

# BOUDICCA

By Joseph Schaedler



## CAST

C SUETONIUS PAULINUS Roman Governor of Britain  
Q PETILIUS CERIALIS Legate of the Legion IX Hispana  
CN JULIUS AGRICOLA Military Tribune under Suetonius Paulinus  
CATUS DECIANUS Roman Procurator of Britain  
C JULIUS ALPINUS CLASSICIANUS Later Procurator of Britain  
BOUDICCA Queen of the Iceni  
GWENIVERE & GWENDOLYN Daughters of Boudicca  
OWEN Uncle of Boudicca  
MYRDDIN Grandfather of Boudicca  
GAVIN Nobleman of the Iceni  
Iceni Noblemen and Warriors  
ARTHUR King of the Trinovantes  
ECTOR Cousin to Arthur  
Trinovan Noblemen and Warriors  
DUNOBEL Trinovan Senator of Camulot  
Roman and British Senators of Camulot  
MORGANO Son of Togido, Catuvellan Nobleman of Londin  
TOGIDO Father of Morgano, Catuvellan Nobleman of Londin  
TASCOBAN Catuvellan Nobleman of Londin  
Roman Merchants of Londin  
Catuvellan Noblemen of Londin  
Senators, Noblemen, Merchants, Townspeople, Tribesmen, Freedmen, Messengers,  
Heralds, Tribunes, Centurions, Officers, Soldiers and Warriors

## SETTING

Various parts of the Roman Province of Britain over the course of year 61 AD.

### ACT I

- SCENE 1: A Roman Camp in North Wales
- SCENE 2: The Isle of Mona at Night
- SCENE 3: Boudicca's House outside the Iceni Capital

### ACT II

- SCENE 1: The Roman Forum in Camulot
- SCENE 2: The Assembly in the Iceni Capital
- SCENE 3: The Assembly in the Trinovan Capital
- SCENE 4: The Roman Forum in Camulot

### ACT III

- SCENE 1: The Central Market in Londin
- SCENE 2: The Roman Castrum in Lindum
- SCENE 3: The Forum in Camulot
- SCENE 4: A Wood on the Ermine Way
- SCENE 5: Before Catus' House in Londin

### ACT IV

- SCENE 1: The Isle of Mona
- SCENE 2: The Forum in Camulot
- SCENE 3: The Central Market in Londin
- SCENE 4: The Border of Togido and Tascoban's Estates outside Londin
- SCENE 5: The Roman Camp in Venonae at Night
- SCENE 6: An Altar at the Grove of Andate outside Londin at Night

### ACT V

- SCENE 1: The Roman Position on the Battle Field near the Watling Way
- SCENE 2: The Briton Position on the Same Field
- SCENE 3: The Same Field
- SCENE 4: The Roman Camp outside Londin
- SCENE 5: A Field outside the Iceni Capital

ACT I  
SCENE 1

A Roman Camp in North Wales

*Enter stage right SUETONIUS, enter stage center AGRICOLA and DECIANUS.*

SUETONIUS:

Britain, her chill wind-battered mossy crags  
Now grow warm, thawed by the blazon of Rome,  
Whose standards bade on legion-men of worth  
Trooping from the balmy mid-sea's navel  
Out to our tribal neighbors of this earth,  
To bring our state of civilization  
As relief from their backward indigence.  
In our wake we grant them boons they never had,  
Roads with safe passage and boundless exchange,  
Purity, and part in our rites divine,  
Though we let them cling to their custom'd ways.  
All they need do is submit to our will  
As the greatest glory there is for men,  
And show their support in treasure and blood  
When our greatest good has cause to press them.  
Thus we grew an empire from sea to sea,  
Across the face of the disk of the world,  
And from Rome's core we radiated out  
To the orb's ends where Ocean sways his tide.  
Now then, on this cloud-choked tin shore so grim  
That waves should flee hence over the earth's rim,  
We practice our art on this culture dim.  
I have myself served with marked distinction  
Under a similar guidon's guidance.  
Caesar sent me south as legion's legate  
Against the blind-burnt egress of the Moors.  
I acted well and subdued their proud ranks,  
And for that now Nero promotes me here  
As the new governor of this backwood.  
The task I have at hand poses no pause,  
For these clans, though fractious, are fractured through,  
By their ceaseless inward tribal quarrels  
For which the only remedy needed  
Is the hard imposition of our ways.  
In their folly they only respect might  
And might is just what we have in surplus,  
With four full legions on this isle's corners  
They have no capacity to reject

Our aim to focus their idle output  
To building a truly Roman province.  
This realm is already girded with roads,  
And Londin town bears her nascent market.  
Yet it remains for our capital here,  
Camulot, to gleam with marbled polish  
As the symbol of our imperial right,  
While the last local rebels 'gainst our cause  
Learn to dread me and our legions' rebuke.  
Through four years we've drilled this inculcation  
In sweeping marches about these welsh swamps,  
Two under my own charge, driving to flight  
All insurgents before our stern classes  
Until now their last remnants amass arms  
Upon the western islet of Mona,  
Women and elder priests, feeble forces  
Built more for show than for battle's contest.  
Thither I will lead these two camped legions  
And decisively suppress their revolt,  
So these peoples may know their proper place  
Below us in a fresh era of peace.  
So shall I, Suetonius Paulinus,  
Govern th'affair with military flair,  
While it's for you, Catus Decianus,  
Being the province's procurator,  
To secure the requisite finances  
By effectively taxing the Britons  
For all the goods and services we need  
To make this place worthy of th'Roman race.

DECIANUS:

The locals all chafe at my extractions,  
Thinking of them as sordid privations  
And noting nothing of the fruits produced.  
They prattle on in their low guttural tongues  
About the sumptuous living we keep us  
At their drained expense - would they saw Rome's heights! -  
Yet their trusted chieftains draw like profits,  
Racking up debts from th'imperial purse  
To squander in grand pomp about their fiefs  
As they doom their own tribes to penury.  
Yet these debtor-regents still draw favor  
From the very same fellows they debase,  
Posing as icons of local splendor  
Despite the proof of their fighting failures  
Having lost these peoples self sovereignty

Wiser folk would have turned to sharper heads  
Or at least appreciate their besters,  
But leave it to Britons to miss the mark  
And fall upon a peripheral part.  
One northeastern tribe known as th'Iceni  
Has just now lost such an esteemed leader,  
Prasutagus by name, he wasted much  
That was not his, and delved deep into debt  
Through Caesar's generous munificence,  
Dulging thereby patience among his tribe.  
Satisfied by life so lavished, in death  
He bequeathed it to perpetuity  
By producing a will and testament  
Publicly declaring the even split  
Of all his estate and prosperity  
Between his surviving familiar heirs  
And the person of the emperor himself.  
Half to our lord, half to his own royalty,  
Whose chief now, his widowed queen Boudicca,  
Sets to suck afresh our imperial teat.  
By this demonstration of loyalty  
The deceased king intended to promote  
The continuation of amity  
Between Rome and his kin, complete with pay  
Provided in regular installments  
For a face of fealty-masked idleness.

AGRICOLA:

Is this not the nature of affairs here?  
In my brief tenure as military tribune,  
Though I've visited but few village posts  
In every one staffs some closed set of chiefs  
Who open their settlements to our rule  
For the steady supplement of a sum.

SUETONIUS:

True said, Agricola, yet by his tone  
I think Catus has some method in mind  
To alleviate our present burden.  
What's been improvised, what authority?

DECIANUS:

By authority of Caesar himself  
I'm installed to service the federal fisc  
With every right to act as I see fit  
In th'procuration of whatever wealth

My insight conjures as worth donation.  
I'm made my own authority out here  
To evaluate all property law  
In the final light of Roman interest.  
Now, as regards this Iceni affair:  
By the letter of the dead king's mandate  
No less than half of his probed possessions  
Becomes the direct property of Rome,  
And as such, it is our right to collect  
The full sum of this our inheritance  
Due immediately upon demand.  
Through this one acquisition we may both  
Better our state here and our stance at Rome,  
As our display of consequence for graft  
Will diminish these native minions' greed  
And lighten th'contributions we must spend,  
While likewise the heft of income attained  
So appends and appenders our treasury  
That its ultimate reception at court  
Appraises you to Caesar's golden ear  
As can apprise a most glorious career.

SUETONIUS:

Grand the particulars of this your plan!  
Great the genius that endowed its design!  
Glorious the fame that from it shall ensue!  
Yet some impediment must still exist  
As you are not in Iceni country,  
Instead among us here, well to their west  
With intent to go further westward still  
For the purpose of Mona's subjection.  
Since you proved the action within your rights,  
I expect this delay's for want of might.  
Tell, Catus, what number of troops you need?

DECIANUS:

My answer is a question of degree.  
Were my only object the king's household,  
My police would be force sufficient strong  
To make confiscations deficient weak  
And worthless for vicing any repute.  
But if I interpret his property  
To compass th'whole Iceni populace,  
Then would returns become most valuable,  
Perhaps even vast enough to eclipse  
The sum general Corbulo imported

As Rome's great hero of Armenia,  
Whence came to him Syria's plush luxury.  
However, such an escalated scope  
Demands that my corps gain augmentation  
By a maniple's worth of manpower  
At the very least if this will succeed.  
So I put it to you, Suetonius,  
Have you so many centuries to spare?

SUETONIUS:

I'm sure the due power can be arranged.  
Agricola, can you enumerate  
What dilutions have thinned our ranks so far?

AGRICOLA:

Sir, the Fourteenth Legion is at full strength,  
While the Twentieth's near ninety percent,  
Its Seventh and Ninth Cohorts but third staffed  
At one maniple remaining apiece.

SUETONIUS:

We'll keep the Fourteenth at its full value,  
Useful intact as my primary punch  
Backed by the Twentieth in assistance.  
Thus reserved, one of these partial cohorts  
May we dissolve outright from the campaign  
Without inviting dangers to our aim.  
Can you expound further the character  
Of both these units' centurions twain?

AGRICOLA:

Aye. The Seventh's two centurion heads  
Attest a blistering hateful aspect  
Shudderingly cruel and hostile throughout,  
While the Ninth's leading pair ne'er rage nor rue,  
But instead being wholly amoral both  
They work all as apathy incarnate.

DECIANUS:

The Seventh opts a vicious will to hurt,  
The shocking awe of which injury crows  
And prods its stunned witnesses t'obedience.  
Yet such abjection sows objection's seeds  
In the furrows of their brows, and produce  
Crop too thistled to harvest fresher fruit.  
However gross our income may be now



In this nearer term, we would further net  
Rather a populace cultivating  
Sustenant yields to justify this state  
Than one o'erwronged hatching plots t'supplant it.  
'Tis fear, not hatred, I'd implant them here.  
Thus the Ninth seems ideal to me suited  
To brutalize just as impartially  
As they will effectively, in which wake  
Our subjects will be the better pliant  
For provisioning what we shall next need.

SUETONIUS:

I grant the Ninth Cohort leave to decamp  
And go east with Catus, th'rest west with me.

AGRICOLA:

Aye, sir. Come sir Catus along with me.

*Exit stage center AGRICOLA and DECIANUS*

SUETONIUS:

Ah Corbulo, our rivalry revives.  
I battled Africans, you Germans fought,  
And while I was faring war here in Wales,  
You assumed the empire's Eastern command  
In response to the worst foreign crisis  
Aggressed against us this generation,  
When the Parthian king raised his kinsman  
Onto Armenia's buffering throne,  
So doing verged our hinternal frontier  
Against the edgy brink of invasion.  
Upon this tottered stage you set yourself  
Mixing opportunism and discipline  
Combined an assertion of Roman might  
So potent that you completely reversed  
Armenia to your direct control,  
With all its wealth enough to more than fund  
Any honor or office you desire.  
Now Britain borders no Persian power  
Capable of such critical hazard,  
Yet her soil does conceal such precious hoards  
As can endow the extractor with goods  
Parallel even to Corbulo's gains  
If not excel them, and by th'excellence  
Sufficient clout to option choice commands  
With potential to upper hand the man.

Such glory's my goal, to o'ergain his fame,  
Or else by failure engrave thus my shame!

*Exit stage right SUETONIUS.*

## SCENE 2

### The Isle of Mona at Night

*Enter stage right ROMAN SOLDIERS. Exit stage left ROMAN SOLDIERS. Enter stage right SUETONIUS and OFFICERS.*

SUETONIUS:

Welcome us to Mona, unhappy isle  
By these our 'stablished forces brought to trial  
In arms, whose verdicts punish capitally.  
Upon yonder crest facing woods beyond  
Our first ranks stake placements 'gainst th' foe within,  
While last-come the cavalry fills us full  
Fresh from our beachhead rear, where we gained hold  
Of this island's most promontory point,  
Which grasp shall span the whole territory  
By morning's end to this evening's campaign.  
All we need to begin is th' cavalry  
To juncture our preceding pedestrity.  
Tell me, magister, how arrives our horse?

OFFICER:

The most are in place, aye, though a part, no.

SUETONIUS:

What means this no? Tell all, though it sounds ill.

OFFICER:

Well, sir, the strait where'pon we flotilla'd  
Fames for furious implacability.  
And though our crossing passed o'er waters calm,  
Their barks swoll'd by a sudden chopping squall  
Which whelmed upon them such a sweeping surge  
That a portion had fallen overboard.  
An omen monstrous dire but for the hap  
That every submersed soul survived the swim  
Breathing to the shore, though so exhausted  
From th'exertion of their desperate strokes  
That they've no fight left in them for this night.  
And so I commanded their exclusion,  
Instading them to a beach-side respite

Attending health and news of our success.  
Such is to our rear, but now for the front,  
For look, Agricola comes from the fore.

*Enter stage left AGRICOLA and OFFICERS.*

SUETONIUS:

Well turned, tribune, how expresses our face?  
Already I know our headway thus far  
Has conveyed us forth by conflict unclashed.  
Such a sullen gloom does smother this space,  
Does dampen and dull all natural noise  
That whispers shout echoes about the place.  
Now, as day lulls sedated to evening,  
Nary a skirmish could have bustled up  
In the mute stillness, for I hear nothing.  
Yet as I know you to be audacious  
I'm sure we've attained in these daylight hours  
Some strategic advant to our array  
As will suffice to ensure our triumph  
Before Dawn next blooms her unfolding rose.  
So report, Agricola, what our moves  
Our detections, our determinations  
To this point of our forces' fruition?

AGRICOLA:

Upon completing yonder palisade  
We dispatched then twin surveillant cursions  
To circulate out and thorough explore  
The level plains girdling that forest's rim  
Wherein the rebel power awaits us.  
- And yea, your interpretation spoke true,  
Never was any battle lined 'gainst them. -  
Thus extended, posted and part returned,  
They have secured the fields clear of ambush  
And assured our main assault on the wood  
Free from complication to flank or rear  
Appearing from without the thicket's turf.  
Addit our cavalry in vigilant rounds  
Circling the core arboreal campaign,  
And there's no chance to retreat or escape  
For our foe on th'occasion of their rout.

SUETONIUS:

Well and good, all the gambit's within hedge.  
Surveys of the Monans must have gone in,

What resulting revelations came out  
On their formations and figurations?  
How do they defend their covering trees?

AGRICOLA:

Late-day probes into the silva confirm  
The Monans are massed in the dusky bosk,  
As myriad prickling fires sparkle its night.  
But oh gods the horrors by them illumed!  
Strange sights and swoonsome sounds from the shadows  
Make spectacles such as shudder heroes.  
Women in the manner of the furies  
Do range about their bonfires bloody tressed -  
Matted dreads with mud and ashen soot mixed.  
Likewise their cloaky garb with smut begrimed,  
While they brandish in their hands rude fire brands  
Incendiary with pitchy tar-born smoke.  
Also witnessed was their druid priesthood  
In assembly around some cultic grove  
Performing rites of vivid sacrifice  
On human victims willing and unglad.  
Thus they seek by these devotions to gain  
Supernal dedications of support  
For their case bellicose against our force.  
And the general ranks of this rebellion  
In the traditional British fashion  
Don uniform emblems identical  
By coloring their flesh a pallid blue,  
Which ghoulish tattoos memorialize  
The ghosts of their ancestors realized,  
As though the dead arise in their interest.  
Now this report of the natives' display  
Has well been published among our soldiers,  
The which so disturbs such a quantity  
And through this blood chill so wavers resolve  
That there's potential for mass defections  
If we should enter that wood on this night.

SUETONIUS:

But what the cause? Our men have seen too much,  
Done too much, faced too much, and beaten all,  
To cower now begulled by some belief  
In the mania of these gog-eyed rustics!  
No, don't fear this rabid extroversy  
Nor let their frenzied self capitations  
Invite delusions of martial prowess

Against our far potenter armaments,  
Whose hard military intervention  
Will rudestly expose these thugs' frailty  
When furious hysteria morphs to panic.  
Erratic at the core, therein's th' error.  
Nothing's virile in such volatility,  
Nay, 'tis the virus of fanaticism.  
Fanaticism is weaker than woman  
And every bit as variable - and more.  
In desperation they folly such faith  
That airy sprites will wisp them to victory.  
Just know this - we've our own demons with us  
Ones far steelier and more substantial,  
And those fans will crumble at first violence  
Wreaked in firmness by our gauntleted fists.  
Now our wrath comes iron-wrought and tempered hard,  
Forged adamant to endure every shock.  
For we are Romans, by Roman men sired,  
Whose brave forefathers did mettle most apt  
Far graver battles on far baser terms,  
Whence they devised our military methods  
Hot and hasty tested to perfection  
That not only saved them from briefened lives  
But broadened our mastery to win us th' world!  
So know yourselves, and remember your troops  
What sort of men they are, conquerors' sons  
Who don't hesitate to face hostile fronts -  
Certainly not minor players like these  
Long cornered here, remote from the world stage,  
Whose massiest compeers long ago fell  
Under our standards' first bared invasion.  
So now let's go out this night to that place  
To re-teach these stragglers our primacy,  
How they have provoked the wrong sort of men  
And what consequential heat we reply  
When, seizing their own terror tools of fire  
From graspless fingers, by our battery broke,  
We'll turn the reeky fumes of those sticks 'round  
To blazen their camps and torch their whole troupe,  
Lighting a beacon to Britain's failure  
A trophy of our dominion for all!  
Now, men, rise to arms and take to your posts!  
Victory's doubtless sure to come to our hosts!

*Exit all stage left.*

SCENE 3

Boudicca's House outside the Icenic Capital

*Enter stage center BOUDICCA and OWEN.*

BOUDICCA:

Nature breathes fresh blooming life o'er the land,  
Blasting off winter's crystallic frigors  
For mellowed airs to flush our fallow fields  
Blossomy ripe for new seminations.  
Feel how the hour for raw plantings draws nigh  
The which, if plown right in rich fertile seams  
May well product further cultivate projects  
And fuel more vital spurts that would spring forth  
Sequel rounds of youthful nativities  
As regenerations our populace  
Since time forgot, for 'tis simply the way.

OWEN:

Quite the boon, Boudicca my Queen, are you  
True to us all, conceding not to grief -  
Proper and consensual though it be  
At so tragic the loss of your husband  
For you thus pangful eyed to cast distressed  
As oft you've been visaged subsequently,  
Yet so oft can such grievance overgrim  
The griever, truer more the weightier the woe,  
And undermine all other due concerns  
Until random neglect perdits the whole.  
Extremest care can to carelessness term.  
Yet you, stricken of late so personal,  
Do slacken nothing from social concerns  
Nor prevent you from constant attention  
To your peoples' highest needs and deserts,  
The which worthies you the honor you bear:  
Regent monarch during your daughters' youth.

BOUDICCA:

Such is the character of royal souls  
Greater than the typical sort of self  
Who cares solely for a familial few  
Pettying all else as null triviality.  
But my family sense tends through the whole tribe  
And subjects me to my subjects' concerns  
As though they were my own, the which relieves  
In soothing my woes and humbling my joys.

The state makes me more than myself alone,  
Which makes the true meaning of majesty.  
Lightened up so from my private burdens  
By this enlightened grace privied th'elite,  
My primest duty – primer more than me –  
Becomes provision for the public weal.  
Absorbing all collective memories  
Borne farthest on from eras foremost gone,  
I reflect them back to th'community  
Upon those moments appropriate most,  
Through which key reflection, enaction them  
In manners ideallest for their success.  
Now time's ever vital in our affairs,  
When to procure, to stockpile or spendthrift,  
For feast or for ration, time tempos all,  
And th'harmony we keep with his rhythms  
Steady intervalled o'er our native soil  
Accords straight to our present survival  
Through the tempestry of terribler times.  
So now, the season for sowing's return  
Apparents intrinsic to my senses  
Who purpose thence to propose our nation  
Attend anew to th'old natural ways,  
And further, to dispense this discernment  
Also to Rome's colonials to our south.

OWEN:

What's how the Romans? Your vision farsights  
And eclipses local use, if you see  
Value in complexing our efforts thus  
By aiding those novel come occupants  
In their ongoing endeavor to transform  
Our once exclusive turf into their own.  
'Tis beyond me. Nay, leave them on their own  
To err the land's trial of learning her ways,  
And spare our innate climatic insight  
Which is one of the few advants we've left  
Against this injurious encroachment.  
If we give them our secrets of the soil  
The resulting popular swell bodes woe  
As th'expense of their ambitions widens  
To our deeper detriment. Why help them?

