

AEMSS ENGLISH DRAMA FEST 2020

SHAKESPEAREAN TRAGEDY

Julius Caesar

From Act 3 Scene 1

ORIGINAL TEXT

Flourish Enter **CAESAR, BRUTUS, CASSIUS, CASCA, DECIUS, METELLUS, TREBONIUS, CINNA, ANTONY, LEPIDUS, PUBLIUS,** and **POPILLIUS LENA** with a crowd of people, including **ARTEMIDORUS** and the **SOOTHSAYER**.

CAESAR

(*to the SOOTHSAYER*) The ides of March are come.

SOOTHSAYER

Ay, Caesar, but not gone.

ARTEMIDORUS

(*offering his letter*) Hail, Caesar! Read this schedule.

DECIUS

(*offering CAESAR another paper*)

Trebonius doth desire you to o'er-read,
5 At your best leisure, this his humble suit.

ARTEMIDORUS

O Caesar, read mine first, for mine's a suit
That touches Caesar nearer. Read it, great
Caesar.

CAESAR

What touches us ourself shall be last served.

ARTEMIDORUS

Delay not, Caesar. Read it instantly.

CAESAR

10 What, is the fellow mad?

PUBLIUS

(*to ARTEMIDORUS*) Sirrah, give place.

CASSIUS

(*to ARTEMIDORUS*)

What, urge you your petitions in the street?
Come to the Capitol.

MODERN TEXT

A crowd of people enters, among them **ARTEMIDORUS** and the **SOOTHSAYER**. A trumpet plays. **CAESAR, BRUTUS, CASSIUS, CASCA, DECIUS, METELLUS, TREBONIUS, CINNA, ANTONY, LEPIDUS, POPILLIUS, PUBLIUS,** and others enter.

CAESAR

(*to the SOOTHSAYER*) March 15th has come.

SOOTHSAYER

Yes, Caesar, but it's not gone yet.

ARTEMIDORUS

(*offering his letter*) Hail, Caesar! Read this schedule.

DECIUS

(*offering CAESAR another paper*) Trebonius wants you to look over his humble petition, at your leisure.

ARTEMIDORUS

Oh, Caesar, read mine first, for my petition affects you more directly. Read it, great Caesar.

CAESAR

Whatever pertains to myself I will deal with last.

ARTEMIDORUS

Don't delay, Caesar. Read it instantly.

CAESAR

What, is the man insane?

PUBLIUS

(*to ARTEMIDORUS*) Stand aside, you.

CASSIUS

(*to ARTEMIDORUS*) What? Are you pressing your petition on the street? Go to the Capitol.

CAESAR's party moves aside to the senate house

CAESAR goes up to the senate house, the rest following.

POPILLIUS

(to CASSIUS) I wish your enterprise today may thrive.

POPILLIUS

(to CASSIUS) I hope your endeavor goes well today.

15 **CASSIUS**

What enterprise, Popillius?

CASSIUS

What endeavor, Popillius?

POPILLIUS

Fare you well.

POPILLIUS

Good luck.

(approaches CAESAR)

POPILLIUS approaches CAESAR.

BRUTUS

(to CASSIUS) What said Popillius Lena?

BRUTUS

(to CASSIUS) What did Popillius Lena say?

CASSIUS

(aside to BRUTUS)

He wished today our enterprise might thrive. I fear our purpose is discovered.

CASSIUS

(speaking so that only BRUTUS can hear) He wished that our endeavor would go well today. I'm afraid we've been found out.

BRUTUS

Look how he makes to Caesar. Mark him.

BRUTUS

Look, he's approaching Caesar. Keep an eye on him.

CASSIUS

20 Casca, be sudden, for we fear prevention—Brutus, what shall be done? If this be known, Cassius or Caesar never shall turn back, For I will slay myself.

CASSIUS

Casca, be quick, because we're worried we might be stopped. Brutus, what will we do? If our secret's known, either Caesar or I will die, for I'll kill myself.

