

William Shakespeare

Julius Caesar

the complete play — original text and a plain modern English translation, side by side

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Act 1, Scene 1

ROME. A STREET

In the streets of Rome, the tribunes Flavius and Marullus break up a crowd of workmen who have taken the day off to cheer Julius Caesar's triumphal return. Marullus shames them for celebrating the defeat of Pompey, whom they idolized only recently, and the tribunes send them home and go off to strip Caesar's decorations from the public statues. The scene opens the play by showing that Caesar's rise is already frightening powerful Romans.

Original

Translation

Enter Flavius, Marullus and a throng of Citizens.

FLAVIUS

Hence!

home, you idle creatures, get you home.

Is this a holiday?

What, know you not,

Being mechanical, you ought not walk

Upon a labouring day without the sign

Of your profession?

Speak, what trade art thou?

CARPENTER

Why, sir, a carpenter.

MARULLUS

Where is thy leather apron and thy rule?

What dost thou with thy best apparel on?

You, sir, what trade are you?

Get out of here!

Go home, you lazy things, go home.

Is today some kind of holiday?

Don't you know that working men aren't
allowed to walk around on a workday without
the tools of their trade?

You there — speak up. What's your trade?

Why, sir, I'm a carpenter.

Then where's your leather apron and your ruler?

What are you doing in your Sunday best?

And you, sir — what's your trade?

COBBLER

Truly, sir, in respect of a fine workman, I am but,
as you would say, a
cobbler.

Well, sir, compared to a really skilled craftsman
I'm only what you'd call a cobbler.

MARULLUS

But what trade art thou?

Answer me directly.

But what is your trade?

Give me a straight answer.

COBBLER

A trade, sir, that I hope I may use with a safe
conscience, which is
indeed, sir, a mender of bad soles.

A trade, sir, that I hope I can practise with a
clear conscience — I'm a mender of bad soles.

MARULLUS

What trade, thou knave?

What trade, you rascal?

Thou naughty knave,
what trade?

You good-for-nothing rascal, what trade?

COBBLER

Nay, I beseech you, sir, be not out with me;

Please, sir, don't lose your temper with me.

yet,
if you be out, sir, I
can mend you.

Though if you're worn out, sir, I can repair you.

MARULLUS

What mean'st thou by that?

What's that supposed to mean?

Mend me, thou
saucy fellow!

Repair me, you cheeky fellow?

COBBLER

Why, sir, cobble you.

Why, sir, patch you up.

FLAVIUS

Thou art a cobbler, art thou?

COBBLER

Truly, sir, all that I live by is with the awl;

I

meddle with no
tradesman's matters, nor women's matters, but
withal I am indeed, sir,
a surgeon to old shoes: when they are in great
danger, I recover them.

As proper men as ever trod upon neat's leather
have gone upon my
handiwork.

FLAVIUS

But wherefore art not in thy shop today?
Why dost thou lead these men about the
streets?

COBBLER

Truly, sir, to wear out their shoes, to get myself
into more work.

But

indeed, sir, we make holiday to see Caesar, and
to rejoice in his
triumph.

MARULLUS

Wherefore rejoice?

What conquest brings he
home?

So you're a cobbler, are you?

Honestly, sir, my whole living comes from the
awl.

I don't meddle in other tradesmen's business, or
in women's business either — though I do
handle their footwear. I'm a surgeon to worn-
out shoes: when they're past saving, I bring
them back.

The finest men who ever walked in leather have
walked on my handiwork.

Then why aren't you in your shop today?

Why are you leading these men through the
streets?

To wear out their shoes, sir, and get myself more
work.

But the truth is, we're taking the day off to see
Caesar and celebrate his victory.

Celebrate what?

What conquest is he bringing home?

What tributaries follow him to Rome,
To grace in captive bonds his chariot wheels?
You blocks, you stones, you worse than
senseless things!

O you hard hearts, you cruel men of Rome,
Knew you not Pompey?

Many a time and oft
Have you climb'd up to walls and battlements,
To towers and windows, yea, to chimney tops,
Your infants in your arms, and there have sat
The livelong day with patient expectation,
To see great Pompey pass the streets of Rome.

And when you saw his chariot but appear,
Have you not made an universal shout,
That Tiber trembled underneath her banks
To hear the replication of your sounds
Made in her concave shores?
And do you now put on your best attire?
And do you now cull out a holiday?
And do you now strew flowers in his way,
That comes in triumph over Pompey's blood?

Be gone!

Run to your houses, fall upon your knees,
Pray to the gods to intermit the plague
That needs must light on this ingratitude.

FLAVIUS

Go, go, good countrymen, and, for this fault
Assemble all the poor men of your sort,
Draw them to Tiber banks, and weep your tears
Into the channel, till the lowest stream
Do kiss the most exalted shores of all.

What conquered kings are trailing behind him to
Rome in chains to decorate his chariot wheels?
You blocks of wood, you stones, you things
worse than lifeless!

Oh, you hard hearts, you cruel men of Rome,
have you forgotten Pompey?

Again and again you climbed up onto walls and
battlements, onto towers and windows, even
onto chimney tops, with your babies in your
arms, and you sat there all day long waiting
patiently just to watch great Pompey ride
through the streets of Rome.

And when you caught the first glimpse of his
chariot, didn't you all roar together loud enough
to make the Tiber shake in its banks as the echo
came back off its hollow shores?

And now you put on your finest clothes?

Now you declare a holiday?

Now you scatter flowers in the path of the man
who comes in triumph over Pompey's murdered
sons?

Get out of here!

Run home, drop to your knees, and pray the
gods spare you the punishment such ingratitude
is bound to bring down on you.

Go on, go on, good countrymen — and to make
up for this offence, gather every poor man like
yourselves, take them down to the banks of the
Tiber, and cry into the river until even the lowest
water rises to touch the highest shore.

Exeunt Citizens.

FLAVIUS

See whether their basest metal be not mov'd;
They vanish tongue-tied in their guiltiness.
Go you down that way towards the Capitol;
This way will I.

Disrobe the images,
If you do find them deck'd with ceremonies.

MARULLUS

May we do so?
You know it is the feast of Lupercal.

FLAVIUS

It is no matter;
let no images
Be hung with Caesar's trophies.
I'll about
And drive away the vulgar from the streets;
So do you too, where you perceive them thick.

These growing feathers pluck'd from Caesar's
wing
Will make him fly an ordinary pitch,
Who else would soar above the view of men,
And keep us all in servile fearfulness.

See how even the coarsest of them is shaken?
They slink off without a word, ashamed.
You go that way, towards the Capitol;
I'll go this way.
Strip the decorations off the statues wherever
you find them dressed up for the celebration.

Are we allowed to?
Today is the feast of Lupercal, remember.

It doesn't matter.
Don't let any statue be hung with Caesar's
victory trophies.
I'll go round driving the crowds off the streets —
you do the same wherever you find them packed
together.
Pull these new feathers out of Caesar's wing and
he'll fly no higher than the rest of us;
otherwise he'll rise out of sight above everyone
and keep us all cowering like slaves.

Exeunt.

Act 1, Scene 2

THE SAME. A PUBLIC PLACE

During the feast of Lupercal, a soothsayer warns Caesar to beware the ides of March and Caesar dismisses him. While Caesar watches the games, Cassius works on Brutus, arguing that Caesar is no better than either of them and that Rome is sliding into one-man rule; offstage the crowd roars

three times as Antony offers Caesar a crown and Caesar refuses it, then collapses in a fit. Casca reports it all sourly afterwards, and Cassius, left alone, plans to forge letters from citizens to push Brutus into the conspiracy.

Original

Translation

Enter, in procession, with music, Caesar; Antony, for the course; Calphurnia, Portia, Decius, Cicero, Brutus, Cassius and Casca; a great crowd following, among them a Soothsayer.

CAESAR

Calphurnia.

Calphurnia.

CASCA

Peace, ho!

Quiet, everyone!

Caesar speaks.

Caesar is speaking.

Music ceases.

CAESAR

Calphurnia.

Calphurnia.

CALPHURNIA

Here, my lord.

I'm here, my lord.

CAESAR

Stand you directly in Antonius' way,
When he doth run his course.

Make sure you stand right in Antony's path
when he runs the race.

Antonius.

Antony.

ANTONY

Caesar, my lord?

Yes, Caesar, my lord?

CAESAR

Forget not in your speed, Antonius,
To touch Calphurnia;

Antony, when you're running, don't forget to
touch Calphurnia.

for our elders say,

Our elders say that a barren woman touched

The barren, touched in this holy chase,
Shake off their sterile curse.

during this sacred race is freed from the curse of
childlessness.

ANTONY

I shall remember.

When Caesar says "Do this," it is perform'd.

CAESAR

Set on;

and leave no ceremony out.

Music.

SOOTHSAYER

Caesar!

CAESAR

Ha!

Who calls?

CASCA

Bid every noise be still;

peace yet again!

Music ceases.

CAESAR

Who is it in the press that calls on me?

I hear a tongue shriller than all the music,

Cry "Caesar"!

Speak.

Caesar is turn'd to hear.

SOOTHSAYER

Beware the Ides of March.

CAESAR

What man is that?

BRUTUS

A soothsayer bids you beware the Ides of March.

I'll remember.

When Caesar says do something, it's as good as done.

Move on —

and don't skip any part of the ritual.

Caesar!

What?

Who's calling me?

Silence, all of you!

Quiet again!

Who is that in the crowd calling for me?

I hear a voice cutting through the music,

shouting "Caesar!"

Speak up.

Caesar is listening.

Beware the ides of March.

Who is that man?

A fortune-teller, warning you to beware the ides of March.

CAESAR

Set him before me;

let me see his face.

Bring him in front of me.

I want to see his face.

CASSIUS

Fellow, come from the throng;

You there, step out of the crowd.

look upon

Look at Caesar.

Caesar.

CAESAR

What say'st thou to me now?

What is it you're saying to me?

Speak once again.

Say it again.

SOOTHSAYER

Beware the Ides of March.

Beware the ides of March.

CAESAR

He is a dreamer;

The man's a dreamer.

let us leave him.

Leave him.

Pass.

Move on.

Sennet. Exeunt all but Brutus and Cassius.

CASSIUS

Will you go see the order of the course?

Aren't you coming to watch the race?

BRUTUS

Not I.

Not me.

CASSIUS

I pray you, do.

Please, come along.

BRUTUS

I am not gamesome:

I'm not in a playful mood.

I do lack some part

I don't have that lively streak Antony has.

Of that quick spirit that is in Antony.

Let me not hinder, Cassius, your desires;

I'll leave you.

CASSIUS

Brutus, I do observe you now of late:

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:

if I have veil'd my look,

I turn the trouble of my countenance

Merely upon myself.

Vexed I am

Of late with passions of some difference,

Conceptions only proper to myself,

Which give some soil perhaps to my behaviors;

But let not therefore my good friends be grieved

(Among which number, Cassius, be you one)

Nor 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

Thoughts of great value, worthy cogitations.

Don't let me hold you back from what you want,
Cassius.

I'll leave you to it.

Brutus, I've been watching you lately.

I don't get the warmth from you, the sign of
affection, that I used to.

You've been treating a friend who loves you with
a stiff, distant hand.

Cassius, don't misread me.

If I've hidden my feelings behind a blank face,
it's because I'm turning my troubles inward, on
myself.

Lately I've been pulled in different directions by
feelings that concern only me, and it has
probably soured how I come across.

But don't let my good friends be hurt by it —
and count yourself among them, Cassius — or
read anything more into my distance than this:
poor Brutus is at war with himself, and has
forgotten to show his affection for anyone else.

Then I've badly misjudged what you were
feeling, Brutus — and because of that I've kept
some important thoughts buried in my chest,
ideas worth thinking about.

Tell me, good Brutus, can you see your face?

BRUTUS

No, Cassius, for the eye sees not itself
But by reflection, by some other thing.

CASSIUS

'Tis just:

And it is very much lamented, Brutus,
That you have no such mirrors as will turn
Your hidden worthiness into your eye,
That you might see your shadow.

I have heard

Where many of the best respect in Rome,
(Except immortal Caesar) speaking of Brutus,
And groaning underneath this age's yoke,
Have wish'd that noble Brutus had his eyes.

BRUTUS

Into what dangers would you lead me, Cassius,
That you would have me seek into myself
For that which is not in me?

CASSIUS

Therefore, good Brutus, be prepared to hear;
And since you know you cannot see yourself
So well as by reflection, I, your glass,
Will modestly discover to yourself
That of yourself which you yet know not of.
And be not jealous on me, gentle Brutus:

Tell me, good Brutus: can you see your own
face?

No, Cassius. The eye can only see itself in a
reflection, in something outside it.

Exactly.

And it's a real shame, Brutus, that you have no
mirror to show you the worth you don't know
you have, so you could see your own image.

I've heard many of the most respected men in
Rome — everyone except the immortal Caesar,
of course — speak about Brutus while groaning
under the burden of these times, and wish that
noble Brutus could see himself the way they see
him.

What kind of danger are you leading me toward,
Cassius, that you want me to search inside
myself for something that isn't there?

Then get ready to listen, good Brutus.

Since you admit you can't see yourself except by
reflection, I'll be your mirror, and show you —
without exaggerating — the part of yourself you
don't yet know about.

And don't be suspicious of me, gentle Brutus.

Were I a common laugh, or did use
To stale with ordinary oaths my love
To every new protester; if you know
That I do fawn on men, and hug them hard,
And after scandal them; or if you know
That I profess myself in banqueting,
To all the rout, then hold me dangerous.

Flourish and shout.

BRUTUS

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

CASSIUS

Ay, 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 so long?
What is it that you would impart to me?
If it be aught toward the general good,
Set honour in one eye and death i' the other,
And I will look on both indifferently;
For let the gods so speed me as I love
The name of honour more than I fear death.

CASSIUS

I know that virtue to be in you, Brutus,
As well as I do know your outward favour.
Well, honour is the subject of my story.

If I were the sort who laughs at everything, or
who cheapened my friendship with easy vows to
every new acquaintance; if you know me to
flatter men and embrace them warmly and then
slander them afterwards; or if you know that at
banquets I hand out my friendship to the whole
crowd — then go ahead and consider me
dangerous.

What's all that shouting?

I'm afraid the people are making Caesar their
king.

Afraid, are you?

Then I take it you don't want it to happen.

No, I don't, Cassius — even though I care for
him.

But why are you keeping me here so long?

What is it you want to tell me?

If it has anything to do with the public good, put
honour in front of one eye and death in front of
the other, and I'll look at them both without
flinching.

As the gods are my witness, I love the name of
honour more than I fear dying.

I know that virtue is in you, Brutus, as surely as I
know your face.

Well — honour is exactly what my story is about.

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, "Dar'st 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 roar'd, and we did buffet it
With lusty sinews, throwing it aside
And stemming it with hearts of controversy.
But ere we could arrive the point propos'd,
Caesar cried, "Help me, Cassius, or I sink!"

I, as Aeneas, our great ancestor,
Did from the flames of Troy upon his shoulder
The old Anchises bear, so from the waves of
Tiber
Did I the tired Caesar.

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.

I don't know what you or other men think about
this life,
but speaking for myself, I'd rather not exist at all
than live in awe of someone no better than me.

I was born as free as Caesar, and so were you.
We've eaten as well as he has, and we can stand
the winter cold as well as he can.
Once, on a raw, windy day, when the Tiber was
churning against its banks, Caesar said to me,
"Cassius, do you dare jump into this angry river
with me and swim to that point over there?"

The moment he said it, I plunged in fully dressed
and told him to follow — and he did.

The current roared, and we fought it with strong
strokes, shoving it aside and pushing through
with defiant hearts.
But before we could reach the spot he'd picked,
Caesar shouted, "Help me, Cassius, or I'll
drown!"

Just as our great ancestor Aeneas carried old
Anchises out of the flames of Troy on his
shoulders, I carried the exhausted Caesar out of
the Tiber.

And this man has now become a god — while
Cassius is a wretch who has to bow if Caesar so
much as nods carelessly in his direction.

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:

His coward lips did from their colour fly,
And that same eye whose bend doth awe the
world
Did lose his lustre.

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.

BRUTUS

Another general shout?

I do believe that these applauses are
For some new honours that are heap'd on
Caesar.

CASSIUS

Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world
Like a Colossus, and we petty men
Walk under his huge legs, and peep about
To find ourselves dishonourable graves.
Men at some time are masters of their fates:

He had a fever once in Spain, and when it took
hold I watched him shake.

It's true — this god shook.

His cowardly lips lost their colour, and that
famous eye whose glance overawes the world
went dull.

I heard him groan.

Yes, and that tongue of his, the one that ordered
Romans to listen and write his speeches down,
cried out, "Titinius, get me something to drink,"
like a sick girl.

Gods, it astounds me that a man so weakly built
should have raced ahead of the whole
magnificent world and taken the prize for
himself.

Another roar from the crowd?

I'm sure that applause is for some new honour
being piled on Caesar.

Man, he stands astride this cramped world like a
giant statue, and we ordinary men creep about
under his enormous legs, glancing around for a
dishonourable grave to fall into.
Men control their own destiny at some point or
other.

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 'em,

"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?

Age, thou art sham'd!

Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods!
When went there by an age since the great flood,
But it was fam'd with more than with one man?
When could they say, till now, that talk'd of
Rome,

That her wide walls encompass'd but one man?

Now is it Rome indeed, and room enough,
When there is in it but one only man.

O, you and I have heard our fathers say,
There was a Brutus once that would have
brook'd

Th' eternal devil to keep his state in Rome,
As easily as a king!

BRUTUS

That you do love me, I am nothing jealous;

The failure, dear Brutus, isn't in the stars above
us but in ourselves, for accepting a lower place.

"Brutus" and "Caesar" — what's so special
about "Caesar"?

Why should that name be spoken louder than
yours?

Write them side by side: yours looks just as fine.
Say them aloud: yours sounds just as good in
the mouth.

Weigh them: they weigh the same.

Use them in a spell: "Brutus" will raise a spirit as
fast as "Caesar" will.

Now, in the name of every god at once — what
has this Caesar of ours been eating, to grow so
huge?

What a disgraceful age this is.

Rome, you've stopped producing noble men!
Has there been a single generation since Noah's
flood that was famous for only one man?
Until now, could anyone talking about Rome
ever say that its broad walls held just one man
inside?

There's certainly room enough in Rome now,
when there's only one man in it.

Oh, you and I have both heard our fathers say
there was once a Brutus who would sooner have
let the devil himself rule Rome than accept a
king.

That you love me, I have no doubt at all.

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, so with love I might entreat you,
Be any further mov'd.

What you have said,
I will consider;
what you have to say
I will with patience hear;

and find a time
Both meet to hear and answer such high things.
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.

Enter Caesar and his Train.

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 worthy note today.

BRUTUS

I will do so.

What you're trying to push me toward, I can
guess.

What I think about all this, and about the times
we live in, I'll tell you later.

For now — and I'm asking as a friend — please
don't press me any further.

I'll think about what you've said.

What you still have to say, I'll hear out patiently,

and I'll find a time when we can properly discuss
such serious things.

Until then, my noble friend, hold on to this
thought: Brutus would rather be a peasant in
some village than call himself a citizen of Rome
under the harsh conditions this age is likely to
force on us.

I'm glad my feeble words have struck even that
much of a spark out of Brutus.

The games are over, and Caesar is coming back.

As they walk past, tug Casca's sleeve.

In that sour way of his, he'll tell you what
happened today that was worth noticing.

I will.

But, look you, Cassius,
The angry spot doth glow on Caesar's brow,
And all the rest look like a chidden train:
Calphurnia's cheek is pale; and Cicero
Looks with such ferret and such fiery eyes
As we have seen him in the Capitol,
Being cross'd in conference by some senators.

CASSIUS

Casca will tell us what the matter is.

CAESAR

Antonius.

ANTONY

Caesar?

CAESAR

Let me have men about me that are fat,
Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep a-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.

But look, Cassius — there's an angry flush on
Caesar's forehead, and everyone with him looks
like a group that's just been scolded.

Calphurnia's face is white, and Cicero has that
sharp, blazing look in his eyes we've seen at the
Capitol when senators argued him down in
debate.

Casca will tell us what it's about.

Antony.

Yes, Caesar?

I want men around me who are well fed — the
smooth, comfortable sort who sleep soundly at
night.

That Cassius over there has a thin, hungry look.

He thinks too much.

Men like that are dangerous.

Don't be afraid of him, Caesar.

He isn't dangerous.

He's a noble Roman with a good character.

I wish he were fatter.

But I'm not afraid of him — though if I were the
kind of man who felt fear, there's no one I'd
steer clear of sooner than that lean 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 mock'd himself and scorn'd his spirit

That could be mov'd to smile at anything.

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 fear'd

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.

Exeunt Caesar and his Train. Casca stays.

CASCA

You pull'd me by the cloak;

would you speak

with me?

BRUTUS

Ay, Casca, tell us what hath chanc'd today,

That Caesar looks so sad.

CASCA

Why, you were with him, were you not?

BRUTUS

He reads a great deal.

He watches everything, and he sees straight
through what men do.

He doesn't enjoy plays the way you do, Antony,
and he takes no pleasure in music.

He rarely smiles, and when he does it's the sort
of smile that mocks itself and despises its own
weakness for finding anything amusing.

Men like that are never at peace while they see
anyone above them, and that is exactly what
makes them dangerous.

I'm telling you what ought to be feared, not
what I fear — because I am always Caesar.

Walk on my right side; this ear is deaf.

And tell me honestly what you make of him.

You pulled at my cloak.

Did you want to say something?

Yes, Casca. Tell us what happened today that has
left Caesar looking so grim.

Why? You were right there with him, weren't
you?

I should not then ask Casca what had chanc'd.

CASCA

Why, there was a crown offer'd him; and being offer'd 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 offer'd 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 neighbours shouted.

CASSIUS

Who offer'd him the crown?

CASCA

Why, Antony.

BRUTUS

If I had been, I wouldn't be asking you what happened.

Well, someone offered him a crown, and when it was offered he pushed it away with the back of his hand, like this — and then the crowd started cheering.

What was the second round of cheering for?

The same thing.

They cheered three times.
What was the last one for?

The same thing again.

The crown was offered three times?

It certainly was, and he pushed it away three times, each time less firmly than the last — and every time he pushed it away, my honest neighbours cheered.

Who offered him the crown?

Antony did.

Tell us the manner of it, gentle Casca.

CASCA

I can as well be hang'd, 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;

Tell us exactly how it went, good Casca.

You could hang me before I could describe it properly.

The whole thing was nonsense; I wasn't paying attention.

I saw Mark Antony offer him a crown — though it wasn't really a crown, more of a coronet — and as I said, he pushed it away once, though if you ask me he badly wanted it.

Then Antony offered it again, and he pushed it away again — but I could see he hated taking his fingers off it.

Then Antony offered it a third time, and a third time he refused.

and still, as
he refus'd it, the rabblement hooted, and
clapp'd their chopt hands,
and threw up their sweaty night-caps, and
uttered such a deal of
stinking breath because Caesar refus'd the
crown, that it had, almost,
choked Caesar, for he swooned, 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 swoon?

CASCA

He fell down in the market-place, and foam'd 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

Every time he refused, the rabble hooted and
clapped their chapped hands and threw their
sweaty nightcaps in the air and let out such a
cloud of foul breath because Caesar was
refusing the crown that it nearly choked him —
he fainted and dropped to the ground.

As for me, I didn't dare laugh, in case I opened
my mouth and breathed in the stink.

Wait, hold on.

Caesar fainted?

He fell down right in the marketplace, foaming
at the mouth and unable to speak.

That's likely enough.

He's an epileptic.

No, Caesar doesn't have the falling sickness.

You and I and honest Casca — we're the ones
who are falling.

I know not what you mean by that;

but I am
sure Caesar fell down.

If
the tag-rag people did not clap him and hiss
him, according as he
pleased and displeased them, as they use to do
the players in the
theatre, I am no true man.

BRUTUS

What said he when he came unto himself?

CASCA

Marry, before he fell down, when he perceived
the common herd was glad
he refused the crown, he pluck'd me ope his
doublet, and offer'd 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.

And so he fell.

I don't know what you mean by that,

but I'm certain Caesar fell down.

And if that rag-tag crowd didn't cheer him and
jeer him depending on whether he pleased
them, exactly the way they treat actors in the
theatre, then I'm a liar.

What did he say when he came round?

Well — just before he collapsed, when he saw
that the common herd was pleased he'd refused
the crown, he tore open his shirt and offered
them his throat to cut.

If I'd been any sort of working man and hadn't
taken him at his word, I hope I'd go to hell with
the worst of them.

And then he fell over.

When he came to himself
again, he said, if he
had done or said anything amiss, he desir'd their
worships to think it
was his infirmity.

Three or four wenches where I
stood cried, "Alas,
good soul!" and forgave him with all their
hearts.

But there's no heed
to be taken of them: if Caesar had stabb'd their
mothers, they would
have done no less.

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

Nay, and I tell you that, I'll ne'er look you i' the
face again.

When he came to, he said that if he'd done or
said anything out of place, he begged their
worships to put it down to his illness.

