It is decreed. Nor shall thy fate, O Rome (Setting 2)

BEN JONSON

CESARE MORELLI (fl. 1674-86)

It is decreed. Nor shall thy fate, O Rome, resist my vow.

Though hills were set on hills And seas met seas to guard thee, I would through;

Ay, plough up rocks, steep as the Alps, in dust And lave the Tyrrhene waters into clouds, But I would reach thy head, thy head, proud city.
The ills that I have done cannot be

safe But by attempting greater; and I feel A

spirit within me chides my sluggish hands And says they have been

innocent too long.

man bred great as Rome herself? One form'd for all her honours, all her
glo ries, Eq ual to all her ti tles? That could stand Close up with At las,

and sus tain her name As strong as he does heav'n?

And was I, Of all her brood, mark'd out for the re pulse Of her

no voice, when I stood can did ate To be com man der in the Pon tic War?

I will here af ter call her step dame,
ev-er. If she can lose her na-ture, I can lose My pi-ety.

and in her ston-y en-trails Dig me a seat where I will live a-gain The la-bour of her womb, and

be a bur-den Weight-i-er than all the prod-i-gies and mon-sters That 'ere she teen'd with since she first knew Mars.
It is decreed. Nor shall thy fate, O Rome

Resist my vow. Though hills were set on hills And seas met seas to guard thee, I would through; Ay, plough up rocks, steep as the Alps, in dust And lave the Tyrhenian waters into clouds, But I would reach thy head, thy head, proud city.

The ills that I have done cannot be safe But by attempting greater;

and I feel A spirit within me chides my sluggish hands And says they have been innocent too long.

Was I a man bred great as Rome herself? One form'd for all her honours, all her
glo-ries, Eq-ual to all her ti-tles? That could stand Close up with At-las,

and sus-tain her name As strong as he does heav'n? And was I, Of

all her brood, mark'd out for the re-pulse Of her no-voice, when I stood

can-did-ate To be com-man-der in the Pon-tic War?

I will here-after call her step-dame,

ev-er. If she can lose her nature, I can lose My pi-e-ty,

and in her stony en-trails Dig me a seat where I will live a-gain The la-bour of her

womb, and be a bur-den Weight-i-er than all the prod-i-gies and

mon-sters That 'ere she teem'd with since she first knew Mars.
It is decreed. Nor shall thy fate, O Rome (Setting 2)

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