

OVER BLACK:

CAESAR (V.O.)
From fairest creatures we desire
increase, that thereby beauty's
rose might never die.

1 INT. CAESAR'S MANSION, MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING 1

A WEATHERED HAND -- fastens the golden buttons of a crisp
military uniform.

CAESAR (V.O.)
But as the riper should by time
decease...

2 EXT. STREET, WASHINGTON HEIGHTS - DAY 2

A POSTER -- that reads "CAESAR SHALL RETURN THE COUNTRY TO
GLORY" -- is pasted onto the blue construction plywood of a
renovated building.

CAESAR (V.O.)
...his tender heir might bear his
memory...

3 INT. CAESAR'S MANSION, MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING 3

A FEMININE HAND -- applies blood red lipstick to the contours
of her lips.

CAESAR (V.O.)
But thou, contracted to thine own
bright eyes...

4 EXT. STREET, WASHINGTON HEIGHTS - DAY 4

FRUIT VENDORS -- unload boxes of fruit from a truck and onto
a stand, preparing for the day's business.

CAESAR (V.O.)
...feeds thy light's flame with
self-substantial fuel.

5 INT. CAESAR'S MANSION, MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING 5

A WEATHERED HAND -- tightens the knot on a red necktie.

CAESAR (V.O.)
...making a famine where abundance
lies...

6 EXT. STREET, WASHINGTON HEIGHTS - DAY 6

A BEGGAR -- panhandles.

CAESAR (V.O.)
...thysself thy foe, to thy sweet
self too cruel.

7 INT. CAESAR'S MANSION, MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING 7

A FEMININE HAND -- slips her heel into a red high-heel shoe.

CAESAR (V.O.)
Thou that art now the world's fresh
ornament...

8 EXT. STREET, WASHINGTON HEIGHTS - DAY 8

A GROUP OF BUSKERS -- set up their instruments, some
makeshift, and begin to warm up.

CAESAR (V.O.)
...and only herald to the gaudy
spring...

9 INT. CAESAR'S MANSION, MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING 9

A WEATHERED HAND -- pins a military medallion to his chest.

CAESAR (V.O.)
...within thine own bud buriest thy
content...

10 EXT. STREET, WASHINGTON HEIGHTS - DAY 10

A VIBRANT GRAFFITI MURAL -- depicts the masculine face of
Caesar. A reverent portrait of a leader.

MATCH TO:

11 INT. CAESAR'S MANSION, MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING 11

CAESAR (60) -- a courtly presence in his general's uniform --
peers at himself in the mirror. Recites his speech.

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CAESAR

...and, tender chorl, mak'st waste.

CALPURNIA (60) -- a regal beauty -- stands behind her husband. She straightens his tie. Smooths his uniform.

Caesar pulls an index card from his pocket. Consults it.

CALPURNIA

Pity the world, or else this
glutton be, to eat the world's due--

CAESAR

--by the grave and thee.

Calpurnia gently drapes a TAN TRENCH COAT over Caesar's shoulders. He smiles lovingly at her in the mirror.

MATCH TO:

12 EXT. A STREET, WASHINGTON HEIGHTS - DAY 12

THWACK! A pinata -- fashioned in the shape of Caesar's head. A baseball bat splits it open. Candy spills to the street.

CHILDREN and ADULTS alike pounce on the bounty, scooping up the treats with glee.

WIDEN TO REVEAL a large CROWD parading through the streets. A celebration.

People wave cheap, colorful bead necklaces and Empire flags. Despite the oppressive August heat, spirits are high.

LATIN MUSIC blares from a boombox in the distance.

Various STREET VENDORS set up along the sidewalk brandish their goods to the crowd -- bead necklaces and laurel headbands, Caesar t-shirts and Empire flags, lemon ices and fried plantains, etc.

A TEENAGER hands out pamphlets with the headline: "Caesar Returns Triumphant From War!"

WHOOOSH! A pamphlet is blown out of the boy's hand by a strong gust as a Harlem bound train barrels from the underground tunnel, hurtling onto the elevated track.

The pamphlet floats down next to a few CHILDREN, who dance through an open fire hydrant, giggling with joy.

A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN in a bikini top and jean shorts hula hoops nearby. She steps in front of the hydrant to cool off, soaking in the cold water.

