

The Judge and the Rash Act

by Ambrose Bierce

A Judge who had for years looked in vain for an opportunity for infamous distinction, but whom no litigant thought worth bribing, sat one day upon the Bench, lamenting his hard lot, and threatening to put an end to his life if business did not improve. Suddenly he found himself confronted by a dreadful figure clad in a shroud, whose pallor and stony eyes smote him with a horrible apprehension.

"Who are you," he faltered, "and why do you come here?"

"I am the Rash Act," was the sepulchral reply; "you may commit me."

"No," the judge said, thoughtfully, "no, that would be quite irregular. I do not sit to-day as a committing magistrate."