**Act l, scene i**: (A street in Rome) Because Caesar has returned from his victory over Pompey's sons, the working people of Rome have a day off to celebrate. Flavius and Marullus, two Roman officers, are angered by the celebration because they see Caesar as a threat to Rome's Republican rule. They disperse the crowd and remove banners and signs honoring Caesar.

**Scene ii**: With a full entourage, Caesar marches through the streets of Rome. He has arrived just before the races that are a part of the celebration of the Feast of Lupercal. From out of the crowd, a soothsayer warns Caesar to “Beware the ides of March.” Caesar dismisses the man as a dreamer and continues with his attendants. Lagging behind, two Roman senators begin discussing their fears that Caesar will gain even greater power and take away the powers of their class of Roman aristocracy. Cassius, long a political enemy of Caesar, begins to flatter Brutus, a friend of Caesar. Cassius's flattery is designed to plumb Brutus's feelings about Caesar's growing power and to determine if Brutus is willing to join the conspiracy to kill Caesar. Caesar returns from the races and sees Cassius and Brutus talking. He tells Antony that he doesn't trust Cassius because he has a “lean and hungry look.” Casca tells Cassius and Brutus that the crowds offered Caesar a crown three times and that Caesar refused it each time. This information adds to the misgivings that the men already have about Caesar. Brutus admits that he is dissatisfied and agrees to talk to Cassius later about his feelings.

**Scene iii**: (A street in Rome) During a violent, stormy night, Cassius recruits Casca to the conspiracy despite portents the storm seems to hold. In a further attempt to recruit Brutus, Cassius instructs Cinna, a fellow conspirator, to place an anonymous note in Brutus's chair, throw one through Brutus's window, and fix yet another note to the statue of Brutus's father.

**Act II scene i**: (Brutus's garden) Alone in his garden, Brutus decides that Caesar must be assassinated because of what he might become (a tyrant). The conspirators join Brutus and decide they will kill Caesar the next day at the Capitol. Brutus convinces them not to kill Antony because that would make them seem too murderous. Portia, Brutus's wife, enters after the conspirators leave and pleads with Brutus to tell her what is troubling him. Although he fears that she will not be able to bear the news, Portia proves her strength by wounding herself. After that act of courage, he tells her.

**Scene ii:** (Caesar's house) Calpurnia, Caesar's wife, sees evil omens in the night's storm and asks Caesar not to go to the Capitol. He agrees until Decius, one of the conspirators, plays on his pride with a flattering interpretation of Calpurnia's dream and convinces him to go.

**Scene iii**: (A street near the Capitol) Artemidorus reads a paper he plans to give Caesar warning him about the conspiracy.

**Scene iv**: (Another part of the street) A very nervous Portia sends her servant boy Lucius to the Capitol to gain news about Brutus. She also questions a soothsayer for news of Caesar's whereabouts.

**Act III, scene i**: (Rome--before the Capitol) Caesar ignores the warnings of Calpurnia and two others and goes to the Capitol. There he gives an arrogant speech and is murdered by the conspirators. Antony approaches the conspirators, says he understands and forgives them, and asks to give Caesar's eulogy. Brutus agrees, against the wishes of the more realistic Cassius. When left alone with Caesar's body, Antony vows to seek revenge against the conspirators.

**Scene ii:** (The Forum) Brutus gives a logical, unemotional speech winning the crowd over to the suggestion of making Brutus the new Caesar. Antony halts the crowd's support for the conspirators with a masterful speech that plays on the crowd's emotions. Antony learns that Octavius and Lepidus are staying at Caesar's house, and that Brutus and Cassius have left the city because of the people's reaction to Antony's speech. He plans to meet with Octavius and Lepidus to suggest they join forces.

**Scene iii:** (A street in Rome) The enraged crowd attacks the poet Cinna and rips him apart because they think he is one of the conspirators.

**Act IV, scene i**: (A house in Rome) The triumvirate of Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus plan to pursue and destroy Brutus and Cassius. In their preparations, they coldly compile a death list of anyone who might stand in their way.

**Scene ii**: (A camp near Sardis) Brutus waits for Cassius's arrival by speculating that their relationship has deteriorated.

**Scene iii**: (A camp near Sardis) Brutus and Cassius argue violently over Cassius allowing his officers to accept bribes. The quarrel ends when Cassius learns that Brutus's anger is really the result of the news that Portia is dead. That night Brutus is visited by the ghost of Caesar who tells Brutus he will meet him at Philippi.

**Act V, scene i**: (The Plains of Philippi) The two armies meet and the generals argue over who is at fault. When nothing is resolved, they return to their armies and prepare for battle. Brutus and Cassius vow to win or not be taken alive.

**Scene ii**: (The field of battle) Brutus sends a messenger to Cassius instructing him to attack Octavius.

**Scene iii:** (The field of battle) Retreating from the onslaught of Octavius's troops, Cassius sends his trusted friend Titinius to see if the oncoming troops are friends or foes. Seeing Titinius suddenly surrounded by the troops, Cassius mistakenly believes they are enemies. Having lost all hope for victory, he takes his own life. Brutus mourns Cassius's death.

**Scene iv:** (The field of battle) Lucilius, masquerading as Brutus, is captured by Antony's troops. Antony honors him for protecting Brutus.

**Scene v**: (The field of battle) When he sees that the battle is lost, Brutus runs upon his own sword rather than being captured. Antony gives a moving eulogy over his body proclaiming him “the noblest Roman of them all.” In a gesture of good will, Octavius agrees to pardon all Brutus's men and take them into his service. The civil war ends with an omen of peace for the future.