Three or four girls standing near me cried, "Oh,
the poor soul!" and forgave him with all their
hearts.

But you shouldn't put any weight on that — if
Caesar had knifed their mothers, they'd have
done the same.

And after all that, he came away looking so grim?

Yes.

Did Cicero say anything?

Yes, he spoke in Greek.

Meaning what?

If I could tell you that, I'd never be able to look
you in the face again.

But

those that understood him smil'd at one
another and shook their heads;
but for mine own part, it was Greek to me.

But the people who understood him smiled at
each other and shook their heads.

As for me, it was all Greek to me.

I

could tell you more news
too: Marullus and Flavius, for pulling scarfs off
Caesar's images, are
put to silence.

I could tell you more news, too: Marullus and
Flavius have been silenced for stripping the
decorations off Caesar's statues.

Fare you well.

Goodbye to you.

There was more

foolery yet, if I could
remember it.

There was more nonsense besides, if I could only
remember it.

CASSIUS

Will you sup with me tonight, Casca?

Will you have supper with me tonight, Casca?

CASCA

No, I am promis'd forth.

No, I have other plans.

CASSIUS

Will you dine with me tomorrow?

Dinner tomorrow, then?

CASCA

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

Yes — if I'm still alive, and you haven't changed
your mind, and the dinner's worth eating.

CASSIUS

Good.

Good.

I will expect you.

I'll expect you.

CASCA

Do so;

farewell both.

Exit Casca.

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,

However he puts on this tardy form.

This rudeness is a sauce to his good wit,

Which gives men stomach to digest his words

With better appetite.

BRUTUS

And so it is.

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.

CASSIUS

Well, Brutus, thou art noble; yet I see,

Thy honourable metal may be wrought

From that it is dispos'd:

Do that.

Goodbye, both of you.

What a blunt fellow he's turned into.

He was sharp and lively when we were at school together.

And he still is, whenever there's something bold or worthwhile to be done — however slow-witted he pretends to be.

This roughness is the seasoning on his intelligence; it gives people the appetite to swallow what he says.

That's true.

I'll leave you for now.

Tomorrow, if you want to talk, I'll come to your house

— or if you prefer, come to mine and I'll be waiting.

I'll do that.

Until then, think about the state of things.

Well, Brutus, you are noble — but I can see that even honourable material like yours can be bent away from its natural shape.

therefore 'tis meet
 That noble minds keep ever with their likes;
 For who so firm that cannot be seduc'd?
 Caesar doth bear me hard, but he loves Brutus.
 If I were Brutus now, and he were Cassius,
 He should not humour me.

I will this night,
 In several hands, in at his windows throw,
 As if they came from several citizens,
 Writings, all tending to the great opinion
 That Rome holds of his name; 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.

That's why noble minds should stay among their
 own kind:
 who is so solid that he can't be worked on?
 Caesar can't stand me, but he loves Brutus.
 If I were Brutus and he were Cassius, he
 wouldn't get around me.

Tonight I'll throw letters in different
 handwritings through his windows, as though
 they came from various citizens, all of them
 talking up the high regard Rome has for his
 name — and each one hinting darkly at Caesar's
 ambition.

After that, Caesar had better hold his seat tight,
 because we'll shake him loose or suffer worse
 days ahead.

Exit.

Act 1, Scene 3

THE SAME. A STREET

On the storm-torn night before the ides of March, Casca describes a series of omens to Cicero — a hand burning without pain, a lion loose by the Capitol, an owl shrieking at noon. Cassius reads the same portents as warnings about Caesar, recruits the shaken Casca into the conspiracy, and sends Cinna to plant forged letters where Brutus will find them. The scene turns private grievance into an organized plot and sets up Brutus's decision in Act 2.

Original

Translation

Thunder and lightning. Enter, from opposite sides, Casca with his sword drawn, and Cicero.

CICERO

Good even, Casca:
 brought you Caesar home?
 Why are you breathless, and why stare you so?

Good evening, Casca.
 Did you see Caesar home?
 Why are you out of breath, and why that look on
 your face?

CASCA

Are not you moved, when all the sway of earth
Shakes like a thing unfirm?

O Cicero,

I have seen tempests, when the scolding winds
Have riv'd the knotty oaks;

and I have seen

Th' ambitious ocean swell and rage and foam,

To be exalted with the threatening clouds:

But never till tonight, never till now,

Did I go through a tempest dropping fire.

Either there is a civil strife in heaven,

Or else the world too saucy with the gods,

Incenses them to send destruction.

CICERO

Why, saw you anything more wonderful?

CASCA

A common slave, you'd know him well by sight,

Held up his left hand, which did flame and burn

Like twenty torches join'd, and yet his hand,

Not sensible of fire remain'd unscorch'd.

Besides, I ha' not since put up my sword,

Against the Capitol I met a lion,

Who glared upon me, and went surly by,

Without annoying me.

And there were drawn

Upon a heap a hundred ghastly women,

Transformed with their fear; who swore they

saw

Men, all in fire, walk up and down the streets.

Doesn't it shake you, when the whole balance of
the earth trembles like something about to give
way?

Cicero, I've seen storms where the raging wind
split solid oaks.

I've seen the ocean swell and rage and foam as if
it wanted to climb up to the storm clouds.

But never until tonight — never until now —
have I walked through a storm raining fire.

Either there's a civil war going on in heaven, or
the world has offended the gods once too often
and they're sending destruction.

Why, did you see anything even stranger?

A slave — an ordinary man you'd recognize on
sight — held up his left hand, and it blazed like
twenty torches bundled together, yet the hand
felt no heat and wasn't burned.

And since then I haven't put my sword away:
near the Capitol I ran into a lion, which stared at
me and stalked past without touching me.

And there were a hundred terrified women
huddled together, so transformed by fear that
they swore they'd seen men on fire walking up
and down the streets.

And yesterday the bird of night did sit,
Even at noonday upon the marketplace,
Hooting and shrieking.

When these prodigies
Do so conjointly meet, let not men say,
"These are their reasons; they are natural";
For I believe, they are portentous things
Unto the climate that they point upon.

CICERO

Indeed, it is a strange-disposed time.
But men may construe things after their
fashion,
Clean from the purpose of the things
themselves.
Comes Caesar to the Capitol tomorrow?

CASCA

He doth,
for he did bid Antonius
Send word to you he would be there tomorrow.

CICERO

Goodnight then, Casca:
this disturbed sky
Is not to walk in.

CASCA

Farewell, Cicero.

Exit Cicero.

Enter Cassius.

CASSIUS

Who's there?

CASCA

And yesterday an owl sat in the marketplace at
midday, hooting and shrieking.

When so many freak events happen at once,
don't let anyone tell you "there's a natural
explanation for each of these."
I believe they're omens warning the country they
appear over.

It's certainly a strange, unsettled time.

But men will interpret things to suit themselves,
completely missing what the things actually
mean.

Is Caesar coming to the Capitol tomorrow?

He is.

He told Antony to send you word that he'd be
there.

Goodnight then, Casca.

This is no sky to be walking about under.

Goodbye, Cicero.

Who's there?

A Roman.

CASSIUS

Casca, by your voice.

CASCA

Your ear is good.

Cassius, what night is this!

CASSIUS

A very pleasing night to honest men.

CASCA

Who ever knew the heavens menace so?

CASSIUS

Those that have known the earth so full of faults.

For my part, I have walk'd about the streets,
Submitting me unto the perilous night;
And, thus unbraced, Casca, as you see,
Have bar'd my bosom to the thunder-stone;
And when the cross blue lightning seem'd to open
The breast of heaven, I did present myself
Even in the aim and very flash of it.

CASCA

But wherefore did you so much tempt the Heavens?

It is the part of men to fear and tremble,
When the most mighty gods by tokens send
Such dreadful heralds to astonish us.

CASSIUS

A Roman.

That's Casca, by the voice.

You have a good ear.

Cassius, what a night this is!

A very agreeable night, for honest men.

Who has ever seen the heavens threaten like this?

Anyone who has seen how full of wrongs the earth is.

As for me, I've been walking the streets, offering myself up to this dangerous night — and with my clothes open like this, Casca, I've bared my chest to the thunderbolts.
When the forked blue lightning seemed to split heaven open, I stood right in its path, in the flash itself.

But why would you provoke the heavens like that?

Men are supposed to be afraid and tremble when the mightiest gods send such terrifying messengers to shock us.

You are dull, Casca;

and those sparks of life

That should be in a Roman you do want,

Or else you use not.

You look pale and gaze,

And put on fear and cast yourself in wonder,

To see the strange impatience of the Heavens:

But if you would consider the true cause

Why all these fires, why all these gliding ghosts,

Why birds and beasts, from quality and kind;

Why old men, fools, and children calculate,

Why all these things change from their

ordinance,

Their natures, and pre-formed faculties,

To monstrous quality; why, you shall find

That Heaven hath infus'd them with these

spirits,

To make them instruments of fear and warning

Unto some monstrous state.

Now could I, Casca, name to thee a man

Most like this dreadful night,

That thunders, lightens, opens graves, and roars,

As doth the lion in the Capitol;

A man no mightier than thyself, or me,

In personal action; yet prodigious grown,

And fearful, as these strange eruptions are.

CASCA

'Tis Caesar that you mean; is it not, Cassius?

CASSIUS

Let it be who it is:

You're being slow, Casca.

Either you lack the spark of life a Roman should have, or you're refusing to use it.

You go pale and stare, you make yourself afraid and lose yourself in astonishment at the heavens' strange fury.

But if you thought about the real reason for all these fires, all these drifting ghosts, why birds and beasts act against their nature, why old men and fools and children turn prophet, why all these things abandon their normal function and behaviour and turn monstrous — you'd realize that heaven has filled them with these energies to make them instruments of fear, warning us about some monstrous condition in the state.

Casca, I could name you a man exactly like this terrible night — a man who thunders and flashes and opens graves and roars like that lion at the Capitol.

A man no stronger than you or me in himself, yet who has grown to a monstrous size and become as frightening as these unnatural events.

You mean Caesar, don't you, Cassius?

Let it be whoever it is.

for Romans now

Have thews and limbs like to their ancestors;
But, woe the while! our fathers' minds are dead,
And we are govern'd with our mothers' spirits;
Our yoke and sufferance show us womanish.

CASCA

Indeed, they say the senators tomorrow
Mean to establish Caesar as a king;
And he shall wear his crown by sea and land,
In every place, save here in Italy.

CASSIUS

I know where I will wear this dagger then;
Cassius from bondage will deliver Cassius:
Therein, ye gods, you make the weak most
strong;
Therein, ye gods, you tyrants do defeat.
Nor stony tower, nor walls of beaten brass,
Nor airless dungeon, nor strong links of iron,
Can be retentive to the strength of spirit;
But life, being weary of these worldly bars,
Never lacks power to dismiss itself.
If I know this, know all the world besides,
That part of tyranny that I do bear
I can shake off at pleasure.

Thunder still.

CASCA

So can I:
So every bondman in his own hand bears
The power to cancel his captivity.

CASSIUS

Romans today have the muscles and limbs their
ancestors had, but — what a shame — our
fathers' spirit is dead in us, and we're ruled by
our mothers' temperament.

Letting ourselves be yoked and putting up with
it makes us look like women.

In fact they say the senators intend to crown
Caesar king tomorrow,
and that he'll wear his crown everywhere by sea
and land — everywhere except here in Italy.

Then I know where I'll wear this dagger.

Cassius will free Cassius from slavery.

That's how you gods make the weak strong;

that's how you gods defeat tyrants.

No stone tower, no wall of hammered brass, no
airless dungeon, no chain of iron can hold in a
determined spirit.

Life, once it tires of these worldly restraints,
always has the power to release itself.

If I know this — and the whole world knows it
too — then whatever share of tyranny I'm forced
to carry, I can throw off whenever I choose.

So can I.

Every slave holds in his own hand the power to
end his captivity.

And why should Caesar be a tyrant then?
Poor man! I know he would not be a wolf,
But that he sees the Romans are but sheep:
He were no lion, were not Romans hinds.
Those that with haste will make a mighty fire
Begin it with weak straws.

What trash is Rome,
What rubbish, and what offal, when it serves
For the base matter to illuminate
So vile a thing as Caesar!

But, O grief,
Where hast thou led me?

I, perhaps, speak this
Before a willing bondman: then I know
My answer must be made;

but I am arm'd,
And dangers are to me indifferent.

CASCA

You speak to Casca, and to such a man
That is no fleering tell-tale.

Hold, my hand:
Be factious for redress of all these griefs,
And I will set this foot of mine as far
As who goes farthest.

CASSIUS

There's a bargain made.
Now know you, Casca, I have mov'd already
Some certain of the noblest-minded Romans
To undergo with me an enterprise
Of honourable-dangerous consequence;
And I do know by this, they stay for me
In Pompey's Porch:

So why should Caesar be a tyrant at all?
The poor man wouldn't be a wolf if he didn't see
that the Romans are sheep.
He wouldn't be a lion if Romans weren't deer.
Men who want a big fire fast start it with feeble
straw.

What garbage Rome must be, what rubbish,
what waste, if it's the cheap fuel that lights up
something as worthless as Caesar.

But — oh, grief, where have you led me?

I may be saying this in front of a man who's
happy to be a slave, in which case I know I'll
have to answer for it.

But I'm armed, and danger doesn't concern me.

You're talking to Casca — a man who is no
sneering informer.

Here, take my hand.
Organize a faction to put all these wrongs right,
and I'll go as far as anyone who goes furthest.

Then we have a deal.

Now I can tell you, Casca, that I've already
persuaded several of the most honourable-
minded Romans to join me in an enterprise that
is dangerous but honourable.

I know that right now they're waiting for me at
Pompey's Porch

for now, this fearful night,

There is no stir or walking in the streets;

And the complexion of the element

In favour's like the work we have in hand,

Most bloody, fiery, and most terrible.

Enter Cinna.

CASCA

Stand close awhile, for here comes one in haste.

CASSIUS

'Tis Cinna; I do know him by his gait;

He is a friend.

Cinna, where haste you so?

CINNA

To find out you.

Who's that? Metellus Cimber?

CASSIUS

No, it is Casca, one incorporate

To our attempts.

Am I not stay'd for, Cinna?

CINNA

I am glad on't.

What a fearful night is this!

There's two or three of us have seen strange
sights.

CASSIUS

Am I not stay'd for?

tell me.

CINNA

— because on a frightening night like this

there's no one stirring in the streets,

and the look of the sky matches the work we

have in hand: bloody, fiery, and utterly terrible.

Stay back a moment — someone's coming in a
hurry.

It's Cinna; I know him by his walk.

He's one of us.

Cinna, where are you rushing to?

To find you.

Who's that? Metellus Cimber?

No, it's Casca — he's joined our plans.

Aren't they waiting for me, Cinna?

I'm glad to hear it.

What a terrifying night!

Two or three of us have seen strange things.

Are they waiting for me?

Tell me.

Yes, you are.

O Cassius, if you could
But win the noble Brutus to our party—

CASSIUS

Be you content.

Good Cinna, take this paper,
And look you lay it in the praetor's chair,
Where Brutus may but find it;

and throw this
In at his window;

set this up with wax
Upon old Brutus' statue:
all this done,
Repair to Pompey's Porch, where you shall find
us.

Is Decius Brutus and Trebonius there?

CINNA

All but Metellus Cimber, and he's gone
To seek you at your house.

Well, I will hie,
And so bestow these papers as you bade me.

CASSIUS

That done, repair to Pompey's theatre.

Exit Cinna.

CASSIUS

Come, Casca, you and I will yet, ere day,
See Brutus at his house:
three parts of him
Is ours already, and the man entire
Upon the next encounter, yields him ours.

Yes, they are.

Oh, Cassius — if only you could bring the noble
Brutus over to our side—

Don't worry about that.

Good Cinna, take this paper and be sure to lay it
on the praetor's chair, where only Brutus will
find it.

Throw this one in at his window,

and fix this one with wax to the statue of the old
Brutus.

When you've done all that, come to Pompey's
Porch, where you'll find us.

Are Decius Brutus and Trebonius there?

Everyone except Metellus Cimber, and he's gone
looking for you at your house.

Right, I'll hurry off and place these papers as
you told me.

Then come to Pompey's theatre.

Come on, Casca. You and I will go and see
Brutus at his house before morning.

Three quarters of him is already ours, and the
whole man will be ours after one more meeting.

CASCA

O, he sits high in all the people's hearts!
And that which would appear offence in us,
His countenance, like richest alchemy,
Will change to virtue and to worthiness.

He stands high in everyone's affection.
What would look like a crime coming from us,
his support — like the finest alchemy — will turn
into virtue and worth.

CASSIUS

Him, and his worth, and our great need of him,
You have right well conceited.

You've got him exactly right: what he's worth,
and how badly we need him.

Let us go,

Let's go. It's past midnight,

For it is after midnight;

and ere day,

and before daybreak we'll wake him and make
sure of him.

We will awake him, and be sure of him.

Exeunt.

Act 2, Scene 1

ROME. BRUTUS' ORCHARD

Alone in his orchard before dawn, Brutus talks himself into killing Caesar, arguing that Caesar has done nothing wrong yet but would be dangerous if crowned. Forged letters planted by Cassius push him over, and the conspirators arrive in disguise; Brutus takes charge, refusing an oath and overruling Cassius's demand that Mark Antony die too. Portia then confronts her husband about his sleeplessness and demands to be told his secret, and Caius Ligarius arrives to join the plot.

Original

Translation

Enter Brutus.

BRUTUS

What, Lucius, ho!

I cannot, by the progress of the stars,
Give guess how near to day.

Lucius, I say!

I would it were my fault to sleep so soundly.

Hey — Lucius!

I can't tell from the position of the stars how
close it is to morning.

Lucius, I said!

I wish it were a fault of mine to sleep that
soundly.

When, Lucius, when?

Come on, Lucius, come on!

Awake, I say!

Wake up, I said!

What,

Lucius!

Lucius!

Enter Lucius.

LUCIUS

Call'd you, my lord?

Did you call me, my lord?

BRUTUS

Get me a taper in my study, Lucius:

Put a candle in my study, Lucius.

When it is lighted, come and call me here.

When it's lit, come back and tell me.

LUCIUS

I will, my lord.

I will, my lord.

Exit.

BRUTUS

It must be by his death:

It has to be his death.

and for my part,

Personally, I have no private reason to strike at him — only the public good.

I know no personal cause to spurn at him,

But for the general.

He would be crown'd:

He wants the crown.

How that might change his nature, there's the question.

How that might change him is the real question.

It is the bright day that brings forth the adder,
And that craves wary walking.

It's warm sunlight that brings the snake out,
and then you have to watch where you step.

Crown him?—

that;

Make him king? Yes — and then, I admit, we hand him a sting he can use to do damage whenever he likes.

And then, I grant, we put a sting in him,

That at his will he may do danger with.

Th' abuse of greatness is, when it disjoins
Remorse from power;

and, to speak truth of
Caesar,
I have not known when his affections sway'd
More than his reason.

But 'tis a common proof,
That lowliness is young ambition's ladder,
Whereto the climber-upward turns his face;
But when he once attains the upmost round,
He then unto the ladder turns his back,
Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees
By which he did ascend.

So Caesar may;
Then lest he may, prevent.

And since the quarrel
Will bear no colour for the thing he is,
Fashion it thus: that what he is, augmented,
Would run to these and these extremities:
And therefore think him as a serpent's egg
Which hatch'd, would, as his kind grow
mischievous;
And kill him in the shell.

Enter Lucius.

LUCIUS

The taper burneth in your closet, sir.
Searching the window for a flint, I found
This paper, thus seal'd up, and I am sure
It did not lie there when I went to bed.

Gives him the letter.

BRUTUS

Power is abused when it cuts itself loose from
conscience.

And to tell the truth about Caesar, I've never
seen his feelings override his judgment.

But it's a familiar pattern: humility is the ladder
young ambition climbs, and the climber keeps
his face turned up toward it — until he reaches
the top rung, when he turns his back on the
ladder, stares off into the clouds, and despises
the low steps that got him there.

Caesar might do the same. So, in case he does,
stop him first.

And since as things stand there's no case
against him for what he is, put it this way: what
he is now, once enlarged, would go to such and
such extremes.

So think of him as a snake's egg which, once
hatched, would grow dangerous like the rest of
its kind — and kill him while he's still in the
shell.

The candle is burning in your study, sir.

While I was feeling along the window for a flint,
I found this sealed-up paper — and I'm certain it
wasn't there when I went to bed.

Get you to bed again; it is not day.

Is not tomorrow, boy, the Ides of March?

LUCIUS

I know not, sir.

BRUTUS

Look in the calendar, and bring me word.

LUCIUS

I will, sir.

Exit.

BRUTUS

The exhalations, whizzing in the air

Give so much light that I may read by them.

Opens the letter and reads.

BRUTUS

_ Brutus, thou sleep'st: awake and see thyself.

Shall Rome, &c. Speak, strike, redress!_

"Brutus, thou sleep'st: awake!"

Such instigations have been often dropp'd

Where I have took them up.

"Shall Rome, &c."

Thus must I piece it out:

Shall Rome stand under one man's awe?

What,

Rome?

My ancestors did from the streets of Rome

The Tarquin drive, when he was call'd a king.

"Speak, strike, redress!"

Go back to bed; it isn't daylight yet.

Boy — isn't tomorrow the ides of March?

I don't know, sir.

Check the calendar and come tell me.

I will, sir.

The meteors streaking through the sky give off
enough light for me to read by.

"Brutus, you're asleep. Wake up and see what
you are. Shall Rome, etc. Speak, strike, put
things right!"

"Brutus, you're asleep — wake up!"

Prompts like this keep getting dropped where I'll
pick them up.

"Shall Rome, etc."

I have to fill in the rest: shall Rome live in fear of
one man?

Rome?

My own ancestors drove the Tarquin out of these
streets when he made himself king.

"Speak, strike, put things right!"

Am I entreated

To speak and strike?

O Rome, I make thee

promise,

If the redress will follow, thou receivest

Thy full petition at the hand of Brutus.

Enter Lucius.

LUCIUS

Sir, March is wasted fifteen days.

Knock within.

BRUTUS

'Tis good.

Go to the gate, somebody knocks.

Exit Lucius.

BRUTUS

Since Cassius first did whet me against Caesar,
I have not slept.

Between the acting of a dreadful thing
And the first motion, all the interim is
Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream:
The genius and the mortal instruments
Are then in council; and the state of man,
Like to a little kingdom, suffers then
The nature of an insurrection.

Enter Lucius.

LUCIUS

Sir, 'tis your brother Cassius at the door,
Who doth desire to see you.

BRUTUS

Am I being begged to speak and strike?

Rome, I promise you this: if setting things right
is what follows, you'll get everything you're
asking for from Brutus's own hand.

Sir, fifteen days of March have gone.

Good.

Go to the gate — someone's knocking.

Ever since Cassius first sharpened me against
Caesar, I haven't slept.

Between the first thought of a terrible act and
the act itself, the whole space in between is like
a hallucination, or a nightmare.

The mind and the body that must carry it out
hold a debate, and a man's inner life, like a small
kingdom, goes through something very like a
rebellion.

Sir, it's your brother-in-law Cassius at the door,
and he wants to see you.

Is he alone?

LUCIUS

No, sir, there are more with him.

BRUTUS

Do you know them?

LUCIUS

No, sir, their hats are pluck'd about their ears,
And half their faces buried in their cloaks,
That by no means I may discover them
By any mark of favour.

BRUTUS

Let 'em enter.

Exit Lucius.

BRUTUS

They are the faction.

O conspiracy,
Sham'st thou to show thy dangerous brow by
night,
When evils are most free?

O, then, by day
Where wilt thou find a cavern dark enough
To mask thy monstrous visage?

Seek none,
conspiracy;
Hide it in smiles and affability:
For if thou path, thy native semblance on,
Not Erebus itself were dim enough
To hide thee from prevention.

Enter Cassius, Casca, Decius, Cinna, Metellus Cimber and Trebonius.

Is he alone?

No, sir, there are others with him.

Do you recognize them?

No, sir. Their hats are pulled down over their
ears and half their faces are buried in their
cloaks, so there's no way I could identify them
by any feature.

Let them in.

It's the conspiracy.

Conspiracy, are you so ashamed that you'll only
show your dangerous face at night, when evil
roams freely?

Then where in daylight will you find a cave dark
enough to cover that monstrous face of yours?

Don't look for one — hide it in smiles and
friendliness.

Because if you walked about with your true face
showing, not even the underworld would be
dark enough to keep you from being caught.

CASSIUS

I think we are too bold upon your rest:

Good morrow, Brutus;

do we trouble you?

BRUTUS

I have been up this hour, awake all night.

Know I these men that come along with you?

CASSIUS

Yes, every man of them;

and no man here

But honours you;

and everyone doth wish

You had but that opinion of yourself

Which every noble Roman bears of you.

This is Trebonius.

BRUTUS

He is welcome hither.

CASSIUS

This Decius Brutus.

BRUTUS

He is welcome too.

CASSIUS

This, Casca; this, Cinna; and this, Metellus
Cimber.

BRUTUS

They are all welcome.

