

William Shakespeare

Julius Caesar



+ Sidney Lee

**The Classic Biography:
The Life of William Shakespeare**

William Shakespeare and Sidney Lee

Julius Caesar (The Unabridged Play) + The Classic Biography: The Life of William Shakespeare

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Julius Caesar

PERSONS REPRESENTED

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JULIUS CAESAR

OCTAVIUS CAESAR, Triumvir after his death.

MARCUS ANTONIUS, " " "

M. AEMIL. LEPIDUS " " "

CICERO, PUBLIUS, POPILIUS LENA, Senators.

MARCUS BRUTUS, Conspirator against Caesar.

CASSIUS, " " "

CASCA, " " "

TREBONIUS, " " "

LIGARIUS, " " "

DECIUS BRUTUS, " " "

METELLUS CIMBER, " " "

CINNA, " " "

FLAVIUS, tribune

MARULLUS, tribune

ARTEMIDORUS, a Sophist of Cnidos.

A Soothsayer

CINNA, a poet. Another Poet.

LUCILIUS, TITINIUS, MESSALA, young CATO, and

VOLUMNIUS, Friends

to Brutus and Cassius.

VARRO, CLITUS, CLAUDIUS, STRATO, LUCIUS,

DARDANIUS, Servants to

Brutus

PINDARUS, Servant to Cassius

The Ghost of Caesar

Senators, Citizens, Soldiers, Commoners, Messengers,
and
Servants

CALPURNIA, wife to Caesar

PORTIA, wife to Brutus

SCENE: Rome, the conspirators' camp near Sardis, and
the plains of Philippi.

ACT I.

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SCENE I. Rome. A street.

[Enter Flavius, Marullus, and a Throng of Citizens.]

FLAVIUS.

Hence! home, you idle creatures, get you home!
Is this a holiday? What! know you not,
Being mechanical, you ought not walk
Upon a laboring day without the sign
Of your profession?—Speak, what trade art thou?

FIRST CITIZEN.

Why, sir, a carpenter.

MARULLUS.

Where is thy leather apron and thy rule?
What dost thou with thy best apparel on?—
You, sir; what trade are you?

SECOND CITIZEN. Truly, sir, in respect of a fine workman,
I am but, as you would say, a cobbler.

MARULLUS.

But what trade art thou? Answer me directly.

SECOND CITIZEN. A trade, sir, that, I hope, I may use
with a safe conscience, which is indeed, sir, a mender of
bad soles.

MARULLUS.

What trade, thou knave? Thou naughty knave, what
trade?

SECOND CITIZEN. Nay, I beseech you, sir, be not out with
me; yet, if you be out, sir, I can mend you.

MARULLUS.

What mean'st thou by that? Mend me, thou saucy fellow!

SECOND CITIZEN.

Why, sir, cobble you.

FLAVIUS.

Thou art a cobbler, art thou?

SECOND CITIZEN. Truly, Sir, all that I live by is with the awl; I meddle with no tradesman's matters, nor women's matters, but with awl. I am indeed, sir, a surgeon to old shoes; when they are in great danger, I recover them. As proper men as ever trod upon neat's-leather have gone upon my handiwork.

FLAVIUS.

But wherefore art not in thy shop today?

Why dost thou lead these men about the streets?

SECOND CITIZEN. Truly, sir, to wear out their shoes to get myself into more work. But indeed, sir, we make holiday to see Caesar and to rejoice in his triumph.

MARULLUS.

Wherefore rejoice? What conquest brings he home?

What tributaries follow him to Rome,

To grace in captive bonds his chariot wheels?

You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things!

O you hard hearts, you cruel men of Rome,

Knew you not Pompey? Many a time and oft

Have you climb'd up to walls and battlements,

To towers and windows, yea, to chimney tops,

Your infants in your arms, and there have sat

The livelong day with patient expectation

To see great Pompey pass the streets of Rome.

And when you saw his chariot but appear,

Have you not made an universal shout

That Tiber trembled underneath her banks

To hear the replication of your sounds
Made in her concave shores?
And do you now put on your best attire?
And do you now cull out a holiday?
And do you now strew flowers in his way
That comes in triumph over Pompey's blood?
Be gone!

