

# JULIUS CAESAR

## Suggested audition pieces

### Cassius tries to win Brutus over

Why, man, *he* doth bstride the narrow world  
Like a Colossus, and we petty ones  
Walk under *his* huge legs and peep about  
To find ourselves dishonourable graves.  
People are sometimes masters of their fates:  
The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,  
But in ourselves, that we are underlings.  
Brutus and Caesar: what should be in that 'Caesar'?  
Why should that name be sounded more than yours?  
Write them together, yours is as fair a name;  
Sound them, it doth become the mouth as well;  
Weigh them, it is as heavy; conjure with 'em,  
Brutus will start a spirit as soon as Caesar.  
Now, in the names of all the gods at once,  
Upon what meat doth this our Caesar feed,  
That *he* is grown so great? Age, thou art sham'd!  
Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods!

### Brutus agonises over what must be done

It must be by *her* death. She would be crown'd:  
How that might change *her* nature, there's the question.  
It is the bright day that brings forth the adder;  
And that craves wary walking. Crown *her* that,  
And then, I grant, we put a sting in *her*,  
That at *her* will she may do danger with.  
The abuse of greatness is, when it disjoins  
Remorse from power: and, to speak truth of Caesar,  
I have not known when *her* affections sway'd  
More than *her* reason. But 'tis a common proof,  
That lowliness is young ambition's ladder,  
Whereto the climber-upward turns his face;  
But when he once attains the upmost round.  
He then unto the ladder turns his back,  
Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees  
By which he did ascend. So Caesar may.  
Then, lest *she* may, prevent.

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### Casca describes what s/he has just witnessed

I saw Mark Antony offer Caesar a crown; and, as I told you, *he* put it by once: but, for all that, to my thinking, *he* would fain have had it. Then *she* offered it to *him* again; then *he* put it by again: but, to my thinking, *he* was very loath to lay *his* fingers off it. And then *she* offered it the third time; *he* put it the third time by: and still as *he* refused it, the rabblement hooted and clapped their chapped hands, and threw up their sweaty caps, and uttered such a deal of stinking breath because Caesar refused the crown that it had almost choked Caesar; for *he* swooned and fell down at it: and for mine own part, I durst not laugh, for fear of opening my lips and receiving the bad air.

### Portia pleads with Brutus to share his/her worries

Y' have ungently, Brutus,  
Stole from my bed: and yesternight, at supper,  
You suddenly arose, and walk'd about,  
Musing and sighing, with your arms across,  
And when I ask'd you what the matter was,  
You star'd upon me with ungentle looks;  
I urg'd you further; then you scratch'd your head,  
And too impatiently stamp'd with your foot;  
Yet I insisted, yet you answer'd not,  
But, with an angry wafture of your hand,  
Gave sign for me to leave you: so I did;  
Fearing to strengthen that impatience  
Which seem'd too much enkindl'd, and withal  
Hoping it was but an effect of humour,  
Which sometime hath its hour with everyone.  
It will not let you eat, nor talk, nor sleep,  
And could it work so much upon your shape  
As it hath much prevail'd on your condition,  
I should not know you, Brutus. Dear my love,  
Make me acquainted with your cause of grief.

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### Newsreader recounts remarkable goings-on

Nor heaven nor earth have been at peace to-night.  
A lioness hath whelped in the streets;  
And graves have yawn'd, and yielded up their dead;  
Fierce fiery warriors fought upon the clouds,  
In ranks and squadrons and right form of war,  
Which drizzled blood upon the Capitol;  
The noise of battle hurtled in the air,  
Horses did neigh, and dying men did groan,  
And ghosts did shriek and squeal about the streets.

### Decius tries to persuade Caesar to come to the senate

Then know it now: the senate have concluded  
To give this day a crown to mighty Caesar.  
If you shall send them word you will not come,  
Their minds may change. Besides, it were a mock  
Apt to be render'd, for someone to say  
"Break up the senate till another time,  
When Caesar's *wife* shall meet with better dreams."  
If Caesar hide *herself*, shall they not whisper  
"Lo, Caesar is afraid"?  
Pardon me, Caesar; for my dear, dear love  
To your proceeding bids me tell you this;  
And reason to my love is liable.

