
MAR-MARTIN

I know not why a truth in rime set out
May not as well mar Martin and his mates
As shameless lies in prose books cast about
Mar priests & prelates, and subvert whole states,
For where truth builds, and lying overthrows,
One truth in rime is worth ten lies in prose.

Lords of our land, and makers of our laws,
 Long may ye live, laws many may you make.
 This careful, kind and country-loving clause,
 As from a faithful friend, vouchsafe to take:
 Martin the merry, who now is Marprelate,
 Will prove mad Martin, and Martin Mar-the-state.

The wind doth first send forth a whistling sound,
 Then fierce and fearful hollow thundering threats.
 At length it rives the earth, and rents the ground,
 And tumbles towns and cities from their seats;
 So he who first did laughing libels send,
 Will at the last procure a wreakful end.

Women are wooed to follow men precise,
 Young boys without experience hold them gods,
 Yea, some for gain, who are both old and wise;
 Thus merry Martin sets the world at odds.
 The frozen snake for cold that cannot creep,
 Restored to strength, a stinging stir will keep.

Let neighbour nations learn us to beware,
 Let harms at home teach us for to take heed;
 When Browne and Barrow have done what they dare,
 Their hellish hydra's heads will spring with speed.
 Such men as Martin caused all these woes;
 This poison still increaseth as it goes.

Somewhat I heard, and mickle have I seen;
 It were too long to tell your Lordships what.
 Somewhat I know, and somewhat have I been;
 Yet this I say, and this is also flat:
 Bridle the coltish mouth of malapert,
 Or else his hoof will hurt both head and heart.

Anglia Martinis parce fauere malis.

England was wont by ancient rites
 To stand, and so endure,
 But now new falconers make men birds,
 And call us to the lure.
 The painted lure the hawk deceives;
 Men find no grapes on painted leaves.

This catching sport will scratching make;
 The quarrel here will grow
 Twixt hawk and falconer at the last;
 Each one will make a show;
I flew, I caught, the hawk may say;
 The falconer, *What, I'll have the prey*.

The clergyman, like silly hawk,
 Hath flown at layman's lure,

And now perceives that, flying still,
Yet fly he may the more;
If aught be caught by flight of thine,
The layman saith, *All must be mine.*

I swooped at fair'st, both church and lands,
To lay to clergy use,
But layman lays, layman so-called,
And vows to lay abuse.
O greedy dirt, thy craft I see;
Be hawk and falconer both for me.

Is this thy sigh, thy hand devout,
Turned up with white of eye?
Thy gape, thy groan, to cozen him
That sits in heaven so high?
O greedy dirt, a hellish heart,
Thy cunning coven will make thee smart.

Poor John and Joan are eaten up,
The country clean forlorn,
Men turned to sheep, let *pecus* fight,
Men cannot long be borne.
O blessed prince, look well to this,
'Twill shorten soon our country's bliss.

Abbots were fat, & friars frim,
The whoresons loved their ease,
Yet standing house by them was kept,
Which did the poor man please;
Now much of theirs to them is gone
Who, having much, yet spend they none.

The[y] fly to wood, like breeding hawks,
And leave old neighbours' love,
They perch themselves in sylvan lodge,
And soar in th' air above;
There magpie teacheth them to chat,
And cuckoo soon doth hit them pat.

When winter comes, our Eves lack heat,
And cast off Adam old,
And then hot sprites must needs be had,
To put in heat to cold.
To towns they go within a while.
Look home, old Adam; mark this wile.

The holy whore no fellow hath,
The Pruritan is she,
That midst her prayers sends her eye
The purest man to see;
The purer man, the better grace,
The clearest hue, the cheerfull'st face.

Sprite moves her first to wish him well
 And, discipline decayed,
 Doth make her seek so far from wood
 To have God's Word obeyed.
 I'll tell you plain, the matter is fresh;
 They gin in sprite, but end in flesh.

A displing rod must needs be had.
 Good Martins say not so;
 This displing rod will made you nod,
 And cause your heads to grow.
 Get home, keep house, ware towns so pure,
 Their zeal is hot; they'll play you, sure.

When home you come, join faith & love,
 Let priest his portion have,
 Let neighbour's field be as it was,
 Cast off your garments brave,
 Love God and gospel as you ought,
 And let that go that was ill sought.

Must churches down to maintain pride,
 And make your sails to swell?
 Few mighty subjects fit a state;
 A few do very well.
 Crack me this nut, thou gentle blood
 Whose father was but Robin Hood.

Shall prince say no, and peerless men
 Detest this wrangling brood,
 Who neither prince nor peer will know
 In this, their traitorous mood?
 And do they live, and live they still
 Their poisoned cup of gall to fill?

Martins, farewell, and let's be friends,
 And thank God for his Word,
 And prince and peers and peace and all,
 And scaping foreign sword.
 Yet no man's sword could strike so sore
 As Martin's would. I'll say no more.

