

TUNCER CÜCENOĐLU

**BRUTUS OR
THE ASSASSINATION
OF
JULIUS CAESAR**

(No Interval)

Translated by Ayşegül HARDERN

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TUNCER CÜCENOĞLU

Playwright

Born in Çorum/Turkey in 1944.

Graduated from the University of Ankara, **College of Language, History, and Geography.**

Member of the **Turkish Writers Union** and **International Pen Club Turkish Center.**

Dramatic playwriting professor in **MSM (Müjdat Gezen Art Center)** Private Conservatory.

Scripts:

Chaos, The Teacher, Poor Women, Dead End, The File, Biga – 1920, The Gamblers, Helicopter, Kemal The Thunder, Matrushka, The Visitor, The Hat, The Painter, Neyzen Tevfik, Red River Ballad, The Avalanche, Theatre Men , Who Killed Sabahattin Ali, Green Night, If I Were a Poor Man, Che Guevara, My Mustafa Kemal, The Nightclub, Women’s Safehouse, Trajik Story of Fosforlu Cevriye, Brutus or Massacre of Julius Caesar.

Awards:

Tobav(2), Turkish Women Association (1), Ankara Art Society (2), Abdi İpekçi (1), İsmet Kuntay (2) , Avni Dilligil (2), İTİ (1), Kasaid (1), Lions (2), Cultural Ministry (1), Muhsin Ertuğrul (1), Afife Cevat Fehmi Başkut (1), Direklerarası (1), 2016 Kardelen Living Values Writing Award of the Year (1) and 3 international awards (Yugoslavia, Holland and Ukraine). Total 22 awards...

His plays are translated into Russian, English, German, French, Bulgarian, Greek, Macedonian, Swedish, Georgian, Urdu, Japanese, Romanian, Azeri, Tatar, Polish, Chuvash, Serbian, Spanish, Arabic, Farsi (Persian) Ukraine.... Greek, Kazakh, Lithuanian and the other language...

Some of the plays (The Avalanche, Matrushka, Dead End, The Hat, The Painter, Poor Women, Red River Ballad, The File, Helicopter, The Visitor, Women’s Safehouse) have been performed or in the repertory of various companies in more than 40 countries.

BRUTUS OR THE ASSASSINATION OF JULIUS CAESAR

I like “Brutus or The Assassination of Julius Caesar ”, the latest play of Tuncer Cucenoglu.

It is a fluent theater script being devoured and fictionalized very cleverly.

While Cucenoglu is staging the common historicity in this play where classical and modern theatre factors are blended masterly; the past and the present shuttle dizzyingly between virtual reality and current reality as if he is competing with the theatre masters dramatizing this subject and in particular with Shakespeare.

Today’s Caesar drafts will see themselves in this play as such in a mirror; the audience has also a chance to question itself while laughing and thinking.

I must state especially that “Brutus or The Assassination of Julius Caesar” is so unique play script giving performer in the stage amazing and impressive acting opportunities.

I congratulate sincerely Cucenoglu.

ATAOL BEHRAMOGLU

Poet/ Author/ Cumhuriyet Newspaper Columnist

A NEW PLAY FROM MR. CUCENOGLU

“BRUTUS OR THE ASSASSINATION OF JULIUS CAESAR”

The darkness exists always, but the light does also.

I guess the most distressed subject of not only my country but also world theatre is new play script lack.

We are in the 21st century. While the poetry, novel, story and the essays and the autobiographic workings are filling the shelves of bookstores, the shelves of theatre plays are hosting re-printings of day-old classical and contemporary plays. Actually this situation is not a sign that we become poor and unclaimed in the field of theatre.

We all know that the only art branch to stand and to be the most principle part of the life by renewing itself is the theatre as long as the human being exists.

Well, what is the problem, why aren't there any new playwrights?

Is it new pollution called as technology or is it that palling stage chiefs sacrifice themselves to life or is it the humanity being pushed to beaten situation by electronic acrobatics, or is it the theatre being the first art field that the capitalism does everything in the book for polluting it?

While the word called as ‘Culture Imperialism’ is going towards the mind settings of communities and individuals and is gnawing the bodies like a cancerous tumor, the only way of reliable exit is not likely feeding on love, peace, equality, liberty being hidden inside of theatre art if we are seeking for an expedient.

Then, a life without theatre is blind, deaf and mute.

Maybe for this reason new play scripts are a cruel necessity.

The play you are holding is a new gift to life from Tuncer Cucenoglu, a playwright producing the most plays of my country and his productions meet with the audience not only in my country but also in many stages of the world.

If the simplicity shedding light on today by eluding lies and cheatings of past, putting into words a historical revenge by hiding human merit of future deep down is a seeking, this play seems like an orchestra whose all instruments are consisting of different size violins.

I don't know where this play is put on the stage first and which smart mind turns this script into a part of our life by fleshing out it, but I would like to be there that day.

Thank you Cucenoglu.

ORHAN AYDIN

Actor- Spokesman of Turkey Artists Initiative

PLAYWRIGHT TUNCER CÜCENOĞLU...

I'm saying YES TO ART for 35 years. I understand the art concept as both a process with creativity philosophy having a utility and a product.

By updating the triplet of good, nice and truth as ethics, esthetics and justice where the process affects the product and the product affects the process.

I defend that the art must exist as a philosophy in each area of human life and that people need to pattern the works of art for maintaining this culture.

Also I know Tuncer Cucenoglu for 35 years.

I know well how he is working.

I can throw out that Tuncer Cucenoglu is realizing practically the culture of "YES TO ART" I mention.

I am closely acquainted with the achievements of his plays at home and abroad.

I also know well that he writes works by improving himself.

As well I know that he becomes experienced, not being behind the times as long as he grows older.

He writes plays to mirror our era with this knowledge.

These are universally valuable plays of our country's author.

Development and prestige of a country are measured with protecting artists such as Tuncer Cucenoglu creating universal values.

We need to protect, to introduce Tuncer Cucenoglu and to try to augment the numbers of people like him so that new generations adopt ART responsibility.

"BRUTUS OR THE ASSASSINATION OF JULIUS CAESAR" you are holding is a living proof of this.

This play is a contemporary "YES TO ART" with both its wording technique and its content.

In the hope of being followed Mr. Cucenoglu's lead and he comes into his own, congratulate him.

TAMER LEVENT

General Manager (former) of Turkish State Theatres

TOBAV (*) Honorary President

Actor, Director, Author

(*) TOBAV (State Opera and Ballet Employees Foundation)

To **Ergin Orbey...**

CAST

BRUTUS	Republican senator.
CASSIUS	Republican senator. Brutus's brother-in-law
CASCA	Republican senator.
PORTIA	Brutus's wife. Cassius's sister.
SERVILIUS	Brutus's mother.
LUCIUS	Brutus's servant.

JULIUS CAESAR

CALPURNIA	Julius Caesar's last wife.
OTHERS	Caesar's bodyguard (Soldier)
	Citizen
	Joe Public

DATE

14 March BC 44. Night.

15 March BC 44. Day time.

PLACE

Rome

I

Cassius's House

(The actor who plays Cassius takes his daily clothes off and starts to put his costume on and get ready.)

He puts his make up on.

He stands up and he pretends to check himself out in front of the mirror. He seems pleased with the way he looks. He smiles. He can't stop staring at himself.)

CASSIUS - *(He shouts with joy)* You are not ready yet!

CASCA - Nearly done.

CASSIUS Hurry up!

CASCA Still have time. Nearly finished anyway.

CASSIUS *(makes a joke)* You are not the curious type, are you? But I can't wait to see senator Casca. You don't even care about seeing Cassius.

CASCA *(comes on the stage slowly. He has his costume on too)* Good evening Senator Cassius.

CASSIUS Good evening Senator Casca.

(They look at each other and like what they see)

CASCA What do you think? Was it worth me being late dear Cassius?

CASSIUS Definitely. What about me?

CASCA When you combine your look with the behaviour of a senator it will be complete. But I don't feel comfortable. My knees knock together. Plays' premieres are always nerve-racking.

CASSIUS We're both experienced actors. We've gone through this excitement so many times. But I have to confess this time I'm so nervous too. If you ask me why, the character I created is vital to the story. This makes me feel uncomfortable. Also the Cassius character is completely opposite to mine. I am a chatterbox. Cassius doesn't even like talking. I'm full of laughter, he only grins. I'm outgoing, he is sneaky.

CASCA I have exactly the same problem. Can you say that mine and Casca's characters are similar? Casca is capable of finishing his duties on the spot. He is a decisive activist and a republican. And me? I can't even pay my bills on time. I just catch my appointments. We have countless differences. Despite all these differences the director chose us for these roles.

CASSIUS Doesn't he always say, "A successful actor is the one who internalizes the character and carries it to the stage." Maybe he is right.

