

I have been a foster

Verse 1

I have been a foster
Long and many a day;
Foster will I be no more,
No longer shoot I may;
Yet have I been a foster.

Verse 2

Hang I will my noble bow
Upon the greenwood bough,
For I cannot shoot in plain
Nor yet in rough;
Yet have I been a foster.

Verse 3

Every bow for me is too big;
Mine arrow nigh worn is;
The glue is slipp'd from the nick;
When I should shoot I miss;
Yet have I been a foster.

Verse 4

Lady Venus hath commanded me
Out of her court to go
Right plainly she sheweth me
That beauty is my foe;
Yet have I been a foster.

Verse 5

My beard is so hard, God wot,
When I should maidens kiss,
They stand aback and make it strange;
Lo, age is cause of this;
Yet have I been a foster

Verse 6

Now will I take to me my beads
For and my psalter-book,
And pray I will for them that may,
For I may nought but look;
Yet have I been a foster.