

SHAKESPEARIENCE!

Swords, Scenes & Soliloquies

JULIUS CAESAR

10

Act II, scene 2: *Caesar to the Capitol*

Caesar, Calpurnia, Metellus

CAESAR

Nor heaven nor earth have been at peace to-night:
Thrice hath Calpurnia in her sleep cried out,
'Help, ho! they murder Caesar!' *[Enter CALPURNIA]*

CALPURNIA

What mean you, Caesar? think you to walk forth?
You shall not stir out of your house to-day.

CAESAR

Caesar shall forth: the things that threaten'd me
Ne'er look'd but on my back; when they shall see
The face of Caesar, they are vanished.

CALPURNIA

Caesar, I never stood on ceremonies, yet now they fright me.
There is one within, besides the things that we have heard and seen,
recounts most horrid sights seen by the watch.
A lioness hath whelped in the streets;
And graves have yawn'd, and yielded up their dead;
Fierce fiery warriors fought upon the clouds,
In ranks and squadrons and right form of war,
Which drizzled blood upon the Capitol;
The noise of battle hurtled in the air,
Horses did neigh, and dying men did groan,
And ghosts did shriek and squeal about the streets.

O Caesar! these things are beyond all use,
And I do fear them.

CAESAR

What can be avoided whose end is purposed by the mighty gods?
Yet Caesar shall go forth.

CALPURNIA

When beggars die, there are no comets seen;
The heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes.

CAESAR

Caesar should be a beast without a heart,
If he should stay at home today for fear.
No, Caesar shall go forth.

CALPURNIA

Alas, my lord,
Your wisdom is consumed in confidence.
Do not go forth to-day: call it my fear
That keeps you in the house, and not your own.
We'll send Mark Antony to the senate-house:
And he shall say you are not well today.
Let me, upon my knee, prevail in this.

CAESAR

Mark Antony shall say I am not well,
And, for thy humour, I will stay at home.

[Enter METELLUS]

Here's Metellus, he shall tell them so.

METELLUS

Caesar, all hail! good morrow, worthy Caesar:
I come to fetch you to the senate-house.

CAESAR

And you are come in very happy time,
To bear my greeting to the senators
And tell them that I will not come to-day.

CALPURNIA

Say he is sick.

METELLUS

Most mighty Caesar, let me know some cause,
Lest I be laugh'd at when I tell them so.

CAESAR

The cause is in my will: I will not come;
That is enough to satisfy the senate.
But for your private satisfaction, because I love you,
I will let you alone know:
Calpurnia stays me at home:
She dreamt to-night she saw my statue,
Which, like a fountain with an hundred spouts,
Did run pure blood: and many lusty Romans
Came smiling, and did bathe their hands in it:
And these does she apply for warnings, and evils imminent;
and on her knee hath begg'd that I will stay at home today.

METELLUS

Here is what I can say:
And know it now: the senate have concluded
To give this day a crown to mighty Caesar.
If you shall send them *word* you will not come,
Their minds may change.
If Caesar hide himself, shall they not whisper
'Lo, Caesar is afraid'?
Pardon me, Caesar; for my dear dear love
To our proceeding bids me tell you this...

CAESAR

How foolish do your fears seem now, *Calpurnia!*
I am ashamed I did yield to them.
I will go.

