

# Julius Caesar

## 1.1

*Enter Flavius, Murellus, and certain commoners  
over the stage*

**FLAVIUS**

Hence, home, you idle creatures, get you home!  
Is this a holiday? What, know you not,  
Being mechanical, you ought not walk  
Upon a labouring day without the sign  
Of your profession?±±Speak, what trade art thou? 5

**CARPENTER** Why, sir, a carpenter.

**MURELLUS**

Where is thy leather apron and thy rule?  
What dost thou with thy best apparel on?±±  
You, sir, what trade are you?

**COBBLER** Truly, sir, in respect of a fine workman I am 10  
but, as you would say, a cobbler.

**MURELLUS**

But what trade art thou? Answer me directly.

**COBBLER** A trade, sir, that I hope I may use with a safe  
conscience, which is indeed, sir, a mender of bad soles.

**FLAVIUS**

What trade, thou knave? Thou naughty knave, what  
trade? 15

**COBBLER** Nay, I beseech you, sir, be not out with me. Yet  
if you be out, sir, I can mend you.

**MURELLUS**

What mean'st thou by that? Mend me, thou saucy  
fellow?

**COBBLER** Why, sir, cobble you.

**FLAVIUS** Thou art a cobbler, art thou? 20

**COBBLER** Truly, sir, all that I live by is with the awl. I  
meddle with no tradesman's matters, nor women's  
matters, but withal I am indeed, sir, a surgeon to old  
shoes: when they are in great danger I recover them.  
As proper men as ever trod upon neat's leather have  
gone upon my handiwork. 25

**FLAVIUS**

But wherefore art not in thy shop today?

Why dost thou lead these men about the streets?

**COBBLER** Truly, sir, to wear out their shoes to get myself  
into more work. But indeed, sir, we make holiday to 30  
see Caesar, and to rejoice in his triumph.

**MURELLUS**

Wherefore rejoice? What conquest brings he home?  
What tributaries follow him to Rome  
To grace in captive bonds his chariot wheels?  
You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless  
things! 35

O, you hard hearts, you cruel men of Rome,  
Knew you not Pompey? Many a time and oft  
Have you climbed up to walls and battlements,  
To towers and windows, yea to chimney-tops,  
Your infants in your arms, and there have sat 40  
The livelong day with patient expectation  
To see great Pompey pass the streets of Rome.  
And when you saw his chariot but appear,  
Have you not made an universal shout,  
That Tiber trembled underneath her banks 45  
To hear the replication of your sounds  
Made in her concave shores?  
And do you now put on your best attire?  
And do you now cull out a holiday?  
And do you now strew flowers in his way 50  
That comes in triumph over Pompey's blood?  
Be gone!  
Run to your houses, fall upon your knees,  
Pray to the gods to intermit the plague  
That needs must light on this ingratitude. 55

**FLAVIUS**

Go, go, good countrymen, and for this fault  
Assemble all the poor men of your sort;  
Draw them to Tiber banks, and weep your tears  
Into the channel, till the lowest stream  
Do kiss the most exalted shores of all. 60

*Exeunt all the commoners*

See whe'er their basest mettle be not moved.  
They vanish tongue-tied in their guiltiness.  
Go you down that way towards the Capitol;

This way will I. Disrobe the images  
If you do find them decked with ceremonies.

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**MURELLUS** May we do so?

You know it is the Feast of Lupercal.

**FLAVIUS**

It is no matter. Let no images  
Be hung with Caesar's trophies. I'll about,  
And drive away the vulgar from the streets;  
So do you too where you perceive them thick.  
These growing feathers plucked from Caesar's wing  
Will make him fly an ordinary pitch,  
Who else would soar above the view of men  
And keep us all in servile fearfulness.

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*Exeunt*