

BRUTUS. I would not, Cassius, yet I love him well.

But wherefore do you hold me here so long?

What is it that you would impart to me?

85 If it be aught toward the general good,²⁷

Set honor in one eye and death i' th' other,

And I will look on both indifferently;²⁸

For let the gods so speed²⁹ me, as I love

The name of honor more than I fear death.

90 CASSIUS. I know that virtue to be in you, Brutus,

As well as I do know your outward favor.³⁰

Well, honor is the subject of my story.

I cannot tell what you and other men

Think of this life, but for my single self,

95 I had as lief not be,³¹ as live to be

In awe of such a thing as I myself.³²

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:

100 For once, upon a raw and gusty day,

The troubled Tiber chafing with³³ 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,

105 Accout'red³⁴ as I was, I plungèd in

And bade him follow: so indeed he did.

The torrent roared, and we did buffet³⁵ it

With lusty sinews,³⁶ throwing it aside

And stemming it with hearts of controversy.³⁷

110 But ere we could arrive the point proposed,

Caesar cried "Help me, Cassius, or I sink!"

I, as Aeneas,³⁸ our Great ancestor,

Did from the flames of Troy upon his shoulder

The old Anchises bear, so from the waves of Tiber

115 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,

120 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 color fly,³⁹

And that same eye whose bend⁴⁰ doth awe the world

did lose his⁴¹ luster: I did hear him groan;

125 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, Titinius,"

As a sick girl. Ye gods! It doth amaze me,

A man of such a feeble temper⁴² should

Literary Analysis

Exposition How do

Brutus' first statements illustrate his conflict?

27. aught . . . good

anything to do with the public welfare.

28. indifferently without preference or concern

29. speed give good fortune to.

30. favor face; appear

31. as lief not be just as soon not exist.

32. such a thing as I myself another human being (Caesar).

33. chafing with raging against.

34. Accout'red dressed in armor.

35. buffet (buff it) v. struggle against.

36. lusty sinews (sin) strong muscles.

37. stemming it . . . controversy making progress it with our intense rivalry

38. Aeneas (i nē' əs) 1 hero of the poet Virgil's poem *Aeneid*, who carried his old father, Anchises, from the burning city of Troy to later founded Rome.

39. His coward lips . color fled from his lips, which were like coward soldiers fleeing from a

40. bend n. glance.

41. his its.

42. feeble temper weak physical constitution.