Speech: “Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears”

BY [WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/william-shakespeare)

from *Julius Caesar*, spoken by Marc 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 interred with their bones;

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 answer’d it.

Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest–

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:

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\*

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,

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,

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.

Lupercal: One of the most obvious and official celebrations which takes place in Julius Caesar is the Feast of Lupercal. This feast began in ancient times as both a religious celebration and a fertility rite. It was a Roman holiday celebrated in the place where the founding brothers, Romulus and Remus, were once nursed by a female wolf to survive. The celebration was held in mid-February.