Run to your houses, fall upon your knees,
Pray to the gods to intermit the plague
That needs must light on this ingratitude.
FLAVIUS.

Go, go, good countrymen, and, for this fault,
Assemble all the poor men of your sort,
Draw them to Tiber banks, and weep your tears
Into the channel, till the lowest stream
Do kiss the most exalted shores of all.
[Exeunt CITIZENS.]

See whether their basest metal be not moved;
They vanish tongue-tied in their guiltiness.
Go you down that way towards the Capitol;
This way will I. Disrobe the images,
If you do find them deck'd with ceremonies.
MARULLUS.

May we do so?

You know it is the feast of Lupercal.

FLAVIUS.

It is no matter; let no images
Be hung with Caesar's trophies. I'll about
And drive away the vulgar from the streets;
So do you too, where you perceive them thick.
These growing feathers pluck'd from Caesar's wing
Will make him fly an ordinary pitch,
Who else would soar above the view of men,
And keep us all in servile fearfulness.
[Exeunt.]

SCENE II. The same. A public place.

[Enter, in procession, with music, Caesar; Antony, for the course; Calpurnia, Portia, Decius, Cicero, Brutus, Cassius, and Casca; a great crowd following, among them a Soothsayer.]

CAESAR.

Calpurnia,—

CASCA.

Peace, ho! Caesar speaks.

[Music ceases.]

CAESAR.

Calpurnia,—

CALPURNIA.

Here, my lord.

CAESAR.

Stand you directly in Antonius' way,

When he doth run his course.—Antonius,—

ANTONY.

Caesar, my lord?

CAESAR.

Forget not in your speed, Antonius,

To touch Calpurnia; for our elders say,

The barren, touched in this holy chase,

Shake off their sterile curse.

ANTONY.

I shall remember.

When Caesar says "Do this," it is perform'd.

CAESAR.

Set on; and leave no ceremony out.

[Music.]

SOOTHSAYER.

Caesar!

CAESAR.

Ha! Who calls?

CASCA.

Bid every noise be still.—Peace yet again!

[Music ceases.]

CAESAR.

Who is it in the press that calls on me?

I hear a tongue, shriller than all the music,

Cry “Caesar”! Speak, Caesar is turn’d to hear.

SOOTHSAYER.

Beware the Ides of March.

CAESAR.

What man is that?

BRUTUS.

A soothsayer bids you beware the Ides of March.

CAESAR.

Set him before me; let me see his face.

CASSIUS.

Fellow, come from the throng; look upon Caesar.

CAESAR.

What say’st thou to me now? Speak once again.

SOOTHSAYER.

Beware the Ides of March.

CAESAR.

He is a dreamer; let us leave him. Pass.

[Sennet. Exeunt all but BRUTUS and CASSIUS.]

CASSIUS.

Will you go see the order of the course?

BRUTUS.

Not I.

CASSIUS.

I pray you, do.

BRUTUS.

I am not gamesome; I do lack some part
Of that quick spirit that is in Antony.

Let me not hinder, Cassius, your desires;
I'll leave you.

CASSIUS.

Brutus, I do observe you now of late:
I have not from your eyes that gentleness
And show of love as I was wont to have:
You bear too stubborn and too strange a hand
Over your friend that loves you.

BRUTUS.

Cassius,
Be not deceived: if I have veil'd my look,
I turn the trouble of my countenance
Merely upon myself. Vexed I am
Of late with passions of some difference,
Conceptions only proper to myself,
Which give some soil perhaps to my behaviors;
But let not therefore my good friends be grieved—
Among which number, Cassius, be you one—
Nor construe any further my neglect,
Than that poor Brutus, with himself at war,
Forgets the shows of love to other men.

CASSIUS.

Then, Brutus, I have much mistook your passion;
By means whereof this breast of mine hath buried
Thoughts of great value, worthy cogitations.
Tell me, good Brutus, can you see your face?

BRUTUS.

No, Cassius, for the eye sees not itself
But by reflection, by some other thing.

CASSIUS.