CASCA (*takes his ringing mobile phone out his pocket and answers.*) Hello... Yes. I dressed and transformed into Casca. I put my make up on, too. I'm waiting for the play to start... No, it hasn't started yet. Could I have answered if it had started? Sometimes you lose all your logic sweetheart... No! I'm not alone... Who could I be with? My colleague who plays Cassius... Cassius is a man... Why would the young actress who plays Brutus's wife be here? We are not even sharing the same scenes... Don't tire yourself. How many times have I explained to you that female actresses have their own dressing room in our theatre? Your jealousy is so meaningless! Do you want me to mess up my lines and make a fool of myself? Cut it out! Wish me luck and turn the phone off! You know! (*Switches the phone off*)

CASSIUS Your wife?

CASCA Who else could it be? You know she came to the start of our rehearsals. She didn't actually give a damn about the rehearsal, she came to see the girl. Since then she is obsessed about that poor girl. She saw "a look" apparently. She doesn't stop bothering me about it.

CASSIUS (*teases him*) She is not all wrong actually. Even the female flies don't come near to you, they escape from you.

CASCA (*quite likes it*) Don't exaggerate!

CASSIUS She is not coming to the premiere.

CASCA She prefers to come to galas. At least our mistakes will be minimalised! And also she can't watch the play twice apparently.

CASSIUS Anyway, we should stop talking about her. You have to calm yourself down before the play. Take a deep breath, hold it and breathe out. The play is about to start. Let things go. Let's go back to the time when our play is taking place.

CASCA 14 March 44... The play starts at night. 15 March 44... and it finishes the next day.

CASSIUS Nice. But 44 might confuse the audience. Is it before Christ or after Christ?

CASCA Before Christ of course...

(*Phone rings again. Casca looks at the phone to see who is calling. He pulls a face. Obviously it was his wife.*)

CASSIUS (*stops him to answer*) In 44 BC the phone hasn't been discovered! For God's sake! Turn this phone off and put it away! Phones are like guns. You never know with them. Don't shoot yourself for no reason. You can be sure it's switched off but suddenly it can ring in the middle of the play. What would you do then? Or if it rings continuously when you are watching a play? It happened to me once when I was in a premiere. Beware! We shouldn't give the wrong impression. The story we are going to play is nothing to do with today. (*He sees that Casca switches the phone off*) Calm down my friend. (*He pretends like he is looking*

at the audience.) Look the audience are settling down. *(First gong)* We'll start now. If we are late they might give us the slow hand-clap. This is new in our theatre world. *(Second gong)* Now go out. Put the phone on a shelf. Take a deep breath five times and come back here again. Be quick!

(Casca leaves. Third gong)

CASSIUS *(While he checks the letters on the table he gives a signal to the light room. With a dramatic light we hear a terrifying storm. He sorts the letters out. Casca is late so he gets frustrated.)* Where is he? He should be here as soon as possible. We are about to make decisions which could affect history but some of us don't comprehend the significance! *(sees Casca)* Where have you been Senator Casca?

CASCA *(He sorts himself out)* Can't you hear the storm? It's as if Rome has been turned upside down. The roofs are flying, the trees are shaking as if they are going to be torn from their roots. I waited for the rain to stop at the entrance of the Pompeii Theatre. That is why I'm late Senator Cassius.

CASSIUS Even if lightning strikes the earth, or floods cover everywhere, or lions are walking in the streets, this act will take place Casca! Because tonight we have to place the stones in the right place on the path which we'll walk along tomorrow. We should be well prepared. Otherwise we can't finalize our act the way we wanted. Or even worse, this holy act would turn into a disaster for us. We shouldn't have any concerns anymore.

CASCA I hope preparing the plan this quickly didn't make us forget some important details. Like they say, "haste makes waste".

CASSIUS Nothing is haste about it. The die is cast. Everything has to be the way we planned. Take these letters to Brutus and leave them in the garden as usual. Don't get caught! Don't forget, Brutus is being cautious and doesn't get involved in our act openly. He is married to my sister Portia but, even so, he doesn't trust me sometimes. But he thinks the letters are coming from the people, and this will get him involved in our act. Believing that the people are behind you makes a person, especially a politician, feel secure. I believe the reason he's invited us to his house tonight is the previous letters. Don't forget that.

CASCA Is Brutus the only cautious one? You haven't told him openly what he's supposed to do.

CASSIUS I expected him to make the first step to be sure. Yes, he is a republican that's for sure, but his admiration towards Caesar is obvious. These letters are important. The past issues are going to plant seeds of doubt in his head and we should destroy his admiration for Caesar, Casca.

CASCA You know that I'm a man of duty in this act Cassius. As I've done so far I'll complete the orders that are given to me in the future too. You can trust me. *(takes the letters)* As long as the rain stops and the puddles don't ruin the letters... The only difficulty of my duty is I'm not able to put the letters somewhere they won't get wet. If I don't put the letters

in various places in the garden he will understand that they are part of the plan to convince him. This is my only concern Cassius.

CASSIUS You're thinking about the details which means our plan is going to work perfectly I suppose.

CASCA When and where are we going to meet to go to Brutus's house?

CASSIUS You should come back to me directly. Meeting outside could be dangerous. We can wait here in my house. We'll go to Brutus's house at midnight when Rome's streets are quiet. That way we'll give him chance to find the letters as well.

CASCA Ok Cassius. But...I feel like I can't breathe and my brain is numb. If I tell you that I'm scared don't reproach me.

CASSIUS I wouldn't do such a thing. Beause I'm scared as well. We are only human. The fear is for the people. We are anxious as well. We are preparing an act nobody would even dream of. Is it easy to plan to assassinate a man like Caesar? *(Seems like he gets scared of the thing he said.)* Better not to talk about this. Walls have ears. Come on, go, don't waste time.

CASCA Ok Cassius.

(The two senators hugs each other as if saying their goodbyes. Casca takes the letter bag and slowly leaves the room.)

II

Brutus's House

(Brutus is getting ready.)

He sorts his clothes out and checks his make up. He takes a mask out of his draw. Behind the mask we can see the strings. He holds it to his face. The mask's impression is smiling and admiring. He only puts his mask on when he is with Caesar. He puts the mask on his head like glasses. He pretends like he is checking himself in front of the mirror. He's pleased with himself. Smiles to himself. He admires his own look, like Cassius and Casca.)

BRUTUS *(to the audience)* I'm going to play Senator Brutus in this play. I'm sure you've seen my name on the billboards outside. The name of the play starts with Brutus. Brutus, or the assassination of Julius Caesar. Long story short, Brutus is the leading role, whereas previously I always played secondary roles. Brutus is an extremely big opportunity for me. I should make hay while the sun shines. Crazy questions are coming to my head. For decades he's been known as a betrayer by Caesar's famous words "Et tu Brutus". Could this role be a new birth for him? Brutus is a republican senator. More than sixty senators like him are Republican too. Caesar? It's enough talking. I'll do my best to perform great Brutus. Let you watch. You are going to decide about my success. *(He sees Portia at the door. Portia freezes while Brutus is talking. Brutus to the audience)* This young lady is my wife Portia. She is going to play Cassius's sister. She's been hired for this role by our theatre. As you can see she is a Goddess. She is walking around like a mare. Look at her lustful lips! As if giving you a sign of what they can be capable of doing and blow your mind. Since the minute I saw her she has driven me crazy. This market won't leave Portia free for long. Directors, advertisers and especially producers who watch the play will take Portia away from our theatre with lots of promises. *(Gives a command to the light room. The light will change to play mode. The storm has faded. Rain can hardly be heard. Brutus turns his back. Portia comes behind Brutus and suddenly hugs him.)*

BRUTUS *(scares)* Ah!

PORTIA Rome's most handsome senator...My Brutus. My lovely husband.

BRUTUS You scared me Portia. I thought we'd been hit by lightning. Look, listen, the storm slackened and the rain almost stopped. The water on the street has drained away. Listen! The scary sound coming from the sky leaves silence behind.

PORTIA Tonight is a night that turns you on.

BRUTUS You are right my beautiful wife, this is an interesting night.

PORTIA When nature was getting wild I thought about you Brutus. I thought to myself I'm glad that he is my husband. He reads books, speaks wisely, he writes and he is really respectful to everyone. He can't break anybody's heart. He's well brought up. He's madly in love with me. Only one thing; he likes Rome more than me.

(They smile.)

BRUTUS You are the same Portia. You are a loving and respectful person. You know how to dress, talk and behave in public. Being the sister of my comrade senator Cassius is another positive. You've been brought up with good family training.

PORTIA I'm not always well-behaved you know! *(smiles)* Can you say that I'm well-behaved in bed?

BRUTUS That's an another issue!

PORTIA Being yours makes me happy Brutus. Even I feel shy when I wake up... *(She gets behind Brutus again, smells his hair and hugs him. She touches his neck with her lips.)* You haven't smelt your love for a week. My body missed your lips.

BRUTUS Isn't Lucius in front of the door?

