



When Brutus observes that the conspirators cannot hide their intentions even in Erubus, he is referring to a part of Hades, the underworld of Greek mythology. According to some myth versions, Erubus is a dim, dark place where people go as soon as they die. From Erubus, the dead who lived evil lives pass on to Tartarus, where they are imprisoned and punished, while the good go to the Elysian Fields to be rewarded.

◆ Erubus

in context Humanities Connection

Literature

Since Cassius first did whet²³ me against Caesar,
I have not slept.
Between the acting of a dreadful thing
And the first motion,²⁴ all the interim is
Like a phantasma,²⁵ or a hideous dream.
The genius and the mortal instruments²⁶
Are then in council, and the state of a man,
Like to a little kingdom, suffers then
The nature of an insurrection.²⁷

[Enter LUCIUS.]

LUCIUS. Sir, 'tis your brother²⁸ Cassius at the door.
Who doth desire to see you.

BRUTUS. Is he alone?

LUCIUS. No, sir, there are more²⁹ with him.

BRUTUS. Do you know them?

LUCIUS. No, sir; their hats are plucked about their ears,
And half their faces buried in their cloaks,
That by no means I may discover them
By any mark of favor.³⁰

BRUTUS. Let 'em enter.

[Exit LUCIUS.]

They are the faction. O conspiracy,
Sham'st thou to show thy dangerous brow by night,
When evils are most free? O, then by day
Where wilt thou find a cavern dark enough
To mask thy monstrous visage? Seek none, conspiracy:
Hide it in smiles and affability:
For if thou path, thy native semblance on,³¹
Not Erubus³² itself were dim enough
To hide thee from prevention.³²

[Enter the conspirators, CASSIUS, CASCA, DECIVS, CINNA, METELLUS CIMBER, and TREBONIUS.]

Who shows
up at Brutus'
house?
How are
they acting?

23. whet (hwet) v. sharpen; incite.
24. motion idea; suggestion.
25. all the . . . a phantasma all the time between seems like a nightmare.
26. mortal instruments bodily powers.
27. insurrection (in'se rek' shen) n. revolt.
28. brother brother-in-law (Cassius was married to Brutus' sister).
29. more more.
30. discover . . . favor identify them by their appearance.
31. path . . . semblance on walk looking as you normally do.
- conspiracy (ken spir' e se) n. group plotting harm or the plot itself
- Literary Analysis**
- Blank Verse Which interjection does Shakespeare use to maintain the iambic pentameter of lines 77 and 79?
32. prevention being discovered and stopped.
- Reading Check**
- What is troubling Brutus?