

Titus Andronicus

5.2

Enter Tamora and Chiron and Demetrius, her two sons, disguised

TAMORA

Thus, in this strange and sad habiliment,
I will encounter with Andronicus
And say I am Revenge, sent from below
To join with him and right his heinous wrongs.
Knock at his study, where they say he keeps 5
To ruminate strange plots of dire revenge.
Tell him Revenge is come to join with him
And work confusion on his enemies.

They knock, and Titus [aloft] opens his study door

TITUS

Who doth molest my contemplation?
Is it your trick to make me ope the door, 10
That so my sad decrees may fly away
And all my study be to no effect?
You are deceived; for what I mean to do,
See here, in bloody lines I have set down,
And what is written shall be executed. 15

TAMORA

Titus, I am come to talk with thee.

TITUS

No, not a word. How can I grace my talk,
Wanting a hand to give it action?
Thou hast the odds of me, therefore no more.

TAMORA

If thou didst know me thou wouldst talk with me. 20

TITUS

I am not mad, I know thee well enough;
Witness this wretched stump, witness these crimson
lines,
Witness these trenches made by grief and care,
Witness the tiring day and heavy night,
Witness all sorrow that I know thee well 25
For our proud empress, mighty Tamora.
Is not thy coming for my other hand?

TAMORA

Know, thou sad man, I am not Tamora.
She is thy enemy, and I thy friend.
I am Revenge, sent from th'infernal kingdom 30
To ease the gnawing vulture of thy mind
By working wreakful vengeance on thy foes.
Come down, and welcome me to this world's light.
Confer with me of murder and of death.
There's not a hollow cave or lurking-place, 35
No vast obscurity or misty vale
Where bloody murder or detested rape
Can couch for fear, but I will find them out,
And in their ears tell them my dreadful name,
Revenge, which makes the foul offender quake. 40

TITUS

Art thou Revenge, and art thou sent to me
To be a torment to mine enemies?

TAMORA

I am; therefore come down, and welcome me.

TITUS

Do me some service ere I come to thee.
Lo by thy side where Rape and Murder stands. 45
Now give some surance that thou art Revenge,
Stab them, or tear them on thy chariot wheels,
And then I'll come and be thy wagoner,
And whirl along with thee about the globe,
Provide two proper palfreys, black as jet, 50
To hale thy vengeful wagon swift away
And find out murderers in their guilty caves.
And when thy car is loaden with their heads
I will dismount, and by thy wagon wheel
Trot like a servile footman all day long, 55
Even from Hyperion's rising in the east
Until his very downfall in the sea;
And day by day I'll do this heavy task,
So thou destroy Rapine and Murder there.

TAMORA

These are my ministers, and come with me. 60

TITUS

Are they thy ministers? What are they called?

TAMORA

Rape and Murder, therefore calleÁd so
'Cause they take vengeance of such kind of men.

TITUS

Good Lord, how like the Empress' sons they are,
And you the Empress! But we worldly men
Have miserable, mad, mistaking eyes.
O sweet Revenge, now do I come to thee,
And if one arm's embracement will content thee,
I will embrace thee in it by and by.

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Exit [aloft]

TAMORA

This closing with him fits his lunacy.
Whate'er I forge to feed his brainsick humours
Do you uphold and maintain in your speeches,
For now he firmly takes me for Revenge,
And being credulous in this mad thought
I'll make him send for Lucius his son,
And whilst I at a banquet hold him sure
I'll find some cunning practice out of hand
To scatter and disperse the giddy Goths,
Or at the least make them his enemies.
See, here he comes, and I must ply my theme.

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Enter Titus, below

TITUS

Long have I been forlorn, and all for thee.
Welcome, dread Fury, to my woeful house.
Rapine and Murder, you are welcome, too.
How like the Empress and her sons you are!
Well are you fitted, had you but a Moor.
Could not all hell afford you such a devil?±±
For well I wot the Empress never wags
But in her company there is a Moor,
And would you represent our Queen aright
It were convenient you had such a devil.
But welcome as you are. What shall we do?

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TAMORA

What wouldst thou have us do, Andronicus?

DEMETRIUS

Show me a murderer, I'll deal with him.

CHIRON

Show me a villain that hath done a rape,

And I am sent to be revenged on him. 95

TAMORA

Show me a thousand that hath done thee wrong,
And I will be revengeÁd on them all.

TITUS *(to Demetrius)*

Look round about the wicked streets of Rome,
And when thou find'st a man that's like thyself,
Good Murder, stab him; he's a murderer. 100

(To Chiron) Go thou with him, and when it is thy hap
To find another that is like to thee,
Good Rapine, stab him; he is a ravisher.

(To Tamora) Go thou with them, and in the Emperor's
court

There is a queen attended by a Moor. 105
Well shalt thou know her by thine own proportion,
For up and down she doth resemble thee.
I pray thee, do on them some violent death;
They have been violent to me and mine.

