

Bard Tales



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INTRODUCTION

Whether you are an apprentice just learning your craft, or a seasoned bard who has performed before kings, this small book will prove both useful and amusing.

Within these pages you will find a collection of my favorite riddles, jokes, poems, ballads, songs, fables, stories and insults. With these you will delight your companions, confound your neighbors and infuriate your adversaries. Please enjoy!

Derrin Gladwhisper, chief bard of Waterdeep

EASY RIDDLES

Three lives have I –
Gentle enough to soothe the skin,
Light enough to caress the sky,
Hard enough to crack rocks.

Water

This thing all else devours:
Birds, beasts, trees, flowers;
Gnaws iron, bites steel;
Grinds hard stones to meal;
Slays king, ruins town
Beats high mountains down.

Time

What belongs to you but others use it more than you do?

Your name

What can you keep after giving it to someone else?

Your word

What does man love more than life?
Fear more than death or mortal strife?
What do the poor have that the rich require?
And what do contented men desire?
What does the miser spend, the spendthrift save?
And all men carry to their graves?

Nothing

What has one head, one foot, and 4 legs?

A Bed

When one does not know what it is,
then it is something;
but when one knows what it is,
it is nothing.

A Riddle

When you've got it, you want to share it -
But when you share it you no longer have it.

A Secret

UNSAVORY JOKES

A monk was preaching to the people at Baldur's Gate, and thundering against adultery, which he depicted in colours of the deepest dye. "It is such a horrible sin," said he, "that I had rather undo ten virgins than one married woman!" At this, many among the congregation gave a hearty "amen!".

※

A merchant from Red Larch, a very fat and corpulent man, was on his way to Waterdeep one evening and feared he would arrive too late. He enquired of a peasant he met, "Do you think I shall be able to enter the gate?" The country-man, rallying his stoutness, replied, "To be sure, you will; a cartload of hay gets through, why should not you?"

※

A man from Everlund was under the necessity of buying a horse in Waterdeep, and bargained with the dealer, who asked him twenty-five gold pieces. He offered to pay fifteen gold cash, and to owe the rest; to which the dealer agreed. On the following day, when asked for the balance, the buyer refused, saying, "We must keep our agreement: it was settled between us that I was to be your debtor; I should be so no longer if I were to pay you."

※

A Cormyrian merchant resided in Triboar with his wife and family. His children were thin and lanky, while those of Triboar are generally healthy and hardy. An unfriendly rival asked one day why his children were so spare and of such a weak constitution. "The reason is easily given," he said. "I work alone at manufacturing my children, but

you have quite a number of assistants in the making of yours.”

A NONSENSE SONG

And can the physician make sick men well?
And can the magician a fortune divine?
Without lily, germander and sops in wine?

With sweet-brier
And bonfire,
And strawberry wire,
And columbine.

Within and out, in and out, round as a ball,
With hither and thither, as straight as a line,
With lily, germander and sops in wine.

With sweet-brier,
And bonfire,
And strawberry wire,
And columbine.

When Chauntea dwelt here, there lived no poor,
The king and the beggar with roots did dine,
With lily, germander, and sops in wine.

With sweet-brier,
And bonfire,
And strawberry wire,
And columbine.

CUTTING INSULTS

You are a...

- craven, hasty-witted mumble-news
- bawdy, reeling-ripe gudgeon
- gorbellied, rude-growing hugger-mugger
- craven, dismal-dreaming vassal
- beslubbering, weather-bitten clack-dish
- yeasty, hell-hated skainsmate
- mewling, bat-fowling ratsbane
- loggerheaded, onion-eyed fustilarian
- lumpish, elf-skinned measles
- unmuzzled, dread-bolted foot-licker
- unmuzzled, knotty-pated maggot-pie
- infectious, dismal-dreaming malt-worm

- saucy, fat-kidneyed nut-hook
- clouted, reeling-ripe ratsbane
- infectious, rude-growing ratsbane
- fobbing, half-faced flirt-gill
- rank, fly-bitten clotpole
- puking, rough-hewn maggot-pie
- jarring, rough-hewn strumpet
- spongy, rude-growing maggot-pie
- jarring, beef-witted joithead
- jarring, fat-kidneyed joithead
- dankish, dread-bolted flap-dragon
- paunchy, boil-brained boar-pig
- pribbling, elf-skinned maggot-pie
- spongy, dizzy-eyed vassal
- puking, weather-bitten hugger-mugger
- fawning, hasty-witted malt-worm
- puking, idle-headed wagtail

A CRUDE STORY

In the city of Baldur's Gate there was a man named Osper Longfellow, who was born poor but became the wealthiest of merchants. Seeing his good fortune, his friends pressed him to marry.