PORTIA Forget about Lucius for now.

BRUTUS Where can he have gone? He knows that my guests are coming. Haven't you seen him?

PORTIA He was collecting some things under the trees.

BRUTUS I told him not to leave. He knows I'm expecting two really important guests.

PORTIA Who are they?

BRUTUS Two senators. Your brother Cassius and Casca...

PORTIA I haven't seen my brother for a month. But he is coming to see you not me. As if isn't it enough seeing each other in senate. Are you bringing work home now? *(Hugs)* Are you pretending like you haven't heard my latest hard-hitting observation?

BRUTUS I'm only underlining my priorities. It'll be an important night for all of us.

PORTIA Haven't you missed me?

BRUTUS How could you ask that? You know how much I love you.

PORTIA Would a loving husband not smell his wife for a week? My aunt always says, "A woman should be her husband's everything. A healthy marriage depends on that." Please understand me! I miss you so much.

BRUTUS The concerns we have puts pressure on our sexual desires. Unwillingness appears. This is what you've observed lately in me.

PORTIA Unlike you, I never stop wanting you. On the contrary it grows.

BRUTUS Never? Are you telling the truth?

PORTIA Never.

BRUTUS Maybe it happened and I haven't realised. Because women can use the advantage of their anatomy. They can pretend to be turned on. They can even fool their man.

PORTIA (*hugs him*) I've never pretended with you Brutus.

BRUTUS (*tries to move away*) Lucius can be here any moment.

PORTIA Don't make me nervous in my own house. Let's go to our room. Come on.

BRUTUS (*stops her*) I told you the guests will be here in minutes.

PORTIA Come on!

BRUTUS (*Light change. To the audience*) How difficult to play as if you're full when you are hungry! Like watching a wild volcano that erupts lava in its mouth... (*laughs*) Seems like I got used to talking like Shakespeare's characters in real life.

(*lights change.*)

PORTIA I'm your wife Brutus.

BRUTUS (*Holds her hands.*) We're on the eve of an important job Portia. Don't make me talk more than I should. We are going through some things you shouldn't know about. The Senators are on their feet.

PORTIA Nothing interests me my love. Except one thing. Why did you run away from me?

BRUTUS We are so occupied with our work.

PORTIA (*with anger*) Are you busy every single day? Are important things happening only during the last week? (*Reproachfully*) You are coming to our room after me. You lie down on our bed. You're scared of touching me. All night you are turning in the bed. After a while you are leaving our room quietly. And till the morning you're sitting and doing nothing in here. Are you hiding something from me Brutus?

BRUTUS These kind of questions of yours are really disturbing.

PORTIA What's that supposed to mean? If I'm your wife it's my right to know everything..

BRUTUS Let's close this subject.

PORTIA Close it right? What are you hiding from me?

BRUTUS (*rises his voice*) Knock it off!

PORTIA (*Gets angry and walks away. Stops and looks in Brutus's eyes*) Do you have another woman in your life?

BRUTUS What are you talking about?

PORTIA Don't pretend as if you don't know what I meant! Answer me! I asked you if you have an another woman in your life?

BRUTUS (*thinks*) Is there another woman in Rome more beautiful and attractive than you? Tell me! If there is than you would have a right to ask such a question.

PORTIA (*Softly*) I can't lie, I like your answer. You know a woman's soul Brutus. You know that I chose you for that reason.

BRUTUS In that case don't ask me such a question.

PORTIA My aunt always says "You are a beautiful and attractive woman Portia. There isn't anybody like you in Rome. Your husband Brutus worships you. But you should never forget this - 'the grass is always greener on the other side' "

BRUTUS What are you trying to say with this Portia?

PORTIA Look around you. You can see lots of men having a hell of a good time with women who are not equal to their wives. You can't trust a man. Because cheating is in men's blood.

(Lucius comes in gently. He has a basket in his hand.)

BRUTUS (*Teases him*) Did you pick some fruit again Lucius?

LUCIUS (*Joins in*) Yes sir. As if they've been spread all over the garden neatly. Apart from a couple of them all have been saved from getting wet in the storm and the rain, sir. It was difficult to pick them up because of that. If I didn't count wrong it was twenty two...If we put all the ones we received this week we can make a tart! (*Leaves them on the table and about to leave*)

BRUTUS Wait! I have some things to tell you.

LUCIUS Sure sir. (*goes next to the door and waits.*)

BRUTUS (*quietly*) Don't be unfair to me Portia. We can talk about it after my guests leave. The meeting won't be too long with them anyway. (*Whispers into her ears*) Tonight will be a long night for both of us.

PORTIA (*She looks calmer*) Ok my love. I'll wait for you. I want to say something before I go but don't be angry. Sometimes I worry about being without you. For that reason I feel jealous and say stupid things. Even thinking about it is devastating. If something happens to you I can't live Brutus.

BRUTUS Nothing will happen to me but death is everybody's truth. We have to accept and live with the reality of death. This behaviour will make the pain of possible death heal easier.

PORTIA Is there anything I can do?

BRUTUS No my love. We'll serve wine and fruit to the guests. Lucius is really good at it, as you know.

LUCIUS I prepared everything sir. The wine is twenty years old. Been kept exclusively. The glasses are shining. The nuts are warm and the fruit has just been picked. You are not going to be disappointed.

BRUTUS Thank you Lucius.

PORTIA Take it easy my love. Send my love to my brother. Tell him to spare some time for us too. Government can wait.

BRUTUS I will tell him...

PORTIA (*while she leaves to Lucius*) If you need anything let me know Lucius.

LUCIUS As you command my lady.

(*Portia leaves.*)

BRUTUS (*he takes out a letter from the basket and passes to Lucius*) Read it to me Lucius. Slowly. Don't hurry.

LUCIUS (*He takes the letter and reads.*) My dear precious senator Brutus. I'm writing this letter with all my honesty. I know that you would understand me because you are clever and far-sighted. I appreciate your fight for your people – especially the poor and the middle-class people's happiness, rights and justice, with all your heart. If you ask about me I'm a small retailer. I know that you are working on our side against the landowners with your passionate speeches to solve our problems. Your dedication to and protection of the republican values makes me even more dedicated to you. For us, now is the time for you to be more active. Please step up. I'm ending my letter reassuring you that we are always going to be behind you. Wishing you to punch the table for us. With my deepest respect. Stay safe, stay with us. A citizen.

BRUTUS Can you please read the next letter Lucius?

LUCIUS As you command sir. (*he takes the next letter and starts reading.*) Precious Marcus Brutus... I would like to start my letter apologizing for reminding you of a sad occasion. Dear Brutus. As you can recall, your beautiful mother and your precious father had a fairy-tale like marriage. Your family was a symbol of happiness and the best family in Rome. Until Caesar came back from the war and invited the establishment to celebrate his victory... Your dad was the one of the few people to be invited. The celebration continued till morning. Meanwhile Caesar was telling the details of his victory and the glasses continued to be raised to his success. This celebration finished in the early hours of the morning. Some of the guests stayed there and some of them started to leave to go back to their houses. When your father was back you welcomed him at the door. Your father was drunk and he kept saying, "Caesar is a great guy. Great soldier. While he is alive nobody can touch Rome." You dragged him to his room with your mother and you undressed him and laid him on the bed. He wasn't breathing properly. You went back to your bed dear Brutus. When you were about to fall asleep you

heard your mother scream. You ran upstairs. Your mother was screaming “your father’s dead”... *(Stops.)*

BRUTUS What? Why did you stop Lucius? I know all this anyway. Continue.

LUCIUS The next day Caesar came to your house to express his condolences to you and your mother. Your father’s funeral was traditional. But Caesar continued his visits to your house. After a while your mother started to live with Caesar. Please try to understand me. I have to write to all this to you dear Brutus. You know it already. Your mother was Caesar’s kept woman like all the other women. But this relationship didn’t last long. Cruel Caesar left your mother in the lurch and he went after other woman for new pleasures... *(stops reading.)*

BRUTUS Keep reading. Finish the letter Lucius...

LUCIUS Dear senator, please forgive me for reminding you of this story you already know. But I would like to inform you about an important matter not provided. The doctors reported your father’s death as “food poisoning”. I would like to ask you dear Brutus, if it was food poisoning why did only your father die? Didn’t all the other guests eat the same food? Like everyone else you know well that Caesar is a womaniser. Everybody knew that before your father died Caesar had an eye on your mother. How do you feel about the fact that he was using consoling your mother as an excuse and coming to your house every so often and seducing your mother? You should never forget this dear Brutus. Caesar is the kind person who would plan everything in detail ahead to get whatever he wants. I want you to know. I would like you to accept all my love and respect dear Brutus. Signed, a friend from Rome...

(Silent for a while)

LUCIUS Shall I read the next letter sir?

BRUTUS I’ll look at the next one Lucius. Thank you. Don’t leave the door.

(Lucius leaves the room quietly. Brutus is confused. Lights change.)

BRUTUS *(to the audience)* What is this now? Actually it doesn’t say anything concrete but asks questions that need to be thought about. There’s no point being like Hamlet. Is it possible the biggest playwright in the world Shakespeare missed this truth when he was writing ‘Julius Caesar’? Or did he skip this interesting detail deliberately for the time being to use it as inspiration for the play which he was going to start writing one year after; Hamlet?

(Black out and back again. Brutus reads the letters. He is anxious. Lucius is waiting at the door. Brutus’s mother Servilius arrives.)

SERVILIUS *(beautiful, confident and impressive)* Good night Lucius.

LUCIUS *(he stands up with respect)* Good night Madam.

SERVILIUS Is my son in?

LUCIUS Yes madam, come in.

SERVILIUS No. Go inside and let him know that I'm here. I'll see him if he is not busy. If he is I'll wait for him next to Portia.

LUCIUS Ok madame. *(Comes in)* Sir.

BRUTUS *(Stands up)* Are they here?

LUCIUS No sir. Your mother Servilius is here sir.

BRUTUS My mother?

LUCIUS She said if you are busy she can go to Portia.

BRUTUS *(Opens the door not waiting for Lucius)* Come in my dear mother. *(kisses her hand.)* Welcome.

SERVILIUS Good night Brutus.

LUCIUS Do you want anything from me my lady?

SERVILIUS No, thank you.

BRUTUS Let me know when my guests arrive. My mother won't mind.

LUCIUS Ok sir. *(leaves)*

SERVILIUS Who are your guests Brutus?

BRUTUS Two senators.

SERVILIUS I'm curious. What are their names?

BRUTUS Cassius and Casca...

SERVILIUS Cassius! Your brother-in-law. Caesar didn't like him at all. He used to say he is a sneaky and untrustworthy man. Cassius has always been jealous of Caesar. He believes that he's been overlooked. They were equal but Caesar has shined. I've heard about Casca, too. I think he is a hot-blooded Republican.

BRUTUS Cassius is a clever man mother.

SERVILIUS I didn't say he was stupid. Nearly midnight. What are they coming for at this time of the night?

BRUTUS Look, you are here too.

SERVILIUS This is my son's house. I can come whenever I want. Can't I?

BRUTUS Do you have any doubt? We asked you to stay with us but you didn't want to. I always want to live with you.

SERVILIUS It would've been wrong. Two imperious women in the same house would've been wrong. The right thing to do is live in different houses. You haven't answered my question.

BRUTUS We are going to talk about tomorrow's election. We're going to discuss what we should do.

SERVILIUS At this time of night!?

BRUTUS What is more normal than decisive people coming together and discussing the situation mother? Don't these meetings stop people making mistakes? What's the matter mother? I'm really curious about the thing that made you come all the way here at this time of the night. Especially on a stormy and rainy night like this.

SERVILIUS The wild weather's stopped Brutus. Even if it hadn't I would've come. I've been having strange nightmares for the last week. I've meant to come several times but I couldn't. This afternoon I fell asleep. The storm woke me up. I'm happy that it did. I shot out from the bed all covered in sweat because of that strange nightmare. I waited for the storm to calm down and I came to you. Actually I came because of your father's warning.

BRUTUS My father? What warning? What are you talking about mother?

SERVILIUS You can't sleep at nights. You are having night sweats.

BRUTUS What is this all about?

SERVILIUS Your father kept saying "Warn Brutus. He shouldn't do wrong things". Portia feels the same.

BRUTUS (*surprised*) Where have you seen Portia?

SERVILIUS She was right next to your father. She was dressed in black and she said to me, "I don't want to be a widow." I believe Portia worries about you too.

BRUTUS (*Smiles*) Yes she does. She thinks that I'm having an affair. I couldn't spare time for her lately. For that reason Portia thinks like that. These kind of misunderstandings really upset me.

SERVILIUS Don't hide anything from me. I know that you don't like Caesar. Even you hate him. You couldn't forgive him for leaving me in the lurch like that and you never will. I can understand that, but if you make a mistake Caesar won't forgive you. He shouldn't see you as his betrayer. I am not asking you not to hate him, but be careful. Nobody knows him as well as me. He is cruel.

BRUTUS Look mother. Don't worry. Caesar trusts me. He believes that I respect and love him. He knows that I don't have any political expectations. Not only him, lots of people think that I admire him. Because I buried my hate inside me. Do you understand what I mean? (*He picks up the letter about his father's death.*) Can you please look at this letter mother?

SERVILIUS (*reads it quickly*) Who could be writing this and for what reason?

BRUTUS What do you think mother?

SERVILIUS Somebody who would like you to hate Caesar even more obviously. Some people openly provoke you. Brutus, your father was ill in the days before he died. When he walked he was out of breath. He couldn't go up the stairs. When he got tired he was complaining about having a chest pain. Can't you remember? At the dinner party there wasn't anybody to stop him eating. That night he ate and drunk a lot and that night we lost him. Don't look for a scapegoat. Yes, Caesar liked me, like all beautiful women. He told me that when I was married. But I was in love with your father. I pretended not to understand. Suddenly losing your father devastated me. I fell apart. Caesar showed interest in me. Also he was a powerful man. You know that. I couldn't say no. Our relationship was good for a while. But I couldn't connect with him. I wasn't able to accept your father's death. Caesar sensed it. Even missing a dead man was not acceptable for Caesar. He has a character that can't accept being second. He left me after a while. Please don't open this subject Brutus. But the reality is not the way it's written in the letter. I told you to know. The reason I'm here is I worry you're becoming involved in an attack against Caesar, Brutus. I can feel it.

BRUTUS How can you be that sure about this mother? Are you a fortune teller or seer?

SERVILIUS (*Lights change. To the audience.*) Writers are strange people. They reflect their own personal experience and testimony to their characters. Cücenoglu did the same thing when he created me and added his personal experience to me. This is what happened. The writer was unemployed and broke. He had to send money to his daughter. She was away for her education. He writhed in bed till the morning. The next day his mother, who lived in another city sent money and she called him to inform him. The writer asked his mother, "how did you know I needed money?" She said "you writhed in bed till the morning. Mothers can sense my son."

BRUTUS (*Lights change.*) I asked a question mother. You haven't answered. How can you be sure that I'm in trouble

SERVILIUS Mothers can sense my son.

BRUTUS Calm down mother. I wouldn't do anything that would put me in danger.

SERVILIUS Caesar is a powerful man Brutus. He has an army behind him. His past is a history of victory. Everybody knows the war he bravely fought against corrupt politicians when he was lawyer. He didn't allow them to be forgiven. He wouldn't forgive any attempt against the system. Isn't he the one who conquered Wales and extended Roman soils to the Atlantic? Who led the first invasion of Britain by Rome? Don't be surprised by his arrogance. The person who has this history deserves arrogance. Get on well with him and don't do anything that would upset me. Do you understand me?

BRUTUS I can understand you mother. (*Though clearly he is not going to listen*) Thank you for your warnings. Would you stay with us tonight?

SERVILIUS I can't sleep anywhere other than my own bed. I've been tired and sleepless for days Brutus. I warned you and I feel better now. I should go.

BRUTUS Aren't you going to see Portia?

SERVILIUS I should go back to my house before the streets are deserted. I'll come to visit soon. *(Kisses Brutus)* Give my love to Portia. Goodnight my dear.

BRUTUS Good bye mother.

SERVILIUS Don't forget the thing I said son...

BRUTUS I won't mother.

(Servilius leaves, Brutus walks her mother to the door. Black out. Lights on again.)

BRUTUS *(To the audience)* We shouldn't slow down the tempo of the play too much. *(Shouts to the dressing room.)* Cassius and Casca should come now.

(Lights change. Cassius and Casca enter.)

LUCIUS Welcome sir.

CASSIUS Thank you.

CASCA Thank you.

LUCIUS *(opens the door.)* They are here sir.

BRUTUS Come in my friends. Welcome.

CASSIUS Thank you Brutus.

CASCA Thank you.

CASSIUS I came late on purpose Brutus. We preferred the streets to be empty.

BRUTUS Wise thing to do. Please have a seat. I have twenty years old wine in the cellar. It's a heritage from my father. I've been keeping it to serve to my best friends for years. It was your destiny.

CASSIUS Wine takes away the tension.

CASCA It is a tranquilizer if you don't get drunk.

BRUTUS I should tell you before I forget Cassius. Portia sent her love. She is asking you to spare some time to her from governor business.

CASSIUS She is right actually. After this business let's get together. We can celebrate the thing we've done and we can see each other too.

BRUTUS It has to be done. Otherwise the women are not going to stop bothering us about it.
(to Lucius) Come on son. Show us your talent.

LUCIUS At your command sir. *(Leaves.)*

BRUTUS I don't know where to begin.

CASSIUS We are not in a hurry. Let's have a sip from our drinks.