BOUDICCA:

We do this – we needs must do it – to thrive,  
For else if we maintain ourselves separate,

Backing divorce and shunning comity  
‘Tween our two parties o’er one common isle,  
Rome’s imparitied strength slopes such above  
That th’event certains a disastrous end.  
Look, Rome’s held us near a generation,  
In which occupation’s span they’ve managed  
Sufficient making and milling of food  
On the spot through their off outward techniques  
To supply copious muscle enforcement  
Of policy claims t’local supplements  
For the remainder of their alimence.  
Now, since their feed’s always full guaranteed  
Whether by farming on their part or ours,  
The greater share of crop themselves produce  
The lesser case to call for our portions  
The better the Britons’ prospects and chance  
Lest our character and customs wilter  
From the current and steady stream of fruits  
Despoiled by these tyrannic conquestors,  
The which if extended indefinite  
Would result the final ruin of our folk.  
The aversion of this dread destiny  
Demands we mold them liker unto us  
And match our observance of mother earth,  
Else stubborn silence will cost all regard.  
Nay, nearsight less yourself, lest the focus  
So blur out the wider vista beyond  
That blinded you let calamitous doom  
Creep in untoward entry from the edge  
Till when it clears the blot you’ve no defense.  
Have a care for all, or by th’outcasts fall.

OWEN:

Your sense revisions my contracted eye  
Clear from its too familiar perspective.  
Tellierscopic, you guide us myopic  
To broader outlooks more advantageous.  
But look! There’s a sight more particular:  
See, both your two young queen-coming daughters  
Scramble in rush, white frantic of aspect,  
Ahead to us here, while elder Myrddin,  
Simply my dad, grandly so yours, my niece,  
Stumbles aggravated chasing after.  
Surely it’s some sorry shamle of late  
Committed by your girls that stirs him so.



BOUDICCA:

Seems a pranking mischief raptured their minds  
Hot from conspiracy into action  
The which, by him uncovered premature,  
Goads them hasty to succor our mercy  
As prevention of his extreme complaint.  
Remorsed at the catching, though not the tempt,  
They'll fountain tears and excite quick blubbering,  
Drips vaguely hoped to water sympathies -  
Softeners of the inevitable due  
Verdict tolling apologetic penance.  
'Gainst this show, uncle Owen, harden heart,  
Yet granite you not totally senseless  
For decent is the daring of the deed  
As becomes that strong boldness which they need  
Burgeoned swell in their executive hearts -  
So we oughtn't despise it utterly  
Lest our new leaders lacken their courage  
And cripple the national character.

OWEN:

Right the sense in that, no denial mine.  
But now they reach us, outstretched arms implore.

*Enter stage right GWENIVERE and GWENDOLYN.*

GWENIVERE [rushing to grasp Boudicca] and GWENDOLYN [rushing to grasp Owen]:

Help! Help us! Help! [crying]

GWENIVERE [still grasping Boudicca]:

We're doomed mama! We're doomed to the undone!

GWENDOLYN [still grasping Owen]:

It's over, uncle, all over for us!

GWENIVERE and GWENDOLYN:

We're lost unless you help!

GWENDOLYN:

Unless it's now!

BOUDICCA:

Ah, my two dear Gwens, darlings of my heart,  
What's the crisis that brings out all this howl?

GWENIVERE:

Granderfather wraths fulsomely unbased,  
Stern and shocksome glaring below his brows  
Double like ember coals of brimstone gloam!

GWENDOLYN:

He hates us for following his model,  
Jealous cruel we practice his self same arts -  
He means us death!

GWENIVERE:

He comes to deliver!

GWENIVERE and GWENDOLYN:

Oh mama mama! Uncle ah!

GWENDOLYN:

Don't do us in! Ward us two off from doom!

OWEN:

None'll become done in, ne'er by none of us  
No matter how stern the inception woes.  
Even a death we'll abide, for we're kin.

BOUDICCA:

Just remember that, and your kin will act  
More for yourself than your own self, and more  
The whole community will act like kin  
For good or ill, for such is family.

OWEN:

So fear not grand Myrddin, as he's for you  
Nor seeking trauma more than's just to do,  
Never mortal nor nothing hurtful harsh.

GWENDOLYN:

But his rage! How he steams up such a storm  
Bursting all category, crackling ruin  
With violent thundering madness striking blind!

GWENIVERE:

Striking clear out of our lives! He will kill,  
For his mood's uncompassed red in aspect  
Nothing like the man in temperament sane!  
Oh he comes! Does a dagger flash? Save us!

*Enter stage right MYRDDIN.*

MYRDDIN:

Their hands! Grasp them their hands! Lest th'evidence  
Lately purloined from my pharmacy casks  
Gets swallowed to utter their extinction! [stops and pants exhaustedly]

BOUDICCA:

Calm, their hands hold naught but our roben folds  
Be calm, and becalm these girls th'fright they treat  
For they distress at you as the reaper.  
Vow us first you object no ill in you.

MYRDDIN:

Forfend any harm to either darling!  
Nay, 'tis for harm's prevention that I'm here.  
As caught within my apothecary  
They rummaged I know not what germen pox.

GWENIVERE:

We've nothing of yours!

MYRDDIN:

You'd something before,  
Yea, when I called you to come from my house,  
And you two squealed out a fast streak past me  
Possessed by panic like some quarry capt.  
Weighed then on me numerous extremities grave -  
The massivity of your shrillful fright  
Deemed a heavy intent to your actions,  
As too the preponderous toxicity  
Of most my herby extracts enstored  
Burdens me so radically with worry  
That I exhaust health in hasty pursuit  
Desperate for salving your saplings' well being.

BOUDICCA:

Clear's the care you shower on us, grand sire,  
Clear's your loving sense towards, and clearly  
There's more to this, girls, for you yet to fess -  
A guilty tale and blameful acceptance  
Which opens the gateway to atonement  
Wherein warm gracious restoration waits  
All penitent comers unto its hold.  
So speak contrition, say what was taken  
Say what for, what purpose the poison worths

However unacceptable may be.  
Was it cruelty, harmful escalation  
Raised in response to some insult begrudged?  
Was your target noxious or mortal wrong?

GWENIVERE:

Mortal no! Never to harm him ever!  
Or harm anyone's beyond my basest  
Impulsion, nay 'twas no harm in my mind.

BOUDICCA:

What then was? Say and open yourself up  
To our open hearts, opener the more  
Now our worst fears vapor in wrath's absence.  
But do tell us what caused these escapades?

GWENDOLYN:

'Twas love! 'Twas th'allure of love that drew us  
To loot the bitters that soured granderpa!

GWENIVERE:

Sissy shish! Oh 'barrassment's blush, oh blow  
To my heavy humbled indignity.

GWENDOLYN:

But they're on top of us and holding down,  
Unmoving their stance 'till we've confessed up.

GWENIVERE:

Our aim was beetle dust, whose properties  
Ground and peppered comprise aphrodisiac  
Quality upon the consumer's wits.  
To fire someone's fancy avidly warm  
Under its influence - this was our hope.

OWEN:

Well, they show their mother's selfsame foresight,  
Intuiting alike to timings ideal  
For plantings towards plantings to come thereon.  
Attentive also to loric Myrddin  
And his extensive medicinal supplies,  
They timely seized this opportune moment  
To improve their pursuit of life's splendors.

MYRDDIN:

Yet they pursue the venture recklessly,

For unacquainted with this desired drug  
Nor warned of its precise particulars  
They risk mistaking some more toxic root  
For their prize, and by application kill  
The exact man they would enliven most.  
Even if they have the correct compound,  
This agent's mortal, and by overdose  
They would likewise murder the ingester.  
This activity is far too adult  
For unwatched practice by nearly children  
New borne to the cusp of adolescence.

BOUDICCA:

Aye, kids, we love your industrious airs,  
But this dare demands more whole composure  
Than yet is found in your still too few years.  
Be patient in this and be forgiven.

GWENIVERE:

We relent, ma, and cast the scheme aside.

GWENDOLYN:

Aye, such feasible harm rejects its trial.

OWEN [looking off stage right]:

Oh gods! Forget this light settled affair  
And see what darker travail now impends.  
A revelation chilling to my heart  
Emerges over the hill come from town -  
Armored men, perhaps twenty strong, Romans.

MYRDDIN:

Horrors result when Romans advance armed,  
Warly slaughter wrought for rapinous ruin  
Shall pierce our tendons through to the marrow.  
Vile of intent, potent of force, hark woe  
Unto our people, for they target us.

BOUDICCA:

That single togate personage heading  
Their martial corp airs political charge,  
Condemnation of some imagined crime  
Indemning final profit at our cost.  
Here he closes to unfold the sentence,  
Against which we've no immediate defense  
And so we must pliant submit to this

Unjustest of deprivations. Here comes.

*Enter stage right DECIANUS carrying canes and SOLDIERS with swords drawn.*

Hail senior magnate, pray lax your soldiers  
As we've not weapons, nor real nor ideal,  
Nor e'er make offense to Rome's boundless state.

DECIANUS:  
Offensive is this suckling flattery  
Heaped of late on your tempting at treason!

BOUDICCA:  
Ah! Dreadly toned this intolerant strain  
Contemptuous fired at my guiltless face.  
Oh lord, beg your pardon, pard this poor fool!

DECIANUS:  
Foolish indeed to perjure poverty  
When begging amidst one's own luxury.  
All the which theftly you pretended from us,  
But we gave not just giving, nay, bargained  
Routine over these last passing decades  
To secure the solvency of our peace,  
Possible only through the absolute  
Assured predomination of our rule  
Sovereign supreme over all abiding  
Within the bounds of our heightened regime.  
But this sacred covenant you did burst  
Through that willful testament declaring  
All yourselves our halfway peerly equals  
Expecting such favor indefinite  
Unto the end of days. So you betrayed  
Our most essential bond, inspiring like  
Repetition in each minor magnate  
Whose cumulation threatens to threadbare  
The covering canvas of our prelature  
And so tatter the imperial skein  
That the realm's pacifism dangers rupture  
Not just on Britain but across the globe!  
Rome's social order hierarchs us all  
Static in rankings to sustain fortune,  
Degrading all Britons merely servants  
To support us the overlords above,  
Whose higher tiered ambits bestly do fit  
To enprosper the community whole.

This you've unposted by usurpation  
Beyond such sturdiness you'd propped before,  
Tottering reliance from numberless more  
Unless we punish you severestly  
And direct entwine shameful consequence  
Onto every report now flighting broad  
Of this your overambitious exploit.  
Though worded by will of your late lost spouse,  
Complicit you knew and knowing endorsed  
Its deep and debilitating outcome  
And so are malicious and without faith  
Owed the penalty reserved for traitors,  
Or you're unsound of mind, fancifully touched,  
Dreaming up some bonnity to the deed,  
The which requires coercive correction  
To remember your basic proper place.  
Either deceiving us or your own self  
Through ignorance, I've arrived to ensure  
You understand the error of your ways,  
And condemn as fits your offense, with all  
Rough crudelity to salvage the state.

BOUDICCA:

Oh horrid effect from horrid cause brought,  
That his death to my damnation descends!  
Most awe-provoking minister of rule,  
Wholly innocent we misdid the deed  
And but new discovering its disaster  
We regret our edict, reject the claim,  
And with humbled tongues beseech compassion  
Gentle your justestly valid judgment,  
Inhering too my meekly made consent  
To endorse th'punishment so mercified.

DECIANUS:

Mercy, you cry, auditing still unclued  
Inattention to the matter's substance.  
You slaves did rebuke your very masters  
Plainly, without even sense to sense th'wrong,  
Which demands the harshest retribution  
Most publicly applied. Mercy's denied.  
I'll mercy your lives, but all else is mine.

MYRDDIN:

Please, sir, have our all we give -

DECIANUS:

Have this, then! [strikes Myrddin, who falls to the ground]  
What we leased you took from us unwilling.  
Justice serves only if we take in turn  
All our take likewise 'gainst your wills, like this! [strikes Myrddin again]  
This will not go well or easy from you  
For more must go than any would offer,  
Lest through drop sopping pity we level  
Ourselves recrimed with irresolution  
In rumors of treachery's attempt here,  
The which would retempt fresh retry elsewhere  
Leading bloody to uncivillian strife  
Infinitely worse in atrocity.  
Only by this sentenced violation  
May we such future violence prevent,  
To the which today your whole tribe must yield,  
Else the state falls asunder, and you with't.  
E'en as we speak my corpus collectors  
Presently patrol your full countryside,  
And for each dwelling they retain license  
To approach, extract and destroy at will  
Any person or property contained,  
Summing to the half of your possessions.  
We execute both the letter of law  
And of your own selfsame will – half to Rome.  
Assuming then you keep thorough well hid  
Half your values covert from our coverage,  
All finds are ours, the buried rest's your share.  
But for you Boudicca, I've come my self,  
To ensure that as chief instigator  
You recognize the reason for these pains,  
By which recognition, avoid repeat.  
Now to it - These men live separately near.  
You men there - Escort these two bondsmen out  
To their houses to witness them despoiled.  
Handle them as rough as their tempers need.

[Soldiers pick up Myrddin and separate Owen from Gwendolyn, and begin to lead them off stage right]

And you men - Go enter this home and take  
What you find worth. Take these children with you,  
And take their childhood from them too, its yours.

[Soldiers advance on Gwenivere and Gwendolyn]



GWENDOLYN [rushing to grasp Boudicca, with Gwenivere still grasping Boudicca]:  
Ah, mama!

BOUDICCA:  
No! Dreadful potentate, no!  
That barbarous obscenity usurps foul!

OWEN:  
Oppressive tyrant! Despotic and vile!  
This vice undoes you illegitimate!

DECIANUS:  
My, how the serfs dissent overmuch still,  
Unsensed to their subservient station.  
Demonstrate to him th'invalidity  
Of his too protestant tongue. Break his mouth.

[a Soldier strikes Owen in the face, Owen swoons on his feet still in the Soldiers' grasp]

How awestruck man becomes when new enthralled.  
Enough now, take them away to their fines.

*Exit stage right SOLDIERS grasping MYRDDIN and OWEN.*

[Soldiers grasp Boudicca, Gwenivere and Gwendolyn and separate them from each other.  
The Soldiers grasping Gwenivere and Gwendolyn begin to lead them off stage center]

GWENIVERE and GWENDOLYN [being led off]:  
Stop it! No! Mama help! Why, oh gods, why!

BOUDICCA [still being grasped]:  
Never gods! Babies, my babies, my babes!

*Exit stage center SOLDIERS grasping GWENIVERE and GWENDOLYN.*

I damn you to the dust for this, devil!

DECIANUS:  
On the contrary, queenly quaint, 'tis you  
Who stands condemned, the which we'll deal hereon.  
First, men, bind her hands together – tight. Good.

[the Soldiers grasping Boudicca begin to tie her hands together]

See, girl, when a slave defies their master,  
Be th'base servant head of house or field drudge,

That lord has full executive privilege  
To discipline th' fault just as he prefers,  
Even if unto the death of the doule.

BOUDICCA:

Oh, do me through! Do me to the decease!  
I'd much more that perfected vacuum gain  
Than th' gravelled aftermath of this life lost!

DECIANUS:

Nay, dream nothing of annihilation,  
For the ministry's not doomed you to die.  
Rather, administering masterful means  
Of corporal coercion we'll rectify  
Your crooked-bent course of prior bias  
Back to th' straightward path of obedience,  
In which living you'll attend better use.  
Now, whether the superior be man  
Or agent of state, the sanction's the same  
As 'tis commonly dispensed by the rod,  
Whose mutilations spare the body most  
While its sharps rebuke the rebellious mood,  
Although it can be sufficient applied  
To kill the offending lackey outright,  
Should they still obdure in obstinacy  
Throughout the periods of its purgations.  
Now two such canes have I in hand for you,  
To crutch your fallen character back up  
Into a more agreeable standing  
On the spot, where this post will finely pose  
As the pillar of your due chastening.  
Now, men, tether her hands high upon it.

[The Soldiers grasping Boudicca tie her hands up to the post on stage]

Aye, lash her up for the lashes to come.  
Good then, and here's a shaft for you, [hands out a rod] and you. [hands out a second rod]

To your stations. Become the lictors now,  
As do I the doctoral overseer.  
Witness, Boudicca, these two retainers,  
Wielding th' true scepters of your majesty.  
Behold them, for beholden you are too,  
Like attendant to this stately service  
Set to draw the vital balm out. To it -  
You are pronounced here guilty of the crime

Of injury to the greatness of Rome,  
Done through your defiant declaration  
Of parallelity 'tween you and Caesar,  
Whose majestic hegemony needs  
Be as singular as 'tis primary.  
For this deep upsetting unsettlement  
We decree you deserve flagellation  
Punitive to the degree of ten strokes  
Whose rotations shall be delivered here  
Full upon your passionate exposed back,  
With possibility for increasement  
Directly thereafter at will. Begin.

[Soldiers take turns whipping Boudicca for 5 lashes]

Hold, now, halt while I tell a truth to her.  
Boudicca, when slaves serve their masters well,  
They can well expect to be treated well,  
But this half-conducted ill treatment serves  
As result of your disservice done us,  
Preferring advance of your petty tribe  
O'er the grandity of Caesar's empire  
Whose upraisal duties you most supreme,  
Before these baseless mediocrities.  
Consider this while your sentence completes.  
Spur her cognition on, men. Continue.

[Soldiers take turns whipping Boudicca for 5 more lashes]

Well worked, my men. Stand down a set's repose.  
And Boudicca, weary conscious throughout,  
Perhaps now can we conclude these sore strains  
Or else could your suffering resume renewed.  
All hangs on th'attitude you here assume:  
If moved amenable or hostile still,  
Critically rash or mended contrite,  
Repentant or remorseless, I'll know you,  
How correct your consideration's come,  
Through th'evidence of your response deposed  
To this curious prompting inquiry.  
So answer me my remark, Boudicca -  
Who in their musting might do you serve most?

BOUDICCA:

I serve most those who serve my people most,  
And I grant 'tis true, Rome's steeled potency

Exalts you to premium position,  
But such merit's made of more than mere might.  
Yea, 'tis a condition conceived from care  
And raised adult through fostering cherishment,  
Molded as much of generous dotings  
As of regulative strictures composed.  
Now there's nothing of that warm charity  
In your self-serving conduct done today,  
Only haughty expansion 'pon our necks.  
I will serve you, but loving it, never.

DECIANUS:

Querulous still, e'en as th'pillory racks!  
Disquieting, such disdain ratchets up  
Our vexation, and requisites we crack  
Correspondent racketing retorts back  
Down on you, whose ill pondered scorn compounds  
This proscribed chastisement duplicate  
To a full score, the which but yet half timed  
Leaves ten lashes still more to go to you.  
Stripe this woman's decadence down. Go to.

[Soldiers take turns whipping Boudicca for 10 more lashes]

Howso loveless should you obstain us aft,  
At least do yourself the service of thought  
To recognize our value, Boudicca,  
And apprize us up to our heighty loft.  
Though brutishly coarse our batteries might be,  
We gentle e'en in these brutalities  
Milder more than any autocrat else,  
For we spare you lives we've permit to take,  
Lives most would've taken, lives we might still,  
If e'er again you fail obedience.  
So restore your lapsed allegiance to Rome  
And peaceful live under our leniency,  
Or dare insuborn again, and I swear  
Our reprimand'll eradicate your clan

*Enter a SOLDIER stage center.*

SOLDIER:

We've completed our varied tasks in full.  
As each beast beladens burdensome piled  
By th'monetary mobiles we've transceived.

DECIANUS:

Grand details. March them on to the townstead  
To mobilize out these assets restored.  
Leave the dame as is, to contemplate this.  
Switch allegiance, lest our switches return.

*Exit stage right DECIANUS and SOLDIERS.*

BOUDICCA:

Low lays the hand that has driven these blows,  
Low fallen far dives our debasement down,  
Downtrodden so, I conceive now at last  
What villainy consumes Rome's regency,  
Where all welfare promised th'community  
For concluding subjection's premised change  
They'll all unjust interested retake back  
While we descend unto servitude's stoop  
Lastly left with naught but slavery's end.  
Yet I'd also lived broadened by freedom,  
Felt her permissive liberality  
More luxurious than any coinage  
And better abling than th'best satrapy,  
How ever being free makes free forever  
And as one free, I'm ennatured the right  
To avenge these most undeserved done wrongs.  
Yea, by th'passion afflicted me and mine,  
I'm mad impassioned for murderous vengeance  
And devote my entire self to her cause,  
E'en to the death of my ruined self and kin,  
Just to first wreak answering devastation  
On Rome's every quester responsible  
For this my dishonorable enslavement.  
To the which end pray you reconceive me,  
You demon crafters of the soul's contours,  
Exchange here the matron for the marshal  
To birth me anew a captain of war.  
Dry up my every duct, lest by them sopped  
I soften and foil my resolution  
Of commitment to this revolution.  
Supplant within those channels rancorous bile,  
Flushing goads of wrath whose jaundicial bite  
Hones my purview th'keener to contraset  
My stance intolerating Rome's presence.  
Remold my outward aspect monstrous more,  
Cautionary case to despair my foes,

While to my allies arousing boldness.  
Make me horror - stiffen my skin to scale,  
Razor these nails and rasp them rough as claw,  
Glitten mine eyes a flashing gaze to daze  
My adversaries as though th'basilisk  
Comes face to face contesting monarchy,  
A medusa to chill th'Romans still stone,  
Bellow my voice most of all ravenous  
To crow up our case to needed action.  
Harshen me to incarnation ideal  
For conducting the usages of war,  
Let my incitements exhort critical  
Masses to unity in common pique  
Of resentment against the Roman throne,  
Pathing forth the way to all out conflict,  
And I at their head. I must do't - uprise  
As th'justest course left for the best in us,  
And let's requite their worst galling misdeeds  
With such venom as our spleens can produce.