What watchful cares do interpose themselves
Betwixt your eyes and night?

I think we're taking too much liberty with your
sleep.

Good morning, Brutus.

Are we disturbing you?

I've been up for the past hour — awake all night,
in fact.

Do I know the men who came with you?

Yes, every one of them.

And there isn't a man here who doesn't respect
you;

every one of them wishes you had the opinion of
yourself that every noble Roman has of you.

This is Trebonius.

He's welcome here.

This is Decius Brutus.

He's welcome too.

This is Casca; this is Cinna; and this is Metellus
Cimber.

They're all welcome.

What worries have come between your eyes and
a night's sleep?

CASSIUS

Shall I entreat a word?

They whisper.

DECIUS

Here lies the east:

doth not the day break here?

CASCA

No.

CINNA

O, pardon, sir, it doth;

and yon grey lines

That fret the clouds are messengers of day.

CASCA

You shall confess that you are both deceiv'd.

Here, as I point my sword, the Sun arises;

Which is a great way growing on the South,

Weighing the youthful season of the year.

Some two months hence, up higher toward the

North

He first presents his fire;

and the high East

Stands, as the Capitol, directly here.

BRUTUS

Give me your hands all over, one by one.

CASSIUS

And let us swear our resolution.

BRUTUS

No, not an oath.

May I have a word with you?

East is over there, isn't it?

Isn't that where the sun comes up?

No.

Excuse me, sir, but it is —

and those grey streaks running through the

clouds are the first signs of daybreak.

You'll both admit you're mistaken.

The sun rises here, where I'm pointing my

sword, well round to the south, given how early

in the year we are.

Two months from now the sun will show itself

further north,

and the true east is over here, in the direction of

the Capitol.

Give me your hands, all of you, one at a time.

And let's swear an oath on our resolve.

No — no oath.

If not the face of men,
The sufferance of our souls, the time's abuse—
If these be motives weak, break off betimes,
And every man hence to his idle bed.
So let high-sighted tyranny range on,
Till each man drop by lottery.

But if these,
As I am sure they do, bear fire enough
To kindle cowards, and to steel with valour
The melting spirits of women; then,
countrymen,
What need we any spur but our own cause
To prick us to redress?

what other bond
Than secret Romans, that have spoke the word,
And will not palter?

and what other oath
Than honesty to honesty engag'd,
That this shall be, or we will fall for it?
Swear priests and cowards, and men cautelous,
Old feeble carrions, and such suffering souls
That welcome wrongs;

unto bad causes swear
Such creatures as men doubt;
but do not stain
The even virtue of our enterprise,
Nor th' insuppressive mettle of our spirits,
To think that or our cause or our performance
Did need an oath;

If the look on people's faces, the suffering we all
carry, the corruption of the times — if those
aren't reason enough, then let's break this off
now and everyone go back to his idle bed, and
let arrogant tyranny run loose until we're picked
off one by one at random.

But if these things carry enough fire — and I'm
certain they do — to set cowards alight and
stiffen even the softest spirits with courage,
then, countrymen, what spur do we need
beyond our own cause to drive us to set things
right?

What stronger bond than Romans who have
privately given their word and won't go back on
it?

What better oath than one honest man pledged
to another that this will happen or we'll die
trying?

Let priests and cowards swear oaths, and crafty
men, and feeble old wrecks, and the kind of
long-suffering souls who welcome being
wronged.

Let the men nobody trusts swear to bad causes.

But don't stain the plain integrity of what we're
doing, or the unbreakable steel in our spirits, by
suggesting that either our cause or our nerve
needed an oath

when every drop of blood
That every Roman bears, and nobly bears,
Is guilty of a several bastardy,
If he do break the smallest particle
Of any promise that hath pass'd from him.

CASSIUS

But what of Cicero?

Shall we sound him?

I think he will stand very strong with us.

CASCA

Let us not leave him out.

CINNA

No, by no means.

METELLUS

O, let us have him, for his silver hairs
Will purchase us a good opinion,
And buy men's voices to commend our deeds.
It shall be said, his judgement rul'd our hands;
Our youths and wildness shall no whit appear,
But all be buried in his gravity.

BRUTUS

O, name him not;

let us not break with him;

For he will never follow anything
That other men begin.

CASSIUS

Then leave him out.

CASCA

Indeed, he is not fit.

— when every drop of blood any Roman carries,
and carries nobly, proves him a bastard if he
breaks the smallest part of any promise he has
made.

What about Cicero?

Should we sound him out?

I think he'd be a strong ally.

Let's not leave him out.

No, certainly not.

Yes, let's have him — his grey hair will buy us a
good reputation and win people over to praising
what we do.
They'll say his judgment guided our hands;
our youth and recklessness won't show at all,
but will be hidden behind his dignity.

Don't mention him.

Let's not raise it with him at all.

He'll never go along with anything that someone
else has started.

Leave him out, then.

You're right, he isn't suitable.

DECIUS

Shall no man else be touch'd but only Caesar?

CASSIUS

Decius, well urg'd.

I think it is not meet,
Mark Antony, so well belov'd of Caesar,
Should outlive Caesar:

we shall find of him
A shrewd contriver;
and you know, his means,
If he improve them, may well stretch so far
As to annoy us all;
which to prevent,
Let Antony and Caesar fall together.

BRUTUS

Our course will seem too bloody, Caius Cassius,
To cut the head off, and then hack the limbs,
Like wrath in death, and envy afterwards;

For Antony is but a limb of Caesar.
Let us be sacrificers, but not butchers, Caius.

We all stand up against the spirit of Caesar,
And in the spirit of men there is no blood.
O, that we then could come by Caesar's spirit,
And not dismember Caesar!

But, alas,
Caesar must bleed for it!
And, gentle friends,
Let's kill him boldly, but not wrathfully;

Is Caesar the only one we touch?

Good point, Decius.

I don't think it's wise for Mark Antony, who
Caesar loves so much, to outlive Caesar.

We'll find him a clever schemer —

and you know his resources, if he builds on
them, could easily reach far enough to cause us
all trouble.

To prevent that, let Antony die alongside Caesar.

That will make what we do look too bloody,
Caius Cassius — cutting off the head and then
hacking at the limbs, as if we killed in a rage and
then out of spite.

Antony is only one of Caesar's limbs.
Let's be priests making a sacrifice, Caius, not
butchers.

What we all stand against is the spirit of Caesar,
and a man's spirit contains no blood.

If only we could get at Caesar's spirit without
tearing Caesar apart!

But sadly, Caesar has to bleed for it.

So, my friends, let's kill him boldly but not
angrily.

Let's carve him as a dish fit for the gods,
Not hew him as a carcass fit for hounds.

And let our hearts, as subtle masters do,
Stir up their servants to an act of rage,
And after seem to chide 'em.

This shall mark

Our purpose necessary, and not envious;
Which so appearing to the common eyes,
We shall be call'd purgers, not murderers.
And for Mark Antony, think not of him;
For he can do no more than Caesar's arm
When Caesar's head is off.

CASSIUS

Yet I fear him;
For in the ingrafted love he bears to Caesar—

BRUTUS

Alas, good Cassius, do not think of him:

If he love Caesar, all that he can do
Is to himself; take thought and die for Caesar.

And that were much he should; for he is given
To sports, to wildness, and much company.

TREBONIUS

There is no fear in him;
let him not die;
For he will live, and laugh at this hereafter.

Clock strikes.

BRUTUS

Peace!

Let's carve him up as a dish fit to be served to
the gods, not hack him like a carcass thrown to
dogs.

And let our hearts do what shrewd masters do:
goad their servants into a violent act and then
appear to scold them for it.

That will make our purpose look necessary
rather than spiteful, and when the public sees it
that way we'll be called healers, not murderers.

As for Mark Antony — don't give him a thought.
He can do no more than Caesar's arm once
Caesar's head is off.

I'm still afraid of him, because of the deep-
rooted love he has for Caesar—

Good Cassius, don't waste your thoughts on
him.

If he loves Caesar, the only person he can harm
is himself: he can brood and die of grief for
Caesar.

And even that would be a lot to expect, since
he's devoted to games and partying and crowds.

There's nothing to fear in him.

Don't let him be killed — he'll live and laugh
about all this afterwards.

Quiet —

count the clock.

CASSIUS

The clock hath stricken three.

TREBONIUS

'Tis time to part.

CASSIUS

But it is doubtful yet

Whether Caesar will come forth today or no;

For he is superstitious grown of late,

Quite from the main opinion he held once

Of fantasy, of dreams, and ceremonies.

It may be these apparent prodigies,

The unaccustom'd terror of this night,

And the persuasion of his augurers,

May hold him from the Capitol today.

DECIUS

Never fear that:

if he be so resolved,

I can o'ersway him,

for he loves to hear

That unicorns may be betray'd with trees,

And bears with glasses, elephants with holes,

Lions with toils, and men with flatterers.

But when I tell him he hates flatterers,

He says he does, being then most flattered.

Let me work;

For I can give his humour the true bent,

And I will bring him to the Capitol.

CASSIUS

count the strokes.

The clock struck three.

It's time we separated.

But it's still uncertain whether Caesar will come out today.

He's grown superstitious lately, which is the opposite of what he used to think about visions, dreams and rituals.

These obvious omens, the unusual terror of tonight, and the advice of his priests may keep him away from the Capitol today.

Don't worry about that.

If he's decided to stay in, I can talk him round.

He loves hearing that unicorns can be trapped with trees, bears with mirrors, elephants with pits, lions with nets — and men with flattery.

And when I tell him he hates flatterers, he agrees that he does, which is when he's most thoroughly flattered.

Leave it to me.

I know how to steer his mood the right way, and I'll bring him to the Capitol.

Nay, we will all of us be there to fetch him.

BRUTUS

By the eighth hour:

is that the uttermost?

CINNA

Be that the uttermost;

and fail not then.

METELLUS

Caius Ligarius doth bear Caesar hard,

Who rated him for speaking well of Pompey;

I wonder none of you have thought of him.

BRUTUS

Now, good Metellus, go along by him:

He loves me well, and I have given him reason;

Send him but hither, and I'll fashion him.

CASSIUS

The morning comes upon's.

We'll leave you,

Brutus.

And, friends, disperse yourselves; but all
remember

What you have said, and show yourselves true
Romans.

BRUTUS

Good gentlemen, look fresh and merrily;

Let not our looks put on our purposes,

But bear it as our Roman actors do,

With untired spirits and formal constancy.

No — we'll all go and fetch him.

By eight o'clock.

Is that the latest?

Let that be the latest,

and don't be late.

Caius Ligarius has a grudge against Caesar, who
told him off for speaking well of Pompey.

I'm surprised none of you thought of him.

Good Metellus, call on him on your way.

He's fond of me, and I've given him reason to
be.

Just send him here and I'll bring him round.

Morning is catching up with us.

We'll leave you, Brutus.

Friends, split up — but everyone remember
what you've said, and prove yourselves true
Romans.

Gentlemen, look bright and cheerful.

Don't let your faces give away what we intend;
carry it off the way our Roman actors do, with
steady energy and a convincing performance.

And so, good morrow to you everyone.

Exeunt all but Brutus.

BRUTUS

Boy! Lucius!

Fast asleep?

It is no matter;

Enjoy the honey-heavy dew of slumber:

Thou hast no figures nor no fantasies,

Which busy care draws in the brains of men;

Therefore thou sleep'st so sound.

Enter Portia.

PORTIA

Brutus, my lord.

BRUTUS

Portia, what mean you?

Wherefore rise you

now?

It is not for your health thus to commit

Your weak condition to the raw cold morning.

PORTIA

Nor for yours neither.

Y' have ungently, Brutus,

Stole from my bed;

and yesternight at supper,

You suddenly arose, and walk'd about,

Musing and sighing, with your arms across;

And when I ask'd you what the matter was,

You star'd upon me with ungentle looks.

And so, good morning to you all.

Boy! Lucius!

Fast asleep?

Never mind.

Enjoy the thick, honey-sweet dew of sleep.

You have none of the images or imaginings that

anxiety paints in men's brains

— that's why you sleep so soundly.

Brutus, my lord.

Portia, what are you doing?

Why are you up at this hour?

It isn't good for you to expose your delicate

health to the raw cold of the morning.

It isn't good for yours either.

You slipped unkindly out of my bed, Brutus.

And last night at supper you suddenly stood up

and paced around, brooding and sighing with
your arms folded.

When I asked you what was wrong, you gave me
a hard stare.

I urg'd you further; then you scratch'd your head,

And too impatiently stamp'd with your foot;

Yet I insisted, yet you answer'd not,

But with an angry wafture of your hand

Gave sign for me to leave you.

So I did,

Fearing to strengthen that impatience

Which seem'd too much enkindled;

and withal

Hoping it was but an effect of humour,

Which sometime hath his hour with every man.

It will not let you eat, nor talk, nor sleep;

And could it work so much upon your shape

As it hath much prevail'd on your condition,

I should not know you, Brutus.

Dear my lord,

Make me acquainted with your cause of grief.

BRUTUS

I am not well in health, and that is all.

PORTIA

Brutus is wise, and, were he not in health,

He would embrace the means to come by it.

BRUTUS

Why, so I do.

Good Portia, go to bed.

PORTIA

Is Brutus sick, and is it physical

To walk unbraced and suck up the humours

Of the dank morning?

I pressed you further, and you scratched your head and stamped your foot impatiently.

I still insisted, and you still gave no answer —

you just waved your hand angrily to tell me to

go.

So I went, afraid of feeding an irritation that

already seemed dangerously lit,

and hoping it was only a passing mood, the kind

every man has sometimes.

But it won't let you eat, or talk, or sleep.

If it had worked on your appearance as much as

it has worked on your temper, I wouldn't

recognize you, Brutus.

My dear lord, tell me what is causing you this pain.

I'm not feeling well. That's all it is.

Brutus is a sensible man, and if he were unwell

he'd be doing something about it.

That's exactly what I'm doing.

Good Portia, go to bed.

Is Brutus ill, and is this his treatment — walking

about with his clothes hanging open, breathing

in the fog of a damp morning?

What, is Brutus sick,
And will he steal out of his wholesome bed
To dare the vile contagion of the night,
And tempt the rheumy and unpurged air
To add unto his sickness?

No, my Brutus;
You have some sick offence within your mind,
Which, by the right and virtue of my place,
I ought to know of:

and, upon my knees,
I charm you, by my once commended beauty,
By all your vows of love, and that great vow
Which did incorporate and make us one,
That you unfold to me, your self, your half,
Why you are heavy, and what men tonight
Have had resort to you;

for here have been
Some six or seven, who did hide their faces
Even from darkness.

BRUTUS

Kneel not, gentle Portia.

PORTIA

I should not need, if you were gentle Brutus.

Within the bond of marriage, tell me, Brutus,
Is it excepted I should know no secrets
That appertain to you?

Am I your self
But, as it were, in sort or limitation,
To keep with you at meals, comfort your bed,
And talk to you sometimes?

Is Brutus ill, and does he sneak out of a healthy
bed to risk the night's foul infection and invite
the raw, unclean air to make his sickness worse?

No, my Brutus. It's a sickness in your mind, and
by the right my position gives me I ought to be
told about it.

So I'm on my knees, and I beg you, by the beauty
you once praised, by all your vows of love, and by
that great vow that joined us into one person:
tell me — your self, your other half — why you
are so weighed down, and which men came here
tonight.

Because six or seven were here, hiding their
faces even from the darkness.

Don't kneel, gentle Portia.

I wouldn't have to, if you were the gentle Brutus
I married.

Tell me, Brutus — was there a clause in our
marriage saying I shouldn't know any secret of
yours?

Am I your other self only up to a point, only in
certain areas: to sit with you at meals, warm
your bed, and talk to you occasionally?

Dwell I but in the

suburbs

Of your good pleasure?

If it be no more,

Portia is Brutus' harlot, not his wife.

BRUTUS

You are my true and honourable wife,

As dear to me as are the ruddy drops

That visit my sad heart.

PORTIA

If this were true, then should I know this secret.

I grant I am a woman; but withal

A woman that Lord Brutus took to wife;

I grant I am a woman; but withal

A woman well reputed, Cato's daughter.

Think you I am no stronger than my sex,

Being so father'd and so husbanded?

Tell me your counsels, I will not disclose 'em.

I have made strong proof of my constancy,

Giving myself a voluntary wound

Here, in the thigh:

can I bear that with patience

And not my husband's secrets?

BRUTUS

O ye gods,

Render me worthy of this noble wife!

Knock.

BRUTUS

Hark, hark, one knocks.

Do I live out on the edge of your affection?

If that's all it is, Portia is Brutus's mistress, not his wife.

You are my true and honourable wife — as

precious to me as the blood that runs into my grieving heart.

If that were true, you'd let me know this secret.

I admit I'm a woman — but a woman that Lord Brutus chose to marry.

I admit I'm a woman — but a woman of good reputation, Cato's daughter.

Do you think I'm no stronger than the rest of my sex, with a father like that and a husband like you?

Tell me your plans; I won't reveal them.

I've given hard proof of how much I can endure:

I deliberately wounded myself here, in the thigh.

If I can bear that without complaining, can't I bear my husband's secrets?

Gods — make me worthy of a wife like this!

Listen — someone's knocking.

Portia, go in awhile;

And by and by thy bosom shall partake

The secrets of my heart.

All my engagements I will construe to thee,

All the charactery of my sad brows.

Leave me with haste.

Exit Portia.

Enter Lucius with Ligarius.

BRUTUS

Lucius, who's that knocks?

LUCIUS

Here is a sick man that would speak with you.

BRUTUS

Caius Ligarius, that Metellus spake of.

Boy, stand aside.

Caius Ligarius, how?

LIGARIUS

Vouchsafe good-morrow from a feeble tongue.

BRUTUS

O, what a time have you chose out, brave Caius,

To wear a kerchief!

Would you were not sick!

LIGARIUS

I am not sick, if Brutus have in hand

Any exploit worthy the name of honour.

BRUTUS

Portia, go inside for a while, and very soon I'll

share the secrets of my heart with you.

I'll explain everything I've committed myself to,

and everything written on this grim face of

mine.

Go now, quickly.

Lucius, who's knocking?

There's a sick man here who wants to speak with you.

Caius Ligarius — the one Metellus mentioned.

Boy, stand aside.

Caius Ligarius, how are you?

Accept a good morning from a weak voice.

Brave Caius, what a moment you've picked to be wearing an invalid's scarf!

I wish you weren't ill.

I'm not ill, if Brutus has anything in hand that deserves to be called honourable.

Such an exploit have I in hand, Ligarius,
Had you a healthful ear to hear of it.

LIGARIUS

By all the gods that Romans bow before,
I here discard my sickness.

Soul of Rome!

Brave son, derived from honourable loins!
Thou, like an exorcist, hast conjur'd up
My mortified spirit.

Now bid me run,

And I will strive with things impossible,
Yea, get the better of them.

What's to do?

BRUTUS

A piece of work that will make sick men whole.

LIGARIUS

But are not some whole that we must make
sick?

BRUTUS

That must we also.

What it is, my Caius,

I shall unfold to thee, as we are going,
To whom it must be done.

LIGARIUS

Set on your foot,
And with a heart new-fir'd I follow you,
To do I know not what;
but it sufficeth
That Brutus leads me on.

Thunder.

I do have exactly such a thing in hand, Ligarius
— if you were well enough to hear about it.

By every god the Romans kneel to, I throw off
my illness right now.

Soul of Rome!

Brave son of an honourable line!
Like a magician, you've called my deadened
spirit back to life.

Now tell me to run, and I'll take on the
impossible — and beat it.

What needs doing?

A job that will make sick men well.

But aren't there some well men we'll have to
make sick?

That too.

I'll explain what it is, my Caius, while we walk to
the man it has to be done to.

Start walking, and with my heart freshly lit I'll
follow you — to do I don't know what.

It's enough for me that Brutus is leading the
way.

BRUTUS

Follow me then.

Follow me, then.

Exeunt.

Act 2, Scene 2

A ROOM IN CAESAR'S PALACE

On the morning of the ides of March, thunder shakes Caesar's house and Calphurnia, who has dreamt three times of his murder, begs him not to leave; the priests find a sacrificed animal with no heart. Caesar agrees to stay home until Decius arrives and reinterprets Calphurnia's dream of his blood-spouting statue as a sign that Rome will be revived by him, adding that the Senate plans to crown him and will mock him if he hides. Caesar changes his mind and leaves for the Capitol with the conspirators, who have come to escort him.

Original

Translation

Thunder and lightning. Enter Caesar, in his nightgown.

CAESAR

Nor heaven nor earth have been at peace
tonight:

Thrice hath Calphurnia in her sleep cried out,
"Help, ho! They murder Caesar!"

Who's within?

Neither heaven nor earth has been quiet
tonight.

Three times in her sleep Calphurnia cried out,
"Help! They're murdering Caesar!"

Is anyone there?

Enter a Servant.

SERVANT

My lord?

My lord?

CAESAR

Go bid the priests do present sacrifice,
And bring me their opinions of success.

Go tell the priests to make a sacrifice at once,
and bring me their reading of how the day will
go.

SERVANT

I will, my lord.

I will, my lord.

Exit.

Enter Calphurnia.

CALPHURNIA

What mean you, Caesar?

Think you to walk
forth?

You shall not stir out of your house today.

CAESAR

Caesar shall forth.

The things that threaten'd me
Ne'er look'd but on my back;
when they shall see
The face of Caesar, they are vanished.

CALPHURNIA

Caesar, I never stood on ceremonies,
Yet now they fright me.

There is one within,
Besides the things that we have heard and seen,
Recounts most horrid sights seen by the watch.
A lioness hath whelped in the streets,
And graves have yawn'd, and yielded up their
dead;
Fierce fiery warriors fight upon the clouds
In ranks and squadrons and right form of war,
Which drizzled blood upon the Capitol;
The noise of battle hurtled in the air,
Horses did neigh, and dying men did groan,
And ghosts did shriek and squeal about the
streets.
O Caesar, these things are beyond all use,
And I do fear them!

What do you think you're doing, Caesar?

You mean to go out?

You are not leaving this house today.

Caesar is going out.

The things that have threatened me have only
ever looked at my back;
once they see Caesar's face, they disappear.

Caesar, I never used to put any weight on
omens, but these frighten me.

Besides everything we've heard and seen
ourselves, there's a man inside describing
horrors the night watch saw.
A lioness gave birth in the open street.
Graves split open and gave up their dead.

Fierce warriors of fire fought in the clouds in
ranks and squadrons, in proper battle order, and
their blood drizzled down on the Capitol.
The din of battle crashed through the air, horses
whinnied, dying men groaned, and ghosts
shrieked and wailed up and down the streets.

Caesar, these things are far outside anything
normal, and they terrify me.

CAESAR

What can be avoided

Whose end is purpos'd by the mighty gods?

Yet Caesar shall go forth;

for these predictions

Are to the world in general as to Caesar.

CALPHURNIA

When beggars die, there are no comets seen;

The heavens themselves blaze forth the death of
princes.

CAESAR

Cowards die many times before their deaths;

The valiant never taste of death but once.

Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,

It seems to me most strange that men should
fear,

Seeing that death, a necessary end,

Will come when it will come.

Enter Servant.

CAESAR

What say the augurers?

SERVANT

They would not have you to stir forth today.

Plucking the entrails of an offering forth,

They could not find a heart within the beast.

CAESAR

The gods do this in shame of cowardice:

Caesar should be a beast without a heart

If he should stay at home today for fear.

How can anyone avoid what the mighty gods
have decided?

Caesar will still go out.

These warnings apply to the world at large as
much as to Caesar.

No comets appear when beggars die.

The heavens themselves blaze to announce the
death of princes.

Cowards die many times over before their actual
death;

a brave man tastes death only once.

Of all the strange things I've heard, the

strangest to me is that men should be afraid of
it, when death is a necessary ending that will
come whenever it comes.

What do the priests say?

They advise you not to go out today.

When they pulled the guts out of the sacrificed
animal, they couldn't find a heart inside it.

The gods are doing that to shame cowardice.

Caesar would be an animal with no heart if he
stayed home today out of fear.

No, Caesar shall not.

Danger knows full well

That Caesar is more dangerous than he.

We are two lions litter'd in one day,

And I the elder and more terrible,

And Caesar shall go forth.

CALPHURNIA

Alas, my lord,

Your wisdom is consum'd in confidence.

Do not go forth today:

call it my fear

That keeps you in the house, and not your own.

We'll send Mark Antony to the Senate-house,

And he shall say you are not well today.

Let me upon my knee prevail in this.

CAESAR

Mark Antony shall say I am not well,

And for thy humour, I will stay at home.

Enter Decius.

CAESAR

Here's Decius Brutus, he shall tell them so.

DECIUS

Caesar, all hail!

Good morrow, worthy Caesar.

I come to fetch you to the Senate-house.

CAESAR

And you are come in very happy time

To bear my greeting to the Senators,

And tell them that I will not come today.

No, Caesar will not.

Danger knows perfectly well that Caesar is the more dangerous of the two of us.

We're a pair of lions born on the same day, and I am the elder and the more terrible — and Caesar will go out.

