

THE EARTHQUAKE DID NOT ARRIVE

Una ballata inglese del 1842 da cantare sulla melodia di "Nix my dolly"

*Una previsione al giorno,
toglie il sismologo di turno.
Una mancata previsione,
può mandarlo in prigione.
Un allarme annunciato,
può mandarlo carcerato.
(n.d.wm.: ogni riferimento a fatti
realmente accaduti non è casuale)*

Girano in rete notizie che il 17 novembre u.s erano alte le probabilità di un forte terremoto a Napoli (94%), Roma (90%), Bari (83%), Catanzaro (80%) e Catania (76%). Sempre la rete ci 'informa' che ieri 18 novembre erano alte le probabilità di un forte terremoto a Rieti (86%), Pescara (82%) e anche qui da noi a Ancona (74%) Domani i soliti noti ci sapranno sicuramente dire cosa accadrà. Che fortuna !

La previsione dei terremoti è una scienza molto più antica di questa ballata inglese del 1842 che così recita secondo una **libera ed abbreviata** traduzione della fonte originale (<http://digital.nls.uk/english-ballads/pageturner.cfm?id=74893429> consultata il 17/11/13):

IL TERREMOTO NON C'É STATO	THE EARTHQUAKE DID NOT ARRIVE
<p>Solista: Il 16 di marzo era un mercoledì E, verso mezzanotte, la gente rabbrivì. Coro: Ma ora tirate il fiato, brava gente: Il terremoto non c'è stato per niente Solista: Zio Peppe se ne stava tranquillo a riposare Ma un topo sotto il letto lo fece sobbalzare. Oh come saltò su, oh come schizzò giù Tremava e sobbalzava come canna di bambù. Coro: Ma ora tirate il fiato ... Solista: Tizio nel focolare si gettò Caio nel ripostiglio s'infrattò. Sempronio che di tutti era il più audace Saltò dalla padella nella brace. Coro: Ma ora tirate il fiato ... Solista: Il 16 di marzo, a notte fonda</p>	<p>It was on the sixteenth day of March, When folks, for fear began to start, How they did quake, Some ro e up in a terrible fright. About twelve o'clock on Wednesday night, CHOROUS.</p> <p>I now assure you great and small, The Earthquake did not come here at all, My Uncle Dick lay down his head. And a little mouse ran under the bed, How he did quake, How he did tremble and quake for fear. And run in the cupboard to say his prayers, I now, &c.</p> <p>Some quite snug in the coal-hole got, Some hid behind the chimney pots, Overcome with fear. Nineteen poor tailors, I do declare, Got in the frying pan under the stairs, But, I now, &c.</p> <p>On Wednesday night, when it was dark, In the Strand I met a lawyer's clerk, In a woeful plight, Clean out of his hat he tore a piece, Crying the Earthquake's coming, police ! police ! But, I now, &c.</p> <p>Old women be happy, dry up your tears, The time is put for three long years, Indeed 'tis true, He would not come here so he went to Greece, He was so afraid of the City police, But, I now, &c.</p> <p>John Bull would believe a turnip's a fig, A cat was a bull, or a lion a pig, How Jonnny did shake,</p>

Strillava a tutto andare zia
Gioconda:

“Aiuto! il terremoto! Polizia!
Soccorso, presto, aiuto, oh
mamma mia!

Coro: Ma ora tirate il fiato ...

Solista: Il giorno temuto alla fine è
arrivato,

Come Dio volle, è venuto e
passato.

Del gran terremoto non si è vista
l'ombra

Conviene annunciarlo a suono di
tromba.

Astrologi, maghi e profeti bisogna
Che andiate a nascondervi per la
vergogna.

That a mop was silk, and the stick was elm, And the Queen's poll
parrot, a Peer of the Realm,

But, I now, &c.

I saw an old Duchess, how sad to tell, A weeping and wailing in Pall
Mall,

On Wednesday last,
She climbed up to speak to the Duke of York, And she gave one jump
to the City of Cork,

But, I now, &c.

In Drury Lane an old woman went wild, She heard the cat going over
the tiles,

How she did quake,
Oh, the Earthquake's coming, she cried, just now When her old Tomcat
hollowed out moll row,

But, I now, &c.

Oh dear, oh dear, hollow'd Mrs More, Nail the window and bolt the
door,

Only hark!
I will up in the ceiling hide myself, The tea pot is tumbling off the shelf,
But, I now, &c.

A broker bolted himself in the room,
And arm'd himself with a shovel and broom,
Shal ing for fear,

The ducks, for fear, did quack that day, And trip poor old donkeys, with
fright did brav,

But, I now, &c.

Some went to Italy, some to Spain, Some hid in the furzes on Salisbury
Plain,

Overcome with fright.
Some got drunk, for fear, that day, Singing, Nix my dolly ,pals, fake
away,

But, I now, &c.

As I went over Clapham Common, I saw a poor forlorn old woman,
A hundred and three,
She tied up her stockings and gave a jump, And her nose broke off the
end of the pump,

But, I now, &c.

The time is over, the day is gone by. And this humbugging story is all
my eye,

Old women don't fret,
This curious tale did many perplex, And I wonder whatever they'll think
of next

But, I now, &c.

To the Commons they have sent a petition, To pass an Act of
Parliament,

At Greenwich Fair,
To please false prophets and quakers in stocks, And flog them to death
with turnip tops,

But, I now, &c.

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