*Enter stage right OWEN.*

OWEN:

Oh gods, my queen! [rushes to Boudicca and unties her hands] Oh woe, my lady, woe,  
They're beyond mere curses for this deep wrong!

BOUDICCA:

Aye, uncle, 'tis one we've need to right now.  
I've resolved to rouse the roughest response.  
Call up a council of Icenii lords,  
Where I'll declare our case 'gainst Rome for war.  
Convey me back home, and thence on to town.  
From there we'll cast this flagrant menace down!

*Exit stage center BOUDICCA and OWEN.*

End of ACT I

ACT II  
SCENE 1

The Roman Forum in Camulot

*Enter stage left DUNOBEL and SENATORS, enter stage right DECIANUS and SOLDIERS.*

DECIANUS [aside to a Soldier]:  
How now, what means this gross receptive throng?  
So grave are they in aspect, so upset,  
That I'm certain sure I'll be loathe to learn  
What be the origin to such concern.  
Our local ally Briton Dunobel,  
Lately made lordship for his loyalty  
Defected ours from his Trinovan tribe  
Who were this colony's previous occupants -  
He stands at their fore expecting audience  
From us there to hear his tale. Well, lets to't.

[approaches Dunobel]

Salvé, senior Dunobel, pray tell us  
Why attends this frow-faced crowd our passage?

DUNOBEL:  
A tension has attouched our colony  
Here in Camulot with anxieties  
Most attenuating the former peace,  
For numerous portents, all dire of content,  
Frequently did apparit unto our  
Scarce sustaining senses their messages,  
Foul impending our destruction to come.  
The first fantasy came on audibly,  
When last we'd synoded in th'senate house  
Then did tongues most curious our Curia claim  
As voices demonic permeated th'place.  
Initially whispers, then risen to chants,  
Fiendish throughout, these empty acoustics  
Accosted th'assembly to dispersal  
Distressed to th'extreme by this bedlam sprung.

FIRST SENATOR:  
He tells true, as we all can testify,  
For the senate was then in full session  
And every good man did then apprehend

Clear the sonic afflictions of that day,  
Whose murmurs etch forever memorized  
So long as my mind contemplates aught grim.  
And I recall the words were Britannic,  
Choked with their unfamiliar caks and gaks,  
The which facture connotes native unrest  
Concentrated upon our township here.

DUNOBEL:

And there's more. Simultaneous came reports  
That the town's theater echoed curdling shrieks  
Out into the surrounding streets and squares  
Mixing angry shouts and cries of misery  
As though some massacre occurred within.  
None would then dare enter the macabre site,  
Though crowds on every corner pervigiled,  
Until th'din died out and bold force went in  
To find nothing but the stones desolate.  
Such were the sounds. Visions spectered us too  
Out on the waterfront, where from the wharf  
Townsmen and women appalled at the view  
Of a grisly and gruesome spectacle,  
Though I'd been kept away and saw them not.

FIRST SENATOR:

Would I were so fortunate as to 'scape  
The miasmic profanity of seeing  
The awful horrors shown in those waves.  
A whole city ethereal appeared,  
Camulot's duplicate in her details,  
Reflected submergent in the river's tide,  
And oh what terrible transformations  
Were underwent within that water's glass!  
She'd turned to ruin, cinders and rubble lapped  
By th'spectral fluorescence of opal flames,  
While inky seepage like black fuming smoke  
Exuded to engulf th'sembled skyline  
Till the whole exhibit muddied so dark  
As to prevent further speculation.  
Then did the scene shift to grosser display  
As from the murk buoyed countless bodies up  
To the surface, pallid and limp adrift,  
Some enveloped in senator's togas  
Stained and slashed to shreds, all hemorrhaging blood  
Whose crimson blooms spread to pollute marooned  
Th'whole estuary, from which defilement



None will now hazard use for draw or drink.

SECOND SENATOR:

I'd been there too, and he recounts all true.  
Know that I'd served a full twenty year term  
In my soldierly service to the state,  
Pilum in my palm, cuirass on my chest,  
Face to phalanxious face, got and begot  
Many a dreadful terribility,  
Yet not once swayed I from my fortitude  
To conduct our charges despite th'danger,  
For wars are simply stratagems of men  
By worldly reason readily underlaid.  
But in these godly dooms of late discharged  
There underpins strange and potent motives  
Far beyond th'account of mortal reckoning,  
Which by their malicious hostility  
Do paler my cheeks than all the ghastrlies  
Conducted in those scored battles of old,  
For these are imprecations supernal  
Whose powers outfeat e'en the strongest of men,  
Let alone our eldered bare campment here,  
Targeted for imminent catastrophe.

DECIANUS:

My good veteran, your hardy service,  
Indeed th'braveries you've all marshaled afield,  
I know well, and am impressed with honor  
To operate my office on your behalf,  
But these details cross th'confines of credence  
And invite the charge of credulity.  
No doubt some oddities occurred of late,  
But abnorms anommel us every day,  
Merely to be promoted or dismissed  
More by the caprice of popular preference  
Than any fictive agencial intent,  
And without any relevance either way  
To whatever events resulting sue.  
'Tis your own perceptions of the routine  
That have become portentially askewed  
And invent prodigies from plain affairs.  
Certain these all are simple incidents  
Magnified improportionally complexed  
So that whistling winds into whispers warp,  
Multiplied the more by massy frenzy  
Into hollering shouts and riotous turmoil.

Thus terror's self twists tranquility turbulent.  
Likewise with these visions in the water.  
Sure then was some sediment common to th'stream  
Transmuted through some queer tricks of the light  
Into much more malignant materials  
By your impressionable observing minds.  
The reason for this ease of hysteria  
Seems as clear to me as proper for you,  
Considering your precarious position  
Hinged here 'pon the fringe of our influence  
Where th'Iceni territory adjoins  
Immediate t' your north, and where 'tis well known  
How my men late made our hostile incourse  
So provocative as must have incurred  
Enmity in their hearts 'gainst th'name of Rome,  
Perhaps hatred sharp enough to sponsor  
Some reactive necine counteraction  
Happen here, displaced upon your city  
As convenient close and too little fenced  
To repulse their revengeant assault back.  
Stanced thus at the plausible brink of war,  
This critical atmosphere's subjection  
Can naturally breed those trepid concerns  
That are quickly wont to conceive concepts  
Fresh ready to reinterpret drastic  
The day's many harmless mundanities  
Into phenomena more menacing,  
Omens from origins ordinary.  
More to – th'condition's communicable,  
Contaiged from each tensed individual  
To th'whole community, magnificent  
Compounding its calamitous effect  
By basic means of communication,  
The which you've too well employed here lately.  
That such normal defect should spiral so,  
This the real marvel, this the monster is.  
I tell you, both sorts of your dreamt up foes,  
Both those of heaven and the ones on earth,  
Are naught so substantial as to scare at.  
These celestials are mere mendacity,  
And as for your irked Iceni neighbors,  
They've not the vicinity of valor  
In them, nor such vigor remotely close  
To those ghosted potency possessors  
You'd faced and felled in your darger days.  
Yea, 'tis from such survived circumstances

Whose war hosts remembered in full array,  
Lives old lost, you foundless revive anew  
Recalling them here, recoiling therefrom,  
That you falsely append this imminence  
Truly without any basis behind.  
Rather, reckon this proof of their frailty:  
I led in a civilian agency  
Barely backed by a military jot  
But few hours gone direct to their heartland,  
And thus deep penetrated did manage  
To wrest my costly exactions in full  
Among their o'ernumerous presence there.  
Aye, outnumbered but in no way outmatched,  
For though they decidedly abhorred it,  
No composure of opponent arms formed,  
Nor did my scattered scavenger squads meet  
Any detached posture of resistance  
Throughout our slow scrutiny thoroughly crawled.  
Thus proved the Iceni their feebleness  
In how their whole nation bowed defenseless  
To the raptions of our company's raid,  
Debunking themselves far too offenseless  
To mission any detachment thereafter  
Purposed to quarrel such so grander a mass  
Of Romans agglomerated as this colony,  
Whose influential sphere far outshades  
Th'obscurities our slim crew slightlier-casts,  
Precisely by which satellary scarceness  
Notwithstanding we triumphant victoried  
Over these Iceni's full plentitude,  
As so could you, as all parts but you know,  
So calm this alarm, lest you cause your harm.

*Enter stage right MESSENGER.*

DUNOBEL:

Hail, what hap markable for heralding  
Prompts your approach to proclaim th'novelty?  
Unfold us the revelation entire.

MESSENGER:

My sirs, a newest accident befell  
As unclued by any prior sign of stress  
Our triumphal statue of Victory  
Posited beside th'easterly portal  
Broke clear from her pedestal and collapsed

Just as Catus' plunder laden party  
Passed in file before her limestone facade.

DUNOBEL:

Lo, here's yet another precursive curse  
Crashed in upon us attumulary,  
Spontaneous timed to counter your response  
As it furthers Camulot's despondence.  
These afflictions are no fictions, but facts,  
Incidents inconceivably condensed,  
Culminal to what woe is still unknown.  
Mark these marvels, Catus, for what they are:  
Sure symbols for impending damnation.

DECIANUS:

Quite contrary, too darling Dunobel,  
Here's no sign of scandal calamitous,  
Rather 'tis the index of our success,  
For nicene Victoria did nicely gaze  
Upon th'long pomp of our ingotten ores,  
Of stones and gem studs, the tools and toys,  
All won through her art. By this convicted  
The suiting urge in her glorious heart  
To apport some predation hers proper,  
The which so impelled her after said gains  
That she tore from her impeding pediment  
And foundation free crashed prostrately down.  
That timeless adage has it backwards, see -  
'Tis to the spoils that the Victory goes,  
So it seems, not the other way around.  
Just so shall her desire attain its form,  
For we'll change her bare lime to marble gilt  
Through devotion of th'scruplest of trimmings  
From the vasty massive values we've claimed  
By our valorous work. So seek no more  
Morals within these murky accidents  
Whose frequency is mere coincidence,  
Empty of intent and aimlessly spent.

DUNOBEL:

Set these too dense disturbances aside,  
Yet such comfort boldens but one well fared  
For Londin's far safer internity,  
Where Britons are as like to strike their first  
As Ethiopes by bright Egypt begrudged.  
If you would becalm our perturbation,

Conspicuous our strategic deficiencies:  
This open undefensible plain,  
With the temple of divine Claudius  
Our only fortification in the forum,  
And less troops on site than you now bring through,  
Nor ditch nor rampart to mural the town.  
Consider this and upon it consent  
To serve a donation of guardians,  
Decreasing your sum to accrue our few.

DECIANUS:

If but to allow would effect its end,  
Their command by command would change today,  
But my commission is one conditioned  
To guarantee these entitled soldiers  
Direct proceed to Londin's pursed markets,  
There to make their portionate shares  
From the profitable liquidation  
Of our confiscated acquisitions  
In the commerce of peacekeeping th'empire.  
Only once this compact is transacted  
Can they render their services hither,  
The which I shall approve most immediate,  
But which to expedite with utmost haste  
Needs our band's dispatch from this place at once.  
Sound summons, call Londin's course. Valé sirs.

*Exit stage right DECIANUS and SOLDIERS.*

DUNOBEL:

Pray Mercury speeds you in march and mart,  
Lest too tardy aid stirs up trouble's start.

*Exit stage left DUNOBEL and SENATORS.*

## SCENE 2

### The Assembly in the Iceni Capital

*Enter stages left and right ICENI NOBLEMEN, enter stage right MYRDDIN, enter stage left GAVIN.*

GAVIN:

Oh most reverend primogenitor dear!  
How do the ladies fare? Have you seen them?

MYRDDIN:

I have, noble young Gavin bold. They live,  
Though huddling so clammed within sadness' shade,  
All former personal sparks sombered extinct,  
Their starking sight would perplex your fond breast  
Enraged beyond extreme, too hateful hot  
For vengeance to sense out means to reach th'end.  
'Tis the worst, but they live, give thanks for that,  
And pray they'll be somewhat themselves someday.

GAVIN:  
Enraged e'en at the thought! Vexed with contempt  
Against those culprits - so surely we all!  
Attribe me the essence of Nemesis,  
Like whose dark zeal mine nor relents nor yields,  
But 'scapeless shall bound our retribution.  
We must make answer, to make them answer -  
All whose conspiring commissioned this wrong,  
And all whose complacence condoned it's run!

*Enter stage center OWEN, then BOUDICCA.*

MYRDDIN:  
Now peace, Gavin. Hear our vindicatrix.

OWEN:  
Attend, my fellows, attend us audient,  
For the queen wills this address exhortant.

BOUDICCA:  
Now, o neighbors, now have we lastly learned  
Slavery to Rome, we who'd only known  
The freedom of our ancestors before.  
When the Romans first came giftbearing here,  
They promised us peace and prosperity  
Living full free, but we see how empty  
Their promises are now as they empty  
Us bare out of our hardestly-saved stores,  
Proving how poverty without master  
Far betters the wealth got in slavery.  
Once we had but one king monarchical,  
Whose exactions were both light and valid,  
But now we have two cowardly rulers  
Who drain us heavily and unjustly.  
The one's centurions wrong our persons,  
While the other's slaves take our property.  
Count our losses tolled bereft under them -

Our possessions are taxed off as tribute,  
These most and greatest are gone already.  
Our land's tilled pastures bedole their regime.  
Our kids and brethren taken by levies,  
Our wives and sisters are taken by lust.  
Our bodies and hands are taken for duties,  
Toiling on their roads and inside their mines  
Suffering their blows and insults all the while.  
And when our last use is spent exhausted,  
They'll make cause to attack us further still,  
For as they fight th'rich for greedy avarice,  
So will they th'poor for prestige and glory.  
Thus this hateful condition has no end  
But the wretched clutch of oblivion –  
Slaves forever 'till the constricted close.  
Thus the Romans are plunderers of the world  
Whose advances waste everything they find.  
Being sold but once into open slavery  
Is better than this repeating ransom  
For an empty titled guise of freedom  
Under Rome, buying and feeding anew  
The core organs of slavery every day.  
Being killed and dying but once thanatized  
Is better than this living death as slaves,  
Where e'en death brings grounds for more fees to Rome.  
What excuse, then, could exculp them these sins?

GAVIN:

'Tis truth she tells, justly of the unjust!  
'Twas their greed that diminished our station,  
They aggrieve for full annihilation!

BOUDICCA:

Aye, so why should we pay these hateful costs?  
Our gross mistreatment will only get worse  
If we acceptingly put up with it,  
And that is cause for fear graver by far  
Than any consequence, however mortal,  
We'd receive in honorable rebellion  
Against their practice of this injustice,  
Which injustice is our fault most of all,  
In how we let ourselves become disjointed  
And divided let these greedy cowards  
come into command over all our tribes.  
But it's not too late for us to unite  
Together to rise a revolution,

By revolting repel Rome from our isle  
And restore us to our forfeit free state.  
Just so their German clients along the Rhine  
Managed such a union that expelled Rome  
From their territory forever since,  
And they only had but a river bound  
While we're intervened an ocean entire.  
Oh my neighbors, my friends, my family all –  
For we're all one family 'Briton' in this,  
Defending our common ancestral isle,  
Let's do it – Let us united revolt,  
And so preserve freedom for our children  
While we've still its memory retained ourselves.  
For be sure that if we don't do this now,  
We will forget freedom, and then what then?  
What will our children do to save themselves,  
When they've been raised solely in servitude?

OWEN:

Slaves wholly submissioned to slavery  
With bonded wills stay slaves forever aft,  
Unto the death of the last's children's child.

GAVIN:

No, by th'matrons, no! Now's but one way left -  
Let's fight! It's our only proper option.

MYRDDIN:

Aye, proper, true, but can we defeat them?  
For a righteous win unmitigated  
Beats by far to lose unmightily bested.  
So tell us our chances, our evening odds?  
What or hap they upend us in this stead?

BOUDICCA:

Do not fear their romantic military  
For they are fewer and more soft than we,  
Who with just few tribes could overwhelm all.  
They are cowards armor hid in battle  
And fortress enclosed without it, for which  
They can neither pursue their victories  
Nor escape their losses when they befall,  
But we need but skeins and shields to pulse force,  
Using which we can capitalize full  
On any outcome attained in the field.  
Thus our Caractacus never did lose



His guerrilla fight against the Romans  
Lasted decade-long, a decade ago.  
It took a Briton traitor to take him.  
They are dainty folks, requiring all sorts  
Of man-made accommodating imports  
To abide and endure intemperately  
The natural turbulence of our climate.  
They need coddling casks of man-made shelter  
Against our caelious waters and cool winds,  
And their food needs must be man-made as well –  
Processed bread, and oil and wine homeland borne,  
While our land's own grasses and saps nourish us,  
And we take to our trees as sheltering homes.  
In their aberrance, they are lost in our land,  
And must thread their man-made streets and bridges.  
But we know and use nature's paths and streams,  
Easily jaunting through any jot at will.  
So see how th'land itself opposes them,  
And so are the heavens contrary curved,  
For so higher is the justice of our case  
Clearly evident to all heaven and earth -  
We fight for our own country and family,  
Our wives, our parents and children alike.  
Rome only fights for avarice and luxury.  
The gods in heaven signal their support  
In granting us this opportunity  
Of Paulinus' absence in th'far off west,  
By which we've time to prepare and organize  
Such a force as will make them realize  
Their romance of ruling us is ended.  
All we need's your consensus and it's done.  
Can any counsel cause for exception  
'Gainst this my meditated course? Speech it now.

[silence]

GAVIN:  
This quiet hush commotes alike a clarion  
All complete approval for your intent.

MYRDDIN:  
The Iceni alone may suffice  
To tackle this task through to the triumph.  
We should enlist those well-disposed neighbors  
Whose confederal bonding would en vigor  
Our attempt the better unbreachable.

Th' Trinovantes beyond our southern bounds  
Are a potent tribe most allegiant proved,  
Like to sympathize with our injuries.  
Their inclusion would secure th' effort well,  
For the which an embassy ought dispatch.

OWEN:

I'll direct this function, for I've dealt much  
With the Trinovans, straight and simple fair,  
For which they'll receive me well in good terms.

GAVIN:

And I as well will accompany him.  
As most preeminent of our fighting youths,  
My mere presence will as much demonstrate  
Our sincerity as will my earnest pleas.

BOUDICCA:

You two fit our courting needs perfectly,  
Cool diplomacy contrasting fervent heat.  
But first let us offer up common prayer  
To our carriageous goddess of victory  
Whose winning will alone lets men prevail.  
Oh goddess Andrate, I give you thanks,  
Woman to woman, for making ourselves  
A people such as we are, strong and hard  
Through all our nation, man, woman and child.  
There've been many soft peoples in the world  
Led by soft women. Such were the Egyptians  
Burdened of old by Nitocris and new  
Beneath Cleopatra's intriguing charms.  
Such too did the commercial Assyrians  
Service th' libido of Semiramis.  
And such were th' Romans themselves thrice mistressed.  
First with Messalina's libertinism  
Then domineuse Agrippina minor,  
And so are they e'en now under Nero –  
Man in name, but woman in character -  
Singing, strumming and smearing on makeup.  
But by you we Britons shun such defects,  
We're a hard people, and I our hard queen.  
We've some slight flaws. For farming or commerce  
We're ignorant and untried, but for war  
We're all familiar and brave, every one,  
And war's precisely what's coming ahead.  
So goddess Andrate, I pray to you

For our victory, salvation and freedom  
Against these men so outrageous to us,  
Men unjust, unrelenting, unholy,  
Men unmanly in their softened essence,  
For they eat, drink, smell and sleep too softly,  
As they allow their own selves to be slaves  
Unto a soft mistress of a master.  
Let Mistress Nero sing her tyranny  
To the Romans alone, who've but themselves  
To blame for accepting such leadership  
So illegitimate and for so long.  
But for us, Mistress, lend a different course.  
Let you alone be our leader fore'er.

All ICENI NOBLEMEN together:  
Let you alone be our leader fore'er.

BOUDICCA:  
So well spoke, revered truth from heart to mouth.  
But now to matters of more earthly port,  
Nobles, lets assemble our tribe for war,  
While these ambassadors our cause implore.

*Exit stages left, right and center all but GAVIN and OWEN.*

GAVIN:  
Quick let's to horse, for time does quickly flow.

OWEN:  
And crucial to our aim, so off we go.

*Exit stage right GAVIN and OWEN.*

### SCENE 3

#### The Assembly in the Trinovan Capital

*Enter stage left TRINOVAN NOBLEMEN and ARTHUR, enter stage right ECTOR.*

ARTHUR:  
My cousin Ector, you convoked this court  
Composed of our most estimable nobles  
T'audit receptive some new-come mission  
From our friendly Icenian neighbor's north.

ECTOR:  
Precise is your account, lord Arthur king,

Cousinly kin, with nothing left eclipsed.  
Two leading members of th'Iceni line  
Presently attend summons to your face,  
Wherefore to propose their pointed intent.

ARTHUR:

And I'm told that you're familiar with one.  
Attest what you've proved of his character.

