

The woman of water



Adrian Mitchell worked first as a journalist before later becoming a novelist, poet and playwright. He wrote several plays for children, based on famous stories such as *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C. S. Lewis and the *Tales of Beatrix Potter*.

There once was a woman of water
Refused a Wizard her hand.
So he took the tears of a statue
And the weight from a grain of sand
5 And he squeezed the sap from a comet
And the height from a cypress tree
And he drained the dark from midnight
And he charmed the brains from a bee
And he soured the mixture with thunder
10 And stirred it with ice from hell
And the woman of water drank it down
And she changed into a well.

There was once a woman of water
Who changed into a well
15 And the well smiled up at the Wizard
And down down that old Wizard fell ...



Adrian Mitchell (1932–2008)

1 In your own words, explain what the 'woman of water' has done to upset the wizard.

1 mark

2 What do the ingredients that the wizard collects have in common?

1 mark

3 Give an example of **one** of the collected items that is intangible – an abstract noun or phrase.

1 mark

4 Ring the **one** word below that best describes what this poem is about.

love fear equality revenge disappointment

1 mark

5 What is the final thing that the woman does – the thing that causes her to be turned into a well?

1 mark

6 Why does the poet repeat the word 'down' in the last line?

1 mark

7 Could anyone be said to have 'won' in this tit-for-tat battle? Explain your answer.

2 marks

8 The poet says that the wizard 'took' the tears of a statue and the weight from a grain of sand. He then uses more exciting verbs to describe collecting other ingredients. Which is your favourite, and why?

2 marks

Review

