

Act 1, Scene 2 Rome. A public place

(Flourish. Enter CAESAR, ANTONY, for the race, CALPURNIA, PORTIA, DECIUS BRUTUS, CICERO, BRUTUS, CASSIUS and CASCA; a great crowd following, among them a SOOTHSAYER.)

CAESAR
Calpurnia.

CASCA
Peace, ho! Caesar speaks.

CAESAR
Calpurnia.

CALPURNIA
Here my lord.

CAESAR
Stand you directly in Antonius' way when he doth run his course.* Antonius.

ANTONY
Caesar my lord?

CAESAR
Forget not in your speed Antonius, to touch Calpurnia;
for our elders say the barren, touched in this holy chase, shake off their sterile curse.

ANTONY
I shall remember. When Caesar says 'Do this,' it is performed.

CAESAR
Set on, and leave no ceremony out.

(Music.)

SOOTHSAYER
Caesar!

CAESAR
Ha! Who calls?

CASCA
Bid every noise be still.

CAESAR
Who is it in the press that calls on me?

run his course - racing naked through the city striking bystanders with a goatskin thong

SOOTHAYER

Beware the ides of March.*

CAESAR

What man is that?

BRUTUS

A soothsayer* bids you beware the ides of March.

CAESAR

Set him before me, let me see his face.

CASSIUS

Fellow, come from the throng; look upon Caesar.

CAESAR

What sayest thou to me now? Speak once again.

SOOTHSAYER

Beware the ides of March.

CAESAR

He is a dreamer. Let us leave him.

(Horns. Exeunt all except BRUTUS and CASSIUS.)

CASSIUS

Will you go see the order* of the course?

BRUTUS

Not I.

CASSIUS

I pray you do.

BRUTUS

I am not gamesome.* I do lack some part of that quick spirit that is in Antony.
I'll leave you.

CASSIUS

Brutus, I have not from your eyes that gentleness and show of love as I was wont* to have.
You bear too stubborn and too strange a hand over your friend that loves you.

BRUTUS

Cassius, be not deceived.
Vexed I am of late with passions of some difference, conceptions only proper to myself.

ides of March - 15th of March, *soothsayer* - truthsayer, *order* - events,
gamesome - sport-loving, *wont* - accustomed

Do not construe any further my neglect,
than that poor Brutus, with himself at war, forgets the shows of love to other men.

CASSIUS

Then Brutus, I have much mistook your passion;
by means whereof this breast of mine hath buried thought of great value.

(Flourish and shout.)

BRUTUS

What means this shouting? I do fear the people choose Caesar for their king.

CASSIUS

Do you fear it? Then must I think you would not have it so.

BRUTUS

I would not Cassius; yet I love him well.
But wherefore do you hold me here? What is it that you would impart to me?
If it be aught toward the general good,* set honor in one eye and death in the other,
and I will look on both indifferently;
for let the gods so speed me as I love the name of honor more than I fear death.

CASSIUS

I know that virtue to be in you Brutus, as well as I do know your outward favor.*
Well, honor is the subject of my story.
I cannot tell what you and other men think of this life;
but for my single self, I had as lief* not be as live to be in awe of such a thing as I myself.
I was born free as Caesar; so were you.
We both have fed as well, and we can both endure the winter's cold as well as he.
For once, upon a raw and gusty day, the troubled Tiber chafing with her shores,
Caesar said to me 'Darest thou, Cassius, now leap in with me into this angry flood,* and swim to yonder point?'
Upon the word, accoutred* as I was, I plunged in and bade him follow; so indeed he did.
The torrent roared, and we did buffet it with lusty sinews.
But ere we could arrive the point proposed, Caesar cried 'Help me, Cassius, or I sink!'
So from the waves of Tiber did I the tired Caesar upon my shoulder bear.
And this man is now become a god,
and Cassius is a wretched creature and must bend his body if Caesar carelessly but nod on him.
He had a fever when he was in Spain, and when the fit* was on him I did mark* how he did shake.
'Tis true, this god did shake. I did hear him groan.
Ay, and that tongue of his that bade the Romans mark him and write his speeches in their books,
'Alas,' it cried 'give me some drink Titinius,' as a sick girl!
Ye gods, it doth amaze me a man of such a feeble temper should so get the start of the majestic world
and bear the palm* alone.

(Shout. Flourish.)

general good - welfare of the state, *favor* - appearance, *lief* - rather,
flood - river, *accoutred* - dressed, *fit* - periodic chill, *mark* - observe, *palm* - prize of victory

BRUTUS

Another general shout?

I do believe that these applauses are for some new honors that are heaped on Caesar.

CASSIUS

Why man, he doth bstride the narrow world like a Colossus,*

and we petty men walk under his huge legs and peep about to find ourselves dishonorable graves.

Men at some time are masters of their fates.

The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in ourselves that we are underlings.

'Brutus,' and 'Caesar.' What should be in that 'Caesar?' Why should that name be sounded more than yours?

Write them together: yours is as fair a name. Sound them: it doth become the mouth as well.

Weigh them: it is as heavy. Conjure with them: 'Brutus' will start* a spirit as soon as 'Caesar.'

Now in the names of all the gods at once, upon what meat doth this our Caesar feed that he is grown so great?

When could they say (till now) that talked of Rome, that her wide walls encompassed but one man?

BRUTUS

What you would work* me to, I have some aim.*

How I have thought of this, and of these times, I shall recount hereafter.

For this present, I would not be any further moved.

Till then, my noble friend, chew upon this:

Brutus had rather be a villager than to repute himself a son of Rome

under these hard conditions as this time is like to lay upon us.

CASSIUS

I am glad that my weak words have struck but thus much show of fire from Brutus.

BRUTUS

The games are done, and Caesar is returning.

CASSIUS

As they pass by, pluck Casca by the sleeve,

and he will (after his sour fashion) tell you what hath proceeded to day.

(Re enter CAESAR and his train.)

BRUTUS

I will do so.

But look you Cassius, the angry spot doth glow on Caesar's brow, and all the rest look like a chidden train.

CASSIUS

Casca will tell us what the matter is.

CAESAR

Antonius!

ANTONY

Caesar?

Colossus - gigantic statue, *start* - raise up, *work* - persuade, *aim* - idea

CAESAR

Let me have men about me that are fat, sleek-headed men and such as sleep at nights.
Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look. He thinks too much. Such men are dangerous.

ANTONY

Fear him not, Caesar; he's not dangerous. He is a noble Roman, and well given.

CAESAR

Would he were fatter! But I fear him not.

Yet if my name were liable to fear, I do not know the man I should avoid so soon as that spare Cassius.

He reads much, he is a great observer, and he looks quite through the deeds of men.

He loves no plays as thou dost, Antony; he hears no music.

Seldom he smiles, and smiles in such a sort as if he mocked himself.

Such men as he be never at heart's ease whiles they behold a greater than themselves,
and therefore are they very dangerous.

I rather tell thee what is to be feared than what I fear; for always I am Caesar.

Come on my right hand, for this ear is deaf, and tell me truly what thou think'st of him.

(Horns. Exeunt CAESAR and all his train but CASCA.)

CASCA

You pulled me by the cloak. Would you speak with me?

BRUTUS

Ay Casca. Tell us what hath chanced today that Caesar looks so sad.

CASCA

Why you were with him, were you not?

BRUTUS

I should not then ask Casca what had chanced.

CASCA

Why there was a crown offered him; and being offered him, he put it by with the back of his hand, thus;
and then the people fell a-shouting.

BRUTUS

What was the second noise for?

CASCA

Why for that too.

CASSIUS

They shouted thrice. What was the last cry for?

CASCA

Why for that too.

BRUTUS

Was the crown offered him thrice?*

CASCA

Ay marry was't, and he put it by thrice, every time gentler than other;
and at every putting by mine honest neighbors shouted.

CASSIUS

Who offered him the crown?

CASCA

Why, Antony.

BRUTUS

Tell us the manner of it, gentle Casca.

CASCA

I can as well be hanged as tell the manner of it. It was mere foolery; I did not mark it.
I saw Mark Antony offer him a crown—yet 'twas not a crown neither, 'twas one of these coronets*
—and, as I told you, he put it by once; but for all that, to my thinking, he would fain* have had it.
Then he offered it to him again; then he put it by again;
but to my thinking, he was very loath to lay his fingers off it.
And then he offered it the third time. He put it the third time by;
and still as he refused it, the rabblement hooted and clapped their chapped hands
and uttered such a deal of stinking breath because Caesar refused the crown, that it almost choked Caesar;
for he swounded* and fell down at it.
And for mine own part I durst not laugh, for fear of opening my lips and receiving the bad air.

CASSIUS

But soft I pray you. What, did Caesar swound?

CASCA

He fell down in the market-place and foamed at mouth and was speechless.

BRUTUS

'Tis very like:* he hath the falling sickness.*

CASSIUS

No, Caesar hath it not; but you, and I, and honest Casca, we have the falling sickness.

CASCA

I know not what you mean by that, but I am sure Caesar fell down.

BRUTUS

What said he when he came unto himself?

thrice - as in Shakespeare's uncut text, Brutus and Cassius only mention the crowd shouting twice.
The director needs to put in a third shout at his./-her discretion, *coronets* - small crowns of laurel, *fain* - willingly,
swounded - fainted, *Tis very like:* - that sounds probable, *the falling sickness* - epilepsy

CASCA
Marry, before he fell down, when he perceived the common herd was glad he refused the crown,
he plucked open his doublet and offered them his throat to cut.
And I had been a man of any occupation,*
if I would not have taken him at a word I would I might go to hell among the rogues.

BRUTUS
And after that, he came thus sad away?

CASCA
Ay.

CASSIUS
Did Cicero say anything?

CASCA
Ay, he spoke Greek.

CASSIUS
To what effect?

CASCA
Those that understood him smiled at one another and shook their heads;
but for mine own part, it was Greek to me.
I could tell you more news too. Marullus and Flavius, for pulling scarfs off Caesar's images, are put to silence.*
Fare you well. There was more foolery yet, if I could remember it.

CASSIUS
Will you sup with me tonight, Casca?

CASCA
No, I am promised forth.

CASSIUS
Will you dine with me tomorrow?

CASCA
Ay, if I be alive, and your mind hold, and your dinner worth the eating.

CASSIUS
Good. I will expect you.

CASCA
Do so. Farewell both.

(Exit CASCA.)

occupation - action, *put to silence* - deprived of their tribuneships and exiled; executed (?)

BRUTUS

What a blunt fellow is this grown to be. He was quick mettle* when he went to school.

CASSIUS

So is he now in execution of any bold or noble enterprise.

BRUTUS

For this time I will leave you.

Tomorrow, if you please to speak with me, I will come home to you;
or if you will, come home to me, and I will wait for you.

CASSIUS

I will do so. Till then, think of the world.

(Exit BRUTUS.)

Well Brutus, thou art noble;

yet I see thy honorable metal may be wrought from that it is disposed.*

I will this night, in several hands,* in at his windows throw, as if they came from several citizens,
writings wherein obscurely Caesar's ambition shall be glanced at.

And after this let Caesar seat him sure,* for we will shake him,* or worse days endure.

(Exit CASSIUS.)

quick mettle - lively temperament, *wrought...disposed* - worked upon to change its natural qualities,
several hands - different handwritings, *him sure* - firmly in power, *shake him* - from his dominant position