A gang of five teenage HOOLIGANS holler at the hoola-hooper. One of them peels off his sweat-stained shirt. Waves it above his head as he reverently chants Caesar's name.

A STREET VENDOR hawks fruit and water to the overheated crowd. A JAGGED HUNTING KNIFE stabs an apple, lifts it from the fruit stand.

WIDEN TO REVEAL a rugged, middle-aged man -- who we'll come to know as DECIUS -- yanking the apple from the knife's tip.

A wily man -- who we'll soon know as CASCA -- joins Decius. They observe the scene. Decius slices off a chunk of apple in one clean swoop. Offers it to Casca. He pops it in his mouth.

Casca flips down his visor sunglasses over his wire-frame glasses. Joins the parade as it proceeds down the street.

A few commoners rolling a homemade float -- a metal flatbed cart adorned with streamers and Empire flags -- pass by. Atop the cart stands a MAN wearing a giant papier-mâché Caesar head. He dances.

Two YOUNG LADIES -- adorned in festive scarves, "Hail Caesar" baseball hats, and carnival beads -- place bead necklaces around Decius' neck. They dance off.

The ladies sashay up to a COMMONER in a straw hat. Adorn him with beads.

Decius pulls out a few bills. Hands them to the fruit vendor. Throws on a pair of reflective shades. Crosses into the crowd where Casca disappeared.

Decius passes a haggardly Vagrant -- we'll later know as the SOOTHSAYER -- digging through a garbage can on the sidewalk, stuffing empty soda cans into her own trash bag.

She pulls an empty spray paint can from the trash. Discards it, tossing it onto the sidewalk.

We follow the can as it rolls. It comes to a stop as it hits a concrete barricade stamped with the Seal of the Empire.

WIDEN TO REVEAL two stoic men -- dark suits, dark shades, earpieces, concealed weapons -- standing guard in front of the barricade, observing the crowd.

The men -- FLAVIUS and MARULLUS, part of Caesar's private security detail -- yell at drunk commoners stumbling by.

FLAVIUS

Home, you idle creatures get you home: is this a holiday?

Flavius grabs a commoner, who is drinking from a bottle of whiskey, enjoying the revelry.

FLAVIUS (CONT'D)

Speak, what trade art thou?

FIRST COMMONER

Why, sir, a carpenter.

MARULLUS

Where is thy leather apron and thy rule? What dost thou with thy best apparel on?

Marullus motions to the commoner's attire -- a fancy colorful shirt and blazer. He turns to another commoner.

MARULLUS (CONT'D)

You, sir, what trade are you?

SECOND COMMONER

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

MARULLUS

But what trade art thou?

SECOND COMMONER

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

The commoners chuckle. Flavius and Marullus grow impatient.

FLAVIUS

You are a cobbler, are you not?

SECOND COMMONER

Truly, sir, all that I live by is with the awl.

FLAVIUS

But wherefore art not in thy shop today? Why dost thou lead these men about the streets?

SECOND COMMONER

To wear out their shoes, to get myself into more work.

The commoners guffaw. Flavius replies with an icy glare.

FIRST COMMONER

But, indeed, sir, we make holiday, to see Caesar and to rejoice in his triumph.

MARULLUS

Wherefore rejoice? What conquest brings he home?

Marullus hops onto the concrete barricade. Shouts at the mob. Several commoners pull out their phones to record the scene.

MARULLUS (CONT'D)

You worse than senseless things! Knew you not Pompey? 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 that comes in triumph over Pompey's blood?

The mob heckles him.

THIRD COMMONER

Callate maricon!

FOURTH COMMONER

Cierra la bocca!

FIFTH COMMONER

Vaffanculo!

SIXTH COMMONER

Taire salope!

A commoner tosses a handful of bead necklaces at Marullus. They bounce off his chest harmlessly. The crowd laughs.

MARULLUS (CONT'D)

Be gone! Run to your houses. Pray to intermit the plague that needs must light on this ingratitude--

A VUVUZELA buzzes loudly from the crowd, cutting him off.

A commoner sneaks up behind Marullus and places a bead necklace around his neck. The mob chuckles, bemused.