'Tis just:

And it is very much lamented, Brutus,

That you have no such mirrors as will turn
Your hidden worthiness into your eye,
That you might see your shadow. I have heard
Where many of the best respect in Rome,—
Except immortal Caesar!— speaking of Brutus,
And groaning underneath this age's yoke,
Have wish'd that noble Brutus had his eyes.

BRUTUS.

Into what dangers would you lead me, Cassius,
That you would have me seek into myself
For that which is not in me?

CASSIUS.

Therefore, good Brutus, be prepared to hear;
And since you know you cannot see yourself
So well as by reflection, I, your glass,
Will modestly discover to yourself
That of yourself which you yet know not of.
And be not jealous on me, gentle Brutus;
Were I a common laughers, or did use
To stale with ordinary oaths my love
To every new protester; if you know
That I do fawn on men, and hug them hard
And after scandal them; or if you know
That I profess myself, in banqueting,
To all the rout, then hold me dangerous.
[Flourish and shout.]

BRUTUS.

What means this shouting? I do fear the people
Choose Caesar for their king.

CASSIUS.

Ay, do you fear it?

Then must I think you would not have it so.

BRUTUS.

I would not, Cassius; yet I love him well,
But wherefore do you hold me here so long?

What is it that you would impart to me?
If it be aught toward the general good,
Set honor in one eye and death i' the other
And I will look on both indifferently;
For let the gods so speed me as I love
The name of honor more than I fear death.
CASSIUS.

I know that virtue to be in you, Brutus,
As well as I do know your outward favor.
Well, honor is the subject of my story.
I cannot tell what you and other men
Think of this life; but, for my single self,
I had as lief not be as live to be
In awe of such a thing as I myself.
I was born free as Caesar; so were you:
We both have fed as well; and we can both
Endure the winter's cold as well as he:
For once, upon a raw and gusty day,
The troubled Tiber chafing with her shores,
Caesar said to me, "Darest thou, Cassius, now
Leap in with me into this angry flood
And swim to yonder point?" Upon the word,
Accoutred as I was, I plunged in,
And bade him follow: so indeed he did.
The torrent roar'd, and we did buffet it
With lusty sinews, throwing it aside
And stemming it with hearts of controversy;
But ere we could arrive the point proposed,
Caesar cried, "Help me, Cassius, or I sink!"
I, as Aeneas, our great ancestor,
Did from the flames of Troy upon his shoulder
The old Anchises bear, so from the waves of Tiber
Did I the tired Caesar: and this man
Is now become a god; and Cassius is
A wretched creature, and must bend his body,
If Caesar carelessly but nod on him.

He had a fever when he was in Spain;
And when the fit was on him I did mark
How he did shake: 'tis true, this god did shake:
His coward lips did from their color fly;
And that same eye whose bend doth awe the world
Did lose his luster. I did hear him groan:
Ay, and that tongue of his that bade the Romans
Mark him, and write his speeches in their books,
Alas, it cried, "Give me some drink, Titinius,"
As a sick girl.—Ye gods, it doth amaze me,
A man of such a feeble temper should
So get the start of the majestic world,
And bear the palm alone.
[Shout. Flourish.]

BRUTUS.

Another general shout!
I do believe that these applauses are
For some new honors that are heap'd on Caesar.

CASSIUS.

Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world
Like a Colossus; and we petty men
Walk under his huge legs and peep about
To find ourselves dishonorable graves.
Men at some time are masters of their fates:
The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings.
"Brutus" and "Caesar": what should be in that "Caesar"?
Why should that name be sounded more than yours?
Write them together, yours is as fair a name;
Sound them, it doth become the mouth as well;
Weigh them, it is as heavy; conjure with them,
"Brutus" will start a spirit as soon as "Caesar."
Now, in the names of all the gods at once,
Upon what meat doth this our Caesar feed
That he is grown so great? Age, thou art shamed!

Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods!
When went there by an age since the great flood,
But it was famed with more than with one man?
When could they say, till now, that talk'd of Rome,
That her wide walls encompass'd but one man?
Now is it Rome indeed, and room enough,
When there is in it but one only man.
O, you and I have heard our fathers say
There was a Brutus once that would have brook'd
Th' eternal devil to keep his state in Rome,
As easily as a king!

BRUTUS.

