**The Woful Lamentation of Mistris *Jane Shore*, a Goldsmiths Wife/ in London, sometimes King Edward the Fourth’s Concubine, who for her wanton life, came to a miserable end. Set/ forth for the example of all lewd Livers. The tune is, Live with me.[[1]](#footnote-1)**

**Featured edition: ‘Printed for F. Coles, T. Vere and J. Wright’. Euing 394, 1663-74.**

**[Thoughts on performance: this is really 2 separate but inter-related songs, the first sung by Mistress Shore and the 2nd by her disappointed husband. Would it be an idea, given the song’s overall length, to record it as two separate tracks? In case it’s necessary to reduce the length, I’ve italicised some verses that could be dropped if this proves essential. The 2 extra lines that appear at the end of verses 1 and 37 are a curiosity. Perhaps this is supposed to be a refrain sung at the end of every verse but not printed because of lack of space on an already crowded sheet? If we add the lines to every verse, however, it will of course add substantially to the length of the song. So how about just singing the lines where they’re actually marked, ie after the first and last verses of the first song. Or they could be added now and again to other verses too – at your discretion. It seems sensible to sing these lines to a repeat of the 2nd half of the melody?]**

1. If Rosamond that was so fair,

Had cause her sorows to declare

Then let Jane Shore with sorrow sing

That was belov-ed of a King:

Then wanton wives in time amend,

For love and beauty will have end.

1. *In Maiden years my beauty bright*

*Was lov-ed dear of Lord and Knight,*

*But yet the love that they requir’d,*

*It was not as my friends desir’d*

1. My Parents they for thirst of gain,

A Husband for me did obtain;

And I their pleasure to fulfil,

Was forc’d to wed against my will:

1. To Mathew Shore I was a wife,

Till lust brought ruine to my life,

And then my life so lewdly spent,

Now makes my soul for to lament

1. In Lumbard street I once did dwell,

As London yet can witness well,

Where many gallants did behold

My beauty in a shop of Gold:

1. I spread my plumes as wantons do,

Some sweet and secret friend to woe,

Because my love I did not find,

Agreeing to my wanton mind.

1. At last my name in Court did ring,

Into the ears of Englands King

Who came and lik’d and love requir’d,

But I made coy what he desir’d:

1. Yet Mistress Blague a neighbour ne’r,

Whose friendship I esteem-ed dear,

Did say it was a gallant thing:

To be belov-ed of a King.

1. By her perswasions I was led,

For to defile my Marriage bed,

& wrong’d my wedded husband Shore

Whom I had lov’d ten years before

1. In heart and mind I did rejoyce:

That I had made so sweet a choice,

And therefore did my Estate resign

To be King Edwards Concubine;

1. From City then to Court I went

To reap the pleasures of Content,

And had the joys that love could bring

And knew the secrets of a King,

1. *When I was thus advanc’d on high,*

*Commanding Edward with mine eye,*

*For Mistriss Blague I in short space*

*Obtain’d a living of his Grace.*

1. No friend I had but in short time

I made unto promotion climb:

But yet for all this costly Pride,

My Husband could not me abide:

1. His bed though wrong-ed by a King

His heart with grief did deadly sting,

From England then he goes away,

To end his life upon the Sea,

1. *He could not live to see his name*

*Impar-ed by my wanton shame:*

*Although a Prince of Peerless might*

*Did reap the pleasures of his right*

1. Long time I liv-ed in the Court,

With Lords and Ladies of great port,

For when I smil’d all men were glad

But when I mourn’d my Prince grew sad

1. But yet an honest mind I bore,

To helpless people that were poor,

I still redrest the Orphans cry

And sav’d their lives condemn’d to dye,

1. *I still had ruth on Widdows tears*

*I succour’d Babes of tender years,*

*And never lookt for other gain,*

*But Love and thanks for all my pain*.