Marullus is not. He pulls aside his jacket, flashing his firearm. He means business. The crowd grumbles, disperses.

Marullus jumps off the barricade. Rejoins Flavius. He tears the bead necklace from his neck.

MARULLUS (CONT'D)

Go you down that way towards the Capitol; this way will I disrobe the images, if you do find them deck'd with ceremonies.

FLAVIUS

May we do so? You know it is--

MARULLUS

It is no matter; let no images be hung with Caesar's trophies. I'll walk about, and drive away the vulgar masses 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.

Flavius nods in assent. The men split off in opposite directions as the crowd continues to celebrate.

13 EXT. 96TH ST, STAIRWAY ALONG RIVERSIDE PARK - DAY 13

A large staircase with a magnificent statue of a mounted Horse. A CROWD descends the staircase carrying banners, Empire flags, noisemakers, etc. They festoon the Horse with scarves and ribbons. They head towards--

14 EXT. GRANT'S TOMB, PROMENADE - DAY 14

The crowd continues its journey, dancing and parading to--

15 EXT. GRANT'S TOMB - DAY 15

Grant's Tomb. A majestic stone building supported by Roman columns. Flags of the Empire hang between the pillars.

A large CROWD excitedly awaits the arrival. They wear bead necklaces, wave flags, and munch on lemon ices, having just paraded through the street fair.

Flavius and Marullus hold the supporters at bay as--

A black Range Rover rolls to a stop in the square. Marullus stands guard as Flavius opens the rear door.

A red high-heel shoe hits the pavement. We slowly rise up to meet Calpurnia. Her flowing gown and sparkling jewels befitting of her regal stature.

Calpurnia steps aside as a figure emerges from the limo -- Caesar. Not a single hair out of place. His general's uniform adorned with military medallions and an Empire flag pin.

Caesar extends his elbow towards Calpurnia. She wraps her arm between his. They stride arm-in-arm through the adoring crowd. People cheer, waving Empire flags with pride.

FIRST SUPPORTER

Caesar shall return the country to glory!

PAPARAZZI swarm the couple, snapping pictures. Flavius and Marullus sweep them aside.

Various media CAMERA MEN line the side walk, cameras slung over their shoulders. NEWS REPORTERS, holding their station ID microphones, report live into the cameras.

Caesar and Calpurnia approach the pack of TV reporters. One eager correspondent shoves her microphone in Caesar's face. She and her camera man keep pace with the couple. She yells over the cacophony of the crowd.

REPORTER

Behold Caesar... Hark Caesar! What is your substance, whereof are you made that millions of strange shadows on you tend?

Flavius and Marullus hold the Reporter at bay, as Caesar and Calpurnia continue on. The elegant couple schmoozes with the people, shaking hands and smiling, as they approach the steps to Grant's Tomb.

Caesar catches eyes with BRUTUS and CASSIUS across the crowd. They nod.

The Soothsayer hangs in the shadows, digging through a trash can. She tracks Caesar as he moves through the crowd.

Caesar approaches the base of the marble steps, as Calpurnia lags behind, posing for a selfie with a YOUNG TEEN.

CAESAR

Calpurnia!

Calpurnia turns to face her husband.

CALPURNIA

Here, my love.

CAESAR

Stand you directly in Antonius' way
when he doth run his course.

Caesar beckons to someone in the crowd.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

Antonius!

The crowd parts, making way for a young man to emerge. ANTONY (28), masculine and handsome, steps forward, decked out in running gear.

ANTONY

Caesar!

CAESAR

Forget not, in your speed,
Antonius, to touch Calpurnia; for
our elders say, touched in this
holy chase, shake off their curse.

ANTONY

I shall remember: when Caesar says
'do this,' it is performed.

The crowd erupts into applause, voicing their support.

SECOND SUPPORTER

Es la verdad!

CAESAR

Set on; and leave no ceremony out.

Antony nods in assent. Embarks on his race, followed by several other MARATHONERS.

Caesar takes Calpurnia's hand, guiding her towards the steps. Brutus and Cassius join them, following close behind.

Caesar's cavalcade of rugged advisors, ranging from age 30 to 50 -- Casca, CASSIUS, CINNA, Decius, METELLUS CIMBER, PINDARUS, MESSALA, POPILIUS and STRATO -- await the couple at the top of the stairs, seated in chairs behind an ornate podium. An older Senator, CICERO (60s), is also amongst them.

