

Julius Caesar: A Look at Mark Antony's Funeral Oration – Act III, scene 2 (excerpt)

Determine what rhetorical devices Mark Antony is using to persuade the crowd (plebeians).

ANTONY

Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears:

I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.

The evil that men do lives after them:

The good is oft interrèd with their bones.

buried treasure

So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus

Hath told you Caesar was ambitious:

If it were so, it was a grievous fault,

And grievously hath Caesar answered it.

paid for it

Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest—

permission

For Brutus is an honourable man:

So are they all, all honourable men—

Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral.

He was my friend, faithful and just to me:

But Brutus says he was ambitious,

And Brutus is an honourable man.

He hath brought many captives home to Rome,

Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill:

public treasury

Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?

When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept:

Ambition should be made of sterner stuff.

Yet Brutus says he was ambitious,

And Brutus is an honourable man.

You all did see that on the Lupercal *Roman festival which honoured the god of shepherds, Lupercus*

I thrice presented him a kingly crown,

Which he did thrice refuse. Was this ambition?

Yet Brutus says, he was ambitious,

And sure he is an honourable man.

I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,

prove wrong, refute

But here I am to speak what I do know.

You all did love him once, not without cause:

What cause withholds you then to mourn for him?—

O judgment! Thou art fled to brutish beasts

wisdom, good sense

And men have lost their reason.—Bear with me:

My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar,

And I must pause till it come back to me.