

## The College at Brockport: State University of New York Digital Commons @Brockport

---

English Master's Theses

English

---

5-15-2008

# Shakespeare, Ovid, and the Expression of Feminine Voice

Rebecca J. Kryger  
*The College at Brockport*

Follow this and additional works at: [http://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/eng\\_theses](http://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/eng_theses)

 Part of the [Classics Commons](#), and the [Literature in English, British Isles Commons](#)

---

### Repository Citation

Kryger, Rebecca J., "Shakespeare, Ovid, and the Expression of Feminine Voice" (2008). *English Master's Theses*. 60.  
[http://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/eng\\_theses/60](http://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/eng_theses/60)

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the English at Digital Commons @Brockport. It has been accepted for inclusion in English Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @Brockport. For more information, please contact [kmyers@brockport.edu](mailto:kmyers@brockport.edu).

Shakespeare, Ovid, and the Expression of Feminine Voice

by

Rebecca J. Kryger

A thesis submitted to the Department of English of the State University of New York  
College at Brockport, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

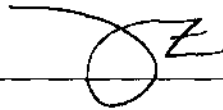
Master of Arts

May 15, 2008

Shakespeare, Ovid, and the Expression of Feminine Voice

by Rebecca J. Kryger

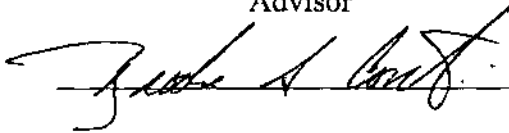
Approved:



Advisor

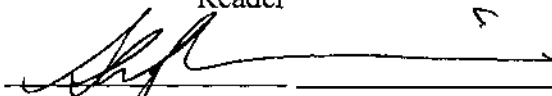
6-15-08

date



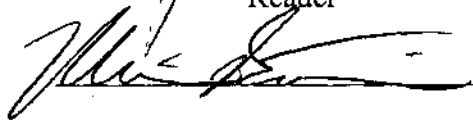
Reader

7/21/08



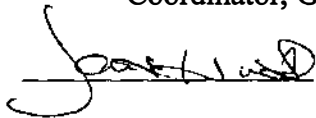
Reader

7/29/08



Coordinator, Graduate Committee

7-7-08



Chair, Department of English

7-30-08

## Abstract

The way in which femininity is represented in literature often reinforces the idea of the objectified woman and the dominant man. William Shakespeare, influenced by the writings of Ovid, attempts to challenge these social constructs by developing alternative feminine voices in his works. Lavinia from *Titus Andronicus*, Lucrece from *The Rape of Lucrece*, and Imogen from *Cymbeline* serve as examples of women who must utilize a voice outside what is characteristically feminine in order to gain power from the “unspeakable” events such as rape and mutilation that alter each woman’s perception of self. These women also prove how the eyes of a voyeur can manipulate and misinterpret the voice a woman communicates.

## Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Gender and Voice in Shakespeare and Ovid	1
Chapter 2: Philomela and Lavinia Seek Voice	6
Chapter 3: Lucrece as Conquered City	28
Chapter 4: Voyeurism as Voice	46
Works Cited	59

## Chapter 1: Gender and Voice in Shakespeare and Ovid

The socially defined characteristics of femininity and masculinity seem ever-present in literature, both modern and classic. The representation of gender in literature often reinforces the idea of the objectified woman and the dominant man. However, both Ovid and Shakespeare attempt to challenge these social constructs by developing alternative feminine voices in their works. Ovid's exploration of gender and the way in which feminine and masculine communication are defined serve as an archetype for Shakespeare's own writing. In Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* and *The Rape of Lucrece*, violence is as a necessary catalyst for women as they seek a voice that will allow them to obtain the revenge they desire. For the women, however, it is a voice that cannot be sustained. Shakespeare fails to uphold the idea that women can own a voice independent of femininity; instead, Shakespeare reverts to the dominating patriarch that his audience needs and expects. Feminine power is able to exist only as a result of the unspeakable acts they endure. More succinctly, women who have been a victim of an act of violence, such as we see with the rapes and mutilations in *Titus Andronicus* and *The Rape of Lucrece*, are able to extend themselves outside of the realm of femininity in order to demonstrate their want of revenge; ultimately, society's acceptance of women as submissive and meek perpetuates masculine dominance over women. The social position of women, therefore, remains circumscribed within the masculine and dominated by patriarchal authority.

Central to my argument are the socially defined gender roles of Renaissance England. Gender and the way in which femininity and masculinity are characterized serve an important function in how Shakespeare viewed his world, what social norms he accepted, and which norms he challenged. While we cannot know exactly how Shakespeare viewed the roles of men and women, we can investigate how these roles were portrayed in his plot and characters. Diane Elizabeth Dreher outlines both traditional and progressive Renaissance thought and behavior, which will aid my discussion of how socially defined gender roles inhibit women's acquisition of power. She describes the traditional expectation of feminine submissiveness: "Woman's life was a continuous lesson in submission. She was to conform patiently and silently to the will of her father and, later, to that of her husband, accepting commands, correction, even physical abuse, with sweetness and humility" (Dreher 16). Femininity was defined, then, by obedience and meekness in relation to controlling men. While Dreher goes on to discuss Shakespeare's "dramatic contrast to this static model of feminine perfection," the women she uses as exemplars who exist outside of tradition focus primarily on women of Shakespeare's comedies (17). Because of the lighthearted nature of the comedic productions, Shakespeare's demonstration of progressive values in these works might have been more palatable to a crowd of traditionalists. However, the dramatic tone of the tragedies made progressiveness more challenging. Gervase Markam, author of *The English Huswife, Containing the Inward and Outward Virtues Which Ought to Be in a Complete Woman* published in London in 1615, said of women's position as wife: "She shall shun all violence of

rage, passion, and humour, coveting less to direct than to be directed, appearing ever unto him pleasant, amiable, and delightfull” (Dreher 20). Markam maintains the position that showing rage or passion is not acceptable feminine behavior, even for women who had suffered at the hands of their husbands.

*Titus Andronicus* addresses the issue of female submissive behavior, but in a Roman context. The play shows a clear struggle between allowing women to access voice and the dominance of men in the social hierarchy. Titus “embodies paternal authority” and demonstrates “the gendered ideals of character typical of early republican *virtus*: ‘severity, self-conscious masculinity, stoical self-denial’” (Kahn 48-9). Lavinia consistently is expected to submit to the dominating patriarchal figures that surround her, and she struggles to find a mode of expression that will allow her a voice among men. *The Rape of Lucrece*, a narrative poem written a few years after *Titus*, allows the central female figure more freedom to test the boundaries of feminine and masculine voice.

Characters from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, Philomela, Io, Hecuba, and Pygmalion, among others, provide a model from which Shakespeare begins his own investigation into the relationship between feminine voice and masculine dominance. Many scholars have engaged in the discussion of gender discourse in both Ovid and Shakespeare. Lynn Enterline, an authority on Ovid’s influence on Shakespeare, discusses Ovid’s poem’s “troubled failure to speak about an event that defies speech” (4). She outlines the struggle for women to speak about a violent act against them when the mere mention of such events is unacceptable. Coppelia Kahn, as well,



examines the effect of socially constructed gender roles and the implications of patriarchal authority on women:

[It is] merely accurate to term [Shakespeare's] world patriarchal, because it was patrilinear and primogenitural in the means by which it deployed power and maintained degree as the basis of the social order [...] it is men who rape women and patriarchal constructions of gender and power that enable rape. (Kahn 29)

Patriarchal power in Shakespeare's works continually compels female characters to maintain the qualities of femininity. As in *Titus Andronicus*, the men that surround Lavinia persistently control her. Rape for Lavinia, Lucrece, and in a symbolic way for Imogen, becomes a demonstration of masculine power and position. It is the women, though, that seek to find their own power in order to express their anger at the violence committed against them. My investigation, therefore, draws conclusions about the way in which women derive voice and thus power from the "unspeakable" events such as rape and mutilation that alter each woman's perception of self.

Lavinia from *Titus Andronicus* and Lucrece in *The Rape of Lucrece* reveal Shakespeare's interpretation of a woman's place in patriarchal society; both women demonstrate how a woman's voice is transformed after a violent act has been committed against her.

Shakespeare strives to explore the various modes of discourse accessible to men and women in order to expand his audience's understanding of voice and communication. While the idea that violence predicates a woman's ability to

communicate beyond the realm of femininity is present in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*, Shakespeare challenges Ovid by creating a voice that uses a variety of non-verbal modes of expression. Throughout my discussion of feminine and masculine discourse, I will use the term "voice" to represent a communicated message, whether that message is literally spoken or one that is communicated using another method. In *Titus Andronicus*, *The Rape of Lucrece*, and *Cymbeline*, Shakespeare suggests that voice is much more than verbal communication. Voice, too, can operate wordlessly, even without the speaker aware that she is communicating a message. Though his works, Shakespeare considers the implications of physical expression, voyeurism, and art in the expression and interpretation of voice. Centrally, I will investigate the voice of women in his works—how women fit in the social hierarchy and what motivates women to seek out a voice beyond the realm of femininity. Voyeurism, while at first glance seeming to apply more to viewing than speaking, is a powerful communicator of voice. Through a character's clandestine observations, as I will discuss in *The Rape of Lucrece* and *Cymbeline*, he creates a voice that is expressed *for* a woman without her knowledge or consent, thus usurping her ability to determine her own image of self. I will examine both women's pursuit of a voice that will enable their revenge and the way in which a woman's private discourse, the voice her body "speaks," is often usurped by men in an act of voyeurism.

## Chapter 2: Philomela and Lavinia Seek Voice

There is a significant parallel between Ovid's Philomela and Lavinia in *Titus Andronicus*. Both Ovid and Shakespeare investigate various methods by which characters in their works utilize voice and communication; both authors, too, explore the role of the voyeur in the expression of voice. In the case of Ovid, as Lynn Enterline suggests, "[he] knowingly poises his text on a divide between what can and cannot be represented, aesthetic form and violence, poetic 'ingenium' and barbarism, and language and the body" (5). Ovid constantly tests socially defined gender boundaries by challenging what was and was not acceptable to discuss. While Shakespeare follows the same mission, he also amplifies how communication can be wrought and the degree to which violence can be represented. Ovid's story of Tereus and Philomela serves as a major source for Shakespeare's development of voice and gender in his own works. Philomela's voice is transformed several times within Ovid's narrative: immediately after she has been raped, when she literally loses her tongue, and again when she transforms into a bird. Immediately after the rape, she is "like a shuddering dove whose feathers now are drenched in its own blood" (*Metamorphoses* 198). It is as if Tereus' violence against Philomela has removed her voice and transformed her into a creature no longer able to communicate a human message; she is only able to access an unfamiliar form of discourse, leaving her seemingly voiceless. However, her voice returns when "her senses [come] back" (*Metamorphoses* 198). Her temporary power is derived from the violent act against her. Tereus, being a royal and authoritative figure, expects Philomela's vulnerability

as a trait of her subjective position. He does not, however, anticipate that she will be able to speak out against him.