That you do love me, I am nothing jealous;
What you would work me to, I have some aim:
How I have thought of this, and of these times,
I shall recount hereafter; for this present,
I would not, so with love I might entreat you,
Be any further moved. What you have said,
I will consider; what you have to say,
I will with patience hear; and find a time
Both meet to hear and answer such high things.
Till then, my noble friend, chew upon this:
Brutus had rather be a villager
Than to repute himself a son of Rome
Under these hard conditions as this time
Is like to lay upon us.

CASSIUS.

I am glad that my weak words
Have struck but thus much show of fire from Brutus.

BRUTUS.

The games are done, and Caesar is returning.

CASSIUS.

As they pass by, pluck Casca by the sleeve;
And he will, after his sour fashion, tell you
What hath proceeded worthy note today.

[Re-enter Caesar and his Train.]

BRUTUS.

I will do so.—But, look you, Cassius,
The angry spot doth glow on Caesar's brow,
And all the rest look like a chidden train:
Calpurnia's cheek is pale; and Cicero
Looks with such ferret and such fiery eyes
As we have seen him in the Capitol,
Being cross'd in conference by some senators.

CASSIUS.

Casca will tell us what the matter is.

CAESAR.

Antonius,—

ANTONY.

Caesar?

CAESAR.

Let me have men about me that are fat;
Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep o' nights:
Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look;
He thinks too much: such men are dangerous.

ANTONY.

Fear him not, Caesar; he's not dangerous;
He is a noble Roman and well given.

CAESAR.

Would he were fatter! But I fear him not:
Yet, if my name were liable to fear,
I do not know the man I should avoid
So soon as that spare Cassius. He reads much;
He is a great observer, and he looks
Quite through the deeds of men: he loves no plays,
As thou dost, Antony; he hears no music:
Seldom he smiles; and smiles in such a sort
As if he mock'd himself and scorn'd his spirit
That could be moved to smile at any thing.
Such men as he be never at heart's ease
Whiles they behold a greater than themselves;

And therefore are they very dangerous.
I rather tell thee what is to be fear'd
Than what I fear, for always I am Caesar.
Come on my right hand, for this ear is deaf,
And tell me truly what thou think'st of him.
[Exeunt Caesar and his Train. Casca stays.]

CASCA.

You pull'd me by the cloak; would you speak with me?

BRUTUS.

Ay, Casca, tell us what hath chanced today,
That Caesar looks so sad.

CASCA.

Why, you were with him, were you not?

BRUTUS.

I should not then ask Casca what had chanced.

CASCA. Why, there was a crown offer'd him; and being
offer'd him, he put it by with the back of his hand, thus;
and then the people fell a-shouting.

BRUTUS.

What was the second noise for?

CASCA.

Why, for that too.

CASSIUS.

They shouted thrice: what was the last cry for?

CASCA.

Why, for that too.

BRUTUS.

Was the crown offer'd him thrice?

CASCA. Ay, marry, was't, and he put it by thrice, every
time gentler than other; and at every putting-by mine
honest neighbors shouted.

CASSIUS.

Who offer'd him the crown?

CASCA.

Why, Antony.

BRUTUS.

Tell us the manner of it, gentle Casca.

CASCA. I can as well be hang'd, as tell the manner of it: it was mere foolery; I did not mark it. I saw Mark Antony offer him a crown;—yet 'twas not a crown neither, 'twas one of these coronets;—and, as I told you, he put it by once: but, for all that, to my thinking, he would fain have had it. Then he offered it to him again: then he put it by again: but, to my thinking, he was very loath to lay his fingers off it. And then he offered it the third time; he put it the third time by; and still, as he refused it, the rabblement shouted, and clapp'd their chopt hands, and threw up their sweaty night-caps, and uttered such a deal of stinking breath because Caesar refused the crown, that it had almost choked Caesar, for he swooned and fell down at it: and for mine own part, I durst not laugh for fear of opening my lips and receiving the bad air.

CASSIUS.

But, soft! I pray you. What, did Caesar swoon?

CASCA. He fell down in the marketplace, and foam'd at mouth, and was speechless.

BRUTUS.

'Tis very like: he hath the falling-sickness.

CASSIUS.

