

Brutus and Antony¹
by William Shakespeare

THIRD CITIZEN

The noble Brutus is ascended: silence!

BRUTUS

Be patient till the last.

Romans, countrymen, and lovers, hear me for my cause; and be silent, that you may hear. Believe me for mine honour, and have respect to mine honour, that you may believe. Censure me in your wisdom, and awake your senses, that you may the better judge. If there be any in this assembly, any dear friend of Caesar's, to him I say that Brutus' love to Caesar was no less than his. If then that friend demand why Brutus rose against Caesar, this is my answer: Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more. Had you rather Caesar were living, and die all slaves, than that Caesar were dead, to live all free men? As Caesar loved me, I weep for him; as he was fortunate, I rejoice at it; as he was valiant, I honour him; but, as he was ambitious, I slew him. There is tears, for his love; joy for his fortune; honour for his valor; and death, for his ambition. Who is here so base, that would be a bondman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so rude, that would not be a Roman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so vile, that will not love his country? If any, speak; for him have I offended. I pause for a reply.

CITIZENS

None, Brutus, none.

BRUTUS

Then none have I offended. I have done no more to Caesar than you shall do to Brutus. The question of his death is enrolled in the Capitol, his glory not extenuated, wherein he was worthy; nor his offenses enforced, for which he suffered death. Enter Antony and others, with Caesar's body. Here comes his body, mourned by Mark Antony, who, though he had no hand in his death, shall receive the benefit of his dying, a place in the commonwealth; as which of you shall not? With this I depart, that, as I slew my best lover for the good of Rome, I have the same dagger for myself, when it shall please my country to need my death.

CITIZENS

Live, Brutus! live, live!

FIRST CITIZEN

Bring him with triumph home unto his house.

SECOND CITIZEN

Give him a statue with his ancestors.

¹ From Act 3 of William Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*

THIRD CITIZEN

Let him be Caesar.

FOURTH CITIZEN

Caesar's better parts
Shall be crowned in Brutus.

FIRST CITIZEN

We'll bring him to his house with shouts and clamors.

BRUTUS

My countrymen,—

SECOND CITIZEN

Peace! Silence! Brutus speaks.

FIRST CITIZEN

Peace, ho!

BRUTUS

Good countrymen, let me depart alone,
And, for my sake, stay here with Antony.
Do grace to Caesar's corpse, and grace his speech
Tending to Caesar's glories, which Mark Antony,
By our permission, is allowed to make.
I do entreat you, not a man depart,
Save I alone, till Antony have spoke.

Exit.

FIRST CITIZEN

Stay, ho! and let us hear Mark Antony.

THIRD CITIZEN

Let him go up into the public chair.
We'll hear him. Noble Antony, go up.

ANTONY

For Brutus' sake, I am beholding to you.

Goes up.

FOURTH CITIZEN

What does he say of Brutus?

THIRD CITIZEN

He says, for Brutus' sake

He finds himself beholding to us all.

FOURTH CITIZEN

'Twere best he speak no harm of Brutus here!

FIRST CITIZEN

This Caesar was a tyrant.

THIRD CITIZEN

Nay, that's certain.

We are blest that Rome is rid of him.

SECOND CITIZEN

Peace! let us hear what Antony can say.

ANTONY

You gentle Romans,—

CITIZENS

Peace, ho! let us hear him.

ANTONY

Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears;

I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.

The evil that men do lives after them,

The good is oft interred with their bones;

So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus

Hath told you Caesar was ambitious.

If it were so, it was a grievous fault,

And grievously hath Caesar answer'd it.

Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest,

For Brutus is an honorable man,

So are they all, all honorable men,

Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral.

He was my friend, faithful and just to me;

But Brutus says he was ambitious,

And Brutus is an honorable man.

He hath brought many captives home to Rome,

Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill:

Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?

When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept;

Ambition should be made of sterner stuff:

Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;

And Brutus is an honorable man.

You all did see that on the Lupercal
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,
Which he did thrice refuse. Was this ambition?
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;
And sure he is an honorable man.
I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,
But here I am to speak what I do know.
You all did love him once, not without cause;
What cause withholds you then to mourn for him?
O judgement, thou art fled to brutish beasts,
And men have lost their reason. Bear with me.
My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar,
And I must pause till it come back to me.

FIRST CITIZEN

Methinks there is much reason in his sayings.

SECOND CITIZEN

If thou consider rightly of the matter,
Caesar has had great wrong.