Weary of their pressure, Osper entered into negotiations with the old women who procure matches, and married a woman as beautiful as the moon shining over the sea. To the wedding banquet he invited kith and kin, noble and priest, friends and foes, and all of his acquaintances.

The whole house was thrown open to feasting, so they ate and drank and made merry. The bride was displayed in her dress to the women, who could not take their eyes off her. At last the bridegroom was summoned to the chamber where she sat enthroned. He rose slowly and with dignity from his chair; but in so doing, for he was over full of meat and drink, he let fly a great and terrible fart.

In great embarrassment, all the guests immediately turned to their neighbors and talked aloud, pretending to have heard nothing.

Mortified, Osper Longfellow turned away from the bridal chamber and as if to answer a call of nature. He went down to the courtyard, saddled his mare, and rode off, weeping bitterly through the night.

In time he reached Sembia where he found a ship ready to sail for Thesk; so he boarded, arriving ultimately at Telflamm. Here he met with some countrymen who recommended him to the King. This King trusted him and advanced him to the captaincy of his bodyguard. He remained there ten years, in peace and happiness, but finally was overcome with homesickness. His longing to behold his native land was like that of a lover pining for his beloved; and it nearly cost him his life.

Finally, he sneaked away without taking leave and made his way to Hillsfar on the Moonsea. Here he donned the rags of a beggar. Keeping his name and circumstances a secret, he set forth on foot for Baldur's Gate. He endured a thousand hardships of hunger, thirst, and fatigue; and braved a thousand dangers from lions, snakes, and ghouls.

Drawing near to his old home, he looked down upon it from the hills with brimming eyes, and said to himself, "They might recognize me, so I will wander about the outskirts and listen to what people are saying. May the gods grant that they do not remember what happened."

He listened carefully for seven nights and seven days, until it happened that, as he was sitting at the door of a hut, he heard the voice of a young girl saying, "Mother, tell me what day was I born on, for one of my companions wants to tell my fortune."

The mother answered, "My daughter, you were born on the very night when Osper Longfellow farted."

No sooner had the listener heard these words than he rose up from the bench and fled, saying to himself, "My fart has become a date! It will be remembered for ever and ever."

He continued on his way, returning finally to Thesk, where he remained in self-exile until he died. May the mercy of the gods be upon him!

LOVE POEMS

STAY, O sweet, and do not rise;
The light that shines comes from thine eyes;
The day breaks not, it is my heart,
Because that you and I must part.
Stay, or else my joys will die,

And perish in their infancy.

✘

SEND me some tokens, that my hope may live
Or that my easeless thoughts may sleep and rest
Send me some honey, to make sweet my hive,
That in my passions I may hope the best.
I beg not ribbon wrought with thine own hands,
To knit our loves in the fantastic strain
Of new-touch'd youth; nor ring to show the stands
Of our affection, that, as that's round and plain,
No, nor thy picture, though most gracious,
And most desired, 'cause 'tis like the best
Nor witty lines, which are most copious,
Within the writings which thou hast address'd.
Send me nor this nor that, to increase my score,
But swear thou think'st I love thee, and no more.

✘

I ne'er was struck before that hour
With love so sudden and so sweet.
Her face it bloomed like a sweet flower
And stole my heart away complete.

My face turned pale, a deadly pale.
My legs refused to walk away,
And when she looked what could I ail
My life and all seemed turned to clay.

And then my blood rushed to my face
And took my eyesight quite away.
The trees and bushes round the place
Seemed midnight at noonday.

I could not see a single thing,
Words from my eyes did start.
They spoke as chords do from the string,
And blood burnt round my heart.

Are flowers the winter's choice
Is love's bed always snow
She seemed to hear my silent voice
Not love appeals to know.