No, Caesar hath it not; but you, and I,
And honest Casca, we have the falling-sickness.

CASCA. I know not what you mean by that; but I am sure Caesar fell down. If the tag-rag people did not clap him and hiss him, according as he pleased and displeased them, as they use to do the players in the theatre, I am no true man.

BRUTUS.

What said he when he came unto himself?

CASCA. Marry, before he fell down, when he perceived the common herd was glad he refused the crown, he pluck'd me ope his doublet, and offered them his throat to cut: an I had been a man of any occupation, if I would not have taken him at a word, I would I might go to hell among the rogues:—and so he fell. When he came to himself again, he said, if he had done or said any thing amiss, he desired their worships to think it was his infirmity. Three or four wenches where I stood cried, “Alas, good soul!” and forgave him with all their hearts. But there's no heed to be taken of them: if Caesar had stabb'd their mothers, they would have done no less.

BRUTUS.

And, after that he came, thus sad away?

CASCA.

Ay.

CASSIUS.

Did Cicero say any thing?

CASCA.

Ay, he spoke Greek.

CASSIUS.

To what effect?

CASCA. Nay, an I tell you that, I'll ne'er look you i' the face again: but those that understood him smiled at one another and shook their heads; but for mine own part, it was Greek to me. I could tell you more news too: Marullus and Flavius, for pulling scarfs off Caesar's images, are put to silence. Fare you well. There was more foolery yet, if could remember it.

CASSIUS.

Will you sup with me tonight, Casca?

CASCA.

No, I am promised forth.

CASSIUS.

Will you dine with me tomorrow?

CASCA. Ay, if I be alive, and your mind hold, and your dinner worth the eating.

CASSIUS.

Good; I will expect you.

CASCA.

Do so; farewell both.

[Exit CASCA.]

BRUTUS.

What a blunt fellow is this grown to be!

He was quick mettle when he went to school.

CASSIUS.

So is he now in execution

Of any bold or noble enterprise,

However he puts on this tardy form.

This rudeness is a sauce to his good wit,

Which gives men stomach to digest his words

With better appetite.

BRUTUS.

And so it is. For this time I will leave you:

Tomorrow, if you please to speak with me,

I will come home to you; or, if you will,

Come home to me, and I will wait for you.

CASSIUS.

I will do so: till then, think of the world.—

[Exit Brutus.]

Well, Brutus, thou art noble; yet, I see,

Thy honorable metal may be wrought,

From that it is disposed: therefore 'tis meet

That noble minds keep ever with their likes;

For who so firm that cannot be seduced?
Caesar doth bear me hard, but he loves Brutus;
If I were Brutus now and he were Cassius,
He should not humor me. I will this night,
In several hands, in at his windows throw,
As if they came from several citizens,
Writings all tending to the great opinion
That Rome holds of his name; wherein obscurely
Caesar's ambition shall be glanced at:
And after this let Caesar seat him sure;
For we will shake him, or worse days endure.
[Exit.]

SCENE III. The same. A street.

[Thunder and lightning. Enter, from opposite sides,
CASCA, with his sword drawn, and CICERO.]

CICERO.

Good even, Casca: brought you Caesar home?
Why are you breathless, and why stare you so?
CASCA.

Are not you moved, when all the sway of earth
Shakes like a thing unfirm? O Cicero,
I have seen tempests, when the scolding winds
Have rived the knotty oaks; and I have seen
Th' ambitious ocean swell and rage and foam,
To be exalted with the threatening clouds:
But never till tonight, never till now,
Did I go through a tempest dropping fire.
Either there is a civil strife in heaven,
Or else the world too saucy with the gods,
Incenses them to send destruction.
CICERO.

Why, saw you anything more wonderful?

CASCA.

A common slave—you'd know him well by sight—
Held up his left hand, which did flame and burn
Like twenty torches join'd, and yet his hand
Not sensible of fire remain'd unscorch'd.
Besides,—I ha' not since put up my sword,—
Against the Capitol I met a lion,
Who glared upon me, and went surly by,
Without annoying me: and there were drawn
Upon a heap a hundred ghastly women,
Transformed with their fear; who swore they saw
Men, all in fire, walk up and down the streets.
And yesterday the bird of night did sit
Even at noonday upon the marketplace,
Howling and shrieking. When these prodigies
Do so conjointly meet, let not men say
"These are their reasons; they are natural";
For I believe they are portentous things
Unto the climate that they point upon.