Thou caytif kerne, uncouth thou art, unkist thou eke sal bee.
 For aiming thus in coverture at Prelatis hie in(?) gree.
 Thy spell is borrell, spokis bin blunt, thy sponce rude, rusticall,
 But to the hecfor fell and feirce, short hornis done eft befall.
 The Sainctis in heavin & earth thou scornst, & selfe them dost nickname.
 It semis thou wert in bastardie a swad begat with shame,
 In England Sir, tomteltroth is lewd plea at every barre
 Why dar thou not then shew thy scalpe gainst clarkis proclaiming warre.
 For thie, thou seemis nought els bot lies, & leasings are thy leere,
 No pitie twere to cut the combe of sike a chauntecleere.

Yclipt thou art, as people sayen, Martin the Mar-prelat,
 Better the mought thie selfe benempt, Mar-Queene, Mar-potentat.
 The Kirke of God may call that stower, & eke that thine(?) unblis,
 Sith swaines forswonke, & so forswat, moght sayen what them list.
 Siker, thous bot a pruid princock thus reking of thy swinke,
 That with thilke irefull tauntes & lies to bleare mens eien dost thinke.
 Now God sheild man that wisards al, should daunce after thy pipe,
 Whaes wordis bin witlesse, termis bin fond, & tonge is hanging ripe.
 Thilke way & trood whilke thou dost swade, is steepe & also tickle,
 To Kesar, King, and people too, the fall warre varie mickle.

This old said saw, this reedr is rife, quha kenneth not this lore,
 Whilke has bin taken as a creed of sires that were of yore?
 Seem'd sanctitie is trecherie, and newfangled religioun,
 Noucht is bot gross knaverie, and maistres of confusioun,
 Quhat zeale were thilk that kingis gwerdons, whae are iclad in clay.
 Quhilk they bequeathit to the kirke as monuments for aie,
 Should be so robd and ransackit, contrair to their behests,
 To make new upstart jacks Lor-Danes, with coine to cram their chests?
 That they whaes fathers wer bot kernis, knavis, pesants, clownis, & booris,
 Moght perke as paddocks, ligg in soft, & swatth their paramoris?

For thy graund zeal is nought bot that thou soarest at thilke same;
 Thus han purloining slavis thee made an instrument of shame,
 Like as a gleede is hovering to catch her younglings praie,
 To gurmandize the chicke, or bring the duckling to her bay,
 So sootly thou can pipe to them, they deftly daunce to thee
 In roundelay, with stolen pelfe, to maken mirth and glee,
 Quhile saucily, quhaire no scape was, thou wouldest all amendit,
 Tholy annointed one her selfe thy spokis they han offendit;
 Thy zeale's petit (Masse Mar-prelat), God knowes, thy purpose evill,
 Thy rowtis bin miscreants, & thou a chaplin for the devil.

Thilke men of elde that han from God the sprite of prophecie,
 Quhilk thou dost reke, did not as thou, speke scoffes and ribaudrie.
 Weil lettred clarkis endite thair warkes (quoth Horace) slow & geasoun,
 Bot thou can wise forth buike by buike at every spurt & seasoun.
 For men of litrature t'endite so fast, them doth not fitte,
 Enaunter in them, as in thee, thair pen outrun thair witt.
 The shaftis of foolis are soone shotte but, bot fro the merks they stray,
 So art thou glibbe to guibe and taunte, bot rovest all the way.
 Quhen thou hast parbrackt out thy gorge, & shot out all thy arrowes,
 See that thou hold thy clacke, & hang thy quiver on the gallowes.

For Sovereigne Dame Elizabeth, that Lord it lang she maie,
 (O England) now full often must thou Pater Noster say.
 And for those mighty Potentatis, thou kenst what they bin hight,
 The tout-puissant Chevaliers that fend St. Nichols right,
 Els clarkis will soon all be Sir Johns, the preistis craft will empaire,
 And Dickin, Jackin, Tom & Hob mon sit in Rabbies chaire.
 Let Georg & Nichlas cheek by jol bathe still on cockehorse yode,
 Thae(?) dignitie of pristis with thee may han a lang abode,
 Els litrature mon spredde her wings, & piersing welkin bright,
 To heaven from whence she did first wend, retire & take her flight.

Anglia. O England, gem of Europe, angels' land,
Blest for thy gospel, people, prince and all,
And all through peace, let Martins understand
The honey of thy peace abhor their gall.

Martinis. Martins? what kind of creatures might those be?
Birds, beasts, men, angels, fiends? Nay, worse, say we.
The fiends spake fair sometimes, and honour gave;
Curse and contempt in(?) all that Martins have.

Disce. England, if yet thou art to learn thy spell,
Learn other things; such doctrine is for hell.

Favere. What favour would these Martins? Shall I say,
As other birds wherewith young children play,
Let them be caged, and hempseed be their food,
Hempseed, the only meat to feed this brood.

Tuis. Disclaim these monsters, take them not for thine,
Hell was their womb, and hell must be their shrine.

