

Character Sketch

Julius Caesar

- **Most powerful Roman leader in the play:** Caesar is shown at the height of political authority, treated with near-royal public reverence.
- **Confident and commanding:** He speaks with certainty, expects obedience, and issues orders easily, assuming his word will be followed.
- **Physically vulnerable:** Despite his public strength, he has bodily weaknesses (he mentions illness; others refer to his infirmities), which contrasts with his larger-than-life image.
- **Believes himself unshakeable:** He repeatedly presents himself as firm and constant, comparing his nature to something fixed and immovable.
- **Dismissive of warnings at first:** He brushes aside the Soothsayer's warning ("Beware the ides of March") and initially treats it lightly.
- **Superstitious yet proud:** He listens to signs and priests at moments, but his pride and desire to appear fearless override caution.
- **Influenced by flattery:** Decius's flattering interpretation of Calpurnia's dream helps pull him to the Capitol, showing how praise can move him.
- **Concerned with public image:** He fears appearing weak if he stays home, and this concern shapes his decision to go out despite danger.
- **Trusting toward close allies:** He trusts Brutus deeply, which makes Brutus's role in the assassination especially devastating.
- **Politically assertive:** He refuses Metellus Cimber's petition and speaks as someone who believes his decisions should not be questioned.
- **Dies with shock and dignity:** The turning point is Brutus's stab—his reaction ("Et tu, Brute?") signals emotional collapse before death.
- **More powerful after death:** Though absent physically, Caesar's body, name, and will become the center of Rome's upheaval and the fuel for Antony's rise and civil war.

Brutus

- **A Roman nobleman and senator:** Brutus is presented as a respected patrician with political standing in Rome.
- **Caesar's close associate:** Caesar trusts him deeply and treats him as a friend; this trust makes the betrayal more tragic.
- **Known for honour and public reputation:** Others repeatedly describe him as "noble," and he is widely seen as a man of integrity.
- **Patriotic in self-image:** He believes his duty to Rome is higher than

personal friendship, shown clearly in his funeral speech ("Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more").

- **Idealistic and principle-driven:** He joins the conspiracy mainly because he fears Caesar *might* become a tyrant, not because of personal hatred.
- **Not politically shrewd:** He misjudges people and situations—especially Antony—and overestimates how far "reason" and "honour" alone will work in politics.
- **Influenced and manipulated:** He is persuaded by Cassius and is pushed further by the forged letters that play on his sense of duty to Rome.
- **Self-controlled and disciplined:** He shows restraint and prefers moral "cleanliness" in action, urging the conspirators to act like "sacrificers, not butchers."
- **Merciful by choice:** He argues against killing Antony, showing his tendency to avoid unnecessary bloodshed.
- **A poor strategist in crisis:** He allows Antony to speak at Caesar's funeral and even permits him to address the crowd after him—an error that turns public opinion.
- **Respected even by enemies:** Antony ultimately acknowledges Brutus as the "noblest Roman of them all," distinguishing him from the other conspirators.
- **Emotionally strained but restrained:** He suffers privately—especially after Portia's death—yet continues to act with outward control.
- **Rigid in personal standards:** He condemns corruption and clashes with Cassius over bribery, showing strict moral expectations.
- **Courageous and stoic at the end:** When defeat is certain, he chooses suicide rather than capture, and his followers honour him for it.

Antony

- **Caesar's loyal friend and follower:** Antony is closely associated with Caesar and openly supports him (e.g., accompanying him, serving him, defending his legacy after death).
- **Public, ceremonial presence:** He appears in the Lupercal scene and carries out Caesar's instructions, showing his role as a prominent public supporter.
- **Quick reader of people and danger:** After Caesar's murder, he immediately gauges the conspirators' power and approaches them cautiously, protecting himself while planning his response.
- **Strategic and calculating:** He asks to "shake hands" with the conspirators and speaks respectfully to them, but this is a tactical move to buy time and gain access to Caesar's body.
- **Emotionally affected by Caesar's death:** Alone with Caesar's body,

he grieves intensely and condemns the murder, showing genuine attachment and rage.