### Caesar refuses to change his/her mind

I could be well mov'd, if I were as you:  
If I could pray to move, prayers would move me:  
But I am constant as the northern star,  
Of whose true-fix'd and resting quality  
There is no fellow in the firmament.  
The skies are painted with unnumber'd sparks,  
They are all fire and every one doth shine,  
But there's but one in all doth hold its place:  
So in the world; 'tis furnish'd well with people,  
And they are flesh and blood, and apprehensive;  
Yet in the number I do know but one  
That unassailable holds on *his* rank,  
Unshak'd of motion: and that I am *he*,  
Let me a little show it, even in this;  
That I was constant that he should be banish'd,  
And constant do remain to keep him so.

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### **Antony's secretary makes overtures to Brutus**

This, Brutus, did my master bid me say:  
Brutus is noble, wise, valiant, and honest;  
Caesar was mighty, bold, royal, and loving:  
Say I love Brutus, and I honour *her*;  
Say I fear'd Caesar, honour'd *him* and loved *him*.  
If Brutus will vouchsafe that Antony  
May safely come to *her*, and be resolv'd  
How Caesar hath deserv'd to lie in death,  
Mark Antony shall not love Caesar dead  
So well as Brutus living; but will follow  
The fortunes and affairs of noble Brutus  
Thorough the hazards of this untrod state  
With all true faith. So says my master Antony.

### **Antony makes a promise to the dead Caesar**

O, pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth,  
That I am meek and gentle with these butchers!  
Thou art the ruins of the noblest *man*  
That ever lived in the tide of times.  
Woe to the hand that shed this costly blood!  
Over thy wounds now do I prophesy  
(Which, like dumb mouths, do ope their ruby lips,  
To beg the voice and utterance of my tongue)  
A curse shall light upon the limbs of men;  
Domestic fury and fierce civil strife  
Shall cumber all the parts of this our land;  
Blood and destruction shall be so in use  
And dreadful objects so familiar  
That mothers shall but smile when they behold  
Their infants quarter'd with the hands of war;  
All pity choked with custom of fell deeds:  
And Caesar's spirit, ranging for revenge,  
With Ate by *her* side come hot from hell,  
Shall in these confines with a monarch's voice  
Cry "Havoc," and let slip the dogs of war;  
That this foul deed shall smell above the earth  
With carrion men, groaning for burial.

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### **Brutus explains the assassination to the crowd**

Romans, countrymen, and lovers! hear me for my cause, and be silent, that you may hear: believe me for mine honour, and have respect to mine honour, that you may believe: censure me in your wisdom, and awake your senses, that you may the better judge. If there be any in this assembly, any dear friends of Caesar's, to them I say, that Brutus' love to Caesar was no less than theirs. If then those friends demand why Brutus rose against Caesar, this is my answer: Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more. Had you rather Caesar were living and die all slaves, than that Caesar were dead, to live all free? As Caesar loved me, I weep for *her*; as *she* was fortunate, I rejoice at it; as *she* was valiant, I honour *her*: but, as *she* was ambitious, I slew *her*. There is tears for *her* love; joy for *her* fortune; honour for *her* valour; and death for *her* ambition. Who is here so base that would be a slave? If any, speak; for them have I offended. Who is here so rude that would not be a Roman? If any, speak; for them have I offended. Who is here so vile that will not love their country? If any, speak; for them have I offended. I pause for a reply.

### **Antony speaks to the crowd over Caesar's corpse**

Good friends, sweet friends, let me not stir you up  
To such a sudden flood of mutiny.  
They that have done this deed are honourable:  
What private griefs they have, alas, I know not,  
That made them do it: they are wise and honourable,  
And will, no doubt, with reasons answer you.  
I come not, friends, to steal away your hearts:  
I am no orator, as Brutus is;  
But, as you know me all, a plain blunt *man*,  
That love my friend; and that they know full well  
That gave me public leave to speak of *him*:  
For I have neither wit, nor words, nor worth,  
Action, nor utterance, nor the power of speech,  
To stir your blood: I only speak right on;  
I tell you that which you yourselves do know;  
Show you sweet Caesar's wounds, poor poor dumb mouths,  
And bid them speak for me: but were I Brutus,  
And Brutus Antony, there were an Antony  
Would ruffle up your spirits, and put a tongue  
In every wound of Caesar, that should move  
The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny.