

Literary Analysis

Exposition in Drama
What is the connection between Cassius' speech and the sentiments expressed by the tribunes in the exposition in Scene I?

56. praetor's (prē' tarz) chair Roman magistrates (or judge's) chair.

57. Where . . . find it where only Brutus (as the chief magistrate) will find it.

58. old Brutus' Lucius Junius Brutus, the founder of Rome.

59. offense (ə fens) n. crime.

60. countenance (koun'tenans) n. support.

61. alchemy (al' ka mē) n. an early form of chemistry in which the goal was to change metals of little value into gold.

62. concealed (ken sēt'id) understood.

And look you lay it in the praetor's chair;⁵⁶

Where Brutus may but find it;⁵⁷ and throw this
Upon old Brutus' statue. All this done,

Repair to Pompey's porch, where you shall find us.
Is Decius Brutus and Trebonius there?

ALLA. All but Metellus Cimber, and he's gone
To seek you at your house. Well, I will hie,
And so bestow these papers as you bade me.

CASSIUS. That done, repair to Pompey's Theater.
Come, Casca, you and I will yet ere day
See Brutus at his house; three parts of him
Is ours already, and the man entire

Upon the next encounter yields him ours.
SCA. O, he sits high in all the people's hearts;
And that which would appear offense⁵⁹ in us,

His countenance,⁶⁰ like richest alchemy,⁶¹
Will change to virtue and to worthiness.

CASSIUS. Him, and his worth, and our great need of him,
You have right well concealed.⁶² Let us go,
For it is after midnight, and ere day

We will awake him and be sure of him.
[Exit]

[Exit CINNA.]

[Exit]

Review and Assess

Thinking About Act I

- Respond: Which character interests you most? Why?
- (a) Recall: How do the workmen celebrate as the play begins?
- (b) Analyze: Why does their celebration annoy Flavius and Marullus?
- (a) Recall: What warning does the soothsayer give to Caesar?
- (b) Infer: What does Caesar's reaction tell you about him?
- (a) Recall: What does Brutus say when he hears the shouts of the people? (b) Infer: What mixed feelings does the shouting arouse in Brutus? (c) Analyze: How does Cassius take advantage of Brutus' conflicting feelings?
- Apply: Explain how Brutus, Cassius, and Caesar represent qualities that can be found in people of any time period.
- Predict: What do you suspect is going to happen in the next part of the play? Why?