

George Gordon Byron (1788-1824)

3 *The Devil's Drive*

An Unfinished Rhapsody.

The Devil return'd to hell by two,
 And he stay'd at home till five;
When he dined on some homicides done in *ragoût*,
And a rebel or so in an *Irish* stew,
And sausages made of a self-slain Jew — 5
And bethought himself what next to do,
 “And,” quoth he, “I ’ll take a drive.
I walk'd in the morning, I ’ll ride to-night;
In darkness my children take most delight,
 And I ’ll see how my favourites thrive. 10

“And what shall I ride in?” quoth Lucifer then —
 “If I follow'd my taste, indeed,
I should mount in a waggon of wounded men,
 And smile to see them bleed.
But these will be furnish'd again and again, 15
 And at present my purpose is speed;
To see my manor as much as I may,
And watch that no souls shall be poach'd away.

“I have a state-coach at Carlton House,
 A chariot in Seymour Place; 20
But they ’re lent to two friends, who make me amends
 By driving my favourite pace:
And they handle their reins with such a grace,
I have something for both at the end of their race.

“So now for the earth to take my chance.” 25

Then up to the earth sprung he;
And making a jump from Moscow to France,
He stepp’d across the sea,
And rested his hoof on a turnpike road,
No very great way from a bishop’s abode. 30

1813

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