

The Unwelcome Guest

Billy Bragg

To the rich man's bright lodges
I ride in this wind
On my good horse, I call you
My shiny black Bess

To the playhouse of fortune
To take the bright silver
And gold you have taken
From somebody else

And as we go riding
In the damp foggy midnight
You snort, my good pony
And you give me your best

For you know and I know
Good horse 'mongst the rich ones
How oftimes we go there
An unwelcome guest

I never took food
From the widows and orphans
And never a hardworking man I oppressed

So take your pace easy
For home soon like lightning
We soon will be riding
My shiny black Bess

No fat rich man's pony
Can ever overtake you
And there's not a rider
From the east to the west

Could hold you a light
In this dark mist and midnight
When the potbellied thieves
Chase the unwelcome guest

I don't know, good horse
As we trot in this dark here
That robbing the rich
Is for worse or for best

They take it by stealing
And lying and gambling
And I take it my way
My shiny Black Bess

I treat horses good
And I'm friendly to strangers
I ride and your running
Makes my guns talk the best

And the rangers and deputies
Are hired by the rich man
To catch me and hang me

My shining black Bess

Yes, they'll catch me napping one day
And they'll kill me
And then I'll be gone
But that won't be my end

For my guns and my saddle
Will always be filled
By unwelcome travelers
And other brave men

And they'll take the money
And spread it out equal
Just like the Bible
And the prophets suggest

But men that go riding
To help these poor workers
The rich will cut down
Like an unwelcome guest