

Act II, Scene 1: Brutus' orchard in Rome**Brutus.**

Lucius!

*[Enter Lucius from the house.]***Lucius.**

Did you call, my lord?

Brutus.

Get a candle and put it in my study, Lucius. When it is lit, come and find me here.

Lucius.

I will, my lord.

*[Exit.]**[Brutus returns to his brooding.]*

Brutus. It can only be solved by Caesar's death. I'm thinking only of the general welfare. He wants to be crowned. The question is, how would that change his personality? Give him a crown, and then we have put a poisonous bite in him that he can cause trouble with whenever he wants. This power will corrupt him and make him a tyrant. He will only be concerned with his own desires and not the good of the people. Rather than let him do that, we must prevent it. Caesar's true nature, if allowed to develop would reach terrible extremes; So we must think of him as a serpent's egg, which, if it hatched, would like all serpents grow dangerous, and kill him before he hatches.

[Reenter Lucius with a letter.]

Lucius. The candle is burning in your private room, sir. While I was searching the window for a match, I found this paper, sealed up, and I am sure it wasn't there when I went to bed.

*[Gives him the letter.]***Brutus.**

Isn't tomorrow, boy, the ides of March?

Lucius.

I don't know, sir.

Brutus.

Look in the calendar and come tell me.

Lucius.

I will, sir.

*[Exit.]***Brutus.***[Opens the letter and reads.]*

"Brutus, you are asleep. Wake up, and see yourself! Shall Rome, etc. Speak, strike, right a wrong! Brutus, you are asleep. Wake up!" Suggestions like this have often been dropped where I have picked them up. "Shall Rome, etc." I must guess the rest of the sentence: Should Rome have such fear and respect for just one man? What, Rome? My ancestors drove the Tarquin from the streets of Rome when he was called a king. "Speak, strike, right a wrong!" Am I encouraged to speak and strike? O Rome, I promise you, if a solution for our troubles will come from my action, you will get everything you ask for from Brutus!

*[Reenter Lucius.]***Lucius.**

Sir, we are fifteen days into March.

*[Knocking within.]***Brutus.**

That's good. Go to the door; somebody is knocking.

[Exit Lucius.]

Since Cassius first aroused my suspicions concerning Caesar, I have not slept. The heart and mind debate the subject, while the man himself, like a small country, undergoes a civil war.

[Reenter Lucius.]

Lucius.

Sir, it's your friend Cassius at the door, who wants to see you.

Brutus.

Is he alone?

Lucius.

No, sir, there are more people with him.

Brutus.

Do you know them?

Lucius.

No, sir. Their hats are pulled down around their ears and half their faces are buried in their cloaks, so that there is no way I can tell who they are.

Brutus.

Let them in.

[Exit Lucius.]

[Enter the conspirators, Cassius, Casca, Decius, Cinna, Metellus Cimber, and Trebonius.]

Cassius.

I think we may have come too early. Good morning, Brutus. Are we disturbing you?

Brutus.

I was already up, awake all night. Do I know these men who have come with you?

Cassius.

Yes, every one of them; and there is no man here who doesn't honor you; and every one wishes you had the same opinion of yourself which every noble Roman has of you. This is Trebonius.

Brutus.

He is welcome here.

Cassius.

This, Decius Brutus.

Brutus.

He is welcome too.

Cassius.

This, Casca; this, Cinna; and this, Metellus Cimber.

Brutus.

They are all welcome. What trouble keep you awake at night?

Cassius.

Could I speak with you privately?

[They whisper.]

[Brutus and Cassius rejoin the others.]

Brutus.

Give me your hands, one at a time.

Cassius.

And let us swear our loyalty. What about Cicero? Shall we see what he thinks? I think he will support us.

Casca.

Let us not leave him out.

Cinna.

Yes, by all means.

Metellus.

O, let us get Cicero to join us! People will say that his sound judgement controlled us, and therefore our plan will be seen as a good one.

Brutus.

Don't mention him! Let us not confide in him, for he will never follow anything that is started by anyone but himself.

Cassius.

Then leave him out.

Casca.

Indeed, he is not suitable.

Decius.

Shall we kill only Caesar?

Cassius.

Decius, good point. I think it is not proper that Mark Antony, Caesar's good friend, should outlive Caesar. We will find that he is a schemer, and you know, if he had more power, he could be trouble for us; To prevent this, let Antony and Caesar die together.

Brutus.

