

This animation provides a summary of Shakespeare's famous play, "Julius Caesar."

In this clip, we meet the man who fought in Gaul (today's France), wrote of wars (foreign and domestic), led his army to stunning victories and—famously—crossed the Rubicon.

What did he look like, in real life?

Caesar is said to have been tall, fair, and well-built, with a rather broad face and keen, dark-brown eyes. His health was sound, apart from sudden comas and a tendency to nightmares which troubled him towards the end of his life; but he twice had epileptic fits [sometimes referred to, in other ancient sources, as "the falling sickness"] while on campaign.

*...His baldness was a disfigurement which his enemies harped upon, much to his exasperation; but he used to comb the thin strands of hair forward from his poll [forehead], and of all the honours voted him by the Senate and People, none pleased him so much as the privilege of wearing a laurel wreath on all occasions - he constantly took advantage of it. (Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars*, "Julius Caesar," Part 45, pages 22-23 of the [Robert Graves translation](#).)*

After winning his battles against Pompey, in the civil war, Gaius Julius Caesar has returned to Rome - a conquering hero-turned-dictator. But all is not well.

It is the month of March, 44 B.C. On his way into a government building, Caesar hears someone call his name. A soothsayer, standing in the shadows, warns the dictator to beware the Ides of March. Caesar pays scant attention to either the man or his message.

Meanwhile ... Brutus, a friend of Caesar's, is greatly worried about the ruler's increasing power. Others are equally concerned.

The situation becomes critical when it appears some Roman Senators want to declare Caesar "King." While flattering for Julius Caesar, such an action increases the anxieties of those who fear his expanding power.

A group of worried men turns into a group of plotting conspirators. During the night, they visit Brutus. What good could come from such a meeting?

As Brutus is tormented by murderous thoughts, Portia - his wife - senses something is wrong. Why is her husband brooding during the night?

As night gives way to morning, Calphurnia - Caesar's wife - believes something bad will happen to her husband if he leaves home that day. To soothe his wife, Rome's ruler agrees to remain with her ... until ... Decius shows up.

Frightened the visitor will change her husband's mind about staying home - therefore putting him into a position of danger - Calphurnia's eyes reveal her fear.

It is a well-founded emotion.

See, also:

[**Julius Caesar - Animated Play, Part 2**](#)

[**Julius Caesar - Animated Play, Part 3**](#)

Credits:

Clip from *Shakespeare: The Animated Tales* (also known as *The Animated Shakespeare*). Originally broadcast in 1992, the series contains thirty-minute adaptations of different Shakespeare plays. This clip, from Series Two, was first aired in 1994.

The producer of this BBC-commissioned series was the Dave Edwards studio in Cardiff, the scripts were authored by Leon Garfield, the academic adviser was Professor Stanley Wells and the animations were created by Russian directors and animators at the Christmas Films Studio in Moscow.

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Director:

Yuri Kulakov

Screenplay:

Leon Garfield

Julius Caesar:

Joss Ackland

Cassius:

Hugh Quarshie

Mark Anthony:

Jim Carter

Brutus:

David Ropp

Portia:

Judith Sharp

Casca:

Peter Woodthoper

Narrator, Octavius:

Andrew Wincott

Calphurnia:

Frances Tonelty

Cinna, Decius:

Tony Leader

Soothsayer, Trebonius:

Dillewgn Owey

Lucius:

John Miers

Series 2, of *Shakespeare's Animated Tales*, originally aired on BBC2 from November 2 - December 14, 1994.

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Ides-of-March-Julius-Caesar-)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Ides-of-March-Julius-Caesar->

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/Ides-of-March-Julius-Caesar-)

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Julius Caesar

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