My lord, your good sense has been swallowed by your confidence.

Don't go out today.

Say it's my fear keeping you at home, not your own.

We'll send Mark Antony to the Senate house to tell them you're unwell today.

Let me win this on my knees.

Mark Antony can say I'm not well,

and to humour you I'll stay at home.

Here's Decius Brutus — he can tell them so.

All hail, Caesar!

Good morning, worthy Caesar.

I've come to escort you to the Senate house.

And you've come at just the right moment to

carry my greetings to the senators and tell them

I won't be coming today.

Cannot, is false; and that I dare not, falser:

I will not come today.

Tell them so, Decius.

CALPHURNIA

Say he is sick.

CAESAR

Shall Caesar send a lie?

Have I in conquest stretch'd mine arm so far,

To be afeard to tell grey-beards the truth?

Decius, go tell them Caesar will not come.

DECIUS

Most mighty Caesar, let me know some cause,

Lest I be laugh'd at when I tell them so.

CAESAR

The cause is in my will;

I will not come.

That is enough to satisfy the Senate.

But for your private satisfaction,

Because I love you, I will let you know:

Calphurnia here, my wife, stays me at home.

She dreamt tonight she saw my statue,

Which like a fountain with an hundred spouts

Did run pure blood; and many lusty Romans

Came smiling, and did bathe their hands in it.

And these does she apply for warnings and
portents

And evils imminent;

and on her knee

Hath begg'd that I will stay at home today.

"Cannot" is untrue, and "dare not" is even less
true.

I will not come today.

Tell them that, Decius.

Say he's ill.

Is Caesar to send a lie?

Have I reached this far in conquest only to be

afraid of telling a few old men the truth?

Decius, go and tell them Caesar will not come.

Most mighty Caesar, give me some reason, or I'll

be laughed at when I tell them.

The reason is that I don't wish to.

I will not come.

That's enough for the Senate.

But for your own private satisfaction, since I'm
fond of you, I'll tell you:

my wife Calphurnia is keeping me at home.

She dreamt last night that she saw my statue

running with pure blood from a hundred spouts

like a fountain, and that plenty of vigorous

Romans came up smiling and washed their

hands in it.

She takes all this for a warning, an omen of
some disaster about to happen,

and she has knelt and begged me to stay home
today.

DECIUS

This dream is all amiss interpreted:

It was a vision fair and fortunate.

Your statue spouting blood in many pipes,
In which so many smiling Romans bath'd,
Signifies that from you great Rome shall suck
Reviving blood, and that great men shall press
For tinctures, stains, relics, and cognizance.

This by Calphurnia's dream is signified.

CAESAR

And this way have you well expounded it.

DECIUS

I have, when you have heard what I can say;
And know it now.

The Senate have concluded
To give this day a crown to mighty Caesar.
If you shall send them word you will not come,
Their minds may change.

Besides, it were a mock
Apt to be render'd, for someone to say,
"Break up the Senate till another time,
When Caesar's wife shall meet with better
dreams."

If Caesar hide himself, shall they not whisper
"Lo, Caesar is afraid"?

Pardon me, Caesar;

for my dear dear love
To your proceeding bids me tell you this,
And reason to my love is liable.

CAESAR

That dream has been completely misread.

It was a good and lucky vision.

Your statue spouting blood from many pipes,
with all those smiling Romans bathing in it,
means that great Rome will draw life-giving
blood from you, and that important men will
crowd in for a token, a stain, a relic, a badge of
you to keep.

That is what Calphurnia's dream means.

That's a very good explanation of it.

It is, once you hear what else I have to say.

So hear it:

the Senate have decided to give mighty Caesar a
crown today.

If you send word that you won't come, they may
change their minds.

Besides, it's the kind of thing that invites a joke
— someone could easily say, "Adjourn the
Senate until Caesar's wife has better dreams."

If Caesar hides himself away, won't they
whisper, "Look, Caesar's frightened"?

Forgive me, Caesar.

It's my deep love for your advancement that
makes me say this, and my love overrules my
discretion.

How foolish do your fears seem now,
Calphurnia!

I am ashamed I did yield to them.
Give me my robe, for I will go.

How silly your fears look now, Calphurnia.

I'm ashamed I gave in to them.
Bring me my robe — I'm going.

Enter Brutus, Ligarius, Metellus, Casca, Trebonius, Cinna and Publius.

CAESAR

And look where Publius is come to fetch me.

And look, here's Publius come to fetch me.

PUBLIUS

Good morrow, Caesar.

Good morning, Caesar.

CAESAR

Welcome, Publius.

Welcome, Publius.

What, Brutus, are you stirr'd so early too?

Brutus — are you up this early too?

Good morrow, Casca.

Good morning, Casca.

Caius Ligarius,

Caius Ligarius, Caesar was never such an enemy

Caesar was ne'er so much your enemy

to you as that fever that has left you so thin.

As that same ague which hath made you lean.

What is't o'clock?

What time is it?

BRUTUS

Caesar, 'tis strucken eight.

Caesar, it has struck eight.

CAESAR

I thank you for your pains and courtesy.

Thank you for the trouble and the courtesy.

Enter Antony.

CAESAR

See! Antony, that revels long a-nights,
Is notwithstanding up.

Look — Antony, who stays up half the night
celebrating, is awake all the same.

Good morrow, Antony.

Good morning, Antony.

ANTONY

So to most noble Caesar.

And to you, most noble Caesar.

CAESAR

Bid them prepare within.

I am to blame to be thus waited for.

Now, Cinna; now, Metellus; what, Trebonius!

I have an hour's talk in store for you:

Remember that you call on me today;

Be near me, that I may remember you.

TREBONIUS

Caesar, I will.

[_Aside._] and so near will I be,

That your best friends shall wish I had been
further.

CAESAR

Good friends, go in, and taste some wine with
me;

And we, like friends, will straightway go
together.

Aside.

BRUTUS

That every like is not the same, O Caesar,
The heart of Brutus yearns to think upon.

Exeunt.

Tell them inside to get ready.

It's my fault you've all been kept waiting.

Now then, Cinna; Metellus; and Trebonius!

I have an hour's conversation saved up for you.

Remember to call on me today,

and stay close to me so I don't forget.

I will, Caesar.

[Aside] And I'll be so close that your best friends
will wish I'd kept my distance.

Good friends, come inside and have some wine
with me,

and then we'll all set off together like the friends
we are.

(Aside) That what looks alike isn't the same
thing at all — Caesar, it aches Brutus's heart to
dwell on it.

Act 2, Scene 3

A STREET NEAR THE CAPITOL

Artemidorus, a teacher who has learned of the plot, stands in a street near the Capitol reading over a warning letter that names every conspirator — Brutus, Cassius, Casca, Cinna, Trebonius, Metellus Cimber, Decius Brutus and Caius Ligarius. He plans to press it on Caesar as he passes, like an ordinary petitioner. The short scene sharpens the suspense: Caesar's life now depends on whether he bothers to read one piece of paper.

Original

Translation

Enter Artemidorus, reading a paper.

ARTEMIDORUS

“Caesar, beware of Brutus;

"Caesar, watch out for Brutus.

take heed of

Be careful of Cassius.

Cassius;

Don't go near Casca.

come not near Casca;

have an eye to Cinna;

Keep an eye on Cinna.

trust not Trebonius;

Don't trust Trebonius.

mark

Study Metellus Cimber closely.

well Metellus Cimber;

Decius Brutus loves thee not; thou hast wrong'd

Caius Ligarius.

Decius Brutus is no friend of yours, and you
have wronged Caius Ligarius.

These men are all of one mind, and that mind is
set against you.

There

is but one mind in all these men, and it is bent
against Caesar.

If

thou be'st not immortal, look about you:

Unless you're immortal, look around you:

security gives way to

conspiracy.

feeling safe is what opens the door to
conspiracy.

The mighty gods defend thee!

Thy lover, Artemidorus.” _

May the great gods protect you.

Your friend, Artemidorus."

Here will I stand till
Caesar pass along, And
as a suitor will I give him this.

I'll wait here until Caesar comes by, and hand
him this as though I were a petitioner.

My heart laments
that virtue cannot
live Out of the teeth of emulation.

It breaks my heart that a good man can't live
free of envy's bite.

If thou read
this, O Caesar, thou
mayest live;

Caesar, if you read this, you may live.

If not, the Fates with traitors do
contrive.

If not, fate is working with the traitors.

Exit.

Act 2, Scene 4

ANOTHER PART OF THE SAME STREET, BEFORE THE HOUSE OF BRUTUS

Outside Brutus's house on the morning of the assassination, Portia is frantic with the secret her husband has told her. She sends the servant Lucius to the Capitol without being able to say what for, imagines she hears an uproar from that direction, and questions the Soothsayer, who is on his way to warn Caesar about a danger he can only guess at. The scene stretches the suspense in the minutes before the murder and shows the cost of the conspiracy on the people around it.

Original

Translation

Enter Portia and Lucius.

PORTIA

I pr'ythee, boy, run to the Senate-house;
Stay not to answer me, but get thee gone.
Why dost thou stay?

Please, boy, run to the Senate house.

Don't stand there answering me — just go.
Why are you still here?

LUCIUS

To know my errand, madam.

To find out what my errand is, madam.

PORTIA

I would have had thee there and here again,
Ere I can tell thee what thou shouldst do there.

Aside.

PORTIA

O constancy, be strong upon my side,
Set a huge mountain 'tween my heart and
tongue!

I have a man's mind, but a woman's might.

How hard it is for women to keep counsel!
Art thou here yet?

LUCIUS

Madam, what should I do?
Run to the Capitol, and nothing else?
And so return to you, and nothing else?

PORTIA

Yes, bring me word, boy, if thy lord look well,
For he went sickly forth:

and take good note

What Caesar doth, what suitors press to him.
Hark, boy, what noise is that?

LUCIUS

I hear none, madam.

PORTIA

Pr'ythee, listen well.
I heard a bustling rumour, like a fray,
And the wind brings it from the Capitol.

LUCIUS

I wish you could be there and back before I
could even tell you what to do there.

Steadiness, hold firm for me — put a mountain
between my heart and my tongue!

I have a man's mind but only a woman's
strength.

How hard it is for women to keep a secret!
Are you still here?

Madam, what am I supposed to do?
Just run to the Capitol and nothing more?
And then come back to you and nothing more?

Yes — and bring me word, boy, whether your
master looks well, because he went out looking
ill.

And pay close attention to what Caesar does and
which petitioners crowd around him.
Listen, boy — what's that noise?

I don't hear anything, madam.

Please, listen harder.

I heard a confused din, like a fight, and the wind
is carrying it from the direction of the Capitol.

Sooth, madam, I hear nothing.

Truly, madam, I hear nothing.

Enter the Soothsayer.

PORTIA

Come hither, fellow:

Which way hast thou been?

Come here, fellow.

Which way have you come from?

SOOTHSAYER

At mine own house, good lady.

From my own house, good lady.

PORTIA

What is't o'clock?

What time is it?

SOOTHSAYER

About the ninth hour, lady.

About nine o'clock, madam.

PORTIA

Is Caesar yet gone to the Capitol?

Has Caesar gone to the Capitol yet?

SOOTHSAYER

Madam, not yet.

Not yet, madam.

I go to take my stand,
To see him pass on to the Capitol.

I'm going now to take up a position where I can
watch him pass on his way there.

PORTIA

Thou hast some suit to Caesar, hast thou not?

You have some petition for Caesar, don't you?

SOOTHSAYER

That I have, lady, if it will please Caesar
To be so good to Caesar as to hear me,
I shall beseech him to befriend himself.

I do, lady — if Caesar will be kind enough to
himself to listen to me.

I mean to beg him to look after his own safety.

PORTIA

Why, know'st thou any harm's intended towards
him?

Why, do you know of some harm meant against
him?

SOOTHSAYER

None that I know will be, much that I fear may chance.

Good morrow to you.

Here the street is narrow.

The throng that follows Caesar at the heels,
Of Senators, of Praetors, common suitors,
Will crowd a feeble man almost to death:
I'll get me to a place more void, and there
Speak to great Caesar as he comes along.

Exit.

PORTIA

I must go in.

Aside.

PORTIA

Ay me, how weak a thing
The heart of woman is!

O Brutus,

The heavens speed thee in thine enterprise!
Sure, the boy heard me.

Brutus hath a suit

That Caesar will not grant.

O, I grow faint.

Run, Lucius, and commend me to my lord;
Say I am merry;

come to me again,

And bring me word what he doth say to thee.

Exeunt.

Nothing I know for certain, but a great deal I'm afraid of.

Good morning to you.

The street is narrow here.

The crowd that trails after Caesar — senators,
praetors, ordinary petitioners — would nearly
crush a frail man to death.

I'll find somewhere more open, and speak to
great Caesar from there as he comes past.

I must go inside.

Oh, what a frail thing a woman's heart is!

Brutus, may heaven speed what you're setting
out to do.

— Surely the boy heard me.

Brutus has a request Caesar won't grant.

Oh, I feel faint.

Run, Lucius, give my lord my love; tell him I'm in
good spirits.

Then come straight back and tell me what he
says to you.

Act 3, Scene 1

ROME. BEFORE THE CAPITOL; THE SENATE SITTING

On the steps of the Capitol Caesar brushes off the Soothsayer, refuses Artemidorus's warning letter, and rejects Metellus Cimber's plea to recall his banished brother, comparing his own resolve to the fixed northern star. At that signal the conspirators strike: Casca stabs first, and Caesar dies with "Et tu, Brute?" when he sees Brutus among them. Brutus spares Antony and, over Cassius's objection, lets him speak at the funeral — a decision Antony immediately repays, alone with the body, by vowing a civil war that will "cry havoc, and let slip the dogs of war."

Original

Translation

A crowd of people in the street leading to the Capitol. Flourish. Enter Caesar, Brutus, Cassius, Casca, Decius, Metellus, Trebonius, Cinna, Antony, Lepidus, Artemidorus, Publius, Popilius and the Soothsayer.

CAESAR

The Ides of March are come.

The Ides of March have arrived.

SOOTHSAYER

Ay, Caesar; but not gone.

Yes, Caesar, but they aren't over yet.

ARTEMIDORUS

Hail, Caesar!

Caesar!

Read this schedule.

Read this document.

DECIUS

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

Trebonius asks that you look over his petition
when you have a free moment.

ARTEMIDORUS

O Caesar, read mine first;
for mine's a suit
That touches Caesar nearer.

Caesar, read mine first.
Mine concerns you personally.

Read it, great

Read it, great Caesar.

Caesar.

CAESAR

What touches us ourself shall be last serv'd.

Anything that concerns me personally comes
last.

ARTEMIDORUS

Delay not, Caesar.

Read it instantly.

CAESAR

What, is the fellow mad?

PUBLIUS

Sirrah, give place.

CASSIUS

What, urge you your petitions in the street?

Come to the Capitol.

Caesar enters the Capitol, the rest following. All
the Senators rise.

POPILIUS

I wish your enterprise today may thrive.

CASSIUS

What enterprise, Popilius?

POPILIUS

Fare you well.

Advances to Caesar.

BRUTUS

What said Popilius Lena?

CASSIUS

He wish'd today our enterprise might thrive.

I fear our purpose is discovered.

BRUTUS

Look how he makes to Caesar:

mark him.

CASSIUS

Casca, be sudden, for we fear prevention.

Don't put it off, Caesar.

Read it now.

What is it, is the man out of his mind?

You there, step aside.

Are you really pressing petitions in the street?

Take it to the Capitol.

I hope your undertaking succeeds today.

What undertaking, Popilius?

Goodbye.

What did Popilius Lena say to you?

He hoped our undertaking would succeed today.

I think our plan has been found out.

Look, he's heading straight for Caesar.

Watch him.

Casca, move fast — we may be stopped.

Brutus, what shall be done?

If this be known,

Cassius or Caesar never shall turn back,

For I will slay myself.

BRUTUS

Cassius, be constant:

Popilius Lena speaks not of our purposes;

For look, he smiles, and Caesar doth not change.

CASSIUS

Trebonius knows his time,

for look you, Brutus,

He draws Mark Antony out of the way.

Exeunt Antony and Trebonius. Caesar and the Senators take their seats.

DECIUS

Where is Metellus Cimber?

Let him go,

And presently prefer his suit to Caesar.

BRUTUS

He is address'd;

press near and second him.

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

Brutus, what do we do?

If this is known, either Cassius or Caesar isn't

leaving here alive, because I'll kill myself.

Steady, Cassius.

Popilius Lena isn't talking about our plan.

Look — he's smiling, and Caesar's expression
hasn't changed.

Trebonius knows when to act.

Look, Brutus, he's drawing Mark Antony away.

Where's Metellus Cimber?

Send him in to present his petition to Caesar
right now.

He's ready.

Get close and back him up.

Casca, you're the one who strikes first.

Is everyone here?

What problem needs Caesar and his Senate to
put it right?

Most high, most mighty, and most puissant
Caesar,
Metellus Cimber throws before thy seat
An humble heart.

Kneeling.

CAESAR

I must prevent thee, Cimber.
These couchings and these lowly courtesies
Might fire the blood of ordinary men,
And turn pre-ordnance and first decree
Into the law of children.

Be not fond,
To think that Caesar bears such rebel blood
That will be thaw'd from the true quality
With that which melteth fools; I mean sweet
words,
Low-crooked curtsies, and base spaniel
fawning.
Thy brother by decree is banished:
If thou dost bend, and pray, and fawn for him,
I spurn thee like a cur out of my way.
Know, Caesar dost not wrong, nor without
cause
Will he be satisfied.

METELLUS

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

BRUTUS

Most high, most mighty, most powerful Caesar,
Metellus Cimber lays a humble heart before your
seat.

Stop right there, Cimber.

This bowing and scraping might stir up an
ordinary man and turn settled law into a game
children can change at will.

Don't be foolish enough to think Caesar's blood
runs so loose that it can be thawed out of its
true nature by the things that melt fools —
sweet words, low bows, and cringing like a dog.

Your brother was banished by decree.

If you bend and beg and fawn for him, I'll kick
you out of my way like a stray.

Understand: Caesar does no wrong, and he
doesn't act without reason.

Is there no better voice than mine to sound
more pleasantly in great Caesar's ear and win my
banished brother's recall?

I kiss thy hand, but not in flattery, Caesar;
Desiring thee that Publius Cimber may
Have an immediate freedom of repeal.

CAESAR

What, Brutus?

CASSIUS

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

CAESAR

I could be well mov'd, 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-fix'd and resting quality
There is no fellow in the firmament.
The skies are painted with unnumber'd 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 furnish'd well with men,
And men are flesh and blood, and apprehensive;
Yet in the number I do know but one
That unassailable holds on his rank,
Unshak'd of motion:

and that I am he,

Let me a little show it, even in this,
That I was constant Cimber should be banish'd,
And constant do remain to keep him so.

CINNA

O Caesar,—

I kiss your hand, Caesar, but not to flatter you —
I'm asking you to grant Publius Cimber an
immediate pardon.

What? You too, Brutus?

Forgive me, Caesar, forgive me.
Cassius falls as low as your foot to beg
citizenship back for Publius Cimber.

I might be swayed if I were like you;
if I could be moved by begging, then begging
would move me.

But I am as fixed as the North Star, which has
no equal in the sky for staying still and holding
its place.

The heavens are dotted with countless points of
light, all of them fire, all of them shining, but
only one stays put.

It's the same in this world: it's full of men, all of
them flesh and blood, all of them capable of
reason, and out of all of them I know only one
who holds his position where nothing can shake
him.

I am that man, and let me prove it in a small way
here: I was firm that Cimber be banished, and I
remain firm that he stay banished.

Caesar, please —

CAESAR

Hence!

wilt thou lift up Olympus?

Away with you!

Are you trying to lift Mount Olympus?

DECIUS

Great Caesar,—

Great Caesar —

CAESAR

Doth not Brutus bootless kneel?

Brutus knelt and got nowhere, didn't he?

CASCA

Speak, hands, for me!

Let my hands speak for me!

Casca stabs Caesar in the neck. Caesar catches hold of his arm. He is then stabbed by several other Conspirators, and at last by Marcus Brutus.

CAESAR

Et tu, Brute?

—Then fall, Caesar!

You too, Brutus?

Then die, Caesar.

Dies. The Senators and People retire in confusion.

CINNA

Liberty! Freedom! Tyranny is dead!

Run hence, proclaim, cry it about the streets.

Liberty! Freedom! The tyrant is dead!

Run out, announce it, shout it through the streets.

CASSIUS

Some to the common pulpits and cry out,

"Liberty, freedom, and enfranchisement!"

Some of you get to the public platforms and

shout, "Liberty, freedom, and full rights for all!"

BRUTUS

People and Senators, be not affrighted.

Fly not; stand still;

ambition's debt is paid.

Citizens and senators, don't be frightened.

Don't run — stand still.

Ambition has paid what it owed.

CASCA

Go to the pulpit, Brutus.

Go to the platform, Brutus.

DECIUS

And Cassius too.

BRUTUS

Where's Publius?

CINNA

Here, quite confounded with this mutiny.

METELLUS

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

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.

Enter Trebonius.

CASSIUS

Where's Antony?

TREBONIUS

Fled to his house amaz'd.

And Cassius too.

Where's Publius?

Here, completely stunned by this uprising.

Stay close together, in case some friend of

Caesar's happens to —

No talk of holding ranks.

Publius, take heart.

No one means you any harm, or any other

Roman.

Tell them that, Publius.

And then leave us, Publius, in case the crowd

rushes at us and hurts an old man.

Do that.

And let no one take the blame for this act but us

who did it.

Where's Antony?

He fled home in shock.

Men, wives, and children stare, cry out, and run,
As it were doomsday.

BRUTUS

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

CASCA

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 abridg'd
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 market-place,
And waving our red weapons o'er our heads,
Let's all cry, "Peace, freedom, and liberty!"

CASSIUS

Stoop then, and wash.

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

BRUTUS

Men, women, and children are staring,
screaming, and running as if the world were
ending.

Fate, we'll learn your plans soon enough.
We know we'll die; it's only the timing, the
stretching out of the days, that men care about.

Look at it this way: cut twenty years off a man's
life and you cut twenty years of fearing death.

Agreed — and if that's true, then death is a
favour, and we're Caesar's friends for
shortening his fear of it.

Bend down, Romans, and let's wash our hands
in Caesar's blood up to the elbows, and smear
our swords with it.

Then we'll walk out to the marketplace, wave
our red weapons over our heads, and all shout,
"Peace, freedom, and liberty!"

Bend down, then, and wash.

Think how many centuries from now this great
scene of ours will be performed again, in
countries not yet founded and languages
nobody has heard yet.

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 call'd
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 a Servant.

BRUTUS

Soft, who comes here?
A friend of Antony's.

SERVANT

Thus, Brutus, did my master bid me kneel;
Thus did Mark Antony bid me fall down;
And, being prostrate, thus he bade me say:
Brutus is noble, wise, valiant, and honest;
Caesar was mighty, bold, royal, and loving;
Say I love Brutus and I honour him;
Say I fear'd Caesar, honour'd him, and lov'd him.

And how many times Caesar will be killed again
as entertainment — Caesar, who lies stretched
out here at the base of Pompey's statue, worth
no more now than dirt.

And every time it's performed, our group will be
called the men who gave their country its
freedom.

Well, shall we go?

Yes, everyone move out.

Brutus leads, and we'll follow close behind him
with the boldest and finest men in Rome.

Wait — who's this coming?
One of Antony's men.

Brutus, my master told me to kneel like this.
Mark Antony told me to lie flat like this.
And face down, he told me to say this: Brutus is
noble, wise, brave, and honest; Caesar was
powerful, bold, kingly, and loving.
Tell Brutus I love him and respect him;
tell him I feared Caesar, respected him, and
loved him.

If Brutus will vouchsafe that Antony
May safely come to him, and be resolv'd
How Caesar hath deserv'd to lie in death,
Mark Antony shall not love Caesar dead
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

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 honour,
Depart untouch'd.

SERVANT

I'll fetch him presently.

Exit.

BRUTUS

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.

If Brutus will guarantee that Antony can come
to him safely and be told how Caesar deserved to
die, then Mark Antony will not value the dead
Caesar as highly as the living Brutus

— he will follow noble Brutus loyally through
every danger of this new and untested situation.

That's what my master Antony says.

Your master is a wise and brave Roman.

I never thought otherwise.

Tell him that if he'll come here, he'll get his
explanation, and on my word of honour he'll
leave unharmed.

I'll bring him right away.

I'm sure we'll have him firmly on our side.

I hope so.

But something in me is deeply afraid of him,

and my bad feelings usually turn out to be right.

Here comes Antony now.

Welcome, Mark Antony.

ANTONY

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:

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,
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 means of death,
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
And this the bleeding business they have done.
Our hearts you see not; they are pitiful;

Welcome, Mark Antony.

Mighty Caesar — are you brought this low?
Have all your conquests, glories, triumphs, and
plunder shrunk down to this small space?
Goodbye, then.

Gentlemen, I don't know what you intend, or
who else has to bleed, who else you think is
diseased.

