

Julius Caesar

Act V, sc. 1 (line 84 - intercut)

CASSIUS

This is my birth-day; as this very day
Was Cassius born. Give me thy hand, Messala:
Be thou my witness that against my will,
As Pompey was, am I compell'd to set
Upon one battle all our liberties.
You know that I held Epicurus strong
And his opinion: now I change my mind,
And partly credit things that do presage.
Coming from Sardis, on our former ensign
Two mighty eagles fell, and there they perch'd,
Gorging and feeding from our soldiers' hands;
Who to Philippi here consorted us:
This morning are they fled away and gone;
And in their steads do ravens, crows and kites,
Fly o'er our heads and downward look on us,
As we were sickly prey: their shadows seem
A canopy most fatal, under which
Our army lies, ready to give up the ghost.

MESSALA
Believe not so.

CASSIUS

I but believe it partly;

For I am fresh of spirit and resolved

To meet all perils very constantly.

BRUTUS

Even so, Lucilius.

CASSIUS

Now, most noble Brutus,

The gods to-day stand friendly, that we may,

Lovers in peace, lead on our days to age!

But since the affairs of men rest still uncertain,

Let's reason with the worst that may befall.

If we do lose this battle, then is this

The very last time we shall speak together:

What are you then determined to do?

BRUTUS

*Even by the rule of that philosophy
By which I did blame Cato for the death
Which he did give himself, I know not how,
But I do find it cowardly and vile,
For fear of what might fall, so to prevent
The time of life: arming myself with patience
To stay the providence of some high powers
That govern us below.*

CASSIUS

Then, if we lose this battle,

You are contented to be led in triumph

Thorough the streets of Rome?

BRUTUS

*No, Cassius, no: think not, thou noble Roman,
That ever Brutus will go bound to Rome;
He bears too great a mind. But this same day
Must end that work the ides of March begun;
And whether we shall meet again I know not.*

*Therefore our everlasting farewell take:
For ever, and for ever, farewell, Cassius!
If we do meet again, why, we shall smile;
If not, why then, this parting was well made.*

CASSIUS

For ever, and for ever, farewell, Brutus!

If we do meet again, we'll smile indeed;

If not, 'tis true this parting was well made.