Our actions will seem too violent, if we kill Antony, too. We are killing Caesar for a noble reason, the protection of Rome. There is no reason to kill Antony, too. .

Cassius.

Still I'm afraid of him, for in his deep-rooted friendship to Caesar--

Brutus.

Alas, good Cassius, don't think about him! If he cares for Caesar, the only thing he can do is to himself--Become depressed, and die for Caesar, though I don't think he will kill himself; he loves sports, wildness, and socializing too much to do such a thing.

Trebonius.

We have nothing to fear from him. Let's not kill him, for he will live and laugh at this later.

[Clock strikes.]

Cassius.

The clock struck three.

Trebonius.

It's time to go.

Cassius.

But we still don't know whether Caesar will leave his house today or not; He has become superstitious lately. These strange events, the unusual terrors tonight, and the arguments of his fortune-tellers may keep him away from the Capitol today.

Decius.

Don't be afraid of that. If he decides to stay home, I can change his mind. Let me work, for I can get him into the right mood, and I will bring him to the Capitol.

Cassius.

No, all of us will be there to bring him.

Brutus.

By eight o'clock. Do we all agree that eight is the latest we'll be there?

Cinna.

That's the latest, and don't fail then.

Metellus.

Caius Ligarius has a grudge against Caesar, who criticized him for supporting Pompey. I'm surprised none of you thought of him.

Brutus.

Now, good Metellus, go get him. He is my friend, for good reason. Send him to me, and I'll persuade him.

Cassius.

Morning is coming. We'll leave you, Brutus. And, friends, scatter yourselves; but everyone remember what you have said and prove yourselves true Romans.

Brutus.

Good gentlemen, get some sleep. Let's not let our appearances reveal what we are planning to do, but carry it off like our Roman actors do.

[Exit all but Brutus.]

Boy! Lucius! Fast asleep? It doesn't matter. Enjoy your rest. You have no dreams which worry puts in the brains of men; That's why you sleep so soundly.

[Enter Portia, Brutus' wife.]

Portia.

Brutus, my lord!

Brutus.

Portia! What are you doing? Why are you up at this hour?

Portia.

You have unkindly, Brutus, sneaked out of my bed. And last night at supper you suddenly got up and walked around, thinking and sighing with your arms crossed; And when I asked you what the matter was, you just stared at me. I asked again, then you scratched your head and too impatiently stamped your foot. Still I insisted, and still you would not answer, but with an angry gesture of your hand you motioned for me to leave you. So I did, because I was afraid of making your impatience even greater, and also I hoped it was only an effect of your mood, which affects every man at some time. It will not let you eat or talk or sleep, and if it could change your appearance the way it has changed your personality, I would not recognize you, Brutus. Dear husband, tell me what is upsetting you.

Brutus.

I am not feeling well, and that is all.

Portia.

Brutus is wise, and, if he were sick, he would do what was necessary to get well.

Brutus.

That's what I'm doing. Good Portia, go to bed.

Portia.

Do you expect me to believe that you're sick? Is it healthy to walk without a coat and breathe the air of a damp morning? No, my Brutus, you have a sickness of the mind, which, because I am your wife, I ought to know about; and on my knees I beg that you tell me, yourself, your half, why you are sad, and who were those men who visited you

Brutus.

Don't kneel, gentle Portia.

Portia.

I would not need to if you were gentle Brutus. Within the bond of marriage, tell me, Brutus, is it accepted that I shouldn't know any secrets that relate to you? Do I live only on the outskirts of your life? If that's all, Portia is Brutus' prostitute, not his wife.

Brutus.

You are my true and honorable wife, as important to me as the blood that visits my sad heart.

Portia.

If this were true, then I would know this secret. I admit that I am a woman, but also a woman that Lord Brutus chose as his wife. Tell me your secret; I will not disclose it. I have proved my strength by wounding myself here, in the thigh. Can I stand that pain, and not my husband's secrets?

Brutus.

O you gods, make me worthy of this noble wife.

[Knocking within.]

Listen! Someone's knocking. Portia, go inside for awhile, and soon you shall hear the secrets of my heart. I will explain all my dealings and the reason for my sad looks. Leave me quickly.

[Exit Portia.]

Lucius, who's knocking?

[Reenter Lucius with Caius-Ligarius.]

Lucius.

Here is a sick man who wishes to speak with you.

Brutus.

