

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

A line-by-line translation

Act 1, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Enter DEMETRIUS and PHILO

PHILO

Nay, but this dotage of our general's
O'erflows the measure. Those his goodly eyes,
That o'er the files and musters of the war
Have glowed like plated Mars, now bend, now turn
5 The office and devotion of their view
Upon a tawny front. His captain's heart,
Which in the scuffles of great fights hath burst
The buckles on his breast, reneges all temper
And is become the bellows and the fan
10 To cool a gypsy's lust.

Flourish. Enter ANTONY, CLEOPATRA, her ladies, the train, with eunuchs fanning her

Look where they come.
Take but good note, and you shall see in him
The triple pillar of the world transformed
Into a strumpet's fool. Behold and see.

CLEOPATRA

15 If it be love indeed, tell me how much.

ANTONY

There's beggary in the love that can be reckoned.

CLEOPATRA

I'll set a bourn how far to be beloved.

ANTONY

Then must thou needs find out new heaven, new earth.

Enter a MESSENGER

MESSENGER

News, my good lord, from Rome.

ANTONY

20 Grates me, the sum.

CLEOPATRA

Nay, hear them, Antony.
Fulvia perchance is angry. Or who knows
If the scarce-bearded Caesar have not sent

Shakescleare Translation

DEMETRIUS and PHILO enter.

PHILO

I'm telling you, our general's ridiculous infatuation goes beyond the limits of reasonable behavior. Those handsome eyes of his, that used to shine like Mars's ¹ when he looked over the lines of troops, now turn away and give their duty and love to a woman with a dark complexion. He used to have the heart of a military commander, which swelled so much during the battles of great wars that it split open the armor on his chest, but now he abandons all self-restraint and only lives to stir up and then satisfy an Egyptian's ² sexual desire.

A flourish of trumpets sounds. ANTONY, CLEOPATRA, and CLEOPATRA'S female attendants and followers ³ enter, with eunuchs ⁴ fanning her.

See, here they come. Pay attention, and you'll see one of the three most powerful men ⁵ in the world behaving like a fool to entertain a strumpet ⁶. Look and see.

CLEOPATRA

If you really love me, tell me how much.

ANTONY

My love for you could not be very great if I could tell you how much I love you.

CLEOPATRA

I'll mark off boundaries to see how far your love extends.

ANTONY

If you want to see how far my love extends, you'll need to discover a new world, because my love extends beyond this one.

A MESSENGER enters.

MESSENGER

I have news from Rome, my good lord.

ANTONY

That irritates me. Summarize it for me.

CLEOPATRA

No, listen to him, Antony. Maybe Fulvia ⁷ is angry. Or perhaps the young Caesar has sent a stern command,

¹ Mars was the Roman god of war.

² Shakespeare's term "gypsy" could denote an Egyptian or a person of Romany descent, as well as a disreputable or sexually loose woman.

³ Monarchs and nobles often employed groups of people to follow, or attend, them and act as servants, companions, guards, and audience. Cleopatra is often onstage with her followers.

⁴ A eunuch is a man whose genitals have been removed.

⁵ Philo refers to Antony, Octavius Caesar, and Lepidus, who were the three joint rulers—called triumvirs—of the Roman Empire. As one of these three men, Antony is called "The triple pillar of the world" in the original text.

⁶ A strumpet is a sexually loose woman, sometimes a prostitute.

⁷ Fulvia is Antony's wife, who is back in Rome while Antony is in Egypt with Cleopatra.

25 His powerful mandate to you, "Do this, or this.
Take in that kingdom, and enfranchise that.
Perform 't, or else we damn thee."

ANTONY

How, my love?

CLEOPATRA

Perchance? Nay, and most like.
You must not stay here longer. Your dismissal
30 Is come from Caesar. Therefore hear it, Antony.
Where's Fulvia's process? Caesar's, I would say—both?
Call in the messengers. As I am Egypt's queen,
Thou blushest, Antony, and that blood of thine
Is Caesar's homager. Else so thy cheek pays shame
35 When shrill-tongued Fulvia scolds. The messengers!

ANTONY

Let Rome in Tiber melt and the wide arch
Of the ranged empire fall. Here is my space.
Kingdoms are clay. Our duny earth alike
Feeds beast as man. The nobleness of life
40 Is to do thus, when such a mutual pair
And such a twain can do 't, in which I bind,
On pain of punishment, the world to weet
We stand up peerless.

CLEOPATRA

Excellent falsehood!
45 Why did he marry Fulvia, and not love her?
I'll seem the fool I am not. Antony
Will be himself.

ANTONY

But stirred by Cleopatra.
Now, for the love of Love and her soft hours,
50 Let's not confound the time with conference harsh.
There's not a minute of our lives should stretch
Without some pleasure now. What sport tonight?

CLEOPATRA

Hear the ambassadors.

ANTONY

Fie, wrangling Queen!
55 Whom every thing becomes—to chide, to laugh,
To weep, whose every passion fully strives
To make itself, in thee, fair and admired!
No messenger but thine, and all alone
Tonight we'll wander through the streets and note
60 The qualities of people. Come, my Queen,
Last night you did desire it.— (to the MESSENGER) Speak
not to us.

Exeunt ANTONY and CLEOPATRA with the train

DEMETRIUS

Is Caesar with Antonius prized so slight?

PHILO

Sir, sometimes when he is not Antony
65 He comes too short of that great property
Which still should go with Antony.

DEMETRIUS

I am full sorry
That he approves the common liar, who
Thus speaks of him at Rome, but I will hope!
70 Of better deeds tomorrow. Rest you happy!

Exeunt

ordering you, "Do this, or this. Conquer that kingdom, and
free that one. Do it, or I'll be very angry with you."

ANTONY

Why are you talking like this, my love?

CLEOPATRA

Maybe? No, this is definitely the news. You shouldn't stay
here any longer. Caesar has given you your orders. So, pay
attention, Antony. Where's the summons from Fulvia? From
Caesar, I should say—or both? Call in the messengers. As
sure as I'm Egypt's queen, I say you're blushing, Antony,
and your blush shows your loyalty to Caesar. Either that, or
it shows you're shame when Fulvia scolds you with her
shrill tongue. Call in the messengers!

ANTONY

Let Rome collapse into the Tiber River ⁸ and the whole
extent of the wide empire fall. The only empire I want is
right here. Conquering foreign lands is worthless. Land is
just something that animals feed off of, the same way
humans do. The noble way to live is like this ⁹ when there
are two people like us who share the same greatness and
the same great feelings—and I order the world to recognize,
on pain of punishment, that no one else comes close to our
greatness.

CLEOPATRA

[To the court] What an eloquent lie! Why did Antony marry
Fulvia if he didn't love her? I'll pretend to believe him. I
know that Antony will keep acting so foolishly.

ANTONY

Yes, but only because of you. Now, since we love Love and
the relaxing hours it brings, let's not ruin our time together
by arguing. We shouldn't let a minute pass without
pleasure. How shall we entertain ourselves tonight?

CLEOPATRA

Listen to the messengers.

ANTONY

Don't talk like that, you stubborn Queen! But everything
you do is endearing, whether you criticize, laugh, or cry;
every emotion you express becomes attractive and
admirable! The only messages I want to hear are yours, and
tonight we'll wander through the streets alone and observe
the people we meet. Come, my Queen, this was what you
wanted last night.

[To the MESSENGER] Don't talk to me ¹⁰.

ANTONY and CLEOPATRA exit along with her followers.

DEMETRIUS

Does Antony care so little about Caesar's orders?

PHILO

Sir, sometimes he doesn't behave like Antony, and he
doesn't care about the things that the Antony we know
should care about.

DEMETRIUS

There are people back in Rome who say he's not acting the
way he should, and I'm sorry that he's proving them right.
But I hope he'll behave better tomorrow. Sleep well!

PHILO and DEMETRIUS exit.

⁸ The city of Rome is built on the
banks of the Tiber River in Italy.

⁹ Antony may embrace Cleopatra or
show some other display of affection.

¹⁰ Rulers in this play frequently use
the "royal 'we,'" or first-person plural
pronoun, to refer to themselves.

Act 1, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Enter ENOBARBUS, LAMPRIUS, a SOOTHSAYER, Rannius, LUCILLIUS, CHARMIAN, IRAS, MARDIAN the eunuch, and ALEXAS

CHARMIAN

Lord Alexas, sweet Alexas, most anything Alexas, almost most absolute Alexas, where's the soothsayer that you praised so to th' Queen? Oh that I knew this husband, which, you say, must charge his horns with garlands!

ALEXAS

5 Soothsayer!

SOOTHSAYER

Your will?

CHARMIAN

(to ALEXAS) Is this the man? (to SOOTHSAYER) Is 't you, sir, that know things?

SOOTHSAYER

10 In nature's infinite book of secrecy
A little I can read.

ALEXAS

(to CHARMIAN) Show him your hand.

ENOBARBUS

(to servants within) Bring in the banquet quickly. Wine enough
Cleopatra's health to drink.

CHARMIAN

15 (giving hand to SOOTHSAYER) Good sir, give me good fortune.

SOOTHSAYER

I make not, but foresee.

CHARMIAN

Pray, then, foresee me one.

SOOTHSAYER

You shall be yet far fairer than you are.

CHARMIAN

20 (to the others) He means in flesh.

IRAS

No, you shall paint when you are old.


CHARMIAN


Wrinkles forbid!

ALEXAS


Vex not his prescience. Be attentive.


Shakescleare Translation

ENOBARBUS, LAMPRIUS, a SOOTHSAYER , RANNIUS, LUCILLIUS, CHARMIAN, IRAS, MARDIAN the eunuch, and ALEXAS enter.

 A soothsayer is a fortune teller.

CHARMIAN

Lord Alexas, sweet Alexas, Alexas whom I could give almost any compliment, almost perfect Alexas, where's that soothsayer that you praised so much when you were talking to the Queen? Oh, I wish I knew who you were referring to when you talked about a husband who had been cuckolded !

 A man is cuckolded if his wife sleeps with another man. In Shakespeare's time, cuckolds were said to have horns growing out of their foreheads, which is why Shakespeare's original text refers to horns.

ALEXAS

Soothsayer!

SOOTHSAYER

What do you want?

CHAIRMAN

[To ALEXAS] Is this the person you were talking about?

[To the SOOTHSAYER] Are you the one, sir, who has supernatural knowledge?

SOOTHSAYER

I know a little about the world's many secrets.

ALEXAS

[To CHARMIAN] Show him your hand.

ENOBARBUS

[To servants inside] Bring in the banquet quickly. Bring in enough wine to toast to Cleopatra's health.

CHARMIAN

[Giving her hand to the SOOTHSAYER] Good sir, give me a good fortune.

SOOTHSAYER

I don't give fortunes, I just tell people what they are going to be.

CHARMIAN

Then please tell me what mine is going to be.

SOOTHSAYER

You'll be more beautiful in the future than you are right now.

CHARMIAN

[To the others] He means that I'll get fatter.

IRAS

No, he means that you'll use makeup when you get old.

CHARMIAN

God forbid I get wrinkles!

ALEXAS

Don't annoy this wise man. Pay attention to him.

CHARMIAN

Hush!

SOOTHSAYER

25 You shall be more believing than beloved.

CHARMIAN

I had rather heat my liver with drinking.

ALEXAS

Nay, hear him.

CHARMIAN

30 Good now, some excellent fortune! Let me be married to three kings in a forenoon and widow them all. Let me have a child at fifty, to whom Herod of Jewry may do homage. Find me to marry me with Octavius Caesar, and companion me with my mistress.

SOOTHSAYER

You shall outlive the lady whom you serve.

CHARMIAN

Oh, excellent! I love long life better than figs.

SOOTHSAYER

35 You have seen and proved a fairer former fortune Than that which is to approach.

CHARMIAN

Then belike my children shall have no names. Prithce, how many boys and wenches must I have?

SOOTHSAYER

40 If every of your wishes had a womb, And fertile every wish, a million.

CHARMIAN

Out, fool! I forgive thee for a witch.

ALEXAS

You think none but your sheets are privy to your wishes.

CHARMIAN

(to SOOTHSAYER) Nay, come, tell Iras hers.

ALEXAS

45 We'll know all our fortunes.

ENOBARBUS

Mine, and most of our fortunes tonight, shall be—drunk to bed.

IRAS

(giving her hand to the SOOTHSAYER) There's a palm presages chastity, if nothing else.

CHARMIAN

50 E'en as the o'erflowing Nilus presageth famine.

CHARMIAN

Hush!

SOOTHSAYER

You'll love other people more than they love you.

CHARMIAN

I would rather drink than love.³

ALEXAS

No, listen to him.

CHARMIAN

Come on, tell me some good news now! Let me marry three kings in a single day and let all of them die and leave me a rich widow. When I'm fifty years old, let me give birth to a child so great that even King Herod⁴ would honor him. Look at my palm and tell me that I'm destined to marry Octavius Caesar and become as great as my mistress Cleopatra.

SOOTHSAYER

You will live longer than your mistress.

CHARMIAN

Oh, excellent! I love long life even better than figs.⁵

SOOTHSAYER

Your life up until now has been happier than it will be in the future.

CHARMIAN

Then maybe all my children will be illegitimate. Tell me, how many little boys and girls will I have?

SOOTHSAYER

If every one of your wishes were a child, you would have a million children.

CHARMIAN

Get out of here, fool! Because you're a fortune teller, I won't bring charges of witchcraft against you.

ALEXAS

You think no one knows your wishes but your bed.⁶

CHARMIAN

[To the SOOTHSAYER] No, come on, tell Iras her fortune.

ALEXAS

We'll all have our fortunes told.

ENOBARBUS

My fortune, and most of ours, tonight will be—that we go to bed drunk.

IRAS

[Giving her hand to the SOOTHSAYER] My palm tells you that I'm chaste, if nothing else.

CHARMIAN

Yes, just like the Nile tells you that there will be a famine when it overflows.⁷

³ Shakespeare's original text refers to the liver because the liver was believed to be the location of the passions, which were stimulated both by drinking and by falling in love.

⁴ King Herod was infamous for slaughtering hundreds of children in his attempt to find and kill the infant Christ. He was made King of Judea by Antony.

⁵ Figs may have a sexual or phallic connotation, they were used to represent female genitalia.

⁶ Charman may say her wishes aloud while lying in bed or dreaming about them.

⁷ Charman is mocking Iras's claim; it was the Nile's regular flooding that made Egypt's lands fertile and prevented famine.

IRAS

Go, you wild bedfellow, you cannot soothsay.

CHARMIAN

Nay, if an oily palm be not a fruitful prognostication, I cannot scratch mine ear.—Prithee, tell her but a workaday fortune.

SOOTHSAYER

55 Your fortunes are alike.

IRAS

But how, but how? Give me particulars.

SOOTHSAYER

I have said.

IRAS

Am I not an inch of fortune better than she?

CHARMIAN

60 Well, if you were but an inch of fortune better than I, where would you choose it?

IRAS

Not in my husband's nose.

CHARMIAN

Our worse thoughts heavens mend. Alexas! (*to SOOTHSAYER*) Come, his fortune, his fortune! Oh, let him marry a woman that cannot go, sweet Isis, I beseech thee, and let her die too, and give him a worse, and let worse follow worse, till the worst of all follow him laughing to his grave, fifty-fold a cuckold! Good Isis, hear me this prayer, though thou deny me a matter of more weight, good Isis, I beseech thee!

IRAS

70 Amen, dear goddess, hear that prayer of the people! For, as it is a heartbreaking to see a handsome man loose-wived, so it is a deadly sorrow to behold a foul knave uncuckolded. Therefore, dear Isis, keep decorum, and fortune him accordingly.

CHARMIAN

75 Amen.

ALEXAS

(*to himself*) Lo now, if it lay in their hands to make me a cuckold, they would make themselves whores but they'd do 't.

ENOBARBUS

Hush! Here comes Antony.

CHARMIAN

80 Not he. The Queen.

Enter CLEOPATRA

CLEOPATRA

Saw you my lord?

ENOBARBUS

No, lady.

IRAS

Go away, you lusty friend, you can't tell fortunes.

CHARMIAN

No, if I don't know the meaning of a sweaty palm⁸, I can't scratch my ear.

⁸ *Sweaty palms were thought to be a sign of sexual activity and desire.*

[*To the SOOTHSAYER*] Please, just tell her an ordinary, everyday kind of fortune.

SOOTHSAYER

You have the same fortunes.

IRAS

But how, but how? Give me details.

SOOTHSAYER

I've said what I have to say.

IRAS

Don't I have at least a slightly better fortune than she does?

CHARMIAN

Well, if you had just an inch more fortune than me, where would you want it?

IRAS

Not in my husband's nose⁹.

⁹ *That is, she would prefer an extra inch somewhere else on her husband.*

CHARMIAN

May God correct our inappropriate thoughts. Alexas!

[*To the SOOTHSAYER*] Come on, his fortune, tell his fortune! Oh, let him marry a woman who is infertile, sweet Isis¹⁰, I pray, and let her die too, and then have him marry a worse wife, and let every wife be worse after that, until the very worst one laughs next to his grave after she has cuckolded him fifty times! Good Isis, hear this prayer of mine, even if you don't grant my prayers about more important things. Good Isis, I beg you!

¹⁰ *Isis is the Egyptian goddess of fertility. She is especially associated with Cleopatra.*

IRAS

Amen, dear goddess, hear that prayer from the people! Because, just as it's a tragedy to see a handsome man with an unfaithful wife, it's also a tragedy to see an ugly scoundrel with a faithful wife. Therefore, Isis, respect what's appropriate and treat him accordingly.

CHARMIAN

Amen.

ALEXAS

[*To himself*] Honestly, if they had it in their power to make me a cuckold, they would be willing to make themselves whores to do it.

ENOBARBUS

Hush! Here comes Antony.

CHARMIAN

It's not him, it's the Queen.

CLEOPATRA enters.

CLEOPATRA

Have you seen my lord?

ENOBARBUS

No, lady.

CLEOPATRA

Was he not here?

CHARMIAN

No, madam.

CLEOPATRA

85 He was disposed to mirth, but on the sudden
A Roman thought hath struck him.—Enobarbus!

ENOBARBUS

Madam?

CLEOPATRA

Seek him and bring him hither.—
Where's Alexas?

ALEXAS

90 Here at your service. My lord approaches.

Enter ANTONY with the FIRST MESSENGER

CLEOPATRA

We will not look upon him. Go with us.

Exeunt all but ANTONY and the FIRST MESSENGER

FIRST MESSENGER

Fulvia thy wife first came into the field.

ANTONY

Against my brother Lucius?

FIRST MESSENGER

Ay.

95 But soon that war had end, and the time's state
Made friends of them, joining their force 'gainst
Caesar,
Whose better issue in the war from Italy
Upon the first encounter drove them.

ANTONY

100 Well, what worst?

FIRST MESSENGER

The nature of bad news infects the teller.

ANTONY

When it concerns the fool or coward. On.
Things that are past are done, with me. 'Tis thus:
Who tells me true, though in his tale lie death,
105 I hear him as he flattered.

FIRST MESSENGER

Labienus—

This is stiff news—hath with his Parthian force
Extended Asia: from Euphrates
His conquering banner shook, from Syria
110 To Lydia and to Ionia,
Whilst—

CLEOPATRA

Wasn't he here?

CHARMIAN

No, madam.

CLEOPATRA

He was in the mood for fun and games, but then he
suddenly started thinking about Rome. Enobarbus!

ENOBARBUS

Madam?

CLEOPATRA

Find him and bring him here. Where's Alexas?

ALEXAS

I'm at your service. My lord approaches.

ANTONY enters with the FIRST MESSENGER.

CLEOPATRA

I won't look at him. Go with us.

*All characters exit except for ANTONY and the FIRST
MESSENGER.*

FIRST MESSENGER

Your wife Fulvia first entered the battlefield.

ANTONY

She was fighting against my brother Lucius?

FIRST MESSENGER

Yes, but that fight was soon over, and the situation forced
them to make friends and combine forces to fight against
Caesar. But Caesar won the very first battle and drove them
out of Italy.

ANTONY

Well, what worse news could you have than that?

FIRST MESSENGER

When a messenger delivers bad news, people usually hate
him for it.

ANTONY

Only if they're fools or cowards. Continue with your news. I
don't get upset about things that are already over and done
with. This is how it is: if someone tells me the truth, then I
appreciate what he has to say, even if he brings terrible
news.

FIRST MESSENGER

Labienus¹¹—this is terrible news—has seized Asia with his
Parthian army. He has conquered all the territory from the
Euphrates¹² and Syria to Lydia and to Ionia. And he did all
this while—

¹¹ Labienus was an ally of Brutus and Cassius, who led the assassination of Julius Caesar a short time before this play is set. Antony and Octavius Caesar, Julius Caesar's adopted son and heir, fought and defeated Brutus and Cassius. Labienus is now warring against Antony and Octavius, leaders of the Roman Empire, and has conquered territories that it was Antony's job to protect.

¹² The Euphrates is the longest river in Western Asia.

ANTONY

"Antony," thou wouldst say.

FIRST MESSENGER

O my lord!

ANTONY

115 Speak to me home. Mince not the general tongue.
Name Cleopatra as she is called in Rome.
Rail thou in Fulvia's phrase, and taunt my faults
With such full license as both truth and malice
Have power to utter. Oh, then we bring forth weeds
120 When our quick minds lie still, and our ills told us
Is as our earring.

Enter SECOND MESSENGER

Fare thee well awhile.

FIRST MESSENGER

At your noble pleasure.

Exit FIRST MESSENGER

ANTONY

From Sicyon, how, the news? Speak there.

SECOND MESSENGER

The man from Sicyon—

ANTONY

125 Is there such an one?

SECOND MESSENGER

He stays upon your will.

ANTONY

Let him appear.

Exit SECOND MESSENGER

These strong Egyptian fetters I must break,
Or lose myself in dotage.

Enter THIRD MESSENGER, with a letter

130 What are you?

THIRD MESSENGER

Fulvia thy wife is dead.

ANTONY

Where died she?

THIRD MESSENGER

In Sicyon.
Her length of sickness, with what else more serious
135 Importeth thee to know, this bears.

He gives ANTONY a letter

ANTONY

Forbear me.

Exit THIRD MESSENGER

(to himself) There's a great spirit gone! Thus did I
desire it.
What our contempts doth often hurl from us
140 We wish it ours again. The present pleasure,
By revolution lowering, does become

ANTONY

You were about to say "While Antony."

FIRST MESSENGER

Oh my lord!

ANTONY

Tell me the truth. Don't downplay the common people's
poor opinion of me. Speak about Cleopatra the way they
speak about her in Rome. Scold me using the same words
my wife uses, and mock my faults as fully possible, whether
you want to speak the truth or want to be malicious. Oh, we
create all kinds of problems when we sit back and do not
use our abilities, and when other people criticize us, they
help us become productive again.

The SECOND MESSENGER enters.

Goodbye for now.

FIRST MESSENGER

I'll see you again when you please.

The FIRST MESSENGER exits.

ANTONY

What news do you have from Sicyon? You there, speak.

SECOND MESSENGER

The messenger from Sicyon—

ANTONY

Is there one?

SECOND MESSENGER

He's outside waiting for you to call him in.

ANTONY

Let him come in.

The SECOND MESSENGER exits.

I must break free from my strong attachment to Cleopatra,
or I will become so slavishly devoted to her that I will cease
to be myself.

A THIRD MESSENGER enters with a letter.

Who are you?

THIRD MESSENGER

Your wife Fulvia is dead.

ANTONY

Where did she die?

THIRD MESSENGER

In Sicyon. This letter tells you how long she was sick, along
with more important matters.

He gives ANTONY a letter.

ANTONY

Leave me.

The THIRD MESSENGER exits.

[To himself] A great person is gone! And yet that's what I
wanted. When we're feeling scornful, we wish we could get
rid of something, but later on we wish we could get it back.
What is pleasurable in the moment becomes less pleasant
as time goes on and eventually becomes downright painful.
I value her now that she's gone. I could want her back, even

The opposite of itself. She's good, being gone.
The hand could pluck her back that shoved her on.
I must from this enchanting Queen break off.
145 Ten thousand harms, more than the ills I know
My idleness doth hatch. —How now, Enobarbus!

Enter ENOBARBUS

ENOBARBUS

What's your pleasure, sir?

ANTONY

I must with haste from hence.

ENOBARBUS

150 Why, then, we kill all our women. We see how mortal an
unkindness is to them. If they suffer our departure,
death's the word.

ANTONY

I must be gone.

ENOBARBUS

155 Under a compelling occasion, let women die. It were
pity to cast them away for nothing, though between them
and a great cause they should be esteemed nothing.
Cleopatra, catching but the least noise of this, dies
instantly. I have seen her die twenty times upon far
poorer moment. I do think there is mettle in death,
160 which commits some loving act upon her, she hath such a
celerity in dying.

ANTONY

She is cunning past man's thought.

ENOBARBUS

165 Alack, sir, no, her passions are made of nothing but
the finest part of pure love. We cannot call her winds
and waters sighs and tears. They are greater storms and
tempests than almanacs can report. This cannot be
cunning in her. If it be, she makes a shower of rain as
well as Jove.

ANTONY

Would I had never seen her!

ENOBARBUS

170 O sir, you had then left unseen a wonderful piece of
work which not to have been blessed withal would have
discredited your travel.

ANTONY

Fulvia is dead.

ENOBARBUS

Sir?

ANTONY

Fulvia is dead.

ENOBARBUS

175 Fulvia?

ANTONY

Dead.

ENOBARBUS

180 Why, sir, give the gods a thankful sacrifice. When it
pleaseth their deities to take the wife of a man from
him, it shows to man the tailors of the earth,
comforting therein, that when old robes are worn out,

though I was the one that wanted her gone. I must break
away from this enchanting queen. My lying around lazily in
Egypt will cause ten thousand problems, even more than
the ones I already know about.

[To ENOBARBUS]—Hey there, Enobarbus!

ENOBARBUS enters.

ENOBARBUS

What do you want, sir?

ANTONY

I must leave here quickly.

ENOBARBUS

Why, that would kill all our women. We see that unkindness
is fatal to them. They'll die if we leave.

ANTONY

I must leave.

ENOBARBUS

If it's absolutely necessary, then let women die. But it
would be a shame to kill them for nothing—even if it's true
that we should treat them as worthless if they get in the
way of our goals. Cleopatra would die instantly if she even
suspected that you would leave. I've seen her die ¹³ twenty
times for a much smaller reason. I think death must have
some kind of sexual power that acts on her, because she's
so quick to die.

ANTONY

She is too cunning for a man to outwit.

ENOBARBUS

No, sir, no, her passions aren't cunning performances, they
arise from the best part of pure love. We can't refer to her
storms and floods as sighs and tears. Her sighs and tears
are bigger storms and tempests than any book could
describe. It would be impossible for her to fake them. If
they come from her scheming, then she must be able to
control the rain like Jove ¹⁴.

ANTONY

I wish I had never met her!

ENOBARBUS

Oh sir, then you would have missed a wonderful sight,
which would have reduced the glory of your adventures
while traveling.

ANTONY

Fulvia is dead.

ENOBARBUS

Excuse me?

ANTONY

Fulvia is dead.

ENOBARBUS

Fulvia?

ANTONY

Dead.

ENOBARBUS

Why, sir, give a sacrifice to the gods in thanks. When the
gods decide to take a man's wife from him, a man takes
comfort from realizing that there are tailors on earth who
can make a new robe when the old one is worn out ¹⁵. If

¹³ Enobarbus is referring partly to Cleopatra's penchant for drama, but "die" in Shakespeare's time also meant "to achieve sexual climax." Discussions of death in this play pun frequently on the two meanings.

¹⁴ Jove, the Roman king of the gods, had the power to govern rain and storms.

¹⁵ Enobarbus offers an extended metaphor in this speech comparing women to clothing. Antony should not

there are members to make new. If there were no more women but Fulvia, then had you indeed a cut, and the case to be lamented. This grief is crowned with consolation. Your old smock brings forth a new petticoat, and indeed the tears live in an onion that should water this sorrow.

ANTONY

The business she hath broached in the state
Cannot endure my absence.

ENOBARBUS

And the business you have broached here cannot be without you, especially that of Cleopatra's, which wholly depends on your abode.

ANTONY

No more light answers. Let our officers
Have notice what we purpose. I shall break
The cause of our expedience to the Queen
And get her leave to part. For not alone
The death of Fulvia, with more urgent touches,
Do strongly speak to us, but the letters too
Of many our contriving friends in Rome
Petition us at home. Sextus Pompeius
Hath given the dare to Caesar and commands
The empire of the sea. Our slippery people,
Whose love is never linked to the deserter
Till his deserts are past, begin to throw
Pompey the Great and all his dignities
Upon his son, who—high in name and power,
Higher than both in blood and life—stands up
For the main soldier, whose quality, going on,
The sides o' th' world may danger. Much is breeding
Which, like the courser's hair, hath yet but life,
And not a serpent's poison. Say our pleasure,
To such whose place is under us, requires
Our quick remove from hence.

ENOBARBUS

I shall do 't.

Exeunt

there were no other women but Fulvia, then you would really have suffered a great loss, and your situation would be terrible. As it is, you have a consolation for your grief. In exchange for your old clothes, you get new ones, and so it makes as much sense to cry over losing Fulvia as to cry when you cut an onion.

ANTONY

She has started some business in Rome that makes it necessary for me to return.

ENOBARBUS

And the business you have started here makes it necessary for you to stay here, especially Cleopatra's business, which depends entirely on your presence.

ANTONY

No more of these jokes. Tell my officers what I intend to do. I will let the Queen know why we have to leave so quickly and get her permission to go. For Fulvia's death is not the only thing on my mind—letters from my friends back in Rome also urge me to go home. Sextus Pompeius¹⁶ has challenged Caesar's authority and commands the empire around the island of Sicily. Our citizens are fickle, and never acknowledge service until the service is over. And so they give the title "Pompey the Great" and all the honors associated with it to Pompey's son, who has a great name and great power, and even greater vitality and force. Now he acts like the chief soldier, and if his abilities go unchecked, he will endanger the whole arrangement of the world¹⁷. Many troubles are beginning to form that, right now, only have the potential for disaster¹⁸. Tell my subordinates that I wish to leave here quickly.

ENOBARBUS

I will do it.

ANTONY and ENOBARBUS exit.

be upset about Fulvia's death because he can find a new wife as easily as he can find a new robe. "Smock" and "petticoat" refer to women's articles of clothing.

¹⁶ *Sextus Pompeius, referred to as Pompey for most of the play, was the younger son of Pompey the Great, a rival of Julius Caesar. Pompey is now a rival of Octavius Caesar and Antony, and has gained control of the shipping routes around the island of Sicily, off the coast of Italy.*

¹⁷ *Right now, the Roman Empire, controlled by Octavius Caesar, Antony, and Lepidus, has control of the area around the Mediterranean Sea, but Pompey's actions could upset that balance of power.*

¹⁸ *A horse's hair, or "courser's hair," as Shakespeare's original text reads, was thought to become a live snake if put into water. Before it was put in water, it had only the potential to be harmful.*

Act 1, Scene 3

Shakespeare

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, ALEXAS, and IRAS

CLEOPATRA

Where is he?

CHARMIAN

I did not see him since.

CLEOPATRA

(to ALEXAS) See where he is, who's with him, what he does.

5 I did not send you. If you find him sad,
Say I am dancing. If in mirth, report
That I am sudden sick. Quick, and return.

Exit ALEXAS

CHARMIAN

Madam, methinks, if you did love him dearly,
You do not hold the method to enforce

10

Shakescleare Translation

CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, ALEXAS, and IRAS enter.

CLEOPATRA

Where is he?

CHARMIAN

I haven't seen him recently.

CLEOPATRA

[To ALEXAS] Find out where he is, who he's with, and what he's doing. Don't tell him I sent you. If you see that he's sad, tell him I'm happy. If you see that he's happy, tell him that I've suddenly gotten sick. Go quickly and come back.

ALEXAS exits.

CHARMIAN

Madam, in my opinion, if you love him so much, then you're not acting in the right way to get him to reciprocate.

The like from him.

CLEOPATRA

What should I do I do not?

CHARMIAN

In each thing give him way. Cross him in nothing.

CLEOPATRA

Thou teachest like a fool the way to lose him.

CHARMIAN

Tempt him not so too far. I wish, forbear.

15 In time we hate that which we often fear.

Enter ANTONY

But here comes Antony.

CLEOPATRA

I am sick and sullen.

ANTONY

I am sorry to give breathing to my purpose—

CLEOPATRA

Help me away, dear Charmian! I shall fall.

20 It cannot be thus long. The sides of nature
Will not sustain it.

ANTONY

Now, my dearest Queen—

CLEOPATRA

Pray you, stand farther from me.

ANTONY

What's the matter?

CLEOPATRA

25 I know by that same eye there's some good news.
What, says the married woman you may go?
Would she had never given you leave to come!
Let her not say 'tis I that keep you here.
I have no power upon you. Hers you are.

ANTONY

30 The gods best know—

CLEOPATRA

Oh never was there queen
So mightily betrayed! Yet at the first
I saw the treasons planted.

ANTONY

Cleopatra—

CLEOPATRA

35 Why should I think you can be mine, and true—
Though you in swearing shake the thronèd gods—
Who have been false to Fulvia? Riotous madness,
To be entangled with those mouth-made vows
Which break themselves in swearing!

ANTONY

40 Most sweet Queen—

CLEOPATRA

Nay, pray you, seek no color for your going,
But bid farewell and go. When you sued staying,

CLEOPATRA

What should I be doing that I'm not doing?

CHARMIAN

Let him have his own way in everything. Don't oppose him
at all.

CLEOPATRA

You fool, you're telling me the best way to lose him.

CHARMIAN

Don't test him so much. I wish that you'd cut it out. Often,
we end up bringing about the very thing we are afraid will
happen, and we hate it when we do.

ANTONY enters.

But here comes Antony.

CLEOPATRA

I'm sick and out of sorts.

ANTONY

I'm sorry to have to tell you what I came to tell you.

CLEOPATRA

Help me away, dear Charmian! I will faint. I cannot last
much longer. This body of mine can't take it.

ANTONY

Now, my dearest Queen—

CLEOPATRA

Please, stand further away from me.

ANTONY

What's the matter?

CLEOPATRA

I can tell by your expression that you've received some
good news. What, does your wife tell you to come home? I
wish she had never allowed you to come here! Don't let her
say that it's I who kept you here. I don't have any power
over you. You belong to her.

ANTONY

The gods know best—

CLEOPATRA

Oh, there never was a queen who was betrayed so terribly!
But I saw from the start the signs that you would betray
me.

ANTONY

Cleopatra—

CLEOPATRA

Why did I think that you could belong to me and be true to
me—even though your vows to the gods seemed to shake
the heavens—when you have been untrue to your wife? It's
absolute insanity, to be taken in by those insincere vows
that are broken the moment they are made!

ANTONY

Most sweet Queen—

CLEOPATRA

No, please, don't try to come up with an excuse for leaving,
just say goodbye and go. When you begged to stay, that was

Then was the time for words. No going then!
Eternity was in our lips and eyes,
45 Bliss in our brows' bent, none our parts so poor
But was a race of heaven. They are so still,
Or thou, the greatest soldier of the world,
Art turned the greatest liar.

ANTONY

How now, lady?

CLEOPATRA

50 I would I had thy inches. Thou shouldst know
There were a heart in Egypt.

ANTONY

Hear me, Queen:

The strong necessity of time commands
Our services awhile, but my full heart
55 Remains in use with you. Our Italy
Shines o'er with civil swords. Sextus Pompeius
Makes his approaches to the port of Rome.
Equality of two domestic powers
Breed scrupulous faction. The hated, grown to strength,
60 Are newly grown to love. The condemned Pompey,
Rich in his father's honor, creeps apace
Into the hearts of such as have not thrived
Upon the present state, whose numbers threaten;
And quietness, grown sick of rest, would purge
65 By any desperate change. My more particular,
And that which most with you should save my going,
Is Fulvia's death.

