

Heinrich-Heine-University Düsseldorf
Department of English and American Studies
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BN task 1/3 (creative response):

Some elements of the Old English poem *Andreas* reimagined as a Saturday Night Live sketch

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Description:

The sketch below combines some elements of the Old English poem *Andreas* from the Vercelli Book with the typical characters and themes of a series of Saturday Night Live sketches centered around Ms. Rafferty, a woman who is repeatedly and involuntarily involved in supernatural incidents with two of her friends. These incidents invariably take significantly worse turns for her than for her friends, who always have a wonderful time. Ms. Rafferty's nevertheless cheerful accounts usually feature the loss of her pants, being molested by someone (little gray aliens or pre-human hominids, for example), and less-than-ideal manners of being returned to the earth or present. I believe that an island full of hungry cannibals would be right up her alley.

(Disclaimer: The sketch contains profane language (of necessity). It is also slightly longer than the real Ms.-Rafferty-sketches, and less funny. I would advise the reader to imagine Kate McKinnon saying the lines of Ms. Rafferty.)

Ms. Rafferty and the Man-Eaters

A wood-paneled office. Professor Jones and Cardinal Danvers seated at a large desk across from three friends on wooden chairs, from left to right a smoking Ms. Rafferty, Sharon, and Doug.

PROFESSOR JONES

Welcome! My name is Professor Jones, from the University of Notre Dame's Department of Theology.

CARDINAL DANVERS

And I am Cardinal Danvers, of the Vatican's Congregation for the Causes of Saints. We are very grateful that you came here today to provide the first actual eye-witness accounts relating to the story of Saint Andrew and the Man-Eaters.

PROFESSOR JONES

Indeed. Could you tell us how exactly you were transported into the past?

DOUG

Well, we're three buddies on a road trip through Scotland, you see, and right across from some big-ass ruined church the brakes of my friend's antique VW minibus suddenly stop working.

SHARON

Yeah, and next thing I know I'm being lifted into the air by this magnificent, mighty eagle, which carried me through time and space into the past.

DOUG

Yup, same here.

CARDINAL DANVERS

And you, Ms. Rafferty?

MS. RAFFERTY

I got lifted into the air by an eagle, alright. But I wouldn't call it magnificent, or mighty for that matter. It looked more like that dumb owl from the Harry Potter movies that always crashes into windows, ruffled and practically bald.

CARDINAL DANVERS

I see. Now, if we understood you correctly, you were not all brought to the same place in the past. Where did the eagles take you two?

DOUG

The eagles brought us down gently on a ship in the middle of the sea, and we were scared at first, Sir, but then we heard someone preaching to the sailors. It was Saint Andrew.

SHARON

Saint Andrew said, “I know the Shaper of Angels shields us”, and it really felt as if God were right there on that ship protecting us from the waves.

PROFESSOR JONES

Amazing! You know, Jesus is said to have been on board in disguise. And where did the eagle take you, Ms. Rafferty?

MS. RAFFERTY

Well, we kind of lag behind the other eagles while crossing the sea, right, ‘cause my eagle’s exhausted already, and when it spots an island below it decides to come down in the middle of the main town – and the only reason I don’t break my neck in the fall is that my slacks get caught in this iron torch holder. So I’m hanging there for a few seconds until the fabric finally tears, and I land on the ground with my rear-end exposed to public view.

PROFESSOR JONES

Interesting. And what happened next on the ship?

DOUG

Oh, Saint Andrew spoke to us all day long, Ma’am, and he talked about the life of Jesus and it was truly inspirational.

SHARON

The surface of the sea became perfectly smooth, and I think it was Saint Andrew's speech that had calmed the waters. We fell asleep right then and there below the shining stars.

CARDINAL DANVERS

Just beautiful!

PROFESSOR JONES

Now, what happened next in Mermedonia, Ms. Rafferty?

MS. RAFFERTY

That's what that damned place is called? Okay, anyway, I must have gotten knocked unconscious by the fall, right, and I wake up in a prison cell next to a guy who tells me his name is Matthew.

CARDINAL DANVERS

That must have been Saint Matthew!

MS. RAFFERTY

I guess so, but it's not like it got me anything. He keeps babbling on about a certain Measurer of Mankind who's supposedly going to rescue us, and I'm like: "Dude, I don't care whether your friend is some fancy bespoke tailor or whatever, I just hope he can get us out of here!" But before he gets a chance

to explain the cell door swings open and two skinny guardsmen rush in, carry me out – still sans pants, of course. And that’s the last I saw of old Matt.

PROFESSOR JONES

And what happened next on the ship?