Ovid allows Philomela to access an unfamiliar voice to show how she overcomes feminine weakness in order to confront her attacker. Prior to Tereus removing her tongue, Philomela condemns Tereus for his vicious act and claims, “I’ll cast aside my shame, proclaim your crime. If that be possible for me, I’ll tell my tale where many people crowd...I’ll move the rocks to pity” (*Metamorphoses* 199). Her forcefulness both angers and scares Tereus. He does not expect this display of power from Philomela, and in turn he cuts out her tongue. Her voice must now be articulated through the expressions of her body. Her tongue, “falls to the ground; there, on the blood-red soil, it murmurs; as a serpent’s severed tail will writhe so did that tongue, in dying, twist and try to reach its mistress’ feet” (*Metamorphoses* 199). Philomela has literally been separated from the instrument by which she was able to speak. The tongue continues to “murmur” as if to acknowledge this vicious act for its mutilated master. The tongue becomes a symbol of masculine usurpation of power; Tereus recognizes his regained authority and demonstrates it by raping Philomela again and again.

Philomela, unable to speak without her tongue, produces a voice which can be heard by weaving her story into a cloth: “on a white background, [she] weaves purple signs: the letters that denounce the savage crime” (*Metamorphoses* 200). She uses what Lynn Enterline describes as “a loom of incomprehensible utterance” in order to weave the message of her crime (4). Utilizing this feminine tool, Philomela’s woven

'voice' allows her to, as Lynn Enterline asserts, "speak about the unspeakable" crimes committed against her (4). Through this alternative voice, Philomela names her attacker and is revitalized with a new motivation for revenge against Tereus. Her seemingly voiceless body gains a means of strength for both herself and her sister, Procne. Just as Philomela was "like a shuddering dove" after the initial violent act, she regains a voice as a result of her vengeance. Revenge becomes the force behind the power that these women have employed. As Coppelia Kahn points out, "Procne hesitates only when her son embraces her; at that moment, she explicitly weighs his claim on her, and her husband's, against her ties to her sister" (64-5). In weighing her decision whether to kill her son or not, however, Procne sees her son as Tereus' "stake in the continuity of patriarchal power" (Kahn 65). Because Procne knows her son is able to preserve and continue any power Tereus has, she abandons any maternal feelings she has for her son. Procne's revenge not only overcomes feminine weakness, but also her maternal nature. It is as though her sister's mutilation makes Procne more responsible to the bonds of femininity with her sister than to her position as mother or wife. When she has expelled any sense of duty towards those positions, she is empowered and can fulfill her own brutal act of revenge. Once revenge has been satisfied, however, the women lose the power they were able to access for revenge, as the emotional charge behind it no longer exists. In order to escape Tereus' wrath, both women are transformed into birds. Perhaps this represents Ovid's means of redefining a position for the sisters. Philomela and Procne, having overcome the restrictions of feminine discourse, cannot fully revert to their previously

limited selves, leaving them without their previous gendered identities. Therefore, Ovid allows the women to transform into birds rather than defining a gendered category for the women outside of feminine and masculine. Instead, both women revert to a new physical self that possesses a new means of discourse for them.

Philomela's final voice, however, is one only of the song of a bird, able to sing of her sad fate. Ovid's physical transformation of Philomela from the mutilated being without voice into a bird is what allows her to continue living.

Like Ovid, Shakespeare also develops his female victim in a way that exemplifies how woman, or truly any creature in nature, cannot exist in an indeterminate state. One must be able to recognize a self in order to survive. Shakespeare develops Lavinia in a way that models Ovid's narrative, but uses an alternative process of metamorphosis. However, with Lavinia, Shakespeare needs to find a means of transformation for the tragic female character that was within the realm of reality, or a "non-magical" transformation. Shakespeare tries to delve further into modes of communication as explored by Ovid in *Titus Andronicus*:

First, Lavinia can point to the book, a compendium of words and pictures already made; second, she makes signs in the earth; finally, Shakespeare can embody the whole fable in a drama: words, pictures, book, signs, and more. Just as the characters try to outdo the myth, as the Renaissance tries to outdo antiquity, so Shakespeare struggles to find a medium by expanding and exploding other media. (Barkan 245)

Both Philomela and Lavinia are initially transformed into a seemingly gender-less, unidentifiable entity when they are brutally raped and mutilated. Once revenge has been contrived and fulfilled, Philomela is able to complete her transformation by changing into a bird to escape Tereus' wrath. In Lavinia's case, because such a transformation is not open to her, Shakespeare must explore other modes of communication she may be able to employ. She struggles to find a new identity, being unable to access a self within femininity.

Lavinia enters the narrative showing her subservience to patriarchal authority by kneeling to her father in a display of obedience: "And at thy feet I kneel with tears of joy / Shed on this earth for thy return to Rome" (*Titus* I.i.164-65). Patriarchal dominance is clearly displayed in her subjective actions. As Coppelia Kahn asserts, Lavinia demonstrates "her complete subjection as a model patriarchal daughter" by "greeting her father by repeating his words of farewell to her brothers, offering 'tributary tears' for them, and kneeling at his feet, she asks for the blessing of his 'victorious hand'" (51). Titus is quick to try to please Saturninus when he requests Lavinia's hand because he wishes to maintain his position of power in the social order. Titus' willingness to give Lavinia over, treating her much more as a bargaining tool rather than a daughter, shows his "reverence for tradition and authority and his eagerness to garner imperial favor, while effacing or even exploiting her" (Kahn 51). Ownership over Lavinia transfers to Bassianus when he claims her as his own.

Lavinia, when treated as a pawn of masculine dominance, says nothing.

When she becomes Bassianus' wife, she is able to speak more freely in his presence, knowing that her devotion to him is steadfast. Though still under the constraints of masculine dominance, she accepts her position and is content to be in a position of submissiveness in relation to Bassianus. Her loyalty to her husband, much like Lucrece's loyalty to Collatine and Imogen's to Posthumus (which I will discuss later), allows her to speak in both her own defense and his. The strongest motive behind defending herself as the dutiful wife is that, by maintaining her reputation, she is also maintaining the reputation of her husband. Bassianus' claim over Lavinia seems to allow her authority in her speech; however, the authority is only used in the name of defending her husband's honor.

Demetrius and Chiron, sons of Tamora, are quick to show their masculine dominating position over Lavinia. Aaron, in convincing Chiron and Demetrius to violate rather than woo Lavinia, references Lucrece: "Take this of me: Lucrece was not more chaste / Than this Lavinia, Bassianus' love" (*Titus* I.i.608-9). Shakespeare makes the connection between these two women to show how they are equally chaste and vulnerable. Like Tereus, Chiron and Demetrius tell Lavinia of their lustful desire. Chiron says, "Come, mistress, now perforce we will enjoy / That nice-preserved honesty of yours" (*Titus* II.ii.133-35). They are willing to use masculine dominance to overpower her. Not only do Demetrius and Chiron utilize brute physical force over Lavinia, but they exploit their position of power over her in their verbal derision of the situation she is now in. Demetrius and Chiron know that her



“honesty” or chastity is something of value to Lavinia, so they get pleasure from the fact that they will tarnish it. Lavinia, like Lucrece, pleads for death rather than defilement: “And with thine own hands kill me in this place [...] ‘Tis present death I beg, and one thing more / That womanhood denies my tongue to tell” (*Titus* II.ii.169, 173-74). Ironically, she invokes the image of her tongue in referring to her impending rape by Demetrius and Chiron, an act that femininity denies her ability to speak of. Soon, however, she will not be able to speak of the act at all. Even Lavinia’s last attempt to persuade her attackers to show mercy is cut off with Chiron’s, “Nay then, I’ll stop your mouth” (*Titus* II.ii.184). As Lynn Enterline points out, Lavinia’s impending mutilation is “pulled apart by the language of lips, tongues, hands, and fingers” (8). The constant reference to the body parts responsible for communication both foreshadow Lavinia’s fate and emphasize the importance of communication. Lavinia’s voice is silenced first by her pleas being ignored by Tamora and her sons then by Chiron covering her mouth.

Tamora also demonstrates her ability to use a voice that is outside of the realm of femininity. She is able to shed her feminine identity in order to get revenge. Instead of the physical trauma that Lavinia experiences, Tamora’s role as mother is insulted. Initially, Tamora, as a prisoner of Titus’, is subjugated to the will of Rome. As the barbarian queen of the Goths, she drops to her knees and begs for mercy to be shown her sons. Her role as mother is exemplified in her plea to Titus: “Draw near them [the gods] then in being merciful. / Sweet mercy is nobility’s true badge: / Thrice noble Titus, spare my first-born son” (*Titus* I.i.121-123). Tamora equates

mercy with nobility in the hopes that Titus will demonstrate Roman civility. She is kneeling as she pleads, emphasizing her subordinate position both as a woman to Titus and as a Goth in relation to Rome. It is Titus, however, who acts the barbarian by refusing mercy. In opposition to the idea of the civilized Roman, Titus has his sons drag Alarbus away to be dismembered, and then has his remains burned in the fire. Once mercy has been refused, Tamora rises and cries, "O cruel, irreligious piety!" (*Titus* I.i.133). This is the first demonstration of Tamora's empowerment, as if she has necessarily shed her femininity in order to replace submissiveness with a vengeful power. Like Lavinia, her power is derived from the abuse of her femininity by masculine dominance.

Tamora's position at this point is twofold. Outwardly, she is the ever-obedient wife and queen of Rome. Tamora says of her new position: "She will a handmaid be to his desires, / A loving nurse, a mother to his youth" (*Titus* I.i.336-37). She outlines her priorities as central to the needs of her new husband, Saturninus. Her true intentions, however, focus primarily on her desire for revenge on Titus rather than Saturninus' desires as her speech suggests. She has found power through both her advancement as queen to Rome and in her hatred toward Titus. She says to her new husband, "I'll find a day to massacre them all [...] And make them know what 'tis to let a queen / Kneel in the streets and beg for grace in vain" (*Titus* I.i.455, 459-60). Her earlier demonstration of powerlessness to Titus, kneeling before him to plead for her sons, serves now as a means for Tamora to voice her desire for revenge. Ironically, it is as a Roman that Tamora is empowered to carry out a vicious revenge

on Titus just as Titus had exacted his revenge on Tamora when she was a Goth. Her Roman status allows her the authority that her previously subordinate feminine voice did not.

