

Julius Caesar

by William Shakespeare

**An Adaptation via Thinking Processes Affording
Joy in Learning and Logical Analysis**

an *auto*SOCRATIC QUICK-START publication

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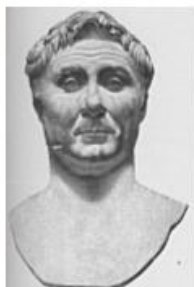
Julius Caesar
Historical Background

The Roman Republic

at the time of Caesar's death in
44 BC



Caesar



Pompey



Crassus

The First Triumvirate

Caesar was appointed to govern Hispania, but he had many debts.

Crassus - a consul - helped, in return for Caesar's support against Pompey.

Caesar and Crassus were allies.

Reconciling Crassus and Pompey would make the three a powerful team.

The "First Triumvirate" of Rome was formed: 70 BC.

A Crisis Appears

As consuls, the men led armies about the world, conquering lands.

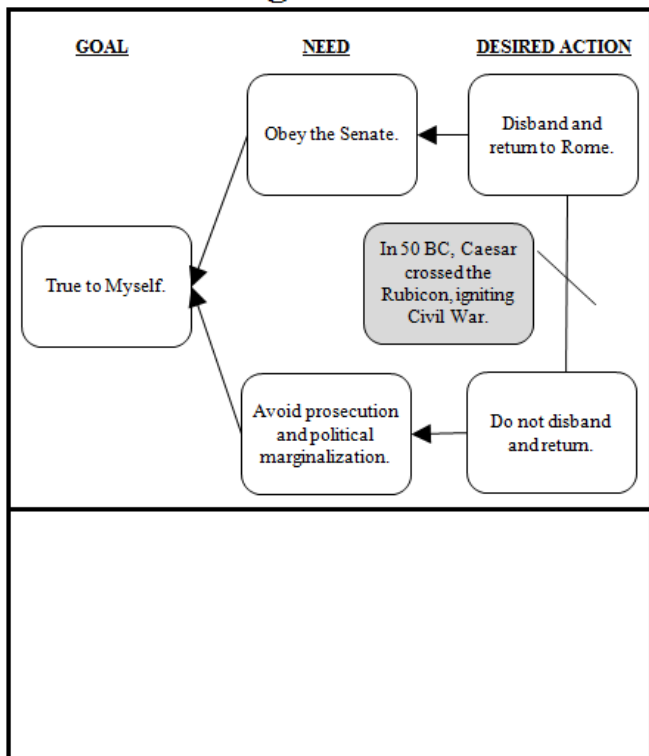
Crassus was killed in 53 BC during a failed invasion of Parthia.

The Triumvirate was reduced to Pompey and Caesar.

Caesar's term as Proconsul had finished, and he was ordered back to

Caesar faced a dilemma.

Crossing the Rubicon



The Rubicon Relevance

Romans, in seeking to conquer the world, feared military coups.

A military coup can only take place when the military is in the country.

One way to avoid coups, or have time to act against them, is to create a barrier.

The Rubicon River, being the Italian northern border, served this purpose.

To cross the Rubicon with your army was against Roman Law. It meant treason.

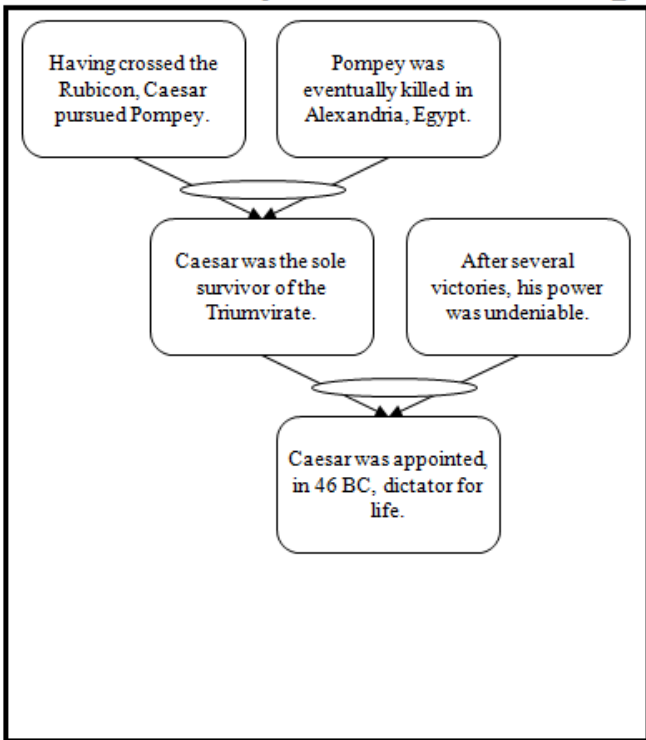
Crossing the Rubicon

Caesar's "Point of No Return": The River Boarder to the North



Julius Caesar
Logic Chains

Ascendancy to Dictatorship



The High Price of Fame

Caesar has been named "dictator for life".