The Soothsayer yells out as Caesar approaches.

SOOTHSAYER

Caesar! Beware the Ides of March!

Caesar, Calpurnia, Cassius and Brutus scan the crowd. From the rear of the pack, the Soothsayer calls out.

SOOTHSAYER (CONT'D)
Beware the Ides the March!

The crowd chuckles at the seemingly absurd premonition. But Calpurnia darts a concerned look towards her husband.

CAESAR
What is that in the press that
calls on me? I hear a tongue,
shiller than all the music, cry
'Caesar!' Speak; Caesar is turned
to hear.

The Soothsayer cries out again.

SOOTHSAYER
Beware the Ides of March!

Caesar turns to Brutus with a quizzical look.

BRUTUS
A soothsayer bids you beware the
ides of March.

CAESAR
Set them before me; let me see
their face.

Cassius calls out into the crowd.

CASSIUS
Come from the throng; look upon
Caesar.

The crowd parts, revealing the Soothsayer.

Brutus ushers her in front of Caesar. Caesar looks the woman up and down -- she's disheveled, clutching an armful of glass bottles and cans.

CAESAR
What say thou to me now? Speak once
again.

The Soothsayer peers at Caesar with a grave look.

SOOTHSAYER
Beware the ides of March.

Caesar flashes the Soothsayer a pitying smile. He whispers something to Brutus.

Brutus steps towards the Soothsayer. Gives her some coins. Leads her away from Caesar.

The Soothsayer extends her hand towards Brutus' cheek. Just before she touches his skin, she recoils, suddenly filled with dread. She slowly backs away from the negative aura.

Calpurnia takes note, her face contorts with dread. Caesar is dismissive.

CAESAR

She is a dreamer; let us leave her.

Calpurnia's gaze is transfixed on the Soothsayer. Caesar takes her hand, gently pulling her away. She follows Caesar on his march towards the steps, but peers over her shoulder anxiously.

ANGLE ON Brutus, mind adrift. He stares at the Soothsayer as she returns to fishing for bottles.

Cassius taps Brutus on the shoulder, snapping him out of his trance.

CASSIUS

Will you go see the order of the course?

BRUTUS

Not I.

CASSIUS

I pray you, do.

BRUTUS

I am not gamesome. I do lack some part of that quick spirit that is in Antony. Let me not hinder your desires.

Brutus wanders off. Pulls out his phone as he heads down--

16 EXT. SIDE STEPS OF GRANT'S TOMB - DAY 16
The River shimmers in the distance. Brutus' head is buried in his phone. Cassius follows close behind.

17 EXT. GRANT'S TOMB - DAY 17
Caesar and Calpurnia climb the steps towards a podium festooned for the celebration.

Chants of "Caesar! Caesar!" ring out through the crowd.

Caesar and Calpurnia reach the top of the steps. They turn to face the adoring crowd, which applauds and cheers with gusto.

The conspirators and Senators all rise, welcoming the couple with applause.

NEWS CAMERA CREWS from many networks angle for the best shot. CORRESPONDENTS speak into cameras, reporting on the event.

Calpurnia takes her seat in a reserved chair as Caesar takes his mark behind the podium.

REVERSE ANGLE -- Caesar raises his arms in acknowledgement of the crowd as they cheer enthusiastically.

18 EXT. GRANT'S TOMB, SIDE STEPS - DAY

18

Brutus stops. Types on his phone. Caesar and the crowd visible in the distance.

CASSIUS (O.S.)

Brutus, I do observe you now of late.

Brutus stops typing. Looks up to see Cassius.

CASSIUS (CONT'D)

You bear too stubborn and too strange a hand over your friend.

BRUTUS

Cassius, be not deceived: if I have veiled my look, I turn the trouble of my countenance merely upon myself. Vexed I am of late with passions of some difference, which give some soil perhaps to my behaviors; but let not therefore my good friends be grieved. Brutus, with himself at war, forgets the shows of love.

CASSIUS

Then, Brutus, I have much mistook your passion; tell me, Brutus, can you see your face?

BRUTUS

No, Cassius; for the eye sees not itself, but by reflection.