TAMORA

Well hast thou lessoned us. This shall we do; 110
But would it please thee, good Andronicus,
To send for Lucius, thy thrice-valiant son,
Who leads towards Rome a band of warlike Goths,
And bid him come and banquet at thy house±±
When he is here, even at thy solemn feast, 115
I will bring in the Empress and her sons,
The Emperor himself, and all thy foes,
And at thy mercy shall they stoop and kneel,
And on them shalt thou ease thy angry heart.
What says Andronicus to this device? 120

TITUS

Marcus, my brother! 'Tis sad Titus calls.

Enter Marcus

Go, gentle Marcus, to thy nephew Lucius.
Thou shalt enquire him out among the Goths.
Bid him repair to me, and bring with him
Some of the chiefest princes of the Goths. 125
Bid him encamp his soldiers where they are.
Tell him the Emperor and the Empress too
Feast at my house, and he shall feast with them.

This do thou for my love, and so let him,
As he regards his age—Ad father's life. 130

MARCUS

This will I do, and soon return again.
Exit

TAMORA

Now will I hence about thy business,
And take my ministers along with me.

TITUS

Nay, nay, let Rape and Murder stay with me,
Or else I'll call my brother back again, 135
And cleave to no revenge but Lucius.

TAMORA (*aside to her sons*)

What say you, boys, will you abide with him
Whiles I go tell my lord the Emperor
How I have governed our determined jest?
Yield to his humour, smooth and speak him fair, 140
And tarry with him till I turn again.

TITUS (*aside*)

I knew them all, though they supposed me mad,
And will o'erreach them in their own devices—
A pair of curse—Ad hell-hounds and their dam.

DEMETRIUS

Madam, depart at pleasure. Leave us here. 145

TAMORA

Farewell, Andronicus. Revenge now goes
To lay a complot to betray thy foes.

TITUS

I know thou dost, and sweet Revenge, farewell.
Exit Tamora

CHIRON

Tell us, old man, how shall we be employed?

TITUS

Tut, I have work enough for you to do. 150
Publius, come hither; Caius and Valentine.
Enter Publius, Caius, and Valentine

PUBLIUS

What is your will?

TITUS

Know you these two?

PUBLIUS

The Empress' sons I take them—Chiron, Demetrius.

TITUS

Fie, Publius, fie! Thou art too much deceived.
The one is Murder, and Rape is the other's name. 155
And therefore bind them, gentle Publius;
Caius and Valentine, lay hands on them.
Oft have you heard me wish for such an hour,
And now I find it. Therefore bind them sure,
And stop their mouths if they begin to cry. 160
Exit

CHIRON

Villains, forbear! We are the Empress' sons.

PUBLIUS

And therefore do we what we are commanded.
*Publius, Caius, and Valentine bind and gag Chiron
and Demetrius*
Stop close their mouths. Let them not speak a word.
Is he sure bound? Look that you bind them fast.
*Enter Titus Andronicus with a knife, and Lavinia
with a basin*

TITUS

Come, come, Lavinia. Look, thy foes are bound. 165
Sirs, stop their mouths. Let them not speak to me,
But let them hear what fearful words I utter.
O villains, Chiron and Demetrius!
Here stands the spring whom you have stained with
mud,
This goodly summer with your winter mixed. 170
You killed her husband, and for that vile fault
Two of her brothers were condemned to death,
My hand cut off and made a merry jest,
Both her sweet hands, her tongue, and that more
dear
Than hands or tongue, her spotless chastity, 175
Inhuman traitors, you constrained and forced.
What would you say if I should let you speak?
Villains, for shame. You could not beg for grace.
Hark, wretches, how I mean to martyr you.
This one hand yet is left to cut your throats, 180
Whiles that Lavinia 'tween her stumps doth hold
The basin that receives your guilty blood.

You know your mother means to feast with me,
And calls herself Revenge, and thinks me mad.
Hark, villains, I will grind your bones to dust, 185
And with your blood and it I'll make a paste,
And of the paste a coffin I will rear,
And make two pasties of your shameful heads,
And bid that strumpet, your unhallowed dam,
Like to the earth swallow her own increase. 190
This is the feast that I have bid her to,
And this the banquet she shall surfeit on;
For worse than Philomel you used my daughter,
And worse than Progne I will be revenged.
And now, prepare your throats. Lavinia, come. 195
Receive the blood, and when that they are dead
Let me go grind their bones to powder small,
And with this hateful liquor temper it,
And in that paste let their vile heads be baked.
Come, come, be everyone officious 200
To make this banquet, which I wish may prove
More stern and bloody than the Centaurs' feast.
He cuts their throats
So, now bring them in, for I'll play the cook
And see them ready against their mother comes.
Exeunt carrying the bodies