



*Lavinia.*

TITUS ANDRONICUS, ACT 2. SC. 3.

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LAVINIA.

LAVINIA, daughter of Titus Andronicus, a Roman general, and wife of Bassianus, brother to the emperor, is the heroine of that revolting tragedy which bears her father's name.

“*Cruciana Lavinia*, Rome’s rich ornament,” is described as the most beautiful of daughters, charmed of wits, mistress of wits; and for the very reason, it would seem, that she is a spectacle to the like Lucretia, who is to be the victim of one of those crimes of great horror which hardly admit the name of passion.

For Lavinia, it is to be seen, is not to be the victim of passion, but of a terrible deed, a woman’s part, however, which is to be rendered revolting.

The subject of her death, Marcus Andronicus, with the last remnants of her strength and mutilation, affords us a few pathetic touches suggestive of the accomplishments of this “martyr’d lady.”

O, that delightful engine of her thoughts,  
That blabbed them with such pleasing eloquence,  
Is torn from forth that pretty hollow cage;  
Where, like a sweet melodious bird, it sang  
Sweetest notes, enchanting every ear!





## LAVINIA.

LAVINIA, daughter of Titus Andronicus, a Roman general, and wife of Bassianus, brother to the emperor, is the heroine of that revolting tragedy which bears her father's name.

"Gracious Lavinia, Rome's rich ornament," is described as the most dutiful of daughters, chastest of virgins, noblest of wives; and for the very reason, it would seem, that she is so spotless, is she, like Lucrece, doomed to be the victim of one of those crimes of tragic horror which foully blot the pages of classic story.

For Lavinia's history we beg leave to refer to the text; from the task of describing its terrible details, a woman's pen, however innocently bold, naturally revolts.

The lament of her uncle, Marcus Andronicus, over the fatal catastrophe of her wrongs and mutilation, affords us a few personal touches, suggestive of the accomplishments of this "martyr'd lady:"

O, that delightful engine of her thoughts,  
That blabb'd them with such pleasing eloquence,  
Is torn from forth that pretty hollow cage;  
Where, like a sweet melodious bird, it sung  
Sweet varied notes, enchanting every ear!

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Fair Philomela, she but lost her tongue,  
 And in a tedious sampler sew'd her mind;  
 But, lovely niece, that mean is cut from thee;  
 A craftier Tereus hast thou met withal,  
 And he hath cut those pretty fingers off,  
 That could have better sew'd than Philomel.  
 O, had the monster seen those lily hands  
 Tremble, like aspen leaves, upon a lute,  
 And make the silken strings delight to kiss them,  
 He would not then have touch'd them for his life;  
 Or had he heard the heavenly harmony  
 Which that sweet tongue hath made,  
 He would have dropp'd his knife, and fell asleep,  
 As Cerberus at the Thracian poet's feet.  
 Come, let us go, and make thy father blind;  
 For such a sight will blind a father's eye.

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*Mar.* What means my niece Lavinia by these signs?

*Tit.* Fear her not, Lucius:—Somewhat doth she mean.

See, Lucius, see, how much she makes of thee!

Somewhither would she have thee go with her.

Ah, boy, Cornelia never with more care

Read to her sons, than she hath read to thee,

Sweet poetry, and Tully's Orator.

*Tit.* Lucius, what book is that she tosseth so?

*Boy.* Grandsire, 'tis Ovid's Metamorphoses;

My mother gave't me.

*Mar.* For love of her that's gone,  
 Perhaps she cull'd it from among the rest.

*Tit.* Soft! see, how busily she turns the leaves!  
 Help her:—

What would she find?—Lavinia, shall I read?

This is the tragic tale of Philomel,

And treats of Tereus's treason.



THE END.