SHARON

The eagles returned, and it felt like they touched my soul and lifted me up in the air and – you must think we’re nuts, Ma’am – they flew high into the skies with us, and we went to Heaven, Ma’am.

DOUG

Yeah, there were angels and saints standing all about, and everyone was singing in the loveliest voices – those were the most beautiful sounds I’d ever heard, Ma’am.

MS. RAFFERTY

Great, so my travel companions are sailing with Jesus and take a field trip to Heaven, meanwhile I’m lying face down on what I’m thinking is a bed of straw in the center of an open-air courtyard, with my hands and feet tied to its four wooden corners and my kinder-maker and wind-breaker uncovered. There’s seven of those tan, lean guys now – they must run marathons or something, is what I’m thinking – and one by one they come up and place heaps of weeds around me. And before turning away to get more stuff, everyone lingers a second to pinch my butt.

CARDINAL DANVERS

Why do you think they did this?

MS. RAFFERTY

Well, at that point I'm fully expecting to be gang-raped by a half dozen skinny guys with some grotesque bucolic fetish. And my expectation is seemingly confirmed when one guy pours olive oil all over me and starts licking it off – and I haven't showered for days living in the minibus, so the joke's on him, really – but then he bites into my cheek meat! And I notice another guy bringing out cutlery and placing plates around my body, and it suddenly hits me that what I'm lying on is not a bed of straw but a frickin' human-sized dinner tray, and the weeds and straw are garnish for these skinny fellas because apparently they don't have anything else to eat – anyway, bottom line, these chaps are cannibals, man, and I'm on the menu!

PROFESSOR JONES

Fascinating! Now, what happened next to you two? Did you continue with Saint Andrew on his quest to free Saint Matthew?

DOUG

Well, no, we got to spend some more time in Heaven and met God and Jesus and also some of the Apostles – it was awesome, Ma'am. And all the while the angels were singing in these beautiful, sacred voices.

SHARON

Yeah, and it felt like the whole truth of Christianity was revealed to us, and joy and pleasure pervaded everything.

CARDINAL DANVERS

Truly wondrous! And how were you returned to the present?

SHARON

The eagles, Sir, those gracious animals, flew us back to Scotland.

DOUG

We came to on a green, cozy meadow on top of a hill, with scenic views of the ocean, and our minibus – in a better state than I remembered leaving it in, too – parked not thirty feet away on the side of a quaint country road.

PROFESSOR JONES

Miraculous. And how were you returned home, Ms. Rafferty?

MS. RAFFERTY

Yeah, well, my return trip wasn't quite as jolly. Just as the skinny dudes are getting ready to consume my keister, somebody's blowing a whistle and the seven of them rush off, probably because their shift is starting or something. And the dudes aren't coming back – God knows why –, it's getting cold as hell and I'm lying there forever with my flirty and my dirty out and itching from all those weeds. I don't want to complain though, I've had worse nights in

handcuffs! Anyway, after what feels like an eternity I hear a crashing-sound close by, and it turns out my old bud the dumb eagle's come to rescue me. He's gnawing away at the rope and when he's through he grabs me by the ears and carries me off.

PROFESSOR JONES

And then?

MS. RAFFERTY

Umm, let me tell you, I didn't get any cozy-meadow stuff. Instead, that damn bird seems to lose interest mid-air and drops me right on the goal line of a Scottish soccer pitch. A second later, I feel like my head's exploding – I must have taken a ball to the head. I'm starting to see stars, and it seems I've prevented a goal or something, 'cause a bunch of goddamn hooligans are storming the pitch. So I'm putting myself together and basically start running for my life from those maniacs, still in the nude and resembling a human scarecrow with that mix of straw and weeds and Scottish mud clinging to my skin, until by some miracle I spot our minibus in the distance, and that's where I try to take shelter – just to walk in on these two fogging up the windows.

CARDINAL DANVERS

Remarkable.

PROFESSOR JONES

Yes, indeed. Thank you all for sharing your experiences with us! Your accounts are of great value to the Catholic Church.

MS. RAFFERTY

Glad to've been of help. Any chance we can get some reward money, though? 'cause the VW's totaled now on account of those soccer fans wrecking it after they'd seen me in there, and Doug's buddy wants cash.

CARDINAL DANVERS

Unfortunately, the Vatican does not permit payment for eye-witness accounts of wondrous events. I will pray for you, however, Ms. Rafferty – and remember that you will reap eternal rewards in Heaven.

MS. RAFFERTY

Oh, great, that's going to help out lots with my credit card debt ... I just hope that wackjob's not going to come after me for ruining his hippie van.

– The End –