

Name \_\_\_\_\_



## Antony's Rise

At the beginning of *Julius Caesar*, Mark Antony is seen as a loyal friend of Caesar, enjoying life and staying out of politics. He is charming and athletic, known more for his social skills than his leadership. However, after Caesar's assassination, Antony's character changes. He becomes a clever strategist and a powerful leader, proving that he is not just a follower but someone who knows how to gain power.

After Caesar is killed, Brutus speaks to the people of Rome, explaining that Caesar was too ambitious and had to be stopped. At first, the crowd agrees with Brutus. Then, Antony steps forward to give his famous funeral speech. Instead of attacking Brutus directly, Antony uses persuasion to turn the people against the conspirators. He repeats the phrase, "Brutus is an honorable man," but says it in a way that makes people question whether Brutus is truly honorable. Antony also reads Caesar's will, which promises gifts to the Roman people, making them love Caesar even more. Finally, he shows them Caesar's bloody cloak and describes the spots where he was stabbed, making the crowd emotional. By the end of the speech, the people who had once cheered for Brutus now riot against him. This moment reveals Antony's intelligence and ability to use words as weapons.

As the play continues, Antony joins forces with Octavius, Caesar's adopted son, and Lepidus to form a new ruling group. However, Antony's leadership starts to change. While he once appeared loyal, he now seems more interested in power. He makes secret deals, removes people who do not support him, and even dismisses Lepidus, showing that he is no longer just a friend of Caesar but someone who wants to rule Rome himself.

Mark Antony's character evolves from a carefree friend into a skilled politician and leader. At first, he seems loyal and emotional, but as he gains power, he becomes more ruthless. Shakespeare uses Antony to show how people change when given power. He teaches us that leadership requires both strategy and strength, but power can also lead to corruption.