

Saint Peter

by [Guy Walker](#) (December 2019)



The Liberation of St. Peter, Hendrick van Steenwyck the Younger, 1619

My substance was not hid from thee

The torchlit bloody blow for all to see,
a macho gesture aping bravery;
resort to violence made, would this distract
convincing of ability to act?

The first 'heroic' virtue-signaller,
he learnt that night the hardest way, from her,
a girl, the worth of all his bombast. She
lay bare with words the full anatomy
of cowardice, though unaware of his
disgrace. She spatchcocked raw, in spite of this,
his useless, craven heart and left all willed
pretence a futile game once morning filled
the town with sound and blanching light,
confirming knowledge which he could not fight;
a knowledge irreversible that quelled
all struggle. Stunned, unmanned, though still propelled,
he came, as limp as empty cloths he saw,
in automatic daze, then, to the shore
another morning. Rising from a lake-
side fire, unburdened of pretence, to take
new steps beneath the orange shreds of cloud
at dawn. He re-engaged, this time unbowed
by old imprisonments whose chains each time
were shattered by an angel; now, no crime
to answer after all that grief. The boast
his thuggery pretended placed him most

esteemed above the others. Finally,
thus, sweet and welcome fittingness would be
fulfilled as his upending came. His pain
and gall would set the world to rights again.

«[Previous Article](#) [Table of Contents](#) [Next Article](#)»

Guy Walker a retired French teacher living in the South of England. In addition to writing poetry, Guy has published articles on political and health issues in [The Conservative Woman](#) He is technically a Catholic with a predilection for a conservative outlook. He blogs at roseatetern.blogspot.com.

Follow NER on Twitter [@NERIconoclast](https://twitter.com/NERIconoclast)