

# SUNRISE OF THE EMPIRE

OCTAVIAN, 44-29 BCE



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# TRACK LIST

## Side One: Winners

***Spirit in the Sky*** by Norman Greenbaum

***Yoshimi Battles the Pink Robots Pt 1*** by The Flaming Lips

***I Will Survive*** by Gloria Gaynor

***Come Sail Away*** by Styx

***Mercedes Benz*** by Janis Joplin

***May This Be Love*** by Jimi Hendrix

***In My Time of Dyin'*** by Bob Dylan

***Someday*** by The Strokes

***Guess Who*** by Alabama Shakes

## Side Two: Losers

***I Think I Smell A Rat*** by The White Stripes

***Fire on the Mountain*** by The Grateful Dead

***Run Like Hell*** by Pink Floyd

***Another One Bites the Dust*** by Queen

***Get Back*** by The Beatles

***Babe I'm Gonna Leave You*** by Led Zeppelin

***50 Ways to Leave Your Lover*** by Paul Simon

***Mad*** by Solange

# EXPLAINED

## Spirit in the Sky by Norman Greenbaum

When I die and they lay me to rest  
Gonna go to the place that's the best  
When I lay me down to die  
Goin' up to the spirit in the sky

In 44 BCE, **Julius Caesar** posthumously adopts Octavian, leaving the youth responsible for the Republic. Octavian deifies his father to reemphasize the line's relationship with the gods and to enhance Julius Caesar's legacy.

# EXPLAINED

## Yoshimi Battles the Pink Robots Pt 1 by The Flaming Lips

Those evil natured robots - they're programmed to  
Destroy us - She's gotta be strong to fight them -  
So she's taking lots of vitamins - cause she knows that  
It'd be tragic if those evil robots win - I know  
She can beat them

Still a teenager, **Octavian** assumes control of Rome in 44 BCE. In order to cement his power and subdue his Republican enemies (the robots), he must begin building a network of allies who have political and military clout (take his vitamins).

# EXPLAINED

## I Will Survive by Gloria Gaynor

Oh, as long as I know how to love, I know I'll stay alive  
I've got all my life to live  
And I've got all my love to give and I'll survive  
I will survive

In 40 BCE, Octavian marries his sister **Octavia** to Mark Antony to increase his hold on the Republic. Octavia mediates between the two and provides arms to Mark Antony, but he leaves her in 36 BCE for Cleopatra. Despite these trials, Octavia remains strong to raise her own children as well as Cleopatra's.

# EXPLAINED

## Come Sail Away by Styx

On board I'm the captain, so climb aboard  
We'll search for tomorrow on every shore  
And I'll try, oh Lord I'll try to carry on

**Agrippa** is Octavian's right-hand man, known for his military and naval prowess. He captains Octavian's fleet at the Battle of Actium in 31 BCE, defeating Mark Antony. In addition, he sponsors public works projects like the aqueducts and the Pantheon, making Octavian's regime more appealing to the *populus Romanus*.

# EXPLAINED

## Mercedes Benz by Janis Joplin

Oh Lord, won't you buy me a night on the town  
I'm counting on you, Lord, please don't let me down  
Prove that you love me and buy the next round  
Oh Lord, won't you buy me a night on the town

**Maecenas** is another close advisor to Octavian, perhaps even in competition with Agrippa. As a patron of the arts, he promotes Octavian through works by poets such as Vergil and Horace. As a political advisor, he administers Rome while Octavian engages in various battles. Despite his disheveled appearance, he is indispensable to Octavian.

# EXPLAINED

## May This Be Love by Jimi Hendrix

Waterfall

Don't ever change your ways

Fall with me for a million days

Oh, my waterfall

**Livia** becomes Octavian's third and final wife in 38 BCE. At this point, she has already birthed future emperor Tiberius with her first husband, Tiberius Claudius Nero. Although Livia and Octavian will not produce any children of their own, they will develop a fruitful marriage characterized by mutual respect and general care for each other.



# EXPLAINED

## In My Time of Dyin' by Bob Dylan

Well, in my time of dying don't want nobody to mourn  
All I want for you to do is take my body home  
Well, well, well, so I can die easy

**Marcellus** is the nephew of Augustus and the son of Octavia. Octavian marries Marcellus to Julia, positioning him as Octavian's successor. In 23 BCE, however, Marcellus suffers an untimely death due to an illness. His body will is taken home from Baiae and his ashes placed in the Mausoleum of Augustus.

# EXPLAINED

## Someday by The Strokes

Yeah, I think I'll be alright  
I'm working so I won't have to try so hard  
Tables, they turn sometimes  
Oh, someday

Educated in Octavian's house alongside other potential heirs, **Tiberius** is always in consideration for the throne. He is the son of Livia and the adopted son of Augustus but is never the number one contender. Someday, however, the tables will turn and he will become *princeps* of Rome.