CLEOPATRA

Though age from folly could not give me freedom,
It does from childishness. Can Fulvia die?

ANTONY

70 She's dead, my Queen.

He offers letters

Look here, and at thy sovereign leisure read
The garboils she awaked, at the last, best,
See when and where she died.

CLEOPATRA

O most false love!
75 Where be the sacred vials thou shouldst fill
With sorrowful water? Now I see, I see,
In Fulvia's death how mine received shall be.

ANTONY

Quarrel no more, but be prepared to know
The purposes I bear, which are or cease
80 As you shall give th' advice. By the fire
That quickens Nilus' slime, I go from hence
Thy soldier, servant, making peace or war
As thou affects.

CLEOPATRA

Cut my lace, Charmian, come!
85 But let it be. I am quickly ill, and well,
So Antony loves.

ANTONY

My precious Queen, forbear,
And give true evidence to his love which stands
An honorable trial.

CLEOPATRA

90 So Fulvia told me.
I prithee, turn aside and weep for her.

the time for talking. There was no talk of leaving then! You wanted to enjoy my lips and eyes for eternity, you found bliss in the curve of my eyebrow. No part of my body was anything less than a heavenly creation. And that's still true, or else you, the greatest soldier in the world, have become the greatest liar.

ANTONY

What are you saying, my lady?

CLEOPATRA

I wish I were as big as you. Then you would know that there is someone in Egypt who has as much courage as you.

ANTONY

Listen to me, Queen. There is a situation I must take care of, but my heart remains here with you. Italy, my country, is consumed by civil war. Sextus Pompeius draws near the port of Rome. When there are two equally strong powers in one country, it creates distrust and disagreement. The people who were once hated are now loved, once they have gained power. Pompey, who was once condemned, has gained honor thanks to his father's good reputation; he has started to win over the people who haven't succeeded under the current government, and there are enough of them to pose a threat. And when our idleness makes us sick in times of peace, we can only cure ourselves through acts of violence. But my personal motivation, which should make you approve of my leaving, is Fulvia's death.

CLEOPATRA

Even though getting older cannot keep me totally free from foolishness, it does mean that I'm not as foolish as a child. Is it possible Fulvia is dead?


ANTONY


She's dead, my queen.

ANTONY holds out letters to CLEOPATRA.

Look here, and when your royal highness has time to spare, read about the conflicts she began, as she achieved her best at the end of her life. Read when and where she died.

CLEOPATRA


Oh you unfaithful lover! Where are the tears  that you should be shedding in sorrow? Now I see, I see from Fulvia's death, that you wouldn't cry over my death either.


 In Ancient Rome, friends and family often placed vials of tears in their loved ones' funeral urns.

ANTONY

Don't fight with me anymore, but listen to my plans, which I will execute or abandon according to what you tell me. I swear by the fire of the sun that causes plants to grow on the banks of the Nile, I will leave here as your soldier and servant, and I will seek peace or war as you wish.

CLEOPATRA

Cut my lace , Charmian, come! No, let it be. I move quickly between sickness and health, just the way Antony loves.

 Cleopatra is wearing a bodice tied with lace. The lace on a bodice would be untied or cut if a woman felt faint, as Cleopatra is pretending to feel.

ANTONY

My precious Queen, please stop this, and be honest that my love is true. It would be found honorable if put to the test.

CLEOPATRA

Yes, that's what Fulvia told me. Please, turn away and cry for her. Then say goodbye to me, and tell me that you're

Then bid adieu to me, and say the tears
Belong to Egypt. Good now, play one scene
Of excellent dissembling, and let it look
95 Like perfect honor.

ANTONY

You'll heat my blood. No more.

CLEOPATRA

You can do better yet, but this is meetly.

ANTONY

Now, by my sword—

CLEOPATRA

And target. Still he mends.

100 *(toCHARMIAN)* But this is not the best. Look, prithee,
Charmian,
How this Herculean Roman does become
The carriage of his chafe.

ANTONY

I'll leave you, lady.

CLEOPATRA

105 Courteous lord, one word.
Sir, you and I must part, but that's not it.
Sir, you and I have loved, but there's not it,
That you know well. Something it is I would—
Oh, my oblivion is a very Antony,
110 And I am all forgotten.

ANTONY

But that your royalty
Holds idleness your subject, I should take you
For idleness itself.

CLEOPATRA

'Tis sweating labor
115 To bear such idleness so near the heart
As Cleopatra this. But, sir, forgive me,
Since my becomings kill me when they do not
Eye well to you. Your honor calls you hence.
Therefore be deaf to my unpitied folly,
120 And all the gods go with you! Upon your sword
Sit laurel victory, and smooth success
Be strewed before your feet.

ANTONY

Let us go. Come.
Our separation so abides and flies
125 That thou, residing here, goes yet with me,
And I, hence fleeting, here remain with thee.
Away!

Exeunt

crying for me. Come on now, act one scene of excellent
deception, and let it seem perfectly honorable.

ANTONY

You'll make me angry. No more of this.

CLEOPATRA

You can give a better performance than that, but that was
pretty good.

ANTONY

Now, I swear by my sword—

CLEOPATRA

And by your shield. His acting keeps getting better.

[To CHARMIAN] But this still isn't his best work. Look, I tell
you, Charmian, how well this Herculean Roman puts on the
appearance of rage.

ANTONY

I'll leave you, lady.

CLEOPATRA

Courteous lord, one word. Sir, you and I must part, but
that's not what I wanted to say. Sir, you and I have loved
each other, but that's not what I wanted to say either. You
know that well. There's something I would like to say, oh,
my memory is deserting me just like you are, and I'm
forgetting everything, just like you've forgotten me.

ANTONY

If you weren't the queen of immaturity, I would think you
were immaturity itself.


CLEOPATRA

It's hard work to be foolish deep down the way I am. But,
sir, forgive me, since these changes in my behavior disgust
me when they don't please you. Your honor requires you to
leave. Therefore pay no attention to my foolishness and
don't pity me, and may all the gods bless you on your way! I
hope that you find **victory** in battle and that you succeed
easily in all your plans.

ANTONY

Let us go. Come. We are so bound together, even in our
separation, that even if you stay here, you'll still be with me,
and I, when I leave, will still be here with you. Away, let's
go!

ANTONY, CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, ALEXAS and IRAS exit.

 Romans who were victorious in battle received a crown made out of the leaves of the laurel tree, so Shakespeare's term "laurel" would connote victory.

Act 1, Scene 4

Shakespeare

Enter OCTAVIUS CAESAR, reading a letter, LEPIDUS, and their train

Shakescleare Translation

OCTAVIUS CAESAR enters, reading a letter, with LEPIDUS and their followers.

CAESAR

You may see, Lepidus, and henceforth know,
It is not Caesar's natural vice to hate
Our great competitor. From Alexandria
This is the news: he fishes, drinks, and wastes
5 The lamps of night in revel; is not more manlike
Than Cleopatra, nor the queen of Ptolemy
More womanly than he; hardly gave audience, or
Vouchsafed to think he had partners. You shall find
there
10 A man who is th' abstract of all faults
That all men follow.

LEPIDUS

I must not think there are
Evils enough to darken all his goodness.
His faults in him seem as the spots of heaven,
15 More fiery by night's blackness, hereditary
Rather than purchased, what he cannot change
Than what he chooses.

CAESAR

You are too indulgent. Let's grant, it is not
Amisss to tumble on the bed of Ptolemy,
20 To give a kingdom for a mirth, to sit
And keep the turn of tipling with a slave,
To reel the streets at noon, and stand the buffet
With knaves that smell of sweat. Say this becomes him—
As his composure must be rare indeed
25 Whom these things cannot blemish—yet must Antony
No way excuse his foils when we do bear
So great weight in his lightness. If he filled
His vacancy with his voluptuousness,
Full surfeits and the dryness of his bones
30 Call on him for 't. But to confound such time
That drums him from his sport and speaks as loud
As his own state and ours, 'tis to be chid
As we rate boys who, being mature in knowledge,
Pawn their experience to their present pleasure
35 And so rebel to judgment.

Enter FIRST MESSENGER

LEPIDUS

Here's more news.

FIRST MESSENGER

Thy biddings have been done, and every hour,
Most noble Caesar, shalt thou have report
How 'tis abroad. Pompey is strong at sea,
40 And it appears he is beloved of those
That only have feared Caesar. To the ports
The discontents repair, and men's reports
Give him much wronged.

CAESAR


I should have known no less.
45 It hath been taught us from the primal state
That he which is was wished until he were,
And the ebb'd man, ne'er loved till ne'er worth love,
Comes deared by being lacked. This common body,
Like to a vagabond flag upon the stream,
50 Goes to and back, lackeying the varying tide
To rot itself with motion.


Enter SECOND MESSENGER

SECOND MESSENGER

Caesar, I bring thee word
Menecrates and Menas, famous pirates,
Make the sea serve them, which they ear and wound
55 With keels of every kind. Many hot inroads
They make in Italy—the borders maritime
Lack blood to think on 't—and flush youth revolt.

CAESAR

You will see Lepidus, and know for the future, that I am not
naturally inclined to hate this great competitor of mine.
Here's the news from Alexandria. He fishes, drinks, and
stays up all night wasting his time with fun and games. He is
no more masculine than Cleopatra is, and she, the Egyptian
queen , is no more feminine than him. He hardly listened
to my messenger or admitted that he had political partners
back here at home. In this letter, you'll read about a man
who exemplifies the faults of all men.

 Shakespeare calls Cleopatra "the queen of Ptolemy" because she was ordered by Julius Caesar to marry Ptolemy XIV, who was pharaoh of Egypt along with Cleopatra.

LEPIDUS

I cannot believe there are enough faults in the world to
negate all his good qualities. In him, faults just serve to set
off his good qualities more strongly. It seems that he
inherited his vices rather than acquiring them. His faults are
something he cannot change, not something that he
chooses to have.

CAESAR

You're too lenient. Let's say, for argument's sake, that it's
okay to have a sexual affair with Cleopatra, to give up his
kingdom for the sake of entertainment, to sit and take turns
drinking with a slave, to stagger drunkenly around the
streets at noon, and wind up in fights with lowborn
scoundrels who smell of sweat. Let's say that this behavior
is appropriate for him—a man would have to have perfect
character for all this not to count against him. Still, Antony
can't excuse faults when we have to deal with such serious
problems ourselves as a result of his irresponsibility. If he
has filled his leisure time with sexual affairs, then he'll be
punished with sickness from overeating and from venereal
disease, and that's his problem. But he's wasting vital time
and resources and putting all our positions in danger. He
needs to be scolded, like any boy who knows what's right
but chooses to do the wrong thing regardless.

The FIRST MESSENGER enters.

LEPIDUS

Here's more news.

FIRST MESSENGER


Your orders have been carried out, and every hour, most
noble Caesar, you'll have news about how things are going
abroad. Pompey has strong military power at sea, and it
seems that he's supported by people who only obeyed
Caesar because they were afraid of him. These
discontented people go to the ports, and they say Pompey
has been badly mistreated.


CAESAR

I should have guessed this would happen. It's been like this
since the first government, people always wish for their
leaders to gain power until they have actually done so.
Fallen leaders, who are never loved until they are no longer
worth loving, become dear to the people because they are
gone. The common people are like a loose piece of cloth on
a stream, going back and forth, following the changing
tides, and ruining itself by constantly moving and changing.

The SECOND MESSENGER enters.

SECOND MESSENGER

Caesar, I've come to tell you that Menecrates and Menas,
those famous pirates, have taken over the sea, which they
cross  in vessels of every kind. They're coming into Italy
by many roads—the territories on the coast aren't brave
enough to stop them—and spirited young men revolt and
join them. No ship can set sail without being captured as

 The messenger uses agricultural metaphors, comparing the sea to a field that the pirates plow, or "ear" in Shakespeare's original text, with their ships.

No vessel can peep forth, but 'tis as soon
Taken as seen, for Pompey's name strikes more
60 Than could his war resisted.

Exit

CAESAR

Antony,
Leave thy lascivious wassails. When thou once
Wast beaten from Modena, where thou slew'st
Hirtius and Pansa, consuls, at thy heel
65 Did famine follow, whom thou fought'st against,
Though daintily brought up, with patience more
Than savages could suffer. Thou didst drink
The stale of horses and the gilded puddle
Which beasts would cough at. Thy palate then did deign
70 The roughest berry on the rudest hedge.
Yea, like the stag, when snow the pasture sheets,
The barks of trees thou browsed. On the Alps
It is reported thou didst eat strange flesh,
Which some did die to look on. And all this—
75 It wounds thine honor that I speak it now—
Was borne so like a soldier, that thy cheek
So much as lanked not.

LEPIDUS

'Tis pity of him.

CAESAR

Let his shames quickly
80 Drive him to Rome. 'Tis time we twain
Did show ourselves i' th' field, and to that end
Assemble we immediate council. Pompey
Thrives in our idleness.

LEPIDUS

Tomorrow, Caesar,
85 I shall be furnished to inform you rightly
Both what by sea and land I can be able
To front this present time.

CAESAR

Till which encounter
It is my business too. Farewell.

LEPIDUS

90 Farewell, my lord. What you shall know meantime
Of stirs abroad, I shall beseech you, sir,
To let me be partaker.

CAESAR



Doubt not, sir. I knew it for my bond.


Exeunt


soon as it is seen, because Pompey's name alone is even
more terrifying than his armies would be if they were met in
battle.

The SECOND MESSENGER exits.

CAESAR

Antony, come away from your self-indulgent celebrations.
Once, when you were defeated at Modena , where you
slew the consuls  Hirtius and Pansa, you were beset by
famine, and you fought against it with more endurance
than someone used to living in the wild, even though you
had been brought up in luxury. You drank horses' urine and
drank from slime-covered puddles that even the animals
wouldn't touch. You were willing to eat the toughest berries
from the wildest bushes. In fact, when snow covered the
pastures, you even ate the bark off of trees like a stag. Going
over the Alps, they say that you ate strange foods that some
people would rather die than eat. And you bore all this—it is
a blow to your honor for me to say this now—you bore it so
much like a soldier that your cheek didn't even grow hollow
from hunger or exhaustion.

 Antony was defeated at Modena
by Octavius Caesar's forces.

 The consuls were the highest
ranking political officials in the Roman
Republic. Two consuls governed each
year.

LEPIDUS

His current state is a great pity.

CAESAR

I hope he will be so ashamed of himself that he will quickly
return to Rome. It's time that the two of us appeared on the
battlefield, and for that purpose, I am calling a council
immediately. Pompey thrives while we continue to do
nothing.

LEPIDUS

Tomorrow, Caesar, I'll be able to tell you accurately what
troops I will be able to assemble, both on sea and land, to
face the enemy now.

CAESAR

And until we do face him, assembling troops is my business
too. Farewell.

LEPIDUS

Farewell, my lord. In the meantime, when you know what's
going on abroad, I ask you to let me know as well, sir.

CAESAR

Don't doubt that I will. I know that's my responsibility.

CAESAR and LEPIDUS exit.

Act 1, Scene 5

Shakespeare

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS, and MARDIAN

CLEOPATRA

Charmian!

CHARMIAN

Madam?

Shakescleare Translation

CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS, and MARDIAN enter.

CLEOPATRA

Charmian!

CHARMIAN

Yes, madam?

CLEOPATRA

Ha, ha! Give me to drink mandragora.

CHARMIAN

Why, madam?

CLEOPATRA

- 5 That I might sleep out this great gap of time
My Antony is away.

CHARMIAN

You think of him too much.

CLEOPATRA

Oh, 'tis treason!

CHARMIAN

Madam, I trust, not so.

CLEOPATRA

- 10 Thou, eunuch Mardian!

MARDIAN

What's your highness' pleasure?

CLEOPATRA

- Not now to hear thee sing. I take no pleasure
In aught an eunuch has. 'Tis well for thee
That, being unseminared, thy freer thoughts
15 May not fly forth of Egypt. Hast thou affections?

MARDIAN

Yes, gracious madam.

CLEOPATRA

Indeed?

MARDIAN

- Not in deed, madam, for I can do nothing
But what indeed is honest to be done.
20 Yet have I fierce affections, and think
What Venus did with Mars.

CLEOPATRA

- O Charmian,
Where think'st thou he is now? Stands he or sits he?
Or does he walk? Or is he on his horse?
25 O happy horse, to bear the weight of Antony!
Do bravely, horse, for wott'st thou whom thou mov'st?
The demi-Atlas of this earth, the arm
And burgonet of men. He's speaking now,
Or murmuring "Where's my serpent of old Nile?"
30 For so he calls me. Now I feed myself
With most delicious poison. Think on me,
That am with Phoebus' amorous pinches black
And wrinkled deep in time. Broad-fronted Caesar,
When thou wast here above the ground, I was
35 A morsel for a monarch. And great Pompey
Would stand and make his eyes grow in my brow.
There would he anchor his aspect, and die
With looking on his life.

CLEOPATRA

Ha, ha! Give me mandragora ² to drink.

CHARMIAN

Why, madam?

CLEOPATRA

So I can sleep through this long period while my Antony is away.

CHARMIAN

You think about him too much.

CLEOPATRA

Oh, that's treasonous to say!

CHARMIAN

Madam, I trust that it isn't.

CLEOPATRA

You, Mardian the eunuch!

MARDIAN

What does your highness want?

CLEOPATRA

I don't wish to hear you sing right now. I don't take pleasure in anything that a eunuch has. It's lucky for you, since you've been castrated, that your fantasies don't involve anything outside of Egypt. Do you have desires?

MARDIAN

Yes, gracious madam.

CLEOPATRA

Indeed?

MARDIAN

Not in deed ², madam, since I can't do anything except what is honest ³ to do. But I still have strong desires, and I think about what Venus did with Mars ⁴.

CLEOPATRA

Oh Charmian, where do you think he is now? Is he standing or sitting? Or is he walking? Or he is on horseback? Oh what a lucky horse, to have Antony on top of him! Run with style and courage, horse, for do you know who is riding you? The demi-Atlas ⁵ of this earth, the champion and guardian of humankind. Perhaps he's speaking now, or murmuring, "Where's my serpent of the old Nile?" For that's what he calls me. Now I cheer myself up with delicious thoughts of the thing that pains me most. Think about me, whose skin is dark from the sun's loving beams and wrinkled with old age. Wide-browed Caesar ⁶, when you were still alive, I was magnificent enough even for a great monarch like you. And great Pompey would stand and gaze for hours at my forehead. There he would fix his gaze, and die ⁷ from looking at the woman who sustained his life.

² Mandragora was a drug made from the mandrake plant to reduce pain and promote sleep.

² Mardian puns on Cleopatra's "indeed" with "in deed." He cannot consummate sexual relationships in action, or in deed, but he can still have sexual desire.

³ The term "honesty" often connoted sexual restraint or chastity. As a eunuch, Mardian is compelled to be honest in this sense.

⁴ Venus, Roman god of love, was married to the god Vulcan but had an illicit and passionate sexual affair with Mars, the god of war.

⁵ In Greek mythology, Atlas was a titan (a semi-divine giant) who held the globe on his shoulders.

⁶ Caesar here refers to Julius Caesar, not the Octavius Caesar of this play. While Pompey (mentioned in the next sentence) was married to Cleopatra, Cleopatra was also Julius Caesar's lover.

⁷ "Die" again has sexual connotations here.

*Enter ALEXAS***ALEXAS**

Sovereign of Egypt, hail!

CLEOPATRA

40 How much unlike art thou Mark Antony!
Yet, coming from him, that great med'cine hath
With his tinct gilded thee.
How goes it with my brave Mark Antony?

ALEXAS

45 Last thing he did, dear Queen,
He kissed—the last of many doubled kisses—
This orient pearl.

He gives a pearl.

His speech sticks in my heart.

CLEOPATRA

Mine ear must pluck it thence.

ALEXAS

50 "Good friend," quoth he,
"Say the firm Roman to great Egypt sends
This treasure of an oyster, at whose foot,
To mend the petty present, I will piece
Her opulent throne with kingdoms. All the East,
Say thou, shall call her mistress." So he nodded,
55 And soberly did mount an arm-gaunt steed,
Who neighed so high that what I would have spoke
Was beastly dumb'd by him.

CLEOPATRA

What was he, sad or merry?

ALEXAS

60 Like to the time o' th' year between the extremes
Of hot and cold, he was nor sad nor merry.

CLEOPATRA

O well-divided disposition! Note him,
Note him, good Charmian, 'tis the man, but note him.
He was not sad, for he would shine on those
That make their looks by his. He was not merry,
65 Which seemed to tell them his remembrance lay
In Egypt with his joy, but between both.
O heavenly mingle! Be'st thou sad or merry,
The violence of either thee becomes,
So does it no man else.—Mett'st thou my posts?

ALEXAS

70 Ay, madam, twenty several messengers.
Why do you send so thick?

CLEOPATRA

Who's born that day
When I forget to send to Antony
Shall die a beggar. Ink and paper, Charmian.
75 Welcome, my good Alexas. Did I, Charmian,
Ever love Caesar so?

CHARMIAN

Oh, that brave Caesar!

CLEOPATRA

Be choked with such another emphasis!
Say, "the brave Antony."

*ALEXAS enters.***ALEXAS**

Ruler of Egypt, hail!

CLEOPATRA

How very unlike Mark Antony you are! But, since you were
sent by him, some of his greatness has rubbed off on you.
How is my brave Mark Antony doing?

ALEXAS

The last thing he did, dear Queen, was to kiss—the last kiss
of many such kisses—this pearl from India.

ALEXAS gives CLEOPATRA a pearl.

His parting words stuck in my mind.

CLEOPATRA

I must hear them from you.

ALEXAS

"Good friend," he said, "Say that the stalwart Roman sends
this treasure from an oyster to the great queen of Egypt, at
whose feet—to improve this meager present—I will lay
kingdoms, to add glory to her splendid throne. Tell her that
all the East will call her their queen." So he nodded, and
somerly mounted a thin, spirited warhorse, who neighed
so loudly that the reply I would have made was drowned
out by the beast.

CLEOPATRA

What mood was he in, sad or happy?

ALEXAS

Like the midpoint of the year between extreme heat and
extreme cold, he was neither sad nor happy.

CLEOPATRA

Oh well-balanced temperament! Take notice of him, take
notice, good Charmian, that's exactly how he is, but take
notice of him. He wasn't sad, because he wanted to look
cheerfully at those people whose moods depend on his. He
was not merry, which seems to say that he was
remembering Egypt and his joy, but he was between sorrow
and merriment. Oh heavenly mixture! Whether you are sad
or happy, the extreme of either emotion suits you as it suits
no other man. Did you encounter my messengers?

ALEXAS

Yes, madam, twenty different messengers. Why did you
send so many?

CLEOPATRA


Whoever is born on the day that I forget to write to Antony
will die a beggar. Bring me ink and paper, Charmian.
Welcome, my good Alexas. Did I, Charmian, ever love
Caesar this much!

CHARMIAN

Oh, that brave Caesar!

CLEOPATRA

May you choke if you ever say such a thing again! Say, "the
brave Antony."

 "Brave" has connotations of gallant and magnificent, as well as courageous.

CHARMIAN

80 The valiant Caesar!

CLEOPATRA

By Isis, I will give thee bloody teeth
If thou with Caesar paragon again
My man of men.

CHARMIAN

85 By your most gracious pardon,
I sing but after you.

CLEOPATRA

My salad days,
When I was green in judgment, cold in blood,
To say as I said then. *(to everyone)* But, come, away.
(to CHARMIAN) Get me ink and paper.
90 He shall have every day a several greeting,
Or I'll unpeople Egypt.

Exeunt

CHARMIAN

The valiant Caesar!

CLEOPATRA

I swear by Isis, I will strike you in the mouth if you compare
Caesar again with my man who surpasses all other men.

CHARMIAN

I beg your pardon, your highness, I'm only repeating what
you said.

CLEOPATRA

I was in the days of my youth ⁹, when I was inexperienced
and my emotions weren't very strong, and that's the only
reason I said such things then.

[To everyone] But come, away.

[To CHARMIAN] Get me ink and paper. Antony will have a
new greeting every day, even if I have to get rid of all of
Egypt to send them.

CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, ALEXAS, IRAS, and MARDIAN exit.

⁹ "Salad days" is a Shakespearean term that refers to youth and the inexperience and innocence that is associated with it. It was coined in this play.

Act 2, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Enter POMPEY, MENECRATES, and MENAS, in warlike manner

POMPEY

If the great gods be just, they shall assist
The deeds of justest men.

MENAS

Know, worthy Pompey,
That what they do delay, they not deny.

POMPEY

5 Whiles we are suitors to their throne, decays
The thing we sue for.

MENAS

10 We, ignorant of ourselves,
Beg often our own harms, which the wise powers
Deny us for our good, so find we profit
By losing of our prayers.

POMPEY

I shall do well.
The people love me, and the sea is mine.
My powers are crescent, and my auguring hope
Says it will come to th' full. Mark Antony
15 In Egypt sits at dinner, and will make
No wars without doors. Caesar gets money where
He loses hearts. Lepidus flatters both,
Of both is flattered, but he neither loves,
Nor either cares for him.

MENAS

20 Caesar and Lepidus
Are in the field. A mighty strength they carry.

POMPEY

Where have you this? 'Tis false.

Shakesclare Translation

POMPEY, MENECRATES, and MENAS enter bearing arms.

POMPEY

If the great gods are just, they will assist the actions of the
most honest men.

MENAS

You should know, worthy Pompey, that just because the
gods are slow to do something doesn't mean they won't do
it.

POMPEY

While we spend time praying to them for help, the thing we
pray for loses its value.

MENAS

10 We don't know ourselves well enough, and so we often pray
for something that will harm us, which the wise gods
withhold for our own good. So we are often better off when
our prayers aren't answered.

POMPEY

I will do well. The people love me, and I have control of the
sea. My military power is increasing, and all my knowledge
tells me that it will reach its full potential ¹. Mark Antony
is off enjoying himself in Egypt and he won't fight any
battles except inside the bedroom. Caesar loses the
people's loyalty by taxing them to raise money. Lepidus
flatters them both and is flattered by both of them, but he
doesn't love either of them, and neither of them cares for
him.

MENAS

Caesar and Lepidus are on the battlefield. They have a
powerful army.

POMPEY

Where did you hear that? It's false.

¹ In the original text, Pompey compares his power to the moon, which first appears as a small "crescent" and eventually grows to become a "full" moon.

MENAS

From Silvius, sir.

POMPEY

25 He dreams. I know they are in Rome together
Looking for Antony. But all the charms of love,
Salt Cleopatra, soften thy wanned lip!
Let witchcraft join with beauty, lust with both.
Tie up the libertine in a field of feasts,
Keep his brain fuming. Epicurean cooks,
30 Sharpen with cloyless sauce his appetite,
That sleep and feeding may prorogue his honor
Even till a Lethe'd dulness—

Enter VARRIUS

How now, Varrius?

VARRIUS

This is most certain that I shall deliver:
35 Mark Antony is every hour in Rome
Expected. Since he went from Egypt 'tis
A space for farther travel.

POMPEY

I could have given less matter
A better ear.—Menas, I did not think
40 This amorous surfeiter would have donned his helm
For such a petty war. His soldiership
Is twice the other twain. But let us rear
The higher our opinion, that our stirring
Can from the lap of Egypt's widow pluck
45 The ne'er lust-wearied Antony.

MENAS

I cannot hope
Caesar and Antony shall well greet together.
His wife that's dead did trespasses to Caesar.
His brother warred upon him, although, I think,
50 Not moved by Antony.

POMPEY



I know not, Menas,
How lesser enmities may give way to greater.
Were 't not that we stand up against them all,
'Twere pregnant they should square between themselves,
55 For they have entertained cause enough
To draw their swords. But how the fear of us
May cement their divisions and bind up
The petty difference, we yet not know.
Be 't as our gods will have 't. It only stands
60 Our lives upon to use our strongest hands.
Come, Menas.


Exeunt


MENAS

From Silvius, sir.

POMPEY

He dreamt it. I know Caesar and Lepidus are in Rome
together looking for Antony. But I hope, lustful Cleopatra,
that all the charms of love will make your withered lips soft!
May you use witchcraft as well as beauty, and may both
arouse Antony's lust. Keep that libertine  occupied with
feast after feast, keep him from thinking clearly. May
decadent cooks increase his appetite with pleasing sauces
so that sleeping and eating will make him forgetful, until he
forgets  his duties completely.

 A libertine is someone excessively devoted to sensual bodily pleasures.

 "Lethe'd" in Shakespeare's original text refers to the river Lethe, which in Greek mythology was said to flow through the Underworld; drinking from the river would wipe out the memory.

VARRIUS enters.

What's going on, Varrius?

VARRIUS

The news I have to deliver is absolutely true. Mark Antony is
expected to arrive in Rome any minute now. Enough time
has passed since he left Egypt that he could have traveled
an even greater distance.

POMPEY

I could have listened more eagerly to something less
urgent. Menas, I didn't think that this self-indulgent lover
would put on his helmet to join in such a minor war. He is
twice as good a soldier as the other two. But we'll have to
increase our opinion of ourselves, since my military
preparations can motivate even Antony, who never tires of
pleasure, to leave his Egyptian lover.

MENAS

I don't think that Caesar and Antony will have a friendly
reunion. Antony's late wife opposed Caesar and his brother
declared war on him, although I don't think he was
encouraged by Antony.

POMPEY

I don't know, Menas, whether a greater rivalry might not
help them overlook smaller rivalries. If it weren't for the fact
that we are opposing all of them, it's likely that they would
fight amongst themselves, since they have enough reasons
to draw their swords against each other. But it's possible
their fear of our forces will heal the breach between them
and end their small disagreements. Let it be as the gods will
it. Our lives depend only on us using our greatest possible
strength. Come, Menas.

POMPEY, MENECRATES, MENAS, and VARRIUS exit.

Act 2, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Enter ENOBARBUS and LEPIDUS

LEPIDUS

Good Enobarbus, 'tis a worthy deed,
And shall become you well, to entreat your captain
To soft and gentle speech.

Shakescleare Translation

ENOBARBUS and LEPIDUS enter.

LEPIDUS

Good Enobarbus, it's worth your while to urge your captain
to use polite and gentle words, and it will do you credit.

ENOBARBUS

I shall entreat him

- 5 To answer like himself. If Caesar move him,
Let Antony look over Caesar's head
And speak as loud as Mars. By Jupiter,
Were I the wearer of Antonio's beard,
I would not shave 't today.

LEPIDUS

- 10 'Tis not a time for private stomaching.

ENOBARBUS

Every time serves for the matter that is then born in 't.

LEPIDUS

But small to greater matters must give way.

ENOBARBUS

Not if the small come first.

LEPIDUS

- 15 Your speech is passion. But pray you stir
No embers up. Here comes the noble Antony.

Enter ANTONY and VENTIDIUS

ENOBARBUS

And yonder, Caesar.

Enter OCTAVIUS CAESAR, MECAENAS, and AGRIPPA

ANTONY

(to VENTIDIUS) If we compose well here, to Parthia.
Hark, Ventidius.

They talk aside

CAESAR

- 20 *(to MECAENAS)* I do not know, Maecenas. Ask Agrippa.

LEPIDUS

(to CAESAR and ANTONY)

Noble friends,
That which combined us was most great, and let not
A leaner action rend us. What's amiss,
May it be gently heard. When we debate
Our trivial difference loud, we do commit
Murder in healing wounds. Then, noble partners,
The rather for I earnestly beseech,
Touch you the sourest points with sweetest terms,
Nor curstness grow to th' matter.

ANTONY

'Tis spoken well.
Were we before our armies, and to fight,
I should do thus.

Flourish

CAESAR

- 25 Welcome to Rome.

ANTONY

Thank you.

ENOBARBUS

I will urge him to speak like himself. If Caesar provokes him, let Antony ignore Caesar and answer as fiercely as Mars ¹. By Jupiter ², if I were able to look as heroic as Antony, I would try to do so today.

¹ Mars is the Roman god of war.

² Jupiter is the king of the Roman gods.

LEPIDUS

This isn't the time to deal with private arguments.

ENOBARBUS

Every time is a good time to deal with the matters that arise in that moment.

LEPIDUS

But small matters should be put aside so we can deal with more important ones.

ENOBARBUS

Not if the small matters occur first.

LEPIDUS

You're letting your emotions run away with you. But please, don't provoke any fights. Here comes the noble Antony.

ANTONY and VENTIDIUS enter.

ENOBARBUS

And over there is Caesar.

OCTAVIUS CAESAR, MECAENAS, and AGRIPPA enter.

ANTONY

[So only VENTIDIUS can hear] If we come to an agreement here, the next stop is Parthia ³. Come over here, Ventidius.

³ Parthia is a historical region in north-eastern Iran.

ANTONY and VENTIDIUS speak off to one side.

CAESAR

[To MECAENAS] I don't know, Maecenas. Ask Agrippa.

LEPIDUS

[To CAESAR and ANTONY] Noble friends, the cause that brought us together was a great one, and we shouldn't let less important matters tear us apart. We can have a civilized discussion about the things that have gone wrong. When we make a big deal over trivial matters, we cause great harm in trying to fix a small problem. So, noble partners, I urge you instead to use the kindest words to talk about the most troubling issues, and don't make matters worse by losing your tempers.

ANTONY

Well said. Even if we were in front of our armies and we were about to fight, I would do this ⁴.

⁴ Antony may mean that he will speak gently as Lepidus has requested; "do thus" in the original text may also refer to a formal embrace from Antony to Lepidus.

A flourish of trumpets sounds.

CAESAR

Welcome to Rome.

ANTONY

Thank you.

CAESAR

Sit.

ANTONY

Sit, sir.

CAESAR

Nay, then.

*They sit.***ANTONY**

30 I learn, you take things ill which are not so,
Or being, concern you not.

CAESAR

I must be laughed at
If or for nothing or a little, I
Should say myself offended, and with you
35 Chiefly i' th' world; more laughed at, that I should
Once name you derogately, when to sound your name
It not concerned me.

ANTONY

My being in Egypt, Caesar, what was 't to you?

CAESAR

No more than my residing here at Rome
40 Might be to you in Egypt. Yet if you there
Did practice on my state, your being in Egypt
Might be my question.

ANTONY

How intend you, "practiced"?

CAESAR

You may be pleased to catch at mine intent
45 By what did here befall me. Your wife and brother
Made wars upon me, and their contestation
Was theme for you. You were the word of war.

ANTONY

You do mistake your business. My brother never
Did urge me in his act. I did inquire it,
50 And have my learning from some true reports
That drew their swords with you. Did he not rather
Discredit my authority with yours,
And make the wars alike against my stomach,
Having alike your cause? Of this my letters
55 Before did satisfy you. If you'll patch a quarrel,
As matter whole you have to make it with,
It must not be with this.

CAESAR

You praise yourself
By laying defects of judgment to me, but
60 You patched up your excuses.

ANTONY

Not so, not so.
I know you could not lack, I am certain o' t,
Very necessity of this thought, that I,
Your partner in the cause 'gainst which he fought,
65 Could not with graceful eyes attend those wars
Which fronted mine own peace. As for my wife,
I would you had her spirit in such another.
The third o' th' world is yours, which with a snaffle
You may pace easy, but not such a wife.

ENOBARBUS

70 Would we had all such wives, that the men might go to
wars with the women!

CAESAR

Sit.

ANTONY

Sit, sir.

CAESAR

Well then.

*They sit.***ANTONY**

I hear that you take things as offensive that aren't intended
to be—or if they are offensive, they have nothing to do with
you.

CAESAR

I would make myself a laughingstock if I got offended over
nothing or over a small matter, and most of all in dealings
with you. I would deserve even greater mockery if I spoke
badly of you once, when it is no business of mine to speak
about you at all.

ANTONY

What concern is it of yours if I'm in Egypt?

CAESAR

No more than my living here in Rome might concern you in
Egypt. But if you plotted against me while you were there,
your being in Egypt might be a concern of mine.

ANTONY

What do you mean, "plotted?"

CAESAR

You might guess what I mean from what happened to me
here. Your wife and brother waged war against me, and they
intended for you to join them. They fought in your name.

ANTONY

You're mistaken about what happened. My brother never
urged me to join him. I asked him about it, and I learned the
truth from reliable sources that were on your side. Isn't it
the case, rather, that he undermined my authority as well
as yours, and that his fight was against me, too, since I was
on your side? I told you all this in my letters earlier. If you
want to pick a fight, you have enough other reasons to fight
with me. It can't be about this.

CAESAR

You try to make yourself look better by attributing bad
judgment to me, but you're coming up with poor excuses
for yourself.

ANTONY

Not true, not true. I am certain that you can understand this
important truth—since I was your partner in the very cause
my brother fought against, I couldn't possibly approve of
the wars that undermined my own peace. As for my wife, I
wish you could find a spirit like hers in another woman. A
third of the world belongs to you, and you can subdue ⁵ it
easily, but you could not so easily subdue a woman like
that.

⁵ A snaffle is a bridle without a curb, that is used to train good-tempered horses to walk.

ENOBARBUS

I wish we all had such wives, so that men could go to battle
accompanied by women!

ANTONY

So much incurbable, her garboils, Caesar,
Made out of her impatience—which not wanted
Shrewdness of policy too— I grieving grant
75 Did you too much disquiet. For that you must
But say I could not help it.

CAESAR

I wrote to you
When rioting in Alexandria. You
Did pocket up my letters and with taunts
80 Did gibe my missive out of audience.

ANTONY

Sir,
He fell upon me ere admitted, then.
Three kings I had newly feasted, and did want
Of what I was i' th' morning. But next day
85 I told him of myself, which was as much
As to have asked him pardon. Let this fellow
Be nothing of our strife. If we contend,
Out of our question wipe him.

CAESAR

You have broken
90 The article of your oath, which you shall never
Have tongue to charge me with.

LEPIDUS

Soft, Caesar.

ANTONY

No, Lepidus, let him speak.
The honor is sacred which he talks on now,
95 Supposing that I lacked it. —But, on, Caesar.
The article of my oath?

CAESAR

To lend me arms and aid when I required them,
The which you both denied.

ANTONY

Neglected, rather,
100 And then when poisoned hours had bound me up
From mine own knowledge. As nearly as I may
I'll play the penitent to you, but mine honesty
Shall not make poor my greatness nor my power
Work without it. Truth is that Fulvia,
105 To have me out of Egypt, made wars here,
For which myself, the ignorant motive, do
So far ask pardon as befits mine honor
To stoop in such a case.

LEPIDUS

'Tis noble spoken.

MAECENAS

110 If it might please you to enforce no further
The griefs between ye, to forget them quite
Were to remember that the present need
Speaks to atone you.

LEPIDUS

Worthily spoken, Maecenas.

ENOBARBUS

115 Or, if you borrow one another's love for the instant,
you may, when you hear no more words of Pompey, return
it again. You shall have time to wrangle in when you
have nothing else to do.

ANTONY

She was difficult to restrain, Caesar. She waged battles out
of boredom—and not entirely without good strategy—and I
do apologetically admit that they caused you too much
disturbance. In return, you must admit that I couldn't
prevent it.

CAESAR

I wrote to you while you were entertaining yourself in
Alexandria. You ignored my letters and taunted my
messenger until he left your sight.

ANTONY

Sir, in that instance, your messenger arrived before I had
given him permission to come in. I had just been at dinner
with three kings and I wasn't feeling quite myself in the
morning. But the next day I explained my situation to him,
which was as good as asking him to pardon me. Don't let
this person add to our quarrels. If we are going to fight,
keep him out of it.

CAESAR

You have broken the terms of your promise, and that's
something you will never be able to accuse me of.

LEPIDUS

Hold on, Caesar.

ANTONY

No, Lepidus, let him speak. Caesar is speaking about my
honor now, and my honor is sacred, even if he thinks that I
lack it.

[To CAESAR] But keep going, Caesar. The terms of my
promise?

CAESAR

To lend me weapons and help when I needed them, both of
which you denied to me.

ANTONY

I didn't deny it, I just neglected to do it—and that was only
when an illness kept me from thinking clearly. I'll apologize
to you as much as I can, but my honesty in this matter
doesn't diminish my greatness, and I will never use my
power without honesty. It is true that Fulvia went to war
here in order to draw me away from Egypt. For that, I—who
unknowingly motivated this conflict—ask your forgiveness,
just because it is fitting for my honor to humble myself in a
situation like this.

LEPIDUS

That's nobly said.

MAECENAS

If you could agree to stop fighting about your past
grievances, then forgetting those grievances entirely would
be a good way of remembering that you ought to be friends
in this current crisis.

LEPIDUS

Well said, Maecenas.

ENOBARBUS

Or, if you could just agree to be friends for now, you can
always take it back later when Pompey is defeated. You'll
have time to fight when you have nothing else to do.

ANTONY

Thou art a soldier only. Speak no more.

ENOBARBUS

120 That truth should be silent I had almost forgot.

ANTONY

You wrong this presence. Therefore speak no more.

ENOBARBUS

Go to, then. Your considerate stone.

CAESAR

I do not much dislike the matter, but
The manner of his speech, for 't cannot be
125 We shall remain in friendship, our conditions
So diff'ring in their acts. Yet if I knew
What hoop should hold us stanch, from edge to edge
O' th' world I would pursue it.

AGRIPPA

Give me leave, Caesar.

CAESAR

130 Speak, Agrippa.

AGRIPPA

Thou hast a sister by the mother's side,
Admired Octavia. Great Mark Antony
Is now a widower.

CAESAR

Say not so, Agrippa.
135 If Cleopatra heard you, your reproof
Were well deserved of rashness.

ANTONY

I am not married, Caesar. Let me hear
Agrippa further speak.

AGRIPPA

To hold you in perpetual amity,
140 To make you brothers, and to knit your hearts
With an unslipping knot, take Antony
Octavia to his wife, whose beauty claims
No worse a husband than the best of men,
Whose virtue and whose general graces speak
145 That which none else can utter. By this marriage,
All little jealousies, which now seem great,
And all great fears, which now import their dangers,
Would then be nothing. Truths would be tales,
Where now half-tales be truths. Her love to both
150 Would each to other and all loves to both
Draw after her. Pardon what I have spoke,
For 'tis a studied, not a present thought,
By duty ruminated.

ANTONY

Will Caesar speak?

CAESAR

155 Not till he hears how Antony is touched
With what is spoke already.

ANTONY

What power is in Agrippa
If I would say, "Agrippa, be it so,"
To make this good?

ANTONY

You're just a soldier. Don't speak anymore.

ENOBARBUS

I'd almost forgotten that people who speak the truth should
be quiet.

ANTONY

You're behaving inappropriately in this company. So don't
talk anymore.

ENOBARBUS

Fine, then. I'll be silent and obedient as a stone.

CAESAR

I don't dislike what he says so much as how he says it. For
it's impossible for us to remain friends, since our
temperaments differ and affect how we act. But if I knew of
something that would keep us strong allies, I would pursue
it from one end of the world to other.

AGRIPPA

Give me permission to speak, Caesar.

CAESAR

Speak, Agrippa.

AGRIPPA

You have a half-sister on your mother's side, the admired
Octavia. Great Mark Antony is now a widower.

CAESAR

Don't say that, Agrippa. If Cleopatra heard you, your rash
statement would deserve the rebuke she would give you.

ANTONY

I am not married, Caesar. Let me hear Agrippa speak some
more.

AGRIPPA

To keep you perpetual friends, to make you brothers, and to
join your hearts in an unbreakable bond, let Antony take
Octavia as his wife. Her beauty makes her deserve no less a
husband than the best of men, and her virtue and many
graces reveal her to be a woman like no other. Thanks to
this marriage, all the little issues that seem so great now,
and all the great fears that bring danger with them, would
become nothing. True accusations would be dismissed as
rumors, whereas now even unbelievable rumors are taken
for truths. Her love for both of you would make each of you
love the other, and she would induce everyone else to love
both of you. Pardon me for saying this. It's not something
that just occurred to me but something I have been
thinking over carefully, moved by duty.

ANTONY

Will you speak, Caesar?

CAESAR

Not until I hear your response to what has already been
said.

ANTONY

If I said, "Agrippa, let this be so," what power would he have
to make this happen?

CAESAR

160 The power of Caesar, and
His power unto Octavia.

ANTONY

May I never
To this good purpose, that so fairly shows,
Dream of impediment! Let me have thy hand
165 Further this act of grace, and from this hour
The heart of brothers govern in our loves
And sway our great designs!

CAESAR

There's my hand.

They clasp hands

A sister I bequeath you whom no brother
170 Did ever love so dearly. Let her live
To join our kingdoms and our hearts, and never
Fly off our loves again!

LEPIDUS

Happily, amen!

ANTONY

I did not think to draw my sword 'gainst Pompey,
175 For he hath laid strange courtesies and great
Of late upon me. I must thank him only,
Lest my remembrance suffer ill report;
At heel of that, defy him.

LEPIDUS

Time calls upon 's.
180 Of us must Pompey presently be sought,
Or else he seeks out us.

ANTONY

Where lies he?

CAESAR

About the Mount Misena.

ANTONY

What is his strength by land?

CAESAR

185 Great and increasing.
But by sea he is an absolute master.

ANTONY

So is the fame.
Would we had spoke together! Haste we for it.
Yet, ere we put ourselves in arms, dispatch we
190 The business we have talked of.

CAESAR

With most gladness,
And do invite you to my sister's view,
Whither straight I'll lead you.

ANTONY

Let us, Lepidus, not lack your company.

LEPIDUS

195 Noble Antony, not sickness should detain me.

Flourish. Exeunt all but ENOBARBUS, AGRIPPA, and MAECENAS

CAESAR

He would have my power, and my power over Octavia.

ANTONY

May I never dream of interfering with this good plan, which
seems so appealing! I will let you bring about this blessed
event, and from this moment on, let's let our brotherly
bond govern our love for each other and the great plans we
make together.

CAESAR

Here's my hand.

CAESAR and ANTONY shake hands.

I give you a sister whom I love more than any brother ever
loved a sister. Let her join our kingdoms and our hearts, and
may our love for each other never dissolve again!

LEPIDUS

Happily, amen!

ANTONY

I hadn't planned to go into battle against Pompey, since he
has lately done me honor of a great, uncommon kind. I
must at least thank him, or risk appearing ungrateful. After
that, I will oppose him.

LEPIDUS


Time is running short. We must go to Pompey immediately,
or else he will come to us.

ANTONY

Where is he camped?

CAESAR

Near [Mount Misena](#) .

 Mount Misena was a port town in the south of Rome.

ANTONY

How strong are his land armies?

CAESAR

Very strong and getting stronger. But he controls the sea
completely.

ANTONY

That's what I hear. If only we had met earlier! Let's move
quickly. But, before we get ready for battle, let's carry out
the plan we talked about.

CAESAR

Most gladly. I invite you to meet my sister, and I'll take you
straight to her.

ANTONY

Be sure to join us, Lepidus.

LEPIDUS

Noble Antony, not even sickness would keep me away.

Flourish. Everyone exits except ENOBARBUS, AGRIPPA, and MAECENAS.

MAECENAS

(to ENOBARBUS) Welcome from Egypt, sir.

ENOBARBUS

Half the heart of Caesar, worthy Maecenas! My honorable friend, Agrippa.

AGRIPPA

Good Enobarbus!

MAECENAS

200 We have cause to be glad that matters are so well digested.
You stayed well by 't in Egypt.

ENOBARBUS

Ay, sir, we did sleep day out of countenance and made the night light with drinking.

MAECENAS

205 Eight wild boars roasted whole at a breakfast—and but twelve persons there! Is this true?

ENOBARBUS

This was but as a fly by an eagle. We had much more monstrous matter of feast, which worthily deserved noting.

MAECENAS

210 She's a most triumphant lady, if report be square to her.

ENOBARBUS

When she first met Mark Antony, she pursed up his heart upon the river of Cydnus.

AGRIPPA

215 There she appeared indeed, or my reporter devised well for her.

ENOBARBUS

I will tell you.

The barge she sat in, like a burnished throne,
Burned on the water. The poop was beaten gold,
Purple the sails, and so perfumèd that

220 The winds were lovesick with them. The oars were silver,

Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made
The water which they beat to follow faster,
As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,

225 It beggared all description: she did lie
In her pavilion—cloth-of-gold, of tissue—
O'erpicturing that Venus where we see

The fancy outwork nature. On each side her

Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,

230 With divers-colored fans, whose wind did seem
To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
And what they undid did.

AGRIPPA

Oh, rare for Antony!

ENOBARBUS

Her gentlewomen, like the Nereides,

235 So many mermaids, tended her i' th' eyes,
And made their bends adornings. At the helm
A seeming mermaid steers. The silken tackle

Swell with the touches of those flower-soft hands
That yarely frame the office. From the barge

240 A strange invisible perfume hits the sense
Of the adjacent wharfs. The city cast

MAECENAS

[To ENOBARBUS] Welcome from Egypt, sir.

ENOBARBUS

Hail the most trusted counselor of Caesar, worthy Maecenas! My honorable friend, Agrippa.

AGRIPPA

Good Enobarbus!

MAECENAS

We should be happy that things have worked out so well. You had a fine time in Egypt.

ENOBARBUS

Yes, sir, we slept through the day and brightened the night with drinking.

MAECENAS

I hear there were eight wild boars roasted whole at breakfast—and for only twelve people! Is that true?

ENOBARBUS

That was nothing. We had much more extravagant feasts than that, which certainly deserve to be noted.

MAECENAS

Cleopatra's a most magnificent lady, if the reports about her are true.

ENOBARBUS

When she first met Mark Antony, she secured his heart on the river of Cydnus.

AGRIPPA

She did appear there, or else the person who told me so made up a good story about her.

ENOBARBUS

I will tell you. She sat in a barge that looked like a polished throne, so bright that it was like a flame burning on the water. The rear deck was made of hammered gold, and the sails were purple and so perfumèd that the scent would have made the very wind fall in love with them. The oars were made of silver, and the oar-strokes kept time with the music of flutes, and when they beat the water, they made the water flow faster, as if moved by lust. As for Cleopatra's appearance, it was impossible to describe. As she lay under a tent—whose fabric was woven with golden thread—she outdid even that picture of Venus ⁸ which was already idealized. On either side of her stood handsome dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids, with fans of different colors. The breeze from the fans seemed to make her delicate cheeks glow even as they cooled them, undoing the very thing they did ⁹.

AGRIPPA

Oh, how nice for Antony!

ENOBARBUS

Her attendants, resembling sea nymphs or mermaids, tended to her as she watched them closely, and their curtsies further decorated the boat. At the helm, a person dressed as a mermaid was steering. The silken sails and ropes swelled as they were touched by hands, soft as flowers, that skillfully carried out their tasks. A strange invisible perfume wafted from the barge and struck the noses of the people on the adjoining riverbanks. Everyone

⁸ Enobarbus seems to be referring to a well known depiction of Venus, goddess of love. Cleopatra is even more beautiful than the artist's picture of Venus, which was already more beautiful than any ordinary human woman could be by nature.

⁹ The fans are meant to cool Cleopatra's face, but by making her cheeks glow, they seem to make her warmer and so undo their cooling effect.

Her people out upon her, and Antony,
 Enthroned i' th' marketplace, did sit alone,
 Whistling to th' air, which, but for vacancy,
 245 Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too
 And made a gap in nature.

AGRIPPA

Rare Egyptian!

ENOBARBUS

Upon her landing, Antony sent to her,
 Invited her to supper. She replied
 250 It should be better he became her guest,
 Which she entreated. Our courteous Antony,
 Whom ne'er the word of "No" woman heard speak,
 Being barbered ten times o'er, goes to the feast,
 And for his ordinary pays his heart
 255 For what his eyes eat only.

AGRIPPA

Royal wench!
 She made great Caesar lay his sword to bed.
 He plowed her, and she cropped.

ENOBARBUS

I saw her once
 260 Hop forty paces through the public street,
 And having lost her breath, she spoke, and panted,
 That she did make defect perfection,
 And, breathless, pour breathe forth.

MAECENAS

Now Antony must leave her utterly.

ENOBARBUS

Never. He will not.
 Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale
 Her infinite variety. Other women cloy
 The appetites they feed, but she makes hungry
 Where most she satisfies, for vilest things
 270 Become themselves in her, that the holy priests
 Bless her when she is riggish.

MAECENAS

If beauty, wisdom, modesty, can settle
 The heart of Antony, Octavia is
 A blessèd lottery to him.

AGRIPPA

Let us go.
 Good Enobarbus, make yourself my guest
 Whilst you abide here.

ENOBARBUS

Humbly, sir, I thank you.

Exeunt

left the city in order to see her, and Antony, sitting on a
 throne in the marketplace, sat alone, whistling to the
 air—even the air itself would have gone to look at her, if that
 wouldn't have caused a vacuum in the atmosphere.

AGRIPPA


Rare Egyptian!

ENOBARBUS

When she landed, Antony sent her a message inviting her to
 supper. She replied that it would be better if he were her
 guest, and she requested that he would be. Our courteous
 Antony, who had never heard a woman say "no" to him,
 groomed himself with ten times the usual care and went to
 the feast. He paid for his meal by giving her his heart,
 looking at the food without eating it.

AGRIPPA

Royal lady! She got great Caesar to put away his sword. He
 slept with her, and she bore a child.

 Cleopatra had a son, Caesarion, with Julius Caesar.

ENOBARBUS

I saw her once hop forty steps through the public street.
 Having lost her breath, she panted and said that she turned
 even a defect into something perfect—she poured out
 breath even when she was breathless.

MAECENAS

Now Antony must abandon her completely.

ENOBARBUS

Never. He will not. Age cannot lessen her beauty, and even
 once you get to know her, the endless mood swings mean
 that you never get tired of her. With other women, you stop
 desiring them after you have enjoyed them, but the more
 you have of Cleopatra, the more you want her. Even the
 grossest things become attractive in her, so that even the
 holy priests bless her when she has sexual urges.

MAECENAS

If beauty, wisdom, modesty, can secure Antony's heart,
 then Octavia is a valuable prize for him.

AGRIPPA

Let's go. Good Enobarbus, please be my guest while you are
 here.

ENOBARBUS

I humbly thank you, sir.

ENOBARBUS, AGRIPPA, and MAECENAS exit.

Act 2, Scene 3

Shakespeare

Enter ANTONY, CAESAR; OCTAVIA between them

ANTONY

(to OCTAVIA) The world and my great office will
 sometimes
 Divide me from your bosom.

Shakesclore Translation

ANTONY and CAESAR enter with OCTAVIA between them.

ANTONY

[To OCTAVIA] The great responsibilities I have to carry out
 all over the world will sometimes take me away from you.

OCTAVIA

All which time

- 5 Before the gods my knee shall bow my prayers
To them for you.

ANTONY

(to CAESAR) Good night, sir. —My Octavia,
Read not my blemishes in the world's report.

- 10 I have not kept my square, but that to come
Shall all be done by th' rule. Good night, dear lady.
(to CAESAR) Good night, sir.

CAESAR

Good night.

He exits with OCTAVIA

Enter SOOTHSAYER

ANTONY

Now, sirrah, you do wish yourself in Egypt?

SOOTHSAYER

Would I had never come from thence, nor you thither.

ANTONY

- 15 If you can, your reason?

SOOTHSAYER

I see it in my motion, have it not in my tongue. But
yet hie you to Egypt again.

ANTONY

Say to me whose fortunes shall rise higher,
Caesar's or mine?

SOOTHSAYER

- 20 Caesar's.
Therefore, O Antony, stay not by his side.
Thy daemon—that thy spirit which keeps thee—is
Noble, courageous, high, unmatchable
Where Caesar's is not. But near him thy angel
25 Becomes afeard, as being o'erpowered. Therefore
Make space enough between you.

ANTONY

Speak this no more.

SOOTHSAYER

- To none but thee, no more but when to thee.
If thou dost play with him at any game,
30 Thou art sure to lose, and of that natural luck
He beats thee 'gainst the odds. Thy luster thickens
When he shines by. I say again, thy spirit
Is all afraid to govern thee near him,
But, he away, 'tis noble.

ANTONY

- 35 Get thee gone.
Say to Ventidius I would speak with him.

Exit SOOTHSAYER

(to himself) He shall to Parthia. Be it art or hap,
He hath spoken true. The very dice obey him,
And in our sports my better cunning faints
40 Under his chance. If we draw lots, he speeds.
His cocks do win the battle still of mine

OCTAVIA

And while you are gone, I will kneel before the gods and
pray for you.

ANTONY

[To CAESAR] Good night, sir.

[To OCTAVIA] My Octavia, don't believe the critical things
you will hear about me. I haven't behaved perfectly in the
past, but in the future I will abide strictly by the rule-book.
Good night, dear lady.

[To CAESAR] Good night, sir.


CAESAR


Good night.

CAESAR exits with OCTAVIA.

The SOOTHSAYER enters.

ANTONY

Now, sir , do you wish you were in Egypt?

 The term "sirrah" in the original text was a term of address for a social inferior, such as a servant.

SOOTHSAYER

I wish I had never left and that you hadn't either.

ANTONY

If you can tell me, why do you say that?


SOOTHSAYER


It's a feeling I have, I can't put it into words. But still, return
to Egypt.

ANTONY

Tell me who will have the better fortune, me or Caesar?

SOOTHSAYER

Caesar. Therefore, Antony, don't stay near him. Your
daemon —that spirit that sustains you—is noble,
courageous, soaring, unequalled, while Caesar's is not. But
when you are near him, your daemon becomes afraid, as if
overpowered. Therefore, create some distance between you
and Caesar.

 A daemon is a spirit, somewhat like a guardian angel, that was thought to dwell with a person and watch over and guide him.

ANTONY

Don't talk about this anymore.

SOOTHSAYER


I won't talk about it to anyone but you, and I won't speak
about it anymore except to you. If you play games with
Caesar, you are sure to lose, and because of your natural
misfortune around him, he beats you even when the odds
are against him. Your prospects dim while his look bright. I
tell you again, your daemon is afraid to guide you when you
are near Caesar, but when he's away, your spirit is noble.

ANTONY

Get going. Tell Ventidius that I wish to speak with him.

The SOOTHSAYER exits.

[To himself] Ventidius will go to Parthia. Whether it's by skill
or by luck, the soothsayer has spoken truthfully. Even the
dice obey Caesar, and in our sports, my better skill is
overcome by his better luck. If we draw straws, he wins. His
roosters win in fights against mine when the odds are
completely in my favor, and his quails always beat mine in


 Quails were put into round enclosures like hoops (hence

When it is all to naught, and his quails ever
Beat mine, inhooped, at odds. I will to Egypt.
And though I make this marriage for my peace,
45 I' th' East my pleasure lies.

Enter VENTIDIUS

O come, Ventidius.
You must to Parthia. Your commission's ready.
Follow me and receive 't.

Exeunt

the ring , even when the odds are against him. I will go to
Egypt. And even though I married Octavia to achieve
political peace, I can only find pleasure in Egypt.

VENTIDIUS enters.

Oh come, Ventidius. You must go to Parthia. Your orders are
ready. Follow me and receive them.

ANTONY and VENTIDIUS exit.

*"in角度" in the original text) to
make them fight, in a sport similar to
cockfighting.*

Act 2, Scene 4

Shakespeare

Enter LEPIDUS, MECAENAS, and AGRIPPA

LEPIDUS

Trouble yourselves no further. Pray you, hasten
Your generals after.

AGRIPPA

Sir, Mark Antony
Will e'en but kiss Octavia, and we'll follow.

LEPIDUS

5 Till I shall see you in your soldiers' dress,
Which will become you both, farewell.

MAECENAS

We shall,
As I conceive the journey, be at the Mount
Before you, Lepidus.

LEPIDUS

10 Your way is shorter.
My purposes do draw me much about.
You'll win two days upon me.

MAECENAS, AGRIPPA

Sir, good success.

LEPIDUS

Farewell.

Exeunt

Shakescleare Translation

LEPIDUS, MAECENAS, and AGRIPPA enter.

LEPIDUS

Don't trouble yourselves any further. Please, hurry after
your generals.

AGRIPPA

Sir, Mark Antony is only going to kiss Octavia, and then we'll
follow.

LEPIDUS

Until I see you dressed like soldiers, which will suit you both
well, goodbye.

MAECENAS

As I anticipate it, we will be at Mount Misenum before you,
Lepidus.

LEPIDUS

Your route is shorter. I have business that will take me to
many different places. You'll get there two days before I
will.

MAECENAS, AGRIPPA

Sir, we wish you luck.

LEPIDUS

Farewell.

MAECENAS, AGRIPPA, and LEPIDUS exit.

Act 2, Scene 5

Shakespeare

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS, and ALEXAS

CLEOPATRA

Give me some music. Music, moody food
Of us that trade in love.

ALL

The music, ho!

Enter MARDIAN the eunuch

Shakescleare Translation

CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS, and ALEXAS enter.

CLEOPATRA

Play me some music. Music is the best emotional
sustenance for those of us who are in love.

ALL

Play the music!

MARDIAN the eunuch enters.

CLEOPATRA

Let it alone. Let's to billiards. Come, Charmian.

CHARMIAN

5 My arm is sore. Best play with Mardian.

CLEOPATRA

As well a woman with an eunuch played
As with a woman.—Come, you'll play with me, sir?

MARDIAN

As well as I can, madam.

CLEOPATRA

And when good will is showed, though 't come too short,
10 The actor may plead pardon. I'll none now.
Give me mine angle. We'll to th' river. There,
My music playing far off, I will betray
Tawny-finned fishes. My bended hook shall pierce
Their slimy jaws, and as I draw them up
15 I'll think them every one an Antony
And say, "Aha! You're caught."

CHARMIAN

'Twas merry when
You waded on your angling, when your diver
Did hang a salt fish on his hook, which he
20 With fervency drew up.

CLEOPATRA

That time—Oh, times!—
I laughed him out of patience, and that night
I laughed him into patience. And next morn,
Ere the ninth hour, I drunk him to his bed,
25 Then put my tires and mantles on him, whilst
I wore his sword Philippan.

Enter a MESSENGER

Oh, from Italy!
Ram thou thy fruitful tidings in mine ears,
That long time have been barren.

MESSENGER

30 Madam, madam—

CLEOPATRA

Antonio's dead! If thou say so, villain,
Thou kill'st thy mistress. But well and free,
If thou so yield him, there is gold, and here
My bluest veins to kiss—a hand that kings
35 Have lipped, and trembled kissing.

MESSENGER

First, madam, he is well.

CLEOPATRA

Why, there's more gold. But, sirrah, mark, we use
To say the dead are well. Bring it to that,
The gold I give thee will I melt and pour
40 Down thy ill-uttering throat.

MESSENGER

Good madam, hear me.

CLEOPATRA

Forget the music. Let's play billiards. Come, Charmian.

CHARMIAN

My arm is sore. You had better play with Mardian.

CLEOPATRA

It's the same to play with a woman as it is with a eunuch.

[To MARDIAN] Come, you'll play with me, sir?


MARDIAN

As well as I can, madam.


CLEOPATRA

And if an actor tries his best, even if his performance isn't
very good, he can still ask for pardon. I don't want to play
anymore. Give me my fishing rod. We'll go to the river.
There, with my music playing from a distance, I'll catch the
golden-finned fishes. My curved hook will pierce their slimy
jaws, and as I pull them up, I'll imagine that every one of
them is Antony and say, "Aha! I've caught you!"

CHARMIAN

It was a good joke when you bet on your fishing , and you
had your diver go down and put a dried fish on his hook,
which he pulled out enthusiastically.

CLEOPATRA

That time—oh, the times we had!—that I laughed at him
until he lost patience, and that night, I satisfied him again.
And the next morning, before nine o'clock, I got him drunk
and sent him to bed, and then put my clothes and
headdresses on him, while I put on his sword .


A MESSENGER enters.

Oh, a message from Italy! Tell me your good news quickly,
since I haven't had any news in so long.

MESSENGER

Madam, madam—

CLEOPATRA

Antonio's dead! If you tell me that, villain , you kill me.
But if you tell me that he is well and has not been
captured—if you report that about him—then I will give you
gold *[Gives him gold]* and here, my blue-blooded hand to
kiss *[She holds out her hand]*—a hand that kings have
kissed, and trembled while they kissed it.

MESSENGER


First, madam, he is well.


CLEOPATRA


Why, there's more gold. But, sir, pay attention, we use to
use the word "well" to describe the dead. If that's what you
mean, I will melt the gold I've given you and pour it down
that throat of yours that tells me such terrible news.

MESSENGER

Good madam, listen to me.

 Cleopatra and Antony made a bet on who could catch the most fish; Cleopatra tricked Antony by having a diver go down into the water and put a dried fish on Antony's hook so that he thought he had caught a fish.

 Shakespeare calls the sword "Philippan" because it is the sword that Antony used to defeat Brutus and Cassius at Philippi (as recounted in Shakespeare's play "Julius Caesar").

 "Villain" was used to refer to a person of low social status, but in Cleopatra's anger, it also takes on the sense of a malevolent trouble-maker.

CLEOPATRA

Well, go to, I will.

But there's no goodness in thy face—if Antony

Be free and healthful, so tart a favor

45 To trumpet such good tidings! If not well,

Thou shouldst come like a Fury crowned with snakes,

Not like a formal man.

MESSENGER

Will 't please you hear me?

CLEOPATRA

I have a mind to strike thee ere thou speak'st.

50 Yet if thou say Antony lives, is well,

Or friends with Caesar, or not captive to him,

I'll set thee in a shower of gold and hail

Rich pearls upon thee.

MESSENGER

Madam, he's well.

CLEOPATRA

55 Well said.

MESSENGER

And friends with Caesar.

CLEOPATRA

Th' art an honest man.

MESSENGER

Caesar and he are greater friends than ever.

CLEOPATRA

Make thee a fortune from me.

MESSENGER

60 But yet, madam—

CLEOPATRA

I do not like "But yet." It does allay

The good precedence. Fie upon "But yet."

"But yet" is as a jailer to bring forth

Some monstrous malefactor. Prithee, friend,

65 Pour out the pack of matter to mine ear,

The good and bad together. He's friends with Caesar,

In state of health, thou say'st, and, thou say'st,
free.

MESSENGER

Free, madam, no. I made no such report.

70 He's bound unto Octavia.

CLEOPATRA

For what good turn?

MESSENGER

For the best turn i' th' bed.

CLEOPATRA

I am pale, Charmian.

MESSENGER

Madam, he's married to Octavia.

CLEOPATRA

Well, fine, I will. But there's no goodness in your face—if

Antony is free and well, it's odd that he would send such a

sour face to bring such good news! But if he isn't well, you

should have appeared like a Fury ⁴ with a crown of

snakes, not so calm and well-dressed.

MESSENGER

Will you please listen to me?

CLEOPATRA

I have half a mind to strike you before you speak. But if you

tell me that Antony lives, that he's well, that he's friends

with Caesar or that he's not Caesar's prisoner, then I'll

shower you with gold and greet you with rich pearls.

MESSENGER

Madam, he's well.

CLEOPATRA

Well said.

MESSENGER

And friends with Caesar.

CLEOPATRA

You are a good man.

MESSENGER

Caesar and he are greater friends than ever.

CLEOPATRA

I will give you a fortune.

MESSENGER

But yet, madam—

CLEOPATRA

I do not like the sound of "But yet." It casts a shadow on the

previous good news. Down with "But yet." "But yet" are the

words you'll use to introduce some terrible news. Please,

friend, tell me all your news at once, both the good and the

bad. He's friends with Caesar, he's well, you say, and you

say that he's free.

MESSENGER

Free, madam, no. I did not say that. He's bound ⁵ to

Octavia.

CLEOPATRA

For what good turn ⁶?

MESSENGER

For the best turn, in bed.

CLEOPATRA

I am pale, Charmian.

MESSENGER

Madam, he's married to Octavia.

⁴ In Greek mythology, a fury was a female spirit who avenged wrongdoing with ferocity. They were usually portrayed with snakes in their hair.

⁵ Cleopatra uses "free" to mean that Antony isn't a prisoner, but the messenger means that Antony is no longer a free man in the sense that he is married.

⁶ Cleopatra takes "bound" to mean obliged or indebted, as if Octavia had done Antony a good turn. A good turn is a favor or kind act, but the messenger then uses "turn" in the sense that denotes sexual activity.

CLEOPATRA

75 The most infectious pestilence upon thee!

Strikes him down

MESSENGER

Good madam, patience.

CLEOPATRA

What say you?

Strikes him

Hence, horrible villain, or I'll spurn thine eyes
Like balls before me! I'll unhair thy head!

She hales him up and down

80 Thou shalt be whipped with wire and stewed in brine,
Smarting in ling'ring pickle!

MESSENGER

Gracious madam,
I that do bring the news made not the match.

CLEOPATRA

85 Say 'tis not so, a province I will give thee
And make thy fortunes proud. The blow thou hadst
Shall make thy peace for moving me to rage,
And I will boot thee with what gift beside
Thy modesty can beg.

MESSENGER

He's married, madam.

CLEOPATRA

90 Rogue, thou hast lived too long.

Draws a knife

MESSENGER

Nay then, I'll run.
What mean you, madam? I have made no fault.

Exit

CHARMIAN

Good madam, keep yourself within yourself.
The man is innocent.

CLEOPATRA

95 Some innocents 'scape not the thunderbolt.
Melt Egypt into Nile, and kindly creatures
Turn all to serpents. Call the slave again.
Though I am mad, I will not bite him. Call!

CHARMIAN

He is afraid to come.

CLEOPATRA

100 I will not hurt him.
These hands do lack nobility that they strike
A meaner than myself, since I myself
Have given myself the cause.

Enter the MESSENGER again

Come hither, sir.

105 Though it be honest, it is never good
To bring bad news. Give to a gracious message
An host of tongues, but let ill tidings tell
Themselves when they be felt.

CLEOPATRA

May the most infectious disease come upon you!

CLEOPATRA strikes down the MESSENGER.

MESSENGER

Good madam, patience.

CLEOPATRA

What did you say?

She strikes him.

Get out of here, horrible villain, or I'll kick your eyes in front
of me like balls! I'll tear all the hair from your head!

She drags him up and down across the floor.

You'll be whipped with wire and soaked in brine like a
pickle, prolonging your pain!

MESSENGER

Gracious madam, I brought the news, but I did not arrange
the marriage.

CLEOPATRA

Say that it isn't so, and I will give you a territory and build
up your fortunes. The blow that I gave you will make up for
you making me angry, and I'll enrich you with whatever
other gift your lowly self can ask for.

MESSENGER

He's married, madam.

CLEOPATRA

Scoundrel, you have lived too long.

CLEOPATRA draws a knife.

MESSENGER

No, I'll run. What are you doing, madam? I have done
nothing wrong.

The MESSENGER exits.

CHARMIAN

Good madam, pull yourself together. That man is innocent.

CLEOPATRA

Some innocent people don't escape punishment. Let Egypt
melt into the Nile and let all sweet creatures turn into
serpents. Call that lowborn messenger again. Even though I
am angry, I will not hurt him. Call!

CHARMIAN

He's afraid to come.

CLEOPATRA

I will not hurt him. It would be dishonorable for my hands
to strike someone of lower rank than myself, since I am the
cause of my anger, by caring about Antony so much.

The MESSENGER enters again.

Come here, sir. Even though it is honest, it is never good to
bring bad news. Send many people to bring good news, but
let bad news announce itself when it becomes apparent.

MESSENGER

I have done my duty.

CLEOPATRA

110 Is he married?
I cannot hate thee worse than I do
If thou again say "yes."

MESSENGER

He's married, madam.

CLEOPATRA

The gods confound thee! Dost thou hold there still?

MESSENGER

115 Should I lie, madam?

CLEOPATRA

Oh, I would thou didst,
So half my Egypt were submerged and made
A cistern for scaled snakes! Go, get thee hence.
Hadst thou Narcissus in thy face, to me
120 Thou wouldst appear most ugly. He is married?