BRUTUS

25 Cassius, be constant.
Popillius Lena speaks not of our purposes. For, look, he smiles, and Caesar doth not change.

BRUTUS

Cassius, stand firm. Popillius Lena wasn't talking about our plot—for, look, he's smiling, and Caesar's expression is the same.

CASSIUS

Trebonius knows his time. For, look you, Brutus. He draws Mark Antony out of the way.

CASSIUS

Trebonius knows his cue. See, Brutus, he's pulling Mark Antony aside.

Exeunt TREBONIUS and ANTONY

TREBONIUS and ANTONY exit.

DECIUS

Where is Metellus Cimber? Let him go And presently prefer his suit to Caesar.

DECIUS

Where's Metellus Cimber? He should go up and offer his petition to Caesar now.

BRUTUS

30 He is addressed. Press near and second him.

BRUTUS

They're speaking to him. Go up there and second his petition.

CINNA

Casca, you are the first that rears your hand.

CAESAR

Are we all ready? What is now amiss
That Caesar and his senate must redress?

METELLUS

(kneeling)

Most high, most mighty, and most puissant
Caesar,

35 Metellus Cimber throws before thy seat
An humble heart—

CAESAR

I must prevent thee, Cimber.

These couchings and these lowly courtesies
Might fire the blood of ordinary men
And turn preordinance and first decree
40 Into the law of children. Be not fond,
To think that Caesar bears such rebel blood
That will be thawed from the true quality
With that which melteth fools—I mean, sweet
words,
Low-crookèd curtsies, and base spaniel
fawning.

45 Thy brother by decree is banishèd.
If thou dost bend and pray and fawn for him,
I spurn thee like a cur out of my way.
Know, Caesar doth not wrong, nor without
cause
Will he be satisfied.

METELLUS

50 Is there no voice more worthy than my own
To sound more sweetly in great Caesar's ear
For the repealing of my banished brother?

BRUTUS

(kneeling) I kiss thy hand, but not in flattery,
Caesar,

55 Desiring thee that Publius Cimber may
Have an immediate freedom of repeal.

CAESAR

What, Brutus?

CASSIUS

(kneeling) Pardon, Caesar. Caesar, pardon.
As low as to thy foot doth Cassius fall
To beg enfranchisement for Publius Cimber.

CINNA

Casca, you are the first that rears your hand.

CAESAR

Are we all ready? What problem should I
discuss with you first?

METELLUS

(kneeling) Most high, most mighty, and most
powerful Caesar, Metellus Cimber kneels
before you with a humble heart—

CAESAR

I have to stop you, Cimber. These kneelings and
humble courtesies might excite ordinary men,
flattering them into turning Roman law into
children's games. But don't be so foolish as to
think you can sway *me* from what's right by
using the tactics that persuade fools—I mean
this flattery, low bows, and puppy-like fawning.
Your brother has been banished by decree. If
you kneel and beg and flatter for him, I'll kick
you out of my way like I would a dog. Know
that I am not unjust, and I will not grant him a
pardon without reason.

METELLUS

Is there no voice worthier than my own to
appeal to Caesar to repeal the order that my
brother be banished?

BRUTUS

(kneeling) I kiss your hand, but not in flattery,
Caesar. I ask you to repeal Publius Cimber's
banishment immediately.

CAESAR

What, even you, Brutus?

CASSIUS

(kneeling) Pardon him, Caesar, pardon him. I
fall to your feet to beg you to restore Publius
Cimber to citizenship.

CAESAR
60 I could be well moved if I were as you.
If I could pray to move, prayers would move
me.
But I am constant as the northern star,
Of whose true-fixed and resting quality
65 There is no fellow in the firmament.
The skies are painted with unnumbered sparks.
They are all fire and every one doth shine,
But there's but one in all doth hold his place.
So in the world. 'Tis furnished well with men,
70 And men are flesh and blood, and apprehensive,
Yet in the number I do know but one
That unassailable holds on his rank,
Unshaked of motion. And that I am he
Let me a little show it even in this:
75 That I was constant Cimber should be banished,
And constant do remain to keep him so.

