I shot down game on hunting days,
So I trained a dog to fetch my prey,
To not plough the fields when I awoke,
Upon my creatures necks I placed a yoke,
In case my beasts would leave me in a rage,
I confined them all within a cage,
But so my brethren needn't toil in pain
My flesh they locked in iron chains.

Upon my land I grew some crop
The surplus grown I sold to shops,
To trade our skills amongst our neighbours
We devised a way to split our labours
I debunked all of the beliefs of old
And got on my knees to worship gold,
But when I wondered where the maidens went,
Their bodies were hawked on streets for rent.

I saw noble men and made them sign,
A contract of what's theirs and mine,
I saw a field with flowers pretty

And burnt it to construct a city.
Though living in this world of ease
I began to find my mind diseased,
I reigned o'er the earth and came to see,
I was the subject of my mastery.

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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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