MESSENGER

I crave your highness' pardon.

CLEOPATRA

He is married?

MESSENGER

Take no offense that I would not offend you.
To punish me for what you make me do
125 Seems much unequal. He's married to Octavia.

CLEOPATRA

Oh, that his fault should make a knave of thee,
That art not what th' art sure of! Get thee hence.
The merchandise which thou hast brought from Rome
Are all too dear for me. Lie they upon thy hand
130 And be undone by 'em!

Exit MESSENGER

CHARMIAN

Good your highness, patience.

CLEOPATRA

In praising Antony, I have dispraised Caesar.

CHARMIAN

Many times, madam.

CLEOPATRA

I am paid for 't now. Lead me from hence.
135 I faint. O Iras, Charmian! 'Tis no matter.—
Go to the fellow, good Alexas. Bid him
Report the feature of Octavia: her years,
Her inclination. Let him not leave out
The color of her hair. Bring me word quickly.

Exit Alexas

140 Let him for ever go:—let him not—Charmian,
Though he be painted one way like a Gorgon,
The other way's a Mars. Bid you Alexas
To MARDIAN

MESSENGER

I have done my duty.

CLEOPATRA

Is he married? I cannot hate you worse than I already do if
you say "yes" again.

MESSENGER

He's married, madam.


CLEOPATRA


May the gods destroy you! Do you still stand by that
statement?

MESSENGER

Should I lie, madam?

CLEOPATRA

Oh, I wish you were lying, even if meant half of Egypt had to
be submerged in water and turned into a pool for scaly
snakes! Go, get out of here. Even if you were as handsome
as [Narcissus](#) , you would seem entirely ugly to me. He is
married?

 In Greek mythology, Narcissus was a vain and exceptionally handsome young man who, catching sight of his reflection in a pool, stared at it for so long that he ultimately died there.

MESSENGER

I beg your highness's pardon.


CLEOPATRA


He is married?

MESSENGER

Do not take offense, since I do not wish to offend you. It
seems very unfair to punish me for doing what you order
me to. He's married to Octavia.

CLEOPATRA

Oh, what a pity that his fault should turn you into a
scoundrel, since you aren't a bad man even though you
bring bad news! Get going. The merchandise you brought
with you from Rome is too expensive for me. Leave with
your [goods on your hands and be ruined by them](#) !

 The messenger is evidently also a merchant who has bought goods from Rome with hopes of selling them in Egypt. By leaving with his goods unsold, he will be financially ruined.

The MESSENGER exits.

CHARMIAN

My good queen, have patience.

CLEOPATRA

Whenever I praised Antony, I also insulted Caesar.

CHARMIAN

Many times, madam.

CLEOPATRA

I'm punished for it now. Lead me away from here. I faint. Oh
Iras, Charmian! It doesn't matter—Go to the messenger,
good Alexas. Tell him to describe Octavia's features: her
age, her temperament. Don't let him leave out any detail,
not even the color of her hair. Report back to me quickly.

ALEXAS exits.

I'll forget about him forever—no I won't—Charmian, even
though in some ways he seems like a monster, in other
ways he's a god.

145 Bring me word how tall she is. Pity me, Charmian,
But do not speak to me. Lead me to my chamber.

Exeunt

[*To MARDIAN*] Tell Alexas to let me know how tall she is.
Take pity on me, Charmian, but don't speak to me. Lead me
to my chamber.

CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, MARDIAN, and IRAS exit.

Act 2, Scene 6

Shakespeare

Flourish. Enter POMPEY and MENAS at one door, with drum and trumpet; at another CAESAR, LEPIDUS, ANTONY, ENO BARBUS, MAECENAS, and AGRIPPA, with soldiers marching

POMPEY

Your hostages I have, so have you mine,
And we shall talk before we fight.

CAESAR

Most meet
That first we come to words, and therefore have we
5 Our written purposes before us sent,
Which, if thou hast considered, let us know
If 'twill tie up thy discontented sword
And carry back to Sicily much tall youth
That else must perish here.

POMPEY

10 To you all three,
The senators alone of this great world,
Chief factors for the gods: I do not know
Wherefore my father should revengers want,
Having a son and friends, since Julius Caesar,
15 Who at Philippi the good Brutus ghosted,
There saw you laboring for him. What was 't
That moved pale Cassius to conspire? And what
Made the all-honored, honest Roman Brutus,
With the armed rest, courtiers of beauteous freedom,
20 To drench the Capitol, but that they would
Have one man but a man? And that is it
Hath made me rig my navy, at whose burden
The angered ocean foams, with which I meant
To scourge th' ingratitude that spiteful Rome
25 Cast on my noble father.

CAESAR

Take your time.

ANTONY

Thou canst not fear us, Pompey, with thy sails.
We'll speak with thee at sea. At land, thou know'st
How much we do o'ercount thee.

POMPEY

30 At land indeed
Thou dost o'ercount me of my father's house,
But since the cuckoo builds not for himself,
Remain in 't as thou mayst.

Shakescleare Translation

A flourish of trumpets sound. POMPEY and MENAS enter from one side of the stage, accompanied by the sound of drums and trumpets. CAESAR, LEPIDUS, ENO BARBUS, MAECENAS, and AGRIPPA enter from the other side of the stage, with soldiers marching.

POMPEY

I have hostages of yours ¹ and you have hostages of mine,
so we'll talk before we fight.

CAESAR

It is very appropriate that we talk first, and for that reason
we sent our proposals beforehand. So, if you have
considered them, let us know if we can convince you to stop
waging such an unsatisfying war, and take your brave
young troops back to Sicily, who would otherwise die here.

POMPEY

Let me tell the three of you, the sole rulers of this great
world and gods' only messengers on earth: I don't know
why my father's death shouldn't be avenged ², since he
has a son and friends to do it. You fought on behalf of Julius
Caesar, who appeared as a ghost to the good Brutus at
Philippi. Why was it that pale Cassius started conspiring
against Caesar? And what drove Brutus, who was honest
and honored by all, along with the rest of the armed
conspirators who were seeking glorious freedom, to drench
the Capitol in Caesar's blood ³, except that they didn't
want one man to have more power ⁴ than anyone else?
And that is what made me equip my navy, under which the
angry sea now foams. With this navy, I intend to punish
spiteful Rome for its ingratitude towards my noble father.

CAESAR

Go carefully now.

ANTONY

You cannot scare us, Pompey, with your navy. We'll engage
your forces at sea. By land, you know how much greater our
force is than yours.

POMPEY

On land, indeed, you cheated me out of my father's house ⁵
. But, since I know you're not making it your own ⁶,
remain in it for the time being.


¹ This was a typical action for opposing sides; they would each take hostages to ensure peaceful negotiations.

² Pompey's father, Pompey the Great, was defeated by Julius Caesar in battle and later assassinated on the orders of Cleopatra's half-brother, Ptolemy. Julius Caesar was assassinated by Brutus and Cassius, who were later defeated in battle by Octavius Caesar and Mark Antony. By defeating Caesar and Antony, Pompey believes he would be taking revenge on the friends of his father's enemy, and thus avenging his father; he would also be fighting on behalf of the Roman Republic, which ended when Caesar took absolute power as emperor.

³ Cassius, Brutus, and a group of conspirators stabbed Caesar to death on the steps of the Capitol.

⁴ The conspirators assassinated Caesar because they feared he would set himself up as a dictator or absolute ruler of Rome, destroying the republican system of government in Rome and seizing all political power.

⁵ Antony apparently agreed to buy the house of Pompey's father but later refused to pay for it.

 The cuckoo proverbially laid its eggs in other birds' nests rather than building its own. Pompey may be reminding Antony that his home and empire are not secure and not really his, and that they may be taken back.

LEPIDUS

Be pleased to tell us—

35 For this is from the present—how you take
The offers we have sent you.

CAESAR

There's the point.

ANTONY

Which do not be entreated to, but weigh
What it is worth embraced.

CAESAR

40 And what may follow,
To try a larger fortune.

POMPEY

You have made me offer

Of Sicily, Sardinia. And I must

Rid all the sea of pirates, then, to send

45 Measures of wheat to Rome. This 'greed upon
To part with unhacked edges and bear back
Our targes undinted.

CAESAR, ANTONY, LEPIDUS

That's our offer.

POMPEY

Know then

50 I came before you here a man prepared
To take this offer, but Mark Antony
Put me to some impatience. (*to ANTONY*) —Though I lose
The praise of it by telling, you must know,
When Caesar and your brother were at blows,
55 Your mother came to Sicily and did find
Her welcome friendly.

ANTONY

(*to POMPEY*) I have heard it, Pompey,
And am well studied for a liberal thanks
Which I do owe you.

POMPEY

60 Let me have your hand.

They clasp hands

I did not think, sir, to have met you here.

ANTONY

The beds i' th' East are soft, and thanks to you,
That called me timelier than my purpose hither,
For I have gained by 't.

CAESAR

65 (*to POMPEY*) Since I saw you last
There's a change upon you.

POMPEY

Well, I know not

What counts harsh Fortune casts upon my face,
But in my bosom shall she never come

70 To make my heart her vassal.

LEPIDUS

Well met here.

LEPIDUS

Please tell us—because this is not what we've come to
discuss—your response to the offers we've sent you.

CAESAR

That's the main point.

ANTONY

Don't let yourself be tricked into anything, but consider
carefully how much our offer is worth if you agree to it.

CAESAR

And what may happen to you if you try to win a larger
fortune by fighting us instead.

POMPEY

You have offered me Sicily and Sardinia. In return, I would
rid the whole sea of pirates and send shipments of wheat to
Rome. If we both agree to this, we will part peacefully,
without drawing swords against each other and without
denting our shields.

CAESAR, ANTONY, LEPIDUS

That's our offer.

POMPEY

You should know, then, that I came here prepared to accept
your offer, but Mark Antony irritated me somewhat.

[*To ANTONY*] Even though I detract from the honor of my
good deed by telling you about it, you should know that
when Caesar and your brother were at war, your mother
came to Sicily and found warm hospitality.

ANTONY

[*To POMPEY*] I have heard that, Pompey, and I intend to
thank you generously, which I know I owe you.

POMPEY

Give me your hand.

ANTONY and POMPEY clasp hands.

I didn't think that I would meet you here, sir.

ANTONY

The East is a very pleasant place, and I thank you for calling
me away from it earlier than I had intended, because it has
been good for me.

CAESAR

[*To POMPEY*] Since I last saw you, you've changed
somehow.

POMPEY

Well, I can't tell how hard times have affected my face, but I
will never let those hard times subdue my courage.

LEPIDUS

It is good for us all to meet here.

POMPEY

I hope so, Lepidus. Thus we are agreed.
I crave our composition may be written
And sealed between us.

CAESAR

75 That's the next to do.

POMPEY

We'll feast each other ere we part, and let's
Draw lots who shall begin.

ANTONY

That will I, Pompey.

POMPEY

80 No, Antony, take the lot. But, first or last,
Your fine Egyptian cookery shall have
The fame. I have heard that Julius Caesar
Grew fat with feasting there.

ANTONY

You have heard much.

POMPEY

I have fair meanings, sir.

ANTONY

85 And fair words to them.

POMPEY

Then so much have I heard.
And I have heard Apollodorus carried—

ENOBARBUS

(interrupting POMPEY) No more of that. He did so.

POMPEY

What, I pray you?

ENOBARBUS

90 A certain queen to Caesar in a mattress.

POMPEY

I know thee now. How far'st thou, soldier?

ENOBARBUS

Well,
And well am like to do, for I perceive,
Four feasts are toward.

POMPEY

95 Let me shake thy hand.
I never hated thee. I have seen thee fight
When I have envied thy behavior.

ENOBARBUS

Sir,
I never loved you much, but I ha' praised ye
100 When you have well deserved ten times as much
As I have said you did.

POMPEY

Enjoy thy plainness.
It nothing ill becomes thee.—
Aboard my galley I invite you all.
105 Will you lead, lords?

POMPEY

I hope so, Lepidus. We're agreed on this. I'd like our
agreements to be written down and sealed by all of us.

CAESAR

That's the next thing for us to do.

POMPEY

We'll throw feasts for each other before we part, and we'll
draw straws to see who will host the first one.

ANTONY

I will, Pompey.

POMPEY

No, Antony, draw straws with us. But, whether you go first
or last, your fine Egyptian style of cooking will carry away
all the honor. I've heard that Julius Caesar grew fat from
feasting while he was there.

ANTONY

You've heard a lot.

POMPEY

I mean well, sir.

ANTONY

And your words sound good.

POMPEY

That's what I heard. And I've heard that Apollodorus
carried—

ENOBARBUS

[Interrupting POMPEY] No more about that. He did exactly
that.

POMPEY

What did he carry, I ask you?

ENOBARBUS

A certain queen to Caesar in a mattress. 

POMPEY

I know who you are now. How are you doing, soldier?

ENOBARBUS

Well, and I believe I'll continue to do well, for I hear there
are four feasts planned.

POMPEY

Let me shake your hand. I never bore you ill will. I've seen
you fight so well that I envied your achievements.


ENOBARBUS

Sir, I have never been very fond of you, but I have praised
you—when you deserved ten times as much praise as what
I gave you.

POMPEY

Keep speaking straightforwardly like this. It suits you.

[To CAESAR, ANTONY, and LEPIDUS] I invite you all to come
aboard my ship. Will you go first my lords?

 It was written by Plutarch that
Cleopatra kept a tryst with her lover
Julius Caesar by rolling herself up in a
mattress and having Apollodorus
carry her to him.

CAESAR, ANTONY, LEPIDUS

Show 's the way, sir.

POMPEY

Come.

Exeunt all but ENOBRABUS and MENAS

MENAS

(aside) Thy father, Pompey, would ne'er have made this treaty. *(to ENOBRABUS)* You and I have known, sir.

ENOBRABUS

110 At sea, I think.

MENAS

We have, sir.

ENOBRABUS

You have done well by water.

MENAS

And you by land.

ENOBRABUS

115 I will praise any man that will praise me, though it cannot be denied what I have done by land.

MENAS

Nor what I have done by water.

ENOBRABUS

Yes, something you can deny for your own safety: you have been a great thief by sea.

MENAS

And you by land.

ENOBRABUS

120 There I deny my land service. But give me your hand, Menas.

They clasp hands

If our eyes had authority, here they might take two thieves kissing.

MENAS

All men's faces are true, whatsoever their hands are.

ENOBRABUS

125 But there is never a fair woman has a true face.

MENAS

No slander. They steal hearts.

ENOBRABUS

We came hither to fight with you.

MENAS

For my part, I am sorry it is turned to a drinking. Pompey doth this day laugh away his fortune.

ENOBRABUS

130 If he do, sure he cannot weep 't back again.

CAESAR, ANTONY, LEPIDUS

Please, lead us, sir.

POMPEY

Come.

All characters exit except ENOBRABUS and MENAS.

MENAS

[To himself] Your father, Pompey, would never have made a treaty like this.

[To ENOBRABUS] You and I have met before, sir.

ENOBRABUS

At sea, I think.

MENAS

We have, sir.

ENOBRABUS

Your side has done well at sea.

MENAS

And your side has done well on land.

ENOBRABUS

I'll say good things about anyone who says good things about me, but no one can deny what I have accomplished on land.

MENAS

Or what I have accomplished at sea.

ENOBRABUS

Yes, there is something you ought to deny for your own good—the fact that you have been a thief at sea.

MENAS

And you've been a thief on land.

ENOBRABUS

I deny that. But give me your hand, Menas.

MENAS and ENOBRABUS clasp hands.

If our eyes were policemen, they could arrest two thieves conspiring here.

MENAS

All men have honest faces, even if their hands tend to steal.

ENOBRABUS

But no beautiful woman has an honest face.

MENAS

That's true. They steal men's hearts.

ENOBRABUS

We came here to fight with you.

MENAS

For my part, I'm sorry that the fighting has turned into feasting. By entertaining your leaders today, Pompey throws away his fortune.

ENOBRABUS

If he does, I'm sure he cannot get it back by crying.

MENAS

You've said, sir. We looked not for Mark Antony here. Pray you, is he married to Cleopatra?

ENOBARBUS

Caesar's sister is called Octavia.

MENAS

True, sir. She was the wife of Caius Marcellus.

ENOBARBUS

135 But she is now the wife of Marcus Antonius.

MENAS

Pray ye, sir?

ENOBARBUS

'Tis true.

MENAS

Then is Caesar and he forever knit together.

ENOBARBUS

140 If I were bound to divine of this unity, I would not prophesy so.

MENAS

I think the policy of that purpose made more in the marriage than the love of the parties.

ENOBARBUS

145 I think so too. But you shall find the band that seems to tie their friendship together will be the very strangler of their amity. Octavia is of a holy, cold, and still conversation.

MENAS

Who would not have his wife so?

ENOBARBUS

150 Not he that himself is not so, which is Mark Antony. He will to his Egyptian dish again. Then shall the sighs of Octavia blow the fire up in Caesar, and, as I said before, that which is the strength of their amity shall prove the immediate author of their variance. Antony will use his affection where it is. He married but his occasion here.

MENAS

155 And thus it may be. Come, sir, will you aboard? I have a health for you.

ENOBARBUS

I shall take it, sir. We have used our throats in Egypt.

MENAS

Come, let's away.

Exeunt

MENAS

That's true, sir. We didn't expect to see Mark Antony here. Please tell me, is he married to Cleopatra?

ENOBARBUS

Caesar's sister is called Octavia.

MENAS

True, sir. She was the wife of Caius Marcellus.

ENOBARBUS

But now she's the wife of Mark Antony.

MENAS

Really, sir?

ENOBARBUS

It's true.

MENAS

Then Caesar and he are bound in friendship forever.

ENOBARBUS

If I had to make a prediction, I wouldn't guess so.

MENAS

I think the marriage was arranged more for that political purpose, rather than the love between the couple.

ENOBARBUS

I think so too. But you'll find that the arrangement that was supposed to bind them in friendship will turn out to kill their friendship. Octavia has a very pious, cold, and quiet temperament.

MENAS

Who wouldn't want a wife like that?

ENOBARBUS

Not someone who doesn't share that disposition—Mark Antony. He'll return to his Egyptian lover again. Then Octavia's sorrow will anger Caesar, and, as I said before, the source of their friendship will ultimately prove a source of conflict. Antony will return to the woman he's really fond of. He only married Octavia for pragmatic reasons.

MENAS

And it may turn out that way. Come, sir, will you come aboard? I'll drink a toast to you.

ENOBARBUS

I'll take it, sir. We're used to drinking in Egypt.

MENAS

Come, let's go.

ENOBARBUS and MENAS exit.

Act 2, Scene 7

Shakespeare

Music plays. Enter two or three SERVANTS with a banquet

Shakescleare Translation

Music plays. Two or three SERVANTS enter with a banquet.

FIRST SERVANT

Here they'll be, man. Some o' their plants are ill-rooted already. The least wind i' th' world will blow them down.

SECOND SERVANT

Lepidus is high-colored.

FIRST SERVANT

5 They have made him drink alms-drink.

SECOND SERVANT

As they pinch one another by the disposition, he cries out, "No more," reconciles them to his entreaty and himself to th' drink.

FIRST SERVANT

10 But it raises the greater war between him and his discretion.

SECOND SERVANT

Why, this it is to have a name in great men's fellowship. I had as lief have a reed that will do me no service as a partisan I could not heave.

FIRST SERVANT

15 To be called into a huge sphere, and not to be seen to move in 't, are the holes where eyes should be, which pitifully disaster the cheeks.

A sennet sounded. Enter CAESAR, ANTONY, POMPEY, LEPIDUS, AGRIPPA, MAECENAS, ENOBARBUS, and MENAS, with other captains and a BOY

ANTONY

20 Thus do they, sir: they take the flow o' th' Nile By certain scales i' th' Pyramid. They know By th' height, the lowness, or the mean, if dearth Or foison follow. The higher Nilus swells The more it promises. As it ebbs, the seedsman Upon the slime and ooze scatters his grain, And shortly comes to harvest.

LEPIDUS

You've strange serpents there?

ANTONY

25 Ay, Lepidus.

LEPIDUS

Your serpent of Egypt is bred now of your mud by the operation of your sun. So is your crocodile.

ANTONY

They are so.

POMPEY

(to LEPIDUS) Sit, and some wine. A health to Lepidus!

FIRST SERVANT

They'll eat in here, friend. Some of them are unsteady on their feet already. The smallest breeze in the world would knock them over.

SECOND SERVANT

Lepidus is flushed.

FIRST SERVANT

They made him drink extra rounds .


SECOND SERVANT

As their personalities clash, he cries, "No more quarreling," urges them to be friends, and resigns himself to another drink.


FIRST SERVANT

But all this drinking makes him lose his judgment.

SECOND SERVANT


Well, this is what comes from keeping company with great men. I'd rather have a small job  that I had the power to carry out than an important position I wasn't qualified for.

FIRST SERVANT

To be given an important position  and then not to be able to do anything with it, is like having empty sockets where your eyes should be, which deforms the face.

A flourish of trumpets sounds. CAESAR, ANTONY, POMPEY, LEPIDUS, AGRIPPA, MAECENAS, ENOBARBUS, and MENAS enter, with other captains and a BOY.

ANTONY

This is what they do, sir. They measure the depth of the Nile by certain markings on the Pyramid . They know how low it goes by measuring how high it goes, and they know by the middle position whether famine or abundance will follow. The higher the Nile floods, the more fertile it will make the land. As it ebbs, the farmer goes out on the wet, slimy ground and scatters his seeds, and he soon has a harvest.


LEPIDUS

You have strange serpents in Egypt?

ANTONY

Yes, Lepidus.

LEPIDUS

Serpents in Egypt are bred out of mud by the working of the sun . So are the crocodiles.


ANTONY


They are indeed.


POMPEY


[To LEPIDUS] Sit down, and have some wine.


[To everyone] A toast to Lepidus!

 An *alms-drink* was a drink taken for charity's or friendship's sake. Here, Lepidus calls for additional toasts each time the parties fight and so ends up drinking many more rounds.

 The servant uses the image of a small weapon, or "reed," in the original text, that he is able to wield as opposed to a large "partisan," or spear, that he cannot lift.

 In Shakespeare's time, stars were thought to be fixed within spheres that encircled the earth and to move along the outer rim of their spheres. The servant uses the metaphor of a motionless star (one that does not move in its "sphere," as the original text says) to describe the politically impotent Lepidus.

 The Nile flooded regularly, leaving high water marks on the pyramids. The Nile's flooding made the land fertile for farming.

 It was thought that certain animals were spontaneously generated out of wet mud when the sun shone on it.

They sit and drink

LEPIDUS

30 I am not so well as I should be, but I'll ne'er out.

ENOBARBUS

Not till you have slept. I fear me you'll be in till then.

LEPIDUS

35 Nay, certainly, I have heard the Ptolemies' pyramids are very goodly things. Without contradiction I have heard that.

MENAS

(aside to POMPEY) Pompey, a word.

POMPEY

(aside to MENAS) Say in mine ear. What is 't?

MENAS

40 *(aside to POMPEY)* Forsake thy seat, I do beseech thee, captain,
And hear me speak a word.

POMPEY

(aside to MENAS) Forbear me till anon.—This wine for Lepidus!

LEPIDUS

What manner o' thing is your crocodile?

ANTONY

45 It is shaped, sir, like itself, and it is as broad as it hath breadth. It is just so high as it is, and moves with its own organs. It lives by that which nourisheth it, and, the elements once out of it, it transmigrates.

LEPIDUS

What color is it of?

ANTONY

Of it own color too.

LEPIDUS

50 'Tis a strange serpent.

ANTONY

'Tis so. And the tears of it are wet.

CAESAR

(aside to ANTONY) Will this description satisfy him?

ANTONY

(aside to CAESAR) With the health that Pompey gives him, else he is a very epicure.

MENAS whispers again

POMPEY

55 *(aside to MENAS)* Go hang, sir, hang! Tell me of that? Away!
Do as I bid you.—Where's this cup I called for?

They sit and drink.

LEPIDUS

I'm not as well as I ought to be, but I'll never miss a round.

ENOBARBUS

Not till you fall asleep. I'm afraid you'll be in a drunken stupor then.

LEPIDUS

No, certainly, I have heard the Egyptian pyramids are very magnificent things. Without doubt I've heard that.

MENAS

[So only POMPEY can hear] Pompey, let me have a word with you.

POMPEY

[So only MENAS can hear] Whisper it to me. What is it?

MENAS

[To POMPEY] Get up, I ask you, captain, and listen to me for a moment.

POMPEY


[To MENAS] Leave me alone for a while.


[To the rest of the company] This wine is for Lepidus!

LEPIDUS

What kind of thing is a crocodile?

ANTONY

It's shaped like a crocodile, sir, and it's as long as its own length. It's just as tall as it is, and it moves by using its own body. It lives off what it eats, and when it dies, its soul moves on .

 Antony refers to the Pythagorean theory of transmigration, which held that when a living creature died, its soul would pass, or "transmigrate," as the original text says, into a new life form.

LEPIDUS

What color is it?

ANTONY

The color that it is.

LEPIDUS

That's a strange animal.

ANTONY

It is. And its tears are wet.

CAESAR

[So only ANTONY can hear] Will he be satisfied with that description?

ANTONY

[So only CAESAR can hear] He'll be satisfied with that and with the toast that Pompey drank with him, or else he really has an insatiable appetite.

MENAS whispers to POMPEY again.

POMPEY

[So only MENAS can hear] Go to hell, sir, go! You talk to me about that? Get away! Do as I told you.

[To the company] Where's the drink I asked for?

MENAS

(aside to POMPEY) If for the sake of merit thou wilt hear me,

60 Rise from thy stool.

POMPEY

(aside to MENAS) I think th' art mad.

He rises, and they walk aside

The matter?

MENAS

I have ever held my cap off to thy fortunes.

POMPEY

65 Thou hast served me with much faith. What's else to say?—
(to the others) Be jolly, lords.

ANTONY

These quicksands, Lepidus,
Keep off them, for you sink.

MENAS

(aside to POMPEY) Wilt thou be lord of all the world?

POMPEY

70 What sayst thou?

MENAS

Wilt thou be lord of the whole world? That's twice.

POMPEY

How should that be?

MENAS

75 But entertain it,
And, though thou think me poor, I am the man
Will give thee all the world.

POMPEY

Hast thou drunk well?

MENAS

80 No, Pompey, I have kept me from the cup.
Thou art, if thou dar'st be, the earthly Jove.
Whate'er the ocean pales or sky inclips
Is thine, if thou wilt ha 't.

POMPEY

Show me which way.

MENAS

85 These three world-sharers, these competitors,
Are in thy vessel. Let me cut the cable,
And, when we are put off, fall to their throats.
All there is thine.

POMPEY

90 Ah, this thou shouldst have done
And not have spoke on 't! In me 'tis villainy,
In thee 't had been good service. Thou must know,
'Tis not my profit that does lead mine honor;
Mine honor, it. Repent that e'er thy tongue
Hath so betrayed thine act. Being done unknown,
I should have found it afterwards well done,
But must condemn it now. Desist, and drink.

MENAS

[So only POMPEY can hear] If you'll listen to me for the sake of your own greatness, get up from your seat.

POMPEY

[So only MENAS can hear] I think you're crazy.

POMPEY gets up and he and MENAS walk off to one side to the others cannot hear them.

What is it?

MENAS

I have always done my best to help you.

POMPEY

You have served me faithfully. What else do you have to say?

[To the company] Be merry, lords.

ANTONY

Keep away from the drinks, Lepidus, for you're drowning in them.

MENAS

[So only POMPEY can hear] Do you want to be the ruler of the whole world?

POMPEY

[So only MENAS can hear] What do you mean?

MENAS

Do you want to be the ruler of the whole world? Now I've said it twice.

POMPEY

How could that come about?

MENAS

Listen to what I have to say, and even though you think I'm a poor man, I'll be the person who gave you the whole world.

POMPEY

Are you drunk?

MENAS

No, Pompey, I haven't had a drink tonight. You could, if you dared, be the king of the gods on earth. Whatever land the ocean surrounds or the sky stretches over, will be yours, if you wish.

POMPEY

Tell me how.

MENAS

Your competitors, the three men who govern the world between them, are on your ship. Let me cut the ropes, and, when we have set off from shore, let me kill them. Then all the world will be yours.

POMPEY

Oh, you should have done this and not told me beforehand! It would be villainous of me to do it—for you, it would just have been the act of a good servant. You should know that I don't sacrifice my honor for profit; rather, I give up profit for the sake of my honor. You should regret that you ever mentioned this plan to me. If you had done it without my knowledge, I would have said afterwards that you had done

He returns to the feast

MENAS

(aside) For this,

95 I'll never follow thy palled fortunes more.
Who seeks and will not take when once 'tis offered
Shall never find it more.

POMPEY

This health to Lepidus!

ANTONY

(to a servant) Bear him ashore.—I'll pledge it for him,

100 Pompey.

ENOBARBUS

Here's to thee, Menas!

They drink

MENAS

Enobarbus, welcome.

POMPEY

Fill till the cup be hid.

ENOBARBUS

There's a strong fellow, Menas.

Pointing to the servant who carries off LEPIDUS

MENAS

105 Why?

ENOBARBUS

He bears
The third part of the world, man. Seest not?

MENAS

The third part, then, is drunk. Would it were all,
That it might go on wheels!

ENOBARBUS

110 Drink thou. Increase the reels.

MENAS

Come.

POMPEY

This is not yet an Alexandrian feast.

ANTONY

It ripens towards it. Strike the vessels, ho!
Here's to Caesar.

CAESAR

115 I could well forbear 't.
It's monstrous labor when I wash my brain
And it grows fouler.

ANTONY

Be a child o' th' time.

CAESAR

120 Possess it, I'll make answer.
But I had rather fast from all four days
Than drink so much in one.

well—but now, I must condemn the action. Put the thought
of it aside, and drink.

POMPEY returns to the feast.

MENAS

[To himself] Because of this, I'll no longer follow you and
hope for your success. Whoever seeks power and won't
take it when it is offered will never find the opportunity
again.

POMPEY

A toast to Lepidus!

ANTONY

[To a SERVANT] Carry Lepidus ashore.

[To POMPEY] I'll drink for him, Pompey.

ENOBARBUS

Here's to you, Menas!

They drink.

MENAS

Enobarbus, welcome.

POMPEY

Fill the cup until it overflows.

ENOBARBUS

There's a strong man, Menas.

ENOBARBUS points to the servant who carries off LEPIDUS.

MENAS

What's going on there?

ENOBARBUS

He carries one third of the world, man. Don't you see?

MENAS

His third, then, is drunk. If only the whole world were
drunk, so it would all spin with joy!

ENOBARBUS

Have a drink. Increase the spinning.

MENAS

Come.

POMPEY

This feast is not yet as wild as an Egyptian feast.

ANTONY

It's getting there. Open more casks, I say! Here's to Caesar.

CAESAR

I could do without it. It's unnatural for me to drink if it
makes my brain become cloudy.

ANTONY

Get into the spirit of things.

CAESAR

You take a drink and I'll take another. But I'd rather go
without eating for four days than drink so much in one day.

ENOBARBUS

(to ANTONY) Ha! My brave emperor,
Shall we dance now the Egyptian bacchanals
And celebrate our drink?

POMPEY

125 Let's ha't, good soldier.

ANTONY

Come, let's all take hands
Till that the conquering wine hath steeped our sense
In soft and delicate Lethe.

ENOBARBUS

All take hands.
130 Make battery to our ears with the loud music,
The while I'll place you; then the boy shall sing.
The holding every man shall beat as loud
As his strong sides can volley.

Music plays. ENOBARBUS places them hand in hand

The Song.

BOY

(Sings) Come, thou monarch of the vine,
135 Plump Bacchus with pink eye!
In thy vats our cares be drowned,
With thy grapes our hairs be crowned.

ALL

(Singing) Cup us till the world go round,
Cup us till the world go round!

CAESAR

140 What would you more? —Pompey, good night. (to ANTONY)
Good brother,
Let me request you off. Our graver business
Frowns at this levity. —Gentle lords, let's part.
You see we have burnt our cheeks. Strong Enobarb
145 Is weaker than the wine; and mine own tongue
Splits what it speaks. The wild disguise hath almost
Anticked us all. What needs more words? Good night.
Good Antony, your hand.

POMPEY

I'll try you on the shore.

ANTONY

150 And shall, sir. Give 's your hand.

POMPEY

O Antony, You have my father's house.
But what? We are friends. Come, down into the boat.


ENOBARBUS


Take heed you fall not.

Exeunt all but MENAS and ENOBARBUS

Menas, I'll not on shore.

ENOBARBUS

[To ANTONY] Ha! My noble emperor, shall we dance the
Egyptian bacchanals  now and celebrate our drinking?

 A bacchanal is a wild, drunken dance or revelry, done in honor of Bacchus, the Roman god of wine.

POMPEY

Let's see it, good soldier.

ANTONY

Come, let's all take hands, until this wine conquers us and sends us into a calm, gentle, forgetful stupor.

ENOBARBUS

Everyone grab hands. Batter our ears with the loud music, while I position you. Then the boy will sing. Every man will beat out the refrain as loudly as his strong body is able.

Music plays. ENOBARBUS positions them and joins their hands.

The Song.

BOY

[Singing] Come, you king of the vine,
Plump Bacchus with pink eyes!
In your vats, we will drown our cares,
With your grapes, we will crown our hair.

ALL

[Singing] Fill our cups until the world spins,
Fill our cups until the world spins.

CAESAR

What more of a feast could you want?

[To POMPEY] Pompey, good night.

[To ANTONY] Good brother, let me ask you to come off the ship. Given our serious business, we shouldn't be fooling around like this.

[To the company] Noble lords, let's part. You see we've become flushed. Strong Enobarbus is not strong enough to handle the wine, and I cannot articulate my words clearly. This wild drunkenness has almost made fools out of all of us. What else needs to be said? Good night. Good Antony, give me your hand.


POMPEY


I'll test your endurance at drinking on shore.

ANTONY

Yes you will, sir. Give me your hand.

POMPEY

Oh Antony, you took my father's house. But what does that matter? We're friends. Come, get into the boat .

 Antony, Caesar, and their party will be rowed ashore from Pompey's ship on a small boat.

ENOBARBUS

Be careful not to fall.

All characters exit except MENAS and ENOBARBUS.

Menas, I won't go to shore.

MENAS

155 No, to my cabin. These drums, these trumpets, flutes!
What!
Let Neptune hear we bid a loud farewell
To these great fellows. Sound and be hanged, sound out!

Sound a flourish, with drums

ENOBARBUS

Hoo! says 'a. There's my cap.

He flings it in the air

MENAS

160 Hoo! Noble captain, come.

Exeunt

MENAS

No, come to my cabin. What's going on with all these drums, trumpets, and flutes! The whole sea ⁹ can hear how loudly we say goodbye to these great men. Let them go to hell if they keep playing. One final flourish and that's all!

A flourish of trumpets sounds, accompanied by drums.

ENOBARBUS

Hoo, I say! There's my cap!

ENOBARBUS throws his cap in the air.

MENAS

Hoo! Noble captain, come.

MENAS and ENOBARBUS exit.

⁹ Neptune was the Roman god of the sea, and so Shakespeare uses his name in the original text to represent the sea.

Act 3, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Enter VENTIDIUS as it were in triumph, the dead body of Pacorus borne before him, with SILIUS, and other Romans, officers, and soldiers

VENTIDIUS

Now, darting Parthia, art thou struck, and now
Pleased fortune does of Marcus Crassus' death
Make me revenger. Bear the King's son's body
Before our army. Thy Pacorus, Orodes,
5 Pays this for Marcus Crassus.

SILIUS

Noble Ventidius,
Whilst yet with Parthian blood thy sword is warm,
The fugitive Parthians follow. Spur through Media,
Mesopotamia, and the shelters whither
10 The routed fly. So thy grand captain, Antony,
Shall set thee on triumphant chariots and
Put garlands on thy head.

VENTIDIUS

O Silius, Silius,
I have done enough. A lower place, note well,
15 May make too great an act. For learn this, Silius:
Better to leave undone than by our deed
Acquire too high a fame when him we serve's away.
Caesar and Antony have ever won
More in their officer than person. Sossius,
20 One of my place in Syria, his lieutenant,
For quick accumulation of renown,
Which he achieved by th' minute, lost his favor.
Who does i' th' wars more than his captain can
Becomes his captain's captain; and ambition,
25 The soldier's virtue, rather makes choice of loss
Than gain which darkens him.
I could do more to do Antonius good,
But 'twould offend him, and in his offense
Should my performance perish.

SILIUS

30 Thou hast, Ventidius, that
Without the which a soldier and his sword
Grants scarce distinction. Thou wilt write to Antony?

Shakescleare Translation

VENTIDIUS enters with military glory while Pacorus's dead body is carried before him. SILIUS and other Romans, officers, and soldiers accompany him.

VENTIDIUS

Now the nation of Parthia, with all its archers, is defeated, and now fortune has given me the chance to avenge Marcus Crassus' death ¹. Carry the King's son's body in front of our army. Your son Pacorus, Orodes, loses his life in payment for Marcus Crassus's death.

SILIUS

Noble Ventidius, while you still have momentum from the defeat of the Parthian army, follow the fleeing Parthians who have escaped. Ride through Media, Mesopotamia ², all the places where the exiled Parthians hope to seek refuge. For this, your grand captain, Antony, will give you a triumphal procession ³ on a chariot and crown your head with garlands.

VENTIDIUS

O Silius, Silius, I have accomplished enough. Listen, it's possible for someone of low rank to overstep himself. You should be aware of this, Silius: it's better not to do something than to do it and thereby win too much glory while our commander is away. Caesar and Antony have won more battles through the skill of their officers than through their own ability. Sossius, a soldier in Syria with the same rank as myself, was Antony's lieutenant, and because he achieved glory too quickly and kept gaining it, he fell out of Antony's favor. Whoever accomplishes more in war than his captain becomes a greater soldier than him—and because soldiers are generally ambitious, a captain would prefer to lose a battle than have someone else win it and have him pale in comparison. I could accomplish more to help Antony's cause, but it would offend him, and if he were offended, I would lose all the glory of what I have already done.

SILIUS

A sword is just a tool, Ventidius, unless it is being wielded by someone with your qualities. You'll write to Antony?

¹ Marcus Crassus, who ruled Rome with Pompey the Great and Julius Caesar, was treacherously killed by Orodes, king of Parthia.

² Media and Mesopotamia were neighboring countries.

³ Victorious Roman generals were given a triumphal procession, or parade, through the streets of Rome; the generals rode on chariots.

VENTIDIUS

I'll humbly signify what in his name,
That magical word of war, we have effected:
35 How with his banners and his well-paid ranks
The ne'er-yet-beaten horse of Parthia
We have jaded out o' th' field.

SILIUS

Where is he now?

VENTIDIUS

He purposeth to Athens, whither, with what haste
40 The weight we must convey with's will permit,
We shall appear before him. (*to the soliders*) On,
there. Pass along!

Exeunt

VENTIDIUS

I'll humbly tell him what we have done in his name, that
magical wording. I'll tell him how, with his banners and his
well-paid troops, we beat the calvary of Parthia out of the
field like broken-down old horses, even though they had
never been beaten before.

SILIUS

Where is he now?

VENTIDIUS

He intends to go to Athens, where we must meet him as fast
as we can, given the load that we carry.

[To the soldiers] Keep going, there. Move along!

VENTIDIUS and SILIUS exit.

Act 3, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Enter AGRIPPA at one door, ENOBARBUS at another

AGRIPPA

What, are the brothers parted?

ENOBARBUS

They have dispatched with Pompey; he is gone.
The other three are sealing. Octavia weeps
To part from Rome. Caesar is sad, and Lepidus,
5 Since Pompey's feast, as Menas says, is troubled
With the greensickness.

AGRIPPA

'Tis a noble Lepidus.

ENOBARBUS

A very fine one. Oh, how he loves Caesar!

AGRIPPA

Nay, but how dearly he adores Mark Antony!

ENOBARBUS

10 Caesar? Why, he's the Jupiter of men.

AGRIPPA

What's Antony? The god of Jupiter.

ENOBARBUS

Spake you of Caesar? How, the nonpareil!

AGRIPPA

O Antony, O thou Arabian bird!

Shakescleare Translation

AGRIPPA enters from one side of the stage and ENOBARBUS enters from the other.

AGRIPPA

What, have the brothers ¹ left?

¹ Since Antony is now Caesar's brother-in-law, they are referred to as brothers.

ENOBARBUS

They have settled their affairs with Pompey; he is gone. The
other three are signing the agreement. Octavia weeps that
she has to leave Rome. Caesar is sad, and Menas says that
Lepidus, since Pompey's feast, is suffering from a hangover ²

² Enobarbus refers to Lepidus's hangover, but greensickness is also a condition thought to afflict lovesick young girls. Enobarbus pokes fun at Lepidus's affection for Caesar and Antony.

AGRIPPA

Lepidus is a noble man.

ENOBARBUS

A very fine one. Oh, how he loves Caesar!

AGRIPPA

Yes, but how dearly he loves Mark Antony!

ENOBARBUS

Caesar? Why, he's like the king of the gods among men.

AGRIPPA

Then what is Antony? He is the king of the king of the gods.

ENOBARBUS

Did you insult Caesar? Why, he is without equal!

AGRIPPA

O Antony, you phoenix ³!

³ The phoenix, a mythological creature said to come from Arabia (hence the "Arabian bird" in the original text), was believed to live for centuries, die in flames, and then be reborn from its own ashes. The term signifies an uncommonly magnificent person.

ENOBARBUS

Would you praise Caesar, say "Caesar." Go no further.

AGRIPPA

15 Indeed, he plied them both with excellent praises.

ENOBARBUS

But he loves Caesar best; yet he loves Antony.
Hoo! Hearts, tongues, figures, scribes, bards, poets,
cannot

20 Think, speak, cast, write, sing, number—hoo!—
His love to Antony. But as for Caesar,
Kneel down, kneel down, and wonder.

AGRIPPA

Both he loves.

ENOBARBUS

They are his shards, and he their beetle.

Trumpets within

So,

25 This is to horse. Adieu, noble Agrippa.

AGRIPPA

Good fortune, worthy soldier, and farewell.

Enter CAESAR, ANTONY, LEPIDUS, and OCTAVIA

ANTONY

No further, sir.

CAESAR

You take from me a great part of myself;
Use me well in 't. —Sister, prove such a wife

30 As my thoughts make thee, and as my farthest bond
Shall pass on thy approval. —Most noble Antony,
Let not the piece of virtue, which is set
Betwixt us as the cement of our love,
To keep it builded, be the ram to batter

35 The fortress of it. For better might we
Have loved without this mean, if on both parts
This be not cherished.

ANTONY

Make me not offended
In your distrust.

CAESAR

40 I have said.

ANTONY

You shall not find,
Though you be therein curious, the least cause
For what you seem to fear. So the gods keep you
And make the hearts of Romans serve your ends.

45 We will here part.

CAESAR

Farewell, my dearest sister, fare thee well.
The elements be kind to thee and make
Thy spirits all of comfort! Fare thee well.

OCTAVIA

My noble brother!

She weeps

ENOBARBUS

If you want to praise Caesar, simply say "Caesar." The name alone conveys all his great qualities.

AGRIPPA

Indeed, Lepidus praised both of them highly.

ENOBARBUS

But he loves Caesar most; still, he does love Antony. Ha! Hearts, tongues, letters, writers, singers, poets, cannot think, speak, calculate, write, sing, or make verses—ha!—that can adequately convey his love for Antony. But as for Caesar, the only appropriate reaction is to kneel down, kneel down, and be in awe.

AGRIPPA

He loves both of them.

ENOBARBUS

He is a beetle, and they are the wings he uses to fly.

Trumpets sound offstage.

So, I must get going. Goodbye, noble Agrippa.

AGRIPPA

Good luck, worthy soldier, and goodbye.

CAESAR, ANTONY, LEPIDUS, and OCTAVIA enter.

ANTONY

Speak no more, sir.

CAESAR

[To CAESAR] You take a part of me away from myself by taking her; treat me well by treating her well.

[To OCTAVIA] Sister, be as good a wife as I believe you capable of being, so that the great commitment I have made will be justified by your behavior.

[To ANTONY] Most noble Antony, do not let this good woman—who joins us as brothers to secure our love and keep it firm—become the instrument that will destroy our love. For we might have been better friends without this intermediary, if she is not cherished by both of us.

ANTONY

Don't offend me by distrusting me.

CAESAR

I've said what I have to say.

ANTONY

You won't find any reason to be afraid, even though you seem quite anxious about it. May the gods protect you and bring the Roman people to serve you loyally. We will part here.

CAESAR

Goodbye, dearest sister, take care. May you have good fortune so that your feelings will be ones of comfort! Take care.

OCTAVIA

My noble brother!

OCTAVIA weeps.

ANTONY

50 The April's in her eyes; it is love's spring,
And these the showers to bring it on. (to OCTAVIA) Be
cheerful.

OCTAVIA

(to CAESAR) Sir, look well to my husband's house, and—

CAESAR

What, Octavia?

OCTAVIA

55 I'll tell you in your ear.

She and CAESAR walk aside

ANTONY

Her tongue will not obey her heart, nor can
Her heart inform her tongue—the swan's-down feather
That stands upon the swell at the full of tide
And neither way inclines.

ENOBARBUS

60 (aside to AGRIPPA) Will Caesar weep?

AGRIPPA

(aside to ENOBARBUS) He has a cloud in 's face.

ENOBARBUS

(aside to AGRIPPA) He were the worse for that, were he
a horse;
So is he, being a man.

AGRIPPA

65 (aside to ENOBARBUS) Why, Enobarbus,
When Antony found Julius Caesar dead,
He cried almost to roaring, and he wept
When at Philippi he found Brutus slain.

ENOBARBUS

70 (aside to AGRIPPA) That year indeed he was troubled
with a rheum.
What willingly he did confound he wailed,
Believe 't, till I wept too.

CAESAR

75 (coming forward with OCTAVIA) No, sweet Octavia,
You shall hear from me still. The time shall not
Outgo my thinking on you.

ANTONY

Come, sir, come,
I'll wrestle with you in my strength of love.
Look, here I have you.

Embraces him

80 Thus I let you go
And give you to the gods.

CAESAR

Adieu. Be happy.

ANTONY

She weeps. April is the beginning of love, and she cries in
order to bring it on.

[To OCTAVIA] Be cheerful.

OCTAVIA

[To CAESAR] Sir, take care of my husband's house, and—

CAESAR

What, Octavia?

OCTAVIA

I'll whisper it to you.

OCTAVIA and CAESAR speak apart from the others.

ANTONY

She cannot speak her true feelings, neither can her feelings
tell her what she should say. She is so torn between her
feelings for her brother and her feelings for her husband
that she cannot speak.

ENOBARBUS

[So only AGRIPPA can hear] Will Caesar weep?

AGRIPPA

[So only ENOBARBUS can hear] His face is clouded over
with emotion.

ENOBARBUS

[To AGRIPPA] That would be bad for him if he were a horse.
It's also bad for him as a man.

AGRIPPA

[To ENOBARBUS] Why, Enobarbus, when Antony found
Julius Caesar's dead body, he cried so much he was almost
roaring, and he wept at Philippi when he found Brutus
dead.

ENOBARBUS

[To AGRIPPA] That year, he was indeed struck with the flu.
He cried at the death of a man he willingly brought
down, so much that I wept too—believe it.

CAESAR

[Joining the others with OCTAVIA] No, sweet Octavia, you
will always hear from me. Time will stop before I stop
thinking about you.

ANTONY

Come, sir, come, I'll challenge you to see who can love the
most. Look, I'll show you.

ANTONY embraces CAESAR.

Thus I let you depart and commend you to the gods.

CAESAR

Farewell. Be happy.

April, the beginning of spring, was associated with courtship and the beginnings of love, as well as with spring rain. Antony implies that Octavia cries at leaving her brother so she can begin loving her husband.

Antony uses the image of a feather floating in water just as the tide is about to turn, when the feather would not be moved in either direction, to describe Octavia, who feels so torn between the two men that she cannot speak.

Enobarbus picks up on Agrippa's reference to clouds. A cloud is a dark mark on a horse's face. Horses with clouds were thought to have a bad temper.

Brutus committed suicide at the battle of Philippi when he realized that his armies would lose to Mark Antony and Octavius Caesar.

The flu brought on watery eyes. Enobarbus slyly comments on the insincerity of some of Antony's grief.

LEPIDUS

(to ANTONY) Let all the number of the stars give light
To thy fair way.

CAESAR

Farewell, farewell.

Kisses OCTAVIA

ANTONY

85 Farewell.

Trumpets sound. Exeunt

LEPIDUS

[To ANTONY] May all the stars light an easy path before you.

CAESAR

Farewell, farewell.

CAESAR kisses OCTAVIA.

ANTONY

Farewell.

*Trumpets sound. ANTONY, CAESAR, OCTAVIA, LEPIDUS,
ENOBARBUS, and AGRIPPA exit.*

Act 3, Scene 3

Shakespeare

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS, and ALEXAS

CLEOPATRA

Where is the fellow?

ALEXAS

Half afeard to come.

CLEOPATRA

Go to, go to.—Come hither, sir.

Enter the MESSENGER as before

ALEXAS

5 Good majesty,
Herod of Jewry dare not look upon you
But when you are well pleased.

CLEOPATRA

10 That Herod's head
I'll have! But how? When Antony is gone,
Through whom I might command it? (to MESSENGER) Come
thou near.

MESSENGER

Most gracious majesty!

CLEOPATRA

Didst thou behold Octavia?

MESSENGER

Ay, dread Queen.

CLEOPATRA

Where?

MESSENGER

15 Madam, in Rome.
I looked her in the face, and saw her led
Between her brother and Mark Antony.

CLEOPATRA

Is she as tall as me?

MESSENGER

She is not, madam.

Shakesclore Translation

CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS, and ALEXAS enter.

CLEOPATRA

Where is the man?

ALEXAS


He's afraid to come.


CLEOPATRA

Never mind that, never mind. Come here, sir.

The MESSENGER from the earlier scene enters.

ALEXAS

Good queen, not even King Herod  dares to come in your
presence except when you are in a good mood.

 Herod, noted earlier as the king
responsible for the slaughter of
children, was known for his cruelty.

CLEOPATRA

I'll have King Herod's head! But how? When Antony is gone,
who will carry out my orders?

[To the MESSENGER] Come closer.

MESSENGER

Most gracious queen!

CLEOPATRA

Did you see Octavia?

MESSENGER

Yes, oh powerful Queen.

CLEOPATRA

Where?

MESSENGER

Madam, in Rome. I looked at her face, and I saw her walking
between her brother and Mark Antony.

CLEOPATRA

Is she as tall as me?

MESSENGER

She is not, madam.

CLEOPATRA
20 Didst hear her speak? Is she shrill-tongued or low?

MESSENGER
Madam, I heard her speak. She is low-voiced.

CLEOPATRA
That's not so good. He cannot like her long.

CHARMIAN
Like her? O Isis, 'tis impossible.

CLEOPATRA
I think so, Charmian. Dull of tongue, and dwarfish.—
25 What majesty is in her gait? Remember,
If e'er thou looked'st on majesty.

MESSENGER
She creeps.
Her motion and her station are as one.
She shows a body rather than a life,
30 A statue than a breather.

CLEOPATRA
Is this certain?

MESSENGER
Or I have no observance.

CHARMIAN
Three in Egypt
Cannot make better note.

CLEOPATRA
35 He's very knowing,
I do perceive 't. There's nothing in her yet.
The fellow has good judgment.

CHARMIAN
Excellent.

CLEOPATRA
(to *MESSENGER*) Guess at her years, I prithee.

MESSENGER
40 Madam, she was a widow—

CLEOPATRA
Widow? Charmian, hark.

MESSENGER
And I do think she's thirty.

CLEOPATRA
Bear'st thou her face in mind? Is 't long or round?

MESSENGER
Round, even to faultiness.

CLEOPATRA
45 For the most part, too, they are foolish that are so.
Her hair, what color?

MESSENGER
Brown, madam, and her forehead
As low as she would wish it.

CLEOPATRA
Did you hear her speak? Does she have a high voice or a low one?

MESSENGER
Madam, I heard her speak. She has a low voice.

CLEOPATRA
That's not very good for Octavia. He cannot like her for long.

CHARMIAN
Like her? By Isis, that is impossible.

CLEOPATRA
I think so, Charmian. She has a dull voice and she's short—does she walk in an elegant way? Recall, if you ever looked at a queen.

MESSENGER
She has a slow, hunched walk. She looks the same walking and standing still. She has a body, not a form with life in it. She's more like a statue than a living, breathing woman.

CLEOPATRA
Is this certain?

MESSENGER
It is, or I have no power to observe.

CHARMIAN
There's not three people in Egypt who can observe better than he can.


CLEOPATRA
He's very shrewd, I can tell. I haven't heard about any good qualities in Octavia yet. The man has good judgment.

CHARMIAN
Excellent.

CLEOPATRA
(To the *MESSENGER*) Please, guess how old she is.

MESSENGER
Madam, she was a widow—


CLEOPATRA
Widow? Charmian, pay attention to this.


MESSENGER
And I think she's around thirty .


CLEOPATRA
Do you remember her face? Is it long or round?

MESSENGER
Round, even to a fault.

CLEOPATRA
For the most part, people with round faces are foolish. What color is her hair?

MESSENGER
Brown, madam, and her forehead is so low  that she wouldn't want it any lower.

 Cleopatra is thirty-eight, so he believes Octavia is younger.

 During this time, high foreheads were considered attractive.

CLEOPATRA

(giving money) There's gold for thee.

- 50 Thou must not take my former sharpness ill.
I will employ thee back again; I find thee
Most fit for business. Go make thee ready;
Our letters are prepared.

Exit MESSENGER

CHARMIAN

A proper man.

CLEOPATRA

- 55 Indeed, he is so. I repent me much
That so I harried him. Why, methinks, by him,
This creature's no such thing.

CHARMIAN

Nothing, madam.

CLEOPATRA

The man hath seen some majesty and should know.

CHARMIAN

- 60 Hath he seen majesty? Isis else defend,
And serving you so long!

CLEOPATRA

I have one thing more to ask him yet, good Charmian—
But 'tis no matter; thou shalt bring him to me
Where I will write. All may be well enough.

CHARMIAN

- 65 I warrant you, madam.

Exeunt

CLEOPATRA

[Giving the MESSENGER money] Here's money for you. You must not hold my previous hostility against me. I'll employ you for another task; I find that you're a very useful man. Get ready to go; our letters are ready.

The MESSENGER exits.

CHARMIAN

An admirable man.

CLEOPATRA

Indeed, he is. I'm very sorry that I harassed him so much. Why, judging by his report, I think that this Octavia woman really has no good qualities to speak of.

CHARMIAN

None, madam.

CLEOPATRA

Antony has seen what royalty looks like, and he should know it when he sees it.

CHARMIAN

Has he seen royalty? Isis forbid that he has not seen royalty, after serving you so long!

CLEOPATRA

I have one more thing to ask him still, good Charmian—but it doesn't matter. You'll bring him to me and I'll write my letter. All may be well enough.

CHARMIAN

I assure you, madam.

CLEOPATRA and CHARMIAN exit.

Act 3, Scene 4

Shakespeare

Enter ANTONY and OCTAVIA

ANTONY

- Nay, nay, Octavia, not only that—
That were excusable, that and thousands more
Of semblable import—but he hath waged
New wars 'gainst Pompey; made his will, and read it
5 To public ear;
Spoke scantily of me; when perforce he could not
But pay me terms of honor, cold and sickly
He vented them, most narrow measure lent me.
When the best hint was given him, he not took 't,
10 Or did it from his teeth.

OCTAVIA

- O my good lord,
Believe not all, or, if you must believe,
Stomach not all. A more unhappy lady,
If this division chance, ne'er stood between,
15 Praying for both parts.
The good gods will mock me presently,
When I shall pray "O bless my lord and husband!"
Undo that prayer by crying out as loud
"O bless my brother!" Husband win, win brother
20 Prays and destroys the prayer; no midway
'Twi'x these extremes at all.

Shakescleare Translation


ANTONY and OCTAVIA enter.


ANTONY

No, no, Octavia, it's not just that. That would be excusable, as would thousands of other crimes just like it. But he has also waged new wars against Pompey; and he has also written his will and [read it aloud in public](#). He has spoken badly of me, and when he was forced to say things in my favor, his words were cold and unenthusiastic and he gave me very little credit. Even when he had the strongest reason to praise me, he did not do it, or he did it very unwillingly.

OCTAVIA

Oh my good lord, don't believe all the things you hear, or, if you must believe them, don't take so much offense at all of them. There will be no lady unhappier than I if you two fight. I'll be stuck in the middle, praying for you both. The gods will laugh at me when I pray for both my husband and my brother. "Oh bless my lord and husband!" when I undo that prayer by crying out just as earnestly, "Oh bless my brother!" To pray that both my brother and husband win would be to [destroy the prayer](#). There's no way for both sides to find success.

 Octavius Caesar has apparently made promises to the public in his will about benefits he will secure for them; this may stir public opinion in favor of Caesar rather than Antony.

 To pray for both Antony and Caesar would be pointless because, if they strongly oppose each other, only one of them can win.

ANTONY

Gentle Octavia,
Let your best love draw to that point which seeks
Best to preserve it. If I lose mine honor,
25 I lose myself; better I were not yours
Than yours so branchless. But, as you requested,
Yourself shall go between 's. The meantime, lady,
I'll raise the preparation of a war
Shall stain your brother. Make your soonest haste;
30 So your desires are yours.

OCTAVIA

Thanks to my lord.
The Jove of power make me most weak, most weak,
Your reconciler! Wars 'twixt you twain would be
As if the world should cleave, and that slain men
35 Should solder up the rift.


ANTONY


When it appears to you where this begins,
Turn your displeasure that way, for our faults
Can never be so equal that your love
Can equally move with them. Provide your going;
40 Choose your own company and command what cost
Your heart has mind to.

*Exeunt***ANTONY**

Gentle Octavia, give your most faithful love to the side that most worthily tries to deserve your love. If I lose my honor, I lose myself. It would be better to have no husband, than for you to have a husband who was so defeated. But, as you requested, you should negotiate between us. In the meantime, lady, I'll make such strong preparations for war that they will make your brother appear less powerful. Go as quickly as you can; then you'll get what you desire quickly.

OCTAVIA

Thank you, my lord. May the powerful king of the gods make me, who am most weak , act as your mediator! If you were to go to war with each other, it would be as if the world had split in two, and the chasm would have to be filled with the bodies of dead men.

 Women were proverbially known as the weaker sex.

ANTONY

When it becomes apparent to you who started this conflict, turn your anger against that person. For our faults could never be so equal that you, in your love, could condemn them equally. Get ready to leave. Choose your companions and make your preparations as expensive as you desire.

ANTONY and OCTAVIA exit.

Act 3, Scene 5

Shakespeare

*Enter ENOBARBUS and EROS***ENOBARBUS**

How now, friend Eros!

EROS

There's strange news come, sir.

ENOBARBUS

What, man?

EROS

Caesar and Lepidus have made wars upon Pompey.

ENOBARBUS

5 This is old. What is the success?

EROS

Caesar, having made use of him in the wars 'gainst Pompey, presently denied him rivalry, would not let him partake in the glory of the action, and, not resting here, accuses him of letters he had formerly wrote to
10 Pompey; upon his own appeal seizes him. So the poor third is up, till death enlarge his confine.

ENOBARBUS

Then, world, thou hast a pair of chaps, no more,
And throw between them all the food thou hast,
They'll grind the one the other. Where's Antony?

EROS

15 He's walking in the garden— [*imitating anger*] thus, and spurns
The rush that lies before him; cries, "Fool Lepidus!"
And threats the throat of that his officer
That murdered Pompey.

Shakescleare Translation

*ENOBARBUS and EROS enter.***ENOBARBUS**

How are you doing, my friend Eros!

EROS

There's been some strange news, sir.

ENOBARBUS

What, man?


EROS


Caesar and Lepidus have declared war against Pompey.

ENOBARBUS

That's old news. How is the fight going?

EROS


Caesar used Lepidus to help him fight Pompey, but then immediately denied Lepidus equal power, wouldn't share the glory of the victory with him, and what's more, he's making accusations against him based on letters Lepidus had written to Pompey. Upon Caesar's accusations, Lepidus was arrested. So this poor third  is imprisoned until he is freed by death.


 Lepidus had been one third of the triumvirate composed by himself, Caesar, and Antony, and so is called a "third."

ENOBARBUS

Then, world, you have a pair of leaders, no more, and even if you offer them all the wealth you have, one will still destroy the other. Where's Antony?

EROS

He's walking in the garden— [*imitating anger*] like this. He kicks the plants that lie in his path, cries, "Fool Lepidus!" and threatens to slit the throat of that officer of his  that murdered Pompey.

 Shakespeare leaves it unclear exactly how Antony is responsible for Pompey's death, but historically, Pompey was said to have been

murdered on Antony's orders by one of Antony's officers.

ENOBARBUS

20 Our great navy's rigged.

EROS

For Italy and Caesar. More, Domitius:
My lord desires you presently. My news
I might have told hereafter.

ENOBARBUS

'Twill be naught,
25 But let it be. Bring me to Antony.

EROS

Come, sir.

Exeunt

ENOBARBUS

Our great navy is ready.

EROS

To go to Italy and face Caesar. There's more, Domitius ³:
my lord wants to see you immediately. I should have told
you my news afterwards.

³ Domitius is another name for Enobarbus.

ENOBARBUS

It doesn't matter, never mind. Bring me to Antony.

EROS

Come, sir.

ENOBARBUS and EROS exit.

Act 3, Scene 6

Shakespeare

Enter AGRIPPA, MECAENAS, and CAESAR

CAESAR

Contemning Rome, he has done all this and more
In Alexandria. Here's the manner of 't:
I' th' marketplace, on a tribunal silvered,
Cleopatra and himself in chairs of gold
5 Were publicly enthroned. At the feet sat
Caesarion, whom they call my father's son,
And all the unlawful issue that their lust
Since then hath made between them. Unto her
He gave the stablishment of Egypt, made her
10 Of lower Syria, Cyprus, Lydia,
Absolute Queen.

MAECENAS

This in the public eye?

CAESAR

I' th' common showplace, where they exercise.
His sons he there proclaimed the kings of kings:
15 Great Media, Parthia, and Armenia
He gave to Alexander; to Ptolemy he assigned
Syria, Cilicia, and Phoenicia. She
In th' habiliments of the goddess Isis
That day appeared, and oft before gave audience,
20 As 'tis reported, so.

MAECENAS

Let Rome be thus informed.

AGRIPPA

Who, queasy with his insolence already,
Will their good thoughts call from him.

CAESAR

The people knows it, and have now received
25 His accusations.

AGRIPPA

Who does he accuse?

Shakescleare Translation

AGRIPPA, MECAENAS, and CAESAR enter.

CAESAR

Anthony condemned Rome, and that's not all. Here's what
happened: in the marketplace, on a silver platform, he and
Cleopatra were publicly enthroned in chairs of gold. At their
feet sat Caesarion, whom they say is my father's son ¹,
along with all the illegitimate children that their lust has
generated between them. Anthony gave her full possession
of Egypt and made her absolute ruler of lower Syria,
Cyprus, and Lydia.

¹ Octavius Caesar was Julius Caesar's adopted son.

MAECENAS

He did this in public?

CAESAR

In the public arena, where people play sports. There, he
proclaimed his sons to be the kings of kings. He gave great
Media, Parthia, and Armenia to Alexander ²; he gave
Syria, Cilicia, and Phoenicia to Ptolemy. She appeared that
day dressed like the goddess Isis, and it is said that she has
often appeared in public in that costume.

² Alexander and Ptolemy are two of Antony and Cleopatra's children.

MAECENAS

Let the people in Rome know this.

AGRIPPA

The Romans are already indignant at his disrespectful
behavior and will stop thinking well of him.

CAESAR

The people know it already, and have now heard the
accusations that he makes in order to justify his behavior.

AGRIPPA

Who does he accuse?

CAESAR

Caesar, and that, having in Sicily
Sextus Pompeius spoiled, we had not rated him
His part o' th' isle. Then does he say he lent me
30 Some shipping, unrestored. Lastly, he frets
That Lepidus of the triumvirate
Should be deposed, and, being, that we detain
All his revenue.

AGRIPPA

Sir, this should be answered.

CAESAR

35 'Tis done already, and the messenger gone.
I have told him, Lepidus was grown too cruel,
That he his high authority abused
And did deserve his change. For what I have conquered,
I grant him part; but then, in his Armenia,
40 And other of his conquered kingdoms, I
Demand the like.

MAECENAS

He'll never yield to that.

CAESAR

Nor must not then be yielded to in this.

Enter OCTAVIA with her train

OCTAVIA

Hail, Caesar, and my lord! Hail, most dear Caesar!

CAESAR

45 That ever I should call thee castaway!

OCTAVIA

You have not called me so, nor have you cause.

CAESAR

Why have you stol'n upon us thus? You come not
Like Caesar's sister. The wife of Antony
Should have an army for an usher and
50 The neighs of horse to tell of her approach
Long ere she did appear. The trees by th' way
Should have borne men, and expectation fainted,
Longing for what it had not. Nay, the dust
Should have ascended to the roof of heaven,
55 Raised by your populous troops. But you are come
A market-maid to Rome and have prevented
The ostentation of our love, which, left unshown,
Is often left unloved. We should have met you
By sea and land, supplying every stage
60 With an augmented greeting.

OCTAVIA

Good my lord,
To come thus was I not constrained, but did it
On my free will. My lord, Mark Antony,
Hearing that you prepared for war, acquainted
65 My grievèd ear withal, whereon I begged
His pardon for return.

CAESAR

Which soon he granted,
Being an obstruct 'tween his lust and him.

OCTAVIA

Do not say so, my lord.

CAESAR

He accuses me, because after we defeated Sextus Pompey
in Sicily, we did not give him his share of the island. He also
says that he lent me some goods that I have not returned.
Finally, he's upset that Lepidus has been cut out of the
triumvirate and claims that I have kept all of Lepidus's
property.

AGRIPPA

Sir, some answer should be made to these accusations.

CAESAR

It has already been done, and the messenger has left with
my reply. I told him that Lepidus had grown too cruel and
had abused his high position of power and so deserved to
be deposed. I will give him part of the lands I have
conquered; but then, I will demand that he give me part of
Armenia and the other kingdoms he has conquered.

MAECENAS

He'll never agree to that.

CAESAR

Then I should not agree to his terms.


OCTAVIA enters with her followers.

OCTAVIA

Hail, Caesar, my lord! Hail, most dear Caesar!

CAESAR

Oh what a pity that I should ever call you a [castaway](#)!

 Caesar is afraid that Octavia has been sent away, or cast away, by her husband Antony.

OCTAVIA

You haven't called me one, and you have no reason to.

CAESAR

Why have you snuck up on us like this? You don't come in
the style that's appropriate for Caesar's sister. Antony's wife
should be escorted by an army, with neighing horses to
announce her arrival before she appears. Crowds should
have climbed trees on the side of the road expecting to see
you and fainted when they didn't see the sight they longed
to see. In fact, you should have been preceded by so many
troops that the dust raised by their feet would reach up to
the sky. But you have traveled to Rome like a common maid
going to the market and prevented me from publicly
displaying my love, and when love isn't shown, it's often
unappreciated. I would have met you at sea and on land,
with a more spectacular greeting at every stage of the
journey.

OCTAVIA

My good lord, I wasn't forced to travel this way, but I did it
of my own free will. My lord, Mark Antony, heard that you
were preparing for war and told me about it, which upset
me so much that I begged his permission to return.

CAESAR

And he soon gave you his permission, since you are an
obstacle that prevents him from satisfying his lust.

OCTAVIA

Do not say that, my lord.

CAESAR

70 I have eyes upon him,
And his affairs come to me on the wind.
Where is he now?

OCTAVIA

My lord, in Athens.

CAESAR

No, my most wrongèd sister. Cleopatra
75 Hath nodded him to her. He hath given his empire
Up to a whore; who now are levying
The kings o' th' earth for war. He hath assembled
Bocchus, the King of Libya; Archelaus,
Of Cappadocia; Philadelphos, King
80 Of Paphlagonia; the Thracian king, Adallas;
King Manchus of Arabia; King of Pont;
Herod of Jewry; Mithridates, King
Of Comagen; Polemon and Amyntas,
The Kings of Mede and Lycaonia,
85 With a more larger list of scepters.

OCTAVIA

Ay me, most wretched,
That have my heart parted betwixt two friends
That does afflict each other!

CAESAR

Welcome hither.
90 Your letters did withhold our breaking forth
Till we perceived both how you were wrong led
And we in negligent danger. Cheer your heart.
Be you not troubled with the time, which drives
O'er your content these strong necessities,
95 But let determined things to destiny
Hold unbewailed their way. Welcome to Rome,
Nothing more dear to me. You are abused
Beyond the mark of thought, and the high gods,
To do you justice, makes his ministers
100 Of us and those that love you. Best of comfort,
And ever welcome to us.

AGRIPPA

Welcome, lady.

MAECENAS

Welcome, dear madam.
Each heart in Rome does love and pity you.
105 Only th' adulterous Antony, most large
In his abominations, turns you off
And gives his potent regiment to a trull
That noises it against us.

OCTAVIA

(*to CAESAR*) Is it so, sir?

CAESAR

110 Most certain. Sister, welcome. Pray you
Be ever known to patience. My dear'st sister!

Exeunt

CAESAR

I'm having him watched, and messengers tell me what he is
up to. Where is he now?

OCTAVIA

In Athens, my lord.

CAESAR

No, my mistreated sister. Cleopatra has summoned him to
her. He's given up his empire to a whore, and they are now
marshaling all the kings on earth for war. He has assembled
Bocchus, the king of Libya; Archelaus, of Cappadocia;
Philadelphos, king of Paphlagonia; the Thracian king,
Adallas; King Manchus of Arabia; King of Pont; Herod of
Judea; Mithridates, King of Comegen; Polemon and
Amyntas, the kings of Mede and Lycaonia, among others.

OCTAVIA

Oh dear, I am a most wretched woman to have my
affections torn between two friends who plague each other!

CAESAR

You're welcome here. Your letters kept me from waging
open war until I knew both that you were being deceived
and that I was in danger due to my negligence. Be cheerful.
Don't be troubled by the current situation, when these
obligations threaten to ruin your peace of mind. Don't
worry about things that have already been decided.
Welcome to Rome, you are more dear to me than anything.
You are more abused than anyone could comprehend, and
the gods make me and those who love you their agents to
bring about justice for you. You bring me most comfort, and
you are always welcome with me.

AGRIPPA

Welcome, lady.

MAECENAS

Welcome, dear madam. Every person in Rome loves you
and pities you with all their heart. Only the adulterous
Antony, great in his faults, abandons you and gives his great
political power to a whore who opposes us.

OCTAVIA

(*To CAESAR*) Is that true, sir?

CAESAR

It's certain. Sister, welcome. Please, try always to be
patient. My dearest sister!

CAESAR, OCTAVIA, MECAENAS, and AGRIPPA exit.

Act 3, Scene 7

Shakespeare

Enter CLEOPATRA and ENOBARBUS

Shakescleare Translation

CLEOPATRA and ENOBARBUS enter.

CLEOPATRA

I will be even with thee, doubt it not.

ENOBARBUS

But why, why, why?

CLEOPATRA

Thou hast forspoke my being in these wars
And sayst it is not fit.

ENOBARBUS

5 Well, is it, is it?

CLEOPATRA

Is 't not denounced against us? Why should not we
Be there in person?

ENOBARBUS

Well, I could reply,
If we should serve with horse and mares together,
10 The horse were merely lost. The mares would bear
A soldier and his horse.

CLEOPATRA

What is 't you say?

ENOBARBUS

Your presence needs must puzzle Antony,
Take from his heart, take from his brain, from 's time
15 What should not then be spared. He is already
Traded for levity, and 'tis said in Rome
That Photinus, an eunuch, and your maids
Manage this war.

CLEOPATRA

Sink Rome! And their tongues rot
20 That speak against us! A charge we bear i' th' war,
And as the president of my kingdom will
Appear there for a man. Speak not against it.
I will not stay behind.

Enter ANTONY and CANIDIUS

ENOBARBUS

Nay, I have done.
25 Here comes the Emperor.

ANTONY

Is it not strange, Canidius,
That from Tarentum and Brundisium
He could so quickly cut the Ionian sea
And take in Tornyne? —You have heard on 't, sweet?

CLEOPATRA

30 Celerity is never more admired
Than by the negligent.

ANTONY

A good rebuke,
Which might have well become the best of men,
To taunt at slackness. —Canidius, we will fight
35 With him by sea.

CLEOPATRA

By sea, what else?

CANIDIUS

Why will
My lord do so?

CLEOPATRA

I will get even with you, have no doubts about that.

ENOBARBUS

But why, why, why?

CLEOPATRA

You say I shouldn't take part in this war and that it isn't
appropriate.

ENOBARBUS

Well, is it appropriate, is it?

CLEOPATRA

Isn't the war declared against me? Why shouldn't I be there
in person?

ENOBARBUS

Well, if I could, I would say that if we were to go to war with
both men and women, the men would be undone by the
women. The women would seduce the male soldiers.

CLEOPATRA

What are you saying?

ENOBARBUS

If you were there, your presence would inevitably distract
Antony. You'd take his heart and his mind off the business
at hand, which we certainly could not afford. He's already
been criticized for being frivolous, and it's said in Rome that
Photinus the eunuch and your maids control this war.

CLEOPATRA

To hell with Rome! And let them rot, those who criticize us!
I'll do my duty in the war, and as the ruler of my kingdom,
I'll appear there just as a man would. Don't oppose my
plan. I won't stay behind.

ANTONY and CANIDIUS enter.

ENOBARBUS

No, I'm done talking with you. Here comes the Emperor.

ANTONY

Isn't it strange, Canidius, that after starting from the ports
of Tarentum and Brundisium, he could have cut across the
Ionian sea so quickly and overpowered the city of Tornyne?

[To CLEOPATRA] Have you heard about this, sweetheart?

CLEOPATRA

No one admires speed more than a lazy man.

ANTONY

A good criticism, which would have been suitable for the
best of men to use to mock laziness.—Canidius, we will
fight with him on the sea.

CLEOPATRA

By sea, how else would we do it?

CANIDIUS

Why do you want to do that?

ANTONY

For that he dares us to 't.

ENOBARBUS

40 So hath my lord dared him to single fight.

CANIDIUS

Ay, and to wage this battle at Pharsalia,
Where Caesar fought with Pompey. But these offers,
Which serve not for his vantage, he shakes off,
And so should you.

ENOBARBUS

45 Your ships are not well manned,
Your mariners are muleteers, reapers, people
Engrossed by swift impress. In Caesar's fleet
Are those that often have 'gainst Pompey fought.
Their ships are yare, yours, heavy. No disgrace
50 Shall fall you for refusing him at sea,
Being prepared for land.

ANTONY

By sea, by sea.

ENOBARBUS

Most worthy sir, you therein throw away
The absolute soldiership you have by land,
55 Distract your army, which doth most consist
Of war-marked footmen, leave unexecuted
Your own renowned knowledge, quite forego
The way which promises assurance, and
Give up yourself merely to chance and hazard
60 From firm security.

ANTONY

I'll fight at sea.

CLEOPATRA

I have sixty sails, Caesar none better.

ANTONY

Our overplus of shipping will we burn,
And with the rest full-manned, from th' head of Actium
65 Beat th' approaching Caesar. But if we fail,
We then can do 't at land.

Enter a MESSENGER

Thy business?

MESSENGER

The news is true, my lord. He is descried.
Caesar has taken Tornyne.

Exit

ANTONY

70 Can he be there in person? 'Tis impossible,
Strange that his power should be. Canidius,
Our nineteen legions thou shalt hold by land,
And our twelve thousand horse. We'll to our ship.
Away, my Thetis!

Enter a SOLDIER

75 How now, worthy soldier?

SOLDIER

O noble Emperor, do not fight by sea!
Trust not to rotten planks. Do you misdoubt

ANTONY

Because he dares us to.

ENOBARBUS

And my lord Antony has also challenged Caesar to single combat.

CANIDIUS

Yes, and also to fight this battle at Pharsalia, where Caesar fought with Pompey. But these offers aren't to Caesar's advantage and he rejects them, and so should you.

ENOBARBUS

Your ships aren't manned by good sailors. Your crew consists of mule drivers, farmers, people that you got together quickly through drafting. Caesar's fleet has men who often fought against Pompey. Their ships are light and agile, yours are heavy and slow. There would be no shame in refusing to fight him at sea, since you're better prepared to fight him on land.

ANTONY

By sea, by sea.

ENOBARBUS

Most worthy sir, by doing that you would throw away the advantage of the excellent soldiers you have on land; reroute your army, which consists of trained foot soldiers; make no use of your own considerable knowledge; abandon the strategy that promises success; and give up a highly secure position to leave yourself at the mercy of chance and fortune.


ANTONY


I'll fight at sea.

CLEOPATRA

I have sixty ships, Caesar has nothing better than that.

ANTONY

We'll burn our surplus ships , and then we'll fully man the rest to beat Caesar back as he approaches the tip of Actium. But if we fail at sea, then we can fight on land.

 Antony has more ships than he has men to sail them, so he plans to burn his extra ships so that they cannot be captured by Caesar.

A MESSENGER enters.

What's your business?

MESSENGER


The news is true, my lord. He has been spotted. Caesar has taken Tornyne.

The MESSENGER exits.

ANTONY

How can he be there? That's impossible—it's strange even that all his forces should be there. Canidius, you'll command the nineteen legions and the twelve thousand horses that we have on land. I will go by sea.

[To CLEOPATRA] Come with me, my sea goddess !

 Thetis, referred to in the original text, was a sea goddess who gave birth to the war hero Achilles.

A SOLDIER enters.

What's going on now, worthy soldier?

SOLDIER

Oh noble Emperor, don't fight at sea! Don't trust the rotting wood of ships. Can you not see from my sword and my

This sword and these my wounds? Let th' Egyptians
And the Phoenicians go a-ducking. We
80 Have used to conquer standing on the earth
And fighting foot to foot.

ANTONY

Well, well, away.

Exeunt ANTONY, CLEOPATRA, and ENOBARBUS

SOLDIER

By Hercules, I think I am i' th' right.

CANIDIUS

Soldier, thou art; but his whole action grows
85 Not in the power on 't. So our leader's led,
And we are women's men.

SOLDIER

You keep by land
The legions and the horse whole, do you not?

CANIDIUS

Marcus Octavius, Marcus Justeius,
90 Publicola, and Caelius, are for sea;
But we keep whole by land. This speed of Caesar's
Carries beyond belief.

SOLDIER

While he was yet in Rome
His power went out in such distractions as
95 Beguiled all spies.

CANIDIUS

Who's his lieutenant, hear you?

SOLDIER

They say, one Taurus.

CANIDIUS

Well I know the man.

Enter a MESSENGER

MESSENGER

The Emperor calls Canidius.

CANIDIUS

100 With news the time's with labor, and throws forth
Each minute some.

Exeunt

wounds? Let the Egyptians and the Phoenicians fight on the
water. We are used to conquering our enemies on land and
fighting foot soldiers with foot soldiers.

ANTONY

Well, well, away.

ANTONY, CLEOPATRA, and ENOBARBUS exit.

SOLDIER

I swear by Hercules, I think I am right.

CANIDIUS

Soldier, you are, but he makes all his plans without
considering what he has the power to accomplish. So our
leader is led astray, and we men are led by a woman.

SOLDIER

You still have the entirety of the legions and the horses in
reserve, don't you?

CANIDIUS

Marcus Octavius, Marcus Justeius, Publicola, and Caelius
are heading to sea, but our forces are kept together in
reserve on land. It's unbelievable how fast Caesar has
moved.

SOLDIER

While he was still in Rome, his forces went out in so many
different directions that none of our spies could keep track
of them.

CANIDIUS

Have you heard who his lieutenant is?

SOLDIER

They say a certain man named Taurus.

CANIDIUS

I know the man well.

A MESSENGER enters.

MESSENGER

The Emperor has sent for Canidius.

CANIDIUS

These times are full of news, and every minute we learn
something else.

CANIDIUS, the SOLDIER, and the MESSENGER exit.

Act 3, Scene 8

Shakespeare

Enter CAESAR with his army, and TAURUS, marching

CAESAR

Taurus!

TAURUS

My lord?

CAESAR

Strike not by land; keep whole. Provoke not battle
Till we have done at sea. Do not exceed

5

Shakescleare Translation

CAESAR enters with his army; TAURUS enters, marching.

CAESAR

Taurus!

TAURUS

My lord?

CAESAR

Don't send out any troops to attack them on land; stay in
reserve. Don't start to fight on land until we have finished

The prescript of this scroll.

He gives a scroll

Our fortune lies
Upon this jump.

Exit with army

fighting at sea. Do not go beyond the instructions written in this scroll.

CAESAR hands TAURUS a scroll.

Our fortune depends on this strategy.

CAESAR and TAURUS exit with the army.

Act 3, Scene 9

Shakespeare

Enter ANTONY and ENOBARBUS

ANTONY

Set we our squadrons on yond side o' th' hill,
In eye of Caesar's battle, from which place
We may the number of the ships behold
And so proceed accordingly.

Exit

Shakescleare Translation

ANTONY enters with ENOBARBUS.

ANTONY

Let's set our forces on the far side of the hill, in view of Caesar's battle line. From there, we can see how many ships he has and plan accordingly.

ANTONY and ENOBARBUS exit.

Act 3, Scene 10

Shakespeare

CANIDIUS marcheth with his land army one way over the stage, and TAURUS, the lieutenant of CAESAR, the other way. After their going in is heard the noise of a sea fight

Alarum. Enter ENOBARBUS

ENOBARBUS

Naught, naught, all naught! I can behold no longer.
Th' *Antoniad*, the Egyptian admiral,
With all their sixty, fly and turn the rudder.
To see 't mine eyes are blasted.

Enter SCARUS

SCARUS

5 Gods and goddesses,
All the whole synod of them!

ENOBARBUS

What's thy passion?

SCARUS

The greater cantle of the world is lost
With very ignorance. We have kissed away
10 Kingdoms and provinces.

ENOBARBUS

How appears the fight?

SCARUS

On our side like the tokened pestilence,
Where death is sure. Yon ribaudred nag of Egypt—
Whom leprosy o'ertake!—i' th' midst o' th' fight,
15 When vantage like a pair of twins appeared
Both as the same, or rather ours the elder,
The breeze upon her, like a cow in June,

Shakescleare Translation

CAESAR marches with his foot soldiers in one direction across the stage while TAURUS, CAESAR'S lieutenant, marches the other way. After they leave the stage, the sound of a sea battle is heard.

An alarm is sounded. ENOBARBUS enters.

ENOBARBUS

Lost, lost, all is lost! I can't watch it any longer. The *Antoniad*, the Egyptian flagship, along with the sixty other ships, have turned around and fled the battle. It destroys my eyes to see it.

SCARUS enters.

SCARUS

By the whole assembly of the gods and goddesses!

ENOBARBUS

What is troubling you?

SCARUS

The largest portion of the world is lost due to extreme ignorance. We have lost our kingdoms and provinces.

ENOBARBUS

How is the battle going?

SCARUS

On our side, it's as if we've been struck with the plague, which means that death is sure to come. That lustful old Egyptian horse—may leprosy strike her down!—in the very midst of the fight, when the advantage appeared to be even, or rather greater on our side, acted like a cow in June driven by a slight wind, and hoisted sail and fled the battle.

Hoists sails and flies.

ENOBARBUS

That I beheld.

- 20 Mine eyes did sicken at the sight and could not
Endure a further view.

SCARUS

She once being loofed,
The noble ruin of her magic, Antony,
Claps on his sea-wing and, like a doting mallard
25 Leaving the fight in height, flies after her.
I never saw an action of such shame.
Experience, manhood, honor, ne'er before
Did violate so itself.

ENOBARBUS

Alack, alack!

Enter CANIDIUS

CANIDIUS

- 30 Our fortune on the sea is out of breath
And sinks most lamentably. Had our general
Been what he knew himself, it had gone well.
Oh, he has given example for our flight
Most grossly by his own!

ENOBARBUS

- 35 Ay, are you thereabouts? Why then, good night indeed.

CANIDIUS

Toward Peloponnesus are they fled.

SCARUS

'Tis easy to 't, and there I will attend
What further comes.

He exits

CANIDIUS

To Caesar will I render
40 My legions and my horse. Six kings already
Show me the way of yielding.

He exits

ENOBARBUS

I'll yet follow
The wounded chance of Antony, though my reason
Sits in the wind against me.

He exits

ENOBARBUS

I saw that. It made me sick to watch it happen, and I
couldn't bear to watch it any longer.

SCARUS

Once she had prepared her ships to leave, Antony—that
noble man who has been destroyed by her magic—hoisted
his sails as well and, like an overfond duck, left the battle at
its very height and flew after her. I had never seen such
shameful behavior. Never before has any man betrayed his
better knowledge, his manhood, and his honor so severely.

ENOBARBUS

Alas, alas!

CANIDIUS enters.

CANIDIUS

We have lost our advantage at sea, and our prospects for
success are decreasing depressingly quickly. If our general
had been true to himself, the battle would have gone well
for us. Oh, he has set an example for us to abandon him, as
he so disgustingly abandoned us!

ENOBARBUS

Ah, are you thinking that too? Well, then, it really is over
now.

CANIDIUS

They fled toward Peloponnesus.

SCARUS

It's easy to get there, and I'll wait there to see what comes
next.

SCARUS exits.

CANIDIUS

I will offer my legions and my horses to Caesar's service. Six
kings have already set an example by similarly yielding to
Caesar.

CANIDUS exits.

ENOBARBUS

I'll stick with Antony and his diminished chances for now,
even though I'm acting against my better judgment.

ENOBARBUS exits.

Act 3, Scene 11

Shakespeare

Enter ANTONY with attendants

ANTONY

- Hark. The land bids me tread no more upon 't.
It is ashamed to bear me. Friends, come hither.
I am so lated in the world that I
Have lost my way forever. I have a ship
5 Laden with gold. Take that, divide it. Fly
And make your peace with Caesar.

Shakescleare Translation

ANTONY enters with followers.

ANTONY

See how the earth itself tells me not to walk on it any more.
It is ashamed to hold me. Friends, come here. I am so
overtaken by night that I have lost my way forever in this
world. I have a ship full of gold. Take the gold and divide it
amongst yourselves. Abandon me and make peace with
Caesar.

ALL

Fly? Not we.

ANTONY

I have fled myself, and have instructed cowards
To run and show their shoulders. Friends, begone.

- 10 I have myself resolved upon a course
Which has no need of you. Begone.
My treasure's in the harbor. Take it. Oh,
I followed that I blush to look upon!
My very hairs do mutiny, for the white
15 Reprove the brown for rashness, and they them
For fear and doting. Friends, begone. You shall
Have letters from me to some friends that will
Sweep your way for you. Pray you, look not sad,
Nor make replies of loathness. Take the hint
20 Which my despair proclaims. Let that be left
Which leaves itself. To the seaside straightway!
I will possess you of that ship and treasure.
Leave me, I pray, a little. Pray you now,
Nay, do so, for indeed I have lost command.
25 Therefore I pray you. I'll see you by and by.

Exeunt attendants. ANTONY sits down

Enter CLEOPATRA, led by CHARMIAN, IRAS, and EROS

EROS

Nay, gentle madam, to him, comfort him.

IRAS

Do, most dear Queen.

CHARMIAN

Do. Why, what else?

CLEOPATRA

Let me sit down. O Juno!

She sits

ANTONY

- 30 *[seeing CLEOPATRA]* No, no, no, no, no.

EROS

See you here, sir?

ANTONY

Oh, fie, fie, fie!

CHARMIAN

Madam!

IRAS

Madam, O good Empress!

EROS

- 35 Sir, sir—

ANTONY

[aside] Yes, my lord, yes. He at Philippi kept
His sword e'en like a dancer, while I struck
The lean and wrinkled Cassius, and 'twas I
That the mad Brutus ended. He alone
40 Dealt on lieutenantry, and no practice had
In the brave squares of war, yet now—no matter.


CLEOPATRA

Ah, stand by.

ALL

Abandon you? Not us.

ANTONY

I have abandoned myself, and by retreating, I have set an
example for other cowards to run away and turn their backs
on their enemies. Friends, be gone. I have resolved to follow
a course of action that does not require your assistance. Be
gone. My treasure is in the harbor. Take it. Oh, I followed the
very thing that now makes me ashamed to look at it! Even
my hairs rebel. The white hairs condemn the brown ones 
for being rash, and the brown ones condemn the white
for being fearful and too affectionate. Friends, be gone. I'll
write letters for you to some friends of mine that will clear
your path. Please, do not be sad or say that you don't want
to do this. Take your cue from my despair. You should
abandon someone who abandons himself. Go the seaside
immediately! I'll give you the ship and the treasure. Leave
me alone, please, for a little while. I ask you, don't protest,
leave me—please. I have lost the right to command you, so I
can only ask you. I'll see you shortly.

ANTONY'S followers exit. ANTONY sits down.

CLEOPATRA enters, led by CHARMIAN, IRAS, and EROS

EROS

No, gentle madam, go to him, comfort him.


IRAS

Do, dearest Queen.

CHARMIAN

Do. Why, what else would you do?

CLEOPATRA

Let me sit down. Oh Juno  !

CLEOPATRA sits.

ANTONY

[Seeing CLEOPATRA] No, no, no, no, no.

EROS

Do you see this woman here, sir?

ANTONY

Oh, shame on you, shame, shame, shame!

CHARMIAN

Madam!

IRAS

Madam, Oh good Empress!

EROS


Sir, sir—


ANTONY

[To himself] Yes, my lord, yes. At Philippi, Caesar used his
sword only as a decoration, while I fought thin, wrinkled
Cassius, and it was I who defeated the insane Brutus. Caesar
was the one who had others fight for him, and he had no
experience in the proper battle formations but now—well, it
doesn't matter.

CLEOPATRA

Ah, stand aside.

 The white hairs represent old age and the brown hairs represent youth. An older man would condemn a younger one for being too rash and hasty, and a younger one would condemn an older man for being too fearful and doting too much on his lover. Antony believes he has been both too rash and too fearful.

 Juno is the queen of the Roman gods.

EROS

The Queen, my lord, the Queen.

IRAS

45 Go to him, madam, speak to him.
He is unqualified with very shame.

CLEOPATRA

Well then, sustain me. Oh!

She rises

EROS

Most noble sir, arise. The Queen approaches.
Her head's declined, and death will seize her but
Your comfort makes the rescue.

ANTONY

50 I have offended reputation,
A most un noble swerving.

EROS

Sir, the Queen.

ANTONY

Oh, whither hast thou led me, Egypt? See
How I convey my shame out of thine eyes
55 By looking back what I have left behind
'Stroyed in dishonor.

CLEOPATRA

O my lord, my lord,
Forgive my fearful sails! I little thought
You would have followed.

ANTONY

60 Egypt, thou knew'st too well
My heart was to thy rudder tied by th' strings,
And thou shouldst tow me after. O'er my spirit
Thy full supremacy thou knew'st, and that
Thy beck might from the bidding of the gods
65 Command me.

CLEOPATRA

Oh, my pardon!

ANTONY

Now I must
To the young man send humble treaties, dodge
And palter in the shifts of lowness, who
70 With half the bulk o' th' world played as I pleased,
Making and marring fortunes. You did know
How much you were my conqueror, and that
My sword, made weak by my affection, would
Obey it on all cause.

CLEOPATRA

75 Pardon, pardon!

ANTONY

Fall not a tear, I say. One of them rates
All that is won and lost. Give me a kiss.

They kiss

Even this repays me.—
We sent our schoolmaster. Is he come back?—
80 Love, I am full of lead.— (*calling*) Some wine,
Within there, and our viands! Fortune knows
We scorn her most when most she offers blows.

EROS

The Queen, my lord, look at the Queen.

IRAS

Go to him, Madam, speak to him. He's so ashamed that he
has lost all sense of who he is.

CLEOPATRA

Well then, support me. Oh!

CLEOPATRA gets up.

EROS

Most noble sir, get up. The Queen's approaching. Her head
is bowed and she will die unless you save her by comforting
her.

ANTONY

I have betrayed my good name—a most dishonorable
departure from the right path.

EROS

Sir, the Queen.

ANTONY

Oh, what have you led me to do, Queen of Egypt? See how I
steal away in shame out of your sight, remembering what I
left behind destroyed in dishonor.

CLEOPATRA

Oh my lord, my lord! Forgive me for sailing away in fear! I
didn't think you would follow me!

ANTONY

Queen of Egypt, you knew all too well that my heart was
tied to you and your movements, and that whatever you
did, you would draw me after you. You knew that you had
full control over my will and that your summons would call
me away even from what the gods had ordered me to do.

CLEOPATRA

Oh, please forgive me!

ANTONY

Now I must send humble petitions to that young Caesar,
make excuses and play tricks like a man of low status—me,
who once did as I pleased with half of the world's territory,
raising and destroying people's fortunes. You knew how
much you had conquered me, and that in battle, since my
affection for you made me weak, I would obey you no
matter what.

CLEOPATRA

Forgive me, forgive me!

ANTONY

Don't cry one tear, I say. One tear makes up for everything I
have won and lost. Give me a kiss.

ANTONY and CLEOPATRA kiss.

Even one kiss repays me for what I have lost.

[*To an ATTENDANT*] We sent away our children's tutor on an
errand. Has he come back?

[*To CLEOPATRA*] My love, my spirits are heavy.

[*Calling to servants*] You over there, bring us some wine and

Exeunt

food! When fortune deals us the heaviest blows, that's
when we scorn her the most.

CLEOPATRA, ANTONY, IRAS, CHARMIAN, and EROS exit.

Act 3, Scene 12

Shakespeare

*Enter CAESAR, AGRIPPA, THIDIAS, and DOLABELLA, with others***CAESAR**

Let him appear that's come from Antony.
Know you him?

DOLABELLA

Caesar, 'tis his schoolmaster—
An argument that he is plucked, when hither
5 He sends so poor a pinion of his wing,
Which had superfluous kings for messengers
Not many moons gone by.

*Enter AMBASSADOR from Antony***CAESAR**

Approach and speak.

AMBASSADOR

Such as I am, I come from Antony.
10 I was of late as petty to his ends
As is the morn-dew on the myrtle leaf
To his grand sea.

CAESAR

Be 't so. Declare thine office.

AMBASSADOR

Lord of his fortunes he salutes thee, and
15 Requires to live in Egypt; which not granted,
He lessens his requests, and to thee sues
To let him breathe between the heavens and earth
A private man in Athens. This for him.
Next, Cleopatra does confess thy greatness,
20 Submits her to thy might, and of thee craves
The circle of the Ptolemies for her heirs,
Now hazarded to thy grace.

CAESAR

For Antony,
I have no ears to his request. The Queen
25 Of audience nor desire shall fail, so she
From Egypt drive her all-disgracèd friend
Or take his life there. This if she perform,
She shall not sue unheard. So to them both.

AMBASSADOR

Fortune pursue thee!

CAESAR

30 Bring him through the bands.

Exit AMBASSADOR, attended

Shakescleare Translation

*CAESAR, AGRIPPA, THIDAS, and DOLABELLA enter, with other followers.***CAESAR**

Call in Antony's messenger. Do you know him?

DOLABELLA

Caesar, it's his children's tutor. It's a sign that Antony is in
bad shape, that he sends such a lowly person here as his
messenger. Not long ago, he had so many kings in his
power that he could afford to send them as messengers.

*The AMBASSADOR from Antony enters.***CAESAR**

Come forward and speak.

AMBASSADOR

Even though I am a lowly person, I have been sent here by
Antony. Lately, I've been as insignificant and useless to him
as a drop of morning dew on a myrtle leaf would be to the
large sea.

CAESAR

Put that aside. Tell us what you came here for.

AMBASSADOR

Antony salutes you, you now have control over his fate, and
he asks to be allowed to live in Egypt. If you don't grant this
request, he asks for a smaller favor and asks you to let him
live out his remaining days as a private citizen in Athens.
These are his requests. Next, Cleopatra acknowledges your
greatness, submits herself to your power, and asks that the
kingdom of Egypt, which is now at your mercy, might be
given to her children.

CAESAR

For Antony, I will not listen to his requests. The Queen will
get to meet me and get what she wants, so long as she
drives her completely disgraced lover out of Egypt or else
kills him there. If she does this, her requests won't go
unheard. Tell this to both of them.

AMBASSADOR

May you have good fortune!

CAESAR

Escort him through the ranks of soldiers.

The AMBASSADOR exits with some of Caesar's men.

(to THIDIAS) To try thy eloquence now 'tis time.
 Dispatch.
 From Antony win Cleopatra. Promise,
 And in our name, what she requires. Add more,
 35 From thine invention, offers. Women are not
 In their best fortunes strong, but want will perjure
 The ne'er-touched vestal. Try thy cunning, Thidias.
 Make thine own edict for thy pains, which we
 Will answer as a law.

THIDIAS

40 Caesar, I go.

CAESAR


Observe how Antony becomes his flaw,
 And what thou think'st his very action speaks
 In every power that moves.


THIDIAS

Caesar, I shall.

Exeunt

CAESAR

[To THIDIAS] Now it is time to see what your eloquence can accomplish. Get going. Win over Cleopatra from Antony. Promise her in my name that she will be given what she asks for. Promise her more than that, whatever you can think of. Women can't stick to their word even at the best of times, but when they are in need, even the most devout virgin will break her vows . See what your cunning can accomplish, Thidias. Decide what reward you would like for your trouble, and I will supply it as if commanded by law.

 Women would sometimes take vows of chastity (hence the description in the original text of "ne'er-touched") as an act of religious devotion.

THIDIAS

Caesar, I will go.

CAESAR

Observe how Antony reacts to his disgrace, and tell me what you think his actions reveal about him in every move that he makes.

THIDIAS

Caesar, I will.

THIDIAS and CAESAR exit.

Act 3, Scene 13

Shakespeare

Enter CLEOPATRA, ENOBARBUS, CHARMIAN, and IRAS

CLEOPATRA

What shall we do, Enobarbus?

ENOBARBUS

Think and die.

CLEOPATRA

Is Antony or we in fault for this?

ENOBARBUS

Antony only, that would make his will
 5 Lord of his reason. What though you fled
 From that great face of war, whose several ranges
 Frighted each other? Why should he follow?
 The itch of his affection should not then
 Have nicked his captainship at such a point
 10 When half to half the world opposed, he being
 The merèd question. 'Twas a shame no less
 Than was his loss, to course your flying flags
 And leave his navy gazing.

CLEOPATRA

Prithee, peace.

Enter AMBASSADOR with ANTONY

ANTONY

15 Is that his answer?

AMBASSADOR

Ay, my lord.

ANTONY

The Queen shall then have courtesy, so she
 Will yield us up?

AMBASSADOR

He says so.

Shakesclare Translation

CLEOPATRA, ENOBARBUS, CHARMIAN, and IRAS enter.

CLEOPATRA

What we will do, Enobarbus?

ENOBARBUS

Consider our situation and die.

CLEOPATRA

Is Antony at fault for this, or am I?

ENOBARBUS

Only Antony, who allowed his appetite to overcome his reason. What does it matter that you fled from the dangerous battlefield, where ranks of ships frightened both sides? Why should he have followed you? His affection for you shouldn't have undermined his skill as captain, while one half of the world opposed the other, and when he himself was the reason for this fight. His shame was as great as his loss, when he followed the flags of your fleeing ships and left his navy watching him go.

CLEOPATRA

Please, be quiet.

The AMBASSADOR enters with ANTONY.

ANTONY

Is that Caesar's answer?

AMBASSADOR

Yes, my lord.

ANTONY

He will treat the Queen favorably, so long as she hands me over to him?

AMBASSADOR

That's what he says.

ANTONY

20 Let her know 't.—
 (to CLEOPATRA) To the boy Caesar send this grizzled
 head,
 And he will fill thy wishes to the brim
 With principalities.

CLEOPATRA

25 That head, my lord?

ANTONY

(to the AMBASSADOR) To him again. Tell him he wears the
 rose
 Of youth upon him, from which the world should note
 Something particular. His coin, ships, legions,
 30 May be a coward's, whose ministers would prevail
 Under the service of a child as soon
 As i' th' command of Caesar. I dare him therefore
 To lay his gay comparisons apart
 And answer me declined, sword against sword,
 35 Ourselves alone. I'll write it. Follow me.

Exeunt ANTONY and AMBASSADOR

ENOBARBUS

(aside) Yes, like enough, high-battled Caesar will
 Unstate his happiness and be staged to th' show
 Against a sworder! I see men's judgments are
 A parcel of their fortunes, and things outward
 40 Do draw the inward quality after them
 To suffer all alike. That he should dream,
 Knowing all measures, the full Caesar will
 Answer his emptiness! Caesar, thou hast subdued
 His judgment too.

Enter a SERVANT

SERVANT

45 A messenger from Caesar.

CLEOPATRA

What, no more ceremony? See, my women,
 Against the blown rose may they stop their nose,
 That kneeled unto the buds.—Admit him, sir.

Exit SERVANT

ENOBARBUS

(aside) Mine honesty and I begin to square.
 50 The loyalty well held to fools does make
 Our faith mere folly. Yet he that can endure
 To follow with allegiance a fall'n lord
 Does conquer him that did his master conquer
 And earns a place i' th' story.

Enter THIDIAS

CLEOPATRA

55 Caesar's will?

THIDIAS

Hear it apart.

CLEOPATRA

None but friends. Say boldly.

THIDIAS

So haply are they friends to Antony.

ANTONY


Let the queen know.

[To CLEOPATRA] If you send my old body to that young boy
 Caesar, he will give you all the kingdoms you wish.

CLEOPATRA

That body, my lord?

ANTONY

[To the AMBASSADOR] Go to him again. Tell him that he's
 still in the first bloom of youth, and the world should expect
 remarkable things from him. His money, ships, and legions
 of troops might just as well belong to a coward . His
 agents may be so gifted that they would win under the
 command of a child just as well as under Caesar. Therefore,
 I dare him to set aside his flashy decorations and answer
 my challenge, even though I am well past the prime of my
 youth, to fight sword to sword, just the two of us. I'll write
 the message. Come with me.

ANTONY and the AMBASSADOR exit.

ENOBARBUS


[To himself] Yes, I'm sure it's very likely that Caesar, with all
 his armies, will give up his advantage and agree to show
 himself in public and fight against a trained swordsman! I
 see that men's judgment improves or declines in
 accordance with their luck. External events shape our inner
 qualities, so that if we suffer externally, we suffer internally
 too. How could he dream, having known both good and bad
 fortune, that Caesar, with all his good fortune, would
 answer a challenge from a man in such bad condition!
 Caesar, you've destroyed his judgment too.

A SERVANT enters.

SERVANT

A messenger from Caesar.

CLEOPATRA

Why do b't you treat me with more respect ? See, my
 women, how when a great person has fallen low, the people
 who once kneeled before her instead turn their nose up at
 her. Let him in, sir.

The SERVANT exits.

ENOBARBUS

[To himself] My judgment begins to come into conflict with
 my honor. To be loyal to fools makes our loyalty simply an
 act of foolishness. But whoever has the perseverance to
 follow his lord faithfully even after his lord has fallen,
 proves that he is stronger even than the person who
 conquered his master, and so makes a great name for
 himself.

THIDIAS enters.

CLEOPATRA

What does Caesar want?

THIDIAS


Listen to my message in private.


CLEOPATRA

We are all friends here. Say what you have to say.

THIDIAS

It may be that they are friends to Antony.

 Antony implies that Caesar has
 done nothing yet in battle on his own,
 but only used money to pay armies to
 fight for him, and so there is no way of
 telling whether he himself is a brave
 man or a coward in battle.

 The servant has been
 disrespectful to Cleopatra by failing to
 address her with any formal royal
 title.

ENOBARBUS

He needs as many, sir, as Caesar has,
60 Or needs not us. If Caesar please, our master
Will leap to be his friend. For us, you know
Whose he is we are, and that is Caesar's.

THIDIAS

So.—
Thus then, thou most renowned: Caesar entertains
65 Not to consider in what case thou stand'st,
Further than he is Caesar.

CLEOPATRA

Go on. Right royal.

THIDIAS

He knows that you embrace not Antony
As you did love, but as you feared him.

CLEOPATRA

70 Oh!

THIDIAS

The scars upon your honor therefore he
Does pity as constrained blemishes,
Not as deserved.

CLEOPATRA

He is a god and knows
75 What is most right. Mine honor was not yielded,
But conquered merely.

ENOBARBUS

(aside) To be sure of that,
I will ask Antony. Sir, sir, thou art so leaky
That we must leave thee to thy sinking, for
80 Thy dearest quit thee.

Exit ENOBARBUS

THIDIAS

Shall I say to Caesar
What you require of him? For he partly begs
To be desired to give. It much would please him
That of his fortunes you should make a staff
85 To lean upon. But it would warm his spirits
To hear from me you had left Antony
And put yourself under his shroud,
The universal landlord.

CLEOPATRA

What's your name?

THIDIAS

90 My name is Thidias.

CLEOPATRA

Most kind messenger,
Say to great Caesar this in deputation:
I kiss his conquering hand. Tell him I am prompt
To lay my crown at 's feet, and there to kneel.
95 Tell him, from his all-obeying breath I hear
The doom of Egypt.

THIDIAS

'Tis your noblest course.
Wisdom and fortune combating together,
If that the former dare but what it can,
100 No chance may shake it. Give me grace to lay
My duty on your hand.

He kisses her hand

ENOBARBUS

Antony needs as many friends as Caesar, sir, and if things
are very bad, even we won't be any use to him. If Caesar is
willing, our master will willingly be his friend. As for you,
you know that we obey whomever Antony obeys, and that
is Caesar.

THIDIAS

So be it. Here is the situation, then, oh most renowned
queen: Caesar asks that you not concern yourself with your
current situation, given that you know his reputation as a
generous man.

CLEOPATRA

Go on. That is generous indeed.

THIDIAS

He knows that you took Antony as your lover not because
you loved him, but because you feared him.

CLEOPATRA

Oh!

THIDIAS

Therefore, he pities the damage done to your honor as a
blemish you were forced to endure, not as something you
deserved.

CLEOPATRA

Caesar is a god, and he knows what is just. I did not yield to
Antony voluntarily, I was merely overpowered.

ENOBARBUS

[To himself] I'll ask Antony to make sure that that's true.
Antony, Antony, you have fallen so low that we must
abandon you to your disgrace, for even those who love you
most are deserting you.

ENOBARBUS exits.

THIDIAS

Shall I tell Caesar what you want from him? For he likes to
be asked to give. It would please him greatly if you would
show your support by appealing to his power. But it would
make him truly happy to hear from me that you had
abandoned Antony and turned to him, the ruler of the
world, for shelter.

CLEOPATRA

What's your name?

THIDIAS

My name is Thidias.

CLEOPATRA

Most kind messenger, tell this to Caesar as my
representative: I kiss his conquering hand. Tell him I am
ready immediately to lay my crown at his feet and to kneel
there. Tell him that I will obey him and let him decide the
fate of Egypt.

