

William Motherwell (1797-1835)

4 *The Fause Ladye*

“The water weets my toe,” she said,
“The water weets my knee;
Haud up, Sir Knicht, my horse’s head,
If you a true luvè be!”

“I luvèd ye weel, and luvèd ye lang, 5
Yet grace I failed to win;
Nae trust put I in ladye’s troth
Till water weets her chin!”

“Then water weets my waist, proud lord, 10
The water weets my chin;
My achin’ head spins round about,
The burn maks sik a din —
Now, help thou me, thou fearsome Knicht,
If grace ye hope to win!”

“I mercy hope to win, high dame, 15
Yet hand I’ve nane to gie —
The trinklin’ o’ a gallant’s blude
Sae sair hath blindit me!”

“Oh! help! — Oh! help! — If man ye be 20
Have on a woman ruth —
The waters gather round my head
And gurgle in my mouth!”

“Turn round and round, fell Margaret, 25
Turn round and look on me —
The pity that ye schawed yestreen
I’ll fairly schaw to thee!

“Thy girdle-knife was keen and bricht —
The ribbons wondrous fine —
'Tween every knot o’ them ye knit

Of kisses I had nine!

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“Fond Margaret! Fause Margaret!
You kissed me cheek and chin —
Yet, when I slept, that girdle-knife
You sheathed my heart’s blude in!

“Fause Margaret! Lewde Margaret!
The nicht ye bide wi’ me —
The body, under trust, you slew,
My spirit weds wi’ thee!”

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