

PLOT SUMMARY OF *JULIUS CAESAR*

Julius Caesar returns to Rome, a triumphant conqueror, with ambitions to rule as monarch. Cassius and Brutus, veteran republican generals, hear the cries of the mob eager for Caesar's rule. Cassius, jealous of Caesar's success, strives to persuade the idealist Brutus that killing Caesar is the only remedy against tyranny.

A terrifying storm, filled with supernatural portents, occurs that night as Cassius, Casca and Cinna plot against Caesar. The conspirators meet at Brutus's house and convince him to join in their assassination of Caesar the next day.

Portia, wife of Brutus, awakes and seeks to discover the secret that troubles him. Calpurnia, Caesar's wife, also awakes, alerted by nightmares and premonitions of the danger facing him, and pleads with him to stay home. But on that fatal day, the Ides of March, Caesar enters the Senate and is stabbed to death by the conspirators.

Mark Antony, Caesar's loyal general, initially pledges his allegiance to the conspirators, but his speech over Caesar's corpse in the market-place cleverly incites the crowd to vengeful riot. Antony allies himself with Caesar's nephew and heir, Octavius, and their armies prepare to clash with those of Cassius and Brutus at Philippi. Meanwhile, Brutus learns that his wife Portia has committed suicide.

Brutus orders what seems to Cassius a rash assault on Octavius and, in mistaken belief of defeat, Cassius kills himself. The battle eventually turns against Brutus and he too, rather than surrender himself, commits suicide. The victory belongs to Antony and Octavius, who nevertheless praise Brutus for the purity of his motives.