CASCA Let's prepare an environment where nobody can come in.

CASSIUS Nobody should interrupt our conversation. We are going to make the most important decision of our life. The worst thing is being indecisive. Standing on one foot is the result of that.

BRUTUS I understand my friends.

(Lucius comes with a big tray. He opens the big wine bottle with difficulty. First he puts some in his own cup and tastes it)

LUCIUS Delicious sir. Perfect for you.

BRUTUS Thank you Lucius.

(Lucius fills the other cups and plates. He is about to serve.)

BRUTUS *(stops him)* You can leave now.

LUCIUS At your command. If you need me just call me sir.

(Lucius takes his cup and leaves with respect. Closes the door. Brutus stands up and serves them and then serves himself. And he gives them wine. If anybody wants wine they can help themselves. The director has to be careful they don't get drunk, because they are about to plan an act.)

BRUTUS Welcome again my dear friends.

(The others stand up as well.)

CASSIUS Thank you dear Brutus.

CASSA Thank you.

BRUTUS Cheers.

CASSIUS Cheers my friend.

CASCA Cheers.

(they all sit down.)

CASSIUS I'm telling you this is the best wine I've ever drunk Brutus.

CASCA Well said Cassius. It is magnificent.

BRUTUS Bon appetit my friends.

CASCA If you allow me I would like to tell you something I witnessed Brutus.

BRUTUS Sure senator Casca. Go on.

CASCA I was passing by the market place two days ago. You know there is a coffeehouse there. Even though it was March, seven or eight of them were sitting outside because of the sun and they were talking passionately. I sat at the table behind them. I was listening to their conversation. They were talking about you my dear brother. To cut a long story short they were saying “Brutus is a great man”. They were members of the public I’d never seen before and they didn’t know that I was there.

BRUTUS Thank you. Hearing such things is motivating no doubt. I receive letters from people as well. Especially last week it was more than two hundred. I recieved twenty-two letters today, if I’m not wrong.

(Cassius and Casca look at each other.)

CASSIUS I’m the one who realises how much you’re loved by the public too. You should be proud of yourself my friend.

BRUTUS *(Smiles)* Let’s have a look to see who today’s letters are from? Who is the writer of these flattering letters? Signature.. A citizen... Signature... A Roman citizen... Signature... A tradesman... Signature... Joe public... Did you notice something? Nobody wrote their name. It’s interesting don’t you think?

CASSIUS *(suspicious.)* I couldn’t get it.

BRUTUS There is nothing not to understand. You shouldn’t take the public seriously my friends... They are not brave enough to write their name on a letter which is written to their hero. Whoever is in power they are on the same side as them, or seem like they are. Even worse, if it’s in their own interests they keep quiet against injustice...

CASSIUS You are saying that they wouldn’t question?

BRUTUS What do you think? Their biggest worry is losing their jobs. Doesn’t this worry make them passive?

CASCA You are trying to say that the public is a passive crowd.

BRUTUS I didn’t mean that. Sometimes they are active. For example, if you take out some coins they are ready to do somersaults. They are so obsequious when they are trying to overcome obstacles. Their philosophy is really interesting. A bird in the hand is always better than two in the bush, which means they’ve learnt to live with whatever they have rather than risk their livelihoods. In brief, I don’t care one iota about the love of these crafty, ignorant cowards.

CASSIUS But there are some other people like this. The ones who risk their lives, the ones who choose to fight for the new term. Am I wrong?

BRUTUS No doubt, but always a minority. If this minority group wins the battle somehow the useless crowd we call the public will think about which side to take and take their side. We should mind our own business. We can discuss about them in the future. Tomorrow is a very important day for us and for Rome. There will be an election and Caesar will be the only man until the day he dies. What will us Republicans do? What should we do? Do we have anything prepared for this Cassius?

CASSIUS Yes, I have.

BRUTUS Well, why I don't know anything about it?

CASSIUS In this situation we have to talk about everything openly Brutus. The fact that you are loved by Caesar makes other friends wary about you. In fact we all want you to act with us.

BRUTUS All of you means? Who are they?

CASSIUS Our definite number is sixty-three Republican senators my brother. There is one more senator who feels the same as us but he is ill and old. He is going to be with us in his thoughts..

BRUTUS That's a good number. How have they been convinced?

CASSIUS As you know, a senate committee visited Caesar to inform him of his new honorific titles in the Venus Genetrix Temple. What did Caesar do? Instead of welcoming the committee he welcomed them sitting down. This behaviour caused a big reaction in our friends. "This man is arrogant and insolent." It made people think, "God knows what he will be like if he becomes Emperor?" The number is that high for this reason.

BRUTUS Is that reaction enough though? Do you expect Caesar to give way just because you want him to?

CASSIUS Obviously not. We want to make our final decision after persuading you Brutus.

BRUTUS *(Smiles)* Am I convinced then?

CASSIUS We are here for that.

BRUTUS If we come to it, will all the people you talk of go ahead with the decision?

CASCA Absolutely.

BRUTUS *(Light changes to the audience.)* He said it just then too, did you realise? Even as my brother-in-law he is being cautious, he is trying to put the responsibility on me, but he is not aware that if our act is not successful being cautious won't save him. There is no time. I have to stand up front and I have to take control. But when I'm doing it I shouldn't give the

impression that I hate him and I'm doing it because of the pain my mother went through because of him. The personal issues which are pushing me to get revenge on Caesar are difficult to resist, but it should look as though I'm only focused on the political side of it. (*with his sign the lights change.*) Let's talk more openly. We have to admit one more time that Caesar is a great man. A hero. He is an honest guy, not corrupt, and hasn't allowed corruption to take place. He is really a hard-line conformist. He is confident. Brave. These are his positive sides. He has some weaknesses. For example, he is a womaniser. Also, he is arrogant and a snob, which is not good either. But he wasn't dangerous till today. Even putting a bayleaf crown on his head to cover his bald patch was just a human plight to laugh at. But when you look at it deeply it is the thing which he thinks is reason to shake his authority. There is evidence that when he was with Cleopatra he prepared a cream to grow his hair with deer bone marrow, horse tooth and bear fat, and that he again tried to find a cure with the essence of burned mouse proves how he is obsessed about losing his hair. But all these things are not Republicans' concerns. In brief, all his weak points are not so important so far. Caesar cannot be blamed for the things he's done so far.

CASSIUS (*He feels hopeless*) What are we going to do then? How are we going to prove ourselves right?

BRUTUS It is the situation today but tomorrow when he is being elected he is not only going to sit on a chair!

CASSIUS I couldn't get it.

BRUTUS Caesar is going to turn into an absolute power and every word he says will be law. Absolute power has all the possibilities that will turn even a humanist person into a cruel person. Absolute power is the zenith of dangerous situations. Absolute power will derail even the calmest and most honest person. In brief, absolute power destroys everyone.

CASSIUS Maybe Caesar is not going to derail. How can you be sure about that?

BRUTUS Caesar is not a humanist, and can't even keep it in his trousers. He is a greedy person if you would like to describe him with one word. Absolute power is one man's dominance so Caesar will be derailed that's for sure. Especially an uncontrolled power.

CASSIUS We are thinking the same way Brutus. We have to consider that a large group of people will worship the power. Isn't he is going start to use this worship to justify himself?

CASCA Caesar is never going to give up this power. Everybody has to know that the needy and wretched crowd will be expecting everything from him very soon, and they are all going to believe that only he can provide the good life. These weak points seem okay today, but will be on top of the public like a heavy weight later.

BRUTUS I love Caesar my friends but I love Rome even more.

CASSIUS Which means?

BRUTUS It is not possible to decide any other way. I don't want be governed by a single man and all decisions are going to come from his mouth. Even this fickle public who think that they are sneaky don't deserve this one man government.

CASSIUS We all can see that reality.

CASCA Is it enough for us to see it?

BRUTUS Surely not.

CASSIUS What should we do then?

BRUTUS We have to stop Caesar from being the man.

CASSIUS Can we stop this happening with the vote in the senate tomorrow? Is that possible Brutus?

BRUTUS No doubt it is not possible. He will be elected. *(makes a sign to change the light. To the audience)*When I was working on the play I came across a Mikhail Bakunin quote. "Take the most passionate revolutionary and give him absolute power, in one year he'll be worse than the Tzar," he said." *(Lights change.)*There is only one way left to us.

CASSIUS What is it? *(Silence)* What should we do Brutus?

BRUTUS He has to be killed! Yes, Caesar will be killed.
(Silence)

CASSIUS This decision hasn't been mentioned but it's already been decided in lots of Republicans' thoughts. You can be sure about that my friend. When can we put this into action?

BRUTUS Between now and the election time. Why? Because after he sits on that chair everything will be more difficult to neutralise Caesar.

CASSIUS *(He takes a deep breath getting rid of the responsibility.)* How is this going to happen Brutus?