If it's me, there's no better time than the hour of
Caesar's death, and no better weapon than your
swords, made precious by the noblest blood in
the world.

I beg you, if you hold anything against me, do it
now, while your hands are still red and
steaming.

If I lived a thousand years I would never be so
ready to die.

No place and no death would suit me better
than here, beside Caesar, killed by you, the
finest and greatest men of our time.

Antony, don't beg us to kill you.

We must look bloody and cruel to you now —
our hands and this act make us look that way.

But you only see our hands and the bloody work
they've done;
you don't see our hearts, and they're full of pity.

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,
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

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

BRUTUS

Only be patient till we have appeas'd
The multitude, beside themselves with fear,
And then we will deliver you the cause
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.
First, Marcus Brutus, will I shake with you;
Next, Caius Cassius, do I take your hand.
Now, Decius Brutus, yours; now yours,
Metellus;
Yours, Cinna; and, my valiant Casca, yours;
Though last, not least in love, yours, good
Trebonius.

Pity for the wrong being done to Rome as a
whole drove out our pity for Caesar, the way one
fire puts out another, and that is what killed
him.

As for you, our swords have no edge, Mark
Antony.

Our arms, however violent they were, and our
hearts, which feel like brothers to you, welcome
you in with real affection, goodwill, and respect.

You'll have as much say as anyone in handing
out the new offices.

Just be patient until we've calmed the crowd,
who are out of their minds with fear.
Then we'll explain to you why I struck Caesar
down even though I loved him.

I don't doubt your judgement.
Let each of you give me his bloody hand.
Marcus Brutus, I'll shake yours first;
next, Caius Cassius, I take your hand;
now yours, Decius Brutus; now yours, Metellus;
yours, Cinna; and yours, brave Casca; and last
but not least in my affection, yours, good
Trebonius.

Gentlemen all—alas, what shall I say?

My credit now stands on such slippery ground,
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,
To see thy Antony making his peace,
Shaking the bloody fingers of thy foes,
Most noble, in the presence of thy corse?

Had I as many eyes as thou hast wounds,
Weeping as fast as they stream forth thy blood,
It would become me better than to close
In terms of friendship with thine enemies.
Pardon me, Julius!

Here wast thou bay'd, brave
hart;
Here didst thou fall; and here thy hunters stand,
Sign'd in thy spoil, and crimson'd in thy lethe.
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

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

Gentlemen, all of you — what am I supposed to say?

My standing is on such slippery ground now
that you must think me one of two bad things: a
coward or a flatterer.

That I loved you, Caesar, is simply true.

If your spirit is watching us now, wouldn't it
hurt you worse than dying to see your Antony
making peace and shaking your killers' bloody
fingers, right beside your body?

If I had as many eyes as you have wounds,
weeping as fast as your wounds bleed, it would
suit me better than making friendly terms with
your enemies.

Forgive me, Julius.

Here you were cornered, brave stag; here you
fell, and here your hunters stand, marked with
your blood, stained red in the stream of your
death.

World, you were the forest this stag ran in —
and he, world, was your very heart.
How like a deer brought down by a pack of
princes you lie here.

Mark Antony —

Forgive me, Caius Cassius.

Even Caesar's enemies would say this much;
coming from a friend, it's restraint.

CASSIUS

I blame you not for praising Caesar so;
But what compact mean you to have with us?

Will you be prick'd in number of our friends,
Or shall we on, and not depend on you?

ANTONY

Therefore I took your hands; but was indeed
Sway'd 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

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 market-place;
And in the pulpit, as becomes a friend,
Speak in the order of his funeral.

BRUTUS

You shall, Mark Antony.

CASSIUS

Brutus, a word with you.

Aside to Brutus.

CASSIUS

I don't blame you for praising Caesar.

But what arrangement do you intend to make
with us?

Are we to count you among our friends, or
should we go ahead without relying on you?

That's why I took your hands — I only got off the
point because I looked down at Caesar.

I'm a friend to all of you and I care about all of
you, in the hope that you'll give me reasons
why Caesar was dangerous.

Otherwise this would be nothing but butchery.
Our reasons are so sound that even if you were
Caesar's own son, Antony, you'd be satisfied by
them.

That's all I'm asking.

And one thing more: let me carry his body out to
the marketplace and speak from the platform at
his funeral, as a friend should.

You may, Mark Antony.

Brutus, a word with you.

You know not what you do.

Do not consent

That Antony speak in his funeral.

Know you how much the people may be mov'd

By that which he will utter?

Aside to Cassius.

BRUTUS

By your pardon:

I will myself into the pulpit first,

And show the reason of our Caesar's death.

What Antony shall speak, I will protest

He speaks by leave and by permission;

And that we are contented Caesar shall

Have all true rights and lawful ceremonies.

It shall advantage more than do us wrong.

Aside to Brutus.

CASSIUS

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;

Else shall you not have any hand at all

About his funeral.

(Aside to Brutus) You don't know what you're doing.

Don't agree to let Antony speak at the funeral.

Do you have any idea how much the people could be stirred up by what he says?

(Aside to Cassius) Excuse me —

I'll go up to the platform first myself and explain the reason for Caesar's death.

I'll state publicly that whatever Antony says, he says by our leave and permission, and that we're happy for Caesar to have every proper funeral rite.

It will do us more good than harm.

(Aside to Brutus) I don't know what may come of this.

I don't like it.

Mark Antony, take Caesar's body.

In your funeral speech you're not to blame us; say whatever good you can think of about Caesar, and say you're doing it with our permission.

Otherwise you get no part in the funeral at all.

And you shall speak
In the same pulpit whereto I am going,
After my speech is ended.

ANTONY

Be it so;
I do desire no more.

BRUTUS

Prepare the body, then, and follow us.

Exeunt all but 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
That ever lived 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,
A curse shall light upon the limbs of men;
Domestic fury and fierce civil strife
Shall cumber all the parts of Italy;
Blood and destruction shall be so in use,
And dreadful objects so familiar,
That mothers shall but smile when they behold
Their infants quartered with the hands of war;
All pity chok'd with custom of fell deeds:

And you'll speak from the same platform I'm
going to, after I've finished.

Agreed.

I ask for nothing more.

Prepare the body, then, and follow us.

Forgive me, you bleeding piece of the earth, for
being mild and polite with these butchers.
You are the wreckage of the noblest man who
ever lived in all of history.

Cursed be the hand that spilled this precious
blood.

Standing over your wounds — which open like
silent mouths with red lips, begging my tongue
to speak for them — I make this prophecy: a
curse will fall on the bodies of men.

Savage feuding and vicious civil war will grip
every part of Italy.

Blood and destruction will become so ordinary,
horror so familiar, that mothers will only smile
to see their babies cut apart by soldiers, all pity
strangled by how routine the cruelty has
become.

And Caesar's spirit, ranging for revenge,
With Ate by his side come hot from Hell,
Shall in these confines with a monarch's voice
Cry havoc and let slip the dogs of war,
That this foul deed shall smell above the earth
With carrion men, groaning for burial.

Enter a Servant.

ANTONY

You serve Octavius Caesar, do you not?

SERVANT

I do, Mark Antony.

ANTONY

Caesar did write for him to come to Rome.

SERVANT

He did receive his letters, and is coming,
And bid me say to you by word of mouth,—

Seeing the body.

SERVANT

O Caesar!

ANTONY

Thy heart is big,
get thee apart and weep.
Passion, I see, is catching; for mine eyes,
Seeing those beads of sorrow stand in thine,
Began to water.
Is thy master coming?

SERVANT

And Caesar's ghost, hunting for revenge, with the goddess of ruin at his side straight out of hell, will use a ruler's voice in this country to give the order for slaughter and let the dogs of war off the leash, until this filthy deed stinks across the earth with rotting corpses begging to be buried.

You serve Octavius Caesar, don't you?

I do, Mark Antony.

Caesar wrote asking him to come to Rome.

He got the letters and is on his way.
He told me to tell you in person —

Caesar!

Your heart is full.

Go off by yourself and cry.

Grief is contagious, I see: watching those tears
in your eyes has started mine watering.

Is your master on his way?

He lies tonight within seven leagues of Rome.

He's staying tonight about twenty miles from Rome.

ANTONY

Post back with speed, and tell him what hath chanc'd.

Ride back fast and tell him what's happened.

Here is a mourning Rome, a dangerous Rome,
No Rome of safety for Octavius yet.
Hie hence, and tell him so.

Rome is in mourning and Rome is dangerous —
it isn't safe for Octavius yet.
Hurry and tell him so.

Yet stay awhile;
Thou shalt not back till I have borne this corse
Into the market-place:

No, wait a moment. Don't go back until I've
carried this body to the marketplace.

there shall I try,
In my oration, how the people take
The cruel issue of these bloody men;
According to the which thou shalt discourse
To young Octavius of the state of things.
Lend me your hand.

There I'll test, in my speech, how the people take
the cruel thing these men have done, and you
can report to young Octavius accordingly on
how matters stand.

Give me a hand here.

Exeunt with Caesar's body.

Act 3, Scene 2

THE SAME. THE FORUM

In the Forum, Brutus explains the assassination to the crowd in cool, balanced prose — he loved Caesar, but loved Rome more — and wins them over completely. Then Antony, allowed to speak only by Brutus's permission and forbidden to blame the conspirators, repeats that Brutus is "an honourable man" until the phrase turns to acid, displays Caesar's stabbed cloak and body, and reads a will leaving money and gardens to every citizen. The mob riots, Brutus and Cassius flee Rome, and Octavius arrives.

Original

Translation

Enter Brutus and goes into the pulpit, and Cassius, with a throng of Citizens.

CITIZENS

We will be satisfied;

We want an explanation.

let us be satisfied.

Let us have an explanation.

BRUTUS

Then follow me, and give me audience, friends.

Cassius, go you into the other street

And part the numbers.

Those that will hear me speak, let 'em stay here;

Those that will follow Cassius, go with him;

And public reasons shall be rendered

Of Caesar's death.

Then come with me and listen, friends.

Cassius, take the other street and split the crowd.

Anyone who wants to hear me, stay here;

anyone who'd rather hear Cassius, go with him.

The reasons for Caesar's death will be explained in public.

FIRST CITIZEN

I will hear Brutus speak.

I'll hear Brutus speak.

SECOND CITIZEN

I will hear Cassius; and compare their reasons,

When severally we hear them rendered.

I'll hear Cassius, and then we can compare their arguments after hearing each of them separately.

Exit Cassius, with some of the Citizens. Brutus goes into the rostrum.

THIRD CITIZEN

The noble Brutus is ascended:

silence!

Noble Brutus has taken the platform.

Quiet!

BRUTUS

Be patient till the last.

Romans, countrymen, and lovers, hear me for my cause; and be silent, that you may hear.

Wait until I've finished.

Romans, countrymen, friends — hear me out, and keep quiet so you can hear.

Believe me for mine honour, and have respect to mine honour, that you may believe.

Trust me because of my reputation, and respect my reputation so that you can trust me.

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.

Judge me with your intelligence, and stay sharp
so you can judge better.

If there is anyone in this crowd who was a close
friend of Caesar's, I tell him that Brutus loved
Caesar just as much as he did.

And if that friend asks why Brutus rose against
Caesar, here is my answer:

not because I loved Caesar less, but because I
loved Rome more.

Would you rather have Caesar alive and all die
slaves, than have Caesar dead and all live free?

Because Caesar loved me, I weep for him;
because he was successful, I am glad for him;
because he was brave, I respect him — but
because he was ambitious, I killed him.

There

is tears, for his love; joy for his fortune; honour
for his valour; 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.

Tears for his love, gladness for his success,
respect for his courage, and death for his
ambition.

Is anyone here so low that he'd want to be a
slave?

If so, speak up — I've wronged him.

Is anyone here so uncivilized that he doesn't
want to be a Roman?

If so, speak up — I've wronged him.

Is anyone here so worthless that he doesn't love
his country?

If so, speak up — I've wronged him.

I'll wait for an answer.

No one, Brutus, no one.

Then I've wronged no one.

I have done no more
to Caesar than you shall
do to Brutus.

The question of his death is
enroll'd in the Capitol, his
glory not extenuated, wherein he was worthy;
nor his offences enforc'd,
for which he suffered death.

Enter Antony and others, with Caesar's body.

BRUTUS

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

I've done nothing to Caesar that you won't be
free to do to Brutus.

The full account of his death is filed in the
Capitol, with his achievements undiminished
where he deserved credit, and his crimes not
exaggerated, for which he was put to death.

Here comes his body, with Mark Antony in
mourning.

Antony had no part in the killing, but he'll get
the benefit of it — a place in the republic.

So will every one of you.

I'll leave you with this: I killed the man I loved
best for the good of Rome, and I'm keeping the
same dagger for myself, for whenever my
country needs my death.

Long live Brutus!

Live, live!

Bring him with triumph home unto his house.

Carry him home in triumph.

SECOND CITIZEN

Give him a statue with his ancestors.

Put up a statue of him beside his ancestors.

THIRD CITIZEN

Let him be Caesar.

Make him Caesar.

FOURTH CITIZEN

Caesar's better parts

Shall be crown'd in Brutus.

Everything that was best in Caesar should be

crowned in Brutus.

FIRST CITIZEN

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

We'll take him home with cheering and noise.

BRUTUS

My countrymen,—

My countrymen —

SECOND CITIZEN

Peace! Silence!

Brutus speaks.

Quiet! Silence!

Brutus is speaking.

FIRST CITIZEN

Peace, ho!

Quiet there!

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 allow'd to make.

I do entreat you, not a man depart,

Save I alone, till Antony have spoke.

Good countrymen, let me go home by myself,

and for my sake stay here with Antony.

Show respect to Caesar's body, and listen

respectfully to Antony's speech about Caesar's

achievements — which he has our permission to
make.

I'm asking you: nobody leave except me, until

Antony has spoken.

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,—

Wait!

Let's hear Mark Antony.

Let him go up on the public platform.

We'll listen to him.

Go up, noble Antony.

For Brutus's sake, I'm grateful to you.

What was that about Brutus?

He says he's grateful to us all, on Brutus's account.

He'd better not say anything against Brutus here.

This Caesar was a tyrant.

No question about it.

We're lucky Rome is rid of him.

Quiet!

Let's hear what Antony has to say.

You good citizens of Rome —

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 honourable man,

So are they all, all honourable 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 honourable 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 honourable man.

You all did see that on the Lupercal

I thrice presented him a kingly crown,

Which he did thrice refuse.

Quiet there!

Let's hear him.

Friends, Romans, countrymen, give me your attention.

I've come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.

The harm men do outlasts them; the good is usually buried with their bones.

Let that be true of Caesar too.

The noble Brutus has told you Caesar was ambitious.

If that's so, it was a serious fault, and Caesar has paid for it seriously.

Here, with the permission of Brutus and the rest — for Brutus is an honourable man, and so are they all, all honourable men — I've come to speak at Caesar's funeral.

He was my friend, loyal and fair to me.

But Brutus says he was ambitious, and Brutus is an honourable man.

Caesar brought home crowds of prisoners to Rome, and their ransom money filled the public treasury.

Did that look like ambition?

When the poor cried out, Caesar wept with them.

Ambition ought to be harder than that.

But Brutus says he was ambitious, and Brutus is an honourable man.

You all saw that at the feast of Lupercal I offered him a king's crown three times, and three times he turned it down.

Was this ambition?

Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;
And sure he is an honourable 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

Was that ambition?

Yet Brutus says he was ambitious, and certainly
Brutus is an honourable man.

I'm not saying this to contradict Brutus.
I'm here to tell you what I know for a fact.
All of you loved Caesar once, and you had good
reason to.

What reason stops you grieving for him now?

Good judgement has run off to the animals, and
men have lost the power to think.

Forgive me — my heart is in that coffin with
Caesar, and I have to stop until it comes back to
me.

There's a lot of sense in what he's saying.

If you think it through properly, Caesar was
badly wronged.

Was he, gentlemen?
I'm afraid we'll get someone worse in his place.

Did you catch that?

He wouldn't take the crown.
So he can't have been ambitious.

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

If that turns out to be true, some people are going to pay dearly for it.

SECOND CITIZEN

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

Poor man, his eyes are burning red from crying.

THIRD CITIZEN

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

There's no finer man in Rome than Antony.

FOURTH CITIZEN

Now mark him;
he begins again to speak.

Watch now,
he's starting again.

ANTONY

But yesterday the word of Caesar might
Have stood against the world;
now lies he there,

Only yesterday Caesar's word could have held
out against the whole world.

And none so poor to do him reverence.

Now he lies there, and nobody is low enough to
show him respect.

O masters!

Citizens,

If I were dispos'd to stir
Your hearts and minds to mutiny and rage,
I should do Brutus wrong and Cassius wrong,
Who, you all know, are honourable men.
I will not do them wrong;

if I wanted to stir your hearts and minds into
rebellion and fury, I would be doing an injustice
to Brutus and to Cassius, who, as you all know,
are honourable men.

I rather choose
To wrong the dead, to wrong myself and you,
Than I will wrong such honourable men.
But here's a parchment with the seal of Caesar,
I found it in his closet;

I won't do them an injustice.

I would sooner wrong the dead man, and wrong
myself, and wrong you, than wrong such
honourable men.

But here is a document with Caesar's seal on it.

I found it in his private room —

'tis his will:

it's 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

If the common people could just hear what's in
it — which, forgive me, I don't intend to read
out — they would go and kiss the dead Caesar's
wounds, and dip their handkerchiefs in his
sacred blood, and beg for one of his hairs as a
keepsake, and mention it on their own
deathbeds, leaving it to their children as a
treasured inheritance.

We want to hear the will.

Read it, Mark Antony.

The will, the will!

We want to hear Caesar's will.

Be patient, good friends.

I mustn't read it.

It wouldn't be right for you to know how much
Caesar loved you.

You aren't wood, you aren't stone — you're men,

and being men, hearing Caesar's will would set
you on fire and drive you out of your minds.

It's better you don't know you're his heirs.

If you knew, imagine what would come of it.

Read the will!

We want to hear it, Antony.

You're going to read us the will, Caesar's will!

Will you be patient?

Will you stay awhile?

I have o'ershot myself to tell you of it.

I fear I wrong the honourable men

Whose daggers have stabb'd Caesar;

I do fear it.

FOURTH CITIZEN

They were traitors.

Honourable 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.

Will you be patient?

Will you wait a moment?

I went too far in even mentioning it.

I'm afraid I'm wronging the honourable men

whose daggers stabbed Caesar.

I really am afraid of that.

They were traitors.

Honourable men!

The will!

The will!

They were criminals, murderers.

The will!

Read the will!

So you're going to force me to read the will?

Then form a circle around Caesar's body, and let

me show you the man who wrote it.

Shall I come down?

Do I have your permission?

Come down.

Come down.

He comes down.

THIRD CITIZEN

You shall have leave.

You have our permission.

FOURTH CITIZEN

A ring!

Make a circle.

Stand round.

Stand round.

FIRST CITIZEN

Stand from the hearse, stand from the body.

Stand back from the bier, back from the body.

SECOND CITIZEN

Room for Antony, most noble Antony!

Make room for Antony, most noble Antony!

ANTONY

Nay, press not so upon me;

Don't crowd me like this.

stand far off.

Stand back.

CITIZENS

Stand back;

Stand back!

room!

Room!

bear back.

Move back.

ANTONY

If you have tears, prepare to shed them now.

If you have any tears, get ready to shed them now.

You all do know this mantle.

You all recognize this cloak.

I remember

I remember the first time Caesar ever put it on

The first time ever Caesar put it on;

— a summer evening, in his tent, the day he

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

defeated the Nervii.

That day he overcame the Nervii.

Look, in this place ran Cassius' dagger through:

Look, this is where Cassius's dagger went through.

See what a rent the envious Casca made:

See the tear that spiteful Casca made.

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!

ANTONY

Stay, countrymen.

FIRST CITIZEN

Peace there!

Hear the noble Antony.

SECOND CITIZEN

We'll hear him, we'll follow him, we'll die with
him.

ANTONY

Good friends, sweet friends, let me not stir you
up

To such a sudden flood of mutiny.

They that have done this deed are honourable.

What a pitiful sight!

Noble Caesar!

What a terrible day!

Traitors! Criminals!

What a bloody sight!

We'll have revenge.

Revenge! Move! Hunt them! Burn! Fire! Kill! Cut
them down! Don't let a single traitor live!

Wait, countrymen.

Quiet there!

Listen to noble Antony.

We'll listen to him, we'll follow him, we'll die
with him.

Good friends, dear friends, don't let me push
you into a sudden riot like this.

The men who did this are honourable.

What private griefs they have, alas, I know not,
That made them do it.

They're wise and
honourable,
And will, no doubt, with reasons answer you.
I come not, friends, to steal away your hearts.

I am no orator, as Brutus is;
But, as you know me all, a plain blunt man,
That love my friend; and that they know full well
That gave me public leave to speak of him.

For I have neither wit, nor words, nor worth,
Action, nor utterance, nor the power of speech,
To stir men's blood.

I only speak right on.
I tell you that which you yourselves do know,
Show you sweet Caesar's wounds, poor poor
dumb mouths,
And bid them speak for me.

But were I Brutus,
And Brutus Antony, there were an Antony
Would ruffle up your spirits, and put a tongue
In every wound of Caesar, that should move
The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny.

CITIZENS

We'll mutiny.

FIRST CITIZEN

We'll burn the house of Brutus.

THIRD CITIZEN

What personal grievances made them do it,
sadly, I don't know.

They're wise and honourable, and I'm sure
they'll give you their reasons.

I haven't come to steal your loyalty away from
them.

I'm no public speaker, the way Brutus is —
I'm just a plain, blunt man, as you all know, who
loved his friend. And the men who gave me
public permission to speak about him know that
perfectly well.

I have no cleverness, no vocabulary, no
standing, no gestures, no delivery, no power of
speech to stir men's blood.

I only say things straight out.

I tell you what you already know, show you dear
Caesar's wounds, those poor silent mouths, and
ask them to speak for me.

But if I were Brutus, and Brutus were Antony,
then there would be an Antony who'd whip your
feelings up and put a tongue in every one of
Caesar's wounds — enough to make the stones
of Rome get up and rebel.

We'll rebel.

We'll burn Brutus's house down.

Away, then!

come, seek the conspirators.

ANTONY

Yet hear me, countrymen;

yet hear me speak.

CITIZENS

Peace, ho!

Hear Antony; most noble Antony.

ANTONY

Why, friends, you go to do you know not what.

Wherein hath Caesar thus deserved your loves?

Alas, you know not;

I must tell you then.

You have forgot the will I told you of.

CITIZENS

Most true;

the will!—let's stay, and hear the will.

ANTONY

Here is the will, and under Caesar's seal.

To every Roman citizen he gives,

To every several man, seventy-five drachmas.

SECOND CITIZEN

Most noble Caesar!

We'll revenge his death.

THIRD CITIZEN

O, royal Caesar!

ANTONY

Come on, then!

Let's go find the conspirators.

Hear me first, countrymen.

Let me finish.

Quiet!

Listen to Antony, most noble Antony.

Friends, you're rushing off without knowing what you're doing.

What has Caesar done to deserve this loyalty from you?

You don't know, do you.

Then I'll have to tell you.

You've forgotten the will I mentioned.

Quite right —

the will! Let's stay and hear the will.

Here is the will, with Caesar's own seal on it.

To every Roman citizen, to each individual man, he leaves seventy-five drachmas.

Noble Caesar!

We'll avenge his death.

Kingly Caesar!

Hear me with patience.

CITIZENS

Peace, ho!

ANTONY

Moreover, he hath left you all his walks,
His private arbors, and new-planted orchards,
On this side Tiber;

he hath left them you,

And to your heirs forever; common pleasures,
To walk abroad, and recreate yourselves.
Here was a Caesar!

when comes such another?

FIRST CITIZEN

Never, never.

Come, away, away!

We'll burn his body in the holy place,
And with the brands fire the traitors' houses.

Take up the body.

SECOND CITIZEN

Go, fetch fire.

THIRD CITIZEN

Pluck down benches.

FOURTH CITIZEN

Pluck down forms, windows, anything.

Exeunt Citizens, with the body.

ANTONY

Now let it work.

Hear me out patiently.

Quiet there!

On top of that, he's left you all his parks, his
private gardens, and his newly planted orchards
on this side of the Tiber.

He's left them to you and your descendants
forever, as public grounds where you can walk
and enjoy yourselves.

That was a Caesar.

When will we see another like him?

Never, never.

Come on, let's go!

We'll burn his body in the sacred precinct, and
use the burning wood to set fire to the traitors'
houses.

Pick up the body.

Go get fire.

Tear down the benches.

Tear down the seats, the shutters, anything.

Now let it do its work.

Mischief, thou art afoot,

Take thou what course thou wilt!

Enter a Servant.

ANTONY

How now, fellow?

SERVANT

Sir, Octavius is already come to Rome.

ANTONY

Where is he?

SERVANT

He and Lepidus are at Caesar's house.

ANTONY

And thither will I straight to visit him.

He comes upon a wish.

Fortune is merry,

And in this mood will give us anything.

SERVANT

I heard him say Brutus and Cassius

Are rid like madmen through the gates of Rome.

