

Jonathan Swift (1667-1745)

3 *An Excellent New Ballad, or, the True English Dean*

To be hanged for a rape

I.

Our brethren of England, who love us so dear,
And in all they do for us so kindly do mean,
(A blessing upon them!) have sent us this year
For the good of our church, a true English dean.
A holier priest ne'er was wrapt up in crape, 5
The worst you can say, he committed a rape.

II.

In his journey to Dublin, he lighted at Chester,
And there he grew fond of another man's wife;
Burst into her chamber, and would have caress'd her;
But she valued her honour much more than her life. 10
She bustled, and struggled, and made her escape
To a room full of guests, for fear of a rape.

III.

The dean he pursued, to recover his game;
And now to attack her again he prepares:
But the company stood in defence of the dame, 15
They cudgell'd, and cuft him, and kick'd him down stairs.
His deanship was now in a damnable scrape,
And this was no time for committing a rape.

IV.

To Dublin he comes, to the bagnio he goes,
And orders the landlord to bring him a whore; 20
No scruple came on him his gown to expose,
'Twas what all his life he had practis'd before.
He had made himself drunk with the juice of the grape,
And got a good clap, but committed no rape.

V.

The dean, and his landlord, a jolly comrade, 25
 Resolv'd for a fortnight to swim in delight;
For why, they had both been brought up to the trade
 Of drinking all day, and of whoring all night.
His landlord was ready his deanship to ape
In every debauch, but committing a rape. 30

VI.

This protestant zealot, this English divine,
 In church and in state was of principles sound;
Was truer than Steele to the Hanover line,
 And griev'd that a tory should live above ground.
Shall a subject so loyal be hang'd by the nape, 35
For no other crime but committing a rape?

VII.

By old popish canons, as wise men have penn'd 'em,
 Each priest had a concubine, *jure ecclesiæ*;
Who 'd be dean of Fernes without a *commendam*?
 And precedents we can produce, if it please ye: 40
Then why should the dean, when whores are so cheap,
Be put to the peril and toil of a rape?

VIII.

If fortune should please but to take such a crotchet
 (To thee I apply, great Smedley's successor)
To give thee lawn sleeves, a mitre, and rochet, 45
 Whom wouldst thou resemble? I leave thee a guesser.
But I only behold thee in Atherton's shape,
For sodomy hang'd; as thou for a rape.

IX.

Ah! dost thou not envy the brave colonel Chartres,
 Condemn'd for thy crime at threescore and ten? 50
To hang him, all England would lend him their garters,
 Yet he lives, and is ready to ravish again.
Then throttle thyself with an ell of strong tape,
For thou hast not a groat to atone for a rape.

X.

The dean he was vex'd that his whores were so willing: 55

He long'd for a girl that would struggle and squall;
He ravish'd her fairly, and sav'd a good shilling;
But here was to pay the devil and all.
His trouble and sorrows now come in a heap,
And hang'd he must be for committing a rape. 60

XI.

If maidens are ravish'd, it is their own choice:
Why are they so wilful to struggle with men?
If they would but lie quiet, and stifle their voice,
No devil nor dean could ravish them then.
Nor would there be need of a strong hempen cape 65
Tied round the dean's neck for committing a rape.

XII.

Our church and our state dear England maintains,
For which all true Protestant hearts should be glad:
She sends us our bishops, our judges, and deans,
And better would give us, if better she had. 70
But, lord! how the rabble will stare and will gape,
When the good English dean is hang'd up for a rape.

1730

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