BRUTUS In these cases the best way to do it is poisoning. But we don't have time or the right environment for this There is only one way possible, assassination.

CASCA Who can perform this act?

BRUTUS One person's talent won't be enough to do this. We shouldn't forget that Caesar is an expert at fighting. He always has a soldier to guard him. We shouldn't leave things to chance.

CASSIUS Should a couple of us perform this act?

BRUTUS It has to be a collective act. A dagger's incomplete act should be followed by another dagger or a knife and the mission should be complete. Apart from the old and ill one all our friends have to participate in the act. This is going to set a good example to the next generation – "the Republic only can be protected by dagger not babbling." Maybe we can hang this quote in several places around Rome.

CASSIUS (*Relieved*) Where are we going to do this?

CASCA And when?

BRUTUS As you know, Caesar goes for a walk every dawn. The walking-track is the best place do to it. All our friends have to take a place there unseen. That is your job Casca.

CASCA I'm going to inform everybody. Don't worry about it. They will be ready with shiny daggers hiding in their suits.

CASSIUS Most of our friends are attending morning walks Brutus. Not regularly but I attend them too. We can meet on the gate just before dawn.

CASCA I'll make sure everybody is there my brother.

BRUTUS Everything is sorted then. Everybody has to take a place on the walking-track and located at different points before Caesar comes. (*to the audience*) The writer found a way to not see too many people. Let's see if you are going to like it. (*Lights get back to normal.*) As you know, Caesar prefers to walk alone with long steps. Army guards come after him. When they pass us on the walking-track we can get him. In that case nobody is going to look for the dagger or the owner of it on the stage.

CASSIUS That's a great idea. Well thought out. I find it logical. Compliments to the writer.

CASCA The people who have haemophobia will get lost in the crush. Caesar will die in confusion.

BRUTUS (*to the audience*) If this play plays in China it won't need any tricks or mind games. It would be full without even sixty-two senators, or even one hundred of them in the holy place called stage. Do you think we should make a theatre in Peking? Or Shanghai? What do you think? (*Light comes back*) Are there any questions you would like to ask? Or anything else?

CASSIUS I don't think so. You've planned it all in such detail Brutus...

BRUTUS Casca, would you like to say anything?

CASCA We're not going to talk anymore Brutus. The daggers and knives will talk from now on.

BRUTUS Ok then. Let's enjoy the rest of the night.

CASSIUS You are right Brutus. We won't be able to sleep anyway. It's nearly dawn.

CASCA Especially I have lots of things to do tonight.

(Cassius and Casca say their goodbye to Brutus quietly. Like they are saying their last goodbye. Lucius walks Cassius and Casca to the door. Brutus takes two glasses and the wine bottle and walks towards Portia who is waiting in one part of the stage. Brutus fills the glasses.)

PORTIA *(Takes the glass)* Oh my Brutus.

BRUTUS Don't hurry Portia. The whole night is ours. *(to the audience)* I hope it is not the last!

(They raise the glasses standing up. Black out.)

III

Walking-track in Rome

(It's not dawn yet but it's about to be. It's getting lighter around.

A scary and uncomfortable silence surrounds.

Brutus is slowly walking to the walking track through the audience. His mask is on his head as usual.

At the turning point at the highest point of the walking-track we can see Casca's head. He's positioned as a watchmen.

Casca sees Brutus and moves. He says something to invisible senators, climbs onto the walking-track and walks towards Brutus in slow motion.)

BRUTUS *(whispers)* Good morning Casca.

CASCA *(whispers as well)* Good morning Brutus.

BRUTUS What is the situation?

CASCA Our people are waiting behind the hill.

BRUTUS Are there any absentees?

CASCA They have all taken their places except the ill and old senator.

BRUTUS Anything missing?

CASCA You know we have a careless senator. He has a poor memory.

BRUTUS Yes.

CASCA He forgot to bring his gun. Luckily I brought an extra dagger. I gave it to him. But on condition he has to give it back. I asked him not to leave it after he stabs somebody. Because the dagger has memories.

BRUTUS Don't mess around with all these details Casca.

CASCA How couldn't I? It was difficult to take it from my brother-in-law. It was a present from Caesar apparently.

BRUTUS That's called fate. The dagger that you gave someone turning back to you. Where is Cassius?

CASCA He is with the senators. He is helping them to calm down. He gave some of them tranquiliser pills. Most of them are panicky. They are right to be nervous. Except two old soldier senators the others don't have any assassination experience.

(The sun is about to rise).

BRUTUS *(He talks and checks the road for Caesar.)* Caesar is about to come. When we see him I can take your place. He trusts me as you know. I'll welcome him here. I'll be so respectful to him and I'll bring him to you. You will be waiting ready. You'll suddenly attack him. After that only the dagger will talk and he'll be finished. I hope everything will be the way we planned.

CASCA Taking two pills helped me. It would've been better if I'd taken one more.

BRUTUS I drank three or four more glasses of wine. It's enough. I took a cold shower but I'm still drunk. Don't panic. I am fine. I'm not drunk enough to lie down and sleep. *(He takes the dagger out and waves it around.)* As you can see I am as fast as usual. *(He puts the dagger away).*

CASCA God bless you Brutus. You always give me confidence.

BRUTUS Thank you Casca. *(suddenly sees)*. Here he comes with slow steps to end his destiny. The crown on his head... How confident and proud. Soon those will be his shadows. The bay leaves that make up his crown will all be dispersed... And till the funeral his bald patch will be seen by everybody contrary to his desires. *(He puts his mask on.)*

(From a distance Caesar with a soldier and some members of the public walk slowly towards the walking-track. They are trying to tell Caesar something but we can't hear them).

CASCA What are they saying to Caesar at this time of the morning?

BRUTUS People's requests never finish. They will be asking if their children can be released from prison or for their husbands to be forgiven from exile... Maybe the limping one is asking for a job for himself. When they come to the start of the road go next to our man Casca. You can be sure that I'll bring Caesar to you in one piece. God help us.

(Caesar and his entourage are just on the walk-track suddenly Caesar starts shaking. He falls down and shakes on the floor.)

BRUTUS Oh no! He's having an epileptic fit.

CASCA What are we going to do?

BRUTUS Let's pray that he dies like that. We won't have to commit murder in that case.

CASCA I've never seen Caesar like this, frothing at the mouth like a rabid dog!

BRUTUS He is going to shake like that for a while. Nothing we can do.

CASCA Let me call our man. They can finish him off when he is shaking on the floor.

BRUTUS Is there any way to do the thing you say? *(points to the audience)* There are people who like Caesar or who hate but he's shaking on the floor. Can we do such a thing in front of everybody? That wouldn't comply with Rome's tradition. We couldn't ever clean our faces again till the end of our lives. That black mark would stick on us.

CASCA OK, that shouldn't happen, but I'm upset because the senators have prepared themselves to kill Caesar. They are going to be disappointed.

BRUTUS What shall we do to not disappoint them do you reckon?

CASCA I wish that there were a couple of people here that need taking out. There are too many unnecessary people in the world. *(Searches in the audience)* For example there are a couple of critics watching in here. Shall we get rid of those idiots who are ready to use their pens to prove themselves to the senator?

BRUTUS Don't talk nonsense anymore Casca. I'll go next to Caesar now. I'll wish him good health.

CASCA Won't he walk towards our people?

BRUTUS They would take back him to the house to rest. This is what do they normally do after a seizure.

CASCA Which means?

BRUTUS We have to stop this act. Go and tell them to disperse. But they should wait to hear from us.

CASCA *(Hopelessly)* This is not good Brutus. It will be more difficult for us. After the election takes place our hands will be tied even more.

BRUTUS Don't get disappointed. Whatever it's going to take this will happen before the election. Go and take Cassius and come to me. No, no don't come to my house. Come to the biggest park in Rome. Let's meet just behind the gate. We'll talk about what to do.

CASCA Ok Brutus. Goodbye for now.

BRUTUS Goodbye Casca.

(Casca goes to the senators, Brutus walks towards Caesar. The sun has risen. Caesar tries to get back to himself. As soon as he stands up he looks for his crown and he finds it and puts it on his head)

BRUTUS *(mask on)* Get well soon Caesar. It is an unlucky day for all of us.

CAESAR *(Tired but tries to put a brave face on.)* Thank you Brutus. Yes, it is an unlucky start to today but but my enemies shouldn't be happy, my friends shouldn't worry nothing will happen to me.

BRUTUS That's for sure, but you should back home and rest grand Caesar. There are lots of things to do this afternoon.

CAESAR I'll go home Brutus. But not to rest. I'll go home to prepare my speech.

(Black out.)

IV

Big Park in Rome

(Cassius and Casca appear from opposite directions. They greet as if they'd just bumped into each other. Brutus arrives too.)

BRUTUS Did I keep you waiting?

CASSIUS No.

CASCA We've just arrived too.

CASSIUS Shall we sit over there?

