

**THE TRAGEDY OF JULIUS CAESAR**  
By  
William Shakespeare

**Act III, Scene I**



ACT III.

SCENE I. Rome. Before the Capitol; the Senate sitting.

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

CAESAR.

The Ides of March are come.

SOOTHSAYER.

Ay, Caesar; but not gone.

ARTEMIDORUS.

Hail, Caesar! read this schedule.

DECIUS.

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

ARTEMIDORUS.

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

CAESAR.

What touches us ourself shall be last served.

ARTEMIDORUS.

Delay not, Caesar; read it instantly.

CAESAR.

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 to-day may thrive.

CASSIUS.

What enterprise, Popilius?

POPILIUS.

Fare you well.

Advances to Caesar.

BRUTUS.

What said Popilius Lena?

CASSIUS.

He wish'd to-day 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.

[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.

CASCA.

Are we all ready?

CAESAR.

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.  
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.

METELLUS.

Caesar, thou dost me wrong.

CAESAR.

Caesar did never wrong but with just cause,  
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.

Great Caesar,—

CAESAR.

Doth not Brutus bootless kneel?

CASCA.

Speak, hands, 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!

[Dies. The Senators and People retire in confusion.]

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.

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.

[Re-enter Trebonius.]

CASSIUS.

Where's 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.

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 abridged  
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 o'er  
In States unborn and accents yet unknown!

BRUTUS.

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.

BRUTUS.

Soft, who comes here?

[Enter a Servant.]

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 honor 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;  
I never thought him worse.  
Tell him, so please him come unto this place,  
He shall be satisfied and, by my honour,  
Depart untouched.

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.

BRUTUS.

But here comes Antony.—

[Re-enter 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-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;  
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 amity, 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 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:  
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 death.—  
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 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.] 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.

[Aside to Cassius.] 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.

CASSIUS.

[Aside to Brutus.] I know not what may fall; I like it not.

BRUTUS.

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

ANTONY.

Be it so;  
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 quarter'd with the hands of war;  
All pity choked with custom of fell deeds:  
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.—

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.] 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.

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 market-place: 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.

[Exeunt with Caesar's body.]