

*Place/Position/Status*

What's a woman's place,  
 If not first? How could  
 Thrive the human race  
 Without our live mould?

A woman's place is not "behind"—  
 Unless she's behind the wheel—  
 Directing the passage,  
 Navigating the way forward;

Or she's behind the controls—  
 Piloting, soaring to the sun;  
 Or she's behind the desk—  
 Instructing, managing, teaching.

A woman's place is not "in the home"—  
 Unless it's a house of finance—  
 Or it's the House of Commons—  
 Or it's Windsor Castle.

A woman's place is not "out back"—  
 Unless she's the front-line back up—  
 Who don't back down—  
 Not until the downpressed are standing up.

Woman's position  
 Ain't to cook and clean,  
 But to petition—  
 Inquest like a queen.

A woman's position isn't secondary,

But to be supreme—  
Like a Supreme Court Justice,  
And render decisions primary.

A woman's position isn't drudgery,  
But to become the judge,  
And to mete out *Equality*,  
To never deem rights luxuries.

A woman's position isn't retro—  
To go back to the kitchen,  
To go back to the nursery,  
To forget, to regret, to forego.

A woman's position isn't reversed  
By *Adversity*,  
By the biases that *History*  
Has had *Herstory* rehearse.

And what's a woman's status?  
To be valued and "vatic"—  
Gifted by afflatus—  
Autonomous automatic....

And it's also our status  
To give chauvinists static,  
To face down the fatuous;  
To act up; be dramatic!

We may have Indigenous status;  
We may have Landed Immigrant status;  
We may have working-class status;

But our standing is always righteous.

May our status always be first—

The first to argue for rights—

For *Power* and a wallet-equal purse—

And know *Victory's* delights.

-- **George Elliott Clarke**  
**7<sup>th</sup> Parliamentary Poet Laureate (2016-17)**