

Response to Donne's *Woman's Constancy*

by Kristyn Hardy

If ever you should find
A rose that does not prick,
Or a branch that does not
burn;
If you should once discover
A rain cloud that does not
pour,
Or a sun that has yet to
shine;
If you could bring to me
A child that does not squeal,
A star that does not glow,
A book that cannot be read;
If ever it were proved

That even just one of these
Existed in this world,
Not in thought
Nor wish nor dream,
But truly in your hands
One would lie;
Then perhaps I could believe,
Not wholly, of course,
But I may be convinced
That a man's heart,
Naked and bare and stark,
Offered up to me,
On bended knee and

With no conditions,
No circumstances or
constraints;
If ever it were proven
That one thing such
As these were true,
Then, and only then,
Could I be led to believe
That a man's one heart,
His professed love,
Were something to be
faithful to.