ANTONY

Belike they had some notice of the people,

How I had moved them.

Bring me to Octavius.

Exeunt.

Chaos is loose — let it run wherever it likes.

Well, my man?

Sir, Octavius has already reached Rome.

Where is he?

He and Lepidus are at Caesar's house.

Then I'll go straight there to see him.

He's arrived exactly when I wanted him.

Luck is in a generous mood, and while it lasts it will give us anything.

I heard him say that Brutus and Cassius have ridden out through the gates of Rome like madmen.

They probably got word of how I'd worked the people up.

Take me to Octavius.

Act 3, Scene 3

THE SAME. A STREET

Cinna the poet, uneasy after dreaming he dined with Caesar, is stopped in the street by the rioting crowd. They interrogate him in a mock-legal routine — name, destination, address, marital status — until he gives his name, which happens to match one of the conspirators. When he protests that he is Cinna the poet, not Cinna the conspirator, they decide to tear him apart anyway for his bad poetry, then run off to burn the houses of Brutus, Cassius, Decius, Casca and Ligarius.

Original

Translation

Enter Cinna, the poet, and after him the citizens.

CINNA

I dreamt tonight that I did feast with Caesar,
And things unluckily charge my fantasy.

I have no will to wander forth of doors,
Yet something leads me forth.

FIRST CITIZEN

What is your name?

SECOND CITIZEN

Whither are you going?

THIRD CITIZEN

Where do you dwell?

FOURTH CITIZEN

Are you a married man or a bachelor?

SECOND CITIZEN

Answer every man directly.

FIRST CITIZEN

Ay, and briefly.

FOURTH CITIZEN

Ay, and wisely.

THIRD CITIZEN

Ay, and truly, you were best.

Last night I dreamed I was at a banquet with
Caesar, and grim thoughts have been weighing
on my imagination ever since.

I have no wish to go outside, but something is
pulling me out.

What's your name?

Where are you going?

Where do you live?

Are you married or single?

Answer everyone straight.

Yes, and keep it short.

Yes, and be smart about it.

Yes, and be honest — you'd better be.

CINNA

What is my name? Whither am I going? Where
do I dwell? Am I a married
man or a bachelor?

Then, to answer every man
directly and briefly,
wisely and truly. Wisely I say I am a bachelor.

SECOND CITIZEN

That's as much as to say they are fools that
marry;

you'll bear me a
bang for that, I fear.

Proceed, directly.

CINNA

Directly, I am going to Caesar's funeral.

FIRST CITIZEN

As a friend, or an enemy?

CINNA

As a friend.

SECOND CITIZEN

That matter is answered directly.

FOURTH CITIZEN

For your dwelling, briefly.

CINNA

Briefly, I dwell by the Capitol.

THIRD CITIZEN

Your name, sir, truly.

What's my name, where am I going, where do I
live, am I married or single?

Well then, to answer everyone straight and
short, smartly and honestly: smartly, I say I'm
single.

That's as good as calling married men fools.

I think you're going to get a smack for that.

Carry on — straight.

Straight, then: I'm going to Caesar's funeral.

As a friend or an enemy?

As a friend.

That one's answered straight.

Now your address — short.

Short, then: I live near the Capitol.

Your name, sir — honestly.

CINNA

Truly, my name is Cinna.

Honestly, my name is Cinna.

FIRST CITIZEN

Tear him to pieces!

Rip him apart!

He's a conspirator.

He's one of the conspirators.

CINNA

I am Cinna the poet,

I'm Cinna the poet!

I am Cinna the poet.

I'm Cinna the poet!

FOURTH CITIZEN

Tear him for his bad verses,

Then rip him apart for his terrible poetry.

tear him for his bad

Rip him apart for his terrible poetry.

verses.

CINNA

I am not Cinna the conspirator.

I'm not Cinna the conspirator.

FOURTH CITIZEN

It is no matter,

Doesn't matter.

his name's Cinna;

His name is Cinna.

pluck but his

Just cut the name out of his heart and send him
on his way.

name out of his heart,

and turn him going.

THIRD CITIZEN

Tear him, tear him!

Rip him apart, rip him apart!

Come; brands, ho!

Come on — torches, get torches!

firebrands.

To Brutus's house, to Cassius's, burn them all.

To Brutus', to
Cassius'; burn all.

Some to Decius' house, and
some to Casca's, some to
Ligarius'.

Some of you to Decius's house, some to Casca's,
some to Ligarius's.

Away, go!

Go on, move!

Exeunt.

Act 4, Scene 1

ROME. A ROOM IN ANTONY'S HOUSE

Antony, Octavius and Lepidus sit over a list, marking off which Romans are to be executed — Lepidus agrees to his own brother's death, Antony to his nephew Publius's. Once Lepidus is sent away on an errand, Antony dismisses him as a pack animal to be used and turned loose, and Octavius pushes back. They then turn to the real business: Brutus and Cassius are raising armies, and the new rulers must prepare for war.

Original

Translation

Enter Antony, Octavius and Lepidus, seated at a table.

ANTONY

These many then shall die;

So all of these will die.

their names are
prick'd.

Their names are marked.

OCTAVIUS

Your brother too must die;

Your brother has to die too.

consent you,
Lepidus?

Do you agree, Lepidus?

LEPIDUS

I do consent,—

OCTAVIUS

Prick him down, Antony.

LEPIDUS

Upon condition Publius shall not live,
Who is your sister's son, Mark Antony.

ANTONY

He shall not live;
 look, with a spot I damn him.
But, Lepidus, go you to Caesar's house;
Fetch the will hither, and we shall determine
How to cut off some charge in legacies.

LEPIDUS

What, shall I find you here?

OCTAVIUS

Or here, or at the Capitol.

Exit Lepidus.

ANTONY

This is a slight unmeritable man,
Meet to be sent on errands.
 Is it fit,
The three-fold world divided, he should stand
One of the three to share it?

OCTAVIUS

So you thought him,
And took his voice who should be prick'd to die
In our black sentence and proscription.

ANTONY

Octavius, I have seen more days than you;

I agree —

Mark him down, Antony.

— on condition that Publius doesn't survive
either, your sister's son, Mark Antony.

He won't survive.
There — one mark and he's finished.
Now, Lepidus, go to Caesar's house and bring
the will back here, and we'll work out how to cut
down some of the payouts in it.

Will I find you here?

Here or at the Capitol.

The man is a lightweight who deserves nothing
— fit for running errands.
Is it right, with the world split three ways, that
he should be one of the three who share it?

You thought highly enough of him to ask his
opinion on who should be marked for death in
our list of executions.

Octavius, I've lived longer than you.

And though we lay these honours on this man,
To ease ourselves of divers sland'rous loads,
He shall but bear them as the ass bears gold,
To groan and sweat under the business,
Either led or driven, as we point the way;
And having brought our treasure where we will,
Then take we down his load, and turn him off,
Like to the empty ass, to shake his ears,
And graze in commons.

OCTAVIUS

You may do your will;
But he's a tried and valiant soldier.

ANTONY

So is my horse, Octavius; and for that
I do appoint him store of provender.
It is a creature that I teach to fight,
To wind, to stop, to run directly on,
His corporal motion govern'd by my spirit.
And, in some taste, is Lepidus but so:
He must be taught, and train'd, and bid go
forth:
A barren-spirited fellow; one that feeds
On objects, arts, and imitations,
Which, out of use and stal'd by other men,
Begin his fashion.

Do not talk of him

But as a property.

And now, Octavius,

Listen great things.

Brutus and Cassius

Are levying powers; we must straight make head.

We're loading these honours onto him to take
some of the blame off ourselves, but he'll carry
them the way a donkey carries gold — groaning
and sweating under the weight, led or driven
wherever we choose.
And once he's hauled our treasure where we
want it, we take the load off and let him go, like
an unloaded donkey, to shake his ears and graze
in the common field.

Do as you like.

But he's a proven, brave soldier.

So is my horse, Octavius, and that's why I make
sure he's well fed.

He's an animal I train to fight, to turn, to halt, to
charge straight ahead — his body moving on my
instructions.

Lepidus is much the same.

He has to be taught, drilled and told when to go.

He's a man with no ideas of his own, who lives
on other people's tastes, techniques and habits,
and only takes them up as fashion once
everyone else is bored with them.

Don't talk about him as anything but a tool.

Now, Octavius, listen — this is important.

Brutus and Cassius are raising troops, and we
have to move at once.

Therefore let our alliance be combin'd,
Our best friends made, our means stretch'd;
And let us presently go sit in council,
How covert matters may be best disclos'd,
And open perils surest answered.

OCTAVIUS

Let us do so:

for we are at the stake,
And bay'd about with many enemies;
And some that smile have in their hearts, I fear,
Millions of mischiefs.

Exeunt.

So let's tighten our alliance, secure our best
allies, and use every resource we have.

Let's go into council right now and work out
how best to uncover what's hidden and meet
the dangers already in the open.

Let's do that.

We're tied to the stake with the dogs closing in
on all sides
— and some of the ones who smile at us are, I
suspect, planning endless harm.

Act 4, Scene 2

BEFORE BRUTUS' TENT, IN THE CAMP NEAR SARDIS

At the camp near Sardis, Brutus meets Cassius's messenger Pindarus and learns from Lucilius that Cassius received him politely but coldly. Brutus reads the change as a friendship going bad, noting that men who put on the biggest show are the first to fail under pressure. When Cassius arrives he immediately accuses Brutus of wronging him, and Brutus insists they take the quarrel inside his tent rather than argue in front of both armies.

Original

Translation

Drum. Enter Brutus, Lucilius, Titinius and Soldiers; Pindarus meeting them; Lucius at some distance.

BRUTUS

Stand, ho!

Halt!

LUCILIUS

Give the word, ho! and stand.

Pass the order along — halt!

BRUTUS

What now, Lucilius! is Cassius near?

Well, Lucilius, is Cassius nearby?

LUCILIUS

He is at hand, and Pindarus is come
To do you salutation from his master.

Pindarus gives a letter to Brutus.

BRUTUS

He greets me well.

Your master, Pindarus,
In his own change, or by ill officers,
Hath given me some worthy cause to wish
Things done, undone:

but, if he be at hand,
I shall be satisfied.

PINDARUS

I do not doubt
But that my noble master will appear
Such as he is, full of regard and honour.

BRUTUS

He is not doubted.

A word, Lucilius;
How he received you, let me be resolv'd.

LUCILIUS

With courtesy and with respect enough,
But not with such familiar instances,
Nor with such free and friendly conference,
As he hath us'd of old.

BRUTUS

Thou hast describ'd
A hot friend cooling.

Ever note, Lucilius,
When love begins to sicken and decay
It useth an enforced ceremony.

He's close by, and Pindarus has come to bring
you greetings from his master.

He sends a courteous greeting.

Pindarus, your master — either because he's
changed, or because of bad officers under him
— has given me real reason to wish some things
undone.

But if he's close by, I'll get my explanation.

I have no doubt my noble master will turn out to
be exactly what he is: full of consideration and
honour.

Nobody doubts it.

A word, Lucilius.

Tell me exactly how he received you.

With courtesy and plenty of respect, but not
with the easy closeness or the open, friendly
conversation he used to have with me.

What you've described is a warm friend going
cold.

Take note, Lucilius: when affection starts to fail,
it turns into forced politeness.

There are no tricks in plain and simple faith;

But hollow men, like horses hot at hand,
Make gallant show and promise of their mettle;

Low march within.

BRUTUS

But when they should endure the bloody spur,
They fall their crests, and like deceitful jades
Sink in the trial.

Comes his army on?

LUCILIUS

They meant this night in Sardis to be quarter'd;
The greater part, the horse in general,
Are come with Cassius.

Enter Cassius and Soldiers.

BRUTUS

Hark! he is arriv'd.
March gently on to meet him.

CASSIUS

Stand, ho!

BRUTUS

Stand, ho!
Speak the word along.

FIRST SOLDIER

Stand!

SECOND SOLDIER

Stand!

THIRD SOLDIER

Honest, straightforward loyalty has no tricks in it.

But hollow men are like horses that are fiery
when you first take up the reins — a fine show,
all promise of spirit —

— and then when they have to take a real
spurring, they drop their heads and give out like
worthless nags.

Is his army on the march?

They planned to camp in Sardis tonight.
Most of them, and all the cavalry, have come
with Cassius.

Listen — he's arrived.
March slowly forward to meet him.

Halt!

Halt!
Pass the word down the line.

Halt!

Halt!

Stand!

CASSIUS

Most noble brother, you have done me wrong.

BRUTUS

Judge me, you gods;

wrong I mine enemies?

And if not so, how should I wrong a brother?

CASSIUS

Brutus, this sober form of yours hides wrongs;

And when you do them—

BRUTUS

Cassius, be content.

Speak your griefs softly, I do know you well.

Before the eyes of both our armies here,

Which should perceive nothing but love from

us,

Let us not wrangle.

Bid them move away;

Then in my tent, Cassius, enlarge your griefs,

And I will give you audience.

CASSIUS

Pindarus,

Bid our commanders lead their charges off

A little from this ground.

BRUTUS

Lucilius, do you the like;

and let no man

Come to our tent till we have done our

conference.

Halt!

My noble brother, you have wronged me.

Gods, be my judge:

do I wrong even my enemies?

And if I don't, how would I wrong a brother?

Brutus, that calm manner of yours covers up the
wrongs you do.

And when you do them —

Cassius, calm down.

Keep your grievances quiet — I know you well.

Let's not fight in front of both our armies, who

should see nothing but affection between us.

Tell them to withdraw.

Then in my tent, Cassius, lay out your

complaints at length and I'll hear you.

Pindarus, tell our officers to move their units a
little way off from this ground.

Lucilius, do the same.

And no one is to come to our tent until we've
finished talking.

Lucius and Titinius, guard our door.

Lucius and Titinius, guard the entrance.

Exeunt.

Act 4, Scene 3

WITHIN THE TENT OF BRUTUS

Inside the tent, Brutus and Cassius have their great quarrel: Cassius resents being overruled about a bribe-taking officer, Brutus accuses him of selling offices and of refusing him money for his troops, and Cassius finally offers his own dagger and bare chest. They reconcile, and Brutus reveals that Portia has killed herself by swallowing fire. Over the war council Brutus overrides Cassius again and insists on marching to Philippi — "there is a tide in the affairs of men" — and after the others sleep, Caesar's ghost appears to tell him they will meet at Philippi.

Original

Translation

Enter Brutus and Cassius.

CASSIUS

That you have wrong'd me doth appear in this:
You have condemn'd and noted Lucius Pella
For taking bribes here of the Sardians;
Wherein my letters, praying on his side
Because I knew the man, were slighted off.

Here's the proof that you've wronged me: you
convicted and publicly disgraced Lucius Pella for
taking bribes from the people of Sardis,
and when I wrote in his defence, because I know
the man, you brushed my letters aside.

BRUTUS

You wrong'd yourself to write in such a case.

You wronged yourself by writing at all in a case
like that.

CASSIUS

In such a time as this it is not meet
That every nice offence should bear his
comment.

At a time like this it isn't right that every trivial
offence should be picked over.

BRUTUS

Let me tell you, Cassius, you yourself
Are much condemn'd to have an itching palm,
To sell and mart your offices for gold
To undeservers.

CASSIUS

I an itching palm!
You know that you are Brutus that speak this,
Or, by the gods, this speech were else your last.

BRUTUS

The name of Cassius honours this corruption,
And chastisement doth therefore hide his head.

CASSIUS

Chastisement!

BRUTUS

Remember March, the Ides of March remember:

Did not great Julius bleed for justice' sake?
What villain touch'd his body, that did stab,
And not for justice?

What! Shall one of us,
That struck the foremost man of all this world
But for supporting robbers, shall we now
Contaminate our fingers with base bribes,
And sell the mighty space of our large honours
For so much trash as may be grasped thus?
I had rather be a dog, and bay the moon,
Than such a Roman.

CASSIUS

Let me tell you something, Cassius. You yourself
are widely accused of having an itchy palm — of
selling official positions for gold to men who
don't deserve them.

Me, an itchy palm?

You know that it's Brutus saying this, or by the
gods those would be your last words.

It's the name of Cassius that gives this
corruption cover, and that's why punishment
keeps its head down.

Punishment!

Remember March — remember the Ides of
March.

Didn't great Julius bleed for the sake of justice?
Was there a single one of us who stabbed him
for any reason but justice?

So are we, who struck down the greatest man in
the world for protecting thieves, now going to
dirty our own hands with cheap bribes and sell
the whole vast field of our honour for as much
rubbish as fits in a fist?

I'd rather be a dog howling at the moon than a
Roman like that.

Brutus, bait not me,

I'll not endure it.

You forget yourself,

To hedge me in.

I am a soldier, I,

Older in practice, abler than yourself

To make conditions.

BRUTUS

Go to;

you are not, Cassius.

CASSIUS

I am.

BRUTUS

I say you are not.

CASSIUS

Urge me no more, I shall forget myself;

Have mind upon your health,

tempt me no

farther.

BRUTUS

Away, slight man!

CASSIUS

Is't possible?

BRUTUS

Hear me, for I will speak.

Must I give way and room to your rash choler?

Brutus, don't goad me. I won't put up with it.

You're forgetting yourself, trying to fence me in.

I'm a soldier — longer in the service and better
qualified than you to set terms.

Nonsense.

You are not, Cassius.

I am.

I say you're not.

Push me no further, or I'll lose control of myself.

Think about your own safety.

Don't provoke me any more.

Get away from me, you petty man.

Is this really happening?

Listen to me, because I intend to speak.

Am I supposed to step aside and make room for
your tantrum?

Shall I be frightened when a madman stares?

CASSIUS

O ye gods, ye gods!

Must I endure all this?

BRUTUS

All this? ay, more:

fret till your proud heart

break;

Go show your slaves how choleric you are,
And make your bondmen tremble.

Must I

budge?

Must I observe you?

Must I stand and crouch

Under your testy humour?

By the gods,

You shall digest the venom of your spleen,
Though it do split you;

for, from this day forth,

I'll use you for my mirth, yea, for my laughter,
When you are waspish.

CASSIUS

Is it come to this?

BRUTUS

You say you are a better soldier:

Let it appear so;

make your vaunting true,

And it shall please me well.

Am I supposed to be frightened because a
madman glares at me?

Gods above!

Do I have to take all this?

All this? Yes, and more.

Fume until your proud heart cracks.

Go show your slaves what a temper you have
and make your servants shake.

Am I supposed to move for you?

Am I supposed to defer to you?

Am I supposed to stand and cringe under your
bad moods?

By the gods, you can swallow your own bile even
if it splits you open,

because from today I'll treat your temper as
entertainment — I'll laugh at you whenever you
turn spiteful.

Has it come to this?

You say you're the better soldier.

Prove it.

Make your boasting true and I'll be glad of it.

For mine own part,
I shall be glad to learn of noble men.

CASSIUS

You wrong me every way, you wrong me, Brutus.

I said, an elder soldier, not a better:

Did I say better?

BRUTUS

If you did, I care not.

CASSIUS

When Caesar liv'd, he durst not thus have mov'd
me.

BRUTUS

Peace, peace!

you durst not so have tempted
him.

CASSIUS

I durst not?

BRUTUS

No.

CASSIUS

What? durst not tempt him?

BRUTUS

For your life you durst not.

CASSIUS

Do not presume too much upon my love.

I may do that I shall be sorry for.

BRUTUS

For my part, I'm always happy to learn from
good men.

You twist everything I say, Brutus.

I said an older soldier, not a better one.

Did I say better?

If you did, I don't care.

When Caesar was alive he wouldn't have dared
provoke me like this.

Enough —

you wouldn't have dared push him like this.

I wouldn't have dared?

No.

What, not dared push him?

Not if your life depended on it.

Don't count too much on my affection for you.

I might do something I'd regret.

You have done that you should be sorry for.
There is no terror, Cassius, in your threats,
For I am arm'd so strong in honesty,
That they pass by me as the idle wind,
Which I respect not.

I did send to you
For certain sums of gold, which you denied me;
For I can raise no money by vile means:
By Heaven, I had rather coin my heart,
And drop my blood for drachmas, than to wring
From the hard hands of peasants their vile trash
By any indirection.

I did send
To you for gold to pay my legions,
Which you denied me:

was that done like
Cassius?
Should I have answer'd Caius Cassius so?
When Marcus Brutus grows so covetous,
To lock such rascal counters from his friends,
Be ready, gods, with all your thunderbolts,
Dash him to pieces!

CASSIUS
I denied you not.

BRUTUS
You did.

CASSIUS
I did not.

You've already done things you should regret.
There's nothing frightening in your threats,
Cassius, because I'm so well armoured in my
own honesty that they blow past me like a
useless wind I don't even notice.
I sent to you for certain sums of gold and you
turned me down — because I can't raise money
by squalid methods.
God knows I'd sooner mint my own heart and
turn my blood into coins than squeeze the
wretched pennies out of peasants' worn-out
hands by some crooked scheme.
I sent to you for gold to pay my legions and you
refused me.

Is that how Cassius behaves?

Would I have answered Caius Cassius that way?
If Marcus Brutus ever becomes so greedy that he
locks worthless coins away from his friends,
then gods, get your thunderbolts ready and
smash him to pieces.

I did not refuse you.

You did.

I did not.

He was but a fool
That brought my answer back.

Brutus hath riv'd
my heart.

A friend should bear his friend's infirmities;
But Brutus makes mine greater than they are.

BRUTUS

I do not, till you practise them on me.

CASSIUS

You love me not.

BRUTUS

I do not like your faults.

CASSIUS

A friendly eye could never see such faults.

BRUTUS

A flatterer's would not, though they do appear
As huge as high Olympus.

CASSIUS

Come, Antony, and young Octavius, come,
Revenge yourselves alone on Cassius,
For Cassius is a-weary of the world:
Hated by one he loves; brav'd by his brother;
Check'd like a bondman; all his faults observ'd,
Set in a note-book, learn'd and conn'd by rote,
To cast into my teeth.

O, I could weep
My spirit from mine eyes!

Whoever brought my answer back to you was a
fool.

Brutus has split my heart open.

A friend should put up with a friend's
weaknesses, but Brutus makes mine out to be
worse than they are.

I don't — not until you use them on me.

You don't love me.

I don't like your faults.

A friend's eye would never even see such faults.

A flatterer's wouldn't, even if they were as big as
Mount Olympus.

Come on, then, Antony, and young Octavius —
come and take your revenge on Cassius alone,
because Cassius is sick of the world.
Hated by the man he loves, defied by his own
brother, told off like a servant, every fault of his
watched and written down in a notebook,
memorized and rehearsed so it can be thrown in
his face.

I could weep my soul out through my eyes.

There is my dagger,
And here my naked breast; within, a heart
Dearer than Plutus' mine, richer than gold:
If that thou be'st a Roman, take it forth.
I, that denied thee gold, will give my heart:
Strike as thou didst at Caesar; for I know,
When thou didst hate him worst, thou lovedst
him better
Than ever thou lovedst Cassius.

BRUTUS

Sheathe your dagger.
Be angry when you will, it shall have scope;

Do what you will, dishonour shall be humour.

O Cassius, you are yoked with a lamb
That carries anger as the flint bears fire,
Who, much enforced, shows a hasty spark,
And straight is cold again.

CASSIUS

Hath Cassius liv'd
To be but mirth and laughter to his Brutus,
When grief and blood ill-temper'd vexeth him?

BRUTUS

When I spoke that, I was ill-temper'd too.

CASSIUS

Do you confess so much?

Give me your hand.

BRUTUS

And my heart too.

Here's my dagger, and here's my bare chest —
and inside it a heart worth more than the god of
wealth's whole mine, richer than gold.
If you're a Roman, cut it out.
I refused you gold; I'll give you my heart instead.
Strike the way you struck Caesar, because I
know that even when you hated him most, you
loved him more than you ever loved Cassius.

Put your dagger away.

Be angry whenever you like — you'll have room
for it.

Do whatever you want; I'll treat the insults as
moods.

Cassius, you're harnessed to a lamb who carries
anger the way flint carries fire: strike it hard
enough and it throws off a quick spark, then
goes cold again straight away.

Has Cassius lived only to be a joke to his own
Brutus, whenever grief and bad temper get the
better of him?

When I said that, I was in a bad temper too.

You admit that much?

Give me your hand.

And my heart with it.

CASSIUS

O Brutus!

Brutus!

BRUTUS

What's the matter?

What is it?

CASSIUS

Have not you love enough to bear with me,
When that rash humour which my mother gave
me
Makes me forgetful?

Don't you care about me enough to put up with
me when the hot temper my mother gave me
makes me forget myself?

BRUTUS

Yes, Cassius;
and from henceforth,
When you are over-earnest with your Brutus,
He'll think your mother chides, and leave you so.

I do, Cassius.
And from now on, when you get too worked up
with your friend Brutus, he'll assume it's your
mother scolding, and leave it at that.

Enter Poet, followed by Lucilius, Titinius and Lucius.

Within.

POET

Let me go in to see the generals,
There is some grudge between 'em; 'tis not meet
They be alone.

Let me in to see the generals.
There's bad blood between them; they shouldn't
be left alone.

