


**Good Wif of Bathe**

"By God, if women had but...

While the threshing April winds upon the road
swell Dame Alice's high-coloured hue
sly Jenkyn's ghost now glides, now zeros in,
addressing her above the threatening crew,
"Alisoun, dear wag your tongue and
needle these men."

All day long, ignored, while faring forth,
bumping her palfrey's side in scarlet time,
she's brooded long, and laughed until she's raged,
"God's bones, I'm dealt out like a Venus aged
begrudged some husbands, this headdress of twenty pounds
— or worse."

Then suddenly she turns
and, via Jenkyn from above the tepid sun,
without much fuss, she floors them with her tale,
Nay, she admits her taste for "coltish" sex
"meek, young and fresh in bed"...
until they blush.

Anne Farrell Bailie