THIDIAS

That is the most honorable course of action. When wisdom
fights against fortune, so long as wisdom does everything it
can, no bad luck can defeat it. Give me permission to show
my faithfulness by kissing your hand.

THIDIAS kisses CLEOPATRA'S hand.

CLEOPATRA

Your Caesar's father oft,
When he hath mused of taking kingdoms in,
Bestowed his lips on that unworthy place
105 As it rained kisses.

Enter ANTONY and ENOBARBUS

ANTONY

Favors? By Jove that thunders!
What art thou, fellow?

THIDIAS

One that but performs
The bidding of the fullest man, and worthiest
110 To have command obeyed.

ENOBARBUS

You will be whipped.

ANTONY

(calling for servants) Approach, there! *(to THIDIAS)*
Ah, you kite!—Now, gods and devils!
Authority melts from me. Of late, when I cried "Ho!"
115 Like boys unto a muss kings would start forth
And cry, "Your will?" *(calling to servants)* Have you no
ears? I am
Antony yet.

Enter a SERVANT, followed by others

Take hence this jack and whip him.

ENOBARBUS

120 *(aside)* 'Tis better playing with a lion's whelp
Than with an old one dying.

ANTONY

Moon and stars!
Whip him. Were 't twenty of the greatest tributaries
That do acknowledge Caesar, should I find them
125 So saucy with the hand of she here—what's her name
Since she was Cleopatra? Whip him, fellows,
Till like a boy, you see him cringe his face
And whine aloud for mercy. Take him hence.

THIDIAS

Mark Antony—

ANTONY

130 Tug him away! Being whipped,
Bring him again. This jack of Caesar's shall
Bear us an errand to him.

Exeunt SERVANTS with THIDIAS

(to CLEOPATRA) You were half blasted ere I knew you.
Ha!

135 Have I my pillow left unpressed in Rome,
Forborne the getting of a lawful race,
And by a gem of women, to be abused
By one that looks on feeders?

CLEOPATRA

Julius Caesar, father of your master Octavius, while he
thought about conquering kingdoms, often put his lips on
my unworthy hand and rained kisses on it.

ANTONY and ENOBARBUS enter.

ANTONY

Kisses? By thundering Jove ³! Who are you, my man?

³ Jove is another name for Jupiter, king of the Roman gods, who is associated with thunder and storms.

THIDIAS

I obey the commands of the man who is the most powerful
and who most deserves to have his commands obeyed.

ENOBARBUS

You'll be whipped.

ANTONY

[Calling for servants] You over there, come here!

[To CLEOPATRA] Ah, you whore! Now, gods and devils! I lose
all my authority. Not long ago, when I cried "Ho!" kings
would dart forward like boys towards a meal and cry, "What
do you wish?"

[Calling to servants] Do you have no ears? I am still Antony ⁴

⁴ Antony insists that he still has some of the greatness associated with his former reputation and still deserves to wield some authority.

A SERVANT enters, followed by others.

Take this scoundrel out of here and whip him.

ENOBARBUS

[Aside] It's less dangerous to mess with a powerful man's
messenger ⁵ than with a man who was once powerful and
now rages against his downfall.

⁵ In the original text, Enobarbus compares Caesar and Antony to two lions; Caesar's cub, or "whelp," is the messenger, and Antony is an older lion near his death.

ANTONY

Moon and stars! Whip him. Even if there were twenty of the
greatest monarchs who pay tribute to Caesar, if I found
them being so intimately familiar with the hand of this
woman here—what's her name since she stopped being
135 Cleopatra ⁶? Whip him, fellows, until you see him cringe
like a boy and whine aloud for mercy. Take him away.

⁶ Antony implies that since Cleopatra's behavior has changed so radically, her name must have changed, too.

THIDIAS

Mark Antony—

ANTONY

Pull him away! Whip him, and bring him back again. This
scoundrel of Caesar's will take a message to him for me.

The SERVANTS exit with THIDIAS.

ANTONY

[To CLEOPATRA] You were half decayed before I met you!
Ha! Have I abandoned my home in Rome, neglected the
chance to beget a family of legitimate children with a noble
woman, only to be abused by someone who bestows favors on
140 servants ⁷?

⁷ Antony believes that kissing Cleopatra's hand is much too great an honor to be bestowed on a servant, a low person who "feeds," as the original text puts it, on his masters like a parasite.

CLEOPATRA

Good my lord—

ANTONY

140 You have been a boggler ever.
But when we in our viciousness grow hard—
Oh, misery on 't!— the wise gods seal our eyes,
In our own filth drop our clear judgments, make us
Adore our errors, laugh at 's while we strut
145 To our confusion.

CLEOPATRA

Oh, is 't come to this?

ANTONY

I found you as a morsel cold upon
Dead Caesar's trencher. Nay, you were a fragment
Of Gneius Pompey's, besides what hotter hours,
150 Unregistered in vulgar fame, you have
Luxuriously picked out. For I am sure,
Though you can guess what temperance should be,
You know not what it is.

CLEOPATRA

Wherefore is this?

ANTONY

155 To let a fellow that will take rewards
And say "God quit you!" be familiar with
My playfellow, your hand, this kingly seal
And plighter of high hearts! Oh, that I were
Upon the hill of Basan, to outroar
160 The hornèd herd! For I have savage cause,
And to proclaim it civilly were like
A haltered neck which does the hangman thank
For being yare about him.

Enter a SERVANT with THIDIAS

Is he whipped?

SERVANT

165 Soundly, my lord.

ANTONY

Cried he? And begged he pardon?

SERVANT

He did ask favor.

ANTONY

(to THIDIAS) If that thy father live, let him repent
Thou wast not made his daughter, and be thou sorry
170 To follow Caesar in his triumph, since
Thou hast been whipped for following him. Henceforth
The white hand of a lady fever thee;
Shake thou to look on 't. Get thee back to Caesar.
Tell him thy entertainment. Look thou say
175 He makes me angry with him, for he seems
Proud and disdainful, harping on what I am,
Not what he knew I was. He makes me angry,
And at this time most easy 'tis to do 't,
When my good stars, that were my former guides,
180 Have empty left their orbs and shot their fires
Into th' abyss of hell. If he mislike
My speech and what is done, tell him he has
Hipparchus, my enfranchèd bondman, whom
He may at pleasure whip, or hang, or torture,
185 As he shall like, to quit me. Urge it thou.
Hence with thy stripes, begone!

Exit THIDIAS

CLEOPATRA

My good lord—

ANTONY

You have always been fickle. But when we grow set in our
vicious ways—oh, what misery it is!—the wise gods close
our eyes, cloud our good judgment through our own bad
behavior, make us love our mistakes, and laugh at us as we
bring about our own ruin.

CLEOPATRA

Oh, is this what you think now?

ANTONY

When I met you, you had been used up by the dead Caesar.
No, you had been used up even more so by Gneius
Pompey—and by other men, too, that you wantonly went
after, in lustful moments that gossip never picked up on.
For I'm sure, that although you can guess how a mild
woman ought to behave, that you have never been
pleasant yourself.

CLEOPATRA

Why are you talking like this?

ANTONY

To let a man that accepts favors and says, "May God repay
you!" be intimate with your hand, the hand that I have
played with, that bestows the royal seal, and drinks toasts
to all those with great spirits! Oh, if only I were on the hill of
Basan, so I could roar louder than the bulls! For I have
reason to behave savagely. To speak about my wrongs
calmly would be as ignoble as a condemned man thanking
the hangman for hanging him quickly.

A SERVANT enters with THIDIAS.

Has he been whipped?

SERVANT

Thoroughly, my lord.

ANTONY

Did he cry? And did he ask for mercy?

SERVANT

He did ask for some relief.

ANTONY

[To THIDIAS] If your father is alive, let him be sorry that you
weren't born a girl! And you should be sorry that you
follow Caesar and his success, since you've been whipped
for doing so. From now on, be as terrified of a lady's white
hand as you would be of a fever; shake with fear to look at
it. Get back to Caesar. Tell him how you were treated. Be
sure to tell him how angry he makes me for continuing to
focus on my present disgrace, rather than on my past
glories. He's making me angry, and right now it's very easy
to do that, since the lucky stars that used to guide me have
left their positions in the sky and drenched their lights in
the pit of hell. If he doesn't like what I have said and done,
tell him that he has Hipparchus, my freed slave, and that he
may freely whip or hang or torture him, just as he likes, to
get revenge on me. Tell him that. Get out of here with your
wounds, be gone!

THIDIAS exits.

Antony represents himself here as a cuckold (a man whose wife has been unfaithful to him). Cuckolds were proverbially said to have horns growing out of their foreheads and so were represented by bulls.

Antony implies that he would not have whipped a woman.

CLEOPATRA

Have you done yet?

ANTONY

Alack, our terrene moon is now eclipsed,
And it portends alone the fall of Antony.

CLEOPATRA

190 *(aside)* I must stay his time.

ANTONY

To flatter Caesar, would you mingle eyes
With one that ties his points?

CLEOPATRA

Not know me yet?

ANTONY

Coldhearted toward me?

CLEOPATRA

195 Ah, dear, if I be so,
From my cold heart let heaven engender hail,
And poison it in the source, and the first stone
Drop in my neck. As it determines, so
Dissolve my life! The next Caesarion smite,
200 Till by degrees the memory of my womb,
Together with my brave Egyptians all,
By the discandying of this pelleted storm
Lie graveless till the flies and gnats of Nile
Have buried them for prey!

ANTONY

205 I am satisfied.
Caesar sits down in Alexandria, where
I will oppose his fate. Our force by land
Hath nobly held. Our severed navy too
Have knit again, and fleet, threat'ning most sealike.
210 Where hast thou been, my heart? Dost thou hear, lady?
If from the field I shall return once more
To kiss these lips, I will appear in blood.
I and my sword will earn our chronicle.
There's hope in 't yet.

CLEOPATRA

215 That's my brave lord!

ANTONY

I will be treble-sinewed, -hearted, -breathed,
And fight maliciously. For when mine hours
Were nice and lucky, men did ransom lives
Of me for jests; but now I'll set my teeth
220 And send to darkness all that stop me. Come,
Let's have one other gaudy night. Call to me
All my sad captains. Fill our bowls once more.
Let's mock the midnight bell.

CLEOPATRA

It is my birthday.
225 I had thought t' have held it poor; but since my lord
Is Antony again, I will be Cleopatra.

ANTONY

We will yet do well.

CLEOPATRA

(to ENOBARBUS) Call all his noble captains to my lord.

CLEOPATRA

Are you finished yet?

ANTONY

Alas, the great Cleopatra's power ¹⁰ is gone, and this alone
foretells that I will fall too.

¹⁰ The phrase "terrene moon" in the original text refers to an earthly moon goddess and metaphorically to Cleopatra. Cleopatra is often compared to goddesses.

CLEOPATRA

[To herself] I must keep quiet until he has calmed down.

ANTONY

To flatter Caesar, would you flirt with one of his servants ¹¹ ?

¹¹ The phrase "tie his points" in the original text means "to help him dress," which is a servant's job.

CLEOPATRA

Don't you know me at all by now?

ANTONY

How can you still be coldhearted towards me?

CLEOPATRA

Ah, dear, if I am, may heaven create hail in my cold heart
and poison it at the source, and may the first hailstone that
falls lodge in my throat. As it melts, let it kill me! Let the
next stone kill my son Caesarion, until gradually all my
children, together with all my brave Egyptians, are killed by
the dissolving hailstones of this storm and lie unburied until
the flies and gnats of the Nile have buried them as their
prey!

ANTONY

I am satisfied of your feelings for me. Caesar lays siege to
Alexandria, where I will oppose him and put an end to his
good luck. Our armies on land have withstood him nobly.
Our dispersed navy, too, has come together again and their
ships are afloat, presenting a most seaworthy threat. Where
has my courage gone? Do you hear me, my lady? If I return
from the field again to kiss your lips, I will be bloody and
have new vigor. My sword and I will earn a good reputation.
There's hope for our side yet.

CLEOPATRA

That's my brave lord!

ANTONY

I will be three times as strong, as brave, and as persevering,
and fight furiously. For when I had good fortune and could
act however I pleased, I was so merciful that men could
ransom their lives from me for a mere trifle. But now I'll
harden my heart and destroy everyone that opposes me.
Come, let's have one more night of celebration. Call all my
sad captains to join me. Fill our cups once more. We won't
care how late it is, we will mock the late hour by
celebrating.

CLEOPATRA

It is my birthday. I thought I would have no
celebrations—but since my lord is acting like himself again,
I will be myself again too.

ANTONY

We will still triumph.

CLEOPATRA

[To ENOBARBUS] Call all my lord's noble captains to him.

ANTONY

Do so. We'll speak to them, and tonight I'll force
 230 The wine peep through their scars. —Come on, my Queen,
 There's sap in 't yet. The next time I do fight
 I'll make Death love me, for I will contend
 Even with his pestilent scythe.

Exeunt all but ENOBARBUS

ENOBARBUS

Now he'll outstare the lightning. To be furious
 Is to be frighted out of fear, and in that mood
 235 The dove will peck the estridge; and I see still
 A diminution in our captain's brain
 Restores his heart. When valor preys on reason,
 It eats the sword it fights with. I will seek
 240 Some way to leave him.

Exit

ANTONY

Do that. We'll speak to them, and tonight I'll make them
 drink so much that the wine will leak out through their
 scarred skin.

[*To CLEOPATRA*] Come on, my queen. There's still hope for
 our side. The next time I fight, I'll make Death admire me,
 for I'll oppose even his fatal power.

All characters exit except ENOBARBUS.

ENOBARBUS

Now he'll set himself against even the mightiest enemies.
 He is so riled up that his frenzy has driven out his fear, and
 in that mood, the weakest man ¹² will challenge the
 strongest. I can tell that our captain is regaining his bravery
 only because he has lost his judgment. When a man's
 courage destroys his reason, he destroys the very thing that
 could save him. I will look for some way to leave him.

ENOBARBUS exits.

¹² In the original text, Enobarbus compares the weak Antony to a dove and the power Caesar to an "estridge," or ostrich.

Act 4, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Enter CAESAR, AGRIPPA, and MAECENAS, with his army, CAESAR reading a letter

CAESAR

He calls me "boy" and chides as he had power
 To beat me out of Egypt. My messenger
 He hath whipped with rods, dares me to personal combat,
 Caesar to Antony. Let the old ruffian know
 5 I have many other ways to die, meantime
 Laugh at his challenge.

MAECENAS

Caesar must think
 When one so great begins to rage, he's hunted
 Even to falling. Give him no breath, but now
 10 Make boot of his distraction. Never anger
 Made good guard for itself.

CAESAR

Let our best heads
 Know that tomorrow the last of many battles
 We mean to fight. Within our files there are,
 15 Of those that served Mark Antony but late,
 Enough to fetch him in. See it done
 And feast the army. We have store to do 't,
 And they have earned the waste. Poor Antony!

Exeunt

Shakesclare Translation

CAESAR, AGRIPPA, and MAECNAS enter with CAESAR'S army. CAESAR is reading a letter.

CAESAR

Antony calls me "boy" and taunts me as if he had the power
 to beat my forces out of Egypt. He whipped my messenger
 with rods and challenges me to single combat, Caesar
 against Antony. Let that old scoundrel know that that is not
 how I plan to die. In the meantime, send a mocking reply to
 his challenge.

MAECENAS

You must suspect that when a man so great starts to rage
 like this, his defeats have put him on the verge of collapse.
 Don't give him any time to regroup, but promptly use his
 anger to your advantage. An angry man never takes proper
 precautions.

CAESAR

Let our wisest officers know that tomorrow, I intend to fight
 the last of our many battles. Among our troops there many
 soldiers who served Mark Antony only a short time
 ago—enough soldiers to capture him. See that this is done,
 and give the army a feast. We have enough food in our
 stores to do it, and they have earned it—even if it is a waste
 of resources. Poor Antony!

CAESAR, AGRIPPA, MAECANAS, and the army exit.

Act 4, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Enter ANTONY, CLEOPATRA, ENOBARBUS, CHARMIAN, and IRAS, with others

ANTONY

He will not fight with me, Domitius?

Shakesclare Translation

ANTONY, CLEOPATRA, ENOBARBUS, CHARMIAN, and IRAS enter, with others.

ANTONY

He won't fight me in single combat, Domitius?

ENOBARBUS

No.

ANTONY

Why should he not?

ENOBARBUS

5 He thinks, being twenty times of better fortune,
He is twenty men to one.

ANTONY

Tomorrow, soldier,
By sea and land I'll fight. Or I will live
Or bathe my dying honor in the blood
Shall make it live again. Woo't thou fight well?

ENOBARBUS

10 I'll strike and cry, "Take all."

ANTONY

Well said. Come on!
Call forth my household servants.

Enter three or four SERVITORS

Let's tonight
Be bounteous at our meal.

Greeting them one by one

15 Give me thy hand.
Thou hast been rightly honest.—So hast thou,—
Thou,—and thou,—and thou. You have served me well,
And kings have been your fellows.

CLEOPATRA

(aside to ENOBARBUS) What means this?

ENOBARBUS

20 *(aside to CLEOPATRA)* 'Tis one of those odd tricks which
sorrow shoots
Out of the mind.

ANTONY

(to another SERVITOR) And thou art honest too.
I wish I could be made so many men,
25 And all of you clapped up together in
An Antony, that I might do you service
So good as you have done.

ALL THE SERVITORS

The gods forbid!

ANTONY

30 Well, my good fellows, wait on me tonight.
Scant not my cups, and make as much of me
As when mine empire was your fellow too,
And suffered my command.

CLEOPATRA

(aside to ENOBARBUS) What does he mean?

ENOBARBUS

(aside to CLEOPATRA) To make his followers weep.

ANTONY

35 *(to the SERVITORS)* Tend me tonight.
May be it is the period of your duty.
Haply you shall not see me more, or if,
A mangled shadow. Perchance tomorrow
You'll serve another master. I look on you

40

ENOBARBUS

No.

ANTONY

Why not?

ENOBARBUS

He estimates that, being twenty times better off than you,
his forces outnumber yours twenty to one.

ANTONY

Tomorrow, soldier, I'll fight by land and by sea. Either I'll
come out alive, or I will restore my ruined reputation by
dying honorably in battle. Will you fight bravely?

ENOBARBUS

I'll strike and cry, "Winner take all!"

ANTONY


Well said. Come on! Call my household servants.

Three or four SERVANTS enter.

Let's be generous with the food at tonight's meal.

ANTONY greets the SERVANTS one by one.

Give me your hand. You have been very honest — So
have you—you—and you—and you. You have served me
well, and you have had kings for your companions.

 "Honest," in Shakespeare's plays, generally means not only truthful but also faithful and honorable.

CLEOPATRA

[So only ENOBARBUS can hear] Why is Antony acting like this?

ENOBARBUS

[So only CLEOPATRA can hear] It's one of his odd quirks that show he is upset.

ANTONY

[To another SERVANT] And you are honest too. I wish that I could be divided up into men just like you, and all of you combined to make one Antony, so I could serve you as well as you have served me.

ALL THE SERVANTS

God forbid!

ANTONY

Well, my good fellows, wait on me at dinner tonight. Don't skimp when you pour my wine, and treat me as reverently as you did when my empire was also my servant, like you, and obeyed my commands.

CLEOPATRA

[So only ENOBARBUS can hear] What does he mean?

ENOBARBUS

[To CLEOPATRA] He means to make his servants weep.

ANTONY

[To the SERVANTS] Take care of me tonight. It may be the last time you do so. It may be that you will not see me anymore, or if you do, that you'll see only my disfigured ghost. Perhaps tomorrow you'll serve another master. I look upon you as if I were saying goodbye. My honest friends, I'm

As one that takes his leave. Mine honest friends,
I turn you not away, but, like a master
Married to your good service, stay till death.
Tend me tonight two hours, I ask no more,
And the gods yield you for 't!

ENOBARBUS

45 What mean you, sir,
To give them this discomfort? Look, they weep,
And I, an ass, am onion-eyed. For shame,
Transform us not to women.

ANTONY

Ho, ho, ho!
50 Now the witch take me if I meant it thus!
Grace grow where those drops fall! My hearty friends,
You take me in too dolorous a sense,
For I spake to you for your comfort, did desire you
To burn this night with torches. Know, my hearts,
55 I hope well of tomorrow, and will lead you
Where rather I'll expect victorious life
Than death and honor. Let's to supper, come,
And drown consideration.

Exeunt

not turning you away. Rather, I will stay with you until
death, like a master who is attached to your faithful service.
Take care of me tonight, I ask no more, and may the gods
bless you for it!

ENOBARBUS

What do you mean, sir, upsetting them like this? Look, they
weep, and I, like an ass, have watery eyes too. For shame,
don't make us as emotional as women.

ANTONY

Ha, ha, ha! Curse me if I meant to do that! May the gods
bless the men for weeping! My tender-hearted friends, I
didn't mean to make you so upset. I spoke to comfort you, I
asked you to keep the night bright by burning torches. You
should know, my dear friends, that I have high hopes for
tomorrow, and I will lead you to a battlefield where I expect
to live victoriously rather than die honorably. Let's go to
supper, come, and drink away our cares.

*ANTONY, CLEOPATRA, ENOBARBUS, CHARMIAN, IRAS, and
the others exit.*

Act 4, Scene 3

Shakespeare

Enter a company of SOLDIERS

FIRST SOLDIER

Brother, good night. Tomorrow is the day.

SECOND SOLDIER

It will determine one way. Fare you well.
Heard you of nothing strange about the streets?

FIRST SOLDIER

Nothing. What news?

SECOND SOLDIER

5 Belike 'tis but a rumor. Good night to you.

FIRST SOLDIER

Well, sir, good night.

They meet other SOLDIERS

SECOND SOLDIER

Soldiers, have careful watch.

THIRD SOLDIER

And you. Good night, good night.

The four SOLDIERS place themselves in every corner of the stage

SECOND SOLDIER

Here we. And if tomorrow
10 Our navy thrive, I have an absolute hope
Our landmen will stand up.

FIRST SOLDIER

'Tis a brave army, and full of purpose.

Shakesclare Translation

A company of SOLDIERS enters.

FIRST SOLDIER

Goodnight, comrade. Tomorrow is the big day.

SECOND SOLDIER

Things will be decided one way or another. Good luck to
you. Have you heard any strange news from the streets?

FIRST SOLDIER

Nothing. What's the news?

SECOND SOLDIER

It's probably just a rumor. Goodnight to you.

FIRST SOLDIER

Well, sir, goodnight.

They meet other SOLDIERS.

SECOND SOLDIER

Soldiers, stay watchful while you're on guard.

THIRD SOLDIER

And you as well. Goodnight, goodnight.

*The four SOLDIERS place themselves in the four corners of
the stage.*

SECOND SOLDIER

Here are our positions. And if our navy succeeds tomorrow,
I am completely confident that our army will make a good
stand.

FIRST SOLDIER

The troops are brave and determined to win.

Music of the hautboys is under the stage

SECOND SOLDIER

Peace! What noise?

FIRST SOLDIER

List, list!

SECOND SOLDIER

15 Hark!

FIRST SOLDIER

Music i' th' air.

THIRD SOLDIER

Under the earth.

FOURTH SOLDIER

It signs well, does it not?

THIRD SOLDIER

No.

FIRST SOLDIER

20 Peace, I say! What should this mean?

SECOND SOLDIER

'Tis the god Hercules, whom Antony loved,
Now leaves him.

FIRST SOLDIER

Walk. Let's see if other watchmen
Do hear what we do.

They advance toward the other SOLDIERS

SECOND SOLDIER

25 How now, masters?

ALL

(speak together) How now? How now? Do you hear this?

FIRST SOLDIER

Ay. Is 't not strange?

THIRD SOLDIER

Do you hear, masters? Do you hear?

FIRST SOLDIER

30 Follow the noise so far as we have quarter;
Let's see how it will give off.

ALL

Content. 'Tis strange.

Exeunt

The music of oboes is heard from under the stage.

SECOND SOLDIER

Be quiet! What's that noise?

FIRST SOLDIER

Listen, listen!

SECOND SOLDIER

Listen!

FIRST SOLDIER

There's music in the air.

THIRD SOLDIER

It's coming from under the ground.

FOURTH SOLDIER

This is a good omen, isn't it?

THIRD SOLDIER

No.

FIRST SOLDIER

Be quiet, I say! What does this mean?

SECOND SOLDIER

It's the god Hercules, whom Antony loved. He's leaving Antony.

FIRST SOLDIER

Let's walk and see if the other watchmen hear what we hear.

They advance toward the other SOLDIERS.

SECOND SOLDIER

How is it going, officers?

ALL

[Speaking at the same time] What is it? What is it? Do you hear this?

FIRST SOLDIER

Yes. Isn't it strange?

THIRD SOLDIER

Do you hear it, officers? Do you hear?


FIRST SOLDIER

Let's follow the noise as far as we can within the boundaries of our watch. Let's see how it ends.

ALL

That sounds good. It's strange.

The SOLDIERS exit.

 *The spirit of the god Hercules was thought to present itself to Antony, guiding and protecting him. The soldiers believe the music is the sound of Hercules' spirit abandoning Antony, indicating that his fortunes have fallen badly and now will fall still further.*

Act 4, Scene 4

Shakespeare

Shakescleare Translation

Enter ANTONY and CLEOPATRA, with CHARMIAN and others attending

ANTONY

(calling) Eros! Mine armor, Eros!

CLEOPATRA

Sleep a little.

ANTONY

No, my chuck.—Eros, come, mine armor, Eros!

Enter EROS with armor

Come, good fellow, put thine iron on.

5 If fortune be not ours today, it is
Because we brave her. Come.

CLEOPATRA

Nay, I'll help too.
What's this for?

She helps to arm him

ANTONY

Ah, let be, let be! Thou art
10 The armorer of my heart. False, false. This, this.

CLEOPATRA

Sooth, la, I'll help. Thus it must be.

ANTONY

Well, well,
We shall thrive now.—Seest thou, my good fellow?
Go put on thy defenses.

EROS

15 Briefly, sir.

CLEOPATRA

Is not this buckled well?

ANTONY

Rarely, rarely.
He that unbuckles this, till we do please
To doff 't for our repose, shall hear a storm.—
20 Thou fumblest, Eros, and my Queen's a squire
More tight at this than thou. Dispatch. —O love,
That thou couldst see my wars today, and knew'st
The royal occupation! Thou shouldst see
A workman in 't.

Enter an armed SOLDIER

25 Good morrow to thee. Welcome.
Thou look'st like him that knows a warlike charge.
To business that we love we rise betimes
And go to 't with delight.

SOLDIER

A thousand, sir,
30 Early though 't be, have on their riveted trim
And at the port expect you.

Shout. Trumpets flourish

ANTONY and CLEOPATRA enter, followed by CHARMIAN and others.

ANTONY

(Calling) Eros! Bring me my armor, Eros!

CLEOPATRA

Sleep a little.

ANTONY

No, my dear—Eros, come, my armor, Eros!

EROS enters with armor.

Come, my good man, put your amor on. If we don't have
good luck today, it is because **fortune** dislikes the way
that we challenge her. Come.

Fortune was frequently personified in Shakespeare's time and imagined as a deity who controlled good and bad luck and the fates that befell humankind. She was notoriously fickle and changeable.

CLEOPATRA

No, I'll help too. What's this for?

CLEOPATRA helps to put on ANTONY'S armor.

ANTONY

Ah, leave it alone, leave it alone! It's bad enough that you
put the armor on my heart. [Showing CLEOPATRA how to
put on the armor properly] That's not how you do it. Like
this, like this.

CLEOPATRA

Really, I'll help. This is how it should be.

ANTONY

Well, well, we'll succeed now.

[To EROS] Do you see, my good man? Go put on your armor.

EROS

Soon, sir.

CLEOPATRA

Isn't this buckled well?

ANTONY

Uncommonly well. The one that unbuckles this
armor—until I am pleased to take it off and rest—will face
my anger.

[To EROS] You're fumbling, Eros, and my Queen is more
skillful as a **squire** than you are. Hurry.

A squire was a servant to a knight or other high-ranking soldier who helped to put his armor on.

[To CLEOPATRA] Oh my love, if only you could see me in
battle today, and if only you were familiar with the
techniques of war! You'd see an expert at work.

An armed SOLDIER enters.

Good morning to you. Welcome. You look like someone
who understands the business of war. We get up early to do
the work that we love and we take great delight from it.

SOLDIER

Even though it is early, sir, a thousand soldiers have put on
their armor and wait for you at the port.

There is a shout and a flourish of trumpets.

*Enter CAPTAINS and SOLDIERS***CAPTAIN**

The morn is fair. Good morrow, General.

ALL

Good morrow, General.

ANTONY

'Tis well blown, lads.

- 35 This morning, like the spirit of a youth
That means to be of note, begins betimes.
So, so. (*to CLEOPATRA*) Come, give me that. This way.
Well said.
Fare thee well, dame.

He kisses her

- 40 Whate'er becomes of me,
This is a soldier's kiss. Rebukable
And worthy shameful check it were to stand
On more mechanic compliment. I'll leave thee
Now like a man of steel. (*to others*) You that will
45 fight,
Follow me close. I'll bring you to 't. (*to CLEOPATRA*)
Adieu.

*Exeunt ANTONY, EROS, CAPTAINS, and SOLDIERS***CHARMIAN**

Please you retire to your chamber?

CLEOPATRA

Lead me.

- 50 He goes forth gallantly. That he and Caesar might
Determine this great war in single fight!
Then Antony—but now—. Well, on.

*Exeunt**CAPTAINS and SOLDIERS enter.***CAPTAIN**

It is a favorable morning. Good morning, General.

ALL

Good morning, General.

ANTONY

The morning begins well, boys. Like a spirited young man
who means to accomplish great things, it gets started early.
So, so.

[*To CLEOPATRA*] Come, give me that. Like this. Well done.
Goodbye to you, my lady.

*ANTONY kisses CLEOPATRA***ANTONY**

Whatever happens to me, this is a soldier's kiss. It would be
shameful and worthy of a scolding if I were to give you any
baser or less noble a compliment than that. I'll leave you
now like a true soldier.

[*To the others*] You who wish to fight, follow me closely, I'll
bring you into battle.

[*To CLEOPATRA*] Farewell.

*ANTONY, EROS, CAPTAINS, and SOLDIERS exit.***CHARMIAN**

Would you like to retire to your room?

CLEOPATRA

Lead me. He goes forward bravely. If only he and Caesar
could fight this war through single combat! Then
Antony—but now—Well, let's go.

CLEOPATRA and CHARMIAN exit.

Act 4, Scene 5

Shakespeare

*Trumpets sound. Enter ANTONY and EROS, and a SOLDIER meeting them***SOLDIER**

The gods make this a happy day to Antony!

ANTONY

Would thou and those thy scars had once prevailed
To make me fight at land!

SOLDIER

Hadst thou done so,

- 5 The kings that have revolted, and the soldier
That has this morning left thee, would have still
Followed thy heels.

ANTONY

Who's gone this morning?

SOLDIER

Who?

- 10 One ever near thee. Call for Enobarbus
He shall not hear thee, or from Caesar's camp

Shakesclare Translation

*Trumpets sound. ANTONY and EROS enter, and a SOLDIER greets them.***SOLDIER**

May the gods make this a lucky day for Antony!

ANTONY

If only you and your scarred face had convinced me a short
time ago to fight on land!

SOLDIER

If you had done so, the kings that have rebelled against you
and the soldier that abandoned you this morning would
still be following you into battle.

ANTONY

Who deserted this morning?

SOLDIER

Who? One who was always close to you. Call for Enobarbus.
He won't hear you, or if he does, he'll call back from
Caesar's camp and say, "I'm no soldier of yours."

Say "I am none of thine."

ANTONY

What sayest thou?

SOLDIER

Sir,

15 He is with Caesar.

EROS

Sir, his chests and treasure
He has not with him.

ANTONY

Is he gone?

SOLDIER

Most certain.

ANTONY

20 Go, Eros, send his treasure after. Do it.
Detain no jot, I charge thee. Write to him—
I will subscribe—gentle adieus and greetings.
Say that I wish he never find more cause
To change a master. Oh, my fortunes have
25 Corrupted honest men! Dispatch.—Enobarbus!

Exeunt

ANTONY

What are you saying?

SOLDIER

Sir, he has joined with Caesar.

EROS

Sir, he didn't bring his chests of treasure with him.

ANTONY

Is he gone?

SOLDIER

It is certain that he is.

ANTONY

Go, Eros, send his treasure to him. Do it. Don't withhold a bit of it, I order you. Write to him—I'll sign the letters—sending him kind farewells and greetings. Tell him that I hope he never has cause again to leave his master. Oh, I have had such bad luck that it has caused honest men to become unfaithful! Hurry. Oh, Enobarbus!

ANTONY, EROS, and the SOLDIER exit.

Act 4, Scene 6

Shakespeare

Flourish. Enter AGRIPPA, and CAESAR, with ENOBARBUS and DOLABELLA

CAESAR

Go forth, Agrippa, and begin the fight.
Our will is Antony be took alive.
Make it so known.

AGRIPPA

Caesar, I shall.

Exit

CAESAR

5 The time of universal peace is near.
Prove this a prosp'rous day, the three-nooked world
Shall bear the olive freely.

Enter a MESSENGER

MESSENGER

Antony
Is come into the field.

CAESAR

10 Go charge Agrippa
Plant those that have revolted in the vant,
That Antony may seem to spend his fury
Upon himself.

Exeunt all but ENOBARBUS

Shakescleare Translation

A flourish of trumpets sounds. AGRIPPA and CAESAR enter with ENOBARBUS and DOLABELLA.

CAESAR

Go forth, Agrippa, and begin the battle. My desire is for Antony to be captured alive. Let the troops know.

AGRIPPA

Caesar, I will.

AGRIPPA exits.

CAESAR

The time is near when we will have peace throughout the world. If this day proves successful, there will be peace across the three regions of the world.

A MESSENGER enters.


MESSENGER

Antony has arrived on the battlefield.

CAESAR

Go tell Agrippa to take Antony's former soldiers and place them on the front lines. That way, Antony will feel like he is hurting himself.

All characters exit except ENOBARBUS.

 The three regions are Europe, Asia, and Africa. Shakespeare's term "three-nooked world," or three-cornered world, refers to these three corners or regions of the Roman Empire.

ENOBARBUS

Alexas did revolt and went to Jewry on
 15 Affairs of Antony, there did dissuade
 Great Herod to incline himself to Caesar
 And leave his master Antony. For this pains
 Caesar hath hanged him. Canidius and the rest
 That fell away have entertainment but
 20 No honorable trust. I have done ill,
 Of which I do accuse myself so sorely
 That I will joy no more.

Enter a SOLDIER of Caesar's

SOLDIER

Enobarbus, Antony
 Hath after thee sent all thy treasure, with
 25 His bounty overplus. The messenger
 Came on my guard, and at thy tent is now
 Unloading of his mules.

ENOBARBUS

I give it you.

SOLDIER

Mock not, Enobarbus.
 30 I tell you true. Best you safed the bringer
 Out of the host. I must attend mine office,
 Or would have done 't myself. Your Emperor
 Continues still a Jove.

Exit

ENOBARBUS

I am alone the villain of the earth,
 35 And feel I am so most. O Antony,
 Thou mine of bounty, how wouldst thou have paid
 My better service, when my turpitude
 Thou dost so crown with gold! This blows my heart.
 If swift thought break it not, a swifter mean
 40 Shall outstrike thought, but thought will do 't, I
 feel.
 I fight against thee? No, I will go seek
 Some ditch wherein to die. The foul'st best fits
 My latter part of life.

Exit

ENOBARBUS


Alexas revolted when he went to Judea on some business
 for Antony and, while he was there, he persuaded the great
 king Herod to take Caesar's side and abandon his master
 Antony. Caesar hanged him for his efforts. Canidius and
 the others who abandoned Antony have found
 employment, but they aren't trusted as loyal men. I have
 done something terrible, for which I accuse myself so
 bitterly that I will never be happy again.