CICERO.

Indeed, it is a strange-disposed time.
But men may construe things after their fashion,
Clean from the purpose of the things themselves.
Comes Caesar to the Capitol tomorrow?

CASCA.

He doth, for he did bid Antonius
Send word to you he would be there tomorrow.

CICERO.

Good then, Casca: this disturbed sky
Is not to walk in.

CASCA.

Farewell, Cicero.

[Exit Cicero.]

[Enter Cassius.]

CASSIUS.

Who's there?

CASCA.

A Roman.

CASSIUS.

Casca, by your voice.

CASCA.

Your ear is good. Cassius, what night is this!

CASSIUS.

A very pleasing night to honest men.

CASCA.

Who ever knew the heavens menace so?

CASSIUS.

Those that have known the earth so full of faults.

For my part, I have walk'd about the streets,

Submitting me unto the perilous night;

And, thus unbraced, Casca, as you see,

Have bared my bosom to the thunder-stone;

And when the cross blue lightning seem'd to open

The breast of heaven, I did present myself

Even in the aim and very flash of it.

CASCA.

But wherefore did you so much tempt the Heavens?

It is the part of men to fear and tremble,

When the most mighty gods by tokens send

Such dreadful heralds to astonish us.

CASSIUS.

You are dull, Casca; and those sparks of life

That should be in a Roman you do want,

Or else you use not. You look pale and gaze,

And put on fear and cast yourself in wonder,

To see the strange impatience of the Heavens:

But if you would consider the true cause

Why all these fires, why all these gliding ghosts,

Why birds and beasts, from quality and kind;

Why old men, fools, and children calculate;—
Why all these things change from their ordinance,
Their natures, and preformed faculties
To monstrous quality;—why, you shall find
That Heaven hath infused them with these spirits,
To make them instruments of fear and warning
Unto some monstrous state. Now could I, Casca,
Name to thee a man most like this dreadful night;
That thunders, lightens, opens graves, and roars,
As doth the lion in the Capitol;
A man no mightier than thyself or me
In personal action; yet prodigious grown,
And fearful, as these strange eruptions are.

CASCA.

'Tis Caesar that you mean; is it not, Cassius?

CASSIUS.

Let it be who it is: for Romans now
Have thews and limbs like to their ancestors;
But, woe the while! our fathers' minds are dead,
And we are govern'd with our mothers' spirits;
Our yoke and sufferance show us womanish.

CASCA.

Indeed they say the senators tomorrow
Mean to establish Caesar as a king;
And he shall wear his crown by sea and land,
In every place save here in Italy.

CASSIUS.

I know where I will wear this dagger then;
Cassius from bondage will deliver Cassius:
Therein, ye gods, you make the weak most strong;
Therein, ye gods, you tyrants do defeat:
Nor stony tower, nor walls of beaten brass,
Nor airless dungeon, nor strong links of iron
Can be retentive to the strength of spirit;
But life, being weary of these worldly bars,
Never lacks power to dismiss itself.

If I know this, know all the world besides,
That part of tyranny that I do bear
I can shake off at pleasure.
[Thunders still.]

CASCA.

So can I:

So every bondman in his own hand bears
The power to cancel his captivity.

CASSIUS.

And why should Caesar be a tyrant then?
Poor man! I know he would not be a wolf,
But that he sees the Romans are but sheep:
He were no lion, were not Romans hinds.
Those that with haste will make a mighty fire
Begin it with weak straws: what trash is Rome,
What rubbish, and what offal, when it serves
For the base matter to illuminate
So vile a thing as Caesar! But, O grief,
Where hast thou led me? I perhaps speak this
Before a willing bondman: then I know
My answer must be made; but I am arm'd,
And dangers are to me indifferent.

CASCA.

You speak to Casca; and to such a man
That is no fleering tell-tale. Hold, my hand:
Be factious for redress of all these griefs;
And I will set this foot of mine as far
As who goes farthest.

