

The Fair Maid of the West by Thomas Heywood

M/F SS, Sms, R&D, QS

GOODLACK.

And what of that?

SPENCER.

If she be ranked amongst the loose and lewd,
Take it away: I hold it much indecent
A whore should ha't in keeping; but if constant,
Let her enjoy it. This my will perform.

GOODLACK.

Sense else forsake me.

SPENCER.

All's made even –
My peace with earth, and my atone with Heaven.

Exeunt Goodlack and Spencer.

Scene Five

A field near Foy.

Enter Bess Bridges, like a page, with a sword; and Clem.

BESS.

But that I know my mother to be chaste,
I'd swear some soldier got me.

CLEM.

It may be many a soldier's bluff jerkin came out of your father's
tan-vat.

BESS.

Methinks I have a manly spirit in me,
In this man's habit.
I could do all that I have heard discoursed.
Of Mary Ambree, or Westminster's Long Meg.

CLEM.

What Mary Ambree was I cannot tell; but unless you were
taller, you will come short of Long Meg.

BESS.

Of all thy fellows, thee I only trust,
And charge thee to be secret.

CLEM.

I am bound in my indentures to keep my master's secrets; and
should I find a man in bed with you, I would not tell.

BESS.

Begone, sir.

CLEM.

If you should swagger and kill anybody, I, being a vintner,
should be called to the bar.

Exit Clem.

BESS.

Let none condemn me of immodesty,
Because I try the courage of a man,
Who on my soul's a coward, beats my servants,
Cuffs them, and, as they pass by him, kicks my maids;
Nay, domineers over me, making himself
Lord o'er my house and household.

Enter Roughman and Fawcett.

FAWCETT.

Sir, I can now no further, weighty business calls me away.

ROUGHMAN.

Why, at your pleasure, then.
Yet I could wish that ere I passed this field,
That I could meet some Hector, so your eyes
Might witness what myself have oft repeated,
Namely, that I am valiant.

FAWCETT.

No doubt;
But now I am in haste. Farewell.

Exit Fawcett.

ROUGHMAN.

How many times brave words bear out a man!
For if he can but make a noise, he's feard,
To talk of frays, although he ne'er had heart.
To face a man in the field, that's a brave fellow.
I have been valiant, I must needs confess,
In street and tavern, where there have been men
Ready to part the fray; but for the fields,
They are too cold to fight in.

BESS.

You are a villain and a coward; and you lie.
She strikes him.

ROUGHMAN.

You wrong me, I protest. Sweet, courteous gentleman,
I never did you wrong.

BESS.

Wilt tell me that?
Draw forth thy coward sword, and suddenly,

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Or, as I am a man, I'll run thee through,
And leave thee dead i' the field.

ROUGHMAN.

Hold! as you are a gentleman.
I have ta'en an oath I will not fight today.

BESS.

Th'ast took a blow already, and the lie:
Will not both these enrage thee?

ROUGHMAN.

No; would you give the bastinado too,
I will not break mine oath.

BESS.

Oh! Your name's Roughman:
No day doth pass you but that you hurt or kill!
Is this out of your calender?

ROUGHMAN.

I! You are deceived.
I ne'er drew sword in anger, I protest,
Unless it were upon some poor, weak fellow,
That ne'er wore steel about him.

BESS.

Throw your sword.

ROUGHMAN.

Here, sweet young sir;
He gives up his sword.

But as you are a gentleman,
Do not impair mine honour.

BESS.

Tie that shoe.

ROUGHMAN.

I shall, sir.

BESS.

Untruss that point.

ROUGHMAN.

Anything, this day, to save mine oath.

BESS.

Enough; – yet not enough. Lie down,
'Till I stride o'er thee.

ROUGHMAN.

Sweet sir, anything.

BESS.

Rise, thou hast leave. Now, Roughman, thou art blest;
This day thy life is saved; look to the rest.
Take back thy sword.

ROUGHMAN.

Oh! you are generous: honour me so much
As let me know to whom I owe my life.

BESS.

I am Bess Bridges' brother.

ROUGHMAN.

Still methought
That you were something like her.

BESS.

I have heard
You domineer and revel in her house,
Control her servants, and abuse her guests,
Which if I ever shall hereafter hear,
Thou art but a dead man.

ROUGHMAN.

She never told me of a brother living;
But you have power to sway me.

BESS.

But for I see you are a gentleman,
I am content this once to let you pass;
But if I find you fall into relapse
The second's far more dangerous.

ROUGHMAN.

Sir, will you take the wine? I shall fear it.

BESS.

I am for London,
And for these two terms cannot make return;
But if you see my sister, you may say
I was in health.

ROUGHMAN (*aside*).

Too well: the devil take you!
None saw't: he's gone for London; I am unhurt;
Then who shall publish this disgrace abroad?
One man's no slander, should he speak his worst.
My tongue's as loud as his; but in this country
Both of more fame and credit. Should we contest,
I can outface the proudest. This is, then, my comfort.

Exit Bess