

**Riddle #25**

*From the Book of Exeter*

I am man's treasure, taken from the woods,  
Cliff-sides, hill-slopes, valleys, downs;  
By day wings bear me in the buzzing air,  
Slip me under a sheltering roof--sweet craft.  
Soon a man bears me to a tub. Bathed,  
I am binder and scourge of men, bring down  
The young, ravage the old, sap strength.  
Soon he discovers who wrestles with me

My fierce body-rush--I roll fools  
Flush on the ground. Robbed of strength,  
Reckless of speech, a man knows no power  
Over hands, feet, mind. Who am I who bind  
Men on middle-earth, blinding with rage  
And such savage blows that dazed  
Fools know my dark power by daylight?