Antony’s Funeral Speech Act III

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| Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears; |   |
|   | I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him. |   |
|   | The evil that men do lives after them; |  75 |
|   | 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. |  80 |
|   | 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: |  85 |
|   | 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? |  90 |
|   | 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 |  95 |
|   | I thrice presented him a kingly crown, |   |
|   | Which he did thrice refuse: was this ambition? |   |
|   | Yet Brutus says he was ambitious; |   |
|   | And, sure, he is an honourable man. |   |
|   | I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke, |  100 |
|   | 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; |  105 |
|   | 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? |  110 |   |
|   | 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  | If it be found so, some will dear abide it. |  |  |
| Second Citizen  | Poor soul! his eyes are red as fire with weeping. |   |  |
| Third Citizen  | There's not a nobler man in Rome than Antony. |  116 |   |
| Fourth Citizen  | Now mark him, he begins again to speak. |   |  |
| ANTONY  | But yesterday the word of Caesar might |   |  |
|   | Have stood against the world; now lies he there. |  |  |
|   | And none so poor to do him reverence. |  120 |   |
|   | O masters, if I were disposed 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; I rather choose |  125 |   |
|   | 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, 'tis his will: |  |  |
|   | Let but the commons hear this testament-- |  130 |   |
|   | 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, |  135 |   |
|   | Bequeathing it as a rich legacy |   |  |
|   | Unto their issue. |   |  |
| Fourth Citizen  | We'll hear the will: read it, Mark Antony. |   |  |
| All  | 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. |  141 |   |
|   | You are not wood, you are not stones, but men; |   |  |
|   | And, being men, bearing the will of Caesar, |   |  |
|   | It will inflame you, it will make you mad: |  |  |
|   | 'Tis good you know not that you are his heirs; |  145 |   |
|   | 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  | Will you be patient? will you stay awhile? |  |  |
|   | I have o'ershot myself to tell you of it: |  150 |   |
|   | I fear I wrong the honourable men |   |  |
|   | Whose daggers have stabb'd Caesar; I do fear it. |   |  |
| Fourth Citizen  | They were traitors: honourable men! |   |  |
| All  | The will! the testament! |  |  |
| Second Citizen  | They were villains, murderers: the will! read the will. |  155 |   |
| 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? |  160 |  |
| Several Citizens  | Come down. |   |  |
| Second Citizen  | Descend. |   |  |
| Third Citizen  | You shall have leave. |   |  |
|   | *ANTONY comes down.* |   |  |
| Fourth Citizen  | A ring; stand round. |   |  |
| First Citizen  | Stand from the hearse, stand from the body. |  |  |
| Second Citizen  | Room for Antony, most noble Antony. |  166 |   |
| ANTONY  | Nay, press not so upon me; stand far off. |   |  |
| Several Citizens  | Stand back; room; bear back. |   |  |
| ANTONY  | If you have tears, prepare to shed them now. |   |  |
|   | You all do know this mantle: I remember |  170 |  |
|   | The first time ever Caesar put it on; |   |  |
|   | 'Twas on a summer's evening, in his tent, |   |  |
|   | That day he overcame the Nervii: |   |  |
|   | Look, in this place ran Cassius' dagger through: |   |  |
|   | See what a rent the envious Casca made: |  175 |  |
|   | Through this the well-beloved Brutus stabb'd; |   |  |
|   | And as he pluck'd his cursed steel away, |   |  |
|   | Mark how the blood of Caesar follow'd it, |   |  |
|   | As rushing out of doors, to be resolved |   |  |
|   | If Brutus so unkindly knock'd, or no; |  180 |  |
|   | For Brutus, as you know, was Caesar's angel: |   |  |
|   | Judge, O you gods, how dearly Caesar loved him! |   |  |
|   | This was the most unkindest cut of all; |   |  |
|   | For when the noble Caesar saw him stab, |   |  |
|   | Ingratitude, more strong than traitors' arms, |  185 |  |
|   | Quite vanquish'd him: then burst his mighty heart; |   |  |
|   | And, in his mantle muffling up his face, |   |  |
|   | Even at the base of Pompey's statua, |   |  |
|   | Which all the while ran blood, great Caesar fell. |   |  |
|   | O, what a fall was there, my countrymen! |  190 |  |
|   | Then I, and you, and all of us fell down, |   |  |
|   | Whilst bloody treason flourish'd over us. |   |  |
|   | O, now you weep; and, I perceive, you feel |   |  |
|   | The dint of pity: these are gracious drops. |   |  |
|   | Kind souls, what, weep you when you but behold |  195 |  |
|   | Our Caesar's vesture wounded? Look you here, |   |  |
|   | Here is himself, marr'd, as you see, with traitors. |   |  |
| First Citizen  | O piteous spectacle! |   |  |
| Second Citizen  | O noble Caesar! |   |  |
| Third Citizen  | O woful day! |  200 |  |
| Fourth Citizen  | O traitors, villains! |   |  |
| First Citizen  | O most bloody sight! |   |  |
| Second Citizen  | We will be revenged. |   |  |
| All  | Revenge! About! Seek! Burn! Fire! Kill! Slay! |   |  |
|   | Let not a traitor live! |  |  |
| ANTONY  | Stay, countrymen. |  205 |   |
| 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: |  210 |   |
|   | What private griefs they have, alas, I know not, |   |  |
|   | That made them do it: they are wise and honourable, |   |  |
|   | And will, no doubt, with reasons answer you. |  215 |   |
|   | 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: |  220 |  |
|   | 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, |  226 |  |
|   | 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. |  230 |  |
| All  | We'll mutiny. |  |  |
| First Citizen  | We'll burn the house of Brutus. |   |  |
| Third Citizen  | Away, then! come, seek the conspirators. |   |  |
| ANTONY  | Yet hear me, countrymen; yet hear me speak. |   |  |
| All  | 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. |   |  |
| All  | Most true. The will! Let's stay and hear the will. |  240 |  |
| 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  | Hear me with patience. |  |  |
| All  | Peace, ho! |   |  |
| ANTONY  | Moreover, he hath left you all his walks, |   |  |
|   | His private arbours and new-planted orchards, |   |  |
|   | On this side Tiber; he hath left them you, |  250 |  |
|   | And to your heirs for ever, 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, |  255 |  |
|   | 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. Mischief, thou art afoot, |  261 |  |
|   | Take thou what course thou wilt! |  |  |