Brutus crosses to--

19 EXT. GRANT'S TOMB, TEMPLE - DAY

19

Cassius follows him into the temple.

CASSIUS

And it is very much lamented that
you have no such mirrors as will
turn your hidden worthiness into
your eye. I have heard, many of the
best respect in the nation,
speaking of noble Brutus, have
wished that he had his eyes.

Brutus stops walking. Wheels around to face Cassius.

BRUTUS

Into what dangers would you lead
me, Cassius, that you would have me
seek into myself for that which is
not in me?

REVERSE ANGLE -- from inside the Temple, Brutus and Cassius
stand at the Balustrade.

CASSIUS

Therefore, Brutus, be prepared to
hear: and since you know you cannot
see yourself so well as by
reflection, I, your glass, will
modestly discover to yourself that
of yourself which you yet know not
of. If you know that I profess
myself in banqueting to all the
rout, then hold me dangerous.

20 EXT. GRANT'S TOMB - DAY

20

Caesar stands at the ornate podium, delivering his speech.

CAESAR

Pity the world, or else this
glutton be, to eat the world's due
by the grave and thee.

A loud cheer roars through the crowd.

21 EXT. TEMPLE, RIVERSIDE DRIVE, OPPOSITE GRANT'S TOMB - DAY 21

Brutus and Cassius gaze out at the River. Hear the cheers
spilling out from Grant's Tomb. They glance back towards the
sounds of the rally.

22 EXT. GRANT'S TOMB - DAY

22

Decius presents Caesar with a diamond-shaped sash fashioned out of coronet leaves. It bears the colors of the Empire flag. A large gold medal dangles from the end.

Caesar refuses the award. Waves Decius off. The crowd erupts into applause again, their adulation washing over Caesar.

23 EXT. TEMPLE, RIVERSIDE DRIVE, OPPOSITE GRANT'S TOMB - DAY 23

Brutus walks to the edge of the temple to have a better view of the rally. Cassius follows close behind.

BRUTUS

I do fear, the people choose
Caesar.

CASSIUS

Ay, do you fear it? Then must I
think you would not have it so.

Brutus faces Cassius, a serious look on his face.

BRUTUS

I would not, Cassius; yet I love
him well. If it be aught toward the
general good, set honour in one eye
and death in the other, and I will
look on both indifferently, as I
love the name of honour more than I
fear death.

Brutus turns away. Walks back towards the temple.

CASSIUS

I know that virtue to be in you, as
well as I do know your outward
favour. I cannot tell what you and
other men think of this life; but,
for my single self, I was born free
as Caesar; so were you.

Cassius walks to edge of Balustrade. Gazes out towards the River. Lets that sink in.

CASSIUS (CONT'D)

Once, upon a raw and gusty day, the
troubled Caesar said to me 'Darest
thou, Cassius, now leap in with me
into this angry flood, and swim to
yonder point?'

24 EXT. GRANT'S TOMB - DAY

24

Caesar stuffs the index card into his jacket pocket.

CASSIUS (V.O.)

But ere we could arrive the point
proposed, Caesar cried 'Help me,
Cassius, or I sink!'

Caesar makes his way down the marble steps. The ravenous crowd eagerly awaits. They clap and cheer loudly.

CASSIUS (V.O.)

And this man is now become a god,
and Cassius is a wretched creature
and must bend his body, if Caesar
carelessly but nod on him.

Caesar locks eyes with a beaming Calpurnia. He nods.

25 EXT. GRANT'S TOMB, TEMPLE - DAY

25

Brutus and Cassius saunter to a secluded walkway.

CASSIUS

It doth amaze me a man of such a
feeble temper should so get the
start of the majestic world and
bear the palm alone.

Cassius peers deep into Brutus' eyes, driving his point home.

CASSIUS (CONT'D)

Brutus and Caesar: what should be
in that 'Caesar'? Why should that
name be sounded more than yours?
Yours is as fair a name. Brutus
will start a spirit as soon as
Caesar. Upon what meat doth our
Caesar feed, that he is grown so
great?

Brutus gazes out at the River pensively.

BRUTUS

What you have said I will consider;
what you have to say I will with
patience hear.

Brutus turns his gaze upon Cassius.