

## TAMORA, DEMETRIUS, CHIRON

- **Demetrius.** How now, dear sovereign, and our gracious mother! 825  
Why doth your highness look so pale and wan?
  
- **Tamora.** Have I not reason, think you, to look pale?  
These two have 'ticed me hither to this place:  
A barren detested vale, you see it is;  
The trees, though summer, yet forlorn and lean, 830  
O'ercome with moss and baleful mistletoe:  
Here never shines the sun; here nothing breeds,  
Unless the nightly owl or fatal raven:  
And when they show'd me this abhorred pit,  
They told me, here, at dead time of the night, 835  
A thousand fiends, a thousand hissing snakes,  
Ten thousand swelling toads, as many urchins,  
Would make such fearful and confused cries  
As any mortal body hearing it  
Should straight fall mad, or else die suddenly. 840  
No sooner had they told this hellish tale,  
But straight they told me they would bind me here  
Unto the body of a dismal yew,  
And leave me to this miserable death:  
And then they call'd me foul adulteress, 845  
Lascivious Goth, and all the bitterest terms  
That ever ear did hear to such effect:  
And, had you not by wondrous fortune come,  
This vengeance on me had they executed.  
Revenge it, as you love your mother's life, 850  
Or be ye not henceforth call'd my children.
  
- **Demetrius.** This is a witness that I am thy son.

*[Stabs BASSIANUS]*

- **Chiron.** And this for me, struck home to show my strength.

*[Also stabs BASSIANUS, who dies]*

- **Lavinia.** Ay, come, Semiramis, nay, barbarous Tamora,  
For no name fits thy nature but thy own!

- **Tamora.** Give me thy poniard; you shall know, my boys  
Your mother's hand shall right your mother's wrong.
  
- **Demetrius.** Stay, madam; here is more belongs to her; 860  
First thrash the corn, then after burn the straw:  
This minion stood upon her chastity,  
Upon her nuptial vow, her loyalty,  
And with that painted hope braves your mightiness:  
And shall she carry this unto her grave? 865
  
- **Chiron.** An if she do, I would I were an eunuch.  
Drag hence her husband to some secret hole,  
And make his dead trunk pillow to our lust.
  
- **Tamora.** But when ye have the honey ye desire,  
Let not this wasp outlive, us both to sting. 870
  
- **Chiron.** I warrant you, madam, we will make that sure.  
Come, mistress, now perforce we will enjoy  
That nice-preserved honesty of yours.
  
- **Lavinia.** O Tamora! thou bear'st a woman's face,—
  
- **Tamora.** I will not hear her speak; away with her!

**Tamora.** Hadst thou in person ne'er offended me,  
Even for his sake am I pitiless.  
Remember, boys, I pour'd forth tears in vain,  
To save your brother from the sacrifice;  
But fierce Andronicus would not relent; 905  
Therefore, away with her, and use her as you will,  
The worse to her, the better loved of me.

- **Demetrius.** So, now go tell, an if thy tongue can speak,  
Who 'twas that cut thy tongue and ravish'd thee.
- **Chiron.** Write down thy mind, bewray thy meaning so, **1065**  
An if thy stumps will let thee play the scribe.
- **Demetrius.** See, how with signs and tokens she can scrawl.
- **Chiron.** Go home, call for sweet water, wash thy hands.
- **Demetrius.** She hath no tongue to call, nor hands to wash;  
And so let's leave her to her silent walks. **1070**
- **Chiron.** An 'twere my case, I should go hang myself.
- **Demetrius.** If thou hadst hands to help thee knit the cord.

*[Exeunt DEMETRIUS and CHIRON]*