When Tamora meets Lavinia and Bassianus in the woods, Lavinia taunts Tamora for her brazen rendezvous with Aaron, not recognizing the danger that Tamora presents. Lavinia “supplies a precipitating cause for the rape when she taunts Tamora for her ‘goodly gift in horning’ (2.2.67), by which Lavinia implies her own unspotted chastity” (Kahn 53). This provides Demetrius and Chiron with a reason to seek revenge on Lavinia. Masculine pride condemns Lavinia’s actions for not remaining within the realm of femininity. As the meeting continues, Tamora briefly experiences momentary weakness as she attempts to carry out revenge on Lavinia. Lavinia’s pleas for mercy seem to take away from the power Tamora has created. Tamora, through the bonds of femininity, is able to relate to Lavinia’s current subordinate position in her pleas for mercy. Not wanting to be hindered by Lavinia’s empathetic cry, Tamora demands Lavinia’s voice be stopped: “I will not hear her speak; away with her!” (*Titus* II.ii.137). Lavinia’s voice weakens Tamora because she appeals to Tamora as a fellow woman: “O Tamora, thou bearest a woman’s face” (*Titus* II.ii.136). In Tamora’s case, however, her need for revenge overpowers any camaraderie she may feel for Lavinia. Similarly to Procne’s ability to ignore maternal duties and murder her son in order to seek revenge on her husband, Tamora also is willing to dismiss Lavinia in order to avenge her son’s vicious death. Both women are pulled by different responsibilities accorded to women, though each

chooses a separate path to follow. Tamora obeys her pull to motherly revenge while Procne's responsibility to her sister takes precedence over her maternal obligation. Each woman's choice makes sense, however, because each woman maintains the struggle against the dominating patriarchal male, which takes precedence over all other calls to their sense of duty. This will also be the case with Shakespeare's Lucrece, which I will address more thoroughly later. Tamora and Lavinia, while both women, are on opposite sides of the conflict while Procne and Philomela, and Lucrece and Hecuba, seek the same revenge.

Once Lavinia's mutilation takes place, she literally has her means of communication stripped from her. Without her tongue, she loses the ability to communicate verbally. Demetrius and Chiron also cut off her hands, showing their knowledge of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. They taunt Lavinia:

DEMETRIUS    So, now go tell, and if thy tongue can speak,

Who 'twas that cut thy tongue and ravished thee.

CHIRON        Write down they mind, bewray thy meaning so,

And if thy stumps will let thee, play the scribe. (*Titus*

II.iii.1-4)

Shakespeare's development of Lavinia uses the story of Philomela as a foundation; however, Lavinia is not given the ability to weave her story. Demetrius and Chiron encourage Lavinia to declare their identities as her attackers because they believe she has no means of communication. Because they remember Philomela's use of weaving to identify Tereus, Demetrius and Chiron think they have eliminated the

possibility of Lavinia naming them. Their mocking attitude toward Lavinia demonstrates their dominance over her, making Lavinia appear to fit the image of vulnerability. Just as Philomela is likened to a “shuddering dove” after being ravaged, Lavinia is initially powerless and demonstrates her weakness when she runs from Marcus.

Lavinia, again, becomes a victim when she is “read” by Marcus. With no literal voice, her body becomes a voice that is interpreted by Marcus without her having a say in his interpretation. When Marcus sees her, “he speaks about her as if she were an aesthetic object, a marred beauty best understood in terms of the dismembering rhetoric of the blason” (Enterline 8). Because Lavinia cannot speak for herself, Marcus interprets what he sees, focusing most specifically on her qualities of femininity that have now been mutilated and destroyed. He immediately connects her absent hands to her lack of appeal to a man: “those sweet ornaments / Whose circling shadows kings have sought to sleep in” (*Titus* II.iii.18-19). In the same speech, Marcus also makes reference to Lavinia’s previous ability to play the lute and sing, neither of which she can do any longer. As Coppelia Kahn asserts in the subsequent statement, Marcus’ focus is on Lavinia’s femininity, or lack of it. She loses the ability to belong in the realm of the feminine, yet she is not defined as masculine either. His confusion about the language he must use to describe her image shows his inability to understand her current position:

The shocking disparity between Marcus’s rhetoric [...] and the maimed body to which it pertains makes it clear that the Lavinia who

existed before the rape as an object of desire and exchange was a construction of the language wielded by the men who exchanged and desired her. Marcus's recourse to that language when it can no longer function both highlights it and the places for women that it normally creates, and indicates that Lavinia can no longer occupy those linguistic or social sites. (Kahn 58-9)

Marcus's initial reaction is to Lavinia's stolen feminine appeal. Marcus objectifies Lavinia by interpreting her through her feminine actions only; she is unable to control what message she conveys. Her previous identification as a prized object for a man is no longer present, yet Marcus cannot find a discourse suitable for Lavinia's current form. Her absence of voice seems secondary to her loss of femininity, and the exchange becomes tense and awkward, having no appropriate rhetoric to communicate between the two.

Once Marcus realizes Lavinia's tongue has been cut out, he makes the connection to Ovid's tale of Tereus and Philomela. Lavinia's attacker, Marcus points out, is a "craftier Tereus" because he has removed her means of weaving her message as Philomela did (*Titus* II.iii.41). Because she has not yet devised a means of communicating the identity of her attackers, she is viewed as a mutilated image of what was once an image of femininity. Even more significant, the men that surround her seem only able to recognize her outward physical wounds but not that she has been raped. Coppelia Kahn explains that the men around Lavinia are only able to

recognize her outward wound and cannot interpret from her appearance that she was also raped:

Lavinia's rape is signified to us as audience or readers by her mutilations, but her male kin take those signs for the thing itself. Until she writes 'stuprum' in the dust, they remain transfixed by her external wounds and ignorant of the internal one, which has the greater symbolic significance. (Kahn 57)

Marcus and Titus are transfixed by the voice that has been created for Lavinia by her outward appearance, though they cannot comprehend her image past her mutilated self. Since it is her outward beauty, and therefore worth for Titus, that has been damaged, the patriarchal figures are unable to see that her greatest wound lies within. Coppelia Kahn further points out, "[Lavinia] is symbolically important to Roman patriarchy...she is 'the sign of her father's or husband's political power'—the power of male kin to control women's sexual desire and reproductive power" (49). Being a ravaged woman, her value as a chaste daughter is even further diminished for Titus. Thus, Demetrius and Chiron not only destroyed Titus' daughter, but more importantly his power, further aiding Tamora in the revenge she seeks. Lavinia's feminine characteristics, chastity and delicate beauty, have been spoiled, leaving her without a true identity and Titus without the political asset his daughter once was. He is consumed by grief for his own loss of power: "He that wounded her / Hath hurt me more than had he killed me dead" (*Titus* III.i.92-93). Titus recognizes that any power he once possessed is slowly being stripped from him.

While Titus grieves for his loss, Lavinia merely wants to hide herself from view with each new encounter with the patriarchal figures that surround her. Marcus tells Titus, “I found her, straying in the park, / Seeking to hide herself, as doth the deer / That hath received some unrecuring wound” (*Titus* III.i.89-91). Here is another situation that appears closely related to the *Metamorphoses*. Actaeon’s literal transformation from a man to a stag causes him, like Lavinia, to be unsure of the new form he has taken on: “when he sees his features and his horns in a clear stream, he tries to say ‘Poor me’ but has no words. He moans—that’s all his voice can summon now—and tears flow down a face that’s not his own” (*Metamorphoses* 84). While Actaeon is not a woman, he can be compared to Lavinia here in that his position in this tale is of a subordinate nature like Lavinia’s. Diana, as a goddess, has a higher status than Actaeon as a mortal. He and Lavinia are forced to cope with a new physical form as well as the inability to communicate. Like Actaeon, Lavinia reacts to her new self by shedding tears. Both, too, have not been completely transformed, but instead are forced into a kind of indeterminate state. Lavinia is not her previous feminine self, yet no one is able to define what she has become. Titus says to Lavinia, “What shall I do / Now I behold thy lively body so? / Thou has no hands to wipe away thy tears, / Nor tongue to tell me who hath martyred thee” (*Titus* III.i.105-8). Actaeon, when attacked by his own hounds, lets out a groan that, while “not human, [...] are not the sounds a stag could make” (*Metamorphoses* 85). Actaeon’s mode of discourse is incommunicable to man or beast, and his death occurs before he is able to find a means of communicating his new identity.



Like Actaeon, Lavinia is faced with the threat of not communicating the new form she has taken. Since she is unable to access traditional means of communication, the written and spoken word, she must find an alternative voice. It is through “a new medium of communication, one that marries the book and the picture,” that Lavinia finds voice (Barkan 146). She uses the text of the *Metamorphoses* to point out the story of Tereus and Philomela: “So busily she turns the leaves!” (*Titus* IV.i.45). Lavinia must utilize dramatic action as well. She, as “the picture,” acts out her story once the written text has been found: “See, brother, see: note how she quotes the leaves” (*Titus* IV.i.50). As Leonard Barkan points out, Lavinia’s physical actions provide a dramatic retelling of the events in her experience that parallel those of Philomela, thus creating a dramatic form of voice through which Lavinia can express her own story. Her further actions, writing in the sand with the staff, allow her to complete her own tale and disclose the identities of her attackers. Here Shakespeare alludes to Ovid’s story of Io. Io, like Lavinia, is transformed into an unfamiliar form: “when she tried to utter some lament, nothing but lowings issued from her lips, a sound that she was frightened to emit—her own voice frightened her” (*Metamorphoses* 28). Io cannot access language people are able to comprehend, so she must find an alternative means of communication. She “traced in sand—she used her hoof: so she revealed her transformation—all of her sad tale” (*Metamorphoses* 29). Lavinia, specifically through Marcus’ example, uses the written word as a means of further expressing her tale.

It is interesting that Marcus is the one to recall Io's method. Perhaps it is merely the use of one discourse, the book, to generate another, writing in sand, that holds significance here, not who recalls the narrative. The presence of the *Metamorphoses* begins the process of discovery of voice for Lavinia. It is Lavinia who takes the staff in hand, like Io's hoof, to express the message of her assault: "Stuprum – Chiron – Demetrius" (*Titus* IV.i.78). Lavinia accesses what is for her a new discourse that employs performance and written text. She is utilizing essentially two separate masculine forms of communication for her own purposes, the written text of Ovid and dramatic performance, a male-defined position as actors during the Renaissance were solely men. It is this new discourse that allows Lavinia to share her story without fear or constraint. Her feminine voice was taken from her at the time of her rape and mutilation, thus prompting her opportunity to seek a voice typically associated with power.

