

A WOMAN SCORNED!

A SWORD PLAY adapted by Dale Anthony Girard (©10/09)

(Based, in part, on dialogue from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, by William Shakespeare)

Characters (1 Woman and 1 Man):

MICHELLE (a young woman)

THOMAS (a young man)

MICHELLE

NO!

THOMAS

Why rebuke you him that loves you so?

Lay breath so bitter on your bitter foe.

MICHELLE

Now I but chide; but I will use thee worse,

For thou, I fear, hast given me cause to curse,

If thou hast slain Jonathan in his sleep,

I will this rapier thrust in thee hilt deep. *[She draws upon him]*

THOMAS

[Aside] Curse the day women were let carry sword,

For at their whim may any man be gored.

Put by thy steel and listen to reason,

I do love –

MICHELLE

Poorly and out of season!

If he were here, for love you would not strive.

You would not woo if Jonathan were 'live,

It cannot be but thou hast murder'd him;

Thus, his murderer will face a fate as grim.

[MICHELLE charges, THOMAS draws and defends himself]

THOMAS

Hold! Your passion's spent on a misprised mood:

I am not guilty of Jonathan's blood;

Nor is he dead, for aught that I can tell.

MICHELLE

I pray thee, tell me then that he is well.

THOMAS

And if I could, what should I get therefore?

MICHELLE

A privilege never to see me more.

[MICHELLE charges again, THOMAS defends himself. They lock in a corps-a-corps.]

THOMAS

[Aside] This exchange at arms does her qual'ties show:

Her lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow!

O' let's put 'side our contest: So I may kiss

This princess of pure white, this seal of bliss!

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MICHELLE

If you would listen and knew courtesy,
You would not do me thus much injury.
It is to Jonathan I am betrothed.
Your advances are spurned, your actions loathed.

THOMAS

You are unkind, sweet Michelle; be not so;
For you do love me; this you know I know:

MICHELLE

[Aside] *Why is it men can not hear the word 'NO'
Hearing instead what they do wish were so?*
Hark you Thomas, I said NO; I will none:
If e'er I loved you, all that love is gone.

[MICHELLE puts THOMAS on point]

THOMAS

You say you love me not and aren't my friend;
So, I'll woo you like a soldier, at arms' end.

[THOMAS charges, they fight. MICHELLE is disarmed]

MICHELLE

Hold thy hand!

THOMAS

I will if you'll but hold mine;
My Michelle, goddess, nymph, perfect, divine!

[She pulls away from him]

MICHELLE

If you're a man, as man you are in show,
You would not use a gentle lady so.
Yet, I see your point, and will my hand give
If you will but tell me if he doth live.

[He puts her on point]

THOMAS

Speak you true?

MICHELLE

By all I hold dear, I do.
If Jonathan doth live, and thou speaks true,
This, my hand, I'll give to you.

THOMAS

He doth live;
On my soul, I've done him no harm. Now give
You your hand as promised.

MICHELLE

It shall be so.
I'll give ye my hand; and foot ere I go.
See me no more, whe'er he be dead or no:
Thus, from thy hated presence part I so.

[She slaps and kicks him, then regains her sword]

[Exit]