ECTOR:

'Tis th'elder emissary, a sir Owen,  
With whom I've much contact over the years.  
An e'er honest man, clever in his wits,  
Sown full of those kernels whence wisdom grows.  
I'd expect his speech to be accurate,  
Sure both in story and promise alike.

ARTHUR:

Just so sure am I of your own counsel,  
My good Ector, as trusted as myself.  
Go to these trusty men and treat them in.

ECTOR:

Aye, my lord.

*Exit ECTOR stage right.*

ARTHUR:

To wit, the myth becomes man.  
Let's see if this Owen meets his repute.

*Enter stage right ECTOR, OWEN and GAVIN.*

Our greetings to yourselves and your queen  
Boudicca, in whose delegated name  
You're dispatched to move my authority.  
Tell what urgencies bring you here, what news?

OWEN:

Great king Arthur, likewise grace we tend we you,  
But this critical hour curts such cordials short  
For we come with tidings of hate and fear -  
Hate of the present and fear for th'future  
Bowed by the crooking bales of Rome's slavery.  
You Trinovantes, innocent still now,  
Have only witnessed but the lighter side

Of Roman rule – heavier burdens will come.  
We Iceni bear such testimony  
In our injuries late experienced firsthand,  
The which disbeguiled us decisively  
Towards our verdict that Rome is guilty -  
Guilty of lying, guilty of looting  
Guilty of lashes laid on – such a sum  
Of abuses so burdensome criminal  
That it's sure to stamp both our peoples out  
Unless we resist, charging it condemned.

GAVIN:

And right now while we speak we Iceni  
Are massing just such a resistance force,  
Men half a hundred grand strong at the least,  
And large enough to throw off this lodestone  
Of Roman oppression forever more.  
We're such ourselves could win this war alone,  
But if combined with you Trinovantes,  
Our common host is sure to overcome.

OWEN:

The time is now, and runs its course our way,  
For we've already disabled their posts  
Garrisoned most near, clearing the homefront  
Secured behind for operations abroad.  
Our next target is the liberation  
Of local Camulot. Will you join us?

ARTHUR:

Oh Camulot! You faded capstone,  
Blackened smirched jewel plucked from out our eye!  
Once our greatest pride, now our greatest bane.  
Four sires back, our foremost ancestral king  
Addedo the Great built her as the seat  
Majestic for our former glorious realm.  
Now she seats their Roman senates of vets  
Who daily conspire woes compounding woe  
For our people. When those vets rookily came,  
They confiscated her citadel scarp  
And vast bounding tracts of our land besides  
For their own use without any basis  
But the all excusing conquestive right.  
Those of us on these lands long habited  
Either they evicted refugitive  
Or captured outright appropriated slaves.

Still now do they ever encroach outward  
From their core precinct expanded more and more,  
Collaborating with a traitorous few  
Trinovan elites enamored of this  
Example of voracious avarice,  
Dunobel foresworn most in this tradition.  
Their regular troops abet these violations  
Hoping to retire achieving their like.  
Rome takes not only our land and people –  
Our produce tilled with toil goes with th' seasons  
To tax, then tribute, then confiscations  
Thereon for the use of their temple priests,  
Pouring festive libations for th' colony  
With the goods so drawn from our local funds.  
If this be the tone of their lighter treatment,  
Gods fend us all from the heavy aspects,  
And gods damn Rome for their unworthy bulk.  
Indeed, their temple to Claudius divine  
Seems to me the perfect symbol profane  
Of intruding eternal damnation.  
Except that infidel temple aside,  
There's nothing defensible in Camulot -  
Their tenure's let her banks slacken fallow.  
If we attack, we'll doubtless take her back,  
By which taking relieve our clansmen reft  
And too long impressed to bondslave within,  
While we punish th' same despot oppressors,  
Faithless Romans and traitorous Britons all.  
The which to do's too decent to refuse.  
Let your queen consider me her right arm,  
One willed and identical. We'll join you.

OWEN:

Now by your union this our embassy  
Is no longer one of hatred and fear  
Of this ongoing Roman dominion.  
No, now we're bearers of gratitude and hope  
For th'oncoming end of Roman injury  
With th'emancipation of all Britain.  
Amass you forces with all haste on site,  
As Boudicca's on her way to arrive  
Shortly soon with our whole Iceni host.  
From here we will take sleeping Camulot  
By this our lightning storm, whose thunderhead  
Is th'venting result of their own poor reign.  
There and then will we initiate our aim

To liberate th'loyal and lacerate the lost.

ARTHUR:

I pray you speed yourselves back to your queen,  
And by the time you reach her, be assured  
That we'll be then ready assembled here  
For the juncture. Fare your journey well.

GAVIN:

So may all our movements fare well henceforth,  
For such are our intents to merit well,  
A merit well matched by our fighting zeal!

*Exit stage right OWEN and GAVIN.*

ARTHUR:

My nobles, to your districts and to arms.  
Our course is clear, though it lies contorted,  
For 'tis but through such foul turmoil explored  
That we may see our fair people restored.

*Exit stage left TRINOVAN NOBLEMEN, ARTHUR and ECTOR.*

#### SCENE 4

##### The Roman Forum in Camulot

*Enter stage left DUNOBEL and SENATORS, enter stage right two CENTURIONS and SOLDIERS.*

DUNOBEL:

Welcome, centurions, back to Camulot,  
Whose vigil your presence greatly relieves  
Though relaxes us not yet entirely.  
We've seen from Lord Catus' promises past  
How oft his word less fulfills than his purse,  
And from his last soldierly guarantee  
We drew some doubt about it's implement  
Beyond our concerns for time's own constraints,  
All the which removed once you appeared here,  
Though our complete relief demands receipt  
Of more numbers than we've esteemed so far.  
Pray, sirs, can you secure us with report  
Defining your sum and substantiality,  
And what else such and sort still comes here more?

FIRST CENTURION:

Take cheer, good hosts, and hearten you two fold,  
For our men profess to the first-most class  
Of militancy, marshaled in th' governor's ranks,  
And add to that too how we front-most come  
At the fore of nothing less than the whole  
Of Lord Catus' procuratorial force.

SECOND CENTURION:

Indeed, this efficient supremacy  
Enabled our maniple to first conclude  
The transactive wholeselling prosperously  
Convened in Londin's commercial exchange  
Of those accruals begained as peacekeepers,  
Per the terms of our initial contract.  
So now we lead our men, augmented more  
To a total two hundred sheathen swords,  
Come as the van per Catus' ordered plan  
For a second expedition abroad  
More widely scoped. This time we're to collect  
For young Nero's old courtly sage Seneca  
Those extensive debts presently owed him  
By the general Briton population,  
To whom formerly did he bestrew out  
Some several thousand myriad sesterces  
Unbid and unwished, but unchoicably lent.  
At his own behest now we'll lean ourselves  
Into the task of reclaiming the loan,  
Both its principal and interest, all at once,  
Licensed for which sum's proposed exaction  
Th'extorting ploy of extremest action.  
Once Catus comes with his regiment's rest  
We'll second no delay, and mobilize on  
With columned march to our capital targets.

FIRST SENATOR:

As a man to soldiery familiar,  
My cursory review of your equipage  
Concerns me in how your men seem ill armed,  
Ill prepared for intensive combating  
Should some substantial British hostility  
Fight reactionary against their dues.  
Many men lack lorical cuirasses,  
Many their scutum shields, some without both.  
What has become of your men' heavy gear?

SECOND CENTURION:



Our last experience amid th'Iceni  
Deemed that so much armor was unneeded,  
While more money's always of principal use.  
As such, we chose to increase our income  
By rumoring of your omens in Londin.  
Naturally arose a sudden interest  
In buying or borrowing martial arms  
Of which we, possessing plenty surplus,  
Merchandized and made a bonus profit.

[alarms sounds offstage]

DUNOBEL:

The alarm! Oh, the damning day has come,  
Dusking th'erebene descent to dead night.

*Enter stage right a FIRST SOLDIER.*

FIRST SOLDIER:

Sirs! An assault descends on the colony!  
From nowhere they came everywhere en masse,  
Britons in blue fill th' eastern horizon  
And charge fast 'pon our undermanned outposts.  
The gates will hold no effective defense  
Against such a vast multitude's aggress.

*Enter stage left a SECOND SOLDIER.*

SECOND SOLDIER:

Our westward fields to Londin are filled up  
With crowding files of foeful British throngs.  
They hold all th'avenues, cutting off passage,  
And are advancing on th'western portal  
Numerous beyond our ability to repress.

DUNOBEL:

The city is lost to this swelling tide.  
Retreat all able troops to the temple  
Whose desolate emmasoned citadel  
Holds out our lastmost desperate resort.

*Exit all stage center.*

*Enter stage right BOUDICCA and WARRIORS, enter stage left ARTHUR and WARRIORS, all armed and painted blue.*

BOUDICCA:

Canvas the colony for all living souls.  
As for the Romans - herd their capt nobles  
Here to the forum. Kill the rest on sight.  
Enjoy th'property of them all – it's yours  
To have or havoc, take it or break it  
However you will. As for the Britons -  
The wealthy are traitors, the poor allies.  
Recruit the latter and bring the former  
Embodded back to me for my judgment.

*Exit stages left and right some WARRIORS.*

Here do the Romans taste the first bitters  
Dredged from their vinting press of iniquity!  
Our oppressed dregs do now but tip their tongues,  
Yet we shall pour this deluge down their throats  
In such profusion that they shall drown choked  
Beneath th'inundating flood, sunkenly  
Flushed back out across the sea whence they came,  
They'll never more founder our island's shores,  
Lost forever to lethic oblivion.

ARTHUR:

And for we Britons begins here and now  
Th'sweet scented salving balm of freedom  
To soothe the sour scrapes and bitter blisters  
Of bondage. Fight for our liberation  
And survival of the British nation!

*Exit all stages left and right.*

End of ACT II

ACT III  
SCENE 1

The Central Market in Londin

*Enter stage center the CHIEF FREEDMAN, enter stage right DECIANUS.*

DECIANUS:

I've come per your call, here to Londin's mart  
Where over these past days you've bargained hard  
And rectitudinal strove for our behalf  
Against th'merchants softening connivances,  
Hourly surfilling our caches as swelled  
As my confidence grown of your service.  
Tell, then, count our culminant condition.

CHIEF FREEDMAN:

Yes, sir. It is with great pleasure indeed  
That I report our commerce here complete,  
With every valuable's value redeemed  
And repositied secure in your lodge.

DECIANUS:

Ah, wondrous news, most fitting my fancy!  
By this chapter's cumulary closure  
We've free leave for pursuit of its sequel,  
Exponentially rich in potential.  
Assemble the men of our agency  
To proceed with our Senecan schedule.  
Oh, but first there sembles some commotion  
Of Londin's consterned local elites  
Roman and Briton both, seeking us out.  
Note that Morgano, these Briton's leader,  
Heads their petition. Whatever it is,  
I'll supply assuagement, then we can go.

*Enter stage right MORGANO, CATUVELLAN NOBLEMEN, ROMAN MERCHANTS and  
a CAMULOT SOLDIER.*

MORGANO:

Lord Catus, this man harbings hither  
A dirging tale of drama in Camulot.

DECIANUS:

I'll hear its telling from the man himself.  
Son, what has come upon the township there?

CAMULOT SOLDIER:

Britons, sir, armed and numerous beyond count,  
Encircled the colony and entered her  
Flashing quick, unopposed by our too few.  
I was outside the town, stationed alone  
At the peripheral Londin-ward watch post,  
Bypassed in their advance on their main goal.  
The lone course left me was retreatment here  
To make report and seek reinforcements.  
In my dispatch away I last saw her  
Buildings begin to burn from arsonry  
As smoke's first stirrings ascended the sky.

FIRST MERCHANT:

Oh Gods! What have we done offending so  
To incur this your wrathful reckoning?

SECOND MERCHANT:

Damnation crashes upon our sunk heads  
A tidal wave of woe. We are all doomed!

DECIANUS:

We are safely as secure as ever  
For there's still legionry in our reserve.  
These Brits, like all raiders, are booty bent,  
And so will long delay engaged for gain  
Through th' pillaging of Camulot most thoroughly.  
Plenty time for Petilius Cerialis  
To fervent lead our northern Ninth Legion  
Darting down from their castrum in Lindum,  
Quickened in their pace by the convenience  
Of the well paved Ermine Way, whose proceed  
Directly leads thence straight into Camulot,  
Where striking they'll shatter this British riot.

MORGANO:

Even if time's enough, have we the odds?  
The Britons are countless in multitude,  
Perhaps outampling the Ninth's abilities?

DECIANUS:

Morgano, this is a Roman legion  
You speak of, this the perfection of war.  
Of the legions we brought to this island,  
How many have been lost? None. Never one,

Whether conjoined or on solitary roles,  
Ever fought but to firm th'opponents' fall.  
Those five thousand strong men staffing the Ninth  
Are the best disciplined fighters in the world,  
And can defeat forces twenty times their size.  
Every man's a million. Legions don't lose.

MORGANO:

Might it not be a still superior course  
To move Suetonius' two legions as well,  
Extending our supremacy all the more?

DECIANUS:

The governor's placement on westmost Mona  
Renders his troops too distant to company  
The Ninth before they reach the contest zone.  
Such notice would only counterproduct,  
Upsetting himself and his own campaign  
Needlessly, for th'Ninth itself will suffice  
To relieve th'tumult and retrieve the town.  
Let him learn the news when the story's whole,  
Complete with its triumphant conclusion.  
To effect the achievement of this end  
I'll send our swiftest scout up to Lindum  
And move the Ninth's fulminance charging down.  
As show of my confidence in this plan,  
My agents and I will stay here until  
The Ninth's victory confirms their potency.  
So back to your lives, now, and your affairs,  
We've the security to suppress these scares.

*Exit stage left DECIANUS and the FREEDMAN.*

MORGANO:

Was Camulot assured they'd be kept so safe?  
Yet his hope's our all, for we've no escape.

*Exit stage center MORGANO, CATUVELLAN NOBLEMEN, ROMAN MERCHANTS and the SOLDIER.*

## SCENE 2

The Roman Castrum in Lindum

*Enter stage right a TRIBUNE, enter stage left PETILIUS CERIALIS.*

PETILIUS:

Tell me, tribune, what length of term you've served?  
I'm firm your official staff's not yet supported  
A whole year's rounds tramped about Lindum's grounds,  
Not yet pegged so long in this castrum's square.  
Do I reckon right, or have I gone off?

TRIBUNE:

Sir Cerialis, your estimate's correct.  
But half an annum's run has coursed the sun  
Upon his shorter more darkened day track,  
Since when winter's frosting did first glaze th' soil  
As I arrived into your service here.

PETILIUS:

Such it was, and shames me even to think  
On the forgetful featureless duties  
Wasting us in this northernmost endpost,  
Where but random paltry trifles trouble  
The still and bleary blandity of th' land.  
Throughout my own time isolated here  
Protecting this doldrum tranquility  
Of our tribal allies the Brigantes,  
We've encountered but one agity pest  
Born from their nation, whose nettling robberies  
Harass the local peace often enough  
To occasion our sheriffing response.  
I mean Venutius, whose marriage broken  
From their loyal proved queen spurned his defection  
'Gainst the allegiances of his own folk  
In revolt defeated several years back  
By our own Ninth. Following their failure  
Venutius turned his band to mere banditry.  
Striking from their hideout in th' western wood,  
They associate justice's name to their crimes  
Which but bring larcenous infamy to th' tribe.  
I'd take contentment in how their fewness  
Slightens them comically threatless to us,  
But that this selfsame insignificance  
Palters their suppression too seriously  
'Gainst some gratuity of glorious acclaim,  
Which saddens me more than these surroundings.

TRIBUNE:

If this scenario does nothing promote,  
Why not then shorten the term of it's work?  
Our idle numbers here would well suffice

To spread in searching toils throughout their wood  
With such fulfilling force at every mesh  
That these filchy felons can't fail but fall  
Helplessly tangled into the webwork.

PETILIUS:

Such an offensive seems the'aptest incourse  
To handle this network of highwaymen.  
Indeed, it is my already intent  
To just such a pursuit, through whose pressure  
Steadily applied we'll clear th'Brigantine lands  
By autumn time. Yet dismal I foresee  
The distasteful fruits we'll harvest thereby:  
Reassignment to an e'en more forlorn point  
Amid the northernmost heathen wastelands  
Of dun bescotted Caledonia,  
Whose Pictish pustule's the postern of th'world.  
No, I'd be anywhere but those sunless climes.

*Enter stage right a SOLDIER.*

Welcome, newcomer colleague, to our limbo.  
What stirring cause excites your transit here?

SOLDIER:

Sir Cerialis, I bring most hasteful news  
Of most hateful events erupting south.  
A tribal uproar has consumed Camulot  
And threatens now exposed Londin's next loss  
Unless your Ninth marshals interception.

PETILIUS:

Now this is danger of dreder import,  
And so better th'glory it opportunes!  
Prompt the men to arms, signal the alarm,  
And let's mobilize our meritorious Ninth  
To contact this southern scene so turmoiled,  
Where we'll knock its more palping peril out  
And attain a touching glory through th'rout!

*Exit all stage left.*

### SCENE 3

The Forum in Camulot

*Enter stage right BOUDICCA and ARTHUR.*

BOUDICCA:

Oh good compeerious king, joyous 'tis seeing  
Your royal residence to your royalty restored.  
Though o'erturned grime and ash, 'tis native turned,  
And with our native arts it will return  
Again to its lost loft and grandity.  
Say, what extent of the town has been scoured?  
Is her totality cleared, or howso near?

ARTHUR:

Nearly all the town's been swept wholly clean.  
There but remains those temple refugees,  
Who blaspheme th'fane further by still drawing breath  
Sanctuaried in their own desecration.  
As for our new repossessed properties  
Elder Myrddin leads a wagon train in,  
Passaging those too antique or juvenal  
To take part in our military's forward van.

BOUDICCA:

Aye, their part's instead for our hinder side,  
As communal caravan to carriage th'goods  
We confiscate in course of this campaign  
Towards equitable distribution  
Once this tribulation achieves its end.  
Such is their purpose coming to Camulot  
And such is their position be going forth.

ARTHUR:

Their lading's already well underway  
With such movable goods as were reclaimed.  
What else was missed we've scorched incinerate  
In our pyric purgation of this place.

BOUDICCA:

Properly razed. Loot's but collatery.  
Vengeance – there's the principal, the sum and all  
Which motives this our justful conquering.  
Now just such justice pends yon fugitives,  
Until our fair judgment ends their foul lives.  
For two days still has that Claudian temple  
Withstood vigilant at our conquest's core,  
Stocked full of Camulot's most criminal men  
Who from their confines watch th'surrounding town  
As every vestige of colonial trace



Demolishes before their penitent eyes.  
Yet this contrition shall not redeem them,  
For their upset's but for impotency,  
Not at how vile their former misdeeds were.  
Oh for a leisure of time furthermore  
And I'd starve these convicts out from their pen,  
Though much do I doubt th'offered spits of meat  
We've inclined before their sanctuary fane  
Much grow their appetites in any way.

*Enter stage left a WARRIOR.*

ARTHUR:

This envoy's approach limits our license  
Within curtailed by some news from without.  
Do tell your source, both in place and th'purpose  
Which causes your coming here. What's happened?

WARRIOR:

My placement stood north on the Ermine Street  
Observing Rome's detachment in Lindum  
For precursing signs of some exercise  
Against our national insurgency.  
But few hours back they alarmedly stirred  
Their complete encampment into motion  
Southwards on that selfsame Ermine roadway  
Evident with hostile intent towards us,  
The which to obviate by announcement  
Is the purpose for my arrival here.

BOUDICCA:

So springs their latest artifice 'gainst us.  
How far along have they come on their way?

WARRIOR:

They post in such haste as their troops can pace,  
Yet still well closer to Lindum than us.

BOUDICCA:

How predictable th'tactics of a people  
Unacquainted with th'contours of our land!  
They come on constrained to that obvia tract  
On which we know innumerable copses,  
Each idyllic for ambushing assault  
To mount numerous heaps of Roman corpses.  
Rally our full forces to mobility

For this pivotal turning of the tide  
Against the swollen surety of Rome.

ARTHUR:

Joyous the chance of this opportunity,  
But what about the colonists under siege?  
They can't be suffered to be left alive,  
Yet we can't suffer to leave men behind  
With such momentous events up ahead.

BOUDICCA:

There's no problem, for now it seems to me  
That their temple is more timber than stone.  
Burn it with the occupants there contained.  
They'll either die inside by th'fuming fire,  
Or fleeing out under our seething swords.  
'Tis shame we can't maintain our slower course  
Of punishment unto their wasted last,  
But the chastening of an entire legion  
Is an option much too good to pass up.  
When we've finished this our cremation work,  
Onward will we go to achieve victory,  
Dismissing then th'all witnessing hostage  
Off to wayward Londin to tell the tale  
For which those heads shall provide th'next chapters.  
First let's spark this final incineration  
To extinct th'colony by conflagration.

