

The Death of Caesar from
Shakespeare: JULIUS CAESAR
Adapted by Arthur Mee

Caesar goes up to the Senate House.

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.
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.

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

BRUTUS. He is addressed; 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. Most high, most mighty, and most puissant Caesar,
Metellus Cimber throws before thy seat
An humble heart. (*Kneeling.*)

CAESAR. I must prevent thee, Cimber.
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 doth 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. 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 moved, if I were as you;
If I could pray to move, prayers would move me;
But I am constant as the northern star,
Of whose true-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,
Unshaked 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 –

CAESAR. Hence! Wilt thou lift up Olympus?

DECIUS BRUTUS Great Caesar –

CAESAR. Doth not Brutus bootless kneel?

CASCA. Speak, hands, for me! *Casca first, then the others and then Brutus stab Caesar.*

CAESAR. Et tu, Brute! Then fall, Caesar! *(He dies.)*

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

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

BRUTUS. People and senators, be not affrighted,
Fly not, stand still; ambition's debt is paid.

CASCA. Go to the pulpit, Brutus.

CASSIUS. Where is Antony?

TREBONIUS. Fled to his house amazed.
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.

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

BRUTUS. Grant that, and then is death a benefit;
So are we Caesar's friends that have abridged
His time of fearing death.
Stoop, Romans, stoop,

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 loved him.
If Brutus will vouchsafe that Antony
May safely come to him and be resolved
How Caesar hath deserved to lie in death,
Mark Antony shall not love Caesar dead
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;
Tell him, so please him come unto this place,
He shall be satisfied.

SERVANT. I'll fetch him presently.

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.

BRUTUS. But here comes Antony.
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,
Fulfil 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;
And pity to the general wrong of Rome
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
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 appeased
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.
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!
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,
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.

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 marketplace,
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.*)
You know not what you do. Do not consent
That Antony speak in his funeral.
Know you how much the people may be moved
By that which he will utter?

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 rites and lawful ceremonies.
It shall advantage more than do us wrong.

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. And you shall speak I
n 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.
All leave except Mark 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
A curse shall light upon the limbs of men;
Domestic fury and fierce civil strife
Shall cumber all the parts of Italy;
And Caesar's spirit ranging for revenge,
Shall in these confines with a monarch's voice
Cry Havoc! and let slip the dogs of war, (*To servant, entering*)
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 – O Caesar! (*Seeing the body.*)

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. He lies tonight within seven leagues of Rome.

ANTONY. Post back with speed and tell him what hath chanced.
Here is a mourning Rome, a dangerous Rome,
No Rome of safety for Octavius yet;
Hie hence, and tell him so. Yet stay awhile,
Thou shalt not back till I have borne this corse
Into the marketplace.