

TEACHER: KASHAMA SHARMA

TENDER HEART HIGH SCHOOL, SEC. 33 B.

CLASS: IX

SUBJECT: ENGLISH LITERATURE

DRAMA: JULIUS CAESAR

Synopsis of the Play:

When the play begins there is enormous excitement during the feast of Lupercalia in Rome due to the arrival of Julius Caesar. Julius Caesar who has recently triumphed against Pompey. The common people of Rome are out in the streets to give a hero's welcome to Caesar. They are in their best clothes and are decorating Caesar's statues. But a section of a governing class is jealous and dismayed at the growing power of Caesar. Two Tribunes, Flavius and Marullus belong to such a section. They scold the common men (the class of workers) and tell them to go home. They remind them that Caesar has murdered the sons of Pompey, who once was their hero.

The Tribunes go through the streets and remove decorations from Caesar's statues. In this way, it is obvious that the higher class is opposing Caesar but he is popular among the common people, who like to worship a hero like Caesar. In the festival of Lupercalia Caesar reaches with his followers at the place where the feast is going to be held. A soothsayer warns Caesar of some danger on the Ides of March, but Caesar takes his warning lightly.

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When Caesar and his followers pass, Cassius meets Brutus. Cassius is both clever and cunning. He despises Caesar very artfully. He tells Brutus that Caesar is not better than others, yet he has become the most powerful man of Rome. All other men act like his slaves. They flatter and bow to him.

Cassius intends to kill Caesar. But he is not as popular as Brutus. He therefore tries to instigate him against Julius Caesar and even tries to win Brutus to his side. He talks to other Senators and persuades them to join the conspiracy against Caesar. Brutus is Caesar's friend and has nothing against Caesar. But Brutus is an idealist and is convinced that Caesar is ambitious and wants to be crowned as a King. He too joins this conspiracy, as he would not bear Rome falling back to monarchy. Though Brutus does not want to murder Caesar but he wants to kill Caesar's ambitious spirit.

A meeting of the conspirators is held at night at Brutus' house. There is conspiracy to kill him in the Senate hall of Rome. All of them make a plan to murder Caesar the next morning. Cassius suggests that Antony, who loves Caesar deeply, should also be killed.

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But Brutus brushes aside this suggestion. He says that it would be unnecessary bloodshed. He did not think that Antony could do any harm to them after Caesar's death. But he was mistaken. He made a great and grave blunder by sparing the life of Antony.

Caesar's wife Calpurnia, has had a bad dream about Caesar at night. She insists that he should not go to the Senate House. Caesar consults the augurers and they send him a word of caution. But Decius Brutus gives a happy interpretation to the dream; and is able to persuade Caesar to agree to go to the Senate House with them. On his way, the Soothsayer once again warns Caesar but he laughs at his warning and ignores it completely.

In the Capitol, Antony, Caesar's trusted fellow consul, enticed away ^{by} the conspirators from the proximity of Caesar. The conspirators then cluster about Caesar, while Metellus presents a petition to Caesar. He begs that the banishment order of his brother may be revoked (canceled).

Other conspirators including Brutus too request Caesar to revoke the order. The conspirators then stabbed Caesar. Brutus then directs the conspirators to bathe their hands and swords in dead Caesar's blood and walk among ^{the} people proclaiming peace, freedom and liberty.

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There is panic all around. Antony, Caesar's closest friend runs away to his house. Soon he sends a servant to the Capitol. He intends to come back to the Capitol if he is assured that no harm will come to him. Brutus gives the assurance and Antony comes to the Capitol, where the conspirators, with their hands washed in Caesar's blood, are waiting for him. He asks Brutus to permit him to take Caesar's body to the forum and speak at Caesar's funeral.

Cassius, the practical man objects to his proposal but Brutus, the idealist, immediately agrees to it. First Brutus gives an explanation to Romans why he has killed Caesar. People are convinced. They praise Brutus. But after Brutus has left, Antony makes a moving speech. He proves the charge against Caesar, that he was ambitious and wrong. He convinces the mob that Caesar was a great lover of the people. The mob is roused against Brutus, Cassius and all other conspirators. The mob was determined to kill the conspirators and burn their houses. The conspirators run away for saving their lives.

Antony, Octavius and Lepidus form the Triumvirate. They raise a powerful army. Brutus and Cassius also raise an army. The two armies meet on the plains of Philippi. While armies were camping,

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The ghost of Caesar appears to Brutus and warns him that they will see each other again at Philippi. It means that the spirit of Caesar was alive, Brutus, who wanted to kill Caesar's spirit had failed. He had been able to kill his body and not his spirit.

Before the battle the leaders of the two armies have a meeting which results in bitterness. Then the order of the battle is given. Brutus has an edge over the forces of Octavius but Antony's forces overpower the forces of Cassius.

Cassius sends a servant to find out the fate of armies of Brutus. His slave Pindarus watches the servant riding away. On the way the servant is surrounded by the enemy. He tells so to Cassius. Cassius is heartbroken. Fate has played a trick on him. He gives his sword to his slave to kill him. Cassius is killed with the same sword which was used to murder Caesar. Caesar is avenged.

Then Brutus comes and finds Cassius and Titinius dead. The death of Cassius is a staggering blow to Brutus. He resolves to make one more attempt to win the day. He fails again and his forces are overpowered and defeated. He begs to his three followers to kill him. As they refuse to kill him so he sends them away and

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is left alone with Strato, another follower who had been sleeping all the time. Strato, at his master's bidding (request), holds his sword while Brutus runs ^{up} on it and so he dies. Then enter the successful generals. In the moment of victory Octavius promises to act mercifully towards all who served Brutus. Antony and Octavius pay their homage to Brutus. Antony rightly calls him the noblest Roman of them all.

Then all victors depart to share the fruit of their victory.

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