

Robert Burns (1759-96)

7 *Last May a Braw Wooer*

Last May a braw wooer cam down the lang glen,
And sair wi' his love he did deave me:
I said there was naething I hated like men —
The deuce gae wi'm to believe me, believe me,
The deuce gae wi'm to believe me. 5

He spak o' the darts in my bonnie black een,
And vow'd for my love he was dying;
I said he might die when he liked for Jean:
The Lord forgie me for lying, for lying,
The Lord forgie me for lying! 10

A weel-stockèd mailen, himsel' for the laird,
And marriage aff-hand, were his proffers:
I never loot on that I kend it, or car'd;
But thought I might hae waur offers, waur offers,
But thought I might hae waur offers. 15

But what wad ye think? in a fortnight or less,
The deil tak his taste to gae near her!
He up the lang loan to my black cousin Bess,
Guess ye how, the jad! I could bear her, could bear her,
Guess ye how, the jad! I could bear her. 20

But a' the niest week as I fretted wi' care,
I gaed to the tryst o' Dalgarnock;
And wha but my fine fickle lover was there?
I glowr'd as I'd seen a warlock, a warlock,
I glowr'd as I'd seen a warlock. 25

But owre my left shouther I gae him a blink,
Lest neebors might say I was saucy;
My wooer he caper'd as he'd been in drink,
And vow'd I was his dear lassie, dear lassie,
And vow'd I was his dear lassie. 30

I spier'd for my cousin fu' couthy and sweet,
Gin she had recover'd her hearin',
And how her new shoon fit her auld shachl't feet —
But, heavens! how he fell a swearin' a swearin',
But, heavens! how he fell a swearin'. 35

He beggèd for Gudesake I wad be his wife
Or else I wad kill him wi' sorrow:
So e'en to preserve the poor body in life,
I think I maun wed him to-morrow, to-morrow,
I think I maun wed him to-morrow. 40

1795

(From *The Poetical Works of Robert Burns*. Ed. J. Logie
Robertson. Oxford UP, 1904)