1. At last my Royal King did dye,

And then my days of woe grew nigh

When Crookback Rich[ard] got the Crown;

King Ed[ward’s] friends were soon put down,

1. I then was punisht for my sin

That I so long had liv-ed in.

Yea every one that was his friend

This Tyrant brought to shameful end

1. Then for my rude and wanton life,

That made a strumpet of a Wife

I pennance did in Lumbard-street

In shameful manner in a sheet.

1. *Where many thousands did me view*

*Who late in court my Credit knew,*

*which made the tears run down my face*

*To think upon my foul disgrace:*

1. Not thus content they took from me

My Goods, my Livings, and my Fee

And charg’d that none should me relieve

Nor any succor to me give.

1. Then unto Mistriss Blague I went

To whom my jewels I had sent,

In hope thereby to ease my want

When riches fail’d and love grew scant

1. But she deni’d to me the same,

When in my need for them I came;

To recompence my former love,

Out of her doors she did me shove:

1. So love did vanish with my state,

Which now my soul repents too late;

Therefore example take by me,

For friendship parts in poverty;

1. But yet one friend among the rest,

Whom I before had seen distrest,

And sav’d his life condem’d to die,

Did give me food to succour me.

1. For which by law it was decreed,

That he was hang-ed for that deed:

His death did grieve me so much more,

Then [than] had I died my self therefore:

1. *Then those to whom I had done good,*

*Durst not restore me any food;*

*Whereby in vain I beg’d all day,*

*And still in streets by night I lay.*

1. My gowns beset with Pearl and Gold

Are turn’d to simple garments old;

My chains and jems and golden rings,

To filthy rags and loathsome things,

1. Thus was I scorn’d of Maid and wife

For leading such a wicked life;

Both suckling babes and children small

Did make a pastime at my fall,

1. *I could not get one bit of bread,*

*Whereby my hunger might be fed,*

*Nor drink but such as channels yield,*

*Or sti[n]king ditches in the field:*

1. Thus weary of my life at length

I yielded up my vital strength,

Within a Ditch of loathsome scent

Where carrion dogs do much frequent

1. The which now since my dying day,

Is Shoreditch cal’d as writers say:

Which is a witness of my sin,

For being Concubine to a King:

1. You wanton wives that fall to lust,

Be you assur’d that God is just,

Whoredom shall not escape his hand,

Nor Pride unpunisht in this Land;

1. If God to me such shame should bring,

That yielded only to a King;

How shall they escape that daily run,

To practice sin with every Man:

1. You Husbands match not but for love,

Lest some disliking after prove,

women be warn’d when you are wives

What plagues are due to sinful lives,

Then Maids and wives in time amend,

For love and Beauty will have end.

**The second Part of Jane Shore, wherein her sorrowful husband bewaileth his own estate, and/ Wives wantonness, the wrong of Marriage, the fall of Pride, being a warning for all women to take/ heed by. To the same tune.**

1. If she that was fair Londons pride,

For beauty fam’d both far and wide,

With swan-like Song in sadness told

Her deep distresses manifold.

1. Then in the same let me also,

Now bear a part of such like woe.

Kind Matthew Shore men call-ed me,

A Goldsmith once of good degree,

1. And might have liv-ed long therein

Had not my Wife been wed to sin:

Ah gentle Jane thy wanton race,

Hath brought me to this foul disgrace.

1. Thou hadst all things at wish and will

Thy wanton fancy to fulfill,

No London Dame, nor Merchants wife

Did lead so sweet and pleasant Life,

1. *Then gentle Jane the truth report*

*Why left’st thou me to live in Court?*

*Thou hadst both Gold and silver store*

*No wife in London then had more?*

1. *And once a week to walk in field,*

*To see what pleasure it would yeild,*

*But woe to me that liberty*

*Hath brought me to this misery:*

1. *I married thee whilst thou wert young*

*Before thou knew’st what did belong*

*To husbands love or marriage state,*

*Which now my soul repents too late:*

1. *Thus wanton Pride made thee unjust,*

*And so deceiv-ed was my trust,*

*But when the King possest my Room,*

*And cropt my Rosse [ie ‘rosy’] gallant bloom,*

1. Fair Londons blossom and my joy,

My heart was drown’d in deep annoy:

