Vikram’s English Academy (ICSE)

**Notes : Mark Antony’s Speech**

**Answer the following :**

1. **Who has been killed and by whom? Why ?**

Ans: Julius Caesar, a Roman has been killed by some of his senators including Brutus , one of Caesar’s closest companions. Julius Caesar has defeated many a powerful kings. He had recently defeated Pompey, once a political ally, who had challenged his leadership. Caesar’s growing ambition is seen as a threat by some senators who are insecure with his popularity as they think he may become Emperor. Thus they conspire and kill him.

1. **Who speaks initially to the people gathered outside the senate?**

Ans: It is Brutus, Caesar’s close companion, who speaks to the people gathered outside the senate.

1. **Who comes on the scene? How does he start his speech?**

Ans: Mark Antony , another very close friend of Caesar, comes on the scene. He starts the speech by speaking positively about Brutus. He also says that he has come to bury Caesar and not praise him.

1. **What does Mark Antony say about the good and evil deeds of a person? How does he connect it to Caesar?**

Ans: Mark Antony says that the evil that men do lives after them but the good is buried with them. He says that this is exactly how it was with Caesar. He says this in such a way that one cannot make out what exactly he means.

1. **What does he keep repeating about Brutus? Why does he do so?**

Ans: Mark Antony keeps referring to Brutus as an honorable man. Brutus had already convinced the people that Caesar had been killed for the protection of the people and the country. If Mark Antony had directly opposed to what he said, the people would have not accepted and got furious with him. He keeps referring to him as an "honorable" man because he's being sarcastic. What he says and what he means are two completely different things. Later he invokes from the people the statement that Brutus is not honorable.

1. **Explain: “My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar, and I must pause till it come back to me”**

Ans: This was said by Mark Antony. Here he has become very emotional about his friend Caesar, who lies dead in a pool of blood. So he pauses in the middle of the speech to gather himself before he starts speaking again.

1. **Mark Antony says that he doesn’t want to stir the crowd to mutiny and rage. What reason does he give for that?**

Ans: Mark Antony tells the crowd that he doesn’t want to stir their hearts and minds to mutiny because he would be doing wrong to Brutus and Cassius and the others who had killed Caesar. He says he won’t do them (the honorable) wrong, he would rather wrong the dead (Caesar) and himself and the people of Rome.

1. **How does he introduce the existence of the will? Does he immediately read it out to the people? What does he say will happen if he reads it out?**

Ans: Mark Antony tells the crowd that he doesn’t want to stir them and the next moment he shows them a parchment with the seal of Caesar and tells them that he had found it in Caesar’s closet. No. Mark Antony does not read out the will as he says that if he does so the people would go and kiss dead Caesar’s wounds and dip their napkins in his sacred blood. They would beg a hair of his memory and will mention it in their wills bequeathing it as a rich legacy unto their issue.

1. **What does Mark Antony do before reading the will?**

Ans: Before reading Caesar’s will, Mark Antony points out to every wound on Caesar’s body telling the people where some of the senators had stabbed Caesar.

1. **What does Mark say about the wound made by Brutus dagger?**

Ans: Mark shows the crowd the wound made by Brutus dagger. He says that when Brutus stabbed Caesar and plucked his steel dagger out , the blood followed it and rushed out of his body as if rushing out of a door to see if it was Brutus who had actually done it. Marks points out that that was the most unkindly cut on Caesar’s body as it was the one made by his friend who was worse than a traitor. This treason defeated Caesar and burst his mighty heart and then he fell.

1. **What does Mark say about the fall of Caesar?**

Ans: Mark says that the fall of Caesar amounted to the fall of Mark himself and his countrymen.

1. **Summarise Mark Antony’s address to the crowd.**

Ans: Mark Antony is aware that the crowd has been convinced by the speech of Brutus who has made them believe that Caesar was ambitious and that was harmful for the country. He addresses Brutus as an ‘honorable man’ repeatedly. He says starts off by saying that he has not come to praise Caesar thus getting the undivided attention of the crowd. Slowly but steadily he brings about a paradigm shift in the crowd. Mark recalls how Caesar had brought captives from several nations and the ransom had filled the treasury of Rome. He reminds them that whenever the poor had cried in misery, Caesar had wept with them. He then tells them that Mark had thrice offered the crown to Caesar during a feast and all the times Caesar had declined. Everytime he talks of Caesar’s contribution to the people of his country he asks rhetorically if that was ambition. He keeps repeating that Brutus was ‘honorable’ albeit with mockery only to slowly make the crowd realize for themselves that he wasn’t. Mark Antony says that he doesn’t want to stir the people for that would be a revolt against Brutus but immediately mentions the will saying that if the people know what is in the will, they would go and kiss dead Caesar’s wounds and dip their napkins in his sacred blood. They would beg a hair of his memory and will mention it in their wills bequeathing it as a rich legacy unto their issue. The crowds are now completely with Mark and want to avenge Caesar’s death. That is when Mark Antony uncovers Caesar’s corpse. People are moved and angered at the unbearable sight of the wounds inflicted on Caesar’s body. As the final stroke, Mark Antony reads Caesar’s will in which Caesar had left some fortune for each Roman and also willed all his private gardens and parks to be let out for the public use. Now the crowd’s anger has reached its hilt and the people set out to take revenge of their beloved Caesar’s cruel assassination.

1. **What are the contents of Caesar’s will?**

Ans: According to the will, Caesar had left seventy-five drachmas to every Roman citizen. Moreover he had left all his roadways and private gardens and orchards along the river Tiber to the people and it was now all public property where the people could walk at leisure and relax.