Antony’s Funeral Speech Act III

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 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! |  |  |