Julius Caesar Summary Essay, Research Paper

Shakespeare s play, The Tragedy of Julius Caesar, was a historical literary work. He taught the history behind Julius Caesar and Rome, while giving the audience some suspense also. That must have been hard to do. This essay will explain my interpretation of Julius Caesar.

The story is introduced in Act I. Shakespeare writes in a manner in which the more educated or important characters speak in poetry, whereas the peasants speak in prose. The comedic mood is set with the announcement of the upcoming celebration. The commoners are introduced as pack animals that just follow any leader with an idea. The nobles are introduced as intelligent and sophisticated individuals with many varying ideas and mentalities. The nobles show little liking of Caesar. Their attitudes are meant to help set up the reader’s view of Caesar for later in the play. In scene 2, Caesar and his friends bump into a soothsayer in the streets. The soothsayer is introduced to allude to later events in the plot. Most of the characters are presented directly. Shakespeare presents Brutus by showing Brutus sharing his feelings with Cassius. Brutus is a weakening character. Cassius holds firm opinions, which he puts freely on others. He is an influential person upon Brutus. Mark Antony is shown as a deep submissive to Caesar, doing anything and everything Caesar asks of him. Casca then enters and we find him to be cooperative in telling Brutus what all the commotion was about. In scene 3, a storm and strange occurrences set an ominous mood, as we search further into Cassius’s mind and learn how his devious mind plays people into his plans. We also find that Casca is a noble man who exaggerates a little but is easily willed by Cassius’s corrupt influence. Making short appearances in the scene are Cicero (A Senator who speaks briefly with Cassius about the storm) and Cinna (a fellow conspirator). Shakespeare uses many omens (the owl, the meteor shower, and the flaming bush to name a few) to give an idea of ill times ahead. Cassius and Casca react to the storm in different ways. Cassius is filled with superstition and Casca believes that the weather is just bad.

In Act II, scene 1 Brutus starts to talk about his plan for Caesar s death. He decides it must be to slay Caesar. In this speech he used a soliloquy. This was a big part of the story because we find out Brutus final decision. When Portia and Brutus talk and she asks him what s wrong, it’s foreshadowing. It tells that something is about to happen in scenes to come. There is also symbolism when Portia shows Brutus her scar; it is a symbol of loyalty to Brutus. She wanted to prove to Brutus that she could stand the pain and help support his problems. Shakespeare shows Brutus as a man of affairs to the Roman government and as a private man to his fellow beings and to his wife Portia. In scene 2, the lesson is to stick with loved ones. A person never knows whom they can trust. Shakespeare uses foreshadowing in this scene during Calphurnia’s dream. In her dream she sees that Caesar is going to die, which just thickens the plot. Caesar’s personality in this scene is stubbornness. He is also very gullible. Calpurnia has a very worrisome personality. Decius has a very tricky personality. He tells Caesar that he misinterprets her dream. Everyone else is deceiving. They were all pretending to be his friend, but in reality, they were plotting to kill him.

Scene 3 is important because it tells Caesar about what is going on behind his back. The feeling from Artimidorous towards Caesar is that he will risk his life to tell Caesar about the conspirators because he is so loyal to Caesar. Shakespeare included this scene to show that the plebian’s also have a clue to what is going on. In scene 4, Portia is worried about Caesar’s life because she knows that Brutus has a petition that Caesar will not grant. Portia sends Lucius, Portia s slave, to the capitol to see what Caesar is doing. He follows orders very well. This scene is put in the play because he wanted to show Portia’s concern for Caesar s life.

In Act III scene 1, the conspirators slew Caesar. They approached Caesar by asking if he would free Publius Cimber, Metellus brother. The conspirators are proud of their accomplishment. If they only knew what lay ahead of them. It has been a sickening story up to this point of how a man’s mind can be altered by a fellow man to commit such a horrible crime. In scene 2, Brutus addresses the crowd about Caesar s death. This is put into the story to show that Brutus has a reason to kill Caesar. This speech gives Brutus motivation for killing Caesar. The author puts this in the story to possibly foreshadow what is to come. Brutus states, not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more. Since Brutus loves Caesar, killing him caused internal conflict. He cannot live with himself for killing a man without having a valid reason. He did not believe Caesar should rule Rome, however Caesar did not deserve to die. In this section of the play Antony addresses the crowd. Antony explains to the crowd that Caesar was killed for being ambitious. He points out specific incidents when Caesar was just the opposite of ambitious. Antony makes it clear that Caesar s penalty was harsh even if he was ambitious. The author puts this speech in the story to foreshadow the events to come. People realize Caesar has been mistreated. Antony needs Rome’s support to avenge his great friend’s death. In scene 3 we see a bit of irony. It is ironic that there are two Cinna’s. But what is more ironic is that Cinna the poet was Caesar s friend and was at the trial to stand by Caesar and was attacked because he was thought to be a conspirator. This scene was very sad, because Caesar’s blood was shed and the plebians were trying to find justice, yet they were quick to kill an innocent, truthful man and shed more blood.

