

J2 There is a close Prisoner in the Tower

Notes. This rare poem mixes topical allusions with conventional strains of misogyny.

“Of the Lady Lake”

There is a close Prisoner in the Tower

A woe-to-man¹ who brought him to a bower.

Of sinnes deep Lake to droune in gulph of fraud

A caterpillar² with fell-foule venome daub’de

That cropps the fruite of blooming faire delight

Of falce worlds witt, gott by wealth meritts spight

She Rideing loves for Ryder³ was her name

Her horse Arme-strider metteld⁴ for the same

But now saies Fate wee have orday’nd it soe

For Rydeing fast, a foote pace she shall goe.

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Source. Bodleian MS Smith 17, p. 113

J2

¹ *A woe-to-man*: a woman and a trouble to man. This and the following line repeat James I’s assessment that Lady Lake had been the fount of the conspiracy against Roos and the Exeters. According to the King, Lady Lake was the serpent in the Garden who first seduced Eve (Lady Roos) into sin, and then dragged Adam (Sir Thomas Lake) into the mire (Birch 2.136).

² *caterpillar*: common term for a corrupt and rapacious person.

³ *Ryder*: Mary Lake was the daughter of William Ryder, a former Alderman and Lord Mayor of London.

⁴ *metteld*: metalled; shod.