When Lavinia discovers a way to use Ovid's *Metamorphoses* to tell of her rape, she is described by Young Lucius, her nephew, as crazy from grief:

My lord, I know not, I, nor can I guess, / Unless some fit or frenzy do  
possess her. / For I have heard my grandsire say full oft / Extremity of  
griefs would make men mad, / And I have read that Hecuba of Troy /  
Ran mad for sorrow. (*Titus* IV.i.16-21)

Without a voice, Lavinia's actions are again misread until she is able to demonstrate the significance of the story of Tereus and Philomela. While Shakespeare models

Lavinia's image after Ovid's Hecuba, he emphasizes Hecuba's role as grieving mother rather than vengeful mother, as Ovid's second part of her story reveals:

In suppressing the second part of Hecuba's story in the Boy's reference to Lavinia as Hecuba, Shakespeare excises a female agency that takes violent retribution against patriarchy, and retains as the woman's part the ineffectual empathetic sorrow—witness as opposed to agency—that Titus and the others ascribe to Lavinia. (Kahn 63)

Instead of Lavinia being characterized as vengeful and proactive, she remains within the realm of femininity in being ascribed only Hecuba's sorrow rather than rage. Lavinia is looked at by the patriarchal figures around her as meek and sorrowful instead of a figure seeking revenge. Only she recognizes her from beyond what is characteristically feminine in her ability to use a masculine voice. Shakespeare seems to yield to the expected role of femininity rather than challenging it as Ovid had. In *The Rape of Lucrece*, which I will discuss later, Shakespeare again deems Hecuba “despairing Hecuba,” but he allows her to aid Lucrece in accessing voice (*Lucrece* 1447).

While Philomela is forced “to create a new medium, a composite of words and pictures,” Lavinia must take her voice one step further, being unable to communicate through weaving (Barkan 247). Lavinia employs a masculine voice through drama and prop, using visual action in place of pictures and the staff as her means of the written word. As Leonard Barkan points out, “Lavinia substitutes Ovid's book for what was Philomela's tapestry” (247). She enters the realm of the dramatic in order

to make reference to the crimes that have taken place against her and to demonstrate the parallels that exist to the already written discourse in Philomela's narrative. She then uses that same source, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, in order to act out a discourse exemplified by Io. In essence, Shakespeare depicts Lavinia as a student of Ovid and one who gains voice, and so power, from the same source her attackers used as a source from which to borrow the story of mutilation. Lavinia's new voice comes from the voices of those in the text, the masculine discourse of literature which she is familiar with. She had not been able to previously access this voice because of her feminine role. It is only through her loss of gender identification as a result of her mutilation that she is able to utilize a masculine voice. Unlike Philomela, "Lavinia depends not on the feminine art of textiles, but [...] on the texts authored by men that authorize patriarchal culture" (Kahn 65). She uses the text as her means of communicating the truth. In dramatizing the written words of Ovid, acting out Philomela's narrative and Io's use of the staff, Lavinia creates a visual discourse that becomes her means of power, a way to punish Demetrius and Chiron for taking advantage of her previous feminine weakness through their own masculine dominance. This is problematic for Lavinia, however, because she is only able to temporarily borrow this masculine voice to effect revenge. Once Lavinia has revealed the identity of Demetrius and Chiron, "she disappears for four scenes (4.2, 3, 4; 5.1), to return not only mute but veiled, assisting in the revenge that now belongs to her father" (Kahn 48). In naming her attackers, the source of her mutilation, and devaluing for Titus, so her desire for revenge becomes manipulated into Titus'

revenge for a somewhat different purpose. Lavinia wants revenge for the crime against her, but Titus wants revenge for his daughter's loss of value in terms of his patriarchal position. Lavinia's mutilation has left her without a clear identity within the social identifications of gender. She can no longer be defined within feminine discourse, yet she is clearly not masculine either.

While Ovid provides Philomela voice through both weaving and her transformation into a bird, Shakespeare attempts to create a new means of voice for his parallel plot in *Titus Andronicus*, though this "new voice" is not wholly successful because it serves only a temporary purpose for Lavinia. He takes Philomela's story a step further by cutting off Lavinia's hands. In addition, Shakespeare keeps the narrative within the realm of possibility, thus eliminating the possibility for Lavinia to escape her undefined self through an Ovidian metamorphosis. Unlike Philomela's transformation into a bird, Lavinia escapes her mutilated state through her death.

Once Lavinia has named her attackers, Titus quickly makes her revenge his own, demonstrating the limitation of Lavinia's borrowed "masculine" voice. As Coppelia Kahn asserts, "Shakespeare marks the moment in which dramatic focus shifts from Lavinia's communication of rape to Titus' enactment of revenge by making Titus, the avenging father, address the father of the gods in Latin" (65). Titus has been offended; therefore, he will resume his patriarchal position over Lavinia and be the one to plot and carry out revenge. In doing this, Titus exerts dominance over Lavinia; her only need now is to escape her mutilated and unfamiliar body. Titus' expression of revenge in the name of Lavinia causes her alternative voice, her use of

visual and textual modes, to be overpowered. Both the text and her actions no longer matter once she has revealed the information Titus needed to avenge his honor. Titus confronts Demetrius and Chiron about Lavinia's attack, and he does not allow them speech: "Sirs, stop their mouths; let them not speak to me, / But let them hear what fearful words I utter" (*Titus* V.ii.167-68). Titus uses the power he has usurped from Lavinia in order to silence and murder her attackers. While Lavinia wants revenge, the means by which that revenge shall be fulfilled are no longer within her control.

The parallel with Philomela's story is then completed, though Shakespeare creates his own twist on the feast. Procne uses her son, only guilty of being of Tereus' flesh, as her means of revenging the attacker. Titus, however, uses Lavinia's attackers as the means of both avenging Lavinia and getting his own revenge on Tamora for the deaths of his sons. Therefore, Shakespeare alters Ovid's narrative by shifting the mode of revenge back to patriarchal control. If a chaste woman is representative of her father's or husband's power, "when that woman is raped, such power is mocked, challenged, diminished. Through revenge, it can be restored" (Kahn 67). Lavinia's existence has meaning solely in relation to the men who surround her. Even Titus defines the worst crime committed against Lavinia as her loss of chastity rather than the act of rape committed against her or the dismembering of her hands and tongue; in listing the crimes of Demetrius and Chiron, Titus itemizes the deaths of Lavinia's husband, of her two brothers, and the severing of Titus' own hand before the crimes against Lavinia:

You killed her husband, and for that vile fault / Two of her brothers  
 were condemned to death, / My hand was cut off and made a merry  
 jest, / Both her sweet hands, her tongue, and that more dear than hands  
 or tongue, her spotless chastity. (*Titus V.ii.172-76*)

Lavinia's "spotless chastity" is of the highest importance in order for a daughter to maintain value in the eyes of a father. For Titus, the greatest crime has been committed against him, rather than to Lavinia, by ruining his position of patriarchal power. Through the course of the play, Lavinia is daughter, wife, niece, and sister; she relies on the men in her life to define her self-image. She lacks the feminine support that Philomela found in Procne, so she is unable to overcome the patriarch that surrounds her to continue to use the voice she utilized in naming her attackers. Voiceless once again, Lavinia becomes subservient to what is now Titus' revenge: "This one hand yet is left to cut your throats, / Whiles that Lavinia 'tween her stumps doth hold" (*Titus V.ii.181-82*). Lavinia's visual, dramatic performance, which once demonstrated her power in her ability to exploit masculine means of communication, now represents her return to her original subjected position. The return of male dominance is amplified at the feast. Lavinia enters veiled, and is soon thereafter murdered by Titus. He uses the story of Virginius as a means of justifying Lavinia's murder: "A pattern, precedent, and lively warrant / For me, most wretched to perform the like. / Die, die, Lavinia, and thy shame with thee, / And with thy shame thy father's sorrow die" (*Titus V.iii.43-46*). Like Virginius, Titus uses the rape as a way to clear his own name of a lost asset. Lavinia had been valuable to Titus as a chaste

daughter, but lost her value with her chastity. Though Titus blames his overwhelming sorrow as the reason for him killing his own daughter, more likely, Titus was eager to expunge the blemish Lavinia represented.

Lavinia's return to a position of disempowerment is due in large part to her lack of feminine support. Being completely surrounded by dominating males, Lavinia had no means of developing the power she gained after accessing an alternative voice. Like Philomela, Lucrece, whose narrative will be explored in the next section, is able to find support through other women that allows them to use their alternative voices in expediting their revenge. Philomela, with Procne, punishes Tereus for his crime. Similarly, Lucrece empathizes with Hecuba's image in the tapestry and uses that surge of emotion to implicate Tarquin and then take her own life. Lavinia, having no other female to support and amplify her power, loses the authority she had gained from an alternative voice to the patriarchal figures surrounding her.



### Chapter 3: Lucrece as Conquered City

In *The Rape of Lucrece*, Lucrece, much like Ovid's Philomela, finds a voice by taking advantage of the bonds of feminine community and by connecting with art. For Lucrece, however, the community she connects with lies within the art. Initially, Lucrece is the ideal picture of femininity—chaste, beautiful, and loyal to her husband. Her rape by Tarquin puts into question these qualities both in her eyes and, she believes, the eyes of the public and (most importantly) the eyes of her husband Collatine. Her idea of self has been stripped away, thus forcing her to seek an alternative self and, with that, an alternative voice with which to express her anguish and revulsion towards Tarquin.

Before the crime takes place, Lucrece's innocence makes her vulnerable to the lustful Tarquin: "nor could she moralize his wanton sight" (*Lucrece* 104). When Tarquin arrives at Lucrece's door unexpectedly, she is unable to read his reasons for being there. She cannot interpret the ravenous look in his eyes and instead takes his arrival as a friendly visit by her husband's comrade. Tarquin's envy of Collatine fuels his lust for the chaste Lucrece, though she cannot imagine such a crime against her. She is unable to shed her innocence, the quality central to her femininity as ascribed by Collatine, until she has been tarnished by Tarquin's lust: "for unstain'd thoughts do seldom dream on evil" (*Lucrece* 87). In Ovid's *Fasti*, the primary source for Shakespeare's analysis, Lucrece is not given words to attempt to dissuade Tarquin's passions: "She answered never a word. Voice and power of speech and thought itself fled from her breast" (*Fasti* 115). Her subjective position here allows

her no voice with which to stand up to Tarquin. Shakespeare, unlike Ovid, allows Lucrece to voice her disdain for Tarquin's lust, though her voice is one that still exists within the confines of femininity.

