

# The Death of Caesar

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a short play

by

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**Cast**

PHILLIP

DEREK

VARIOUS OFFSTAGE VOICES

**Setting**

Dressing Room

**Time**

Morning.

## **The Death of Caesar**

Dressing Room, 11am.

Over a tannoy we hear what is happening on the stage above.

CAESAR: (ON LOUDSPEAKER) “ Soothsayer ! The ides of March are come.”

SOOTHSAYER: “Ay, Caesar, but not yet gone.”

ARTEMIDORUS: “Hail Caesar ! Read this schedule.”

DECIUS: “Trebonius doth desire you to read  
At your best leisure, this his humble suit.”

LIGHTS COME UP ON **PHILLIP** SITTING AT A DRESSING TABLE, DRESSED IN BATTLE FATIGUES.

ARTEMIDORUS: “O Caesar, read mine first; for mine’s a suit  
That touches Caesar nearer.”

CAESAR: “What touches ourselves shall be last served.”

AS THIS LAST LINE IS HEARD, **PHILLIP** MOUTHS THE WORDS IN MOCK IMITATION.

ARTEMIDORUS: “Delay not Caesar, read it instantly”

**PHILLIP** MOCKS AGAIN.

CAESAR: “What ? Is the fellow mad ?”

PUBLIUS: “Sirrah, give place.”

**PHILLIP’S** MOCK PERFORMANCE GROWS.

CAESAR: “Urge you your petitions in the street ?  
Come to the capitol.”

THE SOUND OF MUSIC AND FOOTSTEPS.

POPILIUS: “I wish your enterprise today may thrive”

THE SCENES CONTINUES UNDER DIALOGUE.

**DEREK** ENTERS, ALSO DRESSED IN FATIGUES. HE THROWS A COMPUTER DISC DOWN ON TO HIS TABLE.

**PHILLIP** MOVES AROUND THE ROOM AS CAESAR, ENTERING THE SENATE.  
**DEREK** WATCHES HIM.

PHILLIP: Ill met by moonlight proud Titania ?

DEREK: In your dreams.

PHILLIP: Where is Metellus Cimber ? Let him go,  
And presently prefer his suit to Caesar.

DEREK: I think we already know which suit Caesar prefers.

**PHILLIP PRODUCES A KNIFE. HE HOLDS IT UNDER DEREK'S THROAT.**

PHILLIP: Does though mock me ?

DEREK: Careful. That's sharp.

PHILLIP: The point envenomed too ?  
Then venom to thy work.

DEREK: Phillip. I mean it.

**DEREK MOVES AWAY. PAUSE.**

DEREK: Aren't you on soon ?

PHILLIP: I have but little time.

DEREK: Then you better get ready.

PHILLIP: Does though not like my humble dress ?

DEREK: Phillip. Drop it.

**PAUSE. PHILLIP PURSUES HIM.**

PHILLIP: I thought I did see you yesternight.

DEREK: So what ? I saw you too.

PHILLIP: I see, sir, you are eaten up with passion.

DEREK: What precisely is your problem ?

PHILLIP: I think that thou art just, and think that thou art not

**DEREK MOVES AWAY.**

PHILLIP: What ? Frighted by false fire.

DEREK: I'm on again soon.

CAESAR: (OVER LOUDSPEAKER) “Are we all ready ?”

PHILLIP: (JOINING IN) “What is now amiss,  
That Caesar and his senate must redress ?”

DEREK: Pip. It’s 11am. It’s a kiddie’s matinee. Chill.

**PHILLIP ONCE MORE HOLDS THE KNIFE TO DEREK’S THROAT.**

PHILLIP: That someone can smile and smile and still be a villain.

DEREK: I mean it Pip.

METELLUS (OVER LOUDSPEAKER) AND PHILLIP:  
“Most high, most mighty and most puissant Caesar.”

**DEREK GRABS THE KNIFE AND THEY WRESTLE. DEREK EVENTUALLY GETS CONTROL AND WRENCHES THE KNIFE FROM PHILLIP’S HAND. OVER THIS WE HEAR:**

CAESAR: (OVER LOUDSPEAKER) “Thy brother by decree is banished  
If thou dost bend and pray and fawn for him  
I spurn thee like a cur.”

**ON THIS LAST LINE, DEREK PLACES THE KNIFE BACK ON HIS TABLE. PHILLIP IS ON THE FLOOR. HE SPEAKS WITH THE NEXT LINE.**

METELLUS (ON LOUDSPEAKER) AND PHILLIP:  
“Is there no voice more worthy than my own,  
To sound more sweetly in great Caesar’s ear.”

DEREK: This is pathetic.

**PHILLIP CRAWLS TO DEREK AND KISSES HIS HAND.**

BRUTUS (ON LOUDSPEAKER) AND PHILLIP:  
“I kiss thy hand, but not in flattery”

DEREK: Grow up.

**PHILLIP CONTINUES TO CRAWL AFTER HIM, CHASING HIM AROUND THE ROOM.**

CAESAR (ON LOUDSPEAKER) AND PHILLIP:  
“The skies are painted with unnumbered sparks  
They are all fire and every one doth shine.”

DEREK: Stop it Phillip.

