

JULIUS CAESAR

A monologue from Act III, Scene ii

by: William Shakespeare

NOTE: *Julius Caesar* was first published in the folio of 1623. It is now a public domain work and may be performed without royalties.

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 interrèd 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 answered it [1].

Here under leave of Brutus and the rest

(For Brutus is an honorable man;

So are they all, all honorable men),

Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral.

He was my friend, faithful and just to me;

But Brutus says he was ambitious,

And Brutus is an honorable man.

He hath brought many captives home to Rome,

Whose ransoms did the general coffers [2] fill.

Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?

When the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept;

Ambition should be made of sterner stuff.

Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;

And Brutus is an honorable man.

You all did see that on the Lupercal [3]

I thrice presented him a crown,

Which he did thrice refuse. Was this ambition?

Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;

And sure he is an honorable man.

I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,

But here I am to speak what I do know.

You all did love him once, not without cause.

What cause withholds you then to mourn for him?

O judgment, 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.

HAMLET: To be, or not to be--that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles
And by opposing end them. To die, to sleep--
No more--and by a sleep to say we end
The heartache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to. 'Tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished. To die, to sleep--
To sleep--perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub,
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause. There's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life.
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of th' unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin?

The 2012 English-Speaking Union
National Shakespeare Competition
NEW YORK CITY BRANCH

As You Like It

Act III, Scene V, Lines 109-134 (with cuts)

Character: Phebe

Phebe: Think not I love him, though I ask for him;
'Tis but a peevish boy—yet he talks well—
But what care I for words? Yet words do well
When he that speaks them pleases those that hear.
It is a pretty youth—not very pretty—
But sure he's proud—and yet his pride becomes him.
He'll make a proper man. The best thing in him
Is his complexion; and faster than his tongue
Did make offence, his eye did heal it up.
He is not very tall—yet for his years he's tall;
His leg is but so so—and yet 'tis well;
There be some women, Silvius, had they mark'd him
In parcels as I did, would have gone near
To fall in love with him; but, for my part,
I love him not, nor hate him not; and yet
Have more cause to hate him than to love him,
For what had he to do to chide at me?
He said mine eyes were black and my hair black,
And, now I am rememb'ed, scorn'd at me.
I'll write to him a very taunting letter.

The 2012 English-Speaking Union
National Shakespeare Competition
NEW YORK CITY BRANCH

Hamlet

Act III, Scene III, Lines 73-93

Character: Hamlet

Hamlet: Now might I do it [pat], now 'a is a-praying;
And now I'll do't—and so 'a goes to heaven,
And so am I [reveng'd]. That would be scann'd:
A villain kills my father, and for that
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.

Why, this is [hire and salary], not revenge.
'A took my father grossly, full of bread,
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May,
And how his audit stands who knows save heaven?
But in our circumstance and course of thought,
'Tis heavy with him. And am I then revenged,
To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and season'd for his passage?
No!

Up, sword, and know thou a more horrid hent:
When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,
Or in th' incestuous pleasure of his bed,
At gaming a-swearing, or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in't—
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven.

The 2012 English-Speaking Union
National Shakespeare Competition
NEW YORK CITY BRANCH

Hamlet

Act II, Scene I, Lines 72-97 (with cuts)

Character: Ophelia

Ophelia: O my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted!
Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbrac'd,
Pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each other,
And with a look so piteous in purport
As if he had been loosed out of hell
To speak of horrors—he comes before me.
He took me by the wrist, and held me hard,
Then goes he to the length of all his arm,
And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face
As 'a would draw it. Long stay'd he so.
At last, a little shaking of mine arm,
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,
He rais'd a sigh so piteous and profound
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk
And end his being. That done, he lets me go,
And with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes,
For out a' doors he went without their helps,
And to the last bended their light on me.

The 2012 English-Speaking Union
National Shakespeare Competition
NEW YORK CITY BRANCH

Henry V

Act III, Scene I, Lines 1-34 (with cuts)

Character: King Henry

King Henry: Once more unto the breach, dear friends,
once more;

Or close the wall up with our English dead.

In peace there's nothing so becomes a man

As modest stillness and humility;

But when the blast of war blows in our ears,

Then imitate the action of the tiger;

Stiffen the sinews, [conjure] up the blood,

Disguise fair nature with hard-favour'd rage;

Hold hard the breath, and bend up every spirit

To his full height. On, on, you [noblest] English,

Whose blood is fet from fathers of war-proof!

For there is none of you so mean and base

That hath not noble lustre in your eyes.

I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips,

[Straining] upon the start. The game's afoot!

Follow your spirit; and upon this charge

Cry "God for Harry, England, and Saint George!"

Julius Caesar

Act III, Scene I, Lines 58-73

Character: Julius Caesar

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 unnumb'ed 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.

The 2012 English-Speaking Union
National Shakespeare Competition
NEW YORK CITY BRANCH

Julius Caesar

Act II, Scene I, Lines 255-298 (with cuts)

Character: Portia

Portia: I should not know you Brutus. Dear my lord,
Make me acquainted with your cause of grief.
What, is Brutus sick? 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, yourself, your half,
Why you are heavy, and what men to-night
Have had to resort to you; for here have been
Some six or seven, who did hide their faces
Even from darkness.
Is it expected I should know no secrets
That appertain to you?
I grant I am a woman; but withal
A woman that Lord Brutus took to wife.
Tell me your counsels, I will not disclose 'em.

The 2012 English-Speaking Union
National Shakespeare Competition
NEW YORK CITY BRANCH

Macbeth

Act V, Scene V, Lines 17-28

Character: Macbeth

Macbeth: She should have died hereafter;
There would have been a time for such a word.
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

The 2012 English-Speaking Union
National Shakespeare Competition
NEW YORK CITY BRANCH

The Merchant of Venice

Act I, Scene III, Lines 111-129

Character: Shylock

Shylock: You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,
And spet upon my Jewish gaberdine,
And all for use of that which is mine own.
Well then, it now appears you need my help.
Go to then, you come to me, and you say,
“Shylock, we would have moneys,” you say so—
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard,
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur
Over your threshold; moneys is your suit.
What should I say to you? Should I not say
“Hath a dog money? Is it possible
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?” Or
Shall I bend low and in a bondman's key,
With bated breath and whisp'ring humbleness
Say this:
“Fair sir, you spet on me on Wednesday last,
You spurn'd me such a day, another time
You call'd me dog; and for these courtesies
I'll lend you thus much moneys”?