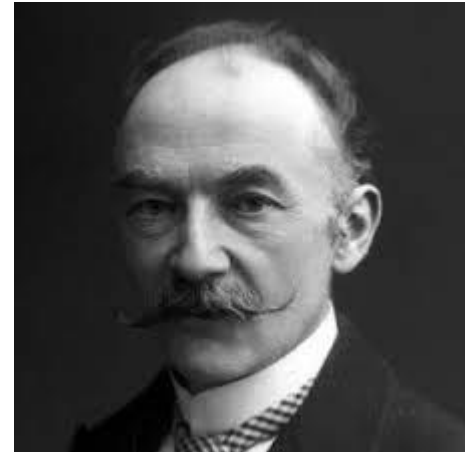


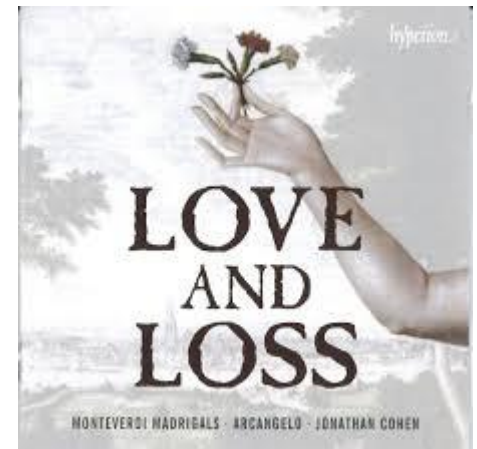
# A Wife in London

Thomas Hardy  
1899



# The Big Question

Is this a poem about war or is it a poem about love and loss?



# Context - The Boer War 1899-1902

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o\\_7yNjQquik](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o_7yNjQquik)
- Answer the key questions about this war:  
Who? What? Where? When? Why?

# What is the poem about?

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V7CjPTLuj6Q>

I--The Tragedy

She sits in the tawny vapour  
That the City lanes have uprolled,  
Behind whose webby fold on fold  
Like a waning taper  
The street-lamp glimmers cold.

A messenger's knock cracks smartly,  
Flashed news is in her hand  
Of meaning it dazes to understand  
Though shaped so shortly:  
He--has fallen--in the far South Land . . .

1. What is the effect of the title of this section of the poem?
2. What is the woman doing in stanza 1?
3. What happens in stanza 2?

# What is the poem about?

## II--The Irony

'Tis the morrow; the fog hangs thicker,  
The postman nears and goes:  
A letter is brought whose lines disclose  
By the firelight flicker  
His hand, whom the worm now knows:

Fresh--firm--penned in highest feather -  
Page-full of his hoped return,  
And of home-planned jaunts by brake and burn  
In the summer weather,  
And of new love that they would learn.

1. What is the effect of the title of this section of the poem?
2. What happens in stanza 1?
3. What happens in stanza 2?

# Answer the questions in the thought bubbles

## I--The Tragedy

She sits in the **tawny vapour**

That the City lanes have uprolled,

Behind whose **webby** fold on fold

Like a **waning taper**

The **street-lamp glimmers cold.**

**'tawny vapour'**

Pathetic fallacy –  
What atmosphere  
does Hardy create  
here?

**'Webby'**

spider's web  
imagery - Why  
does Hardy  
choose that  
image?

**'waning taper' & 'street light  
glimmers cold'**

Contrast between light and dark &  
warmth and cold. What could this  
represent?

# Answer the questions in the thought bubbles

A messenger's knock **cracks** smartly,  
**Flashed** news is in her hand  
Of meaning it dazes to understand  
Though shaped so shortly:  
He--has fallen--in the far South Land . . .

**'cracks'**

Why choose  
this word?

**'flashed'**

What is the  
effect of this  
word?

# Comment on the bits in red

## II--The Irony

'Tis the morrow; the fog hangs thicker,

The postman nears and goes:

A letter is brought whose lines disclose

By the firelight flicker

His hand, whom the worm now knows:



# Comment on the bits in red

Fresh--firm--penned in highest feather -  
Page-full of his **hoped return**,  
And of **home-planned jaunts** by brake and  
burn  
In the **summer weather**,  
And of **new love** that they would learn.

How does this contrast with the start of the poem and what mood does this create?

Structure -More thoughts please  
What is the impact of dividing the  
poem into 2 sections?

- The tragedy
- The irony

# Themes and ideas

- What does this poem tell us about love?
- What does this poem tell us about war?

# The Big Question

Is this a poem about war or is it a poem about love and loss?



## Themes and ideas

1. What does this poem tell us about love?
2. What does this poem tell us about war?