CINNA
(*kneeling*) O Caesar—

CAESAR
Hence! Wilt thou lift up Olympus?

DECIUS
(*kneeling*) Great Caesar—

CAESAR
Doth not Brutus bootless kneel?

CASCA
Speak, hands, for me!

*CASCA and the other conspirators
stab CAESAR, BRUTUS last*

CAESAR
Et tu, Bruté?—Then fall, Caesar. (*dies*)

80 **CINNA**
Liberty! Freedom! Tyranny is dead!
Run hence, proclaim, cry it about the streets.

CASSIUS
Some to the common pulpits, and cry out,
“Liberty, freedom, and enfranchisement!”

Confusion. Exeunt some plebians and senators

CAESAR
I could be convinced if I were like you. If I
could beg others to change their minds, begging
would convince me, too. But I'm as immovable
as the northern star, whose stable and stationary
quality has no equal in the sky. The sky shows
countless stars. They're all made of fire, and
each one shines. But only one among all of
them remains in a fixed position. So it is on
earth. The world is full of men, and men are
flesh and blood, and they are capable of reason.
Yet out of all of them, I know only one who is
unassailable, who never moves from his
position. To show you that that's me, let me
prove it a little even in this case. I was firm in
ordering that Cimber be banished, and I remain
firm in that decision.

CINNA
(*kneeling*) Oh, Caesar—

CAESAR
Enough! Would you try to lift Mount Olympus?

DECIUS
(*kneeling*) Great Caesar—

CAESAR
Haven't I resisted even Brutus, begging from
his knees?

CASCA
Hands, speak for me!

*CASCA and the other conspirators
stab CAESAR. BRUTUS stabs him last.*

CAESAR
And you too, Brutus? In that case, die, Caesar.
(*he dies*)

CINNA
Liberty! Freedom! Tyranny is dead! Run and
proclaim it in the streets.

CASSIUS
Some should go to the public platforms and cry
out, “Liberty, freedom, and democracy!”

Confusion. Some citizens and senators exit.

BRUTUS
85 People and senators, be not affrighted.
Fly not. Stand still. Ambition's debt is paid.

CASCA
Go to the pulpit, Brutus.

DECIUS
And Cassius too.

BRUTUS
Where's Publius?

CINNA
Here, quite confounded with this mutiny.

METELLUS
90 Stand fast together, lest some friend of Caesar's
Should chance—

BRUTUS
Talk not of standing.—Publius, good cheer.
There is no harm intended to your person,
Nor to no Roman else. So tell them, Publius.

CASSIUS
95 And leave us, Publius, lest that the people,
Rushing on us, should do your age some
mischief.

BRUTUS
Do so. And let no man abide this deed
But we the doers.

Exit PUBLIUS

Enter TREBONIUS

CASSIUS
Where is Antony?

TREBONIUS
100 Fled to his house amazed.
Men, wives, and children stare, cry out, and run
As it were doomsday.

BRUTUS
105 Fates, we will know your pleasures.
That we shall die, we know. 'Tis but the time,
And drawing days out, that men stand upon.

BRUTUS
People and senators, don't be afraid. Don't run
away—stay where you are. Only Caesar had to
die for his ambition.

CASCA
Go to the platform, Brutus.

DECIUS
And Cassius too.

BRUTUS
Where's Publius?

CINNA
Here. He's completely stunned by this mutiny.

METELLUS
Stand close together, in case someone loyal to
Caesar tries to—

BRUTUS
Don't talk about standing together.—Publius,
cheer up. We don't intend any harm to you, nor
to anyone else. Tell them this, Publius.

CASSIUS
And leave us, Publius, in case the people
storming us should harm you.

BRUTUS
Do so. And let no one suffer for this deed
except us, the perpetrators.

PUBLIUS exits.

TREBONIUS enters.