Within.

LUCILIUS

You shall not come to them.

You're not going in to them.

Within.

POET

Nothing but death shall stay me.

Only death will stop me.

CASSIUS

How now!

What's the matter?

What's going on?

What's the matter?

POET

For shame, you generals!

What do you mean?

Love, and be friends, as two such men should
be;

For I have seen more years, I'm sure, than ye.

CASSIUS

Ha, ha!

How vilely doth this cynic rhyme!

BRUTUS

Get you hence, sirrah.

Saucy fellow, hence!

CASSIUS

Bear with him, Brutus;

'tis his fashion.

BRUTUS

I'll know his humour when he knows his time.

What should the wars do with these jigging
fools?

Companion, hence!

CASSIUS

Away, away, be gone!

Exit Poet.

BRUTUS

Lucilius and Titinius, bid the commanders
Prepare to lodge their companies tonight.

CASSIUS

Shame on you, generals!

What do you think you're doing?

Be friends, and love each other, as two men like
you should —

I've certainly lived more years than either of you.

Ha!

What awful verse from this ragged philosopher.

Get out, you.

Off with you, impudent man.

Go easy on him, Brutus.

It's just how he is.

I'll indulge his eccentricity when he learns his
timing.

What use are these rhyming clowns in wartime?

Out, man.

Away, away, get out.

Lucilius and Titinius, tell the officers to get their
companies bedded down for the night.

And come yourselves and bring Messala with
you
Immediately to us.

Exeunt Lucilius and Titinius.

BRUTUS

Lucius, a bowl of wine.

Exit Lucius.

CASSIUS

I did not think you could have been so angry.

BRUTUS

O Cassius, I am sick of many griefs.

CASSIUS

Of your philosophy you make no use,
If you give place to accidental evils.

BRUTUS

No man bears sorrow better.

Portia is dead.

CASSIUS

Ha?

Portia?

BRUTUS

She is dead.

CASSIUS

How 'scap'd I killing, when I cross'd you so?

O insupportable and touching loss!
Upon what sickness?

BRUTUS

And then come back yourselves and bring
Messala with you, straight away.

Lucius, a bowl of wine.

I never thought you could get that angry.

Cassius, I'm worn down by more than one grief.

You're not putting your philosophy to any use if
you let bad luck get to you.

No one bears sorrow better than I do.

Portia is dead.

What?

Portia?

She's dead.

How did you not kill me, when I crossed you like
that?

What an unbearable, painful loss.
What was the illness?

Impatient of my absence,
And grief that young Octavius with Mark Antony
Have made themselves so strong; for with her
death
That tidings came.

With this she fell distract,
And, her attendants absent, swallow'd fire.

CASSIUS
And died so?

BRUTUS
Even so.

CASSIUS
O ye immortal gods!

Enter Lucius, with wine and a taper.

BRUTUS
Speak no more of her.
Give me a bowl of wine.
In this I bury all unkindness, Cassius.

Drinks.

CASSIUS
My heart is thirsty for that noble pledge.
Fill, Lucius, till the wine o'erswell the cup.
I cannot drink too much of Brutus' love.

Drinks.

Exit Lucius.

Enter Titinius and Messala.

BRUTUS
Come in, Titinius!

She couldn't stand my being away, and she was
distraught that young Octavius and Mark
Antony have grown so powerful — the news of
that arrived along with the news of her death.

It drove her out of her mind,
and while her attendants were away she
swallowed burning coals.

And died that way?

Just so.

Immortal gods.

Say no more about her.
Give me a bowl of wine.
With this I bury all bad feeling, Cassius.

My heart is thirsty for that generous toast.
Fill it, Lucius, until the wine spills over the rim.
I can't get too much of Brutus's friendship.

Come in, Titinius.

Welcome, good Messala.

Now sit we close about this taper here,
And call in question our necessities.

CASSIUS

Portia, art thou gone?

BRUTUS

No more, I pray you.

Messala, I have here received letters,
That young Octavius and Mark Antony
Come down upon us with a mighty power,
Bending their expedition toward Philippi.

MESSALA

Myself have letters of the selfsame tenor.

BRUTUS

With what addition?

MESSALA

That by proscription and bills of outlawry
Octavius, Antony, and Lepidus
Have put to death an hundred Senators.

BRUTUS

Therein our letters do not well agree.
Mine speak of seventy Senators that died
By their proscriptions, Cicero being one.

CASSIUS

Cicero one!

MESSALA

Cicero is dead,
And by that order of proscription.
Had you your letters from your wife, my lord?

Welcome, Messala.

Now let's sit close around this candle and go
through what we have to decide.

Portia — are you really gone?

No more of that, please.

Messala, I've had letters saying that young
Octavius and Mark Antony are coming at us with
a huge force, heading for Philippi.

My letters say exactly the same.

With anything more?

That through official lists and outlawry orders,
Octavius, Antony and Lepidus have executed a
hundred senators.

On that our letters disagree.

Mine say seventy senators died in their purge,
Cicero among them.

Cicero, one of them!

Cicero is dead, killed under that purge order.

Did you get letters from your wife, my lord?

BRUTUS

No, Messala.

No, Messala.

MESSALA

Nor nothing in your letters writ of her?

And nothing about her in the letters you did get?

BRUTUS

Nothing, Messala.

Nothing, Messala.

MESSALA

That, methinks, is strange.

That seems odd to me.

BRUTUS

Why ask you?

Why do you ask?

Hear you aught of her in yours?

Have you heard anything about her in yours?

MESSALA

No, my lord.

No, my lord.

BRUTUS

Now as you are a Roman, tell me true.

As you're a Roman, tell me the truth.

MESSALA

Then like a Roman bear the truth I tell,
For certain she is dead, and by strange manner.

Then take the truth like a Roman: she is certainly
dead, and in a strange way.

BRUTUS

Why, farewell, Portia.

Goodbye, then, Portia.

We must die, Messala.

We all have to die, Messala.

With meditating that she must die once,
I have the patience to endure it now.

Having already faced the thought that she would
die one day, I can bear it now.

MESSALA

Even so great men great losses should endure.

That is how great men should bear great losses.

CASSIUS

I have as much of this in art as you,
But yet my nature could not bear it so.

I know as much about that in theory as you do,
but my own nature couldn't take it so calmly.

BRUTUS

Well, to our work alive.

What do you think

Of marching to Philippi presently?

CASSIUS

I do not think it good.

BRUTUS

Your reason?

CASSIUS

This it is:

'Tis better that the enemy seek us;

So shall he waste his means, weary his soldiers,

Doing himself offence, whilst we, lying still,

Are full of rest, defence, and nimbleness.

BRUTUS

Good reasons must of force give place to better.

The people 'twixt Philippi and this ground

Do stand but in a forced affection;

For they have grudg'd us contribution.

The enemy, marching along by them,

By them shall make a fuller number up,

Come on refresh'd, new-added, and encourag'd;

From which advantage shall we cut him off

If at Philippi we do face him there,

These people at our back.

CASSIUS

Hear me, good brother.

BRUTUS

Well — back to the work of the living.

What do you think about marching on Philippi
right away?

I don't think it's a good idea.

Your reason?

It's this.

Better to make the enemy come to us.

That way he burns through his supplies, tires

out his men and damages himself, while we sit

still, rested, well defended and quick to move.

Good reasons have to give way to better ones.

The people in the country between here and

Philippi support us only because they've been

forced to;

they've resented every contribution we've asked
of them.

If the enemy marches through them, he'll pick

up recruits along the way and arrive with more

men, fresh and encouraged.

We cut off that advantage if we meet him at

Philippi, with those people behind us.

Listen to me, brother —

Under your pardon.

You must note besides,
That we have tried the utmost of our friends,
Our legions are brim-full, our cause is ripe.

The enemy increaseth every day;
We, at the height, are ready to decline.
There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
On such a full sea are we now afloat,
And we must take the current when it serves,
Or lose our ventures.

CASSIUS

Then, with your will, go on:
We'll along ourselves, and meet them at Philippi.

BRUTUS

The deep of night is crept upon our talk,
And nature must obey necessity,
Which we will niggard with a little rest.

There is no more to say?

CASSIUS

No more.

Good night:
Early tomorrow will we rise, and hence.

Enter Lucius.

BRUTUS

Lucius!

My gown.

Excuse me.

And note this as well: we've squeezed our allies
for everything they have,
our legions are at full strength, our cause is at
its best moment.

The enemy grows stronger every day; we're at
our peak and can only decline from here.
There is a tide in human affairs — catch it at the
flood and it carries you on to success; miss it,
and the whole voyage of your life runs aground
in shallow water and misery.
We're afloat right now on that full tide, and we
have to take the current while it's running, or
lose everything we've staked.

Then have it your way.

We'll march and meet them at Philippi.

The middle of the night has crept up on our
talking, and the body has to be given what it
needs — though we'll be stingy about it and take
only a little rest.

Is there anything more?

Nothing more.

Good night.
We'll be up early tomorrow and away.

Lucius!

My dressing gown.

Exit Lucius.

BRUTUS

Farewell now, good Messala.

Good night, Titinius.

Noble, noble Cassius,

Good night, and good repose.

CASSIUS

O my dear brother!

This was an ill beginning of the night.

Never come such division 'tween our souls!

Let it not, Brutus.

Enter Lucius with the gown.

BRUTUS

Everything is well.

CASSIUS

Good night, my lord.

BRUTUS

Good night, good brother.

TITINIUS and MESSALA.

Good night, Lord Brutus.

BRUTUS

Farewell, everyone.

Exeunt Cassius, Titinius and Messala.

BRUTUS

Give me the gown.

Where is thy instrument?

LUCIUS

Here in the tent.

BRUTUS

Goodbye for now, good Messala.

Good night, Titinius.

Noble, noble Cassius — good night, and sleep well.

My dear brother, this was a bad way to begin the night.

May our souls never fall out like that again.

Don't let it happen, Brutus.

All's well.

Good night, my lord.

Good night, brother.

TITINIUS and MESSALA:

Good night, Lord Brutus.

Goodbye, all of you.

Give me the gown.

Where's your instrument?

Here in the tent.

What, thou speak'st drowsily?

Poor knave, I blame thee not, thou art o'er-watch'd.

Call Claudius and some other of my men;
I'll have them sleep on cushions in my tent.

LUCIUS

Varro and Claudius!

Enter Varro and Claudius.

VARRO

Calls my lord?

BRUTUS

I pray you, sirs, lie in my tent and sleep;

It may be I shall raise you by-and-by
On business to my brother Cassius.

VARRO

So please you, we will stand and watch your
pleasure.

BRUTUS

I will not have it so;

lie down, good sirs,

It may be I shall otherwise bethink me.
Look, Lucius, here's the book I sought for so;
I put it in the pocket of my gown.

Servants lie down.

LUCIUS

I was sure your lordship did not give it me.

BRUTUS

Bear with me, good boy,

You sound half asleep.

Poor lad, I don't blame you — you've been kept
up too long.

Call Claudius and a couple of the others; I'll
have them sleep on cushions in my tent.

Varro! Claudius!

Did my lord call?

Gentlemen, please lie down in my tent and
sleep.

I may wake you shortly to carry a message to my
colleague Cassius.

If you don't mind, we'd rather stay standing and
wait on your orders.

I won't have that.

Lie down, gentlemen.

I may change my mind anyway.
Look, Lucius, here's the book I was hunting for
— I'd put it in my gown pocket.

I was sure your lordship hadn't given it to me.

Be patient with me, good boy.

I am much forgetful.

Canst thou hold up thy heavy eyes awhile,
And touch thy instrument a strain or two?

LUCIUS

Ay, my lord, an't please you.

BRUTUS

It does, my boy.

I trouble thee too much, but thou art willing.

LUCIUS

It is my duty, sir.

BRUTUS

I should not urge thy duty past thy might;
I know young bloods look for a time of rest.

LUCIUS

I have slept, my lord, already.

BRUTUS

It was well done,
and thou shalt sleep again;
I will not hold thee long.
If I do live,
I will be good to thee.

Lucius plays and sings till he falls asleep.

BRUTUS

This is a sleepy tune.
O murd'rous slumber,
Layest thou thy leaden mace upon my boy,
That plays thee music?

I'm very forgetful.

Can you keep your heavy eyes open a little longer
and play me a tune or two?

Yes, my lord, if it pleases you.

It does, my boy.

I ask too much of you, but you're willing.

It's my job, sir.

I shouldn't push your duty past your strength.
I know young men need their sleep.

I've already slept, my lord.

Good —
and you'll sleep again.
I won't keep you long.
If I survive this, I'll look after you.

That's a drowsy tune.
Murderous sleep, are you laying your heavy club
on my boy while he plays music for you?

Gentle knave, good

night;

I will not do thee so much wrong to wake thee.

If thou dost nod, thou break'st thy instrument;

I'll take it from thee;

and, good boy, good night.

Let me see, let me see;

is not the leaf turn'd

down

Where I left reading?

Here it is, I think.

Enter the Ghost of Caesar.

BRUTUS

How ill this taper burns!

Ha! who comes here?

I think it is the weakness of mine eyes

That shapes this monstrous apparition.

It comes upon me.

Art thou anything?

Art thou some god, some angel, or some devil,

That mak'st my blood cold and my hair to stare?

Speak to me what thou art.

GHOST

Thy evil spirit, Brutus.

BRUTUS

Why com'st thou?

GHOST

To tell thee thou shalt see me at Philippi.

BRUTUS

Good night, gentle lad.

I won't do you the injury of waking you.

If you nod off you'll break your instrument, so

I'll take it from you.

Good night, good boy.

Now let me see —

didn't I fold down the page where I stopped reading?

Here it is, I think.

How badly this candle is burning.

Who's there?

I think it must be my eyes failing that's shaping this hideous apparition.

It's coming towards me.

Are you anything at all?

Are you a god, an angel, or a devil, that turns my blood cold and makes my hair stand up?

Tell me what you are.

Your evil spirit, Brutus.

Why have you come?

To tell you that you'll see me at Philippi.

Well;

then I shall see thee again?

GHOST

Ay, at Philippi.

BRUTUS

Why, I will see thee at Philippi then.

Ghost vanishes.

BRUTUS

Now I have taken heart, thou vanishest.

Ill spirit, I would hold more talk with thee.

Boy! Lucius! Varro! Claudius!

Sirs, awake!

Claudius!

LUCIUS

The strings, my lord, are false.

BRUTUS

He thinks he still is at his instrument.

Lucius, awake!

LUCIUS

My lord?

BRUTUS

Didst thou dream, Lucius, that thou so criedst out?

LUCIUS

My lord, I do not know that I did cry.

BRUTUS

Yes, that thou didst.

Very well.

So I'll see you again?

Yes, at Philippi.

Then I'll see you at Philippi.

Now that I've got my nerve back, you vanish.

Evil spirit, I'd like to talk with you longer.

Boy! Lucius! Varro! Claudius!

Wake up, all of you! Claudius!

The strings are out of tune, my lord.

He thinks he's still playing.

Lucius, wake up.

My lord?

Were you dreaming, Lucius, that you cried out like that?

My lord, I didn't know I'd made a sound.

You did.

Didst thou see anything?

Did you see anything?

LUCIUS

Nothing, my lord.

Nothing, my lord.

BRUTUS

Sleep again, Lucius.

Go back to sleep, Lucius.

Sirrah Claudius!

You there, Claudius!

Fellow thou, awake!

And you — wake up!

VARRO

My lord?

My lord?

CLAUDIUS

My lord?

My lord?

BRUTUS

Why did you so cry out, sirs, in your sleep?

Why did you both cry out in your sleep?

VARRO. CLAUDIUS

Did we, my lord?

Did we, my lord?

BRUTUS

Ay.

Yes.

Saw you anything?

Did you see anything?

VARRO

No, my lord, I saw nothing.

No, my lord, I saw nothing.

CLAUDIUS

Nor I, my lord.

Nor did I, my lord.

BRUTUS

Go and commend me to my brother Cassius;

Go and give my regards to my colleague Cassius.

Bid him set on his powers betimes before,

Tell him to move his forces out early, ahead of

And we will follow.

us, and we'll follow.

VARRO. CLAUDIUS

It shall be done, my lord.

It'll be done, my lord.

Exeunt.

Act 5, Scene 1

THE PLAINS OF PHILIPPI

On the plains of Philippi, Octavius and Antony are surprised to find the enemy has come down to meet them, and quarrel briefly over who takes which wing. The two sides trade insults before fighting: Antony throws the assassination in Brutus's face, Octavius draws his sword and swears not to sheathe it until Caesar's wounds are avenged. Left alone, Cassius tells Messala it is his birthday and that eagles have deserted their standards for carrion birds, and he and Brutus say a permanent goodbye in case they lose.

Original

Translation

Enter Octavius, Antony and their Army.

OCTAVIUS

Now, Antony, our hopes are answered.
You said the enemy would not come down,
But keep the hills and upper regions.
It proves not so; their battles are at hand,

They mean to warn us at Philippi here,
Answering before we do demand of them.

ANTONY

Tut,
I am in their bosoms, and I know
Wherefore they do it.
They could be content
To visit other places, and come down
With fearful bravery, thinking by this face
To fasten in our thoughts that they have
courage;
But 'tis not so.

Well, Antony, we've got what we hoped for.
You said the enemy wouldn't come down but
would hold the hills and high ground.
It turns out otherwise — their forces are right
here.
They mean to challenge us at Philippi, answering
us before we've even asked.

Nonsense.
I know what's in their hearts and why they're
doing it.
They'd much rather be somewhere else, but
they've come down with a show of nerve, hoping
the display will convince us they're brave.
They aren't.

Enter a Messenger.

MESSENGER

Prepare you, generals.

The enemy comes on in gallant show;
Their bloody sign of battle is hung out,
And something to be done immediately.

ANTONY

Octavius, lead your battle softly on
Upon the left hand of the even field.

OCTAVIUS

Upon the right hand I.

Keep thou the left.

ANTONY

Why do you cross me in this exigent?

OCTAVIUS

I do not cross you;

but I will do so.

March.

OCTAVIUS

Drum. Enter Brutus, Cassius and their Army;
Lucilius, Titinius, Messala
and others.

BRUTUS

They stand, and would have parley.

CASSIUS

Stand fast, Titinius;

we must out and talk.

OCTAVIUS

Get ready, generals.

The enemy is advancing in impressive order.
Their red battle flag is up, and something has to
be done at once.

Octavius, take your division forward slowly on
the left side of the level ground.

I'll take the right.

You take the left.

Why are you contradicting me at a moment like
this?

I'm not contradicting you.

But that is what I intend to do.

The armies advance to the sound of drums:
Brutus, Cassius, Lucilius, Titinius, Messala and
their soldiers enter opposite.

They've halted. They want to talk.

Hold your position, Titinius.

We'll go out and talk.

Mark Antony, shall we give sign of battle?

ANTONY

No, Caesar, we will answer on their charge.
Make forth; the generals would have some
words.

OCTAVIUS

Stir not until the signal.

BRUTUS

Words before blows: is it so, countrymen?

OCTAVIUS

Not that we love words better, as you do.

BRUTUS

Good words are better than bad strokes,
Octavius.

ANTONY

In your bad strokes, Brutus, you give good
words;
Witness the hole you made in Caesar's heart,
Crying, "Long live! Hail, Caesar!"

CASSIUS

Antony,
The posture of your blows are yet unknown;
But for your words, they rob the Hybla bees,
And leave them honeyless.

ANTONY

Not stingless too.

BRUTUS

Mark Antony, do we give the signal to attack?

No, Caesar — we'll counter when they charge.
Move forward; their generals want a word.

Nobody move until the signal.

Talk before fighting, then, countrymen?

Not because we prefer talk, the way you do.

Good words beat bad blows, Octavius.

You give good words along with your bad blows,
Brutus — as witness the hole you cut in Caesar's
heart while shouting "Long live Caesar! Hail,
Caesar!"

Antony, we still don't know what your blows are
like.

As for your words, they've stripped the bees of
Hybla and left them without any honey.

But not without their stings.

O yes, and soundless too,
For you have stol'n their buzzing, Antony,
And very wisely threat before you sting.

ANTONY

Villains, you did not so when your vile daggers
Hack'd one another in the sides of Caesar:

You show'd your teeth like apes, and fawn'd like
hounds,
And bow'd like bondmen, kissing Caesar's feet;
Whilst damned Casca, like a cur, behind
Struck Caesar on the neck.

O you flatterers!

CASSIUS

Flatterers!

Now, Brutus, thank yourself.
This tongue had not offended so today,
If Cassius might have rul'd.

OCTAVIUS

Come, come, the cause.

If arguing makes us
sweat,
The proof of it will turn to redder drops.
Look, I draw a sword against conspirators.
When think you that the sword goes up again?
Never, till Caesar's three and thirty wounds
Be well aveng'd; or till another Caesar
Have added slaughter to the sword of traitors.

BRUTUS

Without their buzzing too — because you've
stolen that, Antony, and very sensibly you make
your threats before you sting.

You criminals, you didn't do that when your
filthy daggers were knocking against each other
in Caesar's ribs.

You bared your teeth like apes and cringed like
dogs and bowed like slaves, kissing Caesar's feet
— while that damned Casca, like a mongrel,
struck him in the neck from behind.

You flatterers.

Flatterers!

Well, Brutus, you have yourself to thank.
That tongue wouldn't be insulting us today if
Cassius had had his way.

Enough — get to the point.

If arguing makes us sweat, settling it will draw
redder drops than sweat.

Look: I draw my sword against conspirators.
When do you think it goes back in the scabbard?
Never — not until Caesar's thirty-three wounds
are properly avenged, or until another Caesar
has been slaughtered by traitors' swords.

Caesar, thou canst not die by traitors' hands,
Unless thou bring'st them with thee.

OCTAVIUS

So I hope.

I was not born to die on Brutus' sword.

BRUTUS

O, if thou wert the noblest of thy strain,
Young man, thou couldst not die more
honourable.

CASSIUS

A peevish school-boy, worthless of such honour,
Join'd with a masker and a reveller.

ANTONY

Old Cassius still!

OCTAVIUS

Come, Antony; away!

Defiance, traitors, hurl we in your teeth.
If you dare fight today, come to the field;
If not, when you have stomachs.

Exeunt Octavius, Antony and their Army.

CASSIUS

Why now, blow wind, swell billow, and swim
bark!
The storm is up, and all is on the hazard.

BRUTUS

Ho, Lucilius!

Hark, a word with you.

Caesar, you can't die at traitors' hands unless
you bring the traitors with you.

That's what I expect.

I wasn't born to die on Brutus's sword.

Young man, even if you were the finest of your
family, you couldn't die more honourably than
that.

A bad-tempered schoolboy who doesn't deserve
the honour, teamed up with a party-going
playboy.

The same old Cassius.

Come on, Antony, let's go.

Traitors, we throw our defiance in your teeth.
If you dare fight today, come out on the field; if
not, come when you've found the stomach for
it.

Now let the wind blow, the waves rise, and the
ship sail on.

The storm has broken and everything is at stake.

Lucilius!

A word with you.

LUCILIUS

My lord?

Brutus and Lucilius talk apart.

CASSIUS

Messala.

MESSALA

What says my General?

CASSIUS

Messala,

This is my birth-day; as this very day

Was Cassius born.

Give me thy hand, Messala:

Be thou my witness that against my will

As Pompey was, am I compell'd to set

Upon one battle all our liberties.

You know that I held Epicurus strong,

And his opinion.

Now I change my mind,

And partly credit things that do presage.

Coming from Sardis, on our former ensign

Two mighty eagles fell, and there they perch'd,

Gorging and feeding from our soldiers' hands,

Who to Philippi here consorted us.

This morning are they fled away and gone,

And in their steads do ravens, crows, and kites

Fly o'er our heads, and downward look on us,

As we were sickly prey:

their shadows seem

A canopy most fatal, under which

Our army lies, ready to give up the ghost.

My lord?

Messala.

What does my general want?

Messala, today is my birthday — Cassius was
born on this very day.

Give me your hand, and be my witness that I'm
being forced, against my judgement and just as
Pompey was, to stake all our liberties on a single
battle.

You know I was a firm believer in Epicurus and
his teaching.

Well, I've changed my mind, and I half believe in
omens now.

On the way from Sardis, two great eagles came
down on our leading standard and perched
there, gorging themselves out of our soldiers'
hands, and they escorted us all the way here to
Philippi.

This morning they've flown off and gone, and in
their place ravens, crows and kites circle over
our heads, looking down on us as if we were
dying prey.

Their shadows make a kind of death-canopy, and
our army lies underneath it, ready to die.

MESSALA

Believe not so.

CASSIUS

I but believe it partly,

For I am fresh of spirit, and resolv'd

To meet all perils very constantly.

BRUTUS

Even so, Lucilius.

CASSIUS

Now, most noble Brutus,

The gods today stand friendly, that we may,

Lovers in peace, lead on our days to age!

But, since the affairs of men rest still uncertain,

Let's reason with the worst that may befall.

If we do lose this battle, then is this

The very last time we shall speak together:

What are you then determined to do?

