Lady Greensleeves

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Greensleeves was all my joy,
Greensleeves was my delight;
Greensleeves was my hart of gold,
And who but my Lady Greensleeves.

Alas, my love, you do me wrong,
To cast me off discourteously;
And I have loved you so long,
Delighting in your company!

I have been ready at your hand,
To grant whatever you would crave;
I have both waged life and land,
Your love and good-will for to have.

I bought three kerchers to thy head,
That were wrought fine and gallantly;
I kept them both at board and bed,
Which cost my purse well-favour'dly.

I bought thee petticoats of the best,
The cloth so fine as fine might be:
I gave thee jewels for thy chest;
And all this cost I spent on thee.

Thy smock of silk both fair and white,
With gold embroidered gorgeously;
Thy petticoat of sendall right;
And this I bought thee gladly.

Thy girdle of gold so red,
With pearls bedecked sumptously,
The like no other lasses had;
And yet you do not love me!

Thy purse, and eke thy gay gilt knives,
Thy pin-case, gallant to the eye;
No better wore the burgess' wives;
And yet thou wouldst not love me!

Thy gown was of the grassy green,

The sleeves of satin hanging by;
Which made thee be our harvest queen;
And yet thou wouldst not love me!

Thy garters fringed with the gold,
And silver aglets hanging by;
Which made thee blithe for to behold;
And yet thou wouldst not love me!

My gayest gelding thee I gave,
To ride wherever liked thee;
No lady ever was so brave;
And yet thou wouldst not love me!

My men were clothed all in green,
And they did ever wait on thee;
All this was gallant to be seen;
And yet thou wouldst not love me!

They set thee up, they took thee down,
They served thee with humility;
Thy foot might not once touch the ground;
And yet thou wouldst not love me!

For every morning, when thou rose,
I sent thee dainties, orderly,
To cheer thy stomach from all woes;
And yet thou wouldst not love me!

Thou couldst desire no earthly thing,
But still thou hadst it readily,
Thy music still to play and sing;
And yet thou wouldst not love me!

And who did pay for all this gear,
That thou didst spend when pleased thee?
Even I that am rejected here,
And thou disdainst to love me!

Well! I will pray to God on high,
That thou my constancy mayst see,
And that, yet once before I die,
Thou wilt vouchsafe to love me!

Greensleeves, now farewell! Adieu!
God I pray to prosper thee!
For I am still thy lover true;
Come once again and love me!

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From 'A Handful of Pleasant Delites', 1584
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