CASSIUS
Where's Antony?

TREBONIUS
He ran to his house, stunned. Men, wives, and
children stare, cry out, and run in the streets as
though it were doomsday.

BRUTUS
We'll soon find out what fate has in store for us.
All we know is that we'll die sometime, which
is all anyone ever knows, though we try to draw
out our days for as long as possible.

CASSIUS

Why, he that cuts off twenty years of life
Cuts off so many years of fearing death.

BRUTUS

Grant that, and then is death a benefit.
So are we Caesar's friends, that have abridged
110 His time of fearing death. Stoop, Romans,
stoop,
And let us bathe our hands in Caesar's blood
Up to the elbows, and besmear our swords.
Then walk we forth, even to the marketplace,
And waving our red weapons o'er our heads
115 Let's all cry, "Peace, freedom, and liberty!"

CASSIUS

Stoop, then, and wash.

*The conspirators smear their hands and swords
with CAESAR's blood*

CASSIUS

How many ages hence
Shall this our lofty scene be acted over
In states unborn and accents yet unknown!

BRUTUS

120 How many times shall Caesar bleed in sport,
That now on Pompey's basis lies along
No worthier than the dust!

CASSIUS

So oft as that shall be,
So often shall the knot of us be called
125 "The men that gave their country liberty."

DECIUS

What, shall we forth?

CASSIUS

Ay, every man away.
Brutus shall lead, and we will grace his heels
With the most boldest and best hearts of Rome.

Enter ANTONY'S SERVANT

BRUTUS

Soft! Who comes here? A friend of Antony's.

ANTONY'S SERVANT

130 *(kneeling)* Thus, Brutus, did my master bid me
kneel.
(falls prostrate) Thus did Mark Antony bid me
fall down,
And, being prostrate, thus he bade me say:

CASSIUS

Why, the man who shortens his life by twenty
years cuts off twenty years of worrying about
death.

BRUTUS

So, then, death is a gift, and we are Caesar's
friends, for we've done him a service by
shortening his time spent fearing death. Kneel,
Romans, kneel, and let's wash our hands, up to
the elbows, in Caesar's blood and smear it on
our swords. Then we'll go out, even to the
marketplace, and, waving our bloody swords
over our heads, let's cry, "Peace, freedom, and
liberty!"

CASSIUS

Kneel then, and wash.

*The conspirators smear their hands and swords
with CAESAR's blood.*

CASSIUS

How many years from now will this heroic
scene be reenacted in countries that don't even
exist yet and in languages not yet known!

BRUTUS

How many times will Caesar bleed again in
show, though he now lies at the base of
Pompey's statue, as worthless as dust!

CASSIUS

As often as it's replayed, our group will be
hailed as the men who gave their country
liberty.

DECIUS

Well, should we go out?

CASSIUS

Yes, every man forward. Brutus will lead, and
we'll follow him with the boldest and best
hearts of Rome.

ANTONY'S SERVANT enters.

BRUTUS

Wait a minute. Who's that coming? It's a friend
of Antony's.

ANTONY'S SERVANT

(kneeling) Brutus, my master ordered me to
kneel like this. *(he kneels, head bowed low)* He
ordered me to kneel low, and, from the ground,
like this, he ordered me to say: "Brutus is noble,
wise, brave, and honest. Caesar was mighty,

Brutus is noble, wise, valiant, and honest.
Caesar was mighty, bold, royal, and loving.
Say I love Brutus, and I honor him.

135 Say I feared Caesar, honored him, and loved him.

If Brutus will vouchsafe that Antony
May safely come to him and be resolved
How Caesar hath deserved to lie in death,
Mark Antony shall not love Caesar dead
140 So well as Brutus living, but will follow
The fortunes and affairs of noble Brutus
Thorough the hazards of this untrod state
With all true faith. So says my master Antony.

BRUTUS

145 Thy master is a wise and valiant Roman.
I never thought him worse.
Tell him, so please him come unto this place,
He shall be satisfied and, by my honor,
Depart untouched.

