

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
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, favorers of my right,
If ever Bassianus, Caesar's son,
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;
But let desert in pure election shine,
And, Romans, fight for freedom in your choice.
Enter MARCUS ANDRONICUS, aloft, with the crown

MARCUS ANDRONICUS

Princes, that strive by factions and by friends
Ambitiously for rule and empery,
Know that the people of Rome, for whom we stand
A special party, have, by common voice,
In election for the Roman empery,
Chosen Andronicus, surnamed Pius
Let us entreat, by honour of his name,
Whom worthily you would have now succeed.

BASSIANUS

Marcus Andronicus, so I do ally
In thy uprightness and integrity,
And so I love and honour thee and thine,
Thy noble brother Titus and his sons,
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 favor
Commit my cause in balance to be weigh'd.

Exeunt the followers of BASSIANUS

SATURNINUS

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

Exeunt the followers of SATURNINUS

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