- **Master of rhetoric and persuasion:** In the funeral scene, he turns the crowd step-by-step—using repetition (“honourable men”), irony, questions, and pauses—to reverse public opinion against the conspirators.
- **Manipulates evidence effectively:** He uses Caesar’s wounds and the **cloak** as visual proof to stir outrage, making the assassination feel personal and brutal to the crowd.
- **Uses Caesar’s will as a political weapon:** He reveals (and delays revealing) the will to increase suspense and agitation, pushing the mob toward revolt.
- **Not bound by Brutus’s “noble” rules:** Unlike Brutus, Antony is willing to use emotional pressure, provocation, and crowd psychology to achieve his ends.
- **Politically ruthless when needed:** After gaining power with Octavius and Lepidus, he supports harsh measures (including proscriptions), showing a willingness to eliminate opponents for control.
- **Dominant within the Triumvirate dynamic:** He tests, directs, and even belittles Lepidus in discussion, showing authority and a controlling streak.
- **Recognizes Brutus’s stature:** Despite being Brutus’s enemy, Antony ultimately acknowledges Brutus’s unique “nobility,” separating him from the other conspirators’ motives.

Cassius

- **A Roman senator and key conspirator:** Cassius is one of the leading figures in the plot against Caesar and the main force that organizes the conspiracy.
- **Jealous and resentful of Caesar’s rise:** He cannot accept Caesar being treated as superior and resents the unequal power Caesar is gaining over Rome.
- **Persuasive and manipulative:** He works actively to win Brutus over, using arguments, flattery, and strategic pressure rather than open force.
- **Skilled at reading weaknesses:** He understands that Brutus’s honour and public image can be used to pull him into the conspiracy.
- **Uses deception to influence Brutus:** He forges letters (or arranges forged letters) praising Brutus and urging him to act, making it seem like Rome “needs” him.
- **Practical and politically sharp:** Cassius thinks in terms of strategy, control, and outcomes; he focuses on what will work, not what looks noble.
- **Skeptical of idealism:** He often contrasts with Brutus by warning

against trusting Antony and by preferring decisive, hard measures.

- **Bold and defiant in attitude:** He presents himself as someone who will not bow to another man as a "god," stressing equality among Romans.
- **Hot-tempered and emotional:** He can be intense and easily provoked, shown strongly in the quarrel scene with Brutus.
- **Sensitive about honour and accusation:** When Brutus challenges him over corruption/bribery, Cassius reacts with wounded pride and anger.
- **Deep bond with Brutus despite conflict:** After their quarrel, reconciliation shows genuine affection and loyalty between them.
- **Prone to fear and superstition under pressure:** Later, he is troubled by bad omens and anxiety, suggesting weakening confidence as defeat nears.
- **Tragic misjudgment leading to death:** He misreads the battlefield situation and, believing Titinius is captured, orders Pindarus to kill him —dying because of mistaken information.
- **Honoured by allies after death:** Brutus mourns him sincerely, acknowledging his importance and the loss to their cause.

Calpurnia

- **Caesar's wife:** Calpurnia is shown as deeply concerned about Caesar's safety and the growing danger around him.
- **Sensitive to omens and fear:** She is strongly affected by the unnatural signs and terrifying events reported in Rome.
- **Prophetic dreamer (within the play):** She dreams Caesar's statue spouts blood while Romans wash their hands in it, and she interprets it as a warning of his death.
- **Protective and pleading:** She begs Caesar not to go to the Capitol, showing genuine love and anxiety rather than political motives.
- **Persuasive in private:** Her emotional appeal works at first—Caesar agrees to stay home, showing she has influence over him in personal matters.
- **Overruled by political manipulation:** Decius reinterprets her dream flatteringly, and Caesar chooses public pride over Calpurnia's warning.
- **Limited public role:** She appears only briefly and does not take part in political decisions directly; her function is mainly to foreshadow Caesar's assassination and reveal Caesar's vulnerability at home.