*Exit all stage center.*

#### SCENE 4

##### A Wood on the Ermine Way

*Enter stage left SOLDIERS. Exit stage right SOLDIERS. Enter stage left more SOLDIERS, PETILIUS and a TRIBUNE.*

PETILIUS:

What's this delay hampering our progress so?  
Too oft such hindrances cost th'contest's loss.  
I like it not, for sloth limits th'motions  
Whose transitive mercury luxuries choice  
Of battling time and place, whence victory comes.  
But look at the lessons of this from old:  
Thus did Alexander gain his greatness  
Ranging from Thessaly to eastern Ind,  
Unbeaten throughout by timely transit

Of arms to those varied historic fields  
Long since familiarized by his exploits.  
So too with Julius, forefather Caesar,  
Who transformed Rome's republic imperial,  
As from Spain to Spain he circled th' mid-sea  
His champion ring of successive campaigns  
Against all encountered opposing foes,  
Both those within and without th' Roman fold,  
Where'er he went, there conquered every scene.  
Thus, in midst of abridging by himself  
The e'er mutable swirl of broad fitful Gaul,  
'Twas quick leverage of some brief advantage  
That moved his rapid advance as Rome's first  
To sovereign trod this British soil, from which  
Success we reign but as his successors.  
So did his strategy and tactic outfleet  
Slack fleeting Pompey's too tardy charges  
And exalt him peerless of Roman kind,  
Save elder Scipio's stealth and lightning strikes  
Which proved so punitive to the Punic horde.  
All that Caesar did - his surprising feints  
And semblature of simultaneity,  
His inflation of presence - none of it  
Was potential without th' general concern  
Of his dangerous expediency to act.  
Delay would have been but the death of him,  
And so too is it the truth for us all.  
Except prowess, naught becomes a solider  
Like speediness in his disposition -  
And so should we, Rome's prowess proofed men,  
Dispose ourselves with like speed towards th' fray  
'Gainst this Boudicca whose force steps ahead.

TRIBUNE:

Timing's crux is true, sir, old as th' fares of war,  
Yet this new sembled hesitance in our men  
Comes not from a fear to engage the foe,  
But merely caution about finding them  
In this forest, whose close compacted growths  
Too well opacitate our surroundings  
With such foily invisibility  
As could conceal effectively the snares  
Of some hostile multitude's ambushade  
Biding th' approach of our unaware train.  
Such asymmetric martial overtures  
Can threaten with their unbalancing odds

To distemper the most mettled of men  
And destabilize our surest legions.

PETILIUS:

Nay, I find this concern isn't caution  
But foundless fear of an inferior foe.  
The slower we proceed through woods like these,  
The longer we're exposed within their folds  
And the likelier we'll find their fears come true,  
Though to some ineffectual extent.  
And that's just for us, think upon Camulot,  
Of our comrades who may yet live therein.  
The longer we take to reach their relief,  
The graver their casualties' occasion.  
We the legions serve to secure our state,  
And the greater daring in our service,  
The grander our state's security becomes.  
One single swift and bold success in war  
Outworthies a thousand won safely slow.

[sounds of alarms, shouting and clashing offstage]

We were too slow, and by our sluggish pace  
Conceded them the crucial seclusion  
To finish up their business at Camulot,  
And from its cooling charnel conclusion,  
They now fixate hot to finish us here.  
But not so will it be! To the cohorts -  
You wing our left, I'll man the critical right,  
And let's flank maneuvers to reverse th' fight!

*Enter stage right a SOLDIER.*

SOLDIER:

Sir! The enemy's upon us!

PETILIUS:

Aye, certain,  
And we're going forth to ensure their rout!

SOLDIER:

Would sir we could, but there is no place forth!  
The Britons assail all sixty centuries,  
All concurrently and from all angles  
With millennial manpower versus each,  
They've o'errun amply our too paucy few!

We're vastly outnumbered and fast outclassed!  
The Ninth's whole infantry's hopelessly crushed!

PETILIUS:

Gods what preponderance in such meager men!  
And with such speed from such slow wits produced!  
Our front ravaged lost, so salvage our rear.  
Trumpet retreat of all still mobile hands.

[a Soldier sounds a trumpet, more trumpets sound offstage]

Now let's back a hasty return, back north  
Where Lindum's stocky palisade defense  
May station our shelter against this mob.

SOLDIER:

Solely the cavalry's able that journey  
All else is compassed in violent fury.

PETILIUS:

To horse, then, those swift-steeds to save us,  
Yet dispatch our best zephyr to Mona  
To tip Suetonius much to his dismay  
And prayhaps reprisal. For us, away!

*Exit all stage left. Enter stage right retreating SOLDIERS. Exit stage left retreating SOLDIERS. Enter stage right ARTHUR and WARRIORS.*

ARTHUR:

We've got them on the run, men, we have won!  
Boudicca leads true in her vocation  
As Andrate's angel of salvation!

*Exit all stage left.*

## SCENE 5

Before Catus' House in Londin

*Enter stage left DECIANUS and CHIEF FREEDMEN, enter stage center MORGANO, CATUVELLAN NOBLEMEN, TOGIDO and TASCOBAN.*

DECIANUS:

Pray tell, what means this audient intrusion?  
Why needs so many make this assembly?

CHIEF FREEDMAN:

My lord Catus, 'tis some rivaled dispute  
Whose slights did first but simmer internal  
Within th'legal boundaries jurisdicted  
To our noble Catuvellan allies,  
Yet by miscarriage now spills overboiled  
Unto your better seasoned authority  
For your final and ultimate assessment.

DECIANUS:

Very well. Who then among you present  
May best provide me with the particulars  
Pertaining to this most peculiar case?

MORGANO:

He best is me, sir, Morgano, foremost  
Among us Catuvellan magistrates.  
My residence at trials is long our custom,  
Though cut short here by my familiarity  
To one side, which refrains my recusal.  
Yet nothing prevents my fair recountal  
In the objective presence of my peers.  
This man here's Tascoban, plaintively grieved -

TASCOBAN:

Aye, that I am, by this man's butchery!

MORGANO:

And the slaughterer whom Tascoban condemns  
Is Togido here, his longtime neighbor -

TOGIDO:

Yup, that's me!

MORGANO:

- Our onetime primary justice,  
And - to my regret - the man's my father,  
Much fargone from his once judicious prime  
To injurious judgmentality instead.  
By the gods, father! What's become of you,  
That your past noblesse and high character  
Descends to but clownish caricature!  
So now, sir, he proudly stands so accused,  
Indeed, not denying his actions at all -

TOGIDO:

Nope, I don't!

MORGANO:

- Rather contending instead  
That his same actions ought be considered  
Not at all wrong to be done -

TOGIDO:

Fer it ain't!

TASCOBAN:

Yer the taint!

MORGANO:

Enough! Togido thinks it  
All rightly wrought, for which no punishment -  
Save acquittal and th'carcasses' award -  
Deserves delivery on his clear-thought head.

DECIANUS:

What are these carcasses, or mayhaps whose,  
Considering th'source, of which you passing speak?  
What are the damages so deadly done?

MORGANO:

Pigs, my lord, from the some several choice score  
Of Tascoban's swine Togido did clasp  
And untimely cut from their vine of life,  
Sow and hog alike, in rudest massacre.  
He intended death to that entire brood,  
But his discovery and disablement  
Stymied his plan incomplete at the sty.  
That uncivil deed moved this civil trial  
Before our assembled municipal court  
To esteem what losses both parties claim  
And from those calculated sums assize  
What recompense is called for and for whom.  
Therein Togido pled his behavior  
Licit and ethic -

TOGIDO:

Licit and ethic!  
My exact words, spoke from our legal code!

MORGANO:

- As the proper reaction permitted him  
For a prior adversity experienced

By th'base misconduct of Tascoban's beasts  
To th'detriment of Togido's herbiture.  
These men's neighborhood is not a close one,  
Fraught more with crudely vying competition  
Than with convivial collaboration.  
Togido cultivates agrarian crops  
While Tascoban prefers pastoral life,  
Both disputing always which way's the best.  
Along their properties' common border  
Togido established his garden yard  
Broadly terraced with fruitful folds.  
Abutting this Tascoban erected  
His lengthy swinehold pen, stocked porker full.  
By some accident –

TOGIDO:  
Accident my eye!  
'Tis rancher's malice that opened that sty!

MORGANO:  
- Or other how, the pen recently breached,  
And its newly discontinued animals  
Liberally grazed upon Togido's herbs,  
Rooting them out from their cultivual use.  
Tascoban aghast offered Togido  
Repair for the wrong, but he'd not have it,  
Contending instead his contrary case  
That as he fed those pigs, their lives were his.  
Acting on his word he attacked the herd,  
Slaying a shocking score before deterred,  
And brought to our bench for this our review.  
We decreed he acted beyond allow,  
Denied his plea and approved further fines.  
Discontented with this judication,  
He's fixed to ploy his right to higher appeal  
Unto your ultimate magistracy,  
For he's privileged with the more-than-peregrine,  
Yet less-than-citizen mediary status  
Still called "Latin" from those first recipients  
Whose oldest allegiance empowered Rome  
To Italian rule, as do we now here.  
So entitled, he's convoked our case here  
Before this final loft of your opinion  
Though none but him among us convergent  
Conceit that you'll yet turn some conversion.



DECIANUS:

Well, let's not judge ahead with such blind haste  
Before we check the coinage of the case.  
Now, my senior near-citizen - Taliban?

TOGIDO:

Nay, I'm Togido. That one's Tascoban.  
Our names so similar and unfamiliar  
To your tongue can trickle easily confused.

DECIANUS:

Togido, Tascoban, the matter's light  
Who's name's who's compared to this weighty heft  
Of your taxing bale and it's consequence,  
For you seem to me most deep in the culp,  
Endued to repair this rupt through donation  
Of sizzy worth from your assets, released  
To some other's uprightly outheld hand  
As justful amendment of this your wrong.  
The only question's now to whom you'll give,  
Whether straight to th'grieved as the court directs,  
Or else me to curve th'case's emendment.  
If you'd opt the first choice's aversion  
Then what can you offer me to bother  
Budging its opportune alternative?  
Yes, you must give a loss for your due guilt,  
I only ask how much you'll give to whom?  
Do you get my meaning, have you the means,  
Or do you miss the mint altogether?

TOGIDO:

Oh, I see your sense alright, clear as chimes,  
But I'm a man of land, not money made,  
All dependant on its producted crops  
Lately too cropped from use by those late pigs  
For whose feat misdome me I've earned their hides -  
Their hides are mine, all mine! My rightful mine!  
And all of 'em I'd gladly tribute you  
To furnish flesh for a holy hecatomb  
Whose grandy feast would multiply the sway  
Of your enworthied name throughout Londin.  
So what say, sound a fair enough exchange?

DECIANUS:

Fair exchanges benefit both parties,  
Or all, yet this your tartly proposed swap

Maligns most everyone, me most of all.  
To assist you in your pettish wants,  
You'd have me relinquish abnegated  
Rome's air of federal legitimacy  
Whose sky-soared essence inspires me steeply  
Roused to my magisterial office here.  
This noble purpose you'd see me degrade  
But for base personal glorification  
Which stakes too slim a gain, when statehood shakes  
In the reaction, for I do service  
For more than my mere self - I serve all Rome  
Without whose sheltering canopy above us  
We're but nothing, destined to nothing come.  
Any agreement so threatening th'comity  
Between you subjects and our Roman state  
Must transact complimentedly offset  
By expansive countervailing profit  
To rebuffer the state's damaged repute.  
Otherwise, 'tis simply a bad bargain,  
Both for the state and for me its agent,  
And I'll have none of it, and none of you,  
Togido, against the justice sentenced  
By these your local peers – their verdict stands.

[sounds of commotion and shouting offstage]

*Enter stage right FREEDMEN and the CAMULOT SURVIVOR.*

FREEDMAN:

My lord, this witness comes new from Camulot  
With tidings most titanical of woe.

DECIANUS:

Tell us first how you escaped from the scene,  
And how you saw so much before you did.

SURVIVOR:

I am a Trinovan ally to Rome,  
Loyally supporting your reign in Camulot  
With like feal as these Catuvellan gents  
Dote here, despite the which was I alone  
By that Briton mob pointed to release  
With the sole intention that I relay  
Freely back here those difficult events  
Whose grave hearing will compound our misery,  
Cheering them coming in their dark delight.

First off, and foremost touching you yourselves,  
Know that the Ninth is lost, cut down entire,  
Every one, by Queen Boudicca's forces.

MORGANO:

Our wardens unwarded!

CATUVELLAN NOBLEMAN:

Barrened our lives!

DECIANUS:

Boudicca, you said, can this woman be  
That same Boudicca of the Iceni?

SURVIVOR:

Aye, 'tis she who charges this clan's conduct  
With such rude condemning inclemency  
As e'er demeaned against Roman kind,  
And upon we associated Britons  
Descent her strictures akinly unkind.  
All forgiveness is forfeit with this one,  
All mercy removed from her barbarous brood.

CATUVELLAN NOBLEMAN:

Gods forefend us all from this hostile head!

MORGANO:

Gods now are all we have, with those men gone  
On whose miscarried advance our hopes did pend.  
What hope could avail us, Roman or Brit,  
While we face this oncoming calamity?

SURVIVOR:

Hope not to hope! Or hope for some miracle  
Bountied from heaven such as bards bespeak,  
For no hope more on earth shall allieve us  
When those murderous savagers take this town  
To waste as they doomed my hopeless Camulot.  
Saving but those baser British servants  
Who rebelled beside Boudicca's revolt,  
Not a single former loyal resident  
Lives any longer in this mortal world.  
Hot quick upon th'general occupation  
That woman did queenly in her rancor  
Sentence our entire captive multitude  
Uniform to death on some shortest summed guilt

As all traitors to their native Britain,  
Contrary to the conventions of war.  
Just myself alone a living martyr  
Did they except from this fatal judgment,  
Besides a then still besieged detachment  
Of Camulot's most elite magistracy  
Who timely refuged in th'Claudian Temple  
Upon the struck moment of her attack.  
All the colony else fell in her power  
In whose various deaths she improvised  
Her blackest employments of atrocity.  
The taken noblemen they took nearby  
To some close grove deemed sacred in their cult  
Where they were rendered as sacrifices  
And grisly tools of gruesome prophecy.  
Then too for the noble women - Oh gods!  
On those poorest most misfortunate matrons  
They performed their most profane deeds of all.  
Boudicca accused them guilty of suckling  
Venomous milk into the mouths of tyrants,  
Nurturing thereby the land's sickly pestilence.  
She said "By this your ill natured poison  
Fevered we too long in distempered swoon,  
But now do we remedy ourselves to health  
As with cleansing war we detoxify th'land.  
And since your contaming sap nursed our foes  
To our deepest woe, so now must you drink  
So deeply your selfsame toxins in dole."  
So saying, then amid their high screeching plaints  
She had from each woman one breast lopped off  
And cruelly sewed to their still living mouths,  
So they seemed to be feeding on themselves.  
Then she begrudged them the mercy of death,  
Though 'twas bestowed in no way mercifully.  
Them all she had impaled naked upright  
On stakes set up before the temple face  
As torment to their husbands locked within.  
And what last she told me on my release,  
Is that Boudicca now deadly resolves  
To set forth here with exact like malice.

MORGANO:

Oh, cataclysm, bathing the world in blood!

CATUVELLAN NOBLEMAN:

How may we use th'meantime? What force afford?

DECIANUS [aside to the Chief Freedman]:  
In haste now, man, to the Thames-side docks  
And secure there some navable frigates  
For London's departure and channel cross.  
Take with you troops - the general commotion  
Will greatly seize here as this seismic news  
Impends about the town. Go to.

CHIEF FREEDMAN:  
Aye, sir.

*Exit stage right the CHIEF FREEDMAN.*

DECIANUS:  
Despair not so, men, though th'time's indeed dire,  
For yea, even now can Lord Suetonius  
Curry his immediate return hither  
Adequate well fortified with defendants  
To withhold these insurgents' every try  
Until twice sufficient numbers muster  
From on th'isle or with continental reserves,  
And maneuver to our final triumph,  
This Boudiccan emergency extinct.  
I've dispatched th'governor's incitement already  
To prompt his undelayed redirection  
Of Britain's three remaining legion corps  
As needed and possible to preserve us  
Against th'egregions of their British herd.  
Meanwhile must I with concurrent passage  
Transit straightaway to Gaul's eastern bourn,  
Where from our several Rhine stanced legions there  
I may recruit one or some plurality  
To transpost here for portion of th'glory  
Due the defusers of this tempest storm.  
Since their wealth rapt skew demands enticement  
I'll needs transfer and spend our late got gains,  
Both to guise opulent th'opportunity here  
And as up front pay t'inent their service.

MORGANO:  
Would that this message inspired some comfort,  
But for th'blown character of its messenger!  
How its jingoes too similar now jingle  
To your late blasted belief in th'Ninth,  
Whose felled venture escaled our fraught peril.

Under this downcast air how can we hope  
For victory successive to such defeat?  
Yea, your too timely exit seems to us  
More of an errant self saving excuse  
Than an errand straight for state salvation.

DECIANUS:

Don't you speak censures of salvage to me,  
You swift blaming blameless ancillaries,  
Because I stand here a death destined man,  
Certain bedamned for my too cardinal role  
In this catastrophe. That fatal fiat  
For my cold head needs but Nero's notice  
Of these affairs, which shall undoubted reach him  
As hurried as provocatively charged,  
- Lethal to me in both - by my core part  
In our policies whose mismanagement  
Instigated these woes so out of hand,  
To the which galling account wroth Caesar  
Will but for that instant's satisfaction  
Coming to a hot spited potentate  
At his caustic exhalation of breath  
Command in his imperial monarch's tongue,  
"My proscription 'pon that procurator!"  
And so be I undone - by my own hand  
For the mere sake of my shamed family.  
I'm lost already, and can't hope to live  
Save by part in saving yourselves here,  
And by that positive contrary product  
Allay my failure in dread Caesar's mind,  
Against which else there's no refuge on earth.  
Either all of us survive, or none will.

MORGANO:

Then go, and gods grant us the former end,  
Better separate lives than together dead.

*Exit stage center all but DECIANUS and FREEDMEN.*

DECIANUS:

So wing yourselves, men, assemble our corps  
In congregated flock at the treasury.  
Transmigrate thence t'our dockside contingent  
All th'nested wealth you can put your pinions on.  
We'll need its full currency for our travails.

FREEDMAN:

Aye, sir, right away, but pray apprise us  
In this short confidential privacy,  
To what true aim we let our feathers fly?  
For a legion's quest's out of the question,  
Whether in its too extraorbitant cost  
Or too short time for lengths too far to go.

DECIANUS:

Perceptively seen, well percept from me  
That we'll not seek any legion's recruit,  
But merely do recruit ourselves some means  
Of escape from this ratty downing rig,  
Of raft to buoy th'trepid seas squalling round,  
Of ransom when 'rived at th'princeps' precipice  
By whose tidal bank's reception alone  
May we or coast ourselves safe back to land  
Or else crash wrecked upon the scarp crags.  
'Tis finally through our direct presentment  
Of that controved bounty's sandy gold grains  
Before displeasured Caesar's beetling brow,  
Tributing both himself and us thereby -  
Him as possessor, us its collectors,  
That we may soothe his so recorded heart  
Smooth to the cumby beach of leniency.  
No, there's no military in my design,  
Save th'quickest courier now in our service.  
That man have sent westward to Mona isle  
T'alert Lord Suetonius of this crisis.  
Rather, 'tis senselessness itself to part  
Without providing for the protection  
Of our interests behind, especially when  
Th'option nothing detracts from our efforts  
To safeguard clean exculpation abroad.  
Perhaps it could even asset us too,  
Should the governor's response quell this revolt,  
Alleviating our petition in Rome.  
Fly now to prepare our flight.

FREEDMAN:

Direct, sir.

*Exit stage left FREEDMEN.*

DECIANUS:

Thus is this province grown so hateful to me

That my own allies do verge enemies.  
Doubtless too would Suetonius, were he here,  
Seek to exact some brutish chastisement.  
What's more - what's most - all of our pastime hopes  
Of any further tax-farming receipts,  
For which prime mission Rome appointed me  
And from which alone my politic clout grows,  
Now parch droughtfully beyond questioning.  
We've nothing here to gain ourselves or Rome  
Yet everything to lose from every way.  
So then, as I'm a man made to make gains,  
Perceiving endows wherever they lay,  
With whatever so gained our state's to keep,  
'Tis now, I sense, to keep my gainly head  
I must get out of this emerald-stripped isle  
Lest tarding too long I'm got in the while.

*Exit stage right DECIANUS.*

End of ACT III



ACT IV  
SCENE 1  
The Isle of Mona

*Enter stage left SUETONIUS and AGRICOLA.*

SUETONIUS:

Well met Agricola, my adept aide.  
Detail me here at our Mona campsite,  
Wherein I've eased this pacific phase through  
Following th'rebellious Monans' utter rout,  
How constructs our garrison guardhouse up?  
How destruct these disloyal derelicts down?

AGRICOLA:

Our permanent planned barracks near completion.  
Some troops clear cut th'druids' desecrated groves  
While others raze their last scattered remnants,  
Cut down just as cleanly as those fell trees.  
Afore evening, one on th'other compiled  
Will compost up quite a combusty pyre.