In *The Rape of Lucrece*, Lucrece defines her own position in terms of her husband's claim over her. Tarquin knows that Lucrece views herself as "not her own," and so uses this to his advantage as a means of merely claiming ownership of another man's property (241). As Coppelia Kahn points out, "whether figured as a thief stealing another man's treasure, a predator seizing his prey, or a warrior besieging a fortified city, Tarquin is an agonistic competitor and as such [...] inscribed within a heroic discourse" (30). Despite the horrific threat he is making, Tarquin is able to manipulate masculine discourse in order to define himself as a conqueror; he is therefore able to embody the rhetoric of a hero rather than a villain. Lucrece, then, becomes merely a conquered city rather than an abused woman. She can do nothing to remove herself from the position of victim because she identifies herself as the property of Collatine. The image of Tarquin is continued throughout the narrative as if to ensure his status as conqueror. Shakespeare uses the image of Lucrece's breasts as "ivory globes circled with blue," creating the illusion of the Earth and the possibility of an explorer's conquest (*Lucrece* 407). Tarquin, "Who like a foul usurper went about / From this fair throne to heave the owner out," uses his position as royalty, and now as explorer and conqueror, to claim Lucrece as his own (*Lucrece* 412-13). This demonstrates an essential trait of patriarchal authority, the power derived from land ownership. Lucrece is metaphorically manipulated into land

both through this image and her own assertion: “If, Collatine, thine honor lay in me, / From me by strong assault it is bereft: [...] But robb’d and ransack’d by injurious theft” (*Lucrece* 834-35, 838). She defines herself as the keeper of Collatine’s honor and the victim of vicious thievery. As loyal to patriarchal authority in her subordinate relationship with Collatine, Lucrece is unable to access a voice outside the realm of femininity because she accepts submissiveness and has not yet found a means of moving beyond a secondary status.

Lucrece is further objectified through Shakespeare’s Ovidian image of Lucrece as a statue. His description of Lucrece recalls the ivory statue in Ovid’s story of Pygmalion: “Where like a virtuous monument she lies, / To be admir’d of lewd unhallowèd eyes” (*Lucrece* 391-92). Lucrece exemplifies the qualities of the ivory statue insofar as she has no say over the dominating masculine figure. Even though Lucrece has a physical voice while the statue does not, she nonetheless remains trapped within the discourse of femininity:

Her modest eloquence with sighs is mixed,

Which to her oratory adds more grace.

She puts the period often from his place,

And midst the sentence so her accent breaks,

That twice she doth begin ere once she speaks. (*Lucrece* 563-567)

Lucrece attempts to vocalize her thoughts, yet she is unable to form complete sentences, which would suggest written discourse. Both modes of voice for her are inaccessible at this point. Vocalizing rape is “speaking the unspeakable,” something

that the expectations of a woman's innocence and naivety do not allow (Enterline 4). The other, written discourse, is a form of masculine communication that she, too, cannot access. She attempts speech twice, failing once to make any sound. Lucrece's problem is having is that she cannot access a voice that will enable her to discuss the rape that Tarquin threatens. While her sighs add more "grace" to her speech, the last thing Lucrece needs, ironically, is additional femininity. Unable to overcome the constraints of feminine voice, Lucrece has little success in her attempt to dissuade Tarquin.

Lucrece's argument itself goes through several stages of development. She begins her speech by calling attention to her nonverbal attempts at liberation: "If ever man were mov'd with woman's moans, / Be moved with my tears, my sighs, my moans" (*Lucrece* 587-88). Lucrece tries to persuade Tarquin by emphasizing her inability to voice anything more than an inarticulate, and emphatically feminine sigh or moan. When this seems to have little effect, Lucrece moves on to a verbal, emotional plea. She tells him to "be compassionate" and that "soft pity enters at an iron gate," trying this time to dissuade him by asking for pity (*Lucrece* 594-95). However, this continues to emphasize Tarquin's position of power in showing his ability to grant or deny her pity. When a plea to his masculine dominance does not work, she then appeals to his imperial position: "Thou seem'st not what thou art, a god, a king; / For kings like gods should govern every thing" (*Lucrece* 601-2). Lucrece uses Tarquin's status as the king's son as a plea to uphold the honor of his

position. She raises his position to god-like in hopes that he would want to maintain such status.

Lucrece continues this avenue of discourse by implying that his reputation would be affecting in he raped her. Interestingly, she again reverts to written discourse as an asset to her request. Lucrece asserts, “For princes are the glass, the school, the book / Where subjects’ eyes do learn, do read, do look” (*Lucrece* 615-16). While she was unable to construct sentences adequately at the beginning of her speech, Lucrece here aligns Tarquin with an entire book. She has granted him the status of literary foundation, the example by which she and all others learn from. The final step in her plea is complete subservience; she begs for mercy: “my heav’ d-up hands appeal,” thus further demonstrating her inferior position to him (*Lucrece* 638). Lucrece’s strategy throughout this speech, as she cannot act outside of her feminine position, is to continuously inflate Tarquin’s position while at the same time diminish her own. However, it seems that her hope of inspiring Tarquin’s honor by emphasizing his patriarchal authority has much the opposite effect. The progression of her argument only serves to highlight her own feminine vulnerability. As conqueror, Tarquin feeds off her vulnerable state, which only makes his conquest easier. He cuts off her speech, “No more [...] by heaven, I will not hear thee,” and proceeds to gag her with her own nightgown (*Lucrece* 667). Similarly to Philomela’s and Lavinia’s loss of their tongues, though less violently, Lucrece’s physical voice is taken away from her so that the rape can transpire without interruption. She is forced to endure the rape unable to speak any resistance beyond the voice in her head: “For

with the nightly linen that she wears / He pens her piteous clamors in her head”  
 (*Lucrece* 680-1).

Philomela, Lavinia, and Lucrece have their voices stripped from them by dominating men, though each comes at a different point in the rape. Philomela has her tongue cut out after the rape because Tereus fears she will reveal his crime. Lavinia, though her actual rape is not part of the action on stage, has her hands and tongue also removed after the rape. Lucrece is gagged during the rape to silence her resistance, yet she maintains her physical voice after being raped. While all three women are silenced at a different time, it is significant that the loss of voice persists after the rape has occurred. Even Lucrece can physically speak but remains voiceless because she is the only one present to hear her voice. Philomela and Lavinia have only the voice in their heads as a means of recounting previous events, and Lucrece is physically alone to reflect and grieve.

After Lucrece’s rape, the light of morning is described as the eyes of everyone around her seeing her shame: “O eye of eyes, / Why pry’st thou through my window? Leave thy peeping, / Mock with thy tickling beams eyes that are sleeping” (*Lucrece* 1087-90). The sun serves as a metaphor for the eyes of the public judging her for her inability to prevent the crime and her tarnished self’s inability to be a virtuous woman again. It is interesting that Lucrece does not give the bulk of the blame for her rape to Tarquin. Instead, she first blames “Night,” “Opportunity,” and “Time” for what has transpired. To Time she charges, “Be guilty of my death, since of my crime” (*Lucrece* 931). Instead of Lucrece placing the blame solely on

Tarquin, she chooses to circumvent fully blaming a masculine authoritative figure; rather, she blames circumstances out of her control. Just as Collatine, and even Lucrece herself, defines her as the picture of femininity, she upholds the image and is almost hesitant to place full blame on Tarquin:

Yet am I guilty of thy honor's wrack,  
 Yet for thy honor did I entertain him;  
 Coming from thee, I could not put him back,  
 For it had been dishonor to disdain him.  
 Besides, of weariness he did complain him,  
 And talk'd of virtue: O unlook'd-for evil,  
 When virtue is profan'd in such a devil. (*Lucrece* 841-847)

Because Lucrece is expected to embody an image of femininity, she must blame herself and circumstance for the crime that has transpired. As Collatine's wife, she is expected to respect her husband and his peers. Her fear of "dishonoring" Collatine is also partially responsible for her ignorance of Tarquin's intentions. What seems so obvious to her now was before an "unlook'd-for evil" that her femininity would not allow her to see. Lynn Enterline asserts, "Not only does rape propel Lucrece from silence into the poem's discursive orbit—as speaker, writer, and reader—but her entry into the poem's discourse follows the perverse logic of a violent pedagogical curriculum" (158). Lucrece's brutal sexual experience allows her to understand sexual allusion and implication that her previously chaste self was unable to interpret. Her struggle to place blame occurs after the rape but before Lucrece has gained

access to an alternative voice, which would remove the restrictions femininity places on her.

Lucrece's self-defined femininity demonstrates her own struggle to shed the limitations of womanhood that society has constructed: "And my true eyes have never practic'd how / To cloak offenses with a cunning brow" (*Lucrece* 748-49). Lucrece knows that she would be unable to hide what has happened simply because of her practiced honesty and loyalty to the men around her. In maintaining the patriarchal tradition, Lucrece seeks another party to blame rather than those who claim power over her. She instead places fault on her inability to avoid the dark, dangerous circumstances she found herself in. Lucrece struggles with the idea that her defiled body will speak to others without her consent: "The illiterate that know not how / To cipher what is writ in learned books, / Will cote my loathsome trespass in my looks" (*Lucrece* 810-12). Much like the way Marcus interpreted Lavinia's image, Lucrece fears that her image rather than her words will reveal to the outside world that she has been defiled. As a result, she seeks to do only what she is able to now that the crime has taken place. She seeks to control the image that she will "speak" and begins to plan for her own death as a means of correcting both the blemish on her chastity and especially on her husband's name.

The narrator of Lucrece's story highlights the characteristic qualities of masculinity and femininity: "For men have marble, women waxen minds, / And therefore are they form'd as marble will" (*Lucrece* 1240-41). The speaker justifies Lucrece's emotional disposition as a direct result of her impressionable and easily-



molded mind. The steadfast and sturdy minds of men are able to both maintain reason and impress their will on the weak character of women. The speaker goes on to explain, “Though men can cover crimes with bold stern looks, / Poor women’s faces are their own faults’ books” (*Lucrece* 1252-53). Men are given the quality of deception while women are characterized as wearing their thoughts and emotions on their faces, unable to hide truths from men. Books here are not where true knowledge comes from, but instead knowledge is a product of viewing. Therefore, Lucrece’s earlier explication of Tarquin as a book is proven true; he as a book would not serve as a suitable example to follow. While the narrator suggests that women are merely weaker than men, Lucrece confronts the position of women in her society after the rape has taken place: “What virtue breeds iniquity devours: / We have no good that we can say is ours” (*Lucrece* 872-73). Women’s attempts to be virtuous only serve to put them at a disadvantage; virtue leaves them vulnerable to the inequality that exists for women by men claiming a dominant position. All qualities of femininity that Lucrece has previously addressed—grace, purity, virtue—are qualities that can be easily usurped by the dominant qualities of masculinity—control, power, ownership. Again, the idea that it is the image of woman, her face, that is the place where truth can be ‘read,’ is exemplified. Image above all else speaks the loudest whether the interpretation of that ‘voice’ is accurate or not, as is the case for Lavinia and here with the narrator’s reading of Lucrece. The idea that the image she projects can serve as the communicator of her voice is what drives Lucrece to seek a means of creating a new discourse by manipulating how her image will be ‘read.’