BRUTUS

Even by the rule of that philosophy

By which I did blame Cato for the death

Which he did give himself, I know not how,

But I do find it cowardly and vile,

For fear of what might fall, so to prevent

The time of life, arming myself with patience

To stay the providence of some high powers

That govern us below.

CASSIUS

Then, if we lose this battle,

You are contented to be led in triumph

Thorough the streets of Rome?

Don't believe that.

I only half believe it.

My spirits are good and I'm determined to face

every danger steadily.

Just so, Lucilius.

Now, noble Brutus — may the gods be on our

side today, so that we can live out our lives into

old age as friends in peacetime.

But since human affairs are always uncertain,

let's think through the worst that could happen.

If we lose this battle, this is the last

conversation we'll ever have.

What have you decided to do in that case?

Following the same philosophy that made me

criticize Cato for killing himself — I can't quite

explain it, but I find it cowardly and

contemptible to cut your own life short out of

fear of what might happen, instead of arming

yourself with patience and waiting for whatever

the powers above have decided for us down

here.

So if we lose this battle, you're content to be

paraded as a prisoner through the streets of

Rome?

BRUTUS

No, Cassius, no:

think not, thou noble Roman,

That ever Brutus will go bound to Rome;

He bears too great a mind.

But this same day

Must end that work the Ides of March begun;

And whether we shall meet again I know not.

Therefore our everlasting farewell take.

For ever, and for ever, farewell, Cassius.

If we do meet again, why, we shall smile;

If not, why then this parting was well made.

CASSIUS

For ever and for ever farewell, Brutus.

If we do meet again, we'll smile indeed;

If not, 'tis true this parting was well made.

BRUTUS

Why then, lead on.

O, that a man might know

The end of this day's business ere it come!

But it sufficeth that the day will end,

And then the end is known.

Come, ho! away!

Exeunt.

No, Cassius, no.

Never think, noble Roman, that Brutus will go to

Rome in chains — his mind is too great for that.

But today has to finish what the Ides of March

started, and I don't know whether we'll meet

again.

So let's take a permanent farewell of each other.

For ever and for ever, goodbye, Cassius.

If we do meet again, we'll smile about this.

If not, then this parting was done properly.

For ever and for ever, goodbye, Brutus.

If we meet again we really will smile.

If not, then it's true — this parting was done

properly.

Lead on, then.

If only a man could know how the day's work

ends before it happens.

But it's enough that the day will end, and then

we'll know how.

Come on — away!

Act 5, Scene 2

THE SAME. THE FIELD OF BATTLE

A brief battlefield scene in the middle of the fighting at Philippi. Brutus sends Messala racing off with written orders for the legions on the far side of the field, having spotted that Octavius's wing

is fighting without conviction. He judges that one hard, immediate push will break them, and orders every unit to attack at once.

Original

Translation

Alarum. Enter Brutus and Messala.

BRUTUS

Ride, ride, Messala, ride, and give these bills
Unto the legions on the other side.

Ride, Messala, ride — take these written orders
to the legions on the other side of the field.

Loud alarum.

BRUTUS

Let them set on at once; for I perceive
But cold demeanor in Octavius' wing,
And sudden push gives them the overthrow.
Ride, ride, Messala; let them all come down.

Tell them to attack all at once. I can see that
Octavius's wing is fighting half-heartedly, and
one sudden push will break them.
Ride, Messala — get them all to come down.

Exeunt.

Act 5, Scene 3

ANOTHER PART OF THE FIELD

Cassius, driven back by Antony and unable to see clearly, sends Titinius to identify a body of troops and has Pindarus watch from a hill. Pindarus wrongly reports that Titinius has been captured, and Cassius — on his own birthday — makes Pindarus kill him with the same sword that stabbed Caesar. Titinius returns wearing a victory wreath from Brutus's men, finds Cassius dead, and kills himself too; Brutus arrives, calls Cassius "the last of all the Romans," and orders the army back into a second fight.

Original

Translation

Alarum. Enter Cassius and Titinius.

CASSIUS

O, look, Titinius, look, the villains fly!
Myself have to mine own turn'd enemy:
This ensign here of mine was turning back;
I slew the coward, and did take it from him.

Look, Titinius, look — the cowards are running!
I've become an enemy to my own men.
My standard-bearer here was turning to flee;
I killed the coward and took the flag off him.

TITINIUS

O Cassius, Brutus gave the word too early,

Who, having some advantage on Octavius,
Took it too eagerly: his soldiers fell to spoil,
Whilst we by Antony are all enclos'd.

Enter Pindarus.

PINDARUS

Fly further off, my lord, fly further off;
Mark Antony is in your tents, my lord.
Fly, therefore, noble Cassius, fly far off.

CASSIUS

This hill is far enough.

Look, look, Titinius;
Are those my tents where I perceive the fire?

TITINIUS

They are, my lord.

CASSIUS

Titinius, if thou lovest me,
Mount thou my horse and hide thy spurs in him,
Till he have brought thee up to yonder troops
And here again, that I may rest assur'd
Whether yond troops are friend or enemy.

TITINIUS

I will be here again, even with a thought.

Exit.

CASSIUS

Go, Pindarus, get higher on that hill,
My sight was ever thick.

Cassius, Brutus gave the order to attack too soon.

He had a small advantage over Octavius and pressed it too eagerly, and his soldiers broke off to loot — while we've been completely surrounded by Antony.

Get further away, my lord, further away.

Mark Antony is inside your camp.
Run, noble Cassius, get well clear.

This hill is far enough.

Look there, Titinius — are those my tents I can see burning?

They are, my lord.

Titinius, if you care for me, get on my horse and drive your spurs into him until he's carried you up to those troops over there and back again, so I can be certain whether they're friends or enemies.

I'll be back before you can think it.

Pindarus, go higher up that hill.
My eyesight was always poor.

Regard Titinius,

And tell me what thou notest about the field.

Pindarus goes up.

CASSIUS

This day I breathed first.

Time is come round,

And where I did begin, there shall I end.

My life is run his compass.

Sirrah, what news?

Above.

PINDARUS

O my lord!

CASSIUS

What news?

Above.

PINDARUS

Titinius is enclosed round about

With horsemen, that make to him on the spur,

Yet he spurs on.

Now they are almost on him.

Now, Titinius!

Now some light.

O, he lights too.

He's ta'en!

Shout.

PINDARUS

And, hark! they shout for joy.

CASSIUS

Come down;

Keep your eye on Titinius and tell me what you
see happening on the field.

Today is the day I was born.

Time has come full circle, and I'll end where I
began.

My life has run its course.

Well, what's the news?

(From above) My lord!

What's the news?

(From above) Titinius is completely surrounded
by horsemen who are riding hard at him — and
he's still spurring on.

Now they're almost on top of him.

Now, Titinius!

Some of them are dismounting.

And he's dismounting too.

He's captured!

Listen — they're cheering.

Come down.

behold no more.

O, coward that I am, to live so long,
To see my best friend ta'en before my face!

Pindarus descends.

CASSIUS

Come hither, sirrah.

In Parthia did I take thee prisoner;
And then I swore thee, saving of thy life,
That whatsoever I did bid thee do,
Thou shouldst attempt it.

Come now, keep thine

oath.

Now be a freeman; and with this good sword,
That ran through Caesar's bowels, search this
bosom.

Stand not to answer.

Here, take thou the hilts;

And when my face is cover'd, as 'tis now,
Guide thou the sword.

—Caesar, thou art

reveng'd,

Even with the sword that kill'd thee.

Dies.

PINDARUS

So, I am free, yet would not so have been,
Durst I have done my will.

O Cassius!

Don't watch any more.

What a coward I am, to have lived long enough
to see my best friend taken prisoner in front of
me.

Come here, man.

In Parthia I took you prisoner, and when I
spared your life I made you swear that whatever
I told you to do, you would do it.

Now keep that oath.

Be a free man from this moment — and with
this good sword, the one that went through
Caesar's guts, go into my chest.

Don't stop to argue.

Here, take the hilt, and when my face is covered,
as it is now, drive the blade home.

Caesar, you're avenged, and with the very sword
that killed you.

So I'm free — though I'd rather not have been
freed this way, if I'd dared do what I wanted.

Cassius!

Far from this country Pindarus shall run,
Where never Roman shall take note of him.

Exit.

Enter Titinius with Messala.

MESSALA

It is but change, Titinius; for Octavius
Is overthrown by noble Brutus' power,
As Cassius' legions are by Antony.

TITINIUS

These tidings would well comfort Cassius.

MESSALA

Where did you leave him?

TITINIUS

All disconsolate,
With Pindarus his bondman, on this hill.

MESSALA

Is not that he that lies upon the ground?

TITINIUS

He lies not like the living.

O my heart!

MESSALA

Is not that he?

TITINIUS

No, this was he, Messala,
But Cassius is no more.

Pindarus will run far away from this country,
somewhere no Roman will ever notice him
again.

It's only an even exchange, Titinius: Octavius
has been beaten by noble Brutus's forces, just
as Cassius's legions have been beaten by
Antony's.

That news would be a great comfort to Cassius.

Where did you leave him?

Utterly wretched, on this hill, with his servant
Pindarus.

Isn't that him lying on the ground?

He isn't lying like a living man.

My heart.

Isn't that him?

No — this was him, Messala.
Cassius is gone.

O setting sun,
As in thy red rays thou dost sink to night,
So in his red blood Cassius' day is set.
The sun of Rome is set.

Our day is gone;
Clouds, dews, and dangers come; our deeds are
done.
Mistrust of my success hath done this deed.

MESSALA

Mistrust of good success hath done this deed.

O hateful Error, Melancholy's child!
Why dost thou show to the apt thoughts of men
The things that are not?

O Error, soon conceiv'd,
Thou never com'st unto a happy birth,
But kill'st the mother that engender'd thee!

TITINIUS

What, Pindarus!

where art thou, Pindarus?

MESSALA

Seek him, Titinius, whilst I go to meet
The noble Brutus, thrusting this report
Into his ears.

I may say thrusting it;
For piercing steel and darts envenomed
Shall be as welcome to the ears of Brutus
As tidings of this sight.

TITINIUS

Setting sun, as you sink into night in your red
rays, so Cassius's day has set in his own red
blood.

Rome's sun has gone down.

Our day is over; clouds and damp and danger are
coming, and our work is finished.

It was doubt about how I'd done that caused
this.

It was doubt about the good news that caused
this.

Hateful Mistake, child of Depression — why do
you show men's ready minds things that aren't
there?

Mistake, so easily conceived, you're never
delivered safely; you always kill the mind that
gave birth to you.

Pindarus!

Where are you, Pindarus?

Go and find him, Titinius, while I go to noble
Brutus and drive this report into his ears.

I say drive it, because sharp steel and poisoned
arrows would be no less welcome to Brutus
than news of this sight.

Hie you, Messala,
And I will seek for Pindarus the while.

Exit Messala.

TITINIUS

Why didst thou send me forth, brave Cassius?
Did I not meet thy friends?
And did not they
Put on my brows this wreath of victory,
And bid me give it thee?

Didst thou not hear
their shouts?
Alas, thou hast misconstrued everything!
But, hold thee, take this garland on thy brow;
Thy Brutus bid me give it thee, and I
Will do his bidding.

Brutus, come apace,
And see how I regarded Caius Cassius.
By your leave, gods.

This is a Roman's part.
Come, Cassius' sword, and find Titinius' heart.

Dies.

Alarum. Enter Brutus, Messala, young Cato, Strato, Volumnius and Lucilius.

BRUTUS

Where, where, Messala, doth his body lie?

MESSALA

Lo, yonder, and Titinius mourning it.

BRUTUS

Titinius' face is upward.

Hurry, Messala, and I'll look for Pindarus in the
meantime.

Why did you send me out, brave Cassius?
Didn't I reach your friends?
And didn't they put this victory wreath on my
head and tell me to bring it to you?

Didn't you hear them cheering?

You misread every bit of it.
Here — let me put this garland on your head.
Your friend Brutus told me to give it to you, and
I'll carry out his order.
Brutus, come quickly, and see what I thought of
Caius Cassius.
By your leave, gods —
this is what a Roman does.
Come, Cassius's sword, and find Titinius's
heart.

Where, Messala? Where is his body?

Over there, with Titinius mourning over it.

Titinius is lying face up.

CATO

He is slain.

BRUTUS

O Julius Caesar, thou art mighty yet!

Thy spirit walks abroad, and turns our swords

In our own proper entrails.

Low alarums.

CATO

Brave Titinius!

Look whether he have not crown'd dead

Cassius!

BRUTUS

Are yet two Romans living such as these?

The last of all the Romans, fare thee well!

It is impossible that ever Rome

Should breed thy fellow.

Friends, I owe more

tears

To this dead man than you shall see me pay.

I shall find time, Cassius, I shall find time.

Come therefore, and to Thassos send his body.

His funerals shall not be in our camp,

Lest it discomfort us.

Lucilius, come;

And come, young Cato; let us to the field.

Labeo and Flavius, set our battles on.

'Tis three o'clock; and Romans, yet ere night

We shall try fortune in a second fight.

Exeunt.

He's dead.

Julius Caesar, you're still powerful.

Your spirit is loose in the world, and it turns our

own swords into our own guts.

Brave Titinius!

Look — he crowned the dead Cassius before he

died.

Are there two Romans still alive to match these?

Farewell, last of all the Romans.

Rome will never produce your equal.

Friends, I owe this dead man more tears than

you'll see me pay.

I'll find the time, Cassius. I'll find the time.

Come, then, and send his body to Thassos.

We won't hold the funeral in camp, in case it

demoralizes the men.

Lucilius, come. Come, young Cato. Back to the field.

Labeo and Flavius, get our units moving.

It's three o'clock, and Romans, before nightfall

we'll test our luck in a second battle.

Act 5, Scene 4

ANOTHER PART OF THE FIELD

In the thick of the second battle, young Cato shouts his own name as a challenge to the enemy and is killed. Lucilius protects Brutus by claiming to be Brutus himself, and offers a soldier money to kill him on the spot; the soldiers take him prisoner instead. When Antony arrives and sees the deception, he refuses to punish Lucilius, orders him treated well, and sends men to find out whether Brutus is alive or dead.

Original

Translation

Alarum. Enter fighting soldiers of both armies; then Brutus, Messala, young Cato, Lucilius, Flavius and others.

BRUTUS

Yet, countrymen, O, yet hold up your heads!

Hold your heads up, countrymen, hold them up!

CATO

What bastard doth not?

What man born to a real father wouldn't?

Who will go with me?

Who's coming with me?

I will proclaim my name about the field.

I'll shout my name across this field.

I am the son of Marcus Cato, ho!

I am the son of Marcus Cato!

A foe to tyrants, and my country's friend.

An enemy of tyrants and a friend to my country.

I am the son of Marcus Cato, ho!

I am the son of Marcus Cato!

Charges the enemy.

LUCILIUS

And I am Brutus, Marcus Brutus, I;

And I am Brutus — Marcus Brutus, that's me.

Brutus, my country's friend;

Brutus, my country's friend.

know me for

Know me for Brutus!

Brutus!

Exit, charging the enemy. Cato is overpowered, and falls.

LUCILIUS

O young and noble Cato, art thou down?

Young, noble Cato, are you down?

Why, now thou diest as bravely as Titinius,

Well, you die as bravely as Titinius did, and you

And mayst be honour'd, being Cato's son.

deserve honour, being Cato's son.

FIRST SOLDIER

Yield, or thou diest.

Surrender or die.

LUCILIUS

Only I yield to die:

There is so much that thou wilt kill me straight;

I surrender only in order to die.

Here's enough money to make you kill me on the spot —

Offering money

LUCILIUS

Kill Brutus, and be honour'd in his death.

— kill Brutus, and win honour by his death.

FIRST SOLDIER

We must not.

A noble prisoner!

We can't.

This is a noble prisoner.

SECOND SOLDIER

Room, ho!

Tell Antony, Brutus is ta'en.

Make way!

Tell Antony that Brutus is captured.

FIRST SOLDIER

I'll tell the news.

Here comes the General.

I'll take the news.

Here comes the general now.

Enter Antony.

FIRST SOLDIER

Brutus is ta'en, Brutus is ta'en, my lord.

Brutus is captured, my lord, Brutus is captured.

ANTONY

Where is he?

Where is he?

LUCILIUS

Safe, Antony;

Brutus is safe enough.

I dare assure thee that no enemy

Shall ever take alive the noble Brutus.

The gods defend him from so great a shame!

Safe, Antony.

Brutus is quite safe.

I can promise you that no enemy will ever take noble Brutus alive — the gods protect him from that kind of humiliation.

When you do find him, or alive or dead,
He will be found like Brutus, like himself.

ANTONY

This is not Brutus, friend; but, I assure you,
A prize no less in worth.

Keep this man safe,
Give him all kindness.

I had rather have
Such men my friends than enemies.

Go on,
And see whether Brutus be alive or dead;
And bring us word unto Octavius' tent
How everything is chanc'd.

Exeunt.

Whenever you find him, alive or dead, you'll find
him behaving like Brutus, like himself.

This isn't Brutus, friend, but I assure you he's
just as valuable a catch.

Keep this man safe and treat him well.

I'd rather have men like him as friends than as
enemies.

Go on, find out whether Brutus is alive or dead,
and bring us word at Octavius's tent about how
it all turned out.

Act 5, Scene 5

ANOTHER PART OF THE FIELD

With the battle lost, Brutus asks Clitus, then Dardanius, then Volumnius to help him die, and each refuses. Telling Volumnius that Caesar's ghost has now appeared to him twice, he says his hour has come, sends his friends away, and finally persuades Strato to hold the sword while he runs onto it, with his last words addressed to Caesar. Antony and Octavius arrive and Antony delivers the play's verdict — Brutus alone acted for the common good, "this was the noblest Roman of them all" — and Octavius orders him buried with a soldier's honours.

Original

Translation

Enter Brutus, Dardanius, Clitus, Strato and Volumnius.

BRUTUS

Come, poor remains of friends, rest on this rock.

CLITUS

Statilius show'd the torch-light; but, my lord,
He came not back:

Come on, what's left of my friends — rest here
on this rock.

Statilius signalled with his torch, my lord, but he
never came back.

he is or ta'en or slain.

He's either been captured or killed.

BRUTUS

Sit thee down, Clitus.

Sit down, Clitus.

Slaying is the word;

Killing is the word of the day — it's the fashion now.

It is a deed in fashion.

Hark thee, Clitus.

Listen, Clitus.

Whispering.

CLITUS

What, I, my lord?

What, me, my lord?

No, not for all the world.

Not for anything in the world.

BRUTUS

Peace then, no words.

Say nothing about it, then.

CLITUS

I'll rather kill myself.

I'd sooner kill myself.

BRUTUS

Hark thee, Dardanius.

Listen, Dardanius.

Whispers him.

DARDANIUS

Shall I do such a deed?

You want me to do a thing like that?

CLITUS

O Dardanius!

Dardanius!

DARDANIUS

O Clitus!

Clitus!

CLITUS

What ill request did Brutus make to thee?

What terrible thing did Brutus ask you to do?

DARDANIUS

To kill him, Clitus.

To kill him, Clitus.

Look, he meditates.

Look at him, deep in thought.

CLITUS

Now is that noble vessel full of grief,
That it runs over even at his eyes.

That noble vessel is so full of grief now that it's
spilling over at his eyes.

BRUTUS

Come hither, good Volumnius;
list a word.

Come here, good Volumnius.
A word with you.

VOLUMNIUS

What says my lord?

What is it, my lord?

BRUTUS

Why, this, Volumnius:
The ghost of Caesar hath appear'd to me
Two several times by night; at Sardis once,
And this last night here in Philippi fields.
I know my hour is come.

This, Volumnius.
Caesar's ghost has appeared to me twice at
night — once at Sardis, and again last night here
on the fields of Philippi.
I know my time has come.

VOLUMNIUS

Not so, my lord.

It hasn't, my lord.

BRUTUS

Nay I am sure it is, Volumnius.
Thou seest the world, Volumnius, how it goes;
Our enemies have beat us to the pit.

I'm certain it has, Volumnius.
You can see how things stand.
Our enemies have driven us to the edge of the
pit.

Low alarums.

BRUTUS

It is more worthy to leap in ourselves
Than tarry till they push us.
Good Volumnius,
Thou know'st that we two went to school
together;
Even for that our love of old, I pr'ythee
Hold thou my sword-hilts, whilst I run on it.

There's more dignity in jumping in ourselves
than in waiting for them to push us.
Good Volumnius, you know we two went to
school together
— for the sake of that old friendship, please hold
the hilt of my sword while I run onto it.

VOLUMNIUS

That's not an office for a friend, my lord.

Alarums still.

CLITUS

Fly, fly, my lord!

there is no tarrying here.

BRUTUS

Farewell to you; and you; and you, Volumnius.

Strato, thou hast been all this while asleep;

Farewell to thee too, Strato.

—Countrymen,

My heart doth joy, that yet in all my life

I found no man but he was true to me.

I shall have glory by this losing day

More than Octavius and Mark Antony

By this vile conquest shall attain unto.

So fare you well at once; for Brutus' tongue

Hath almost ended his life's history.

Night hangs upon mine eyes; my bones would
rest,

That have but labour'd to attain this hour.

Alarums. Cry within, "Fly, fly, fly!"

CLITUS

Fly, my lord, fly!

BRUTUS

Hence! I will follow.

Exeunt Clitus, Dardanius and Volumnius.

BRUTUS

I pr'ythee, Strato, stay thou by thy lord.

That's not a job for a friend, my lord.

Run, my lord, run!

There's no staying here.

Goodbye to you, and you, and you, Volumnius.

Strato, you've been asleep this whole time —
goodbye to you too, Strato.

Countrymen, it gives me joy that in my whole life
I never found a single man who wasn't loyal to
me.

I'll get more glory out of losing today than
Octavius and Mark Antony will ever get from this
squalid victory.

So goodbye, all of you at once, because Brutus's
tongue has nearly finished telling the story of
his life.

Night is closing over my eyes, and my bones
want their rest — all they've ever done is work
towards this hour.

Run, my lord, run!

Go — I'll follow.

Strato, please stay here with your master.

Thou art a fellow of a good respect;
Thy life hath had some smatch of honour in it.
Hold then my sword, and turn away thy face,
While I do run upon it.

Wilt thou, Strato?

STRATO

Give me your hand first.

Fare you well, my lord.

BRUTUS

Farewell, good Strato.

—Caesar, now be still:

I kill'd not thee with half so good a will.

You're a man who's well thought of, and there's
been a trace of honour in your life.

So hold my sword and turn your face away while
I run onto it.

Will you, Strato?

Give me your hand first.

Goodbye, my lord.

Goodbye, good Strato.

Caesar, rest now — I never killed you with half as
much willingness as this.

He runs on his sword, and dies.

Alarum. Retreat. Enter Antony, Octavius, Messala, Lucilius and the Army.

OCTAVIUS

What man is that?

Who is that man?

MESSALA

My master's man.

Strato, where is thy master?

My master's servant.

Strato, where is your master?

STRATO

Free from the bondage you are in, Messala.

The conquerors can but make a fire of him;

For Brutus only overcame himself,

And no man else hath honour by his death.

Free from the captivity you're in, Messala.

The winners can do nothing to him but burn his
body, because Brutus is the only one who
defeated Brutus, and no other man gets any
credit from his death.

LUCILIUS

So Brutus should be found.

That's how Brutus would have to be found.

I thank thee,

Brutus,

That thou hast prov'd Lucilius' saying true.

OCTAVIUS

All that serv'd Brutus, I will entertain them.

Fellow, wilt thou bestow thy time with me?

STRATO

Ay, if Messala will prefer me to you.

OCTAVIUS

Do so, good Messala.

MESSALA

How died my master, Strato?

STRATO

I held the sword, and he did run on it.

MESSALA

Octavius, then take him to follow thee,
That did the latest service to my master.

ANTONY

This was the noblest Roman of them all.
All the conspirators save only he,
Did that they did in envy of great Caesar;
He only, in a general honest thought
And common good to all, made one of them.
His life was gentle, and the elements
So mix'd in him that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, "This was a man!"

OCTAVIUS

Thank you, Brutus, for proving what Lucilius
said about you was true.

I'll take everyone who served Brutus into my
own household.

Will you spend your time with me, man?

Yes, if Messala recommends me to you.

Do that, good Messala.

How did my master die, Strato?

I held the sword and he ran onto it.

Then take him into your service, Octavius — the
man who did my master his last service.

This was the noblest Roman of all of them.
Every conspirator except him did what he did
out of envy of great Caesar.
He alone joined them out of an honest concern
for the general good of everyone.
His life was balanced, and the elements were so
evenly mixed in him that Nature herself could
stand up and say to the whole world, "This was a
man."

According to his virtue let us use him
With all respect and rites of burial.
Within my tent his bones tonight shall lie,
Most like a soldier, order'd honourably.
So call the field to rest, and let's away,
To part the glories of this happy day.

Exeunt.

Let's treat him as his virtue deserves, with full
respect and proper funeral rites.
Tonight his body will lie in my own tent, laid out
with honour, like a soldier's.
Now call the army to rest, and let's go and divide
up the glory of this fortunate day.

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