BRUTUS No need. We have to speak quickly. We've nearly come to the end. No need for big words. We have to be quick so the audience will watch the play enthusiastically.

CASSIUS Got it Brutus.

CASCA We're listening to you.

BRUTUS I should briefly inform you first. I went to Caesar's house with him. I told him that I'm always on his side. This reassured him. He said "I know it and I trust you". When I was leaving he insisted that I go in. I said "no" and added "I'll come to you this afternoon and we can go to the senate together," and he liked it. I told him that being seen with me is gonna make his opponents think twice. He said "you are clever".

CASSIUS Great.

CASCA That's wonderful.

BRUTUS This is the route we should follow. Listen to me carefully Casca.

CASCA I'm all ears.

BRUTUS I'm going to pick Caesar up from his house and we are going to walk to the senate. On our way, in front of the Pompeii Theatre a member of the public is going to try to give a petition to Caesar.

CASCA What does it say on the petition?

BRUTUS Something to do with citizens' problems. It doesn't matter. *(Takes out a petition from his dress and passes it to Casca.)* Don't lose this petition and find a citizen to insist on giving this to Caesar in front of the theatre Casca.

CASCA If Caesar doesn't take it?

BRUTUS I'll take it then. I'll suggest to him to go into the theatre. I'll tell him that the actors are complaining that he doesn't stop by and ask how they are. Caesar knows how redoubtable actors can be. He wouldn't dare be on the wrong side of them. You are going to organize the Republican senators to hide in the theatre like you did on the walking-track. As soon as Caesar walks in the necessary attack will take place and he is going to be sent to eternity. The best place to finish him off is the Pompeii Theatre.

CASCA If he refuses to go into the theatre?

BRUTUS He won't. Like I said, he wouldn't risk the actors being against him. But don't forget to hold your right hand up to me to let me know everybody has taken their place. I'll hold my hand up to say okay and you'll disappear right after.

CASCA How am I going to get lost?

BRUTUS You are going to go in. Is there anything you don't understand?

CASCA I understood Brutus.

CASSIUS He'll have a soldier guard with him.

BRUTUS We're not going to wait for the guard to go in. We'll finish Caesar off as soon as he is in. If the soldier sees it and doesn't escape we'll have to send him to his God too.

CASSIUS We shouldn't have any gaps in our plan. The guard is a soldier and trained. We shouldn't forget that.

CASCA In that case place the two old commanders near to the door. They would do whatever is necessary.

BRUTUS Nice. It's good that you are in charge of placing the senators Cassius.

CASSIUS With pleasure. My only concern is that taking an order from a civilian might make them uncomfortable. We have to remember this about soldiers.

BRUTUS I'm sure you can find a way to direct them without upsetting them Cassius. For example, it will be enough to say to them, "we need your army knowledge and talent to be successful." This will honour them so they won't be sensitive. Taking orders from civilians will be ok then.

CASSIUS Ok. In that case I'll be in the theatre.

BRUTUS Isn't it best? Also you are the best one to give them moral support and pills Cassius. You had enough experience this morning. Did we miss anything?

CASCA Everything is ok I believe.

CASSIUS In that case I should go and supply the missing pills.

BRUTUS You do that but give them a half. They might fall asleep otherwise.

CASSIUS It is a good idea not to give any more pills to the older ones.

CASCA I shouldn't waste time. I should go and find a member of the public to give the petition. Also I should arrange the theatre building to fit our men.

CASSIUS If something goes wrong and we can't complete the assassination. What is going to happen then Brutus?

BRUTUS What can go wrong?

CASSIUS For example, if Caesar doesn't leave the house?

BRUTUS He will. He's preparing his speech at the moment. Nothing can stop him from going to the senate. Caesar wouldn't miss this opportunity.

CASSIUS You are saying that he will go into the building.

BRUTUS I don't have to repeat myself. He will. I'll make it happen. Even if something goes wrong it won't stop us. Don't give up hope. There will always be a way and he will leave this world one way or the other, because he is our target and we know what our aim is. We'll use every opportunity and make sure his soul reaches the sky.

CASSIUS I believe this.

CASCA Me too.

BRUTUS *(Lights change. To the audience.)* Some people might say what will happen if something goes wrong and they can't complete the mission. I'm telling them to relax. No need for panic, I took precautions. I ordered a cake from the most famous patisserie in Rome for Caesar. Aren't we going to celebrate when Caesar wins the election? I'm going to feed him with the nicest piece of cake in the senate. *(laughs exaggeratedly.)*

(lights change.)

BRUTUS May it be easy my friends.

CASSIUS Thank you Brutus.

CASCA You too my brother.

(They go their separate ways. Black out.)

Julius Caesar's House

(Caesar is working at his desk. His wife walks in).

CAESAR *(returns to normal light. To the audience)*. I couldn't introduce myself earlier because of my epileptic fit. I'm the actor who plays Caesar. This role is a milestone in my life because in this theatre I've only played the man who carries a spear, a lottery seller who passes on the street, a newspaper seller, a guy who falls asleep on a bench, a fruit seller and roles like that. This one was an extraordinary chance for me. No doubt this luck is due to my baldness. I'm happy that I'm bald. Being bald is actually a gift from God to me. The writer allows me to talk more near to the end so I should cut it off here and start acting. But I have to say this seems like my role is not big but my name being mentioned makes me happy. I mean I'm happy. The woman over there is my last wife Calpurnia. Before I make my director and writer I should get back to the play. *(Lights change.)*

CALPURNIA *(Goes next to Caesar quietly. Asks nervously)* I'm not disturbing you right Caesar?

CAESAR You are not my Calpurnia. Because I've finished working.

CALPURNIA Would you like one more cup of tea?

CAESAR It's enough. I can drink with Brutus when he comes. He should keep it warm. You are the only I can trust with tea.

CALPURNIA Ok. How do you feel my precious Caesar?

CAESAR How could I be? Could anybody be happier than me in this world? My kingdom will be announced, could anything be better? My friends will be happy, my enemies will be upset. I put in order on this white paper the things I have to do from tomorrow morning. I decided my priorities. The first thing to do is reward the people. At the top of the list I wrote the doctor's name who cut my mother open to take me out. He saved my and my mother's life. I have to pay my debt to him off first. It doesn't finish there. He called this action's name Caesarean in the medical term. Isn't it my debt to put his statue in all the hospitals in Rome and the soils under our dominance? Isn't it being loyal doing this? From tomorrow all the best sculptors will be competing against each other.

CALPURNIA Well thought my clever Caesar. I congratulate you.

CAESAR *(Proudly)* On top of that I will put doctor Bibulus in charge of health in all the soils under our dominance.

CALPURNIA You are a man whose hands should be kissed big Caesar. I can't be any more proud than this.

CAESAR *(Arrogantly)* As you can see I'm so generous when it comes to rewarding and I don't have a limit. But I'm the same with punishment. I'm never stingy. Do you think I

shouldn't punish the teacher who was hitting me in front of the all the kids and saying "You are stupid Caesar. All you think of is literature. You don't have any intelligence for science. You can't be anything"? I thought about this a lot. Wake him up middle of his sleep and bring him to me and ask him if I became somebody or not? But it is not going to finish there. I'll order that his tongue be cut out so he can't insult any other kids in front of their friends.

(Calpurnia shivers but she doesn't say anything.)

CAESAR *(With hate)* I conquered Gaul. They organized victory parades. Suddenly a song rose. It was sung by soldiers with enthusiasm and sarcasm, "Caesar conquered Gaul and Nikomedes Caesar..." (*) How can I forgive the scum who started this gossip? Even though I'm well known for being a womaniser they accuse me of being a passive homosexual. I'll punish them with a suitable punishment. Speak Calpurnia. Why are you quiet?

(*) In Rome Society being passive in a homosexual relationship was seen as being submissive. Caesar's enemies reckoned that Caesar had an affair with the King Nicomedes IV of Bithynia during the conquer of Gaul. Some politicians were talking about Caesar as a Bithynian Queen trying to humiliate him.

CALPURNIA *(nervously)* You always know best my Caesar.

CAESAR I told you in detail how I was fighting against governors who are corrupt and irregular.

CALPURNIA You earned a place in the people's hearts because of that honest fight my love. And I fell in love with you then.

CAESAR When I was in the fight with all my blood a one-eyed judge was pressuring the courts with the hands of other judges for me to lose the cases. But I didn't give up and despite all those pressures I won the most of the cases one by one. That one-eyed pimp is a member of the Supreme Council of Judges. Doesn't he deserve to have the other eye blinded and be exiled to a solitary town court as a clerk?

(Brutus enters. His mask is on.)

BRUTUS I'm so sorry Great Caesar. I've just walked in without permission.

CAESAR *(Friendly)* You never need permission Brutus. My door is always open to my friend.

CALPURNIA Would you like to have a cup of tea as well?

