

Scene One

Rome. A street.

IF THIS TOOK PLACE TODAY THEY WOULD SAY:

FLAVIUS Hence! home, you idle creatures get you home:
Is this a holiday? what! know you not,
Being mechanical, you ought not walk
Upon a labouring day without the sign
Of your profession? Speak, what trade art thou?

COMMONER 1 Why, sir, a carpenter.

MARULLUS Where is thy leather apron and thy rule?
What dost thou with thy best apparel on?
You, sir, what trade are you?

COMMONER 2 Truly, sir, in respect of a fine workman, I am but,
as you would say, a cobbler.

MARULLUS But what trade art thou? answer me directly.

COMMONER 2 A trade, sir, that, I hope, I may use with a safe
conscience; which is, indeed, sir, a mender of bad soles.

MARULLUS What trade, thou knave? thou naughty knave, what trade?

COMMONER 2 Nay, I beseech you, sir, be not out with me: yet,
if you be out, sir, I can mend you.

MARULLUS What meanest thou by that? mend me, thou saucy fellow!

COMMONER 2 Why, sir, cobble you.

FLAVIUS Thou art a cobbler, art thou?

COMMONER 2 Truly, sir, all that I live by is with the awl: I
meddle with no tradesman's matters, nor women's
matters, but with awl. I am, indeed, sir, a surgeon
to old shoes; when they are in great danger, I
recover them. As proper men as ever trod upon
neat's leather have gone upon my handiwork.

*Hey! You lazy people, go home:
Is today a vacation day? What? Don't you know?
Being workers, you shouldn't be walking
On a workday without showing what you do for
A living. Tell me, what is your occupation?*

I'm a carpenter.

*Where are your carpenter tools?
What are you doing with your best clothes on?
You other guy, what is your occupation?*

*Really, sir, compared to a real tradesman, I'm just
What you would call a shoemaker.*

But what is your job? Tell me the truth.

*A job that I can do with a clear conscious
I'm a mender of bad soles (pun: shoes or people?)*

(angered) What's your job, you fool? What's your job?!

*Don't get mad at me! But, if you do happen to snap,
I can fix you!*

What do you mean? Fix me? Huh?

Why, I'll mend your sole/soul.

Ohhh I get it, you're a shoe repair man.

*Yes, sir, my whole life is using this tool to fix shoes.
I don't get involved with tradesmen or women,
Only with this tool. I am indeed a surgeon for
Old shoes. When they're broken, I
Fix them. The finest men who have walked on
Shoes have walked on my work.*

FLAVIUS But wherefore art not in thy shop today?
Why dost thou lead these men about the streets?

COMMONER 2 Truly, sir, to wear out their shoes, to get myself
into more work. But, indeed, sir, we make holiday,
to see Caesar and to rejoice in his triumph.

MARULLUS Wherefore rejoice? What conquest brings he home?
What tributaries follow him to Rome,
To grace in captive bonds his chariot-wheels?
You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things!
O you hard hearts, you cruel men of Rome,
Knew you not Pompey? Many a time and oft
Have you climb'd up to walls and battlements,
To towers and windows, yea, to chimney-tops,
Your infants in your arms, and there have sat
The livelong day, with patient expectation,
To see great Pompey pass the streets of Rome:
And when you saw his chariot but appear,
Have you not made an universal shout,
That Tiber trembled underneath her banks,
To hear the replication of your sounds
Made in her concave shores?
And do you now put on your best attire?
And do you now cull out a holiday?
And do you now strew flowers in his way
That comes in triumph over Pompey's blood? Be gone!
Run to your houses, fall upon your knees,
Pray to the gods to intermit the plague
That needs must light on this ingratitude.

FLAVIUS Go, go, good countrymen, and, for this fault,
Assemble all the poor men of your sort;
Draw them to Tiber banks, and weep your tears
Into the channel, till the lowest stream
Do kiss the most exalted shores of all.

Exeunt all the Commoners

*But why aren't you at work today?
Why are you leading these guys around the streets?*

*Really, sir, to wear out their shoes so I have
More shoes to fix. But yes, sir, we are celebrating today
To see Caesar and celebrate his victory.*

*Why celebrating? What treasure is he bringing home?
How many hostages does he have
Handcuffed to his chariot?
Blockheads! Numskulls! Fools!
You hard-hearted, evil men of Rome,
Don't you remember Pompey? Many times
You climbed up walls and battlements,
Towers, windows and yes even chimneys,
With your kids in tow, and you've sat there
All day long, patiently expecting
To see the great Pompey pass by you on the street:
And when you saw his chariot
Didn't you all shout and cheer together,
So loudly that the river Tiber shook
When the echoes of your cheers
Made it to the shores of the river?
Aren't you wearing your best clothing right now?
And calling today a public holiday?
And aren't you throwing flowers into the streets
For the man who killed Pompey? Go away!
Run to your houses, get on your knees,
Pray that the gods don't send a plague
To punish you for being hypocrites.*

*Go, you people, and to make up for this problem,
Get all of your friends and people of your class together.
Take them to the banks of the river, and cry
Into the river until the tears fill it up
So it gets to its highest level.*

Everybody but Flavius and Marullus leaves

See whether their basest metal be not moved;
They vanish tongue-tied in their guiltiness.
Go you down that way towards the Capitol;
This way will I. Disrobe the images,
If you do find them deck'd with ceremonies.

MARULLUS May we do so?
You know it is the feast of Lupercal.

FLAVIUS It is no matter; let no images
Be hung with Caesar's trophies. I'll about,
And drive away the vulgar from the streets:
So do you too, where you perceive them thick.
These growing feathers pluck'd from Caesar's wing
Will make him fly an ordinary pitch,
Who else would soar above the view of men
And keep us all in servile fearfulness.

Exeunt

*See how those dumb brains were moved,
They go away being speechless because of their guilt.
You go that way towards the capitol;
I'll go this way. Take all the decorations off the statues of Caesar
if you find them decorated.*

*Can we do that?
You know it's the feast of Lupercal.*

*Don't worry. Don't let any of the statues
Be covered with Caesar's decorations. I'll go
Get all the common people off the streets:
You do it too, where you think there are too many.
If we pluck feathers from Caesar's metaphorical wings,
He won't be able to fly (knock him down, he won't be so cocky).
Otherwise he'll be above us all
And we'll lose our freedom and live in fear.*

They leave.