To think how unto publique shame,

Thy wicked life brought my good name

1. And then I thought each man & wife,

In jesting sort accus’d my life

And every one to the other said,

that Shores fair wife the wanton plaid

1. Thereby in mind I grew to change

My dwelling in some Country strange,

My Lands and Goods I sold away,

And so from England went to Sea;

1. Opprest with grief and woful mind

But left my cause of grief behind,

My loving Wife whom I once thought

Would never be to lewdness brought,

1. But women now I well espy,

Are subject to inconstancy;

And few there be so true of love,

But by long suit will wanton prove,

1. For flesh is frail and women weak

When Kings for love long suit do make

But yet from England my depart,

Was with a sad and heavy heart,

1. Whereat when as my leave I took,

I sent back many a heavy look,

Desiring God if it might be,

To send out sigh sweet Jane to thee.

1. *For if thou hadst but constant been,*

*These days of woe I ne’r had seen,*

*But yet I grieve and mourn full sore,*

*To think what plagues are left in store*

1. *For such as careless tread awry,*

*The modest path of constancy:*

*Ah gentle Jane if thou didst know,*

*The uncouth paths I daily go,*

1. *And woful tears for thee I shed,*

*For wronging thus my Marriage bed,*

*Then sure I am thou wouldst confess,*

*My love was sure though in distress:*

1. Both Flander, France, and Spain I past

And came to Turky at the last;

And there within that mighty Court,

I liv-ed long in honest sort,

1. Desiring God that sits in Heaven,

That Lovers sins might be forgiven;

And there advanc’d thy loving name,

Of living Wights the fairest Dame.

1. The praise of Englands beauty stain,

All which thy Husband did maintain,

And set thy picture there in gold,

For Kings and Princes to behold;

1. *But when I thought upon thy sin,*

*Thy wanton thoughts delighted in;*

*I griev’d that such a comely face,*

*Should hold true honour in disgrace,*

1. *And counted it a luckless day,*

*When as thou first didst go astray,*

*Desiring then some news to hear,*

*Of her my soul did love so dear,*

1. My secrets then I did impart,

To one well skil’d in Magick Art,

Who in a Glass did truly show,

Such things as I desire to know,

1. I there did see thy Courtly state,

Thy pomp, thy Pride, thy Glory great

And likewise there I did behold

My Jane in Edwards arm infold.

1. Thy secret love I there espy’d,

Thy vice, thy fall, and how thou died,

Thy naked body in the street,

I saw do Penance in a sheet:

1. Barefoot before the Beadles wand

With burning taper in thy hand,

And Babes not having use of tongue,

Stood pointing as she went along:

1. Thus ended was the shame of thine,

Though God gave yet no end to mine;

When I suppos’d my name forgot,

And time had washt away my blot,

1. And in another Princes Reign,

I came to England back again:

But staying there my friends decay’d,

My Princes Laws I disobey’d,

1. And by true justice judg’d to die,

For clipping Gold in secresie.

By God was my best living made,

And so by gold my life decai’d.

1. Thus have you heard the woful strife,

That came by my unconstant Wife;

Her fall, my Death, wherein is shew’d

The story of a Strumpet Lewd.

In hope thereby all women may,

Take heed how they the wanton play.

**Notes**

This was one of early modern England’s favourite cautionary tales. Jane Shore was an ambivalent figure, famed not only for her wantonness but for the charity she dispensed when in a position of power (she didn’t forget the little people when her beauty carried her to court). In this song, I think the tune may have stimulated audience sympathy because it was a well-known romantic melody and had already been used for other songs.

1. See Simpson p. 120. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)