I never saw so sweet a face
As that I stood before.
My heart has left its dwelling place
And can return no more.

A STRANGE SONG

Said the Table to the Chair,
"You can hardly be aware
How I suffer from the heat
And from chilblains on my feet.
If we took a little walk,
We might have a little talk;
Pray let us take the air,"
Said the Table to the Chair.

Said the Chair unto the Table,
"Now, you know we are not able:
How foolishly you talk,
When you know we cannot walk!"
Said the Table with a sigh,
"It can do no harm to try.
I've as many legs as you:
Why can't we walk on two?"

So they both went slowly down,
And walked about the town
With a cheerful bumpy sound
As they toddled round and round;
And everybody cried,
As they hastened to their side,
"See! the Table and the Chair
Have come out to take the air!"

But in going down an alley,
To a castle in a valley,
They completely lost their way,
And wandered all the day;
Till, to see them safely back,
They paid a Ducky-quack,
And a Beetle, and a Mouse,
Who took them to their house.
The Table and the Chair

Then they whispered to each other,
"O delightful little brother,
What a lovely walk we've taken!
Let us dine on beans and bacon."
So the Ducky and the leetle
Brownny-Mousy and the Beetle
Dined, and danced upon their heads
Till they toddled to their beds.

RIDDLE RHYMES

Upon the finger my small weight is set
You scarce would feel my presence there, and yet
With my one shape, I many forms beget.

Ring with Gem

Great deeds with little strength I do,
I close the open, ope the closed for you.
I keep the master's house, the master keeps me,
too.

Key

Bound with iron I, and many shall I bind,
By me, though bound, are more to bonds
consigned,
Many I loose, ne'er loosed myself I find.

Chain

The tears I cause, though there's no cause to
mourn,
Still from my upward pathway I am torn,
And without me, my father ne'er was born.

Smoke

My face is like the night, but not so black in shade,
And in the midst of day, behold I've darkness
made!
Through me the stars are hid and the Suns glories
fade.

Cloud

I come from heights afar, by headlong ruin spent,
From heaven I'm dispatched, if through the air I'm
sent,
And me the earth receives from whom, at first, I
went.

Rain

Wet I was and wet again will be
Though now by heaven's chain held rigidly;
With bare flesh beware of handling me.

Ice

Dust of the water, light of weight am I;
I'm wet in the sun, but in the cold am dry,
I can make rivers, though on the ground I lie.

Snow

I thrive on letters yet no letters know,
I live in books, the made more studious so,
Devour the Muses, but no wiser grow.

Bookworm

My house I bear with me, and so away I steal,
Ready to change my land, nor dreary exile feel,
Yet heaven itself to me great wisdom doth reveal.

Snail

MORAL FABLES

The Ranger and the Woodman

A Ranger, not very bold, had been hired to find an Ogre. He asked a man felling oaks in the forest if he had seen any marks of his footsteps or lair. "I will," said the man, "at once show you the Ogre himself." The Ranger, turning very pale and chattering with his teeth from fear, replied, "No, thank you. I did not ask that; it is his track only I am in search of, not the Ogre himself."

The hero is brave in deeds as well as words.

The Prince and the Painted Lion

A King, whose only son was fond of martial exercises, had a dream in which he was warned that his son would be killed by a lion. Afraid the dream should prove true, he built for his son a pleasant palace and adorned its walls for his amusement with all kinds of life-sized animals, among which was the picture of a lion.

When the young Prince saw this, his grief at being thus confined burst out afresh, and, standing near the lion, he said: "O you most detestable of animals! through a lying dream of my father's, which he saw in his sleep, I am shut up on your account in this palace: what shall I now do to you?"

With these words he stretched out his hands toward a thorn-tree, meaning to cut a stick from its branches so that he might beat the lion. But one of the tree's prickles pierced his finger and caused great pain and inflammation, so that the young Prince fell down in a fainting fit. A violent fever suddenly set in, from which he died not many days later.

We had better bear our troubles bravely than try to escape them.

The Ass in the Lion's Skin

An Ass once found a Lion's skin which the hunters had left out in the sun to dry. He put it on and went towards his native village.