Many would know the holy ass,
And who might Martin been,
Pluck but the foot-cloth from his back,
The ass will soon be seen.

My Lords, wise wittol Martins think
Your Lordships fly too high;
Keep on your flight aloft as yet,
Lest Martins come too nigh,
For were your wings a little clipped,
They soon would pluck the rest,
And then the place too high for you
Would be pure Martins' nest.

What is the grief that most afflicts all Martin's brood?
Even self-conceit, supported with a melancholy mood.
What are the chiefest points whereon they raise debate?
No less than changing prince's laws, and altering present state.
And of what sort are those that to this point are come?
Of rascals more than others, but of every sort are some.
What age or learning hath the number of their train?
Children for age, for learning, fools, but fools & boys would reign.
What pains doth law appoint, to put the rest in fear?
For treason, death, but that her Grace is loath to be severe.
Long may she live, and those long may her Grace defend,
That they and other like had thought ere this t'have brought to end.

Men ask why Martins do alms-deeds and housekeeping defy;
Their answer is that housekeeping and alms are popery.

If any wonder that not only men are pure,
But women like hypocrisy do also put in ure,
They use the help of some that never did them wed,
And learn to prove such holy dames of Martins in their bed.

Newfangled boys I thought to term the birds of Martin's nest,
But that I see, in getting boys, like men they do their best.

Well may'st thou mark, but never canst thou mar
This present state whereat thou so dost storm,
Nor they that thee uphold to make this jar,
And would, forsooth, our English laws deform;
Then be thou but Mark-prelate as thou art;
Thou canst not mar, though thou wouldst swelt thy heart.

In Ammon's land pretended Rephaims dwelt,
That termed themselves reformers of the state,
These like Zanzummins and deformers dealt
Among the people, stirring up debate,
But when their vileness was espied and known,
From Ammon's land this giant's brood was thrown.
Our England, that for unity hath been
A glass for Europe, hath such monsters bred,
That rail at prelates and oppugn their Queen;
Whole commonwealths each beareth in his head.
These Rephaims, for so the[y] would be deemed,
Are nothing less than that they most have seemed.
Then if we love the government of peace,
Which true reformers from above maintain,
And foreign force could never make it cease,
Nor these deformers can with vices stain,
First let us find pretended Rephaims rout,
And, like Zanzummins, let us cast them out.

Martin had much a farther reach than every man can guess.
He might have called himself Mar-priest; that hath been somewhat less,
But seeking all to overthrow, whatever high might be,
Marprelate he did call himself, a foe to high degree.

The veriest knaves chief Pruritans and Martinists are found;
And why? they say where sin was great, there grace will most abound.

Now where the father loves the Pope, for private wealth or gain,
The son is of another mind, and follows Martin's train,

So that, in change of church's rites, whatever may be done,
They will be sure it shall advance the father or the son.

If any marvel at the man, and do desire to see
The style and phrase of Martin's book, come learn it here of me.

Hold my cloak, boy, chill have a vling at Martin, O the boor,
And if his horse-play like him well, of such he shall have store.
He thus bumfegs his bousing mates, and who is Martin's mate?
O that the steal-counters were known, chould catch them by the pate.
Th' unsavory snuff's first jesting book, though clownish, knavish was,
But keeping still one style he proves a sodden-headed ass.
Bear with his ingramness a while, his seasoned wainscot face
That brought the godly cobbler, Cliffe, for to disprove his Grace.

But (O) that godly cobbler, Cliffe, as honest an old lad
As Martin (O, the libeller) of hang-bys ever had.
If I berime thy worshipness, as thou beliest thy betters,
For railing, see which of us two shall be the greatest getters.
But if in flinging at such states thy noddle be no slower,
Thy brother hangman will thee make be pulled three aces lower.
Then mend these manners, Martin, or in spite of Martin's nose,
My rhythm shall be as dogg'rel, as unlearned is thy prose.

These tinkers' terms and barbers' jests first Tarleton on the stage,
Then Martin in his books of lies, hath put in every page.
The common sort of simple swads, I can their state but pity,
That will vouchsafe or deign to laugh at libels so unwitty.
Let Martin think some pen as bad, some head to be as knavish,
Some tongue to be as glib as his, some railing all as lavish,
And be content; if not, because we know not where to find thee,
We hope to see thee where deserts of treason have assigned thee.

Cast off thy cloak and shrine thyself in cloak-bag, as is meet,
And leave thy flinging at the priest, as jades do with their feet;
The priest must live, the bishop guide,
To teach thee how to leave thy pride.

If Martin die by hangman's hands, as he deserves no less,
This epitaph must be engraved, his manners to express.

*Here hangs knave Martin, a traitorous libeller he was;
Enemy pretended, but in heart a friend to the *Papa,
Now made meat to the birds that about his carcass are haggling.
Learn by his example, ye rout of Pruritan asses,
Not to resist the doings of our most gracious Hester.
Martin is hanged, O the master of all hypocritical hang-bys.*

*This bodge is
known to be
his own.