In Act IV scene 1, Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus form the second triumvirate. They have a meeting to decide which Romans will live and which will die. Lepidus and Octavius both agree that Lepidus brother should die. Octavius and Antony plan on killing Lepidus because they think that he is not capable of ruling 1/3 of the world. Octavius says, “He’s a tried and valiant soldier.” Lepidus compares him to his horse. They decide not to kill Lepidus, but to train him. They also start preparing for the war against Brutus and Cassius’ army. Scene 2 of this act is the rising action, because Cassius tells Brutus that he has done him wrong. But, Brutus tells Cassius that he would not wrong a brother. The conflict has endured long enough to threaten their friendship. In scene 3, Cassius and Brutus get into an argument, because Brutus condemned and publicly denounced Lucius Pella and took bribes from the Sardinians. But Brutus told Cassius that he is also accused of having a hand eager to accept bribes. Cassius sold office positions for gold. Brutus says that Caesar’s officials were also involved in taking bribes and that this was the motive in his assassination. Portia kills herself by swallowing hot coals, although probably just poison. Caesar s ghost appears and this foreshadows the death of Brutus. It also adds some supernatural to the play. The ghost tells him to meet him at Philippi.

In Act V scene 1, the main characters are Octavius, Antony, Brutus, and Cassius. They are still fighting over the death of Caesar. This is the play s falling action because it s after the death of Caesar and they are in the middle of the war. Octavius is taking charge of his group and he’s telling them how to run the whole march. Brutus, Cassius, and their army arrive, and Brutus and Cassius meet Antony and Octavius. Then Antony and Octavius leave. Cassius says to Messala, his servant, that today is my birthday, but those vultures above are a bad omen. Cassius turns to Brutus

and bids his farewells. He says, Forever, and forever, farewell, Brutus! If we do meet again, we ll smile indeed: If not, tis true this parting was well made. Scene 2 is important because it starts the war between Octavius and Antony vs. Brutus and Cassius. Even though the scene is only six lines, Shakespeare included this scene because he felt that he needed an event that actually begins the war. Brutus tells Messala to tell Cassius that they should make a sudden attack on Octavius and his army. I think that this scene begins the war very nicely and gives a smooth transition into battle. In scene 3, Cassius sent Titinius to intercept a group of soldiers to see whether they are friends or enemies. Cassius also sent Pindarus to a higher hill in order to see what happens. Pindarus mistakenly thinks that Titinius is captured and reports this to Cassius, who in turn orders Pindarus to kill him. Titinius comes back with Messala and, upon seeing Cassius s dead body, sends Messala to tell Brutus. Once Messala leaves, Titinius impales himself with Cassius’s sword. Cato wants every person to know that he is the son of Marcus Cato. Cato dies and a soldier wants to kill himself for Cato. Lucilius & Antony say kill Brutus. Antony found a person he thought was Brutus, but it was not him. They kept him as a prisoner. Scene 5 is the end of the play. Brutus arrives at the spot where Cassius and Titinius lay. He tells Strato, one of his soldiers, to hold his sword (the sword with which he stabbed Caesar), and as Strato does so, Brutus runs up to the sword and kills himself. His last words were, Caesar, now be still: I killed not thee with half so good a will. This means that it was easier for Brutus to kill himself, than it was to kill Caesar. Antony arrives and says, He was the noblest Roman of them all Antony is trying to say that Brutus was the only person that did things for the good of Rome. Shakespeare ended the play with Octavius talking because he was going to become the leader.

The Tragedy of Julius Caesar was a monumental writing in English history. It portrayed the rule of Julius Caesar in Rome quite well. The amount of work Shakespeare had to have put into this play is indescribable. This play shows tragedy, superstition, the supernatural, etc These factors, and many more make up the Shakespeare s play, The Tragedy of Julius Caesar.