

Titus Andronicus

1.1

*[Flourish.] Enter the Tribunes and Senators aloft,
and then enter below Saturninus and his followers
at one door and Bassianus and his followers [at the
other, with drummer and colours]*

SATURNINUS

Noble patricians, patrons of my right,
Defend the justice of my cause with arms.
And countrymen, my loving followers,
Plead my successive title with your swords.
I am his first-born son that was the last 5
That wore the imperial diadem of Rome.
Then let my father's honours live in me,
Nor wrong mine age with this indignity.

BASSIANUS

Romans, friends, followers, favourers of my right,
If ever Bassianus, Caesar's son, 10
Were gracious in the eyes of royal Rome,
Keep then this passage to the Capitol,
And suffer not dishonour to approach
The imperial seat, to virtue consecrate,
To justice, continence, and nobility; 15
But let desert in pure election shine,
And, Romans, fight for freedom in your choice.

[Enter] Marcus Andronicus [aloft] with the crown

MARCUS

Princes that strive by factions and by friends
Ambitiously for rule and empery,
Know that the people of Rome, for whom we stand 20
A special party, have by common voice
In election for the Roman empery
Chosen Andronicus, surname *Ad Pius*
For many good and great deserts to Rome.
A nobler man, a braver warrior, 25
Lives not this day within the city walls.
He by the Senate is accited home
From weary wars against the barbarous Goths,

That with his sons, a terror to our foes,
 Hath yoked a nation strong, trained up in arms. 30
 Ten years are spent since first he undertook
 This cause of Rome, and chastiseÁd with arms
 Our enemies' pride. Five times he hath returned
 Bleeding to Rome, bearing his valiant sons
 In coffins from the field. 35
 And now at last, laden with honour's spoils,
 Returns the good Andronicus to Rome,
 RenowneÁd Titus, flourishing in arms.
 Let us entreat by honour of his name
 Whom worthily you would have now succeeded, 40
 And in the Capitol and Senate's right,
 Whom you pretend to honour and adore,
 That you withdraw you and abate your strength,
 Dismiss your followers, and, as suitors should,
 Plead your deserts in peace and humbleness. 45

SATURNINUS

How fair the Tribune speaks to calm my thoughts.

BASSIANUS

Marcus Andronicus, so I do affy
 In thy uprightness and integrity,
 And so I love and honour thee and thine,
 Thy noble brother Titus and his sons, 50
 And her to whom my thoughts are humbled all,
 Gracious Lavinia, Rome's rich ornament,
 That I will here dismiss my loving friends
 And to my fortunes and the people's favour
 Commit my cause in balance to be weighed. 55

[Exeunt his soldiers and followers]

SATURNINUS

Friends that have been thus forward in my right,
 I thank you all, and here dismiss you all,
 And to the love and favour of my country
 Commit myself, my person, and the cause.

[Exeunt his soldiers and followers]

(To the Tribunes and Senators)

Rome, be as just and gracious unto me 60
 As I am confident and kind to thee.
 Open the gates and let me in.

BASSIANUS

Tribunes, and me, a poor competitor.
[Flourish.] They go up into the Senate House.
Enter a Captain

CAPTAIN

Romans, make way. The good Andronicus,
Patron of virtue, Rome's best champion, 65
Successful in the battles that he fights,
With honour and with fortune is returned
From where he circumscribeÁd with his sword
And brought to yoke the enemies of Rome.
*Sound drums and trumpets, and then enter Martius
and Mutius, two of Titus' sons, and then [men
bearing coffins] covered with black, then Lucius and
Quintus, two other sons; then Titus Andronicus [in
his chariot] and then Tamora the Queen of Goths
and her sons Alarbus, Chiron, and Demetrius, with
Aaron the Moor and others as many as can be.
Then set down the [coffins], and Titus speaks*

TITUS

Hail, Rome, victorious in thy mourning weeds! 70
Lo, as the bark that hath discharged his freight
Returns with precious lading to the bay
From whence at first she weighed her anchorage,
Cometh Andronicus, bound with laurel bows,
To re-salute his country with his tears, 75
Tears of true joy for his return to Rome.
Thou great defender of this Capitol,
Stand gracious to the rites that we intend.
Romans, of five-and-twenty valiant sons,
Half of the number that King Priam had, 80
Behold the poor remains, alive and dead.
These that survive let Rome reward with love;
These that I bring unto their latest home,
With burial amongst their ancestors.
Here Goths have given me leave to sheathe my sword. 85
Titus unkind, and careless of thine own,
Why suffer'st thou thy sons unburied yet
To hover on the dreadful shore of Styx?
Make way to lay them by their brethren.

They open the tomb

There greet in silence as the dead are wont, 90
And sleep in peace, slain in your country's wars.
O sacred receptacle of my joys,
Sweet cell of virtue and nobility,
How many sons hast thou of mine in store
That thou wilt never render to me more! 95

LUCIUS

Give us the proudest prisoner of the Goths,
That we may hew his limbs and on a pile
Ad manes fratrum sacrifice his flesh
Before this earthy prison of their bones,
That so the shadows be not unappeased, 100
Nor we disturbed with prodigies on earth.

TITUS

I give him you, the noblest that survives,
The eldest son of this distresseÁd Queen.

TAMORA *[kneeling]*

Stay, Roman brethren! Gracious conqueror,
Victorious Titus, rue the tears I shed±± 105
A mother's tears in passion for her son±±
And if thy sons were ever dear to thee,
O, think my son to be as dear to me!
Sufficeth not that we are brought to Rome
To beautify thy triumphs, and return 110
Captive to thee and to thy Roman yoke;
But must my sons be slaughtered in the streets
For valiant doings in their country's cause?
O, if to fight for king and commonweal
Were piety in thine, it is in these. 115
Andronicus, stain not thy tomb with blood.
Wilt thou draw near the nature of the gods?
Draw near them then in being merciful.
Sweet mercy is nobility's true badge.
Thrice-noble Titus, spare my first-born son. 120

TITUS

Patient yourself, madam, and pardon me.
These are their brethren whom your Goths beheld
Alive and dead, and for their brethren slain
Religiously they ask a sacrifice.

To this your son is marked, and die he must 125
T'appease their groaning shadows that are gone.

LUCIUS

Away with him, and make a fire straight,
And with our swords upon a pile of wood
Let's hew his limbs till they be clean consumed.

Exeunt Titus' sons with Alarbus

TAMORA *[rising]*

O cruel irreligious piety! 130

CHIRON

Was never Scythia half so barbarous.

DEMETRIUS

Oppose not Scythia to ambitious Rome.
Alarbus goes to rest, and we survive
To tremble under Titus' threat'ning look.
Then, madam, stand resolved; but hope withal 135
The selfsame gods that armed the Queen of Troy
With opportunity of sharp revenge
Upon the Thracian tyrant in his tent
May favour Tamora, the Queen of Goths±±
When Goths were Goths and Tamora was queen±± 140
To quit her bloody wrongs upon her foes.

*Enter Quintus, Marcus, Mutius, and Lucius, the
sons of Andronicus, again, with bloody swords*

LUCIUS

See, lord and father, how we have performed
Our Roman rites. Alarbus' limbs are lopped
And entrails feed the sacrificing fire,
Whose smoke like incense doth perfume the sky. 145
Remaineth naught but to inter our brethren
And with loud 'larums welcome them to Rome.

TITUS

Let it be so, and let Andronicus
Make this his latest farewell to their souls.
*[Flourish.] Then sound trumpets and lay the
[coffins] in the tomb*
In peace and honour rest you here, my sons; 150
Rome's readiest champions, repose you here in rest,
Secure from worldly chances and mishaps.
Here lurks no treason, here no envy swells,

Here grow no damneÁd drugs, here are no storms,
No noise, but silence and eternal sleep. 155
In peace and honour rest you here, my sons.

Enter Lavinia

LAVINIA

In peace and honour live Lord Titus long,
My noble lord and father, live in fame.
Lo, at this tomb my tributary tears
I render for my brethren's obsequies, 160
(*Kneeling*) And at thy feet I kneel with tears of joy
Shed on this earth for thy return to Rome.
O, bless me here with thy victorious hand,
Whose fortunes Rome's best citizens applaud.

TITUS

Kind Rome, that hast thus lovingly reserved 165
The cordial of mine age to glad my heart!
Lavinia, live; outlive thy father's days
And fame's eternal date, for virtue's praise.
[Lavinia rises]

MARCUS *[aloft]*

Long live Lord Titus, my beloveÁd brother,
Gracious triumpher in the eyes of Rome! 170

TITUS

Thanks, gentle Tribune, noble brother Marcus.

MARCUS

And welcome, nephews, from successful wars,
You that survive and you that sleep in fame.
Fair lords, your fortunes are alike in all,
That in your country's service drew your swords, 175
But safer triumph is this funeral pomp
That hath aspired to Solon's happiness
And triumphs over chance in honour's bed.
Titus Andronicus, the people of Rome,
Whose friend in justice thou hast ever been, 180
Send thee by me, their tribune and their trust,
This palliament of white and spotless hue,
And name thee in election for the empire
With these our late-deceaseÁd emperor's sons.
Be *candidatus* then, and put it on, 185
And help to set a head on headless Rome.

TITUS

A better head her glorious body fits
Than his that shakes for age and feebleness.
What should I don this robe and trouble you?±±
Be chosen with proclamations today, 190
Tomorrow yield up rule, resign my life,
And set abroad new business for you all.
Rome, I have been thy soldier forty years,
And led my country's strength successfully,
And buried one-and-twenty valiant sons 195
Knighted in field, slain manfully in arms
In right and service of their noble country.
Give me a staff of honour for mine age,
But not a sceptre to control the world.
Upright he held it, lords, that held it last. 200

MARCUS

Titus, thou shalt obtain and ask the empery.

SATURNINUS

Proud and ambitious Tribune, canst thou tell?

TITUS

Patience, Prince Saturninus.

SATURNINUS

Romans, do me right.

Patricians, draw your swords, and sheathe them not
Till Saturninus be Rome's emperor. 205
Andronicus, would thou were shipped to hell
Rather than rob me of the people's hearts!

LUCIUS

Proud Saturnine, interrupter of the good
That noble-minded Titus means to thee.

TITUS

Content thee, Prince. I will restore to thee 210
The people's hearts, and wean them from themselves.

BASSIANUS

Andronicus, I do not flatter thee
But honour thee, and will do till I die.
My faction if thou strengthen with thy friends
I will most thankful be; and thanks to men 215
Of noble minds is honourable meed.

TITUS

People of Rome, and people's tribunes here,
I ask your voices and your suffrages.

Will ye bestow them friendly on Andronicus?

TRIBUNES

To gratify the good Andronicus 220
And gratulate his safe return to Rome
The people will accept whom he admits.

TITUS

Tribunes, I thank you, and this suit I make:
That you create our emperor's eldest son
Lord Saturnine, whose virtues will, I hope, 225
Reflect on Rome as Titan's rays on earth,
And ripen justice in this commonweal.
Then if you will elect by my advice,
Crown him and say, `Long live our Emperor!'

MARCUS

With voices and applause of every sort, 230
Patricians and plebeians, we create
Lord Saturninus Rome's great emperor,
And say, `Long live our Emperor Saturnine!'
*[A long flourish while Marcus and the other
Tribunes, with Saturninus and Bassianus,
come down.
Marcus invests Saturninus in the white
pallament and hands him a sceptre]*

SATURNINUS

Titus Andronicus, for thy favours done
To us in our election this day 235
I give thee thanks in part of thy deserts,
And will with deeds requite thy gentleness.
And for an onset, Titus, to advance
Thy name and honourable family,
Lavinia will I make my empress, 240
Rome's royal mistress, mistress of my heart,
And in the sacred Pantheon her espouse.
Tell me, Andronicus, doth this motion please thee?

TITUS

It doth, my worthy lord, and in this match
I hold me highly honoured of your grace, 245
And here in sight of Rome to Saturnine,
King and commander of our commonweal,
The wide world's emperor, do I consecrate

My sword, my chariot, and my prisoners±±
Presents well worthy Rome's imperious lord. 250
Receive them, then, the tribute that I owe,
Mine honour's ensigns humbled at thy feet.

SATURNINUS

Thanks, noble Titus, father of my life.
How proud I am of thee and of thy gifts
Rome shall record; and when I do forget 255
The least of these unspeakable deserts,
Romans, forget your fealty to me.

TITUS *(to Tamora)*

Now, madam, are you prisoner to an emperor,
To him that for your honour and your state
Will use you nobly, and your followers. 260

SATURNINUS

A goodly lady, trust me, of the hue
That I would choose were I to choose anew.
Clear up, fair queen, that cloudy countenance.
Though chance of war hath wrought this change of
cheer,
Thou com'st not to be made a scorn in Rome. 265
Princely shall be thy usage every way.
Rest on my word, and let not discontent
Daunt all your hopes. Madam, he comforts you
Can make you greater than the Queen of Goths.
Lavinia, you are not displeased with this? 270

LAVINIA

Not I, my lord, sith true nobility
Warrants these words in princely courtesy.

SATURNINUS

Thanks, sweet Lavinia. Romans, let us go.
Ransomless here we set our prisoners free.
Proclaim our honours, lords, with trump and drum. 275

*[Flourish. Exeunt Saturninus, Tamora,
Demetrius, Chiron, and Aaron the Moor]*

BASSIANUS

Lord Titus, by your leave, this maid is mine.

TITUS

How, sir, are you in earnest then, my lord?

BASSIANUS

Ay, noble Titus, and resolved withal

To do myself this reason and this right.

MARCUS
Suum cuique is our Roman justice. 280
 This prince in justice seizeth but his own.

LUCIUS
 And that he will and shall, if Lucius live.

TITUS
 Traitors, avaunt! Where is the Emperor's guard?

MUTIUS
 Brothers, help to convey her hence away,
 And with my sword I'll keep this door safe. 285
*Exeunt Bassianus, Marcus, Quintus, and
 Martius, with Lavinia
 (To Titus) My lord, you pass not here.*

TITUS
 What, villain boy,
 Barr'st me my way in Rome?
He attacks Mutius

MUTIUS Help, Lucius, help!
Titus kills him

LUCIUS (to Titus)
 My lord, you are unjust; and more than so,
 In wrongful quarrel you have slain your son.

TITUS
 Nor thou nor he are any sons of mine. 290
 My sons would never so dishonour me.
 Traitor, restore Lavinia to the Emperor.

LUCIUS
 Dead, if you will, but not to be his wife
 That is another's lawful promised love.
*Exit with Mutius' body
 Enter aloft Saturninus the Emperor with Tamora
 and Chiron and Demetrius, her two sons, and
 Aaron the Moor*

TITUS
 Follow, my lord, and I'll soon bring her back. 295

SATURNINUS
 No, Titus, no. The Emperor needs her not,
 Nor her, nor thee, nor any of thy stock.
 I'll trust by leisure him that mocks me once,
 Thee never, nor thy traitorous haughty sons,

Confederates all thus to dishonour me. 300
Was none in Rome to make a stale
But Saturnine? Full well, Andronicus,
Agree these deeds with that proud brag of thine
That saidst I begged the empire at thy hands.

TITUS

O monstrous, what reproachful words are these? 305

SATURNINUS

But go thy ways, go give that changing piece
To him that flourished for her with his sword.
A valiant son-in-law thou shalt enjoy,
One fit to bandy with thy lawless sons,
To ruffle in the commonwealth of Rome. 310

TITUS

These words are razors to my wounded heart.

SATURNINUS

And therefore, lovely Tamora, Queen of Goths,
That like the stately Phoebe 'mongst her nymphs
Dost overshadow the gallant'st dames of Rome,
If thou be pleased with this my sudden choice, 315
Behold, I choose thee, Tamora, for my bride,
And will create thee Empress of Rome.
Speak, Queen of Goths, dost thou applaud my choice?
And here I swear by all the Roman gods,
Sith priest and holy water are so near, 320
And tapers burn so bright, and everything
In readiness for Hymenaeus stand,
I will not re-salute the streets of Rome,
Or climb my palace, till from forth this place
I lead espoused my bride along with me. 325

TAMORA

And here, in sight of heaven, to Rome I swear
If Saturnine advance the Queen of Goths
She will a handmaid be to his desires,
A loving nurse, a mother to his youth.

SATURNINUS

Ascend, fair Queen, Pantheon. Lords, accompany 330
Your noble emperor and his lovely bride,
Sent by the heavens for Prince Saturnine,
Whose wisdom hath her fortune conquered.
There shall we consummate our spousal rites.

Exeunt all but Titus

TITUS

I am not bid to wait upon this bride. 335

Titus, when wert thou wont to walk alone,
Dishonoured thus and challengeÁd of wrongs?

*Enter Marcus and Titus' sons Lucius, Quintus, and
Martius, [carrying Mutius' body]*

MARCUS

O Titus, see, O see what thou hast done±±
In a bad quarrel slain a virtuous son.

TITUS

No, foolish Tribune, no; no son of mine, 340
Nor thou, nor these, confederates in the deed
That hath dishonoured all our family;
Unworthy brother and unworthy sons!

LUCIUS

But let us give him burial as becomes,
Give Mutius burial with our brethren. 345

TITUS

Traitors, away, he rests not in this tomb.
This monument five hundred years hath stood,
Which I have sumptuously re-edified.
Here none but soldiers and Rome's servitors
Repose in fame, none basely slain in brawls. 350
Bury him where you can; he comes not here.

MARCUS

My lord, this is impiety in you.
My nephew Mutius' deeds do plead for him.
He must be buried with his brethren.

[QUINTUS AND MARTIUS]

And shall, or him we will accompany. 355

TITUS

`And shall'? What villain was it spake that word?

[QUINTUS]

He that would vouch it in any place but here.

TITUS

What, would you bury him in my despite?

MARCUS

No, noble Titus, but entreat of thee
To pardon Mutius and to bury him. 360

TITUS

Marcus, even thou hast struck upon my crest,
And with these boys mine honour thou hast
wounded.

My foes I do repute you every one,
So trouble me no more, but get you gone.

[MARTIUS]

He is not with himself, let us withdraw. 365

[QUINTUS]

Not I, till Mutius' bones be buried.
Marcus, Lucius, Quintus, and Martius kneel

MARCUS

Brother, for in that name doth nature plead±±

[QUINTUS]

Father, and in that name doth nature speak±±

TITUS

Speak thou no more, if all the rest will speed.

MARCUS

Renowned Titus, more than half my soul±± 370

LUCIUS

Dear father, soul and substance of us all±±

MARCUS

Suffer thy brother Marcus to inter
His noble nephew here in virtue's nest,
That died in honour and Lavinia's cause.
Thou art a Roman; be not barbarous. 375
The Greeks upon advice did bury Ajax,
That slew himself; and wise Laertes' son
Did graciously plead for his funerals.
Let not young Mutius then, that was thy joy,
Be barred his entrance here.

TITUS

Rise, Marcus, rise. 380

The dismal'st day is this that e'er I saw,
To be dishonoured by my sons in Rome.
Well, bury him, and bury me the next.

They put Mutius in the tomb

LUCIUS

There lie thy bones, sweet Mutius, with thy friends',
Till we with trophies do adorn thy tomb. 385

ALL [BUT TITUS] (*kneeling*)

No man shed tears for noble Mutius;
He lives in fame, that died in virtue's cause.

Exeunt [all but Marcus and Titus]

MARCUS

My lord±±to step out of these dreary dumps±±
How comes it that the subtle Queen of Goths
Is of a sudden thus advanced in Rome?

390

TITUS

I know not, Marcus, but I know it is±±
Whether by device or no, the heavens can tell.
Is she not then beholden to the man
That brought her for this high good turn so far?

[MARCUS]

Yes, and will nobly him remunerate.

395

*[Flourish.] Enter the Emperor Saturninus, Tamora,
and her two sons (Chiron and Demetrius), with
Aaron the Moor at one door.*

*Enter at the other door Bassianus and Lavinia with
[Lucius, Quintus, and Martius]*

SATURNINUS

So, Bassianus, you have played your prize.
God give you joy, sir, of your gallant bride.

BASSIANUS

And you of yours, my lord. I say no more,
Nor wish no less; and so I take my leave.

SATURNINUS

Traitor, if Rome have law or we have power,
Thou and thy faction shall repent this rape.

400

BASSIANUS

'Rape' call you it, my lord, to seize my own±±
My true betrothed love, and now my wife?
But let the laws of Rome determine all;
Meanwhile am I possessed of that is mine.