SUETONIUS:

Good to hear, for here sets th'utmost boundary  
Western hedging our Welsh territory in,  
And this our long marched subjugation work  
Has finally pruned it proportional throughout.  
By two years of steady pressed exercise  
I've broken or clipped every sapping branch  
These intransigents extended against us,  
Their impetuous stinging nettles thrust  
'Pon my predecessors then twenty years prior.  
Thus is empire's each province a garden,  
And all of the governors gardeners.  
Through our successions to th'honourous post,  
We overseers survey the domain whole  
For such deviant parts as need maintenance,  
And upon their occasional spotting,  
Then with all methodical thoroughness  
Do we trim and manicure those rough patches  
Shapely anew into commensuration  
With the formal ordinances proscribed  
By our imperial manor-lord above,  
Without whose lifted statutes from on high  
All th'world would stray into ruinous decay

And such corruption as can no favor save.  
So, to avoid that dreadful circumstance  
I execute my office with vigilance.

*Enter stage right MESSENGER from the NINTH.*

MESSENGER:

My lord governor, I come gravely straight  
From northern Lindum bearing grievous news  
From th'eastwardly isle, where a Briton tribe  
Under th'Iceni queen Boudicca's lead  
Arose revolution to Camulot's ruin,  
In response to the which my Ninth marched out  
Too hastily, it turned out, for too unaware  
Were we encountered by their ambushade,  
Overturned thereby, all infantry lost.  
Only our cavalry remains today stocked  
Within th'stockade of Lindum's own confines.  
All th'island else lies exposed to their throes.

SUETONIUS:

What a blasting gale is this ragged blow  
That litters with filth our well kept yard so  
As could bury us humiliated beneath,  
And with a woman's sway too – a woman! -  
Whose nature's tamed domestic, water weak.  
Oh Corbulo! Turned you back such travails  
In old yoked Armenia as swell 'pon us  
In this terrain so newly first subdued?  
Now, men – Now incumbs it on us heavily  
To take up what implements we've left at hand  
Towards containment of this disaster,  
Before its calamity further compounds.  
Their next-most ambit's surely Londin mart,  
Whose distant settled southeastern locale  
Connects directly close to our site here  
Via the country crossing Watling Way.  
O'er that lane I'll charge our courser scouts straight  
Ahead to Londin to gauge their standing.  
Meanwhile you, Agricola, send summons  
For the Ninth's fractured remains from Lindum  
And for southwest Isca's Second Legion  
All to meet on the Watling's midlands point  
At Venonae township, to which yourself  
Mobilize down our two legions here encamped -  
Our winning Twentieth and Fourteenth units -

For amassment of this musted muster.  
Once I've assessed the situation up front,  
I'll or retreat back up to Venonae  
Or order general advance to Londin  
As I find th'martial conditions allow.  
So lays the way we must pass to secure  
Rome's path progressive from this coarse detour!

*Exit all stage left.*

## SCENE 2

The Forum in Camulot

*Enter stage right BOUDICCA and GAVIN, enter stage left ARTHUR and OWEN.*

BOUDICCA:

Good day greet you sirs, now apprise me new  
Howso bold swoll our folk this historic hour?

OWEN:

News of the Ninth Legion's defeat diaspores  
And inspires the country so broadly blithe  
That new roused rebels impour now in prides  
From across the whole island's eastward board -  
White Dover's Cantii chalk themselves in,  
Atrebates from round Stonehenge's bluer grain,  
Even some rustic Catuvellan stock  
Too despisive of th'urbane decadence  
Their Londiner cousins practice in trade.  
These aggregations o'er double our sum  
To stand now our band quarter million strong.

BOUDICCA:

Such glorious results from glorious feats brung!  
And glory more is still to come, for next  
I'll further purify our polluted land  
With vigorous purging of that poxy bruise  
Known as Londin town, whose blemished abscess  
Too long imposed requires full excision.  
Aye, that Londin plagues a curse infective  
To all Briton-kind, a cruel noxious swamp  
Miring us with ethic-emptied emptors  
Who eagerly sale away all our tribes  
But for trifling shares in Rome's evil gains.  
Nay, there's not a single salvable soul  
In that sordid spot – contemptible all

For their crooked commerce - condemnable all  
To be dredged one and all dead from the bog,  
For vultures to soar o'er their moldering bones.

GAVIN:

Oh, what fit treatment for their traitorous greed!  
How soon can we go to in fullest force?

ARTHUR:

Some time yet needs pass us peripherally by  
Before we may march on with all our main -  
Many too many of our soldiery  
Linger still at site of the Ninth's demise,  
Wide spread there despoiling the scattered dead,  
Compiling th'valuables they thus collect  
Onto Myrddin's swollen grown wagon train.  
Their broad recall back to war assembly  
Will consume a few days to pursue through.

BOUDICCA:

All this baggage massed but postpones our pace  
To Rome's due banishment - this I like not,  
Yet there's punishment in this plundering,  
The which pleases me, and so I'll have it.  
Howe'er, I'll have it happen less delayed,  
Thus less delaying to our primary cause.  
Have Myrddin's train keep a closer clip drawn  
Behind our frontal deployments going forth,  
Lest we let these our predatory instincts  
Lazen our army too much towards sloth,  
And lull ourselves into such idleness  
That Rome should be lured reconquering back.  
Now bid our militia remass for war  
To beckon Britain free forevermore!

*Exit all stage right.*

### SCENE 3

The Central Market in London

*Enter stage left TOGIDO wearing armor, enter stage right TASCOBAN wearing armor.*

TOGIDO:

Oh fancy sight this! Such tarnish and rust  
In tarnish and rust beclad! At least some  
Material metal's upon you, who else

Contains no matter of mettle within!

TASCOBAN:

Well, by my faith! The clam's acquired a shell!  
Shame how it coats no lustrous pearl inside.  
Nay, crass kept impolished, aged infantile,  
It clasps instead but worthless granule grit –  
Abrasive as its authorship's infirm.

TOGIDO:

Speak on from your bevid wealth of weakness,  
You Tascoban totter-sot! You who've ne'er  
Flexed e'en so much as a single sinew  
In contented brawl 'gainst a counter's cause,  
Unless perhaps 'twas some spasmic outlash  
Urgent driven and unsportingly socked  
To trick elusion from some o'erdrained debt  
Whose o'erassuming host required reckoning.  
Likely more he'd been one less half your size  
As no fight near fair would you dare to try.

TASCOBAN:

To call me coward, Togido, proxies  
The peak appelling its own foothill steep,  
As gutless as you are in all things  
Besides that your waxy concrescent gut  
Which ever waxes to plump your frame more  
With every passing unexerted year.  
I'd wage that thickness of yours was all waddle  
Even in the backward days of your prime,  
And ever since then you've tempered it none  
Throughout your descent to this aged decline.

TOGIDO:

Your too wan condition's nor fit for boast,  
Much less meet for foisting upon the foe.  
So, considering your frailty, jointsy-bones,  
Pray tell what's your plan to fail us this feud –  
Is it flight you intend, or feint of death?  
Or plan you timely to turn 'gainst your peers  
Pressing thus some vain basis to be spared?

TASCOBAN:

I'd not perfide never one fellow o'er!  
Though to be sure 'tis my licit license  
To leave you derelict to fail yourself

And jiggle your life away in the fray.

TOGIDO:

Such license permits me likewise excuse  
From propping up your supersopped jitters,  
Whose dry convulsions in the closing fray  
Will shake to shambles your compelled downfall  
And final shuffle under decking ground,  
The which being well for the better says I!

*Enter stage center MORGANO wearing armor, armored CATUVELLAN NOBLEMEN  
and ROMAN MERCHANTS.*

TASCOBAN:

Pah! Rebels take you!

TOGIDO:

Hah! Rebels break you!

MORGANO:

Peace now! For war's 'pon our step, slaving grim  
To gorge on our carrion chops to its fill,  
And since we to deflect this troubled head  
Rank all as poor as we're rated condemned,  
Collectively so in both, our one chance  
Stands in unswerving solidarity shown  
By every Londiner soldierly joined  
Together to ward the Briton curse off,  
To defang th'devourers, muzzle their maw,  
Else we'll all be lost without exception,  
Executed to the last standing man.  
Even in unison, alone we'd but stock  
Slim opposition to their sleek density,  
Yet we're swell enriched the bonny new gain  
Of governor Suetonius' current approach,  
Darting his cavalry forth to rush the town  
With flight swift as Apollo's golden shafts  
Before that tardier and leaden-more dross,  
Boudicca's sternward mob, could invest us.  
Even now his van couriers course th'boulevards  
Currying our presence in the market here  
To present our combatable condition  
For the lord's review on his arrival.  
If we can cohere as auxiliaries  
Competently, our salvation's at hand.

TASCOBAN:

Prayers be answered! Oh merciful moment!

TOGIDO:

We're blessed from the depths, and look here he comes!

*Enter stage left SUETONIUS and SOLDIERS.*

SUETONIUS:

Salveté seniors, our chief and elite

Hegemons installed on this locality.

What I need now from your best reckoning

Is an honest and exact appraisal

Of your capacities for waging war.

Do not deceive me here, or invent

Some flation of figures to hide a shamed

Gappy ignorance. Rather, tell me straight

What you know or know not of your details,

For self deception invites disaster

Onto the field, while true intelligence

E'er abettors victory in war. First off,

How many men have you equipped in arms?

MORGANO:

Our mustered defendants approach a sum

Near eight hundred armed and armored in all.

SUETONIUS:

An infantry below a thousand men,

Many qualified such as these frail elders,

Versus a legion killing horde entire,

From whose buzzing swarm my crack enforcers

Hold a position twice too far removed,

Incapable of interposition

Before our enemies can engage us here.

Such the statistics, unfavorably tolled.

Now tell me this setting's situation -

What stronghold bulwarks edifice the town?

MORGANO:

Londin's a place of trade, and so for trade

It's been laid exposed every way around,

For th'ingredient of easy access

Is what lubricates best th'circulating

Currency of commercial influence.

Since then this place for prosperity born

Was begot in an age of constant peace,  
No standing citadel was ever raised here  
Nor any sector protective immured.

SUETONIUS:

Nor castle nor tower nor closure arrayed  
To dispropert the odds to our favor.  
More misfortune, and too much to excess.  
This place is no site fit for a standoff,  
'Tis but befitting for our sepulcher  
If we stand here. No chance. We are leaving  
To join up with our better poised forces  
In midland Venonae to anticept  
An open field faceoff against the foe.  
All able Londiners convoy along,  
Or remain here and prepare for your end  
At these Britons' massacreligious hands.

TOGIDO:

Abandon our town, so methodic made  
Over our generations' patient toil?  
What life's left us when our livelihood's gone?

SUETONIUS:

Better's all resources reft than one's life.  
Survivors may recoup th'one's loss again,  
But the other, once lost, none can regain.

TASCOBAN:

Please, sir! We beg you reconsider more!

SUETONIUS:

I've considered all I need – its hopeless.  
This place cannot hold, with or without me  
Present in th'futile trial for her preserve.  
We leave immediate brief on westward course  
Along th'Watling Way. Those who wish to live  
Disperse, collect your kin, and come with us.

TASCOBAN:

Our lastmost chance profoundly now elapsed!  
Oh day of disdain!

TOGIDO:

Woe for our dashed homes!  
Come son, let's shepherd the family's escape.



MORGANO:

Indeed, with utmost haste. So too you all -  
Hustle such exits as th'hassle allows.

*Exit all stages left, right and center but SUETONIUS and SOLDIERS.*

SUETONIUS:

Alas for the tragedy imminent here,  
But 'tis by this condemnation alone,  
This scuttling of one isolated town,  
That I may rescue the whole isle around.  
So must it be, for I'll not rash gamble  
Nor wager my entire ward's command  
Without full preparing my every man.  
Be this affliction our last in these times,  
Else I succumb first to not witness th'crimes.

*Exit stage left SUETONIUS and SOLDIERS.*

#### SCENE 4

The Border of Togido and Tascoban's Estates outside Londin

*Enter stage left TOGIDO, enter stage right TASCOBAN.*

TOGIDO:

Ah, here by this stone my land becomes yours.

TASCOBAN:

Aye, were this boundary ne'er unbounded o'er,  
Nor by mine onto yours nor you o'er mine,  
Then we'd have marked better neighbors before,  
Better yet as friends.

TOGIDO:

Too true, and truer too  
Substance 'tis that 'twas well to waste my crops  
Whose sparsened remnants they'll but supplant  
T'enrich their inbounding horde's barbary bowels.

TASCOBAN:

So's the same for my slaughtered swine, which else  
They'd be jowling down in mock festivity  
Exultant o'er our tumulted butchery.  
Aye, since our hoped Phoebus proved a Phaethon  
And left us his chariot miscarried so

Topsy-turved by Boudicca's deranged steeds,  
That slaughter's soon to come, as th'impish rogues  
Must by now be roving close to Londin,  
Within which merely the too old, too young,  
And those madly fond of the place remain  
Defendants of her too wide gaping gates.  
Th'condition's settled to deny escape,  
How fared your family, did they evacuate?

TOGIDO:

My only Morgano cleared with his wife,  
Tracting the children in tow – all but two  
Of the dear precious tykes, who had gamboled  
Away through these recent defective days,  
Too distantly hid at innocent play  
To register th'urgent work then at hand.  
Only just now returned t'our hull of a home,  
Too late for escape, naive now inside  
Th'cherubs await such filthy mistreatment  
As none of their spotless purity deserves.  
Curses of gods, ne'er 'fore censured so wrong!

*Enter stage center a CATUVELLAN LONDINER.*

CATUVELLAN LONDINER:

The Britons are coming, Britons are coming!  
The town's surrounded by their wolfen pack!  
Th'conflict's prompted to converge at the core  
Wherein our leftover locals rally,  
Their former mercantile stands encircled  
To serve a newer more militant purpose  
Fortifying them in their final stand.

TASCOBAN:

A dusk attack, twilight to our eclipse.  
Once this marketplace melee manslays through,  
Certain t'decide our partisan's demise,  
The foe's eventually sure to venture  
Outward along these networked country lanes  
As they rout and clear out th'district at large.  
Choose we then to bide the shortening time  
Until they find our paltry numbers here,  
Or enter th'city's more immediate fray  
To fall corralled with our companions?  
I'll follow your discretion, Togido.

TOGIDO:

I say we take our few troops into town,  
Wherein our sacrifice, communal spent,  
Will better bloody the hated enemy  
In reprisal for their evil exploit.  
But first allow me to go once more home  
And bid my grandchildren make their escape.

*Exit TOGIDO stage left.*

TASCOBAN:

Hard the farewell of the wretched condemned!  
Harder th'more for their immaculate hearts!  
E'en scurried away in these far out fields,  
These children illuster from a lineage  
So familiar abroad that they've no hope  
Of eluding the enemy's razing gaze.  
Hereafter in truth, they're utterly doomed  
Beyond what's due them for their sinless years.

*Enter TOGIDO stage left with blood on his armor.*

TOGIDO:

I had to do it, had t'end it myself,  
Oh you inhuman cruelty of the gods,  
I had to! Else were their ends piteous worse.  
Only I alone remain here endowed  
Compassion enough in my welling breast  
To soften and blunt that ultimate cut  
Enkinded with such tender fond mercy  
As never could be kindled in the brunt  
Of brutalities and rude executions  
These horrid savage and hell-sprung butchers  
Inevitably would ruthless exercise.  
Damned be th'war! Damned be all war, that sponsor  
Of endless evils, even from good souls  
Who perforce perform deeds none else would act.  
At least now they're free, and sleep misty eyed  
In the blessed dews of Avalon isle  
Where none now may molest them ever more.

*Enter stage center two CATUVELLAN LONDINERS.*

SECOND CATUVELLAN LONDINER:

My lords! We are cut off from the township,  
Which even now flares up the night macabre

With surging flames in her every district!  
They've completely overrun Londin's guards,  
And now thick rebel bands clog th'country roads,  
Radiating out in patrols to second  
Their first central feat with further wreckage.

TOGIDO:  
So it ends here exact, at our homesteads.

TASCOBAN:  
What a surprise that we lifetime rivals  
Should find ourselves after all those old feuds  
Allied in arms, all grievances forgot.

TOGIDO:  
Aye indeed, all grievances forgiven,  
From parting rejoinders t'partners rejoined.  
What honor to match at last reconciled,  
Though 'tis our last.

TASCOBAN:  
Yet then 'twill be our best.

*Enter stage center GAVIN and three BRITON WARRIORS, all with swords drawn.*

GAVIN:  
What's here! Five hoary and withered geezers  
Tottering on their own brink of extinction!  
Fear not their odd sum, I'll even them – thus! [stabs a Catuvellan Londiner]  
So too the rest, living spoils if you can!

[all engage each other. Gavin disarms a Catuvellan Londiner. A Briton Warrior disarms Togido]

Hold that one! He's a special prize alive!

[Tascoban engages the Briton Warrior and is killed. Gavin and a Briton Warrior together disarm the last armed Londiner]

Well done, and well won. Such for the persons,  
Now to their property. You, then, and you -  
Each to one of those two nearest by homes,  
Search them for survivors or else what wares  
Of worthwhile content therein lay contained.  
If none of nor prospect caches inside,  
Set you then the torch to these domiciles.

*Exit stages left and right two BRITON WARRIORS.*

[aside to a Warrior]

Look at this catch. We've a celebrity here,  
That ignoble Roman collaborator  
Togido himself among us abides  
His overdue judgment day – it comes, dog,  
And that right quick! These grizzled two others  
Who seem to me to rank nothing of note  
Have both too far bypassed their living prime  
To be fitting for th'holy usages  
We'll hold at th'local grove of Andate,  
As our Andraste's appelled in these parts.  
Nor, being not Romans but Britons turned swine,  
Do they fall under Boudicca's precept  
To be fitted to their preferred crosses.  
We'll betake them to that sturdy close tree  
Under pretense of there disposing th'dead –  
Though our bladed constraints need no pretense –  
And then will we gibbet the pair to hang  
As the traitors they are to Briton kind.  
But for that man, that Togido infamed,  
We will bring him to Boudicca herself  
T'penalize in a most publicized way.

*Enter stages left and right two BRITON WARRIORS.*

What have you in your inspections perceived?

FIRST BRITON WARRIOR:

Vasty sums of gilded furnishings here.

SECOND BRITON WARRIOR:

Likewise this house, besides two deceased kids.

GAVIN:

Such th'pricy cost of riches undeserved.  
Once our wagons have turned the houses out,  
They'll combust th'husks and complete our conquest.  
Come, let's to that tree, to caretake the dead.  
Come now, slaves, carry your carrion away.

[Togido and the living Catuvellan Londiners pick up the Londiner corpses]

TOGIDO:

Ah Tascoban, what grace your spirit massed!  
Ah my small mind, unseeing it till it's passed!

*Exit all stage center.*

## SCENE 5

The Roman Camp in Venonae at Night

*Enter stage left AGRICOLA and PETILIUS, enter stage right SUETONIUS.*

AGRICOLA:

Welcome back, lord governor, to the camp.  
We've th'Fourteenth and Twentieth on site complete,  
But the Second won't move up from Cornwall  
For their camp prefect refuses to come  
And append us in this desperate thought fray.

SUETONIUS:

Curses descend on that leaderless head!  
May the cow's name synonym hereafter  
With mortal disgrace long after he's gone!

AGRICOLA:

Better yet valiance appeared in the Ninth,  
Whose tattered cavalry have recent arrived.  
Here's their legate, Petilius Cerialis,  
Who desires deep penitent your audience.

SUETONIUS:

Well then, sir Cerialis, what bring you me?

PETILIUS:

The Ninth's too slim remains, and my own shame,  
These both I bear to you contritely worn.  
Now from this still surviving cavalry  
I offer straightaway the deduction  
Of one life – my own – as just punishment  
For this catastrophe cavaliered on  
By my much too incautious attitude.

SUETONIUS:

Sir, this is not Augustan Germany  
And you're not that Varus who lost it all.  
True you've lost a legion, but not th'province,  
So live on, man, and lead your cavalry on  
Eminent into our imminent battle clash

Versus Boudicca. You've yet a life t' give,  
Dare take you first some more from the enemy.  
This time, though, make sure you call no retreat,  
But rather fight it through to th'deadly end,  
For lose we this one, there's nowhere left t'run.  
Now, as to my specific battle plan,  
I've scouted a situation ideal  
on our march back here from Londin.  
It is a prime piece of level set ground  
Flanked by narrow ridges to well nullify  
Their o'erweening numbers on our two sides,  
Should they approach us in those oblique ways.  
On one side is a dense thicketed wood,  
Impassable to all of their chariots,  
Ill maneuverable for any grouped men.  
This I will keep at our rear. At our front  
Will lay an open plain, an even one  
With no points of cover as could provide  
Potential for a Briton ambush plot.  
This is where we'll march, and where we'll face th' foe.

AGRICOLA:

The site seems great for us to face them off,  
But how to ensure they'll dare face us there?

SUETONIUS:

They will come simply because we are there,  
We who stand their only last obstacle  
To complete dominion over this isle,  
And because the rubes are too rudely stamped  
Without the civilizing grace of patience

That advants our better advanced culture  
Th'resource t'wage and win wars of attrition.  
We are their last challengers for the land,  
And they too ending eager to delay.  
See it in this - already they've posted  
Their swiftest shifting pursuants to observe  
Aloof our evacuative pullback here,  
Harriers who e'en now stay at viewing's verge.  
Now, when we mobilize our men forth in force,  
These vigils will float ahead of our fore  
And forward signal further to their queen  
Inciting her to proceed to meet us.  
And once we've staked ourselves to th'battle place,

Zealously will she zephyrously bear  
All her grave weight down upon our placement.  
So her fervor will prove her defect  
And destruction, and our deliverance thus.  
So, let's start this fatal sequence moving  
At once, e'en before the approach of dawn.  
Signal clarion for the soldiers to start  
Our marching coursers down the Watling Way,  
To Londin and th'enemy's reckoning day!