THIRD CITIZEN

Has he, masters?
I fear there will a worse come in his place.

FOURTH CITIZEN

Mark'd ye his words? He would not take the crown;
Therefore 'tis certain he was not ambitious.

FIRST CITIZEN

If it be found so, some will dear abide it.

SECOND CITIZEN

Poor soul, his eyes are red as fire with weeping.

THIRD CITIZEN

There's not a nobler man in Rome than Antony.

FOURTH CITIZEN

Now mark him; he begins again to speak.

ANTONY

But yesterday the word of Caesar might
Have stood against the world; now lies he there,
And none so poor to do him reverence.

O masters! If I were disposed to stir
Your hearts and minds to mutiny and rage,
I should do Brutus wrong and Cassius wrong,
Who, you all know, are honorable men.
I will not do them wrong; I rather choose
To wrong the dead, to wrong myself and you,
Than I will wrong such honorable men.
But here's a parchment with the seal of Caesar,
I found it in his closet; 'tis his will:
Let but the commons hear this testament,
Which, pardon me, I do not mean to read,
And they would go and kiss dead Caesar's wounds,
And dip their napkins in his sacred blood;
Yea, beg a hair of him for memory,
And, dying, mention it within their wills,
Bequeathing it as a rich legacy
Unto their issue.

FOURTH CITIZEN

We'll hear the will. Read it, Mark Antony.

CITIZENS

The will, the will! We will hear Caesar's will.

ANTONY

Have patience, gentle friends, I must not read it.
It is not meet you know how Caesar loved you.
You are not wood, you are not stones, but men;
And being men, hearing the will of Caesar,
It will inflame you, it will make you mad.
'Tis good you know not that you are his heirs;
For if you should, O, what would come of it?

FOURTH CITIZEN

Read the will! We'll hear it, Antony;
You shall read us the will, Caesar's will!

ANTONY

Will you be patient? Will you stay awhile?
I have o'ershot myself to tell you of it.
I fear I wrong the honorable men
Whose daggers have stabbed Caesar; I do fear it.

FOURTH CITIZEN

They were traitors. Honorable men!

CITIZENS

The will! The testament!

SECOND CITIZEN

They were villains, murderers. The will! Read the will!

ANTONY

You will compel me then to read the will?

Then make a ring about the corpse of Caesar,

And let me show you him that made the will.

Shall I descend? and will you give me leave?

CITIZENS

Come down.

SECOND CITIZEN

Descend.

He comes down.

THIRD CITIZEN

You shall have leave.

FOURTH CITIZEN

A ring! Stand round.

FIRST CITIZEN

Stand from the hearse, stand from the body.

SECOND CITIZEN

Room for Antony, most noble Antony!

ANTONY

Nay, press not so upon me; stand far off.

CITIZENS

Stand back; room! bear back.

ANTONY

If you have tears, prepare to shed them now.

You all do know this mantle. I remember

The first time ever Caesar put it on;

'Twas on a Summer's evening, in his tent,

That day he overcame the Nervii.

Look, in this place ran Cassius' dagger through:

See what a rent the envious Casca made:
Through this the well-beloved Brutus stabbed;
And as he pluck'd his cursed steel away,
Mark how the blood of Caesar follow'd it,
As rushing out of doors, to be resolved
If Brutus so unkindly knock'd, or no;
For Brutus, as you know, was Caesar's angel.
Judge, O you gods, how dearly Caesar loved him.
This was the most unkindest cut of all;
For when the noble Caesar saw him stab,
Ingratitude, more strong than traitors' arms,
Quite vanquish'd him: then burst his mighty heart;
And in his mantle muffling up his face,
Even at the base of Pompey's statue
Which all the while ran blood, great Caesar fell.
O, what a fall was there, my countrymen!
Then I, and you, and all of us fell down,
Whilst bloody treason flourish'd over us.
O, now you weep; and I perceive you feel
The dint of pity. These are gracious drops.
Kind souls, what weep you when you but behold
Our Caesar's vesture wounded? Look you here,
Here is himself, marred, as you see, with traitors.

FIRST CITIZEN

O piteous spectacle!

SECOND CITIZEN

O noble Caesar!

THIRD CITIZEN

O woeful day!

FOURTH CITIZEN

O traitors, villains!

FIRST CITIZEN

O most bloody sight!

SECOND CITIZEN

We will be revenged.

CITIZENS

Revenge,—about,—seek,—burn,—fire,—kill,—slay,—let not a traitor live!