ANTONY'S SERVANT

(*rising*) I'll fetch him presently.

Exit ANTONY'S SERVANT

BRUTUS

150 I know that we shall have him well to friend.

CASSIUS

I wish we may. But yet have I a mind
That fears him much, and my misgiving still
Falls shrewdly to the purpose.

Enter ANTONY

BRUTUS

But here comes Antony.—Welcome, Mark
Antony.

ANTONY

155 O mighty Caesar! Dost thou lie so low?
Are all thy conquests, glories, triumphs, spoils,
Shrunk to this little measure? Fare thee well.
—I know not, gentlemen, what you intend,
Who else must be let blood, who else is rank.
160 If I myself, there is no hour so fit
As Caesar's death's hour, nor no instrument
Of half that worth as those your swords, made
rich
With the most noble blood of all this world.
I do beseech ye, if you bear me hard,
165 Now, whilst your purpled hands do reek and
smoke,
Fulfill your pleasure. Live a thousand years,
I shall not find myself so apt to die.
No place will please me so, no mean of death,

bold, royal, and loving. Antony loves Brutus
and honors him. Antony feared Caesar, honored
him, and loved him.

If Brutus will swear that Antony may come to
him safely and be convinced that Caesar
deserved to be killed, Mark Antony will love
dead Caesar not nearly as much as living
Brutus, and with true faith he'll follow the
destiny and affairs of noble Brutus through the
difficulties of this unprecedented state of
affairs." That's what my master, Antony, says.

BRUTUS

Your master is a wise and honorable Roman. I
never thought any less of him. Tell him, if he
comes here, I'll explain everything to him and,
on my word, he'll leave unharmed.

ANTONY'S SERVANT

(*getting up*) I'll get him now.

ANTONY'S SERVANT exits.

BRUTUS

I know that he'll be on our side.

CASSIUS

I hope we can count on him, but I still fear him,
and my hunches are usually accurate.

ANTONY enters.

BRUTUS

But here comes Antony.—Welcome, Mark
Antony.

ANTONY

Oh, mighty Caesar! Do you lie so low? Have all
your conquests, glories, triumphs,
achievements, come to so little? Farewell.
Gentlemen, I don't know what you intend to do,
who else you intend to kill, who else you
consider corrupt.
If it's me, there's no time as good as this hour
of Caesar's death, and no weapon better than
your swords, covered with the noblest blood in
the world. I ask you, if you have a grudge
against me, to kill me now, while your stained
hands still reek of blood. I could live a thousand
years and I wouldn't be as ready to die as I am
now. There's no place I'd rather die than here
by Caesar, and no manner of death would

170 As here by Caesar, and by you cut off,
The choice and master spirits of this age.

BRUTUS

O Antony, beg not your death of us.
Though now we must appear bloody and
cruel—
As by our hands and this our present act
You see we do—yet see you but our hands
175 And this the bleeding business they have done.
Our hearts you see not. They are pitiful.
And pity to the general wrong of Rome—
As fire drives out fire, so pity pity—
Hath done this deed on Caesar. For your part,
180 To you our swords have leaden points, Mark
Antony.
Our arms in strength of malice and our hearts
Of brothers' temper do receive you in
With all kind love, good thoughts, and
reverence.

CASSIUS

185 Your voice shall be as strong as any man's
In the disposing of new dignities.

BRUTUS

Only be patient till we have appeased
The multitude, beside themselves with fear,
And then we will deliver you the cause,
190 Why I, that did love Caesar when I struck him,
Have thus proceeded.