CASSIUS.

There's a bargain made.

Now know you, Casca, I have moved already
Some certain of the noblest-minded Romans
To undergo with me an enterprise
Of honorable-dangerous consequence;
And I do know by this, they stay for me

In Pompey's Porch: for now, this fearful night,
There is no stir or walking in the streets;
And the complexion of the element
Is favor'd like the work we have in hand,
Most bloody, fiery, and most terrible.

CASCA.

Stand close awhile, for here comes one in haste.

CASSIUS.

'Tis Cinna; I do know him by his gait;

He is a friend.—

[Enter Cinna.]

Cinna, where haste you so?

CINNA.

To find out you. Who's that? Metellus Cimber?

CASSIUS.

No, it is Casca, one incorporate

To our attempts. Am I not stay'd for, Cinna?

CINNA.

I am glad on't. What a fearful night is this!

There's two or three of us have seen strange sights.

CASSIUS.

Am I not stay'd for? tell me.

CINNA.

Yes,

You are. O Cassius, if you could but win

The noble Brutus to our party,—

CASSIUS.

Be you content. Good Cinna, take this paper,

And look you lay it in the praetor's chair,

Where Brutus may but find it; and throw this

In at his window; set this up with wax

Upon old Brutus' statue: all this done,

Repair to Pompey's Porch, where you shall find us.

Is Decius Brutus and Trebonius there?

CINNA.

All but Metellus Cimber, and he's gone
To seek you at your house. Well, I will hie
And so bestow these papers as you bade me.

CASSIUS.

That done, repair to Pompey's theatre.—
[Exit Cinna.]

Come, Casca, you and I will yet, ere day,
See Brutus at his house: three parts of him
Is ours already; and the man entire,
Upon the next encounter, yields him ours.

CASCA.

O, he sits high in all the people's hearts!
And that which would appear offense in us,
His countenance, like richest alchemy,
Will change to virtue and to worthiness.

CASSIUS.

Him, and his worth, and our great need of him,
You have right well conceited. Let us go,
For it is after midnight; and, ere day,
We will awake him, and be sure of him.
[Exeunt.]

ACT II.

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SCENE I. Rome. BRUTUS'S orchard.

[Enter Brutus.]

BRUTUS.

What, Lucius, ho!—

I cannot, by the progress of the stars,

Give guess how near to day.—Lucius, I say!—

I would it were my fault to sleep so soundly.—

When, Lucius, when! Awake, I say! What, Lucius!

[Enter Lucius.]

LUCIUS.

Call'd you, my lord?

BRUTUS.

Get me a taper in my study, Lucius:

When it is lighted, come and call me here.

LUCIUS.

I will, my lord.

[Exit.]

BRUTUS.

It must be by his death: and, for my part,

I know no personal cause to spurn at him,

But for the general. He would be crown'd:

How that might change his nature, there's the question:

It is the bright day that brings forth the adder;

And that craves wary walking. Crown him?—that:

And then, I grant, we put a sting in him,

That at his will he may do danger with.

Th' abuse of greatness is, when it disjoins
Remorse from power; and, to speak truth of Caesar,
I have not known when his affections sway'd
More than his reason. But 'tis a common proof,
That lowliness is young ambition's ladder,
Whereto the climber-upward turns his face;
But, when he once attains the upmost round,
He then unto the ladder turns his back,
Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees
By which he did ascend: so Caesar may;
Then, lest he may, prevent. And, since the quarrel
Will bear no color for the thing he is,
Fashion it thus,—that what he is, augmented,
Would run to these and these extremities:
And therefore think him as a serpent's egg
Which hatch'd, would, as his kind grow mischievous;
And kill him in the shell.
[Re-enter Lucius.]

LUCIUS.

The taper burneth in your closet, sir.
Searching the window for a flint I found
This paper thus seal'd up, and I am sure
It did not lie there when I went to bed.

BRUTUS.

Get you to bed again; it is not day.
Is not tomorrow, boy, the Ides of March?

LUCIUS.

I know not, sir.

BRUTUS.

Look in the calendar, and bring me word.

LUCIUS.

I will, sir.

[Exit.]

BRUTUS.