405

SATURNINUS

'Tis good, sir; you are very short with us.
But if we live we'll be as sharp with you.

BASSIANUS

My lord, what I have done, as best I may
Answer I must, and shall do with my life.
Only thus much I give your grace to know:
By all the duties that I owe to Rome,
This noble gentleman, Lord Titus here,
Is in opinion and in honour wronged,

410

That, in the rescue of Lavinia,
With his own hand did slay his youngest son 415
In zeal to you, and highly moved to wrath
To be controlled in that he frankly gave.
Receive him then to favour, Saturnine,
That hath expressed himself in all his deeds
A father and a friend to thee and Rome. 420

TITUS

Prince Bassianus, leave to plead my deeds.
'Tis thou and those that have dishonoured me.
[He kneels]
Rome and the righteous heavens be my judge
How I have loved and honoured Saturnine!

TAMORA *(to Saturninus)*

My worthy lord, if ever Tamora 425
Were gracious in those princely eyes of thine,
Then hear me speak indifferently for all;
And at my suit, sweet, pardon what is past.

SATURNINUS

What, madam, be dishonoured openly
And basely put it up without revenge? 430

TAMORA

Not so, my lord. The gods of Rome forbend
I should be author to dishonour you.
But on mine honour dare I undertake
For good lord Titus' innocence in all,
Whose fury not dissembled speaks his griefs. 435
Then at my suit look graciously on him.
Lose not so noble a friend on vain suppose,
Nor with sour looks afflict his gentle heart.

(Aside to Saturninus)

My lord, be ruled by me, be won at last,
Dissemble all your griefs and discontents. 440
You are but newly planted in your throne;
Lest then the people, and patricians too,
Upon a just survey take Titus' part,
And so supplant you for ingratitude,
Which Rome reputes to be a heinous sin, 445
Yield at entreats; and then let me alone:
I'll find a day to massacre them all,

And raze their faction and their family,
The cruel father and his traitorous sons
To whom I sue Ad for my dear son's life, 450
And make them know what 'tis to let a queen
Kneel in the streets and beg for grace in vain.
(Aloud) Come, come, sweet Emperor; come,
Andronicus,
Take up this good old man, and cheer the heart
That dies in tempest of thy angry frown. 455

SATURNINUS

Rise, Titus, rise; my empress hath prevailed.

TITUS *(rising)*

I thank your majesty and her, my lord,
These words, these looks, infuse new life in me.

TAMORA

Titus, I am incorporate in Rome,
A Roman now adopted happily, 460
And must advise the Emperor for his good.
This day all quarrels die, Andronicus;
And let it be mine honour, good my lord,
That I have reconciled your friends and you.
For you, Prince Bassianus, I have passed 465
My word and promise to the Emperor
That you will be more mild and tractable.
And fear not, lords, and you, Lavinia;
By my advice, all humbled on your knees,
You shall ask pardon of his majesty. 470
*[Bassianus], Lavinia, Lucius, Quintus, and
Martius kneel*

[LUCIUS]

We do, and vow to heaven and to his highness
That what we did was mildly as we might,
Tend'ring our sister's honour and our own.

MARCUS *[kneeling]*

That on mine honour here do I protest.

SATURNINUS

Away, and talk not, trouble us no more. 475

TAMORA

Nay, nay, sweet Emperor, we must all be friends.
The Tribune and his nephews kneel for grace.

I will not be denied; sweetheart, look back.

SATURNINUS

Marcus, for thy sake and thy brother's here,
And at my lovely Tamora's entreats, 480
I do remit these young men's heinous faults.
Stand up!

Marcus, Bassianus, Lavinia, and Titus' sons stand
Lavinia, though you left me like a churl,

I found a friend, and sure as death I swore
I would not part a bachelor from the priest.
Come, if the Emperor's court can feast two brides 485
You are my guest, Lavinia, and your friends.
This day shall be a love-day, Tamora.

TITUS

Tomorrow an it please your majesty
To hunt the panther and the hart with me,
With horn and hound we'll give your grace *bonjour*. 490

SATURNINUS

Be it so, Titus, and gramercy, too.
[Flourish. Exeunt]