

# *Julius Caesar*

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## Act II

## Why is Brutus anxious about the time at the beginning of Act 2?

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The conspirators are plotting to kill Caesar on March 15<sup>th</sup> (in just a few hours) so he has to decide NOW if he is going to join them, or stop them.

What does Lucius give to Brutus in Scene 1? What does Brutus' reaction tell us about his character?

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A note that Brutus believes is from the people of Rome (really Cassius) telling him to "wake up" and do something- Brutus pledges to protect Rome from Caesar's power, which tells us he is noble and cares about justice and what is right

## Explain the two metaphors Brutus uses to describe Caesar's ascension to power.

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Caesar's power is like a serpent's egg; the egg must be crushed before it can hatch and become dangerous. Ambition is like a ladder for Caesar that causes him to turn his back and rise above the people.

## What promise does Brutus make to Rome?

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Brutus promises to bring justice to  
Rome and protect them from  
Caesar's power.

To what does Brutus compare the mental anxiety he has been feeling?

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His mind is like a small kingdom and his body is causing an insurrection to rebel against it.

Summarize how Brutus says  
the conspirators must act during  
the night and the day.

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Brutus tells them to hide  
behind smiles and friendliness  
to make their plan against  
Caesar less suspicious.

What reason does Brutus give for not wanting to swear an oath to what they have resolved to do?

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Brutus does not want the men to follow through with a plot to assassinate Caesar just because they “promised” to. He wants them to do it because they feel it is for a noble and just cause- what is best for Rome



## At what point does Brutus become the leader of the rebellion?

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Cassius wanted to kill Antony also.  
Brutus says no, that Antony will be worthless when Caesar is dead...  
and all of the men of the conspiracy agree with Brutus.

## Describe Casca's response to the rebellion.

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He agrees with whomever was  
the most recent person to speak  
(symbolizes Rome's "fickle"  
population- sheeple)

What does Brutus want the public, or history, to think of him?

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He “sacrificed” for the good of Rome- a hero, a martyr (not a murderer/butcherer)

According to Decius, what is a surefire way to flatter Caesar?

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Caesar can be flattered  
(complimented) best by telling him  
he hates and cannot be swayed by  
flattery (compliments)

What actions of Brutus lead Portia to conclude that he is upset?

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He is not sleeping, or eating,  
or talking to her.

Why does Brutus say, “Render me my  
of this noble wife”?

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She wants to share the burden of his  
pain. She knows he is not well.

# What conflict does this cause Brutus and how does he respond ?

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Brutus loves his wife and wants to share his decision with her regarding plotting Caesar's assassination but he is concerned about her safety.

# How does Portia try to show her loyalty and strength of character to Brutus?

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She has cut a gash in her leg with a dagger to show that she can bear pain and will handle whatever burden he shares.



## Why is Ligarius, despite his illness, so willing to follow Brutus?

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He thinks Brutus is wise and noble and wants to be part of the plan is Brutus believes it is the right thing to do