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TENDER HEART HIGH SCHOOL, SEC. 33 B, CHD.**CLASS : IX****SUBJECT : ENGLISH LITERATURE****Julius Caesar - Play**

Synopsis

ACT 1, SC-1

Julius Caesar is a play about great public events but again and again, we are given glimpses of the characters in their private, personal and domestic capacities. It is a history play and tragedy, set in Rome and was first performed in 1599 at the Globe Theatre in London. The play is about the events surrounding the 44 B.C. assassination of Julius Caesar, a Roman General and Statesman or a senator. This scene shows the popularity of Caesar and the jealousy of the tribunes. The fickle mob plays a major role in the play. The scene opens in the street of Rome. The workmen are rejoicing in Caesar's triumph over the sons of his old rival Pompey. Flavius is seen rebuking the manual workers that they should not roam around on the streets without wearing the badges of their profession. They are sent back badly by Flavius. Flavius further tells Marullus to go towards the Capitol and drive the crowd off the streets if he happens to see any commoner and also told to set about removing all the street decorations so that Caesar's procession seems a failure. He seems utterly upset with Caesar's growing popularity. He further states that this action will add a humiliation

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to his grand victory over the sons of his old rival Pompey. He even declares that it will be like plucking the feathers from the wings of a young hawk and making him complacent to fly an ordinary flight with other common birds. This embarrassment of stripping off all honours like a hawk will cease him from flying above men's head and threaten^{ing} their liberties and keep everyone safe and happy.

Dramatic significance of the opening scene:

The opening scene of the play has rightly been admired for striking the keynote of the whole drama and preparing us for what is to come.

There are three matters Shakespeare touches upon in the first scene of the play.

There is first of all, the character of the mob which is described as **pickle-minded** and wanting in the power to think and judge by itself.

The people are out to rejoice in Caesar's victory over **Pompey** but as soon as they are chided by the tribunes, vanish **tongue-tied** (silently). This **pickle-mindedness** of the mob

prepares us for its strange behaviour and illogicality in **Act III, Sc-2**, when it is addressed in turn by Brutus and Antony and when after having supported Brutus' action in killing Caesar, it is moved by Antony's

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Oratory to sympathise with Caesar and to feel indignant against the conspirators. The mob is to be regarded as one of the most important Dramatis Personae in the drama and its introduction gives a breadth or largeness to the play to embrace the entire Roman life. The opening scene also denotes Brutus as the hero of the play and Caesar as the most dominating character in the play but also focuses on the popular worship of Caesar. People's love for their mighty conqueror and popular hero is brought out in the opening scene of the play. There is **the germ of conspiracy** in the opening scene which is also developed in this scene.

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