# EXPLAINED

## Guess Who by Alabama Shakes

It's been so hard for a girl like me, it's true  
People say I look just like my daddy, 'cause I do  
All I really want is peace of mind

**Julia** is the only biological child of Octavian, whom he has with Scribonia in 39 BCE. Since Octavian has no male heir, he immediately uses Julia as a political pawn, promising to marry her to Antyllus, the son of Antony, at the age of two. Julia has several marriages, including one with Marcellus, and eventually faces exile for her licentiousness. Deprived of agency from an early age, perhaps all she wants is some peace of mind.

# EXPLAINED

## I Think I Smell A Rat by The White Stripes

All you little kids  
Seem to think you know  
Just where it's at  
Oh I think I smell a rat

**Mark Antony** forms the first triumvirate alongside Lepidus and Octavian. Resentful of the power Caesar has bestowed upon Octavian (and thinking he knows just where it's at), Mark Antony attempts to undermine the *princeps'* rule while controlling the East. Octavian finally defeats Mark Antony (the rat) and Cleopatra at the Battle of Actium in 31 BCE.

# EXPLAINED

## Fire on the Mountain by The Grateful Dead

You say it's a living, we all gotta eat  
But you're here alone, there's no one to compete  
If mercy's a business, I wish it for you  
More than just ashes when your dreams come true

**Lepidus**, a long-time ally of Julius Caesar, forms the triumvirate alongside Mark Antony and Octavian in 43 BCE. When the men renew the triumvirate in 38 BCE, however, they cut Lepidus out. After Mark Antony and Octavian's defeat Lepidus at the Battle of Naulochus in 36 BCE, they send him into exile and strip him of all titles except for Pontifex Maximus, which can only be relinquished at one's death.

# EXPLAINED

## Run Like Hell by Pink Floyd

Feel the bile rising from your guilty past  
With your nerves in tatters as the cockleshell shatters  
And the hammers batter down your door  
You better run!

**Cassius and Brutus** are two main conspirators of the assassination against Julius Caesar in 44 BCE. They run east, but Octavian's army defeats their forces at the Battles of Philippi in 42 BCE. Upon their defeat, caused by their guilty past and Octavian's hammers chasing them down, they commit suicide.

# EXPLAINED

## Another One Bites the Dust by Queen

And another one gone, and another one gone  
Another one bites the dust  
Hey, I'm gonna get you, too  
Another one bites the dust

**Sextus Pompey** is a Republican and great navy admiral who makes peace with the triumvirate at Misenum in 39 BCE and becomes in charge of the grain supply. However, portrayed as an enemy of the state by Octavian for breaking the pact, he bites the dust at the Battle of Naulochus in 36 BCE.

# EXPLAINED

## Get Back by The Beatles

All the girls around her say she's got it coming  
But she gets it while she can  
Get back, get back  
Get back to where you once belonged

**Cleopatra VII**, Queen of Egypt and lover of both Julius Caesar and Mark Antony, holds a great deal of political sway. Due to her un-Romanness, Octavian's forces tell her to "get back" to her conquered client kingdom. Unsatisfied with this fate, she fights until her defeat at the Battle of Actium in 31 BCE.



# EXPLAINED

## Babe I'm Gonna Leave You by Led Zeppelin

Babe, I'm gonna leave you  
Oh, baby, you know, I've really got to leave you  
Oh I can hear it callin' me  
I said don't you hear it callin' me the way it used to do?

**Clodia Pulchra** is the step-daughter of Mark Antony and the first wife of Octavian. After the first triumvirate is formed, Mark Antony offers her hand to Octavian to solidify their political alliance. To Fulvia's dismay, Octavian soon divorces Clodia Pulchra to marry Scribonia.

# EXPLAINED

## 50 Ways to Leave Your Lover by Paul Simon

"The problem is all inside your head", she said to me  
"The answer is easy if you take it logically  
I'd like to help you in your struggle to be free  
There must be fifty ways to leave your lover"

**Scribonia** is the second wife of Octavian and the mother of his only biological child, Julia. Octavian forces the marriage to strengthen the political alliance between Sextus Pompey and himself. On the day Julia is born, however, Octavian divorces Scribonia to pursue Livia.

# EXPLAINED

## Mad by Solange

You got the light, count it all joy  
You got the right to be mad  
But when you carry it alone you find it only getting in the way  
They say you gotta let it go

**Fulvia**, the second wife of Mark Antony, runs the domestic political landscape while her husband is fighting abroad. She becomes notorious for her role during the proscriptions after the civil wars.

Suffering defeat at Perusia, she becomes a scapegoat for Octavian and Mark Antony's political clashes and goes down in history as a *hostis*.