Caius Ligarius, the man Metellus spoke about. Boy, step aside. Caius Ligarius, how are you?

Caius.

Accept a good morning from a sick man.

Brutus.

O, what a time you have chosen, brave Caius, to be ill. I wish you were not sick!

Caius.

It is okay. Aren't some men well whom we need to make sick?

Brutus.

I will tell you the plan, Caius, while we go to see the person to whom it must be done.

Caius.

Lead the way, and with a newly enthusiastic heart I will follow, although I don't know what we are going to do; it is enough that Brutus is leading me.

[Thunder.]

Brutus.

Follow me, then.

[Exit.]

Act II, Scene 2: Caesar's house in Rome

[Enter Caesar in his nightgown.]

Caesar.

Three times Calpurnia has cried out in her sleep, "Help! They are murdering Caesar!" Who's there?

[Enter a servant.]

Servant.

My lord?

Caesar.

Go and ask the priests to make a sacrifice right away, then come and tell me the results.

Servant.

I will, my lord.

[Exit.]

[Enter Caesar's wife, Calpurnia, alarmed.]

Calpurnia.

What are you doing, Caesar? Are you planning to go out? You are not going to set foot out of the house today.

Caesar.

I am going. The things that have threatened me have never looked at anything but my back. When they see the face of Caesar, they will vanish.

Calpurnia.

There is a man inside, who tells of horrible sights seen by the watch, besides the things that we have heard and seen. A lioness has given birth in the streets, and graves have opened and given up their dead. Fierce fiery warriors fought in the clouds in ranks and squadrons and proper military formation, which rained blood on the Capitol. The noise of battle hurtled in the air, horses neighed, and dying men groaned, and ghosts shrieked and squeaked through the streets. O Caesar, these things are not like anything we are used to, and I am afraid of them!

Caesar.

How can anyone avoid something that is planned by the mighty gods? But Caesar will go forth, since these predictions apply to the world in general, not just to Caesar.

Calpurnia.

When beggars die no one sees comets; The heavens themselves proclaim with meteors and comets the death of princes.

Caesar.

Cowards die many times before their deaths; The valiant taste death only once. Of all the strange things I have heard so far, it seems to me the most strange that men are afraid, since death, the unavoidable end, will come when it will come.

[Reenter servant.]

What do the fortune tellers say?

Servant.

They don't want you to go out today. Pulling the insides of an offering out, they could not find a heart inside the animal.

Caesar.

Caesar will be a beast without a heart if he stays home today because of fear. No, Caesar will not. Danger knows full well that Caesar is more dangerous than he is. We are two lions born at the same time, and I am the oldest and more frightening of the two, and Caesar will go forth.

Calpurnia.

Alas, my lord! Confidence has made you stupid. Do not go forth today. Say that it is my fear that keeps you in the house and not your own. We'll send Mark Antony to the Senate House, and he will say that you are not well today.

Caesar.

Mark Antony will say I am not well, and because of your mood I will stay at home.

[Enter Decius.]

Here's Decius Brutus. He will take the message.

Decius.

Caesar, all hail! Good morning, worthy Caesar! I have come to bring you to the Senate House.

Caesar.

And you have come at the right time to take my greetings to the senators and tell them that I will not come today. Cannot is a lie; I will not come today. Tell them that, Decius.

Calpurnia.

Say that he is sick.

Caesar.

Shall Caesar send a lie? Have I done so much in battle and now I'm afraid to tell old men the truth? Decius, go tell them Caesar will not come.

Decius.

Most mighty Caesar, tell me some reason, or else I will be laughed at when I tell them this.

Caesar.

The reason is in my will; I will not come. That is enough to satisfy the Senate; But for your own peace of mind, because I am your friend, I will let you know. Calpurnia here, my wife, keeps me at home. She dreamed tonight that she saw my statue, pouring out pure blood, and many vigorous Romans came smiling and washed their hands in it. And she interprets these as warnings and signs of evils to come, and on her knee she begged that I would stay at home today.

Decius.

This dream is interpreted all wrong; It was a positive and fortunate vision. Your statue spouting blood from many pipes means that great Rome will suck life-giving blood from you, and that great men will come to you for honors and souvenirs to remember you by. This is what Calpurnia's dream means.

Caesar.

And you have explained it well.

Decius.

I have, when you hear what I have to say. You should know that the Senate has decided to give a crown to mighty Caesar today. If you send a message that you will not come, their minds might change. Besides, it's likely that someone will make sarcastic comments about you and talk about how weak you are. Pardon me, Caesar, for my sincere interest in your career makes me tell you this.