*Exit all stage left.*

### SCENE 6

An Altar at the Grove of Andate outside Londin at Night

*Enter stage right MYRDDIN and OWEN chanting and carrying a brazier.*

[Myrddin and Owen set the brazier beside the altar and light it on fire]

*Enter stage right BOUDICCA and ARTHUR.*

BOUDICCA:

Oh you highest clergy of our druid creed,  
Uncle Owen and Myrddin my grandsire,  
Augmented here high priest and vates seer  
To faithful minister to this sacrament,  
Tell - is all prepared for the rites divine?

MYRDDIN:

Aye, th'brazier's set at hand, well fired and hot,  
And our traditioned earth transcending herbs  
Have sedated the patients transitioned  
Unto that psychotropic sublime state  
Wherein godly communion consummates.

BOUDICCA:

For our subjects, then, have we sufficient  
Surviving youths taken in Londin town  
With their green vitality kept unblemished?

ARTHUR:

Quite enough, Roman and Briton alike,  
Both to show the gods our steepest paeans  
And to ourselves be shown their deepest plans,  
By Andraste brought most intimate insight  
Into the spirits intentions towards us.



Elsewise, all other former inhabitants  
Of this blasphemous town are cleared out now,  
Either fled off with their Roman masters  
Or dangle dead strung by noose or by board.  
At last have Londin's devious erred bargains  
And conspirations against our peoples  
Quieted and curtailed, as a new freed peace  
Regrounds th' settlement a true British town.

OWEN:

How then should we make our inception now,  
With someone of Briton or Roman kind?

BOUDICCA:

I foremost need to know how our own lives  
Shape up in the deities' providential eyes.  
Let a Briton's use mark our beginning.

*Enter stage right two WARRIORS carrying a tied and drugged Briton youth.*

[The two Warriors place the youth on the altar before Owen and Myrddin]

OWEN:

Oh, most dread reverend goddess Andraste,  
We congregate this pious ceremony  
To honor your righteous veneration,  
Just as we have congregated numerous  
Before on this our grand ordained campaign,  
And as we will innumerable after  
Congregate again through its conclusion.  
These our devotions we devoutly bring  
And offer to you and to those deities  
Allegiant to our common sanctioned cause.  
We pray you accept this sacred-made man  
And those to follow him through this altar,  
And pray you continue to provide us  
With your holy guidance and guardianship  
To our success in our upright contest.

[Owen slits the youth's throat]

Now, Andraste, we pray you direct us  
Further hereon, and reveal in this mass  
How the sage spirits abounding the land  
Look upon our duteous earthly affairs.  
Pray print the liver of this given man

Tempered with the temperaments of the gods.

[Owen cuts the youth's liver out and places it into Myrddin's hands. Myrddin examines it intently]

MYRDDIN:

Th' results are motley mixed. Some stand for us,  
Some against. By the fullness of the lobes  
I see that the eldermore immortals,  
All-father Dagda and motherly Don,  
Bring their vigor and swell to our effort.  
However, the gall-sack spots and shrivels  
With but littlesome and low-flowing bile,  
Disfavored thus by the younger godlings,  
All-practiced Lugh and Govannon form-forgers  
Foremost averse in this adverse tempering.

[Myrddin places the liver into the brazier where it burns and hisses]

The triads divine quarrel within themselves,  
Hybrid uncertain and irresolute -  
The Morrigan's threefold wits shift unsettled,  
While the variable whims of the war sprites  
Crave indiscriminate carnage on all sides.  
Thus the surpowers of heaven and earth  
Waver and fluct about our enterprise,  
Whose end phase as a result murks as gray  
As this smolder from the brazier rising.

ARTHUR:

Our cause, once whiter than pure Dover chalk,  
Has since darkened and grimmed on our way here.

BOUDICCA:

Dark is ever the nature of vengeance  
When by necessity coerced to its thrust  
'Gainst th' abysmally sombrer impetus  
Of Rome's all-eclipsing exploitation.  
Whether the gods be for or against it,  
The virtue inherent in such vengeance  
Paramounts all, e'en godly disfavor,  
And so must stay retained our focused aim  
Lest we straying from that mark instead attain  
The blackest and most pessimal fate possible -  
Endless Roman slavery to our last child.  
We must go on, no matter what upset,

What unsmiling stance some spirits might pose.  
After all, unless we win this struggle  
To stay liberal to practice our home faiths,  
These selfsame deities' continued worship  
Is threatened among the hazarded stakes.  
So then, let's send this devoted flesh on  
To be carved and cooked with purifying flames,  
In accordance with our festal customs.  
Bring here next a scion of Rome to show us  
How these same gods consider their faction.

[The two Warriors pick up the youth's body]

*Exit stage right the two WARRIORS carrying the youth. Enter stage left GAVIN.*

GAVIN:

Oh potentate gods, forgive th'intrusion,  
But 'tis news most momentous that I bring!  
The remaining Roman powers have forged  
One final head of war to face us off.  
'Tis by that rector Suetonius composed  
Of his two western Welsh legions entire.  
Our envoys report that they have late moved  
Their enormity in motion towards us,  
But now station at a half wooded field  
In the midlands, up along th'Watling Street.

BOUDICCA:

Here now turns the crux of it all! At last,  
All our chances come to one encounter,  
On whose consequence all our futures depend.  
Our seizure of Rome's reprehensible rule,  
That core interest of this insurgency,  
Now stalls plausibly tactile and within reach  
At the exact center of our homeland.  
Excise but this last canker at her heart,  
And then may our so deeply discorded  
Body of Briton kind, being thus relieved  
Begin to heal and to flourish anew.  
Our forces flush at their apex right now,  
While theirs but ebb defective in decline.  
The momentum's ours - We must not hesitate  
To hoist our host and face this final foe,  
Else might critical segments in our service  
Despond at delay and disperse away,  
Diminishing our present potential.

Thus we will desist from this ritual  
Of holy haruspensive divination  
To rally our multitude immediately  
While th'excitement of this opportunity  
Most encourages popular morale.  
Yet our sacrifices must be performed.  
Owen, range you among our devotees  
And make their due offerings to the deities  
I'll not upset our chances in the field  
By some oversight of blind impiety.  
Alas that we'll have no feast to follow,  
But the better our givings deliver  
Up to the supernal gods in this way,  
The lesser their misgivings will devolve  
About our mission seeking deliverance.  
Now let's mobilize our vaster array.  
Myrddin, keep the wagons under your lead  
Trailing yet closer along at our rear,  
As I'd have no lag obscure th'spectacle.  
I want every war-soft elder and child  
To witness historic th'moment at hand  
With their own eyes, and memorialize it  
Henceforth as a timeless and epic tale  
For bards to tell on to all our nation  
Ever to come hereafter, ensuring thus  
New generations respect and applaud  
Our fundamental trial on their behalf  
To free every person and possession  
Secure at home from foreign oppression!

*Exit all stages left and right.*

End of ACT IV

ACT V  
SCENE 1

The Roman Position on the Battle Field near the Watling Way

*Enter stage left SUETONIUS, AGRICOLA, TRIBUNES and OFFICERS.*

AGRICOLA:

Good, my lord, our late left sentries return  
With sir Cerialis at head of their charge.  
Contact must be made with the Briton foe  
On th'opposite side of this fight destined field.

*Enter stage right PETILIUS and SOLDIERS.*

PETILIUS:

Salveté all, our steeds' racing pacements  
Did trace out along the Britons' placements,  
From which survey I may rightly report  
That they've curled the massive sea of their bulk  
Round into th'sickled crescence of an arc,  
Thickly spanning the whole breadth of the plain  
And occluding us hemmed from all egress.

SUETONIUS:

We'll take our leave walking out, not running,  
And going o'er their bones, not backing away.  
This site will excellently undermine  
Their size too funneled down and narrowed thin  
To overtake my planned formulations.  
To dilute their bruising ictus, I'll split  
Our troops partitioned to three e'en portions,  
Each one organized into a dense wedge  
Formation, like unto th'tip of a spear.  
Armed with this steely manpower trident,  
We can withstand like th'Herculean Pillars  
Their flooding ocean brine of crashing waves,  
And once their overeager impetus  
Stifles them stillstood in a hobbled heap,  
Then we'll push out into the pool of them  
And with our jaggy barbs skewer and harpoon  
Every last washed up fighter they've fished out  
Of the squalid sea of our subordinates,  
Undertowing their revolt to its end.  
I will myself take up the leadership  
Of our central placed corpus of picked troops,

On whom th'greatest and most bending pressure  
Will doubtless fall, and so th'battle depends.  
Petilius, you I appoint to our right,  
And by its defense on this pivotal day  
Gain you thereby your sought for redemption.  
Agricola, keep yourself close by me  
To learn thereby how Rome's leaders marshal  
Conflicts of crux to conclusions partial.

[sounds of drums and shouting offstage]

Gods cringe, what means that chimpering caterwaul?

PETILIUS:

Those ruckus strains did ring in their refrains  
All about the enemy's lengthy echelons  
Throughout our reconnoitered forward pass.  
Indeed, their racket and bellowed exhaust  
Can clear be heard before they're vaguely spied.  
'Tis atrocity.

SUETONIUS:

Aye, but 'tis victory too -  
Ours assured, for like lyrics in Mona  
Resoundingly proofed then, as now, how dull,  
How dim imperceptive and ignorant  
All these barbarians misesteem complete  
The right properties for conduct in war,  
Without which success'll e'er shirk elusive  
As it needs include that steely silence  
Of tactical taciturnity till th'tacking point  
Such as our stone-flint troops expertly use,  
And so this their witless ingression t'war  
'Gainst our keener skills faults sheer foolishness.  
In peace, now, folly jollifies just praise,  
loving levity and harmless laughter,  
But war is no laughing matrefact, nay,  
'Tis source of hot shrieks and din gnashing teeth.  
By this, then, these vacant fools' vain pursuit  
Of winless warfare merits not our mirth,  
But rather our sternest, most wroth contempt.  
So now, I command you all to contemn  
Alike the hollow huffs and idle threats  
Of these childish Briton fools, more women  
Than men, for the most part action unproofed,  
And almost all unarmed improperly.

We're true men, well competent in conflict,  
And all completely equipped for th'duel's needs.  
They'll but flail, flutter and downfall before  
This conquering combination of ours.  
So arise then, bold men co-combatant,  
Arise my men of Rome! Rouse us and show  
These contaminated British cattle  
Our mettled sort of mastering manhood  
Which overcomes every adversity!

PETILIUS:

Aye, we've hurdled plentiful adverse trials,  
But here's adversity teeming extreme  
On the field today, these adversaries  
Whose herd outnumbered on a massive scale -  
At least twenty souls to our each soldier.

AGRICOLA:

There's a true concern, as throughout my time  
In this honor, however briefly served,  
I've ne'er yet seen us so flush outnumbered  
As in th'seething bundance before us now.

PETILIUS:

Nor I in all my longer tenured track,  
Until that ambushed day on th'Ermine Way  
When th'Ninth's grim end did end my legature.

SUETONIUS:

I know their numbers figure a menace,  
But that threat's but feigned from every member  
For all those numbers account for nothing  
Against our summit of peak discipline.  
Such a thing is discipline as can halve  
A hundred, aye, drops it by half again,  
And reduct a score soldiers t'as but one.  
It evens all odds and settles all scores,  
And just such discipline have we perfect  
Learned from our fathers' battalions of old.  
As with battles of legions manifold,  
Where it is but a few disciplined men  
Who decide th'outcome for all, so too here,  
Although our maniples be modical,  
We're manned throughout with entire centuries -  
Indeed millennia - of possessors  
Integral of just such determining

Discipline as is called for by the fray.  
Now, discipline does allow for caution,  
But has no room for dusking fear, and so  
I command you not to fear this shadow sham  
Apparition of British advantage.  
Don't fear their numbers – they lack th' resources  
To give them value. Don't fear their conquests  
Of our towns – they didn't fight for either.  
One they'd gotten surprised, one abandoned.  
Definitely don't fear their murder of th' Ninth –  
That they managed by blindly guised ambush,  
But on this plain, all's open and honest  
And the day'll belong t' our defter deployed  
Arms, well sufficient for our reliance  
If you well remember our discipline –  
Stay in close order through th' starting phases,  
The castings of spears and initial scrapes.  
Once full contact's broached, then keep a constant  
Press on th' foe, until they breach and scatter.  
Most important, pay no mind to plunder.  
With victory ours, all the rest shall follow,  
For none more's left to rise up hereafter.  
Yea, we'll cap three long years with one great day,  
And through one singular battle secure  
All our possessions and our regnal place  
Over all peoples, both here and abroad.  
Victorious, we'll set a standard for all  
Romans t' emulate, for all foes to fear,  
And we'll show all mankind how kind we are  
To th' obedient, to rebels how severe.  
Thus they've put everything into your hands -  
Whether by volleying forth your well-wrought wills  
To remain free, rule others and prosper,  
Or by slackening them be dominated,  
Be stripped of everything entirely  
And suffer every opposite atrocity.  
Now, I've decided for our favorable  
Outcome, and I wholly expect it too  
For a supremacy of causes prime –  
Because of our innocent ministry,  
Whose validity thus unjustly provoked  
Guarantees us th' granting gods' sympathy.  
Because of our experience, ingrained back  
When we worsted these same peoples' betters.  
Because of our martial discipline most  
Of all, against which all these forked peasants



Aren't opponents but subservient slaves,  
And so I bid you recall your conquests,  
Mind your discipline and man your ranks sharp  
To end this pesky British pestilence  
At last! So start now, and take to your tasks!

*Exit stage left all but SÜETONIUS.*

But if it comes out 'gainst expectation,  
I'm encouraged still in considering that  
An honest death betters a life of shame.  
Indeed it would be better for us all  
To fall here battling as men at th'world's edge  
Than to incur the coward's shame and worse -  
To be gored and impaled on red-hot skewers,  
To see our own entrails, or be melted  
In boiling water - as will pass if we  
Are felled into captivity to these  
Uncivilized, unlawful, unholy beasts.  
Therefore, I'm resolute unto my last  
To o'erturn them here or die on the spot.  
Either way, we'll have a fine monument  
For ourselves in Britain, e'en if all Rome  
Else gets driven out, and with our bodies,  
At least, we'll forever possess this land.  
Now's time to take my station at our head,  
And launching this last momentous sequence  
Let's whip Boudicca's upstart delinquents!

*Exit SÜETONIUS stage left.*

## SCENE 2

### The Briton Position on the Same Field

*Enter stage right BOUDICCA, ARTHUR, GAVIN, OWEN and WARRIORS.*

BOUDICCA:  
Back from exploring the hostile facade,  
Do describe, fierce Gavin, their promenade.

GAVIN:  
My scouts and I did vigilant espy  
The collected mass of Rome's Welsh legions  
Tripartitioned in a treble-fold stance  
And backed into a copsy corner  
From which there's no escape.

OWEN:

They're gambling all on one final pitched stand,  
Pledging their every last life pawned today  
To hazard the struggle's immediate end.  
Their desperation manifests this show.  
Yet remember, predators caught in the pit  
Do threaten the most. To debilitate, then,  
And thus disarm this their edge of despair –  
Lest we let a too light treatment of it  
Allow the issue to spiral most grave -  
Our band needs must share likewise serious risk,  
So that by communing with our trapped foe  
In that sombrest stake of raw survival,  
We can commute it thereby to nothing.

BOUDICCA:

Good your regard for this closing affair.  
Uncle Owen, call Myrddin's wagons up  
To ring in our rear even closer packed,  
And by this enclosure of our own ranks  
Extinguish thereby blocked any prospect  
For our own egress from this killing rink,  
Should today's fine conflict somehow conclude  
Contrary to our wise expectancy.  
Publish it then among the trooper  
That we willingly opt this obstruction,  
Boxing ourselves in with the enemy  
To ensure here that no retreat delays  
Our ultimate acquirement of our too long  
Deferred vengeance, which vindication then  
Our witnessing civilians will behold  
All the better in all its historic  
Moment, as a native lady undoes  
The domination so wrongful wrought here  
By th'mightiest men of th'continent – of all th'world!

OWEN:

At once with all haste, my dread warrior queen!

*Exit stage right OWEN.*

BOUDICCA:

This long standing standard among our own kind  
Will seem novelty to Rome - that we fight  
Under women's' and men's' valors alike,

Valuing our commanders on our sense  
Of justice and the hard intensity  
Of our intention t'attain that justice  
Regardless of the costs. Now I have shown  
My hardness adamantine thus far on  
In my relentless exaction throughout  
Of precisely such justified revenge,  
And here stands still a new opportunity  
To broadcast our vindictive skills beyond  
To the farthest boundaries of th'world, to strands  
Whose bankward shores we've ne'er e'en seen before.  
Purposing this end, I avenge today  
Not as a leader of long lineage,  
Wrongly deprived my rights and resources,  
I avenge but as a simple Briton  
Personally wronged in myriad ways –  
Wrongly deprived of freedom, wrongly whipped,  
My family wrongly despoiled and worst yet,  
My daughters wrongly deflowered. Too far  
Has this wayward blemish of Roman bred  
Avarice progressed, polluting our bodies,  
Our eldermen, and our young maids alike.  
Too truly wicked is th'noxious effect  
Of their ill-borne injuries against us,  
And just so truly just is the vengeance  
We now seek against them, vengeance so just  
As must be sure propped by th'gods supportive,  
Surely as they've supported us so far.  
Thus it happened that the firstcome legion  
Rome brought on fought to their own destruction.  
Thus it happens that all th'other Romans  
On this island now do but cringing hide  
In their lonely forts and desperately seek  
Some escapade from our unswerving sweep.  
Thus it happens that th'force here before us  
Has no rescue nor replenish coming,  
As they cower encrouched and gelidate  
Unable to match us our din and roar,  
Let alone meet our approaching attack.  
Seeing our vaster numbers, our juster cause  
And our firmly harder disposition  
In this confrontation and in this war,  
They can but delve to delusions of winning,  
Or wakedly die by the blade. To arms,  
And hear this woman's ideal intention –  
That they may somehow survive through the day

So as to become forever our slaves!

ARTHUR:

Living or dead, our goal nears accomplished,  
And our self sovereignty's restoration  
Needs but the removal of this one last  
Bristling thicket of Roman resisters.  
Here they are, as naked in their armor  
As we clad seething with this storming strength  
That shall bow their branches back at a burst  
To th'breaking point, and blast them out by th'root!  
So summon up that typhonic fury  
And hail hell upon their heads, make them bend,  
Till crushed beneath our busting brunt they end!

*Exit all charging stage left.*

### SCENE 3

#### The Same Field

*Drums and alarms sound offstage. Enter stage left retreating ARTHUR, GAVIN and BRITON WARRIORS, followed by advancing ROMAN SOLDIERS.*

ROMAN SOLDIER:

Here's a lot, have at!

GAVIN:

Have a piece of this!

[all engage each other]

*Enter stage left more ROMAN SOLDIERS.*

ARTHUR:

Gavin, off! We can't hold out! Back, men, back!

*Exit stage right retreating ARTHUR, GAVIN and BRITON WARRIORS, followed by advancing ROMAN SOLDIERS. Enter stage left SUETONIUS and ROMAN SOLDIERS.*

SUETONIUS:

Seek the queen! I'd drop her personally!  
Spot out where she stands amid these dull pawns!

*Enter stage left BOUDICCA and BRITON WARRIORS.*

Oh fortitude! Here's the sham dictatrix,

Doomed to shameful discredit! Have here, queen!

BOUDICCA:

Doomed was my people's lot well before this,  
Downcast beneath your oppressive slavery  
Whose hateful injuries needs be balanced  
By our vengeance in the scales of justice,  
Else asymmetered through your hateful heft  
Our heaviered cup would but tipping topple  
Us groveling down to abject perdition!  
Averting this fatal adversity  
Validates my vindictive rebellion  
So long as it's pursued through to its end,  
Or win or lose the draw, for us or Rome,  
For 'tis our last way left by whose avail  
I've not cause to fear a shameful future  
Under this present shameful state I hate!

SUETONIUS:

But take account of th'too cruel countenance  
Of this your enlightened expedition  
And see what profanities illumine  
Thereby: Noble matrons ignobly sliced  
And spitted upright most unrighteously.  
Elders and babes defiled indiscriminate  
Indiscriminate defilement of elders  
And babes whose sole crimes were undefiant lives.  
Add to this myriad mortalities besides  
Most noxiously on innocents assailed,  
And you demonstrate mere monstrosity  
In these brutish displays of butchery.  
If this seems the better way, then forefend  
All the world from your ill intentioned reign!

BOUDICCA:

Howso terrible it seems, this reign's ours,  
Promoting our own wellbeing paramount,  
And there's a decency insurmountable  
Beneath th'periphery of distant Rome's shade!

SUETONIUS:

Shades take you all for this umbrageous fit!  
Advance, men!

BOUDICCA:

These thugs teem too many here!

Fall back where our folk conglom thicker fence!  
Withdraw!

SUETONIUS:

No refuge afield, no resort!

Accost after them, hounds, harry their hinds!

