

**Shakespeare, “Titus Andronicus”
Act IV, Scene ii, lines 20f.**

DEMETRIUS

What's here? A scroll; and written round about?
Let's see;

Reads

'Integer vitae, scelerisque purus,
Non eget Mauri jaculis, nec arcu.'

CHIRON

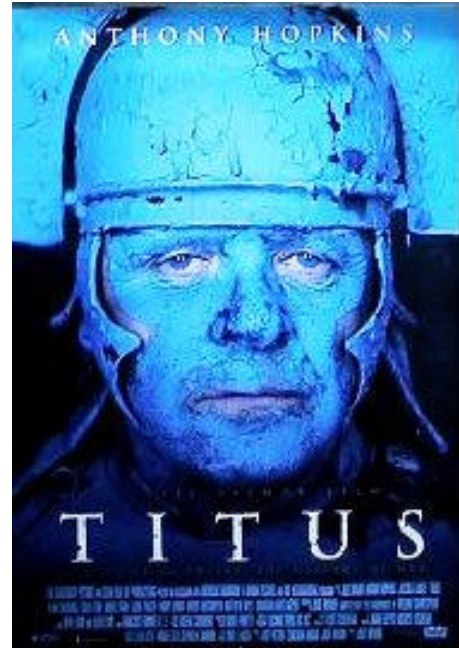
O, 'tis a verse in Horace; I know it well:
I read it in the grammar long ago.

AARON

Ay, just; a verse in Horace; right, you have it.

Aside

Now, what a thing it is to be an ass!
Here's no sound jest! the old man hath found their guilt;
And sends them weapons wrapped about with lines,
That wound, beyond their feeling, to the quick.
But were our witty empress well afoot,
She would applaud Andronicus' conceit:
But let her rest in her unrest awhile.
And now, young lords, was't not a happy star
Led us to Rome, strangers, and more than so,
Captives, to be advanced to this height?
It did me good, before the palace gate
To brave the tribune in his brother's hearing.



Ben Johnson termed this "a play loved by ignorant audiences". It is early Shakespeare, his first tragedy, a revenge tragedy, and not up to the standards of the great tragedies that followed significantly later. Contains many bookish classical references and allusions.

A synopsis of *Titus Andronicus* is available at:

<http://www.sparknotes.com/shakespeare/titus/summary.html>