A Human in a Woman’s Skin
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A Human in a Woman’s Skin

Nicole Yiu

Born as human
Seen as woman
Given a summon
To the stage of common
But I’m to be a warrior
For the battle of sexes
Not the protector
Of the two normal genders
If we lose,
Women remains as Mary on stage
Or Madonnas in scripts
Upon this manmade play
If we win,
There's no telling
As we seek beyond normality
For a new identity

Author’s commentary on “A Human in a Woman’s Skin”

I am a biracial student from Hong Kong. Growing up as a biracial female child I’ve experienced many different forms of discrimination. I’ve never understood why I was seen as a woman and why my identity is fixed by my sex. In my second year at university, I had the pleasure to take WGS200 with Professor Simalchik and have discussions about contemporary gendered human rights issues with Professor Tahmasebi and this offered me a new pair of spectacles to examine gender relations, gender performances, and the dichotomies within our society. This allowed me to finally understand the many obstacles in my life and in those of others. The WGS program helped me to finally understand why I had to grow up wearing pink skirts and pigtails. I finally understood that my identity was bound by my gender performances during my childhood. The WGS program also introduced me to Judith Butler who is my idol and role model. Butler’s original notion of gender as performance in her book Gender Trouble inspired my poem and my studies in WGS. My goal is to portray this reinforced binary within this society through this poem and to argue that we need to break through our sex and become warriors for the battle of sexes.