Citizens decide to take a holiday to see Caesar and rejoice in his triumphs.

Caesar's influence over Rome is extensive.

Cassius, an old friend, is becoming suspicious of his power.

Cassius wants to devise a plan to remove Caesar from power.

A Plan in the Making

Cassius, suspicious of Caesar's popularity, wants to rid him of his power.

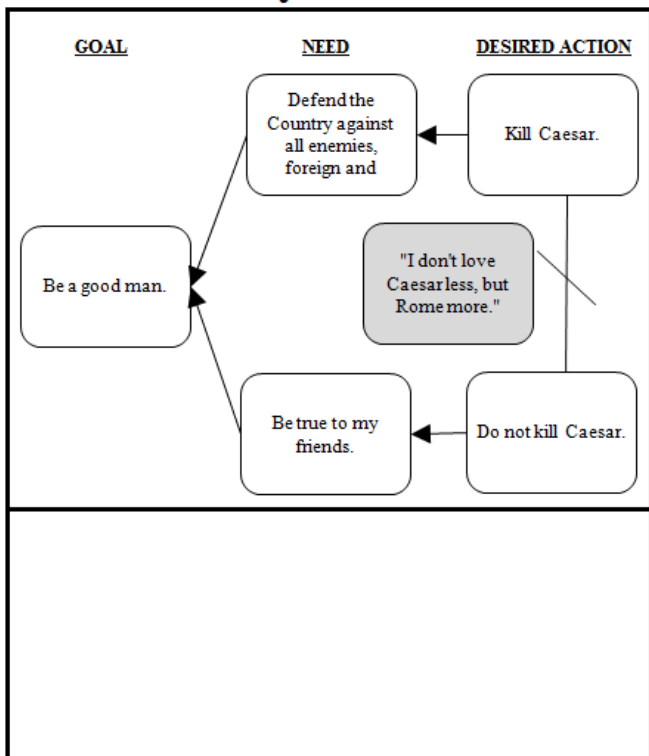
Cassius knows, acting by himself, his plan has no chance of success.

Cassius must find a willing companion with positive public approval.

Brutus is a friend both to Cassius and Caesar.

Cassius will enlist Brutus to help in the plan.

Country or Friend?



The Royal Crown

Caesar is offered three times a Royal Crown by the citizens.

Caesar knows accepting the crown will draw suspicion from fellow Senators.

Caesar declines the Crown.

Brutus hears of the unbridled admiration for Caesar.

Brutus has more evidence Caesar is not good for Rome.

The Plan? A Go.

Brutus asks a friend, Casca, what all the commotion was about.

Casca says the crowd was so excited they wouldn't have cared what Caesar did.

Brutus believes Cassius - Caesar has become too powerful.

A plot is devised to dethrone Caesar.

The date: the 15th of March - the Ides of March.

The Psychology of Man

Caesar is walking with his friend, Mark Antony, when they see Cassius.

Caesar continually makes political calculations.

Caesar thinks Cassius dangerous - "he thinks too much; such men are dangerous".

Mark Antony refuses to believe Cassius capable of evil.

Caesar and Antony differ on the nature of man.

A Wife, Scared

The night before the Ides of March is filled with thunder and lightning.

Natural events are ominous signs, and Caesar's wife implores him to stay

He initially rejects Calpurnia's request, but eventually gives in.

A conspirator comes upon Caesar, and knows this affects the next day's plans.

The conspirator makes fun of Caesar yielding so weakly to a woman.

The Assassination

Caesar, ultimately dismissing his wife's pleas, heads to the Capitol.

On the podium, the conspirators surround him.

During the killing, Caesar notices his friend, Brutus, and says, "Et tu, Brute".

The conspirators know they must address the confused crowd immediately.

One yells "Liberty!
Freedom! Tyranny!"

Mark Antony's Response

Mark Antony appears at the killing, and is outraged.

He knows if he shows his outrage, likely he'll be killed, too.

He pretends to understand the motive of the conspirators

He wants to avenge the death of his friend.

Mark Antony asks to give the funeral oration of Caesar.

The Speech

Antony knows if he says what he thinks, the conspirators will pull him off the stage.

He must start pretending to side with the conspirators.

"Friends, Romans, Countrymen ... I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him."

