



Think you I am no stronger than my sex

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Portia:

"Think you I am no stronger than my sex,
Being so father'd and so husbanded?"

[Julius Caesar \(II, i, 296-297\)](#)

Portia reminds Brutus that she is his wife and the daughter of Cato in this compelling scene in which Brutus has just conspired to assassinate Caesar later that day. Portia does not know what the meeting was about, only that it involved something very important, and she pleads with Brutus to tell her. Not telling her, she claims, would make her his harlot and not his wife because it would exclude her from part of their marriage. She continues to protest, and inflicts a wound to her thigh in order to prove she is strong and worthy of being both Brutus' wife and a keeper of secrets. The courage of Portia is seen in this passage, and the self-inflicted wound reminds us that her father Cato killed himself in battle against Caesar rather than surrender to him. Brutus is moved by his wife's loyalty and is just about to tell her his plans when he is interrupted by a visitor and called away.

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