Marc Antony Speech from Julius Caesar, by Wm Shakespeare.

SCENE II. The Forum.

Enter BRUTUS and CASSIUS, and a throng of Citizens  Citizens  We will be satisfied; let us be satisfied.

BRUTUS  Then follow me, and give me audience, friends. Cassius, go you into the other street, And part the numbers. Those that will hear me speak, let 'em stay here; Those that will follow Cassius, go with him; And public reasons shall be rendered Of Caesar's death.

First Citizen  I will hear Brutus speak.

Second Citizen  I will hear Cassius; and compare their reasons, When severally we hear them rendered.

Exit CASSIUS, with some of the Citizens. BRUTUS goes into the pulpit

Third Citizen  The noble Brutus is ascended: silence!

BRUTUS  Be patient till the last. Romans, countrymen, and lovers! hear me for my cause, and be silent, that you may hear: believe me for mine honour, and have respect to mine honour, that you may believe: censure me in your wisdom, and awake your senses, that you may the better judge. If there be any in this assembly, any dear friend of Caesar's, to him I say, that Brutus' love to Caesar was no less than his. If then that friend demand why Brutus rose against Caesar, this is my answer: --Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more. Had you rather Caesar were living and die all slaves, than that Caesar were dead, to live all free men? As Caesar loved me, I weep for him; as he was fortunate, I rejoice at it; as he was valiant, I honour him: but, as he was ambitious, I slew him. There is tears for his love; joy for his fortune; honour for his valour; and death for his ambition. Who is here so base that would be a bondman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so rude that would not be a Roman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so vile that will not love his country? If any, speak; for him have I offended. I pause for a reply.

All  None, Brutus, none.

BRUTUS  Then none have I offended. I have done no more to Caesar than you shall do to Brutus. The question of his death is enrolled in the Capitol; his glory not extenuated, wherein he was worthy, nor his offences enforced, for which he suffered death.

Enter ANTONY and others, with CAESAR's body

Here comes his body, mourned by Mark Antony: who, though he had no hand in his death, shall receive the benefit of his dying, a place in the commonwealth; as which of you shall not? With this I depart,--that, as I slew my best lover for the good of Rome, I have the same dagger for myself, when it shall please my country to need my death.

All  Live, Brutus! live, live!

First Citizen  Bring him with triumph home unto his house.

Second Citizen  Give him a statue with his ancestors.

Third Citizen  Let him be Caesar.

Fourth Citizen  Caesar's better parts Shall be crown'd in Brutus.

First Citizen  We'll bring him to his house With shouts and clamours.

BRUTUS  My countrymen,--

Second Citizen  Peace, silence! Brutus speaks.

First Citizen  Peace, ho!

BRUTUS  Good countrymen, let me depart alone, And, for my sake, stay here with Antony: Do grace to Caesar's corpse, and grace his speech Tending to Caesar's glories; which Mark Antony, By our permission, is allow'd to make. I do entreat you, not a man depart, Save I alone, till Antony have spoke.

Exit

First Citizen  Stay, ho! and let us hear Mark Antony.

Third Citizen  Let him go up into the public chair; We'll hear him. Noble Antony, go up.

ANTONY  For Brutus' sake, I am beholding to you.

Goes into the pulpit

Fourth Citizen  What does he say of Brutus?

Third Citizen  He says, for Brutus' sake, He finds himself beholding to us all.

Fourth Citizen  'Twere best he speak no harm of Brutus here.

First Citizen  This Caesar was a tyrant.

Third Citizen  Nay, that's certain: We are blest that Rome is rid of him.

Second Citizen  Peace! let us hear what Antony can say.

ANTONY  You gentle Romans,--

Citizens  Peace, ho! let us hear him

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 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. 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: 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? 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 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, 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.

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? 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.

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. 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 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-- 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, 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. 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; 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: 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.

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?

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.

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 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: 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; 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, 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! 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 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!

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.

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: 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. 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: 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, 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.

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.

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, 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, 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, any thing.

Exeunt Citizens with the body

ANTONY  Now let it work. Mischief, thou art afoot, Take thou what course thou wilt!