Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Julius Caesar* Act II Study Guide

**Act II, i**

**Synopsis:**  During the stormy night, Brutus makes his decision. A note tossed in the wind strengthens his decision. When Cassius visits him before dawn, along with the other conspirators, he tells them of his decision. The plans are laid for an attack to be carried out later that day. A decision about killing Antony is made. Portia and Brutus discuss their relationship.

1. Explain the ladder metaphor.

2. Explain the serpent’s egg simile.

3. What is the paper Lucius finds in the window?

4. Why does Brutus ask about the date?

5. What happened in Act I to make this date important?

6. How does Brutus tell the conspirators to act?

7 What is the simile about the body being cut up?

8. List the names of the eight men directly involved in the conspiracy.

9. What three choices does Brutus make in this act?

10. Hoe is he being held accountable for those choices?

11. Portia does not believe Brutus’ excuse for his behavior lately. Why?

12. But 'tis a common proof,  
That lowliness is young ambition's ladder,  
Whereto the climber-upward turns his face;  
But when he once attains the upmost round.  
He then unto the ladder turns his back,  
Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees  
By which he did ascend.

Speaker:

Spoken about:

Literary Element: (2)

13. And therefore think him as a serpent's egg  
Which, hatch'd, would, as his kind, grow mischievous,  
And kill him in the shell.

Speaker:

Spoken about:

Literary Element: (2)

14. 'Brutus, thou sleep'st: awake, and see thyself.  
Shall Rome, & c. Speak, strike, redress!

Speaker:

Spoken to:

What does this mean?

15. Our course will seem too bloody, Caius Cassius,  
To cut the head off and then hack the limbs,  
Like wrath in death and envy afterwards;  
For Antony is but a limb of Caesar:  
Let us be sacrificers, but not butchers, Caius.

Speaker:

Spoken to:

Literary element: (2)

16. Let us be sacrificers, but not butchers, Caius.. . .

. . . Let's kill him boldly, but not wrathfully

Let's carve him as a dish fit for the gods,  
Not hew him as a carcass fit for hounds:

Speaker:

Literary Element:

**Act II, ii**

**Synopsis:** Calplurina, terrified by a dream where she sees Caesar’s death, begs her husband not to go to the Capitol. Caesar receives and equally ominous report from his augurers and agrees to stay home. The conspirator Decius, however, reinterprets the dream in a favorable manner, convincing Caesar to leave for the Capitol in the company of most of the conspirators.

1. Describe Calpurinia’s dream. How does she interpret it?

2. Describe how Decius’ interpretation is different form Calpurnia’s?

3. What one questions dominates the entire scene?

4. Fierce fiery warriors fought upon the clouds,  
In ranks and squadrons and right form of war,  
Which drizzled blood upon the Capitol;

Speaker:

Literary element:

5. She dreamt to-night she saw my statue,  
Which, like a fountain with an hundred spouts,  
Did run pure blood: and many lusty Romans  
Came smiling, and did bathe their hands in it:

Speaker:

Literary Element:

**Act II, iii-iv**

**Synopsis:** Artiemdoris tries to warn Caesar. Portia tries to figure out where Brutus’ whereabouts.

1. What is Artimedoris writing?
2. To whom will he give it? Will this person take it? How do you know?
3. Is Portia weak or strong? Defend your response in a paragraph