He slowly leads the crowd to frenzy with elequent oratory.

The crowd realizes a man has wrongly been killed. They want revenge!

Unbridled Revenge

Antony and Caesar's
grandnephew,
Octavius, seek
revenge.

Many people, friends
and Senators alike,
are suspected.

Many, many people in
Rome are killed.

Brutus and Crassius
escape Rome with
armies loyal to them.

Antony and Octavius
go in pursuit of
Brutus and Crassius.

The End

The armies meet up at Philippi, near Asia Minor.

Crassius wrongly believes he has lost and commits suicide.

Brutus, coming upon his friend, has a sense of foreboding.

Brutus too sees the end, and runs upon his sword.

The conspirators dead, the play comes to a close.

Julius Caesar

Notable Quotes

Beware the ides of March

The Soothsayer delivers his famous warning to Caesar.

The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,

But in ourselves, that we are underlings

Cassius tells Brutus that rise of Caesar is their fault, because they are not doing anything to stop it.

Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look

Caesar's suspicious comment.

It was Greek to me

Casca's sarcastic comment about a speech by Cicero.

Between the acting of a dreadful thing

And the first motion, all the interim is

Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream

Having decided that Caesar must die, Brutus reflects on how difficult it is to put his decision into action.

Think you I am no stronger than my sex . . . ?

Portia assures Brutus that she can be trusted with his secrets.

Cowards die many times before their deaths;

The valiant never taste of death but once

Caesar tells Calpurnia that he is not afraid of death.

I am constant as the northern star

Caesar tells Cassius that he cannot be moved by humble pleadings.

Et tu, Brute?

Seeing his friend among the assassins, Caesar exclaims, "And you, Brutus?"

O, pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth

Antony apologizes to Caesar's body for shaking hands with Caesar's killers.

Cry "Havoc!" and let slip the dogs of war

Antony predicts the revenge of Caesar's spirit upon the conspirators.

Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more

Brutus explains to the Roman crowd his reason for killing Caesar.

Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears;

I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him

Antony begins his famous speech over Caesar's body by calming the crowd.

**But Brutus says he was ambitious;
And Brutus is an honourable man**

Antony, in a backhanded way, casts doubt on the honor of Brutus.

This was the most unkindest cut of all

Antony, showing the crowd Caesar's mantle, points out where Brutus stabbed Caesar.

There is a tide in the affairs of men

Brutus tells Cassius that when the time is ripe, action must be taken.

This was the noblest Roman of them all

Antony's praise of the dead Brutus.

Julius Caesar

*Narrative Summaries – including a
Brief Outline and a Detailed Outline*

NARRATIVE SUMMARY

A Brief Outline

An Empire threatened. Julius Caesar attains the title of dictator. And it's not the case "all is well in the House of Rome". A group of Romans conspire to kill Caesar and restore Rome to the people. Do they succeed?

NARRATIVE SUMMARY

A Detailed Outline

The First Triumvirate

Caesar was appointed to govern Hispania, but he had many debts. He was not able to leave Rome until these debts were taken care of. Crassus – a consul – saw an opportunity, and agreed to help Caesar, if Caesar would support Crassus against Pompey. Caesar agreed – and the two became allies. Caesar saw if he could reconcile the differences between Crassus and Pompey, the three would form a powerful trio governing Rome. This happened in Rome, in 70 BC.

A Crisis Appears

As consuls, the men led armies about the world, extending the Roman Republic. However, on one such excursion, Crassus was killed. This reduced the Triumvirate to two. Additionally, as Caesar's term as Proconsul had finished, he was ordered back to Rome, and he faced a dilemma.

Crossing the Rubicon

Should I return? Roman law would not let armies back across the Rubicon River, in order to avoid military coups. Why should I disband my army and return to Rome? The Senate mandates it. But there's something wrong here, because I do not want to disband and return. Why not? I, suspicious in nature, believe I will be politically marginalized and prosecuted. I must be true to myself. What should I do? There is no middle ground. I'm so sure the Senate is wrong I'll cross the Rubicon. He did, and Civil War erupted.

The Rubicon Relevance

To reiterate the importance of the Rubicon River, it's necessary to clarify this point. Romans, in seeking to conquer the world, feared military coups, and a military coup

can only take place when the military is in the country. Therefore, one way to avoid them was to banish them to a distance behind a barrier far outside of town. The Rubicon River, being the Italian northern border, served such a purpose. To bring an army past this point meant treason.

Ascendancy to Dictatorship

Having crossed the Rubicon, Caesar pursued Pompey. Pompey was eventually killed in Alexandria, Egypt. This left Caesar the sole survivor of the First Triumvirate. After several additional military victories, Caesar's power was undeniable. Therefore, Caesar was appointed, in 46 BC, dictator for life.