ANTONY

I doubt not of your wisdom.
Let each man render me his bloody hand.
(*shakes hands with the conspirators*)
First, Marcus Brutus, will I shake with you.
—Next, Caius Cassius, do I take your hand.
195 —Now, Decius Brutus, yours.—Now yours,
Metellus.
—Yours, Cinna.—And, my valiant Casca,
yours.
—Though last, not last in love, yours, good
Trebonius.
—Gentlemen all, alas, what shall I say?
My credit now stands on such slippery ground
200 That one of two bad ways you must conceit me,
Either a coward or a flatterer
—That I did love thee, Caesar, O, 'tis true.
If then thy spirit look upon us now,
Shall it not grieve thee dearer than thy death
205 To see thy Antony making his peace,
Shaking the bloody fingers of thy foes—
Most noble!—in the presence of thy corpse?
Had I as many eyes as thou hast wounds,
Weeping as fast as they stream forth thy blood,
210 It would become me better than to close

please me more than being stabbed by you, the
masters of this new era.

BRUTUS

Oh, Antony, don't beg us to kill you. Though
we seem bloody and cruel right now, with our
bloody hands and this deed we've done, you've
only seen our hands and their bloody business;
you haven't looked into our hearts. They are
full of pity for Caesar. But a stronger pity, for
the wrongs committed against Rome, drove out
our pity for Caesar, as fire drives out fire, and
so we killed him. For you, our swords have
blunt edges, too dull to harm you, Mark
Antony. Our arms, which can be strong and
cruel, and our hearts, filled with brotherly love,
embrace you with kind love, good thoughts, and
reverence.

CASSIUS

Your vote will be as strong as anyone's in the
reordering of the government.

BRUTUS

But just be patient until we've calmed the
masses, who are beside themselves with fear.
Then we'll explain to you why I, who loved
Caesar even while I stabbed him, have taken
this course of action.

ANTONY

I don't doubt your wisdom. Each of you, give
me your bloody hand. (*he shakes hands with the
conspirators*) First, Marcus Brutus, I shake your
hand. Next, Caius Cassius, I take your hand.
Now, Decius Brutus, yours. Now yours,
Metellus. Yours, Cinna. And yours, my brave
Casca. Last but not least, yours, good
Trebonius. You are all gentlemen—alas, what
can I say? Now that I've shaken your hands,
you'll take me for either a coward or a
flatterer—in either case, my credibility stands
on slippery ground. It's true that I loved you,
Caesar—nothing could be truer. If your spirit is
looking down upon us now, it must hurt you
more than even your death to see your Antony
making peace—shaking the bloody hands of
your enemies—in front of your corpse. If I had
as many eyes as you have wounds, and they
wept as fast as your wounds stream blood—
even that would be more becoming than joining
your enemies in friendship. Forgive me, Julius!
On this very spot you were hunted down, like a
brave deer. And here you fell, where your
hunters are now standing. The spot is marked

In terms of friendship with thine enemies.
Pardon me, Julius! Here wast thou bayed, brave
hart;
Here didst thou fall; and here thy hunters stand,
Signed in thy spoil, and crimsoned in thy lethe.
215 O world, thou wast the forest to this hart,
And this indeed, O world, the heart of thee.
How like a deer, stricken by many princes,
Dost thou here lie!

CASSIUS
Mark Antony—

ANTONY
220 Pardon me, Caius Cassius.
The enemies of Caesar shall say this;
Then, in a friend, it is cold modesty

CASSIUS
225 I blame you not for praising Caesar so.
But what compact mean you to have with us?
Will you be pricked in number of our friends?
Or shall we on, and not depend on you?

ANTONY
230 Therefore I took your hands, but was indeed
Swayed from the point by looking down on
Caesar.
Friends am I with you all and love you all
Upon this hope: that you shall give me reasons
Why and wherein Caesar was dangerous

BRUTUS
235 Or else were this a savage spectacle!
Our reasons are so full of good regard
That were you, Antony, the son of Caesar,
You should be satisfied.

ANTONY
That's all I seek.
And am moreover suitor that I may
Produce his body to the marketplace,
And in the pulpit, as becomes a friend,
Speak in the order of his funeral.

BRUTUS
240 You shall, Mark Antony.

by your death and stained by your blood. Oh
world, you were the forest to this deer, and this
deer, oh world, was your dear. Now you lie
here, stabbed by many princes!