All fled at his approach, both men and animals, and he was a proud Ass that day. In his delight he lifted up his voice and brayed, but then everyone knew him, and his owner came up and gave him a sound cudgeling for the fright he had caused. And shortly afterwards a Fox came up to him and said: "Ah, I knew you by your voice."

Fine clothes may disguise, but silly words will disclose a fool.

MORE EASY RIDDLES

Bright as diamonds, loud as thunder,
Never still, a thing of wonder.

Waterfall

I drive men mad for love of me,
Easily beaten, and never free.

Gold

I make you weak at the worst of all times.
I keep you safe, but you are mine.
I make hands sweat, and hearts grow cold,
I visit the weak, but seldom the bold.

Fear

Often talked of, never seen,
Ever coming, never been.
Daily looked for, never here,
Still approaching, coming near.
Thousands for my visit wait,
But it proves an endless,
Though they expect me to appear,
They will never find me here.

Tomorrow

Only runs, and never walks.
Has a mouth, but never talks.

A River

BALLADS

Will you go to the rolling of the stones
Or the dancing of the ball?
Or will you go and see pretty Amee
And dance among them all

I will not go to the rolling of the stones
Or the tossing of the ball
But I will go and see pretty Amee
And dance among them all

They hadn't danced but a single dance
More than once or twice around
Before the sword at her true love's side
Gave him his fatal wound

They picked him up and carried him away
For he was sore distressed
They carried him and buried him all
 in the greenwoods
Where he was wont to rest

Pretty Susie she came awandering by
With a tablet under her arm
Until she came to her true love's grave
And she began to charm

She charmed the fish out of the sea
And the birds out of their nests
She charmed her true love out of his grave
So he could no longer rest

Will you go to the rolling of the stones?
Or the dancing of the ball?
Or will you go and see pretty Amee
And dance among them all

I will not go to the rolling of the stones
Or the tossing of the ball
But I will go and see pretty Amee
And dance among them all

✕

There were three ravens sat on a tree,
Down a down, hey down, hey down,
They were as black as black might be,
With a down.
The one of them said to his mate,
Where shall we our breakfast take?
With a down, derry, derry, derry down, down

Down in yonder green field,
Down, a down, hey down, hey down,
There lies a knight slain 'neath his shield,
With a down.
His hounds they lie down at his feet,
So well they do their master keep,
With a down, derry, derry, derry down, down.

His hawks they fly so eagerly,
Down a down, hey down, hey down,
No other fowl dare come him night,
With a down.
Down there comes a fallow doe
As great with young as might she go
With a down, derry, derry, derry down, down

She lifted up his bloody head,
Down a down, hey down, hey down,
And kissed his wounds that were so red,
With a down.
She got him up upon her back,
And carried him to earthen lake,
With a down, derry, derry, derry down, down

She buried him before the prime
Down a down, hey down, hey down,
She was dead herself ere e'en-song time,
With a down.
Gods send every gentleman,
Such hawks, such hounds, and such a leman.
With a down, derry, derry, derry down, down

POEMS OF LOVE LOST

Never seek to tell thy love,
 Love that never told can be;
For the gentle wind doth move
 Silently, invisibly.

I told my love, I told my love,
 I told her all my heart,
Trembling, cold, in ghastly fears.
 Ah! she did depart!

Soon after she was gone from me,
 A traveler came by,
Silently, invisibly:
 He took her with a sigh.

✕

I went to the Garden of Love,
And saw what I never had seen:
A Chapel was built in the midst,
Where I used to play on the green.

And the gates of this Chapel were shut,
And Thou shalt not. writ over the door;
So I turn'd to the Garden of Love,
That so many sweet flowers bore.

And I saw it was filled with graves,
And tomb-stones where flowers should be:
And Priests in black gowns,
were walking their rounds,
And binding with briars, my joys & desires.

A SONG OF LEAVING

Now, O now, I needs must part,
Parting though I absent mourn.
Absence can no joy impart:
Joy once fled cannot return.
While I live I needs must love,
Love lives not when Hope is gone.
Now at last Despair doth prove,
Love divided loveth none.

(chorus)

Sad despair doth drive me hence,
This despair unkindness sends.
If that parting be offence,
It is she which then offends.

Dear, when I am from thee gone,
Gone are all my joys at once.
I loved thee and thee alone,
In whose love I joyed once.
And although your sight I leave,
Sight wherein my joys do lie,
Till that death do sense bereave,
Never shall affection die.