The High Price of Fame

Caesar has now been named "Dictator for Life", and citizens decided to take a holiday to see Caesar and rejoice in his triumphs. Therefore, Caesar's influence over Rome was extensive. But this is not always good, and Cassius, an old friend, became suspicious of the power. Cassius wanted to devise a plan to remove Caesar from power.

A Plan in the Making

Cassius, suspicious of Caesar's popularity, wants to rid Rome of Caesar. However, Cassius knows, acting by himself, his plan has no chance of success. Consequently, Cassius must find a willing companion with positive public approval. Who is such a person? Brutus is such a person. Brutus is a friend both to Cassius and Caesar. Therefore, Cassius will enlist Brutus to help in the plan.

Country of Friend?

And poor Brutus – caught in the middle – a tremendous dilemma. Brutus is a good man, and being a good man, he will defend his country against all enemies, foreign and domestic. In this case, the right thing to do is rid Rome of Caesar. Easier said than done, because there's his friendship with Caesar to consider, and a good friend is true to his friends. This being the case, he should not harm Caesar. He chooses between the two, reasoning, "I don't love Caesar less, but Rome more."

The Royal Crown

In the meantime, there is a celebration in place. Caesar has been offered the Royal Crown three times – by Mark Antony.

Caesar, politically savvy, knows accepting the crown will draw suspicion from fellow Senators, and therefore declines the crown thrice. Brutus hears of the unbridled admiration for Caesar, and knows, regardless of Caesar's declining the crown, he is not good for Rome.

The Plan? A Go!

After the celebration, Brutus has asked a friend, Casca, what the commotion was all about, and was told the crowd was so excited they wouldn't have cared what Caesar did. Brutus knows Caesar has become too powerful, and a plot is devised to dethrone Caesar. The date: the 15th of March – the Ides of March!

The Psychology of Man

The political mechanisms are in place. There is a lot going on. Caesar is walking with his friend, Mark Antony, when they see Cassius. Caesar is continually making political calculations, and tells Antony Cassius is dangerous – he thinks too much. Antony refuses to believe Cassius capable of anything evil. One thing is certain: Caesar and Antony differ on the nature of man. Maybe it's suspicion.

A Wife Scared

Calpurnia is worried. It's March 14th, and the sky is filled with thunder and lightning. She considers such natural events as ominous signs, and implores Caesar to stay home the next day. Caesar, caring of his wife's concern, gives in. However, a conspirator happens upon Caesar and knows this will disrupt the attack. He must get Caesar to go! He makes fun of Caesar, yielding so weakly to a woman. Caesar, hearing the words, agrees to go.

The Assassination

Caesar is there! The attack is on! On the podium, the conspirators surround Caesar. Cinna strikes first, followed by others. During the killing, Caesar notices his friend, Brutus, and says, "Et tu, Brute?" Death has come to Caesar, but there is a crowd not sure what is going on, so the conspirators know they must address the crowd quickly. One yells aloud: "LIBERTY! FREEDOM! TYRANNY!"

Mark Antony's Response

Mark Antony is present, and he, remember, is a friend of Caesars. How does he feel? Outraged, of course! He also

knows everyone knows his allegiance, and if he expresses outrage, he'll likely be killed, too! Therefore, he must pretend to understand the motive of the conspirators. This will give him a chance to avenge the death of his friend. The opportunity? Caesar's funeral. Mark Antony asks to give the funeral oration.

The Speech

The conspirators are uneasy. What if Antony says something to inflame the crowd? Brutus will make sure. Similarly, Antony knows if he starts off telling what he actually thinks, he'll be pulled from the stage. He must start by pretending to side with the conspirators. His oration begins with the brilliant, "Friends, Romans, Countrymen! Lend me your ears. I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him." Slowly, the crowd is led to a frenzy, and eventually they demand justice!

Unbridled Revenge

Antony and Octavius, Caesar's grandnephew, spearhead the plan to take back Rome and avenge Caesar's death. Nobody is trusted, and friends and Senators alike are suspected. Many, many people in Rome are killed. Brutus and Crassius escape Rome with armies loyal to them, and Antony and Octavius continue in pursuit.

The End

The end comes quickly. The armies meet up at Philippi, near Asia Minor. An attack ensues. Crassius wrongly believes he has lost, and commits suicide. Brutus, coming upon his friend, has a sense of foreboding. Brutus too sees the end, and runs upon the sword. The conspirators dead, Antony looks upon the body of Brutus and says, “This was the noblest Roman of them all.”