CASSIUS
Mark Antony—

ANTONY
Pardon me, Caius Cassius. Even Caesar's
enemies would say the same. From a friend, it's
a cool assessment—no more than that.

CASSIUS
I don't blame you for praising Caesar like this,
but what agreement do you intend to reach with
us? Will you be counted as our friend, or should
we proceed without depending on you?

ANTONY
I took your hands in friendship, but, indeed, I
was distracted when I looked down at Caesar. I
am friends with you all and love you all, on one
condition—that you prove to me that Caesar
was dangerous.

BRUTUS
Without that proof, this would've been a savage
action! Our reasons are so well considered that
even if you, Antony, were Caesar's son, you
would be satisfied with them.

ANTONY
That's all I ask—and that you let me carry his
body to the marketplace and, as a friend ought
to do, stand on the platform and give a proper
funeral oration.

BRUTUS
You may, Mark Antony.

CASSIUS

Brutus, a word with you.
 (to BRUTUS) You know not what you do.
 Do not consent

245 That Antony speak in his funeral.
 Know you how much the people may be moved
 By that which he will utter?

BRUTUS

(to CASSIUS) By your pardon.
 I will myself into the pulpit first,
 And show the reason of our Caesar's death.
 250 What Antony shall speak, I will protest,
 He speaks by leave and by permission,
 And that we are contented Caesar shall
 Have all true rites and lawful ceremonies.
 It shall advantage more than do us wrong.

CASSIUS

255 (to BRUTUS) I know not what may fall. I like it
 not.

BRUTUS

Mark Antony, here, take you Caesar's body.
 You shall not in your funeral speech blame us,
 But speak all good you can devise of Caesar,
 And say you do 't by our permission.
 260 Else shall you not have any hand at all
 About his funeral. And you shall speak
 In the same pulpit whereto I am going,
 After my speech is ended.

ANTONY

Be it so.
 265 I do desire no more.

BRUTUS

Prepare the body then, and follow us.

Exeunt. Manet ANTONY

ANTONY

O, pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth,
 That I am meek and gentle with these butchers!
 Thou art the ruins of the noblest man
 270 That ever livèd in the tide of times.
 Woe to the hand that shed this costly blood!
 Over thy wounds now do I prophesy—
 Which, like dumb mouths, do ope their ruby
 lips
 To beg the voice and utterance of my tongue—
 275 A curse shall light upon the limbs of men.

CASSIUS

Brutus, may I have a word with you? (*speaking
 so that only BRUTUS can hear*) You don't
 know what you're doing. Don't let Antony
 speak at his funeral. Don't you know how much
 the people could be affected by what he says?

BRUTUS

(*speaking so that only CASSIUS can
 hear*) With your permission, I'll stand on the
 platform first and explain the reason for
 Caesar's death.
 What Antony says, I'll announce, he says only
 by our permission and by our conviction that
 Caesar should be honored with all the usual and
 lawful ceremonies. It'll help us more than hurt
 us.

CASSIUS

(*speaking so that only BRUTUS can hear*) I'm
 worried about the outcome of his speech. I
 don't like this plan.

BRUTUS

Mark Antony, take Caesar's body. You will not
 blame us in your funeral speech, but will say all
 the good you want to about Caesar and that you
 do it by our permission. Otherwise, you'll have
 no role at all in his funeral. And you'll speak on
 the same platform as I do, after I'm done.

ANTONY

So be it. I don't want anything more.

BRUTUS

Prepare the body, then, and follow us.

Everyone except ANTONY exits.

ANTONY

Oh, pardon me, you bleeding corpse, for
 speaking politely and acting mildly with these
 butchers! You are what's left of the noblest man
 that ever lived. Pity the hand that shed this
 valuable blood. Over your wounds—which, like
 speechless mouths, open their red lips, as
 though to beg me to speak—I predict that a
 curse will fall upon the bodies of men.