Fatal Errors Of Brutus Essay, Research Paper

The Fatal Errors of Brutus

William Shakespeare’s The Tragedy of Julius Caesar is built upon the six lethal

mistakes that Brutus unknowingly performs. Brutus believes he uses wise judgment and

cunning skill in his plans to prevail over Caesar. There are three errors that seem to be the

most significant. They are refusing to take an oath, not killing Antony and allowing

Antony to speak at Caesar’s funeral. The plot against Caesar is first devised by Cassius,

who slowly allows Brutus to take over the arrangements. This is when Brutus’

miscalculations eventually lead him to his own downfall.

First, Brutus truthfully feels that the conspirators have enough will and intelligence

to keep the plot concealed from others. He believes the conspirators will not confer with

anyone who may feel betrayed by their plans and protect Caesar. For this reason, Brutus

strongly goes against the conspirators taking an oath to pledge their loyalty to the group.

Brutus proceeds by stating that through each conspirator’s own personal motive for

defeating Caesar is sufficient enough to bind them together. Brutus is dreadfully mistaken.

The conspirators feel no actual degree of loyalty. They feel free to have doubts and

discuss them with others. This is proven true when Artemidorus is revealed writing a

letter to Caesar. The letter warns Caesar of the conspirators and names each one. The

only possible way that Artemidorus could have been aware of the plan is if one of the

conspirators felt the need to speak openly about the plot.

Later, the question of whether or not to kill Antony is brought up by the

conspirators. Brutus and Cassius disagree on the answer. Cassius believes it would be

best to kill Antony so that there is no fear of revenge from him. Brutus does not see the

threat in Antony. He sees Antony as merely a limb that has no power once Caesar is dead.

The men then decide, through Brutus’ persuasion, that it is pointless and too bloody to kill

Antony. This error causes Brutus’ ultimate downfall in the end. It would have been wise

for the conspirators to kill Antony instead of facing him in their last battle.

Finally, once Caesar is dead, Antony proposes to speak at his funeral. Cassius and

Brutus again disagree. Cassius knows it is unwise to allow one of Caesar’s loyal friends

to address the people at the funeral. Brutus persuades Cassius that Antony will not be of

any trouble, however; Brutus ensures him that he will speak to the people first. This event

will change the rest of Brutus’ life. The people first side with Brutus and agree that

Caesar should have been killed for his ambition. It is now Antony’s turn to address the

people. Antony’s speech is full of sadness and sarcasm toward the “Honorable Brutus.”

With the help of visual aids, such as Caesar’s cloak and the will he supposedly left, the

people sense the urge to avenge against Cassius and Brutus. Antony influences the people

to riot and kill the murderers of Caesar. Brutus and Cassius are chased out of Rome and

into a camp near Sardis. Brutus and Cassius later plan to meet Antony and Octavius in

battle at Philippi. Here is where the lives of Brutus and Cassius end, not by the swords of

their enemies but by their own swords. The same swords that stabbed and murdered

Caesar, are fallen upon by Brutus and Cassius.

In conclusion, these three errors in judgment prove to be catastrophic in the end.

Brutus believed strongly in his choices and persuaded others to feel the same. His

decisions ultimately lead him to his own downfall, suicide.