

CASSIUS

I know that virtue to be in you, Brutus,
As well as I do know your outward favour.
Well, honour 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 colour fly,
And that same eye whose bend doth awe the world
Did lose his lustre: 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, Tintinius,'
As a sick girl. Ye gods, it doth amaze me
A man of such a feeble temper should

CASSIUS

I know this quality in you, Brutus—it's as familiar to me as your face. Indeed, honor is what I want to talk to you about. I don't know what you and other men think of this life, but as for me, I'd rather not live at all than live to worship a man as ordinary as myself. I was born as free as Caesar. So were you. We both have eaten as well, and we can both endure the cold winter as well as he. Once, on a cold and windy day, when the river Tiber was crashing against its banks, Caesar said to me, "Cassius, I dare you to jump into this rough water with me and swim to that point there." As soon as he spoke, though I was fully dressed, I plunged in and called for him to follow. And he did. The water roared, and we fought against it with vigorous arms. And, thanks to our fierce competitiveness, we made progress. But before we reached the end point, Caesar cried, "Help me, Cassius, or I will sink!" And just as Aeneas, the hero who founded Rome, emerged from the fires of Troy with his elderly father Anchises on his shoulder, so I emerged from the Tiber carrying the tired Caesar. And this is the man who has now become a god, and I'm a wretched creature who must bow down if Caesar so much as carelessly nods my way. In Spain, Caesar had a fever, and it made him shake. It's true, this so-called "god"—he shook. His cowardly lips turned white, and the same eye whose gaze terrifies the world lost its gleam. I heard him groan—yes, I did—and the same tongue that ordered the Romans to obey him and transcribe his speeches in their books cried, "Give me some water, Titinius," like a sick girl. It astounds me that such a weak man could beat the whole world and carry the trophy of victory alone.

So get the start of the majestic world
And bear the palm alone.



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