As she grieves, Lucrece constructs a plot of revenge on Tarquin, “to make him curse this cursed crimeful night” (*Lucrece* 970). The narrator notes how Lucrece struggles to find a way to verbalize what has happened to her. There are several references after the rape to the inadequacy of verbal communication for Lucrece to express her emotions: “Sometime her grief is dumb and hath no words, / Sometime ‘tis mad and too much talk affords” (*Lucrece* 1105-6). She cannot find a way to adequately speak of the unspeakable crime. She struggles to employ spoken discourse, almost as if, like Lavinia, she has lost her tongue and the ability to speak of the events that have occurred. Lucrece recognizes that words are unable to alter her position as proven by her ineffective plea to Tarquin prior to the rape, so she must act in order to restore her honor: “This helpless smoke of words doth me no right. / The remedy indeed to do me good / Is to let forth my foul defiled blood” (*Lucrece* 1027-9). The only action she sees as powerful enough to remove her shame and restore honor to both Collatine and herself is to take her life.

Lucrece attempts to voice her own fate by telling Collatine of her rape by Tarquin and that she would like Tarquin’s fate to be death; she “speaks” of her want for Tarquin’s death by using her own body and committing suicide. She is “seeking to become the ‘author’ of her own ‘will’ by trying on the voices of others” (Enterline 167). Creating a voice that imitates the laments of other women allows Lucrece to empathize with and therefore imitate the discourse of Ovidian voices such as Hecuba and Philomela: “My tongue shall utter all, mine eyes like sluices, / As from a mountain spring that feeds a dale, / Shall gush pure streams to purge my impure tale.’

/ By this, lamenting Philomele had ended” (*Lucrece* 1076-79). Lucrece’s reference to her tongue, much like Philomela’s murmuring tongue, expresses the truth of her rape. She expresses the truth through the action of releasing her tarnished blood. In addition, the narrator here compares Lucrece to Philomela, as she later does herself, but it is Philomela in another later form: “Come, Philomele, that sing’st of ravishment, / Make thy sad grove in my dishevell’d hair” (*Lucrece* 1128-29). Both of these examples make a comparison between Lucrece and Philomela; however, it is not the weaving Philomela that Lucrece alludes to but the singing nightingale she becomes after her revenge. In addition, Lucrece is described as “the poor frighted deer that stands at gaze, / Wildly determining which way to fly,” much like Philomela and Lavinia take the form of a deer; both women are scared because they do not recognize the voice they have taken on as previously discussed (*Lucrece* 1149-50).

The idea of feminine community comes in stark contrast to the way in which Lucrece characterizes masculinity: “There we will unfold / To creatures stern, sad tunes to change their kinds; / Since men prove beasts, let beasts bear gentle minds” (*Lucrece* 1146-48). Lucrece describes men as “stern” or savage “beasts” that lack the compassion found in the discourse of femininity, or the “sad tunes” that could change the cruel nature of men. She realizes that the nature of man can only be affected if her voice is able to communicate beyond feminine voice. In creating a feminine association, such “sad tunes” created in collaboration with other women, Lucrece begins to find an alternative voice to express her violation. Like Philomela to Procne, Lucrece speaks out to women in search of strength: “No dame hereafter living / By

my excuse shall claim excuse's giving" (*Lucrece* 1714-15). She refuses to remain a victim, as it will only serve to encourage other women to be satisfied with vulnerability. This seems to serve as an assertion by Shakespeare of his views on gender and society. Though he follows the expectations for gender representation, he is able to comment on the ability of women's status to change; it is as if he attempts, through *Lucrece*, to encourage women not to be satisfied with their current social position of weakness.

*Lucrece* is finally able to express her own guilt by aligning her grief with that of Hecuba in the painting. Lynn Enterline explains, "Ovid's Hecuba is caught, like so many other Ovidian women, in the predicament of trying to express a grief beyond words" (166). It is this uncomfortable state that allows *Lucrece*, like Philomela and Lavinia, to find the strength to move beyond the feminine realm of voice, to seek an alternative means of expressing rage, frustration, and abhorrence towards those who have abused them. It is the need to access these emotions that exist outside of what is acceptably feminine that provide the women strength to pursue personal expression.

*Lucrece* eventually feels her feminine means of expressing her grief are no longer adequate: "So woe hath wearied woe, moan tired moan, / That she her plaints a little while doth stay, / Pausing for means to mourn some newer way" (*Lucrece* 1363-65). She then remembers a painting of the attack on Troy. When *Lucrece* views the painting, she is struck by the emotion that can be expressed through art. She examines the brutalized soldiers and grieving wives and claims, "art gave liveless life" (*Lucrece* 1374). *Lucrece* takes note of the emotion present in the painting, "a

weeping tear,” “lust,” “triumphing in their faces,” and “far-off eyes [that] look sad” (*Lucrece* 1375, 1384, 1388, 1386). Just as art is able to give life to images, Lucrece realizes that her own art in physical action could express her emotions better than any written or spoken word. Shakespeare uses the ekphrasis of the painting to illuminate the idea that there is voice in the visual, an accessible voice that all, including women, are able to utilize.

Shakespeare exemplifies the human qualities present in the art Lucrece investigates as if the people in the art were living as a result of Lucrece’s viewing them: “From his lips did fly / Thin winding breath, which purl’d up to the sky. / About him were a press of gaping faces, / Which seem’d to swallow up his sound advice, / All jointly list’ning, but with several graces, / As if some mermaid did their ears entice” (*Lucrece* 1406-11). Lucrece now becomes the observer, allowing the art to speak through her eyes, thus her interpretation. As Lynn Enterline suggests, Lucrece’s notice of “Hecuba’s ‘distress’ resonates with that of the ravished Philomela, the woman who could turn muteness into language by visual means” (169-70). Lucrece sees Hecuba in the painting and is able to connect with her grief, thus providing voice for the images in the painting.

“Poor instrument,” quoth she, “without a sound,  
 I’ll tune thy woes with my lamenting tongue,  
 And drop sweet balm in Priam’s painted wound,  
 And rail on Pyrrhus that hath done him wrong,  
 And with my tears quench Troy that burns so long,

And with my knife scratch out the angry eyes

Of all the Greeks that are thine enemies.” (*Lucrece* 1464-70).

She describes Hecuba as a “poor instrument” being given a painful, sorrowful scene to view but no means of expressing her sadness. Lucrece goes so far as to curse the painter for his cruelty in giving Hecuba “so much grief, and not a tongue” (*Lucrece* 1463). Initially, Lucrece’s response is a feminine one; she plans to quell Hecuba’s sorrows by crying. As previously discussed, the imagery of a conquered city comes into play again. She empathizes with Troy, the fallen, defeated city seeing herself as a defeated city with Tarquin as conqueror: “With outward honesty, but yet defil’d / With inward vice: as Priam him did cherish, / So did I Tarquin, so my Troy did perish” (*Lucrece* 1545-7). Her emotional response of tears, however, is quickly replaced by her rage and a much more violent revenge in “scratch[ing]” out the enemies’ eyes. Lucrece takes note in the painting of Hecuba’s anguish in losing her son. As Leonard Barkan asserts, “[Hecuba’s] voice, which has been her essential quality, is now silenced. [...] The queen has not lost herself entirely, though, because she must still avenge the crime done against her son [...] she is further reduced to an essential principle of vengeance” (22-23). In Ovid’s tale, Hecuba is transformed into a barking dog, leaving her helplessly biting at rocks and unable to access a communicable mode of voice. This demonstrates Shakespeare’s alternative approach to voice in allowing woman to seek another way to communicate when verbal expression is inaccessible. Lucrece, for example, sees the emotion Hecuba exudes and finds power through her emotion. She is able to use that power to find voice

through taking action, which Hecuba in the painting is unable to do. In serving as Hecuba's voice, she begins to contrive a means of expressing her own grief outside of the realm of femininity, though she seems more to be borrowing a masculine response in violence. She feels similarly in her position to Hecuba in the painting: "Let guiltless souls be freed from guilty woe. / For one's offense why should so many fall?" (*Lucrece* 1482). Lucrece takes from her empathy with Hecuba the ability to take action; she, in return, gives the painting voice: "She lends them words, and she their looks doth borrow" (*Lucrece* 1448). She goes so far as to literally tear at the painting with her nails in an effort to get revenge on Sinon for causing all of the city's pain. She realizes the futility in this, though, and smiles at the thought of her misplaced rage: "'Fool, fool,' quoth she, 'his wounds will not be sore'" (*Lucrece* 1568). Lucrece realizes she must take action through the example of the painting in order to express her desire for revenge.

Philomela, Lavinia, and Lucrece all seek out a non-verbal means of discourse in order to voice their experiences and desire for revenge. Philomela weaves her story into a tapestry, Lavinia uses the text of the *Metamorphoses* to express the crime against her, and Lucrece likens her experience with Tarquin to the battle that is taking place in the painting. The women, being stripped of the feminine voice that was previously all they were able to access, now must find an alternative voice from which to speak. Once Lucrece has grieved over her experience of being raped, she must find a means of expressing to Collatine what has happened in order to restore her honor and get revenge. It is only after her interaction with the tapestry that

Lucrece becomes enraged and so finds the strength to speak of the crime that has been committed against her: “Here all enrag’d, such passion her assails / That patience is quite beaten from her breast” (*Lucrece* 1562-63). She has gone through a metamorphosis here from grieving victim to empowered revenge-seeker. Lucrece’s loss of the feminine quality of patience leaves her open to qualities of masculinity that she previously could not own. With rage now as her driving force, Lucrece accesses a voice outside of the realm of femininity, one that enables her to speak of previously unspeakable events.