Dear if I do not return
Love and I shall die together,
For my absence never mourn,
Whom you might have joyed ever.
Part we must, though now I die.
Die I do to part with you.
Him despair doth cause to lie,
Who both lived and died true.

A LOVE SONG

'My sweetheart, come along!
Don't you hear the fond song,
The sweet notes of the nightingale flow?
Don't you hear the fond tale
Of the sweet nightingale,
As she sings in those valleys below?
So be not afraid
To walk in the shade,
Nor yet in those valleys below,
Nor yet in those valleys below.

'Pretty Betsy, don't fail,
For I'll carry your pail,
Safe home to your cot as we go;
You shall hear the fond tale
Of the sweet nightingale,
As she sings in those valleys below.'
But she was afraid
To walk in the shade,
To walk in those valleys below,
To walk in those valleys below.

'Pray let me alone,
I have hands of my own;
Along with you I will not go,
To hear the fond tale
Of the sweet nightingale,
As she sings in those valleys below;
For I am afraid
To walk in the shade,
To walk in those valleys below,
To walk in those valleys below.'

'Pray sit yourself down
With me on the ground,
On this bank where sweet primroses grow;
You shall hear the fond tale
Of the sweet nightingale,
As she sings in those valleys below;
So be not afraid
To walk in the shade,
Nor yet in those valleys below,
Nor yet in those valleys below.'

This couple agreed;
They were married with speed,
And soon to the church they did go.
She was no more afraid
For to walk in the shade,

Nor yet in those valleys below:
Nor to hear the fond tale
Of the sweet nightingale,
As she sung in those valleys below,
As she sung in those valleys below.

MORE FABLES

The Bear and the Two Travelers

TWO MEN were traveling together, when a Bear suddenly met them on their path. One of them climbed up quickly into a tree and concealed himself in the branches. The other, seeing that he must be attacked, fell flat on the ground, and when the Bear came up and felt him with his snout, and smelt him all over, he held his breath, and feigned the appearance of death as much as he could.

The Bear soon left him, for it is said he will not touch a dead body. When he was quite gone, the other Traveler descended from the tree, and jocularly inquired of his friend what it was the Bear had whispered in his ear. "He gave me this advice," his companion replied. "Never travel with a friend who deserts you at the approach of danger."

Misfortune tests the sincerity of friends.

The Boy and the Nettles

A BOY was stung by a Nettle. He ran home and told his Mother, saying, "Although it hurts me very much, I only touched it gently."

"That was just why it stung you," said his Mother. "The next time you touch a Nettle, grasp it boldly, and it will be soft as silk to your hand, and not in the least hurt you."

Whatever you do, do with all your might.

The Eagle and the Arrow

An Eagle was soaring through the air when suddenly it heard the whizz of an Arrow, and felt itself wounded to death. Slowly it fluttered down to the earth, with its life-blood pouring out of it.

Looking down upon the Arrow with which it had been pierced, it found that the shaft of the Arrow had been feathered with one of its own plumes. "Alas!" it cried, as it died,

We often give our enemies the means for our own destruction.

THE BEGGARS SONG

Of all the trades in Faerun
the beggin' is the best
For when a beggar's tired
he can lay him down and rest

(chorus)

And a-beggin' I will go
And a-beggin' I will go

I've a pocket for my oatmeal
and another for my salt
I've a pair of little crutches that
should see how I can bolt

There's patches on my fusty coat
and a black patch on my eye
But when it comes to too cheap ale
I can see as well as thee

My britches they are no but holes
but my heart is free of care
As long as I've my belly full
my backside can go bare

I've been deaf at Baldur's Gate and
I've been blind at Shaw
And many's the right and willing lass
I've bedded in the straw

There's a bed for me where'er I lie
and I don't pay no rent
I've got no noisy looms to mind
and I am right content

I can rest when I am tired and
I heed no master's bell
You men'd be daft to be a king
when beggars live so well

MORE LOVE POEMS

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup
And I'll not look for wine.
The thirst that from the soul doth rise
Doth ask a drink divine;
But might I of Love's nectar sup,

I would not change for thine.

