

Dramatic Interpretation

Boys

OJCL 2019

Source: Derived from *Caesar* By Colleen McCullough

Speaker: Gaius Cassius Longinus

Audience: Julius Caesar

Scene: Gaius is reporting what happened to the body of Marcus Crassus after he was defeated by the Parthians.

When the time came, in walked Queen Agave. On her platter she bore the head of Marcus Crassus. Jason of Tralles put the platter down, pulled off his mask, and picked up Crassus's head, an easy thing to do because, like so many bald men, Crassus had grown the hair on the back of his head very long so he could comb it forward. Grinning triumphantly, the actor swung the head back and forth as if it were a lamp.

Oh, Marcus! That it should have come to this. Could you not see where it would all end, and how? Fifteen thousand good Roman soldiers are dead, ten thousand more sentenced to life on an alien frontier, my Aeduan cavalry are gone, most of the Galatians are gone, and Syria is being governed by an enterprising, insufferably arrogant and conceited young man whose contemptuous words about you are the words which will follow you for all time. The Parthians may have assassinated your person, but Gaius Cassius has assassinated your character. I know which fate I would prefer.

Your wonderful older son is dead. He too is vulture fodder. In the desert, it is not necessary to burn or bury. And your eye sockets glaze sightlessly over a vista of endless, freezingly cold mountains toward the icy infinity of the Caucasus.

Dramatic Interpretation

Girls

OJCL 2019

Source: *Circe* by Colleen McCullough

Speaker: Circe

Audience:

Scene: Circe reports on a time when Odysseus asked her why she chose to turn men who visited her island into pigs.

He asked me once, why pigs.

“Why not?” I said

He gave me a bare smile. “I mean it, I would like to know.”

I knew he meant it. He was not a pious man, but the seeking out of things hidden, this was his highest worship.

There were answers in me. I felt them, buried deep as last year’s bulbs, growing fat.

After I changed a crew, I would watch them scabbling and crying in the sty, falling over each other, stupid with their horror. They hated it all, their newly voluptuous flesh, their bellies dragging in the earth’s muck. It was humiliation, a debasement. They were sick with longing for their hands, those appendages men use to mitigate the world. Come, I would say to them, it’s not that bad. You should appreciate a pig’s advantages. Mud-slick and swift, they are hard to catch. Low to the ground, they cannot easily be knocked over. They are not like dogs, they do not need your love. They can thrive anywhere, on anything, scraps and trash. They look witless and dull, which lulls their enemies, but they are clever. They will remember your face.

They never listened. The truth is, men make terrible pigs.