When Collatine arrives, Lucrece has gone through a metamorphosis in changing her outward appearance to black clothing to serve as a beginning to her story: “Unmask, dear dear, this moody heaviness, / And tell thy grief, that we may give redress” (*Lucrece* 1602-3). She struggles to tell the story of Tarquin arriving and forcing himself upon her. Once she has spoken his name, she uses her image, stabbing herself in the chest, as a way to speak her rage towards Tarquin; for Lucrece, her death is the means by which she can ‘speak’ what she would like her revenge against Tarquin to consist of. Lynn Enterline suggests, “Where Philomela’s tongue and woven *notae* suggest a kind of body language in the *Metamorphoses*, in Shakespeare’s poem Lucrece explicitly uses her body as a text, turning suicide into a kind of writing when she becomes author of her own ‘plot of death’” (153). Lucrece in essence creates a mode of discourse as a way to speak her desire for revenge. The image of her shame gushing like “pure streams” comes full circle when her dead body is encircled by her own blackened blood. Lucrece makes her suicide “a symbolic



purification of the pollution of her chastity wrought by the rape” (Kahn 66). In purging herself of her own tainted blood, she voices through action her inability to accept the violation by Tarquin and her desire for revenge. She uses her own body as a way to dictate Tarquin’s punishment: “How Tarquin must be us’d, read it in me: / Myself thy friend will kill myself thy foe, / And for my sake serve thou false Tarquin so” (*Lucrece* 1195-97). Since she has struggled with verbal expression, her actions will serve to speak her intentions for punishment. Through her death, Lucrece is able to voice her dissatisfaction with her violated self.

Death serves as a final, more effective discourse than Tarquin’s earlier threat: “Yield to my love, if not, enforce hate, / In stead of love’s coy touch, shall rudely tear thee” (*Lucrece* 668-69). Enterline explains that Tarquin’s threat of rape “propels Lucrece into discourse” by “work[ing] to counter one kind of text (Tarquin’s lie) with another, better text—one that promotes her version of her future name and that brings scandal to Tarquin’s family rather than her own” (163). Though Lucrece uses her final action, her suicide, as a way to voice her message of expunging the masculine dominance forced upon her, even this is taken from her when her body is paraded around town by Brutus, her father, and her husband.

Collatine’s word, ‘chaste,’ Tarquin’s crime, rape, and Brutus’ decision to publish the crime by displaying Lucrece’s dead body through the streets of Rome all appear to define what it means to become a woman: it appears to mean becoming an object of symbolic as well as sexual exchanges ordered and carried out by men. (Enterline 159)

Lucrece's attempt to claim power is usurped by the social expectations Shakespeare remains loyal to. While he considers women's reaction to violence more closely than others, as seen from Gervase Markam's position discussed in the introduction, and even attempts to allow women a means of voice outside of the feminine realm, he reverts back to what his audience wants and expects. Lucrece's body becomes the tool of the patriarch in seeking revenge, much as Titus exploits the maimed Lavinia before he murders her. Lucrece becomes an object of interpretation, thus subordinating her voice to the interpretation of the audience. Here the role of the voyeur in voice becomes more apparent. As Jonathan Bate points out, "She is the sacrificial victim required for the bringing of a new political order" (73). Her final display of voice, the vision of her dead corpse, is manipulated for the power and advancement of men. She is exploited in death and unable to control the message her body sends. This idea demonstrates how a woman's voice is often one she does not choose—the voice of her visual interpretation, the way the voyeur chooses to interpret her image.

#### Chapter 4: Voyeurism as Voice

Both Ovid and Shakespeare play on the role of their audience in the interpretation of their works. As Enterline points out, because the *Metamorphoses* is written and not a spoken epic, it has a “complex engagement with the materiality of reading and writing practices in the Roman world” (6). Ovid is able to impact how the written word is interpreted; Shakespeare, however, explores voice through various genres in order to expand the way in which voice and an individual’s expression of self is portrayed and interpreted. In his dramatic works, the audience’s presence allows Shakespeare to not only manipulate rhetoric, but visual representation as well: “The play itself may be just such a medium of voyeurism as are the books and pictures inside it” (Barkan 251). In order to discuss the implications of voyeurism on the voice of women, it is important to define what is meant by the term “voyeur.” Wendy Wall describes it thusly: “One who partakes of forbidden and private discourse and is complicitous in stealing a glance at clandestine words” (38). Shakespeare intensifies the voyeuristic element in his plays by considering how voice can be spoken by one character on behalf of another, often with that captured voice manipulated for a character’s own profit. In much the same manner as Ovid controls the way discourse is interpreted in the *Metamorphoses*, Shakespearean works that are not dramatic productions such as *The Rape of Lucrece* control the perceptions of the audience by having them see events through the eyes of the voyeur. Voyeurism becomes much more than viewing; by interpreting and in some cases retelling a woman’s image, the voyeur speaks for the woman he is viewing. Therefore, the

audience is given access to the private self of the woman and joins the voyeur in his misreading of what is considered unspeakable.

The voyeuristic element in Ovid's and Shakespeare's works exemplifies the exploitation of femininity; it creates a voice for the voyeur that is able to interpret the images of woman without the woman having a say in that interpretation. Ovid's classic example of a voyeuristic role in the interpretation and exploitation of the feminine is the tale of Pygmalion, which seems to serve as a model for instances of viewing in *The Rape of Lucrece*, *Cymbeline*, and *The Winter's Tale*. Being "disgusted by the many sins to which the female mind had been inclined by nature," Pygmalion creates his own vision of woman who is voiceless and visually stunning (*Metamorphoses* 335). He has complete control over her image and how that image is interpreted. The statue is described as owning the qualities of woman that he expects: beauty, timidity, and sexual willingness. Pygmalion describes her in terms of the way her body "ignites a flame" within him (*Metamorphoses* 336). Much like Tarquin or Tereus, Pygmalion's masculine dominance is fueled by his physical lust for her. He is even more pleased by what he believes is an acceptable feminine response, her complete submission to his wishes. Art becomes the image of voiceless femininity. Even when the statue comes alive, she is not given a voice; she merely reacts by "blushing, she lifts up her timid eyes" (*Metamorphoses* 337). She is shown only as dedicated lover and soon-to-be mother. Ovid's now living statue seems content with her secondary position, symbolically represented when she "seeks the light" and "sees the sky" (*Metamorphoses* 337). The statue embodies the

characteristics of femininity, and Pygmalion escapes being identified as an ominous ravager of her identity.

Shakespeare's voyeuristic scenes take on a much different tone in order to express a sense of violation and seizure of self. He chooses a setting with a dark and menacing atmosphere as the backdrop for the role of voyeur. For example, Lavinia's rape occurs deep in the forest, Lucrece's rape is during the late hours of the evening when she is alone, and Imogen's symbolic rape occurs in her bedchamber by a man hiding in a trunk without her knowledge. These situations allow the audience and reader to witness the intrusion of the voyeur and, in a sense, become the eyes of the voyeur as if committing the act themselves, manipulating the "voice" of the image of the woman they see. Lavinia is raped and mutilated in the woods and then taunted by her attackers knowing that she cannot respond; then she is misread by her uncle without any means of communicating the truth of what took place. Lucrece and Imogen both experience the unwanted eyes of a voyeur at night as they lie unknowingly in bed. Shakespeare forces the audience to experience each scene through the perspective of the voyeur in stealing the voice of women to replace it with the image of his own lustful interpretation. Her body becomes her voice, though without her consent. Shakespeare makes each woman's vulnerability tangible, making the audience feel the demoralizing effects of the voyeur and to understand the dominating nature of these masculine figures.

Voyeurism in Shakespeare's works plays a significant role in how women are interpreted and the way in which their voices are heard, misunderstood, and



before, Marcus's language reveals his inability to articulate her identity in terms of gender. It is clear that Marcus is uncomfortable viewing the brutalized Lavinia; Shakespeare forces the audience to share in this voyeuristic experience.

*Cymbeline* serves as another example in which Shakespeare focuses on feminine voice and voyeurism. One of the many parallels between Imogen and Lucrece is their unyielding devotion to their husbands. Imogen says to Pisano, Posthumus's servant and friend, "How I would think on him at certain hours / Such thoughts and such; or I could make him swear / The shes of Italy should not betray Mine interest and his honor" (*Cymbeline* I.iii.27-29). She is perfectly content in defining herself through her relationship with her husband. Her husband, however, like Collatine, brags to others of her virtue, leading to the test of her chastity by Iachimo. Imogen is described "to be more fair, virtuous, wise, chaste, constant, qualified, and less attemptable than any the rarest of our ladies in France" (*Cymbeline* I.iv.59-61). As Barkan asserts, "For Posthumus to expose the perfections of his wife to the other men in Rome is the opening of a book that should remain closed to all but himself" (250). Even without her presence in the scene, Imogen is interpreted and exploited without consent. Her image of self is asserted through Posthumus, thus removing any control she has over her own voice.

Imogen again becomes the victim of the masculine usurpation of her voice when Iachimo tries to corrupt her. His plan is to hide in a trunk in Imogen's bedroom and gather intimate details about her chamber and self; then he will take this evidence back to her husband as proof of Posthumus' misplaced assurance of his wife's virtue.

Iachimo begins his collection of information by investigating and taking notes on the decorations and art in the room: “Th’ adomment of her bed; the arras, figures”

(*Cymbeline* II.ii.26). His interpretation of her bedchamber becomes clearer in his retelling to Posthumus when he describes Cleopatra and Ovid’s Diana in sexualized terms in order to replace Imogen’s chaste image with an eroticized one. He describes her bedchamber to the apprehensive Posthumus: “It was hang’d / With tapestry of silk and silver; the story / Proud Cleopatra, when she met her Roman, [...] A piece of work / So bravely done, so rich” (*Cymbeline* II.iv.68-73). Here, Iachimo aligns himself with Antony, as if he, like the art, is Imogen’s “Roman.” As Heather James asserts, “[Iachimo] criminalizes sexuality and chastity alike by describing Imogen’s artwork as solicitation” (176). By portraying her environment as sexualized, Iachimo begins to redefine Imogen’s image of chastity on his own terms. Through his viewing of Imogen, he is able to speak of what defines her ‘self,’ without her say. Iachimo continues to describe the art in Imogen’s bedchamber by telling of the chimney-piece that is a carving of Ovid’s Diana. He says, “Never saw I figures / So likely to report themselves. The cutter / Was as another Nature, dumb; outwent her, / Motion and breath left out” (*Cymbeline* II.iv.81-84). While Ovid’s Diana is defined by her chastity and modesty, Iachimo’s depiction of Diana is of a woman who wants to be viewed: “The Diana represented in the plastic arts [...] can hardly be kept from describing herself” (James 177). Again, Iachimo aligns the erotic image of a nude Diana to his claimed encounter with Imogen. Just as Imogen, like Diana, was previously defined by her image of purity, Iachimo is able to manipulate that image to



serve his purpose of deceiving Posthumus. In addition, the role of Actaeon is ascribed to Iachimo and, through his retelling, to Posthumus: “Imogen’s husband is placed in the intolerable position of gazing on his wife as narratively described by a supposed seducer” (James 177). The struggle apparent in Iachimo’s retelling is for a position of masculine dominance over Posthumus at the expense of Imogen’s voice. Even before he has focused in his account on her body, her image is transformed through Iachimo’s manipulation of art.