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
Not so much honoring thee
As giving it a hope that there
It could not wither'd be;
But thou thereon didst only breathe
And sent'st it back to me;
Since when it grows,
and smells, I swear,
Not of itself, but thee!

✕

Come live with me and be my Love,
And we will all the pleasures prove,
That hills and valleys, dales and field,
Or woods or steeply mountain yields.

And we will sit upon the rocks
And see the shepherds feed their flocks,
By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of roses
And a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroider'd all with leaves of myrtle.

A gown made of the finest wool,
Which from our pretty lambs we pull,
Fair lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold.

A belt of straw and ivy buds
With coral clasps and amber studs:
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me and be my Love.

Thy silver dishes for thy meat
As precious as the gods do eat,
Shall on an ivory table be
Prepared each day for thee and me.

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May-morning:
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my Love.

✕

If all the world and love were young,
And truth in every shepherd's tongue,
These pretty pleasures might me move
To live with thee and be thy Love.

But Time drives flocks from field to fold;
When rivers rage and rocks grow cold;
And Philomel becometh dumb;
The rest complains of cares to come.

The flowers do fade, and wanton fields
To wayward Winter reckoning yields:
A honey tongue, a heart of gall,
Is fancy's spring, but sorrow's fall.

Thy gowns, thy shoes, thy beds of roses,
Thy cap, thy kirtle, and thy posies
Soon break, soon wither--soon forgotten,
In folly ripe, in season rotten.

Thy belt of straw and ivy-buds,
Thy coral clasps and amber studs,
All these in me no means can move
To come to thee and be thy Love.

But could youth last, and love still breed,
Had joys no date, nor age no need,
Then these delights my mind might move
To live with thee and be thy Love.

MORE JOKES

Alberich Greathill, a notable sage of a sarcastic turn of mind and chiding disposition, was never short of words, but sometimes of discretion. He was one day visited by a very clever child, ten years old, who addressed him a short, but neat compliment. Surprised at the child's earnestness and facility of speech, Alberich put to her several questions, which were cleverly answered.

Turning to his disciples, he said, "With those who from childhood, show so much wit and proficiency, intelligence decreases as the years' increase, and they come to be fools in their old age."

"Why then", immediately retorted the child, "You must have been most preeminent for learning and wisdom in your tender years!"

✕

An inhabitant of Neverwinter was going along the streets, wrapped in thought and melancholy, and, being met by someone who enquired the motive of his concern, replied that he owed money which he

could not pay. The man responded, "Leave that anxiety to your creditor."

✘

An inhabitant of Berdusk, an exceedingly jealous man, racked his brains for a way of ascertaining, without a shadow of a doubt, whether his wife had an intimacy with any other man. By a deeply matured contrivance, well worthy of a jealous mind, he emasculated himself with his own hands. "Now," he thought, "if my wife becomes pregnant, she will not be able to deny her adultery."

✘

A man who had given his wife a valuable dress, complained that he never exercised his marital rights without it costing him more than a gold piece each time. "It is your fault," answered the wife, "why do you not, by frequent repetition, bring down the cost to a copper?"

MORE INSULTS

You are a...

- dankish, dread-bolted flap-dragon
- beslubbering, tardy-gaited bladder
- mangled, bat-fowling haggard
- cockered, reeling-ripe boar-pig
- fobbing, swag-bellied flax-wench
- fobbing, full-gorged bum-bailey
- loggerheaded, tickle-brained clotpole
- craven, spur-galled measle
- roguish, unchin-snouted fustilarian
- spleeny, swag-bellied skainsmate
- craven, hasty-witted joithead
- frothy, milk-livered foot-licker
- vain, full-gorged scut
- mangled, pox-marked clack-dish
- dissembling, fat-kidneyed strumpet
- surly, fly-bitten moldwarp
- paunchy, boil-brained lewdster
- dissembling, tickle-brained joithead
- spleeny, plume-plucked wagtail
- churlish, hell-hated wagtail
- frothy, rump-fed scut

- lumpish, hell-hated fustilarian

MORE LOVE SONGS

When to her lute Corinna sings,
Her voice revives the leaden strings,
And doth in highest notes appear,
As any challenged echo clear;
But when she doth of mourning speak,
E'en with her sighs, the strings do break,

And as her lute doth live or die,
Led by her passion, so must I:
For when of pleasure she doth sing,
My thoughts enjoy a sudden spring,
But if she doth of sorrow speak,
E'en from my heart the strings do break.

