

Side One

DEMETRIUS

Chiron, thy years want wit, thy wit wants edge,
And manners, to intrude where I am graced;
And may, for aught thou know'st, affected be.

CHIRON

Demetrius, thou dost over-ween in all;
And so in this, to bear me down with braves.
I am as able and as fit as thou
To serve, and to deserve my mistress' grace;
And that my sword upon thee shall approve,
And plead my passions for Lavinia's love.

DEMETRIUS

Why, boy, although our mother, unadvised,
Gave you a dancing-rapier by your side,
Are you so desperate grown, to threat your friends?
Go to; have your lath glued within your sheath
Till you know better how to handle it.

CHIRON

Meanwhile, sir, with the little skill I have,
Full well shalt thou perceive how much I dare.

DEMETRIUS

Ay, boy, grow ye so brave?

They draw

AARON

[Coming forward] Why, how now, lords!
So near the emperor's palace dare you draw,
And maintain such a quarrel openly?
For shame, put up.

DEMETRIUS

Not I, till I have sheathed
My rapier in his bosom and withal
Thrust these reproachful speeches down his throat
That he hath breathed in my dishonour here.

CHIRON

For that I am prepared and full resolved.
Foul-spoken coward, that thunder'st with thy tongue,
And with thy weapon nothing darest perform!

AARON

Why, lords, and think you not how dangerous
It is to jet upon a prince's right?
What, is Lavinia then become so loose,
Or Bassianus so degenerate,
That for her love such quarrels may be broach'd
Without controlment, justice, or revenge?
Young lords, beware! and should the empress know
This discord's ground, the music would not please.

CHIRON

I care not, I, knew she and all the world:

I love Lavinia more than all the world.

DEMETRIUS

Youngling, learn thou to make some meaner choice:
Lavinia is thine elder brother's hope.

AARON

Why, are ye mad? or know ye not, in Rome
How furious and impatient they be,
And cannot brook competitors in love?
I tell you, lords, you do but plot your deaths
By this device.

CHIRON

Aaron, a thousand deaths
Would I propose to achieve her whom I love.

AARON

To achieve her! how?

DEMETRIUS

Why makest thou it so strange?
She is a woman, therefore may be woo'd;
She is a woman, therefore may be won;
She is Lavinia, therefore must be loved.

AARON

[Aside] Ay, and as good as Saturninus may.

DEMETRIUS

Then why should he despair that knows to court it
With words, fair looks and liberality?
What, hast not thou full often struck a doe,
And borne her cleanly by the keeper's nose?

AARON

Why, then, it seems, some certain snatch or so
Would serve your turns.

CHIRON

Ay, so the turn were served.

DEMETRIUS

Aaron, thou hast hit it.

AARON

Would you had hit it too!