

J5 Say, no man living would vouchsafe a verse

Notes. In the only known source, this poem immediately follows “Heere lyes the breife of badnes vices nurse”, and, as the pun in the last line makes clear, it is evidently on the same subject.

Say, no man living would vouchsafe a verse
when thou art dead, to hang uppon thy heirse.¹
or that the Tyburne poet² should refuse
in thy bad cause, to interest his muse.
thinking, thy bawdy story in a Ballet 5
would be distastfull to ech herbwives pallet.
yet sure on earth, thy fame should longer dwell
then that of scoares of women that live well
now you came you are in that place³
I wish for more imbellishing your raise⁴ 10
You match with her, that lyke hath never met
till you came there, to find out S.⁵
who had the reputation, to be worst
ere this came from hells lake where she was nurst. 15

Source. Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fol. 70r

J5

¹ *hang uppon thy heirse*: epitaphs were commonly pinned to funeral hearses.

² *Tyburne poet*: allusion to ballad makers who churned out poems and songs on criminals.

³ *that place*: the Tower of London.

⁴ *raise*: race.

⁵ *S.*: Probably Somerset; hence a reference to the murderess Frances Howard, Countess of Somerset, still imprisoned in the Tower (see Sections F and H).