*Exit stage left retreating BOUDICCA and BRITON WARRIORS, followed by advancing SUETONIUS and ROMAN SOLDIERS. Enter stage right ARTHUR and BRITON WARRIORS. Enter stage left BOUDICCA and BRITON WARRIORS.*

ARTHUR:

We are routed! The Roman formation  
Withstood beyond every expectation  
Our brunting billow, upon whose exhale  
They sprang offensive, running us backwards  
Across the field. Oh woe! Our forces' bulk  
Are penned in by our burdensome wagons  
Rounded too securely about us all,  
And there lasts no hope for general regroup  
Or common exit, as our folk splinter  
And scramble about the gorying field  
Pursuing various elusions away  
From fatal Rome's reactive elisions.  
Yet Owen's arranged a thready passage  
Through these faulty wagons, while I rescour  
The field recovering our fractured captains.  
So retrieving Gavin bold, I witnessed  
His martyr fall by a centurion's blow.

BOUDICCA:

Gavin gone and all my army going,  
And all my vengeance hopes go out along.  
I beg you, Arthur, go on, save yourselves,  
But to this trial my soul's vital devout,  
And I will not go on devoided that,  
Humbled to behold any brethren more  
Beaten prostrate by Roman arrogance,  
Helplessly hopeless for its requital.  
Nor would I allow them further license  
Against me, from whom they'll never relent  
So long as rumor reports me alive.  
This then will be my final vengeance here,  
That I shall deprive Rome its trophy catch  
And ability to ever harm me more  
By me first harming myself lethally.

[takes out a vial]

Just for such a contingency as this,  
I bid Myrddin prepare from his medicines  
This potent emergency antidote,  
Proofed 'gainst any further Roman outrage,  
And so I take't here, [drinks from the vial] and cure myself cleansed  
Of Rome's dead poison, whose mortal nausea  
Did but briefly symptom survivable  
Through our revolutionary physic  
Of this exercise, until at the crux  
Our recovery relapsed. Now't remains that  
But by tasting death may I heal at last.  
I go beyond, but pray you fly alive  
And relay the torchlight of my mission  
Forth, reflecting our rousing sedition  
To those yet unborn in subdued Britain.

[Boudicca collapses dead]

ARTHUR:

Oh my queen, hale physician to us all,  
May what comes better be than what went 'fore,  
Though for us survivors the odds bode ill  
Against any improvement for our state.  
Still, doubtful though all our futures may be,  
I'll not leave her body dishonored here  
To be picked over by knave scavengery  
Or worse treatment still, should they recognize  
Her personally. Let's secret her away  
Back to her home, and 'bout her vanishment  
Let's exclaim apogeeosis abroad.  
But ho! Imposing Romans do approach!  
Fellows, effect delay as best you can,  
While we relay this idol from the fray.

*Exit stage right ARTHUR and some BRITON WARRIORS carrying BOUDICA'S CORPSE. Enter stage left SUETONIUS, AGRICOLA and ROMAN SOLDIERS.*

SUETONIUS:

Hack these heathens apart!

[all engage each other]

BRITON WARRIOR:

Too much! Depart!

*Exit stage right BRITON WARRIORS.*

AGRICOLA:

Some of the Britons' wagons do appear  
To be getting their cartage in order,  
Some are finally admitting exit  
From the crisis field.

SUETONIUS:

Shame in each escape.  
When these vermin scatter, th'direct evidence  
Of their complicity dissolves, and they thus  
May evade their overdue punishment.  
Here's no place for mercy, nor's now its time,  
So range forth and cut off their egression -  
Kill their oxen to clog up the outflow.  
Cut you down every man, woman and child  
Encountered, armed or no. Take no captives.  
I want this day to linger lividly  
In th'British psyche a permanent caution  
For their heirs against th'folly of revolt.  
The crueler we are now, the securer  
Our morrow becomes, and for this I'll brook  
No mercy today upon their downfall!  
Show them no mercy, no mercy at all!

*Exit all charging stage right.*

#### SCENE 4

The Roman Camp outside Londin

*Enter stage right AGRICOLA and JULIUS CLASSICIANUS.*

AGRICOLA:

This pavilion's th'praetorium of our camp,  
My lord procurator Classicianus,  
Where the governor intends your reception.  
Pray hope your nascent tenure may prove yet  
More halcyon than your predecessor's.  
These last months have too gruelled our faculties  
Pinched to the hinge. How fared for you  
The channel crossing over here from Gaul?  
Those twelve fresh cohorts of Gallic augments  
Must have mired and sapped the passage across,



Perchance providing some penchance therein  
For capsizes of the so compounded fleet.

CLASSICIANUS:

The channel's worst tempests do sway but mild  
In comparison to th' tempestuous constraints  
These mobilized Gallic units motivate  
To constrict our complexion 'pon the Rhine.  
To furnish these replenishments, we stripped  
Fruitful Gaul's Batavian front precipitous  
Bare, so reduced that our sterling troops there  
Must dilute further debased by foreign  
Alloiances. What's more, our leadership  
Needs diplomate unto our settled foes  
Across the margin lines and bargain off  
Novel peaces less prospering th' empire.  
Else by capricious opportunism  
They'd mount offenses more costly to Rome  
Than the entire worth of this whole island,  
Whose perils all fault upon your rector  
And his catastrophic mismanagement,  
Which I doubt e'en th' aid of these eight thousand  
Gallic arms under his generalship can  
Convert back from its current civil strife.

*Enter stage right SUETONIUS.*

SUETONIUS:

Now I'll have words with you, Classicianus,  
And if you response me as ruefully  
As you've been depicting me to my troops,  
I'll have blows with you too, for I've received  
Reports that among th' newcome squads you've been  
Exhorting outright insubordination  
Against my mandates, urging they desist  
From their tasked appointments and operations  
Among these uncertain populations  
Of Britons lately scattered among us  
Until a new legate comes in my stead –  
As you stand in for unsteadied Catus.  
You slander me wrathful, proud, and arrogant,  
Which conqueror' qualities you denigrate as  
Improper in peacetime administration.  
Tell me then, my pacifist procurator,  
Have you yourself ever served in legion,  
On line or indeed in any way abroad

From th'pleasure domes and marbled villa homes  
Of your silken Italian womb before?  
Of course not. I'd warrant you even feel  
We all but idly feast and fest up here  
Day through day, till this last blip of conflict  
That drove Catus away. Well, come to know  
The truth of it here - we eat naught but scraps,  
And sleep under canvases raw, or sky.  
We spur no resentment from our subjects  
Nor deprive them beyond absolute need  
T'avert worse counteractions 'gainst our rule.  
This ongoing campaign was well underway  
'Fore I e'en arrived here two years ago,  
Just as it had likewise been in progress  
Throughout my every predecessor's term,  
Back through to Rome first intervention here  
O'er a generation ago - always war.  
You condemn my conqueror's qualities bad,  
Fact is they've been Rome's only salvation  
In the face of these half-bred local rubes'  
Continual and violent resentment  
Of our supreme humanistic attempts  
To reorganize their beastly chaos  
And rudimentary disorder reprov'd  
Into a proper civilization.  
I am th'Roman way. I'm the best there is.

CLASSICIANUS:

These are not th'wild old days of th'republic,  
Suetonius, when our legates were licensed  
Roughshod to taunt their provincials' defects,  
And e'en encouraged to provoke rebellions  
Whose suppressions garnered th'suppressors  
Triumphant adulations and reasoned  
Presumptions for honorial promotions.  
None of that now - these are imperial times,  
Begot by th'hundred year cataclysm  
Of uncivil bloodshed caused when that same  
Caustic worldview turned us into ourselves  
In repeating rounds of revolved onslaughts  
That almost eradicated us all,  
Till t'save itself our society evolved  
Away from those too flawed ways and expunged  
Your cavalier combative attitude  
From our stabler reformed constitution.  
This era demands we govern fairer

And more pacific throughout th'territories,  
Fostering sufficient general prosperity  
T'quell thereby any insurgent notions  
Among our subordinate potentates.  
Tragically, this has not been your strategy  
In these bellicose tactics that rather  
Shake our hold on these peoples than firm it,  
As e'en now in these inquisition squads  
You troll haphazard about th'countryside  
Hunting for that lost witch or any whim  
Of infidelity else. These violations  
Activate more hostility than fealty  
Among the abused peasantry, and so  
More threaten us than the menaced natives.  
Learning things being thus at my assignment,  
I determined your rule needs be curtailed  
For the sake of the state, in which spirit,  
When I enjoined with your latest conscripts  
I dispatched them directives invective  
Against obeying your harrying commands,  
Implicating imminent regime change  
To effect their compliance. So again,  
Before beginning my transit out here,  
I wrote appeal to our prelates in Rome  
For your swift removal and replacement  
By cooler and more clement leadership  
As the only remaining way for us  
To restore lasting order to this land.  
Then, just before embarking th'channel's cross,  
I received this epistle imperial  
Expressing th'emperor's concurrent concern  
And impressing his decision to cast  
His personal domestic familiar,  
One Polyclitus, with full supplantive  
Authority to review the situation  
And enaction what amendments he deems  
Appropriate t'effect its rectification.  
Considering the discontent still simmering  
About the island, he's certain to find  
Our efforts here will be foundered for years  
Because of your too brash and over-rash  
Interdictions, and so, by the powers  
Invested me t'check you into balance,  
I'll see you rightly relived of duty  
As both a debility to th'Roman cause  
And a disgrace to yourself. Suetonius,

This is not your province any longer.

SUETONIUS:

Out of my sight now, you sententious worm!  
Another word more and I'll cut you here!  
Back yourself off to your Londin bureau!

CLASSICIANUS:

I go deferential t'your just frustration.  
Know it saddens me to impair you so,  
Yet I must, for your rule maddens me more.

*Exit stage right JULIUS CLASSICIANUS.*

AGRICOLA:

Can this man's maledictions heft such weight  
T'sway this Polyclitus against you so?

SUETONIUS:

Aye, so. By that servant's mere movement here  
My downfall's most verily guaranteed,  
For once th'wheel of policy begins to turn,  
It needs rest altered, else't lures subversion.  
No, my career now careens miscarried  
T'some profound degree of degradation.  
Oh th'depravity of my deprivation!  
Oh you most controversial misfortune  
That countermines my every taken care  
To remedy th'island's remedial maladies.  
Nay, all's dissolving, undone to the dust  
By this rudest brood's unruly nature  
As it's undone their every own monarch  
And native minister, destabilled them all  
Down to th'deepst delves and basest benches  
Of their dimmest ancestral collectives.

AGRICOLA:

Oh malicious mischance of circumstance,  
That for's victory meted o'er th'general tempest  
Our single best tempered general should meet  
His eviction then.

SUETONIUS:

And cursed for't hereon.  
Now that Corbulo, he was blessed indeed  
T'attain his service in th'oriented East,

Dealing therein with peoples long adept  
And well inured t' those imperial virtues  
Of central authority and established  
Hierarchy, and accustomed most morally  
To those several personal sacrifices  
which subjects are obliged to offer up  
And suffer without slightest objection  
To support our most flawless society.  
'Tis a far cry from these obstinate hives  
Of swarming and waspish mobs that, like th' wind  
They waft upon, do but flap aimlessly,  
Dividing allies and shifting enmities  
So the stricken all strike out against all  
Perpetual, producing naught thereby.  
How can any governor hope to adhere  
The sworn obedience needed to handle  
Th' affairs of state – its defense, its opulence –  
With undercutting inhabitants like these?  
It can't be done. This place was wrong for me.  
I'd merit station on th' Danube or th' Rhine,  
Where civilian society's but a vacuum  
Through whose vastness our martial ranks may pass  
And waste genocidal our neighbors beyond,  
Or else my due placement's in th' interior  
Where true citizenship thrives, appreciative  
Of submission's providential validity.  
But oh not here, not this meanest of means  
That examples the worst of both extremes.  
Charged t' seed civilities amid hostilities,  
'Tis an enormous task fraught with setbacks  
And more limitless wrecks than all the days  
Any of us are bound to witness through.  
Just one such trauma has wracked my tenure  
To th' verge, and my very head's at hazard  
To the dread judgment of Caesar's base slave.  
Pray the man deems me still fit to function  
In some suiting frontier or adjunction.

*Exit all stage right.*

#### SCENE 5

A Field outside the Icenic Capital

*Enter stage left ARTHUR and BRITONS carrying BOUDICCA on a bier. Enter stage right MYRDDIN and OWEN. Exit bier stage right.*

OWEN:

Great are our thanks to you, kingly Arthur,  
For your greatly taken pains to convey  
Our carried queen back to her rightful home.  
We here meanwhile have painstaking prepared  
A most magnificent dolmen stone tomb  
For her eternally interned repose.  
We've emulated with intricacy  
The composured methods and materials  
Availed by our antiquest ancestry,  
And e'en imposed a true war chariot,  
As was her fond use in her former life.  
Such expense as we're able to bestow  
Has been employed to the fullest extent  
To duly honor this holy heroine.

ARTHUR:

The labor was an honor in itself,  
But with a heavy toll paid for th' passage,  
For we were coerced to several extreme  
Diversive actions to secret her past  
The roving suspicious Roman patrols.  
Many a building burned to bring her here,  
Many a body unburied behind,  
So great are the pains that vindictive Rome  
Impresses in earnest upon us now  
As th' punishment they verdictate we've earned  
But for our attempt at emancipation.

MYRDDIN:

True these torments they prick on, and truer too  
Are th' too stinging pains that the stingy gods  
Impose on us through our own agency,  
For our farmers' diversion from their fields  
Into service as revolutionaries  
Has but resulted catastrophically  
In a cropless season imperiling all.  
Thus the victimized land punishes us  
For our own fallow negligence far worse  
than could any imperial Roman sect,  
Yet expect no drops of pity from Rome  
Nor their abuses' abatement in th' least,  
For we've so steeped them vicious in turmoil  
That they will but glee at our ravaged spoil.

OWEN:

Wondrous indeed is Rome's punitive passion  
That they punish even their own victors.  
Such is the new procurator's campaign  
To ruin the very governor whose defense  
Just salvaged their province from our attack.

ARTHUR:

How much stranger then is the curiosity  
That some low born and base palatial slave  
Should be defferenced so and highly esteemed  
Among these same eminent Roman grandees.  
Yea, his mere appearance shook and shuttered  
Their boldest leaders abject t'obedience.  
'Tis a true Roman novelty to me  
How e'en slavery itself wields potency,  
As their free men serve and their servants free  
T'command and comply interchangeably,  
Perhaps even so up to the empery.  
All peer alike are in their queer society.

OWEN [looking off stage left]:

Oh gods, what new disaster wracks us now!  
Despair the sight - a Roman squadron nears  
Outdecked with arms more formidable by far  
Than the paltry few farming implements  
Still left in our denuded possession,  
All former martial tools relinquished o'er.

*Enter stage left PETILIUS and SOLDIERS.*

Oh my grave ducal lord! Pray your mercy  
Moves you not t'burn this hovelled village down!  
We only conspire here for breathing peace  
To respire upon the face of the land,  
Inhaled by Briton and Roman alike.  
Nor can our tardied corpses yield produce  
Such as our prompt hands can living conduce.  
I beg you spare our lives and livelihoods!

PETILIUS:

Soothe this consternation now and be calm,  
For I bear olive boughs, not oaken barbs.  
A fresh pact of peace weaves across the land  
More merciful than has been chased of late,  
So I'll pronounce no dour convictions here,  
But rather announce bright prospects instead.

The lord governor Suetonius Paulinus,  
Whose mandate disposed th'Roman machinery  
To mass chastisement of all Briton kind  
In response t'your recent insurgency,  
Has been removed from office by order  
Of th'imperial envoy Polyclitus.  
In his stead, our high presidential consul  
In Rome, Petronius Turpilianus,  
Has elected to step down from the throne  
And assume Britain's direct rectorship.  
Here'pon he'll with more moderate temperament  
Tailor and suture that sewn tranquility  
Through which alone can restored harmony  
Lasting patch and sustain our fellowship.  
Such were our forebears' former intentions,  
And such again our foremost propensions.

ARTHUR:

Oh golden thread of grace! A thousand thanks  
Will flow from each Trinovan tongue for this!

OWEN:

And so say I for my Icenii kind!

PETILIUS:

Now, lest you let your capricious tastes  
Corkscrew these approvals to spiraled reproofs,  
On this point I must discourse more, although  
I'm no orator. Nay, we Roman soldiers  
Assert our values but by valorous arms,  
And leave the explanations of our feats  
To th'historians left behind in our wake.  
But you people, who lack such monuments  
Of note, you value words most above all,  
And so I'll speak on this situation  
'Twixt us while our disputes still lull abed.  
Truth is we Romans came here not for greed,  
Rather beckoned by your ancestors' call,  
Exhausted as they were to the extreme  
By their own internal worm of discord  
Allow me now to recount its details.  
Before us, your own two tribes broiled in feud,  
To which some side sought Catuvellan aid.  
In they came, and with treacherous villainy  
Imposed vulgar servitude on the crowd.  
T' this you begged us, who coming, freed you all.



Now we administer all commonly knit  
With the wide equality of community,  
Whose peaceful coexistential character  
Ne'er so well webbed your weaponed clans before.  
And we expand th'benefit further abroad  
To th'foreign Welsh beyond western Severn  
Simply to shelter this new bound comity  
Safe from their unneighborly encroachments,  
Which like all coups through Britain's war torn past  
Would doubtless come with honeyed citations  
Of hallowed freedom and familiar names,  
Hollow husked terms every usurper's used.  
Yet we, despite your frequent rebellions,  
Only demand the victor's right t'expect  
Those contributions to th'communal costs  
The state needs to maintain this lasting peace  
Whence all your latest improvements advanced.  
The connections are readily evident –  
There can be no prosperity for any  
Without peace for all, and no peace without  
Peacekeeping arms, no armies without pay,  
And no pay without drawn tribute and tax  
From th'prosperous all. This our one demand,  
Is then as much for your welfare as ours,  
Everything else being even between us.  
You and your own descendants shall arise  
To attain powers supreme and ministries  
Both martial and civil. You provincials  
Even benefit from the better portion  
Of this imperial association  
Because you taste of our good emperor's fruits,  
Which evenly profit th'whole empire's breadth  
While bad emperors wrong th'nearby Romans most.  
Now, for our closer British governors here,  
I bid you bide patience if they do wrong,  
As their tenure's briefer and less ruinous  
Than th'tribulations that revolt upheaves.  
You tolerate already nature's traumas –  
Disastrous barrenness, destructive floods.  
Tolerate also luxury and greed  
From our occasional bad governors.  
Their injuries will not be without end,  
And they will be more than compensated  
By the intervention of better heads.  
There are vices so long as there are men  
Don't delude yourselves that native chieftains

Are vicious less or charge lower tribute  
To warden your populous folds secure  
From your fellow Britons, Welshmen or Scots.  
If we Romans are ever expelled hence,  
If native revolt should somehow succeed,  
Naught would follow here but entropied strife  
Of all nations against themselves e'er more.  
All that stands in th'way is eight hundred years  
Of fortune and perfected discipline  
That wove this Roman protective patchwork,  
Which cannot be destroyed, not overturned,  
Without destructing its overturners.  
Such a wreck is most dangerous for you,  
For your resources and riches compiled  
Become then the foremost causes for war.  
Therefore, love and foster this Roman state  
In which the victors and victed alike  
Obtain likewise rights and opportunities,  
And let my warning of th'alternative  
Teach you not to prefer defiance with ruin  
Over obedience with security.

OWEN:

Rest defended, these recent apprehensions  
Have apprenticed us all too well attuned  
To your good entreaty's appealing truth.

MYRDDIN:

Aye indeed, the whole island's wizened keen  
And receptive conversed t'such overtures.

PETILIUS:

So may these lessons glean enlightening.  
In just this hope I hereby take my leave  
T'pronounce our auspices nearby abroad,  
By whose utterance our luminary league  
Will revive open-eyed life to the land.

[looking off stage right]

As to this funeral and whom it venerates,  
What person they once were and how they died,  
Whether starved by famine or struck by sword,  
With heart pious to Rome or recalcitrant,  
Their passing thus honored in this frail place  
So solemn me that Ill not inquest it,

But leave the past to pass, for future's chance.

*Exit stage left PETILIUS and SOLDIERS.*

ARTHUR:

True are the words he said, true their spirit  
True the reconciliatory mark they claim.  
Yet rebellion's more than mere malady  
Such as he too simply claims it to be.  
It hastens an end to the worst abuse,  
It alleives the injured, frees the enslaved,  
And its acquittal ushers better states,  
Native or foreign, newborn or ancient.  
The state needs be just in its promotion  
Of peace and prosperity throughout th'body,  
Or else suffer t'answer for its failure.  
If responsive to petition, so well,  
But if senselessly it connives our harm,  
Then is violence for violence virtuous.

OWEN:

Thus 'tis the rebellious zealot's first challenge  
To plead their case to the body politic,  
And by the content of its delivery  
Either convince their brethren to take arms,  
As did pure Boudicca's most piteous plight,  
Or else by their shallowness of charges  
They lie exposed sham charlatans at heart.  
'Tis our due t'be watchful of our rulers,  
But also to watch ourselves just as well.

MYRDDIN:

Yea so, yet Queen Boudicca's predicament  
Was truest as e'er predicted unrest,  
And though she raged vicious 'gainst the Romans,  
Just so viceless did she reign o'er her own.  
So let us honor her honest grandeur  
And pray Rome so amends its behavior  
With her restless case now come to arrest  
That no preacher more renews the contest.

*Exit all stage right.*

THE END