CAESAR (ON LOUDSPEAKER) AND PHILLIP:

“And men are flesh and blood  
Yet I do know but one  
That unassailable holds his rank; and that I am he  
I was constant Cimber should be banished  
And constant do remain to keep him so.”

DEREK: I said stop it.

CINNA (ON LOUDSPEAKER) AND PHILLIP:  
“O Caesar !”

CAESAR (ON LOUDSPEAKER) AND PHILLIP:  
“Wilt thou lift up Olympus ?”

DEREK: (SCREAMING) Stop it !

DECIUS (ON LOUDSPEAKER) AND PHILLIP:  
“Great Caesar !”

CAESAR (ON LOUDSPEAKER) AND PHILLIP:  
“Doth not Brutus bootless kneel ?”

CASCA (ON LOUDSPEAKER) AND PHILLIP:  
“Speak hands for me !”

AS HE SAYS THIS LAST LINE, **PHILLIP** REACHES ONCE MORE FOR THE KNIFE. **DEREK** GRABS HIS HAND AND THEY BEGIN TO FIGHT, NOW WITH MORE VENOM AS **PHILLIP** TRIES TO HARM **DEREK** AND **DEREK** TRIES TO PREVENT HIM WITHOUT HURTING HIM.

AS THEY STRUGGLE WE HEAR THE SOUNDS OF MUSIC AND MOVEMENT OF BODIES FROM ABOVE, THEN:

CAESAR (ON LOUDSPEAKER):  
“Et tu Brute ! Then die Caesar !”

MORE MUSIC FROM ABOVE.

**DEREK** HAS FINALLY OVERCOME **PHILLIP**. BUT HE HAS HAD ENOUGH AND HE PUNCHES **PHILLIP** HARD IN THE FACE, TWICE. HE CRAWLS AWAY FROM HIM, WRINGING HIS HAND. **PHILLIP** IS STILL.

CINNA (ON LOUDSPEAKER):  
“Liberty ! Freedom ! Tyranny is dead !  
Run hence, proclaim, cry it about the streets !”

CASSIUS (ON LOUDSPEAKER):  
“Some to the common pulpits and cry out  
Liberty, freedom and power to all !”

SCENES CONTINUES UNDER DIALOGUE:

DEREK: What do you want me to say ? Sorry. Yes I fucked him. So what ? Most of the people in this company have fucked him at one time or another – men and women. Did you think you were special ? Did you think he'd changed ? He got tired of you. Just like he got tired of everybody else. Time to move on. Fresh meat. (PAUSE) And no I don't regret it and yes it might mean I get a part next year. He promised me Bassanio. I'm not that naïve that I think he'll actually let me play Bassanio but he's promised to give me something – so at least I'll be working, which is more than I can say for most of the people I know.

**DEREK STANDS. HE GOES AND TIDIES HIMSELF UP IN THE MIRROR.**

DEREK: And if you want to keep working – you better get cleaned up and get upstairs. No one likes a bad loser. (PAUSE) Look at this way. You've got a good gig. At least until the end of the run. He's not going to change the cast now, unless you give him reason too. Whatever happens ? You got to play Antony. That's more than me.

TREBONIUS (ON LOUDSPEAKER):

“Men, wives, and children stare, cry out and run  
As if it was doomsday.”

**DEREK TURNS TO LOOK AT PHILLIP.**

DEREK: Phillip, did you hear me ?

**PHILLIP DOES NOT MOVE. DEREK GOES TO THE DOOR.**

DEREK: I didn't hit you that hard. (PAUSE) Phillip. You're on in about one minute. Don't be stupid. (PAUSE) Phillip !

**PHILLIP RAISES HIS HEAD. TEARS ARE STREAMING DOWN HIS FACE.**

PHILLIP: Did you consider for one second that it wasn't him I lost last night ?  
It was you.

**PAUSE. DEREK STARES AT PHILLIP.**

DEREK: Fuck you.

**DEREK EXITS.**

BRUTUS (ON LOUDSPEAKER): “Fates ! We will know your pleasures –  
That we shall die we know : tis but the time,  
And drawing days out that men stand upon.  
Grant that and then is death a benefit  
So are we Caesar's friends that have shortened

His time of fearing death.

PAUSE. **PHILLIP** ROLLS OVER. HE PULLS HIMSELF TO HIS KNEES,  
BLOOD POURING FROM HIS NOSE.

BRUTUS (ON LOUDSPEAKER): “Stoop, Romans, stoop  
And let us bathe our hands in Caesar’s blood  
How many ages hence  
Shall this our lofty scenes be acted over  
In states unborn and accents yet unknown !”

**PHILLIP** CRAWLS TO THE KNIFE. HE PICKS IT UP IN HIS BLOODIED  
FINGERS.

BRUTUS (ON LOUDSPEAKER): “But here comes Antony !  
Welcome Marc Antony !”

PAUSE. SILENCE FROM THE LOUDSPEAKER.

BRUTUS (ON LOUDSPEAKER): “Here comes Antony !  
Welcome Marc Antony !”

**PHILLIP** RAISES THE KNIFE ABOVE HIS HEAD.

BRUTUS (ON LOUDSPEAKER): (DESPERATE) “Marc Antony !”

PHILLIP: “O mighty Caesar ! Dost thou lie so low ?”

HE BRINGS THE KNIFE DOWN SUDDENLY.

BLACKOUT.