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A first glance at the title of Alexander Pope’s poem The Rape of the Lock immediately rouses the sensibilities to his deployment of the word ‘rape’. Although the mind instantly acquires a sexual cognition of ‘rape’, Pope’s use of it connotes entirely different meaning in the context of the poem. For Pope, ‘rape’ means to take away or remove something from its original place thereby depriving the owner of its importance and service. Indeed, this appears remote from ‘rape’ which describes the forceful initiation of sex without the consent of one of the persons involved.  
  
Before we begin to scrutinize rape, let us establish that the symbolic ethos of any society is essentially composed in its moral order by which the conduct of members is regulated. A breakdown of moral order in any society through rape signifies a dislocation of cosmic harmony and therefore requires propitiation, sometimes punitive; in order to salvage humanity’s doomed fate before chthonic gods. Rape is an undesirable, anti-social act which must be consistently repudiated and abhorred. I do not know of any religion, culture or creed that condones rape. Whether as an act of sexual pervasion or an act of stealing, rape today – like all other social vulgarity – stands trial in the court of public opinion.  
  
Recently, there have been many reports in social and main stream media describing incidents of rape with the geography of victims covering the entire country. In most cases, the victims die or are permanently maimed psychologically and physically. I read the story of a 41 year old man who raped a four year old niece of his to death. What about the story of a 33 year old man who raped his grandmother of 86 years to death.  
  
  
  
Consider the chilling story of a 50 year old driver who raped his boss’s 14 year old daughter inside a car and impregnated her. Sometimes rape victims suffer ignominy, lewd and ribald jokes later in their adult lives. Sometimes too, rape victims commit suicide refusing to live with the corrosive memory of the incident. In our homes, in the absence of mum and dad, daughters, nieces and cousins are raped. Some husbands rape their maids. In the corporate world, rape happens. In some of our churches, while the young lady or wife meets the self-styled man of God for counselling, rape happens. In our higher institutions, a marauding lecturer unleashes his sexual urge on a hapless student, rape happens. Regrettably, rape victims refuse to expose those who have violated them; therefore the perpetrators continue to gloat over their deeds and walk as free men.  
  
Unravelling the causes of rape is a daunting task. There are men among us who are sexually demented, whose morbid drive for sex and unrestrained libido have led to embrace necrophilia. There are men whose philandering tendencies and inclinations to sex recreate demonic savagery. Or is the rape mentality activated by fragments of sinister byways of the mind in the face of economic misfortune and hopelessness? If reports of rape involving two human beings grate at our emotions, how about the rape of an animal by a male adult? I have read how a 36 year old man raped a fowl to death. What about a 44 year old man who was caught while trying to copulate with a sheep? Bestiality and sexual psychosis, are they ingrained in the human genome?  
  
Let us turn to another aspect of rape where we are all victims. Nigeria’s economic and socio-political history points to a populace roundly raped and are still being raped. In this case, I use rape to depict stealing and denial, in the way Alexander Pope used it in his poem. Year after year, public officers who lack the basic tenets of leadership beyond avarice and self enrichment are enthroned. We are faced with people torn to shreds by such irreverent considerations as ethnicity, religion and political patronage. The continual burglary of the exchequer at all levels of government establishment evidenced by the perennial lack of infrastructure exposes Nigerians as victims of rape. Of course there are people with warped value systems complicit in the daily rape of our fatherland. While contemporary events points Nigerians to a new beginning come 2019, these people pull in opposite direction in their pursuit of inordinate, self gratifying ends.  
  
The Nigerian child, in his pursuit of academic excellence is raped by such retrogressive gradualism like quota system. Our children who score high marks are denied opportunities to federal schools and universities because they come from a particular region of the country while their counterparts from other regions are selected ahead of them. Nigerians who wish to be enlisted into the police, army, customs or any of the security agencies are raped because their merit opportunities are stolen and denied them in favour of their fellow kwantry men. I hear that many people from the Southern part of the country presently claim to come from Northern states and manipulate their names to reflect Northern origin just to gain admission to universities and get recruited into any arm of our security agencies. A more repugnant crassness in the control of power mechanism has yet to be imagined which makes it possible for educationally handicapped persons to become political leaders and directors of government agencies over their educationally illustrious counterparts from other parts of the country.  
  
  
  
Given the above explication of rape, what then is the best way to address the issue? Should rape be avenged or left to fester? If someone’s daughter or relation is raped, what should the person do? Should the person follow the law with all the attendant chicanery associated with our penal system or take the laws into one’s hands and extract quick revenge? There is a tribe in Taiwan where rapists are bound hands and legs and big, ferocious rabbits are called to eat their manhood while they watch – the agony of slow death.  
  
There is another tribe in Japan where the scrotum of the rapist is placed on a wooden stool and a pestle is used to crush them to pieces. Better still, should rapists have broomsticks driven up their genitals? Or should we resort to necromancy inviting Amadioha and Sango, deities famed for their ability to achieve retribution through the swift agency of thunder and lightning? Alternatively, when rape happens, should we rehash that sterile platitude associated with timorous, coward consciences ‘let bygones be bygones’?  
  
Again, how should a people in a country avenge their rape when abundant resources in the country are converted to personal use seeing that raped nations are either led to a ruinous debauchery or a passion for revenge which results to revolution and resistance? Let resistance and revolution happen at the altar of elections in 2019 where the people must make a statement and alter the progressive ascent of socio-economic rape. In this way, rape can appropriately be banished in its minuscule manifestation as we matriculate towards a new nationhood.  
  
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