*

Diaphenia, like the daffadowndilly,
Bright as the sun, fair as the lily,
Heigh ho, how I do love thee!
I do love thee as my lambs
Are beloved by their dams;
How blest were I if thou would'st prove me?

Diaphenia like the spreading roses,
That in thy sweets all sweets encloses,
Fair sweet, how I do love thee!
I do love thee as each flower
Loves the sun's life-giving power;
For dead, thy breath to life might move me.

Diaphenia like to all things blesséd,
When all thy praises are expresséd,
Dear joy, how I do love thee!
As the birds do love the spring,
Or the bees their careful king;
Then in requite, sweet virgin, love me!

MORE RIDDLE RHYMES

Bind are my eyes, in darkness I grow,
And day is like night, for Sun I don't know,
I live in the ground; none find me there so.

Mole

Nine lives have I, if sages don't deceive;
I'm clad in black, but not because I grieve,
Though angered not, I curse, for curses I conceive.

Crow

A prickly house a little host contains;
His pointed spears keep him from pains,
So he, unarmed, in his safe fort remains.

Hedgehog

With raging teeth, I mangle what I slay,
And gory victims seek and blood-stained prey,
And in my madness many things slay.

Wolf

My bravery exceeds my body's size,
I'm adept in cunning and skilled in lies,
A wise beast I, if any beast is wise.

Fox

My form with neither parent's doth agree
Of mingled race not fit for progeny,
Though of others born, there's none born of me.

Mule

ANOTHER CRUDE STORY

It was mid-winter when a ne'er-do-well named Longbottom arrived at Triboar. Times were hard, but finally he found a furrier who was willing to take on an apprentice, and he was put to work sewing pelts. Not being accustomed to the smell of the curing hides, he said, "Pew! Pew! You are as white as chalk, but stink like dung!"

The furrier said, "If you don't like the smell, then why are you a furrier's apprentice? It's a natural smell. It's only wool."

Longbottom said nothing, but thought, "One bad thing can drive another bad thing away." Then he let such a sour fart that the furrier and his wife had to stop working.

The furrier said, "If you have to fart like that, then go out into the courtyard. There you can fart as much as you like."

Longbottom answered, "A fart is more natural and healthier than the stench of your sheep pelts."

The furrier said, "Healthy or not, if you want to fart, then go outside."

Longbottom said, "Master, it would do no good, because farts don't like the cold. They are used to being in a warm place. That's why if you let a fart it always rushes for your nose. It goes from one warm place to another."

The furrier said nothing, for he could see that Longbottom knew nothing of the furrier trade and was a rogue at that. And he sent him on his way.

FINAL INSULTS

You are a...

- bawdy, dizzy-eyed mumble-news
- cockered, doghearted mammet
- weedy, unchin-snouted hugger-mugger
- mewling, motley-minded flirt-gill
- wayward, common-kissing whey-face
- paunchy, dismal-dreaming mammet
- impertinent, clay-brained bugbear
- paunchy, flap-mouthed miscreant
- jarring, rough-hewn whey-face
- villainous, pottle-deep barnacle
- beslubbering, rough-hewn measles
- weedy, flap-mouthed measles
- beslubbering, dismal-dreaming hugger-mugger
- wayward, tickle-brained harpy
- tottering, rude-growing boar-pig
- villainous, earth-vexing foot-licker
- venomous, rude-growing moldwarp
- impertinent, pottle-deep giglet
- paunchy, guts-gripping canker-blossom
- fawning, pox-marked puttock

CREDITS & LEGALS

Design: M.T. Black

Acknowledgement: The idea for this supplement came to me after listening to a skilled player in the role of a bard amusing his companions all game with his stories and witticisms. Not everyone has such skills - my hope is that this product will help.

I have drawn most of this material from authentic medieval and renaissance sources, though there is some contemporary material in here as well. I have updated the language in some instances and also moved the geography into the Forgotten Realms.

I'm aware that *Raging Swan* published a similar product to this some years ago, though I have not yet read it.

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