BRUTUS Thank you Ma'am. Actually we have to leave without tarry. It's better to be there before the election starts. Have you rested sir?

CAESAR I'm someone who can get rest working Brutus. I prepared the speech.

BRUTUS If only you'd lie down for a while. I don't want you to get tired.

CALPURNIA (*Worried and shyly*) Are you going to go as well Caesar?

CAESAR I haven't prepared this speech for Brutus to read on behalf of me Calpurnia. Today is the most important day for me and Rome. I have to experience this day with the glory. Don't I Brutus?

BRUTUS No doubt great Caesar. Whatever you command sir.

CAESAR (*getting ready*) I overheard that some senators, especially the Republicans, are accusing me of being disrespectful for not welcoming them standing Brutus. Is that true?

BRUTUS Some reproachful comments did reach my ears.

CAESAR But I let them know the reason that I didn't stand up was because I was having really heavy diarrhea Brutus. Hasn't it been transmitted to them?

BRUTUS It's been transmitted to them sir. But a couple of stubborn senators insist that you walked to your house without any help.

CAESAR Give those two senator's names to me Brutus. I should honour them.

BRUTUS They've been convinced great Caesar. Don't take it seriously.

CALPURNIA (*Built up the nerve*) Are you getting ready to go out Caesar? You shouldn't go out today.

CAESAR Why is that?

CALPURNIA (*Worried*) The oracles say that Caesar shouldn't leave the house today. Because 15th of March will be a bad day for Caesar. Shakespeare wrote that in a play called Julius Caesar.

CAESAR Yes it's been a bad morning. I had an epileptic fit which I hadn't had for a long time. Look, I feel great now. I'll go and experience the most honorable day in the senate. I'm not a coward Calpurnia. I can understand your concerns. You're worrying about me being assassinated. These rumours reached me. Between us they are the cause of the fit. Even Brutus is on this list so how can you expect me to believe this Calpurnia? I would only worry that your brother-in-law Cassius' name is on the list Brutus. Because he always listens and never talks. He is sneaky and he has a fake smile. Sly.

BRUTUS Cassius is clever enough not to be against Caesar. He knows your power. He is obviously jealous of you but this jealousy has turned into an admiration towards you. He almost worships you.

CAESAR Are you saying that there's nobody to be afraid of on the list?

BRUTUS Yes you are right sir. The aim is to destroy our love and loyalty.

CAESAR In that case we have to blast away these rumours. You die once but cowards every day. Let's leave now Brutus.

CALPURNIA Brutus is your friend. He can hear this. I saw you in my dream last night. A group of people were attacking you. You were lying on the floor covered in blood. I woke up and changed. I couldn't sleep since then.

BRUTUS Dreams always become opposite. Which means a group of people are going to clap Caesar. They are going to crown him a single man... If he doesn't turn up the majority might not vote for him. If he is not there some others might find courage. Even if he's in danger turning up in the senate will be good.

CAESAR You are a clever man Brutus. I don't love you for no reason.

CALPURNIA *(She stands at the door like tree. She cries.)* Don't go Caesar. My feelings are never wrong. This is a trap for you. They'll kill you. Even Shakespeare said...

CAESAR *(Shut her up)* I had enough of your Shakespeare, your oracles and your fortune tellers.

(Caesar pushes Calpurnia and leaves. Brutus follows him.)

VI

In front of the Pompeii Theatre

(Casca and Cassius are waiting on the top of the stairs next to the theatre's door. Next to Casca there is the man who is going to give the petition. Casca and Cassius are looking in the direction Caesar is supposed to come.)

A while later Caesar and Brutus enter behind the audience and a soldier is behind them. Caesar and Brutus are walking slowly and talking at the same time, but we can't hear them. Generally Caesar is talking. He uses hand gestures to support his speech.

Casca directs the man who has the petition to go downstairs.

Cassius goes in.

Before Caesar, with his crown, and Brutus, with his mask, reach the theater Casca raises his hand to say everything is fine. Brutus gives the sign too, being careful not to be seen by Caesar. Casca is relieved and goes in, but sometimes we see his head next to the door to see outside.

Caesar and Brutus reach the stairs in slow motion).

MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC (he shows his petition and kneels down in front of Caesar)
Your majesty... Great Caesar...

(The soldier gets in front of the citizen to protect Caesar.)

BRUTUS *(goes in front of Joe Public to protect him.)* What is it?

JOE PUBLIC I would like to give this petition to the Great Caesar.

BRUTUS It isn't the time for that. *(As if he walks away.)* Are there some secrets we have to know in this petition?

JOE PUBLIC Yes dear Brutus... Yes, there are things our country's father should know about... It's important.

BRUTUS Give it to me. I'll pass it to him...

CAESAR Leave him Brutus. *(to the citizen)* Give your petition.

(The soldiers take the petition and passes it to Caesar.)

JOE PUBLIC My majesty. You should read it immediately. I'm doing my duty as a citizen. If you read it right now you are going to learn some really important information. You'll thank me to learn the truth sir.

CAESAR *(suspiciously to Brutus)* I think he is warning me. What do you think about this Brutus?

BRUTUS *(quietly)* Yes. I'm thinking like you great Caesar. I have a suggestion to you. If it is convenient for you let's go into the theatre. The actors in theatre have been reproaching you for never stopping by. We can make them happy and read the petition in peace. We shouldn't offend theatre people. Once they turn against you the whole world will hear your name negatively. Because they are great about communication. What do you think?

CAESAR Wouldn't we be late to the senate?

BRUTUS We have time. Also we wouldn't hang around for more than ten or fifteen minutes. I have a feeling that this petition might have important information we should know about. It would be good idea to read it carefully sir. Of course if it is ok with you, too.

CAESAR And you say it will be good for the theatre people as well. *(to the soldier)* Bring the citizen with us. We might have questions to ask him. Come on then Brutus...

(Caesar gives a sign to the soldier with his head. Suddenly they take their guns and attack Brutus. Brutus falls down. Brutus looks at Caesar and the soldier in shock. They start to hit him.)

CAESAR *(shouts)* Is it that easy to kill Caesar? Do you think I didn't notice the mask you have on? Did you think I'm stupid enough to not take precautions? Soldiers! Clean all the people who tried to knock me off! *(to the soldier)* Come on!

BRUTUS *(gives a sign for light. And it changes)* What's going on? What are you doing?

CAESAR Nothing. This role is my biggest luck. The writer just wiped him out in two scenes. No use for anything. As you know, actors always make their roles bigger.

BRUTUS Are you an idiot? (stands up. Walks towards the stage exit) Making your role bigger by changing the reality of the history right?! Do you think that I'll allow it stupid?!

CAESAR (calms down) Where are you going my friend?

BRUTUS Can't you see the audience is facing an idiot? They are shocked. It's not clear if they are crying or laughing! Also the director and the writer are going to fuck you. We shouldn't be in the middle at least! I'm not playing! I won't!

CAESAR (stands in front of him) I was joking.

BRUTUS You can't make a joke in play like this!

CAESAR (holds his hand and kneels down) Promise. I'm not gonna do it again.

SOLDIER (speaks locking his mouth) Ok cut it out. He promised it's not gonna happen again. (threatening him) Or shall we really kill you? I would be in the history of theatre - the extra who really killed Brutus on the stage. It's really good for somebody who has a small role like me.

CAESAR (encourages him) Come on! Don't create a bigger tragedy. When this hits the news the play tickets will be sold out. Let's continue where we left off! Come on!

(Everybody goes back to their place. Brutus gives the sign for light).

Caesar is in the front, Brutus is next to him and the soldier and citizen are behind them as they climb the steps. Caesar walks in first. From the open door we can see Casca's dagger swing into Caesar's neck.

CAESAR (*Shocked and horrified, he holds it to his neck*) What did you do you traitor?

(Cassius comes and stab his dagger into Caesar's chest. Brutus takes the dagger out and he has it in his hand. We can see lots of knives and daggers behind Caesar's back. Caesar tries to escape but can't succeed. He is hopeless, tries to protect himself with bloody hands. When the hands using the dagger and knives are being raised and lowered the soldier escapes. Brutus stabs a dagger into Caesar's back.)

CAESAR (*Turns back and sees Brutus. Desperately*). Et tu Brutus?

BRUTUS (*He takes his mask off.*) Yes Caesar, me too! You deserved it!

(Under the daggers attack he can't protect himself and falls down. He is dead.

Casca, Cassius and Brutus are shown in the door with bloody daggers in their hands.)

CASCA (*Shows the audience a bloody dagger*) Romans! Good news! The cruel one bit the dust! His dead body is lying on the floor inside!

CASSIUS (*to the audience*) Caesar shouldn't have wanted to be a God.

BRUTUS (*Steps up front. To the audience*) Beware! A new Caesar starts to smell the air. We shouldn't be overcome by languor. Because the tree's worm is always inside it...

August 2016, Ortaca/Sarıgerme/Akdenizevleri.