Caesar.

Now your fears seem foolish, Calpurnia! I am ashamed that I gave in to them. Give me my robe, for I will go.

[Enter Brutus, Ligarius, Metellus, Casca, Trebonius, Cinna, and Publius.]

And look, Publius has come to get me.

Publius.

Good morning, Caesar.

Caesar.

Welcome, Publius. Brutus, are you up so early too? Good morning, Casca and Caius Ligarius. What time is it?

Brutus.

Caesar, it has struck eight.

Caesar.

I thank you all for your trouble and courtesy.
[Enter Antony.]
See! Antony, who parties late into the night, is up early despite that. Good morning, Antony.

Antony.
And to you, most noble Caesar.

Caesar.
Ask them to set out refreshments inside. It is my fault that everyone is waiting for me. Now, Cinna, now, Metellus. What, Trebonius! I have an hour's talk waiting for you; Remember that you call on me today; Stay close to me, so that I will remember you.

Trebonius.
Caesar, I will. *[Aside.]* And I will be so close that your best friends will wish that I had been further away.

Caesar.
Good friends, go in and have some wine with me, and we (like friends) will go together right away.

Brutus.
[Aside.] That everyone who seems to be a friend is not necessarily one, O Caesar, the heart of Brutus grieves to think about.
[Exit.]

Act II, Scene 3: *A street in Rome near the Capitol, close to Brutus' house*

[Enter Artemidorus, reading a paper.]

Artemidorus.
"Caesar, beware of Brutus; watch out for Cassius; stay away from Casca; keep an eye on Cinna; don't trust Trebonius; observe Metellus Cimber carefully; Decius Brutus does not like you; you have offended Caius Ligarius. All these men have the same goal, and it is against Caesar. If you are not immortal, look around you. Overconfidence allows a conspiracy to succeed. The mighty gods defend you!

"Your devoted Friend,
"Artemidorus."

I will stand here until Caesar passes by and like a suitor I will give him this. My heart grieves that greatness cannot avoid the sharp teeth of envy. If you read this, O Caesar, you might live; If not, the Fates plot with traitors.

Act II, Scene 4: *In front of Brutus' house*

[Enter Portia and Lucius.]

Portia.
I beg you, boy, run to the Senate House. Don't wait to answer me, but get going!
Why are you waiting?

Lucius.
To find out what you want me to do, madam.

Portia.
I would have had you run there and back again before I told you what you should do there. O firmness of purpose, be strong beside me; Put a huge mountain between my heart and tongue! I have a man's mind, but a woman's strength. How hard it is for women to keep secrets! Are you still here?

Lucius.

Madam, what should I do? Run to the Capitol, and nothing else? And so return to you and nothing else?

Portia.

Yes, let me know, boy, if your master looks well, for he was sickly when he left; and notice what Caesar does, what suitors stand near him. Listen, boy! What is that noise?

Lucius.

I don't hear anything, madam.

Portia.

I ask you, listen well. I heard a commotion like a battle, and the wind brings it from the Capitol.

Lucius.

Truthfully, madam, I hear nothing.

[Enter the Soothsayer.]

Portia.

Come here, fellow. Where have you been?

Soothsayer.

At my own house, good lady.

Portia.

What time is it?

Soothsayer.

About the ninth hour, lady.

Portia.

Has Caesar gone to the Capitol yet?

Soothsayer.

Madam, not yet. I am going to take my place, to see him go to the Capitol.

Portia.

You have some favor to ask of Caesar, don't you?

Soothsayer.

Yes, I do, lady. If it will please Caesar to do himself a favor and listen to me, I shall beg him to act as his own friend.

Portia.

Why, do you know of any harm planned toward him?

Soothsayer.

None that I am certain of, much that I am afraid may happen. Good day to you. Here the street is narrow. The crowd that follows at Caesar's heels, of senators and common suitors, will crowd a feeble man almost to death. I'll move to a more open place and there speak to great Caesar as he comes along.

[Exit.]

Portia.

I must go in. Ay, me, how weak the heart of woman is! O Brutus, the heavens help you in your enterprise--Surely the boy heard me. Brutus has a request that Caesar will not want grant.--O, I grow faint.--Run, Lucius, and give my husband my good wishes; Say I am happy. Come back to me and tell me what he says to you.