Once Iachimo feels he has adequately noted the bedchamber, he moves on to Imogen’s sleeping body. Though his later retelling depicts a very different image, Iachimo uses images of purity such as “fresh lily” to emphasize Imogen’s “white[ness]” in his description of her:

Our Tarquin thus

Did softly press the rushes ere he waken’d

The chastity he wounded. Cytherea [Venus],

How bravely thou becom’st thy bed! fresh lily,

And whiter than the sheets! That I might touch!

But kiss, one kiss! Rubies unparagon’d

How dearly they do’t! ‘Tis her breathing that

Perfumés the chamber thus. (*Cymbeline* II.ii.12-19)

Iachimo views Imogen’s sleeping body and describes the beauty of her white skin, lips like rubies, and sweet breath. He compares himself to Tarquin in viewing her as she sleeps unaware of his presence. As Barkan asserts, “the reading of a beautiful

woman's sleeping body turns the act of reading at once into voyeurism and into rape" (250). Iachimo commits a voyeuristic rape of Imogen as she is sleeping, unaware of his exploitation of her body. In the same way that Tarquin views Lucrece as she sleeps, Iachimo clearly knows that he is marring her purity: "ere he waken'd the chastity he wounded" (*Cymbeline* II.ii.13-14). Like Lucrece's husband, Imogen's husband boasts of her chastity, which in both cases results in a rape, whether symbolic in the case of Imogen or literal in the case of Lucrece. Iachimo, too, alludes to Pygmalion when he compares Imogen to a monument: "O sleep, thou ape of death, lie dull upon her, / And be her sense but as a monument, / Thus in a chapel lying!" (*Cymbeline* I.ii.33-34). Imogen becomes the ivory statue, unable to control the interpretation of her image by her viewer. Iachimo specifically looks to take note of the intimate features of her body as deceitful proof of a sexual encounter with her for Posthumus:

On her left breast / A mole cinque-spotted, like the crimson drops / I'  
th' bottom of a cowslip. Here's a voucher, / Stronger than ever law  
could make; this secret / Will force him think I have pick'd the lock  
and ta'en / The treasure of her honor. (*Cymbeline* II.ii.37-42)

Much like Lucrece's "ivory globes," it is her image that speaks of the intimate details of her body, allowing Iachimo to usurp her voice and speak what should not be spoken. Iachimo uses the mole on her breast as proof of his intimacy with her to Posthumus. Barkan notes, "Iachimo will exit from the trunk comparing himself to Tarquin just as he reenters it with reference to Imogen's reading 'the tale of Tereus'"

(248). Iachimo, like Tarquin with Lucrece, views Imogen and interprets her image without her knowledge or consent. Not only does this allow Iachimo access to Imogen's private self, but it also allows the audience to access her private self. It is significant, too, that Shakespeare has Imogen falling asleep reading the tale of Tereus: "She hath been reading late the tale of Tereus; here the leaf's turned down where Philomele gave up" (*Cymbeline* II.ii.44-46). Again, the influence of Ovid is used to punctuate the nature of masculine dominance and its ability to exploit woman. Imogen "went to bed reading of ancient rapes, and she becomes the book penetrated by the eyes of the modern rapist" (Barkan 250). Like Marcus's interpretation of Lavinia, the audience is put in the position of voyeur, viewing the unspeakable without the woman's ability to control the interpretation of the image.

The audience, knowing of Iachimo's deceitful plot to exploit Imogen, becomes conscious of the disparity between the visual image of woman and the narrative voice imposed upon her. A woman is again being disempowered by masculine usurpation of voice. Iachimo's redefinition of Imogen becomes more apparent as her symbolic rape is reenacted by describing it to Posthumus:

If you seek

For further satisfying, under her breast

(Worthy her pressing) lies a mole, right proud

Of that most delicate lodging. By my life,

I kiss'd it, and it gave me present hunger

To feed again, though full. (*Cymbeline* II.iv.133-38)

Iachimo, in speaking of his supposed encounter with Imogen, fulfills his “rape” of her by creating an identity for her that does not exist. Much like Tereus’ repeated rape of Philomela, Iachimo describes how he “kiss’d [her breast], and it gave me present hunger to feed again, though full” (*Cymbeline* II.iv.137-8). In speaking of “feeding” on her body and Posthumus’ hearing of it, the story becomes true. While the audience knows that he physically did not rape Imogen, he speaks of it with such depth and detail that it almost becomes real. In this case, Imogen is not able to defend the truth of her chastity and innocence. Her voice is not controlled by Iachimo. Not only is she objectified by his viewing of her private self, but her voice is stolen and used to disempower her. Even her husband who bragged of her purity accepts the portrayal of her as erotic by Iachimo and goes so far as to call for her death: “O that I had her here, to tear her limb-meal! / I will go there and do’t, I’ th’ court, before / Her father” (*Cymbeline* II.iv.147-149). Posthumus’ threat of physical violence exemplifies his claimed position of masculine dominance over Imogen. \

Again, she serves not only as a reflection of Posthumus’ honor, but also as a reflection of her father’s honor. Patriarchal dominance claims power over women here just as was true in *Titus Andronicus* and *The Rape of Lucrece*. The voice created by the voyeuristic image of Imogen, thus the voices of Lavinia and Lucrece, serves to replace each woman’s true self. Because they are unable to control how their bodies are interpreted, they have lost the ability to define themselves. The voyeur is able to control the voice of the women by controlling how her individual message is

expressed. Voyeurism, then, becomes another means by which masculinity claims dominance over femininity.

Lavinia and Philomela, who are aware of the voyeur's usurpation of their voices, are able to regain control of their voices by accessing a voice outside of the realm of femininity, a voice previously inaccessible. For both of these women, written discourse, Ovid's text for Lavinia and weaving for Philomela, provides the opportunity for expression of this voice. However, the experience of "reading" for Lucrece and Imogen is much the opposite:

For Titus and his daughter reading was a kind of cure for or solution to rape: the book solved the who-dunit and provided both a precedent and a system for revenge. In *The Rape of Lucrece* and *Cymbeline*, reading and raping are much more nearly the same thing. Tarquin scrutinizes Lucrece and must possess her. Iachimo reenacts the same scene symbolically. (Barkan 249)

Shakespeare's exploration of means of communication demonstrates the difficulty women face in accessing voice once the constraints of their feminine voice come into play. Lucrece is initially unaware of Tarquin's control of her voice in his voyeuristic look at her sleeping body; however, she awakens as he views her and so is made aware of him. She is then violently raped by him, which serves as her emotional fuel in seeking a means of regaining a sense of self. Imogen remains within the realm of femininity throughout the narrative because she is unaware that the symbolic rape has occurred; this is partly a result of the genre difference of *Cymbeline* as well. Being a

romance rather than a tragedy, the audience expects Imogen to follow feminine expectations and fall obediently back into her husband's arms. Lavinia and Lucrece, because the visual misrepresentation is accompanied by physical violence against them, are prompted to find voice through alternative avenues—Lavinia uses literature and playacting while Lucrece gains power through her empathy with the voiceless Hecuba in the painting on her wall.

Ovid's *Metamorphoses* provided Shakespeare with a foundation from which to look at how characters communicate through both verbal and nonverbal means. Philomela's tale, both her vicious rape and mutilation by Tereus and her utilization of weaving as a means of communicating the crime, provided Shakespeare a place to continue and expand on the exploration of women's voices. By allowing voice to manifest itself in a variety of forms, Shakespeare is able to prove that voice does not mean merely verbal communication. In fact, the message that is communicated through action, discourse, and voyeurism all lead to either a new voice or the usurpation of an individual's private voice. Lavinia utilizes two forms of masculine voice, acting and writing, as her means of communicating a message. She loses her gendered identity when she is raped and mutilated by Demetrius and Chiron, thus enabling her to seek an alternative means of voice. She seeks revenge on her attackers, yet the patriarchal dominance of her father, Titus, causes her to lose control over the enactment of her revenge. Because patriarchal authority is so strong around her, Lavinia is forced back into submission once her attackers have been named. Her revenge is then usurped by the men that surround her, her father, uncle, and brother.

As a result, Lavinia is left without an identity. She no longer fits the gender identity of the feminine, having lost her “feminine qualities” as defined by Marcus, so she is merely a burden to Titus, making her death inevitable.

Lucrece and Imogen both adhere to their positions of honoring their husbands as part of their feminine duties. However, Lucrece must seek an alternative voice in order to get revenge on Tarquin for her rape. In this instance, it is Hecuba’s image within the artwork, as Shakespeare demonstrates, that gives Lucrece power of voice outside of what is acceptably feminine. Through her suicide, she uses her body as a tool with which to voice her anger and desire for revenge on Tarquin. Imogen, because she is unaware of the violation of her private voice by Iachimo, remains within the realm of femininity. Voyeurism, as well, demonstrates that watching becomes speaking when an image is interpreted without consent. All three women, Lavinia by Marcus, Lucrece by Tarquin, and Imogen by Iachimo, have their voices manipulated and misrepresented by dominating patriarchal figures. While Shakespeare provides the audience an expected portrayal of gender roles in each of these works, he also challenges the audience to consider the validity of those roles by allowing each of the women to challenge the expected submissive position they initially embody.

## Works Cited

- Barkan, Leonard. *The Gods Made Flesh: Metamorphosis and the Pursuit of Paganism*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1986.
- Bate, Jonathan. *Shakespeare and Ovid*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1993.
- Dreher, Diane Elizabeth. *Domination and Defiance: Fathers and Daughters in Shakespeare*. Lexington, KY: UP of Kentucky, 1986.
- Enterline, Lynn. *The Rhetoric of the Body from Ovid to Shakespeare*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000. 39-90.
- James, Heather. *Shakespeare's Troy: Drama, Politics, and the Translation of Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997.
- Kahn, Coppelia. *Roman Shakespeare: Warriors, Wounds, and Women*. London: Routledge, 1997.
- Ovid. *Metamorphoses*. Trans. Allen Mandelbaum. San Diego: Harcourt, 1993.
- . *Fasti*. Ed. Sir James George Frazer. Cambridge: William Heinemann LTD, 1931.
- Shakespeare, William. *Cymbeline*. Eds. Herschel Baker et al. *The Riverside Shakespeare: The Complete Works*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997. 1569-1609.
- . *The Rape of Lucrece*. Eds. Herschel Baker et al. *The Riverside Shakespeare: The Complete Works*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997. 1816-1838.
- . *Titus Andronicus*. Ed. Jonathan Bate Croatia: Arden Shakespeare, 1995.



Wall, Wendy. "Disclosures in Print: The 'Violent Enlargement' of the Renaissance Voyeuristic Text." *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 29.1 (Winter 1989): 35-59.