

**The Rape of the Lock
and Other Poems**

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Fairest of mortals, thou distinguish'd care
Of thousand bright Inhabitants of Air!
If e'er one vision touch.'d
thy infant thought, Of all the Nurse and all the Priest have taught.

The Rape of the Lock and Other Poems Details

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Suzanne says

I only read "An Essay on Criticism" and "The Rape of the Lock". I wanted to like them more than I actually liked them. I think the fault is mine because they are clearly brilliant. But I just yawned and got distracted easily the whole time. I'll come back to this later. Maybe this just isn't speaking to me right now.

Heather Nicole says

I only read The Rape of the Lock and loved how it was a great mix of wit and beautiful prose.

Wm Jas Tychonievich says

Brilliant in places, but not consistently so. The Essays on Criticism and on Man are excellent, and The Rape of the Lock is delightful, but I found the Dunciad to be tedious and meanspirited. In the latter work, one of the minor poets Pope is mocking is made to say:

As, forced from wind-guns, lead itself can fly,
And ponderous slugs cut swiftly through the sky;
As clocks to weight their nimble motion owe,
The wheels above urged by the load below:
Me emptiness and Dulness could inspire,
And were my elasticity and fire.

Pope seems not to notice that it is he himself, in writing something called a "Dunciad," who is taking emptiness and dullness as his inspiration, and it shows. As Nietzsche would have said if he had thought of it, "Wer mit Dummköpfe kämpft, mag zusehn, dass er nicht dabei zum Dummkopf wird."

Priya says

Puffs, Powders, Patches, Bibles, Billet-doux. Pope brilliantly presents this storm in a tea cup seasoned with satire, wit and humor. I had actually memorized some wonderful verses in this text which now I have forgotten. Time to re-read it..

Christa says

Good shit. Pope's an awesome poet, one of the best ever in my opinion, though I prefer other poets for

artistry. Pope is funny and writes perfect verse like you wouldn't believe. If I want emotion I go elsewhere, but Pope makes me LOL.

Stephanie Floyd says

I think Pope is great with heroic couplets and words--that's all super lovely. I just had a harder time looking at this story comically. I couldn't get away from the theme of actual rape and the idea that Belinda doesn't control her own body. While Pope makes fun of the court's frivolity, he's also making light of Belinda's situation, which did not settle well with me.

Annabelle says

I know I'm supposed to like Alexander Pope, cause he's an English mastermind and all, but it was pretty painful reading this book.

Heather says

I find Pope's education, polish, and wit delightful. His poems are a world away from the emotionally-laden poetry of the Romantics or the rough, personal poetry of the modern era, but appreciate them for what they are. "The Rape of the Lock" is satire at its finest, brought off with a light touch but still having a needle-sharp point. It is the kind of poem that makes one realize how great the rewards of having a thorough classical education could be; the "in jokes" are endless for one who knows his mythology, rhetoric, and philosophy.

Kelly says

The Rape of the Lock 2/11/07

brook says

oh, my satire class. it may have been painful, but you can't deny the genius of pope's work.

Crystal Belle says

this was pure torture for me. some beautiful language and imagery at some points but overall i just couldn't take it...

Daniel says

What a genius this man is. A treasure to read and to have read.

"Eternal sunshine of the spotless mind!"

"What, and how great, the virtue and the art,
To live on little with a cheerful heart!"

"Fools rush in where angels fear to tread"

"A knowledge both of books and human kind."

Erika B. (SOS BOOKS) says

Alexander Pope is kind of like the unsung poet of the world. I read this book for my 18th century british literature class. I didn't mind it...I just didn't love it! :P

J.G. Keely says

Compared to the Nineteenth Century's Romantic movement and the Seventeenth's Shakespeare and Milton, the Eighteenth has always felt a veritable void to me. There was a little bit going on in France with Diderot and Voltaire, and some minor British works by Swift and Defoe, but by and large, Eighteenth Century literature is Fielding and Pope.

He began his inimitable wit and wordly mastery with 'An Essay on Criticism' when he was only 21. It was a varied, vivid exploration of what makes writing good, and includes such oft-quoted lines as "To err is human, to forgive divine", "A little learning is a dangerous thing", and "fools rush in where angels fear to tread".

Four years later he added his contribution to the Epic Tradition with 'The Rape of the Lock'. One of the reasons that this was a slow century for literature was that it was a century obsessed with the superficial. Like all great Epicists before him, Pope captured the spirit of his age, but in this case, instead of capturing it in a broad net of climactic action, beautiful language, and political posturing, he speared it with an acerbic tongue.

His epic was a small one, but just as Milton reinvented the genre by replacing the hero with the villain, Pope revolutionized the genre by replacing the epic with the everyday. His lampooning of the high nobility and their self-importance allied him literarily with his contemporaries, such as Voltaire, who all prefigured the social and literary revolution of the coming century.

Pope plays a very delicate instrument with his epic, often balancing a thin line between respect and ridicule: the same line the nobility had to walk every day. His linguistic and conceptual abilities shine here, as does

his humor, which lies on the upper borders of the clever and the witty.

Pope had an unfortunately backward view of women, nowhere reaching the subtle implications of Milton's autoerotic Eve or Shakespeare's Cleopatra, or even the powerful women of the Greek and Roman Epics. Yet his portrayals here do not show the same bias as his 'Epistle to a Lady', since he lets his mockery fall equally on the foolish men and women of his period, and often for the same superficialities.

His later works consisted of translations and numerous political treatises, which though scathing and brilliant in their way, do not continue the philosophic and artistic exploration begun in 'An Essay on Criticism' and expanded in 'The Rape of the Lock'. The Dunciad certainly has a similar bent, but is too historo-specific to really have the same effect, so 'The Rape of The Lock' is probably the best work of the best British poet of the Eighteenth.

Lynsey says

i rated it four stars for its genius, not necessarily bc i liked it...respect it yes...like it...not really