A SOLDIER of CAESAR'S enters.

SOLDIER

Enobarbus, Antony has sent you all your treasure, along
 with additional treasure from his own supply. The
 messenger came while I was on guard duty, and he's at your
 tent now unloading the treasure from his mules.

ENOBARBUS

I give the treasure to you. 

 Enobarbus seems not to believe the soldier's words and ironically tells him he may have a treasure that he, Enobarbus, believes to be non-existent.

SOLDIER

Don't mock me, Enobarbus, I'm telling you the truth. It
 would be best if you saw that the messenger received safe
 passage through the lines of troops. I must see to my
 duties, or I would have done it myself. Your Emperor
 continues to behave as magnificently as a god.

The SOLDIER exits.

ENOBARBUS

I am the most villainous person on earth, and I know this
 better than anyone else. Oh Antony, you endless source of
 generosity, how would you have rewarded me for being
 more faithful to you, when you reward my treachery with
 gold like this! This breaks my heart. If rapid thoughts don't
 break it, there's something that will break it faster than
 thought—but I feel that thoughts alone will do it. Could I
 possibly fight against you, Antony? No, I will go find a ditch
 where I can die. The foulest kind of death is most suitable
 for the foul thing I have done at the end of my life.

ENOBARBUS exits.

Act 4, Scene 7

Shakespeare

Alarum. Drums and trumpets. Enter AGRIPPA and others

AGRIPPA

Retire! We have engaged ourselves too far.
 Caesar himself has work, and our oppression
 Exceeds what we expected.

Exeunt

Alarums. Enter ANTONY, and SCARUS, wounded

Shakescleare Translation

*A warning call sounds. Drums and trumpets sound.
 AGRIPPA enters with others.*

AGRIPPA

Fall back! We've extended ourselves too far. Even Caesar is
 assailed, and our enemy's strength is greater than we
 expected.

AGRIPPA and others exit.

*Warning calls sound. ANTONY enters with SCARUS, who is
 wounded.*

SCARUS

O my brave Emperor, this is fought indeed!

- 5 Had we done so at first, we had droven them home
With clouts about their heads.

ANTONY

Thou bleed'st apace.

SCARUS

I had a wound here that was like a "T,"
But now 'tis made an "H."

Sound retreat far off

ANTONY

- 10 They do retire.

SCARUS

We'll beat 'em into bench-holes. I have yet
Room for six scotches more.

Enter EROS

EROS

They are beaten, sir, and our advantage serves
For a fair victory.

SCARUS

- 15 Let us score their backs
And snatch 'em up, as we take hares, behind!
'Tis sport to maul a runner.

ANTONY

I will reward thee
Once for thy sprightly comfort and tenfold
20 For thy good valor. Come thee on.

SCARUS

I'll halt after.

Exeunt


SCARUS


Oh my brave Emperor, this is really the way to fight! If we
had fought like this initially, we would have driven them
home with bandages around their heads.

ANTONY

You're bleeding fast.

SCARUS

I had a wound here that looked like a "T," but now it looks
like an "H." 

 The soldier had a T-shaped wound and received another long gash across the bottom of it so it now looks like an H turned on its side. It's also a pun, since "H" was pronounced like "ache."

The call for retreat sounds from far off.

ANTONY

They're retreating.

SCARUS

We'll beat them back into their barracks. I can still stand six
more wounds.

EROS enters.

EROS

They are beaten back, sir, and our advantage could help us
secure a desirable victory.

SCARUS

Let's make gashes on their backs and take them the same
way we catch hares, from behind! It's entertaining to
wound someone who's running away from you.

ANTONY

I'll reward you once for the comfort you give me with your
high spirits, and reward you ten times for your fine bravery.
Come on.

SCARUS

I'll limp after you.

ANTONY, SCARUS, and EROS enter.

Act 4, Scene 8

Shakespeare

Alarum. Enter ANTONY again in a march; SCARUS, with others

ANTONY

We have beat him to his camp. Run one before
And let the Queen know of our gests.

Exit a soldier

Tomorrow,
Before the sun shall see 's, we'll spill the blood
5 That has today escaped. I thank you all,
For doughty-handed are you, and have fought
Not as you served the cause, but as 't had been
Each man's like mine. You have shown all Hectors.
Enter the city. Clip your wives, your friends.
10 Tell them your feats, whilst they with joyful tears
Wash the congealment from your wounds and kiss
The honored gashes whole.


Shakescleare Translation


*A warning call sounds. ANTONY enters again, marching with
troops. SCARUS enters with others.*

ANTONY

We have beat him back to his camp. Let someone run on
ahead and tell the Queen what we've accomplished.

A SOLDIER exits.

Tomorrow, before the sun rises, we'll kill all the enemy
forces that escaped us today. I thank you all, for you are
brave, and you didn't fight as though you had been
commanded to serve this cause, but as though it were as
much your own cause as it is mine. You have all fought as
bravely as Hector . Enter the city. Embrace your wives,
your friends. Tell them what you have done, while they
wash the congealed blood from your wounds with joyful
tears and heal your honorable injuries with kisses.

 Hector was the finest warrior among the Trojans during the Trojan War.

Enter CLEOPATRA

(to SCARUS) Give me thy hand.
To this great fairy I'll commend thy acts,
15 Make her thanks bless thee. O thou day o' the world,
(to CLEOPATRA) Chain mine armed neck. Leap thou, attire
and all,
Through proof of harness to my heart, and there
Ride on the pants triumphing!

CLEOPATRA

20 Lord of lords!
O infinite virtue, com'st thou smiling from
The world's great snare uncaught?

ANTONY

Mine nightingale,
We have beat them to their beds. What, girl, though
25 gray
Do something mingle with our younger brown, yet ha' we
A brain that nourishes our nerves and can
Get goal for goal of youth. Behold this man.
Commend unto his lips thy favoring hand.
30 (to SCARUS) Kiss it, my warrior.

SCARUS kisses CLEOPATRA's hand

He hath fought today
As if a god, in hate of mankind, had
Destroyed in such a shape.

CLEOPATRA

(to SCARUS) I'll give thee, friend,
35 An armor all of gold. It was a king's.

ANTONY

He has deserved it, were it carbuncl'd
Like holy Phoebus' car. Give me thy hand.
Through Alexandria make a jolly march.
Bear our hacked targets like the men that owe them.
40 Had our great palace the capacity
To camp this host, we all would sup together
And drink carouses to the next day's fate,
Which promises royal peril. —Trumpeters,
With brazen din blast you the city's ear;
45 Make mingle with our rattling taborins,
That heaven and earth may strike their sounds together,
Applauding our approach.

*Exeunt**CLEOPATRA enters.***ANTONY**

(To SCARUS) Give me your hand. I'll praise your deeds to
this great enchantress, the queen, so that she will bless you
with her thanks.

(To CLEOPATRA) Oh light of the world, clasp your arms
around my neck. Leap through my armor into my heart, in
your robes and all, and ride on my heartbeats as if you were
riding a horse in a triumphal parade!

CLEOPATRA

Greatest of all lords! Oh you infinitely brave man, did you
face the world's greatest threat and escape with a smile?

ANTONY

My nightingale, we have beaten them all the way back to
their camp in fear. What does it matter, my lady, if I am not
as young as I once was—I still have a brain that feeds my
muscles and can achieve my goals just as well as a younger
man. Look at this man. Give him your hand to kiss.

*(To SCARUS) Kiss her hand, my warrior.**SCARUS kisses CLEOPATRA'S hand.*

He has fought today like a god who became a man in order
to destroy mankind out of hatred.

CLEOPATRA

(To SCARUS) I'll give you a suit of armor made entirely out
of gold, my friend. It belonged to a king.

ANTONY

He would deserve it, even if it were covered in jewels like
Phoebus's chariot ². Give me your hand. Let's lead a
merry parade through Alexandria. Let's carry our dented
shields as we are the men who own them and received
those dents in battle. If our great palace had room to host
the entire army, we would all dine together and drink toasts
to our victory tomorrow, which I suspect will hold great
danger. Trumpeters, blast the ears of everyone in the city
with bold noise. Let them sound along with our rattling
drums, so that the sounds of heaven and the sounds of
earth ³ will be heard together as if applauding our
approach.

² Phoebus was the Roman sun god,
who drove across the skies in a
dazzling chariot.

³ The trumpet was associated with
heaven and the drum with earth.

ANTONY, CLEOPATRA, SCARUS, and the soldiers exit.

Act 4, Scene 9

Shakespeare

*Enter a SENTRY and his company. ENOBARBUS follows***SENTRY**

If we be not relieved within this hour,
We must return to th' court of guard. The night
Is shiny, and they say we shall embattle
By th' second hour i' th' morn.

FIRST WATCH

5 This last day was a shrewd one to 's.

Shakescleare Translation

*A SENTRY and his company of WATCHMEN enter.
ENOBARBUS follows.***SENTRY**

If the other guards don't come to replace us within the next
hour, we'll have to return to the guardroom. There's bright
light tonight, and they say we'll resume battle by two in the
morning.

FIRST WATCH

This last day was a bad one for us.

ENOBARBUS

O bear me witness, night—

SECOND WATCH

What man is this?

FIRST WATCH

Stand close and list him.

ENOBARBUS

10 Be witness to me, O thou blessed moon,
When men revolted shall upon record
Bear hateful memory, poor Enobarbus did
Before thy face repent.

SENTRY

Enobarbus?

SECOND WATCH

Peace! Hark further.

ENOBARBUS

15 O sovereign mistress of true melancholy,
The poisonous damp of night dispoigne upon me,
That life, a very rebel to my will,
May hang no longer on me. Throw my heart
Against the flint and hardness of my fault,
20 Which, being dried with grief, will break to powder
And finish all foul thoughts. O Antony,
Nobler than my revolt is infamous,
Forgive me in thine own particular,
But let the world rank me in register
25 A master-leaver and a fugitive.
O Antony! O Antony!

He dies

FIRST WATCH

Let's speak to him.

SENTRY

Let's hear him, for the things he speaks may concern
Caesar.

SECOND WATCH

30 Let's do so. But he sleeps.

SENTRY

Swoons rather, for so bad a prayer as his
Was never yet for sleep.

FIRST WATCH

Go we to him.

SECOND WATCH

Awake, sir, awake. Speak to us.

FIRST WATCH

35 Hear you, sir?

SENTRY

The hand of death hath raught him.

Drums afar off

Hark, the drums
Demurely wake the sleepers. Let us bear him
To th' court of guard. He is of note. Our hour
40 Is fully out.

SECOND WATCH

Come on, then. He may recover yet.

ENOBARBUS

Oh night, bear witness to my words—

SECOND WATCH

Who is this?

FIRST WATCH

Let's hide and listen to him.

ENOBARBUS

Bear witness to me, oh you blessed moon: when the time
comes that rebels are remembered with hatred, remember
that poor Enobarbus repented before you for rebelling.

SENTRY

Enobarbus?

SECOND WATCH

Be quiet! Keep listening.

ENOBARBUS

Oh moon, you royal mistress of genuine melancholy, pour
down the poisonous mists of night upon me, so that I may
no longer live, now that I no longer wish to. Take my heart
and throw it against my hard sin, which is weak from grief. It
will burst into pieces and all my bitter thoughts will end
with my death. Oh Antony, your nobility is even greater
than my fault is terrible. I wish that you would forgive me
for those sins that I've committed against you, but I want
the rest of the world to remember me as a deserter and
someone who abandoned his master. Oh Antony! Oh
Antony!

ENOBARBUS dies.

FIRST WATCH

Let's speak to him.

SENTRY

Let's listen to him, because the things he's talking about
might have to do with Caesar.

SECOND WATCH

Let's do that. But he's asleep.

SENTRY

I think he's fainted, actually. No one ever said such a
despairing prayer to lull themselves to sleep.

FIRST WATCH

Let's go to him.

SECOND WATCH

Wake up, sir, wake up. Speak to us.

FIRST WATCH

Can you hear us, sir?

SENTRY

Death has struck him down.

Drums sounds from offstage.

Listen, the drums are waking up the sleeping men with their
subdued noise. Let's carry him to the guardroom. He's a
person of high rank. The time of our watch is up.

SECOND WATCH

Come on, then. He might still wake up.

*Exeunt with the body**The SENTRY and the WATCH exit with the body.*

Act 4, Scene 10

Shakespeare

*Enter ANTONY and SCARUS, with their army***ANTONY**

Their preparation is today by sea.
We please them not by land.

SCARUS

For both, my lord.

ANTONY

I would they'd fight i' th' fire or i' th' air,
5 We'd fight there too. But this it is: our foot
Upon the hills adjoining to the city
Shall stay with us. Order for sea is given;
They have put forth the haven,
Where their appointment we may best discover
10 And look on their endeavor.

Exeunt

Shakescleare Translation



*ANTONY and SCARUS enter with their army.***ANTONY**


They're preparing to fight by sea today. They're not happy
fighting us on land.


SCARUS

They're preparing to fight by both land and sea, my lord.

ANTONY

I wish they'd also fight in fire or in the air —we'd fight
them there too. But this is how we'll do things—our foot
soldiers up on the hills beside the city will stay with us. I've
given the orders for our preparations at sea. The ships have
left the port. Let's go up higher  where we can better
observe their battle plans and watch what they're doing.

 Antony refers to the four
elements, believed in Shakespeare's
time to compose all things: earth,
water, fire, and air.

 In some versions of the original
text, "put forth the haven" is followed
by "Up higher then," meaning, "Let's
go up higher."

ANTONY and SCARUS exit.

Act 4, Scene 11

Shakespeare

*Enter CAESAR and his army***CAESAR**

But being charged, we will be still by land—
Which, as I take 't, we shall, for his best force
Is forth to man his galleys. To the vales,
And hold our best advantage.

Exeunt

Shakescleare Translation

*CAESAR enters with his army.***CAESAR**

Unless we are attacked, we won't take any action on
land—and I guess that we won't be attacked, since most of
his troops have been sent out to guard his ships. Let's go to
the valleys and take the best position.

CAESAR and his army exit.

Act 4, Scene 12


Shakespeare

*Enter ANTONY and SCARUS***ANTONY**


Yet they are not joined. Where yond pine does stand
I shall discover all. I'll bring thee word
Straight how 'tis like to go.

*Exit**Alarum afar off, as at a sea fight*

Shakescleare Translation

*ANTONY enters with SCARUS .***ANTONY**

But they still aren't fighting. I'll go over to where that pine
stands and survey the whole scene. I'll tell you shortly how
things are likely to go.

 Antony and Scarus are on a high
vantage point looking down at the site
of the sea battle.

*ANTONY exits.**Warning calls, like those heard in a sea battle, sound from
offstage.*

SCARUS

Swallows have built

- 5 In Cleopatra's sails their nests. The auguries
Say they know not, they cannot tell, look grimly,
And dare not speak their knowledge. Antony
Is valiant and dejected, and by starts
His fretted fortunes give him hope and fear
10 Of what he has and has not.

Enter ANTONY

ANTONY

All is lost!

- This foul Egyptian hath betrayed me.
My fleet hath yielded to the foe, and yonder
They cast their caps up and carouse together
15 Like friends long lost. Triple-turned whore! 'Tis thou
Hast sold me to this novice, and my heart
Makes only wars on thee. Bid them all fly,
For when I am revenged upon my charm,
I have done all. Bid them all fly. Begone!

Exit SCARUS

- 20 O sun, thy uprise shall I see no more.
Fortune and Antony part here. Even here
Do we shake hands. All come to this? The hearts
That spanieled me at heels, to whom I gave
Their wishes, do discandy, melt their sweets
25 On blossoming Caesar, and this pine is barked
That overtopped them all. Betrayed I am.
Oh, this false soul of Egypt! This grave charm,
Whose eye becked forth my wars and called them home,
Whose bosom was my crownet, my chief end,
30 Like a right gypsy hath at fast and loose
Beguiled me to the very heart of loss.
(calling out) What, Eros, Eros!

Enter CLEOPATRA

Ah, thou spell! Avaunt!

CLEOPATRA

Why is my lord enraged against his love?

ANTONY

- 35 Vanish, or I shall give thee thy deserving,
And blemish Caesar's triumph. Let him take thee
And hoist thee up to the shouting plebeians!
Follow his chariot, like the greatest spot
Of all thy sex. Most monsterlike be shown
40 For poor'st diminutives, for dolts, and let
Patient Octavia plow thy visage up
With her preparèd nails!

Exit CLEOPATRA

- 'Tis well th'art gone,
If it be well to live, but better 'twere
45 Thou fell'st into my fury, for one death
Might have prevented many. —Eros, ho!—
The shirt of Nessus is upon me. Teach me,
Alcides, thou mine ancestor, thy rage.
Let me lodge Lichas on the horns o' th' moon,
50 And with those hands that grasped the heaviest club
Subdue my worthiest self. The witch shall die.
To the young Roman boy she hath sold me, and I fall
Under this plot. She dies for 't. —Eros, ho!

SCARUS

Swallows have built nests in the sails of Cleopatra's ships. The soothsayers say they don't know what this means, they cannot say. They look grim and dare not tell us what they know. Antony is both brave and dejected, and in fits and starts his diminished luck gives him reasons for both hope and fear—hope thanks to what he does have, fear because of what he does not have.

ANTONY enters.

ANTONY

All is lost! That foul Egyptian has betrayed me. My fleet has surrendered to the enemy, and down there, they throw their caps in the air and drink together like long-lost friends. That whore, who's betrayed three men! It's you, Cleopatra, who has sold me out to this boy Caesar, and my anger is directed only at you. Tell all my forces to flee, for all I intend to do now is take revenge on this woman who bewitched me. Tell them all to flee. Get going!

SCARUS exits.

Oh sun, I will never see you rise again. This is when I lose all my luck; at this very moment I bid it goodbye. Has it all come to this? Those men who fawned on me with all their hearts, whose wishes I granted, fall away from me and fawn now on Caesar with his growing good fortune, and I am destroyed even though I was once greater than all of them. I am betrayed. Oh, this treacherous queen of Egypt! This deadly enchantress, who decided when I went to war and when I brought my armies home, whose love was my main goal and greatest glory, she has cheated me like a true gypsy and tricked me until I lost everything.

[Calling out] Hey there, Eros, Eros!

CLEOPATRA enters.

Ah, you witch! Get away from here!

CLEOPATRA

Why is my lord so angry at his love?

ANTONY

Get away, or I'll give you what you deserve and diminish the glory of Caesar's triumphal procession. Let him take you and display you in public in front of the screaming crowd! Follow his chariot, like the most disgraced woman that has ever lived. Be displayed like a spectacle for fools, for the common people to stare at, and let long-suffering Octavia scratch your face with the nails she has sharpened for you!

CLEOPATRA exits.

It's good that you're gone, if you wish to remain alive, but it would have been better if you had fallen prey to my anger. Then your death might have prevented the death of many others.

[Calling] Eros, hey there!

[To himself] I feel as if I were wearing the shirt of Nessus. Hercules, my ancestor, I pray that you will show me how to show my anger as you did. Let me destroy my enemy, and with my own hands—hands that once wielded the heaviest weapons—destroy myself with honor. That witch Cleopatra will die. She's sold me to that young Roman boy Caesar, and I am destroyed by her plot. She will die for it.

[Calling] Eros, hey there!

Soothsayers used magical arts to tell fortunes and read omens, often by observing the movements of birds.

Cleopatra had betrayed Julius Caesar and Pompey, and now she has betrayed Antony.

In a triumphal procession, the parade given to a general to celebrate his victories in battle, the general would often lead and display his captive enemies to increase his glory.

Antony claims Hercules (also called Alcides, as in the original text) as his ancestor. Nessus was a centaur responsible for Hercules' receiving a poisoned shirt, which killed him when he put it on. Hercules blamed Lichas, who brought him the shirt, and killed him.

In ancient Rome, suicide was often considered the noblest response for a general who had been defeated in war.

*Exit**ANTONY exits.*

Act 4, Scene 13

Shakespeare

*Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS, and MARDIAN***CLEOPATRA**

Help me, my women! Oh, he's more mad
Than Telamon for his shield. The boar of Thessaly
Was never so embossed.

CHARMIAN

To th' monument!
5 There lock yourself and send him word you are dead.
The soul and body rive not more in parting
Than greatness going off.

CLEOPATRA

To th' monument!—
Mardian, go tell him I have slain myself.
10 Say that the last I spoke was "Antony,"
And word it, prithee, piteously. Hence, Mardian,
And bring me how he takes my death. *(to the others)* To
th' monument!

Exeunt

Shakescleare Translation

*CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS, and MARDIAN enter.***CLEOPATRA**

Help me, my women! Oh, he's more angrier than Ajax when
he was denied Achilles' shield ¹. The boar of Thessaly ²
never foamed at the mouth with more rage.

¹ Ajax (also called Telamon, as in the original text) was a great Greek warrior who fought in the Trojan War. He went mad with rage after he was denied the shield of Achilles, another great Greek warrior.

² The boar of Thessaly was sent by Diana, a Roman goddess, to destroy the city of Calydon.

CHARMIAN

Go to your tomb ³! Lock yourself inside and send him a
message that you are dead. When a great man loses his
greatness, he falls lower than anyone—his greatness goes
farther from him than the soul goes from the body in death.

³ Cleopatra, anticipating her own death, had already built herself a tomb (called a "monument" in the original text). The tomb had rooms in it that were spacious enough to house her and her servants.

CLEOPATRA

To the tomb!

[To MARDIAN] Mardian, go tell him I have killed myself. Tell
him the last word I spoke was "Antony," and please, fill your
voice with pity when you say it. Get going, Mardian, and tell
me how he reacts to the news of my death.

[To the others] To the tomb!

CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS, and MARDIAN exit.

Act 4, Scene 14

Shakespeare

*Enter ANTONY and EROS***ANTONY**

Eros, thou yet behold'st me?

EROS

Ay, noble lord.

ANTONY

Sometimes we see a cloud that's dragonish,
A vapor sometime like a bear or lion,
5 A towered citadel, a pendant rock,
A forkèd mountain, or blue promontory
With trees upon 't that nod unto the world
And mock our eyes with air. Thou hast seen these signs.
They are black vesper's pageants.

EROS

10 Ay, my lord.

Shakescleare Translation

*ANTONY and EROS enter.***ANTONY**

Eros, you still see me?

EROS

Yes, my noble lord.

ANTONY

Sometimes we see a cloud that looks like a dragon, and
sometimes a mist that looks like a bear or a lion, like a
fortress with towers, an overhanging rock, a mountain with
many peaks. Sometimes we see a blue rock with trees on it
that shake before our eyes and make mockeries of our sight
since they are made only of air. You have seen the signs.
They are the apparitions that tell us night and death are
coming.

EROS

Yes, my lord.

ANTONY

That which is now a horse, even with a thought
The rack dislimns and makes it indistinct
As water is in water.

EROS

It does, my lord.

ANTONY

15 My good knave Eros, now thy captain is
Even such a body. Here I am Antony,
Yet cannot hold this visible shape, my knave.
I made these wars for Egypt, and the Queen,
Whose heart I thought I had, for she had mine—
20 Which whilst it was mine had annexed unto 't
A million more, now lost—she, Eros, has
Packed cards with Caesar and false-played my glory
Unto an enemy's triumph.
Nay, weep not, gentle Eros. There is left us
25 Ourselves to end ourselves.

Enter MARDIAN

Oh, thy vile lady!
She has robbed me of my sword.

MARDIAN

No, Antony,
My mistress loved thee, and her fortunes mingled
30 With thine entirely.

ANTONY

Hence, saucy eunuch! Peace!
She hath betrayed me and shall die the death.

MARDIAN

Death of one person can be paid but once,
And that she has discharged. What thou wouldst do
35 Is done unto thy hand. The last she spake
Was "Antony, most noble Antony!"
Then in the midst a tearing groan did break
The name of Antony. It was divided
Between her heart and lips. She rendered life,
40 Thy name so buried in her.

ANTONY

Dead, then?

MARDIAN

Dead.

ANTONY

Unarm, Eros. The long day's task is done,
And we must sleep. *(to MARDIAN)* That thou depart'st
45 hence safe
Does pay thy labor richly. Go.

Exit MARDIAN

Off, pluck off!
The sevenfold shield of Ajax cannot keep
The battery from my heart. O, cleave, my sides!
50 Heart, once be stronger than thy continent.
Crack thy frail case!—Apace, Eros, apace.
No more a soldier. Bruisèd pieces, go.
You have been nobly borne. *(to EROS)* From me awhile.

Exit EROS

ANTONY

We see a shape that now looks like a horse, and even as we
think it, the cloud dims and makes the shape indistinct, like
one drop in a body of water.

EROS

It does, my lord.

ANTONY

My good young man Eros, your captain's body behaves in
just the same way now. I am myself for now, but I cannot
maintain this bodily form, my boy. I went to war for the
sake of Egypt and the Queen. I thought I had the Queen's
love, for she had mine—and until I loved her, I had the love
of a million more people, which I have now lost. But now
she has concocted a plot with Caesar, Eros, and betrayed
me so that an enemy may defeat me and destroy my glory.
No, do not weep, gentle Eros. We still have enough of our
own power to put an end to our lives.

MARDIAN enters.

Oh, your despicable mistress! She has destroyed all my
fortitude.

MARDIAN

No, Antony, my mistress loved you, and her fate was
inseparable from yours.

ANTONY

Get out, you shameless eunuch! Be quiet! She has betrayed
me and she will die as she deserves.

MARDIAN

A person can only die once, and she has done that. What
you intended to do, she has done for you. The last words
she spoke were, "Antony, most noble Antony!" Then she
broke off in the middle of saying your name to let out a
heart-rending groan. She spoke half of the word, the other
half remained in her heart. And so she died with your name
buried inside her.

ANTONY

She is dead, then?

MARDIAN

Dead.

ANTONY

[To EROS] Take off my armor, Eros. Our long day's work is
finished, and we must sleep.

[To MARDIAN] It's reward enough for your pains that I let
you leave here unharmed. Go.

MARDIAN exits.

ANTONY

Off, take my armor off! *[EROS removes his armor]* Not even
the shield of Ajax, with all its seven layers, can protect my
heart from this assault. Oh, if only my sides would burst
open! I wish my heart were stronger than the weak body
that contains it and crack open. Quickly, Eros, quickly. I am
no longer a soldier. Let these damaged pieces of armor be
cast aside. I wore them nobly. Eros, leave me alone for a
while.

EROS exits.

55 I will o'ertake thee, Cleopatra, and
Weep for my pardon. So it must be, for now
All length is torture. Since the torch is out,
Lie down and stray no farther. Now all labor
Mars what it does. Yea, very force entangles
60 Itself with strength. Seal then, and all is done.—
Eros! —I come, my Queen. —Eros!— Stay for me.
Where souls do couch on flowers, we'll hand in hand,
And with our sprightly port make the ghosts gaze.
Dido and her Aeneas shall want troops,
65 And all the haunt be ours. —Come, Eros, Eros!

Enter EROS

EROS

What would my lord?

ANTONY

Since Cleopatra died
I have lived in such dishonor that the gods
Detest my baseness. I, that with my sword
70 Quartered the world, and o'er green Neptune's back
With ships made cities, condemn myself to lack
The courage of a woman—less noble mind
Than she which by her death our Caesar tells
"I am conqueror of myself." Thou art sworn, Eros,
75 That when the exigent should come which now
Is come indeed, when I should see behind me
Th' inevitable prosecution of
Disgrace and horror, that on my command,
Thou then wouldst kill me. Do 't. The time is come.
80 Thou strik'st not me, 'tis Caesar thou defeat'st.
Put color in thy cheek.

EROS

The gods withhold me!
Shall I do that which all the Parthian darts,
Though enemy, lost aim and could not?

ANTONY

85 Eros,
Wouldst thou be windowed in great Rome and see
Thy master thus with pleached arms, bending down
His corrigible neck, his face subdued
To penetrative shame, whilst the wheeled seat
90 Of fortunate Caesar, drawn before him, branded
His baseness that ensued?

EROS

I would not see 't.

ANTONY

Come, then, for with a wound I must be cured.
Draw that thy honest sword, which thou hast worn
95 Most useful for thy country.

EROS

O sir, pardon me!

ANTONY

When I did make thee free, swor'st thou not then
To do this when I bade thee? Do it at once,
Or thy precedent services are all

[As if to CLEOPATRA] I will follow you into death, Cleopatra,
and weep until you forgive me. It must be like this, since
now, any more time spent alive is torture. Since the light of
my life is gone, I will end my life and go on no further. Now
anything I tried to do would only make matters worse. Yes,
even strength defeats itself by what it tries to do. Let me
end it, then and everything will be done.

[Calling] Eros!

[As if to CLEOPATRA] I come, my Queen.

[Calling] Eros!

[As if to CLEOPATRA] Wait for me. In that place where souls
sleep on flowers ¹, we'll walk hand in hand, and ghosts
will gaze at us because of our cheerful demeanor. No one
will pay attention to Dido and Aeneas ², and the place will
be ours.

[Calling] Come, Eros, Eros!

EROS enters.

EROS

What do you want, my lord?

ANTONY

Since Cleopatra died, my life has had such dishonor that
even the gods hate how disgraceful I am. I, who divided the
world into quarters and sailed across the green sea ¹ with
so many ships that they appeared to make a city on the
waves—I disgrace myself by having less courage than a
woman. I have a less noble mind than she, who tells Caesar
with her death, "I am conqueror of myself ²." You have
sworn, Eros, that when it became necessary, as it is now,
when I could see inevitable disgrace and horror looming,
that you would kill me on my command. Do it. The time has
come. It isn't me you strike, it's Caesar you're defeating.
Pull yourself together.

EROS

May the gods prevent me! All of the Parthians' arrows
missed their target and could not kill you, how could I kill
you instead?

ANTONY

Eros, would you rather look down from a window in the
great city of Rome and see your master displayed like this,
with his arms tied, bending his neck in submission, his face
subdued by penetrating shame, while lucky Caesar's
chariot was drawn before him, indicating to everyone that
the man who walked behind was disgraced?

EROS

I couldn't look at it.

ANTONY

Come, then, for you can only help me by wounding me.
Draw your faithful sword, which you have used to do good
service for your country.

EROS

Oh sir, pardon me!

ANTONY

When I freed you from servitude, didn't you swear to me
then that you would do this when I told you to? Do it
immediately, or all your previous service to me was nothing

¹ Antony evokes Elysium, or the Elysian Fields, a pleasant part of the underworld Romans imagined to be reserved for great heroes.

² In Virgil's epic poem "The Aeneid," the Trojan hero Aeneas visits the underworld and encounters Dido, the Queen of Carthage and Aeneas's former lover who killed herself after Aeneas abandoned her.

¹ In the original text, the name "Neptune," the Roman god of the sea, is used to evoke the sea.

² Caesar was hoping to conquer Cleopatra and Antony by capturing them alive and parading them through Rome in a triumphal procession. Cleopatra and Antony wish to deprive Caesar of his triumph by conquering themselves, i.e., having the courage to kill themselves rather than endure the humiliation of being captured and displayed.

But accidents unpurposed. Draw and come.

EROS

Turn from me then that noble countenance
Wherein the worship of the whole world lies.

ANTONY

Lo thee!

He turns away

EROS

My sword is drawn.

ANTONY

105 Then let it do at once
The thing why thou hast drawn it.

EROS

My dear master,
My captain, and my emperor, let me say,
Before I strike this bloody stroke, farewell.

ANTONY

110 'Tis said, man, and farewell.

EROS

Farewell, great chief. Shall I strike now?

ANTONY

Now, Eros.

EROS

Why, there then!

Stabs himself

115 Thus I do escape the sorrow
Of Antony's death.

He dies

ANTONY

120 Thrice nobler than myself,
Thou teachest me, O valiant Eros, what
I should and thou couldst not. My Queen and Eros
Have by their brave instruction got upon me
A nobleness in record. But I will be
A bridegroom in my death, and run into 't
As to a lover's bed. Come then, and Eros,
Thy master dies thy scholar. To do thus
I learned of thee.

He falls on his sword

125 How! Not dead? Not dead?
The guard, ho! Oh, dispatch me!

Enter DERCETUS and others of a GUARD

FIRST GUARD

What's the noise?

ANTONY

I have done my work ill, friends. Oh, make an end
Of what I have begun!

SECOND GUARD

130 The star is fall'n.

but an accident, not something you intended to do. Draw
your sword and come.

EROS

Turn away from me, then, that noble face that the whole
world used to worship.

ANTONY

Here you are!

ANTONY turns away.

EROS

My sword is drawn.

ANTONY

Then do it at once, the thing you drew it in order to do.

EROS

My dear master, my captain, and my emperor, before I strike
this deadly stroke, let me say goodbye to you.

ANTONY

You've said it, man, goodbye.

EROS

Goodbye, great captain. Shall I strike now?

ANTONY

Now, Eros.

EROS

Why, then there it is!

EROS stabs himself.

In this way I escape the sorrow of seeing Antony's death.

EROS dies.

ANTONY

You are three times nobler than I am. Oh brave Eros, you
teach me how to do the thing that I should do and that you
couldn't do. In this brave deed that they've taught me, my
Queen and Eros have gained a noble reputation ahead of
me, recorded in the history books. But I will embrace death
as willingly as a bridegroom embraces his bride, and seek it
as eagerly as a lover's bed. Come then. Eros, I was once
your master but now I am your student. I learned how to do
this from you.

ANTONY falls on his sword.

How could this be? I'm not dead? Not dead? Guards, hey
there! Oh, finish me off!

DERCETUS enters with others members of the GUARD.

FIRST GUARD

What's all this noise?

ANTONY

I've done my work badly, my friends. Oh, finish what I
started!

SECOND GUARD

The greatest man has fallen.

FIRST GUARD

And time is at his period.

ALL

Alas, and woe!

ANTONY

Let him that loves me strike me dead.

FIRST GUARD

Not I.

SECOND GUARD

135 Nor I.

THIRD GUARD

Nor anyone.

Exeunt GUARD

DERCETUS

Thy death and fortunes bid thy followers fly.

He takes up ANTONY'S sword

This sword but shown to Caesar, with this tidings,
Shall enter me with him.

Enter DIOMEDES

DIOMEDES

140 Where's Antony?

DERCETUS

There, Diomed, there.

DIOMEDES

Lives he? Wilt thou not answer, man?

Exit DERCETUS

ANTONY

Art thou there, Diomed? Draw thy sword and give me
Sufficing strokes for death.

DIOMEDES

145 Most absolute lord,
My mistress Cleopatra sent me to thee.

ANTONY

When did she send thee?

DIOMEDES

Now, my lord.

ANTONY

Where is she?

DIOMEDES

150 Locked in her monument. She had a prophesying fear
Of what hath come to pass. For when she saw—
Which never shall be found—you did suspect
She had disposed with Caesar, and that your rage
Would not be purged, she sent you word she was dead.

155 But fearing since how it might work, hath sent
Me to proclaim the truth, and I am come,
I dread, too late.

ANTONY

Too late, good Diomed. Call my guard, I prithee.

FIRST GUARD

And time comes to a halt.

ALL

Alas, the sorrow!

ANTONY

If anyone loves me, let him kill me.

FIRST GUARD

Not I.

SECOND GUARD

Nor I.

THIRD GUARD

Nor anyone.

The GUARD exits.

DERCETUS

Your death and your fallen fortunes show your followers
that they ought to leave you.

DERCETUS picks up ANTONY'S sword.

If I just show this sword to Caesar and tell him this news, I'll
gain favor with him.

DIOMEDES enters.

DIOMEDES

Where's Antony?

DERCETUS

There, Diomed, there.

DIOMEDES

Is he alive? Won't you answer, man?

DERCETUS enters.

ANTONY

Are you there, Diomed? Draw your sword and strike me
hard enough to kill me.

DIOMEDES

Greatest lord, my mistress Cleopatra sent me to you.

ANTONY

When did she send you?

DIOMEDES

Just now, my lord.

ANTONY

Where is she?

DIOMEDES

Locked in her tomb. She was afraid of what she foresaw
might happen. For when she saw that you suspected her of
plotting with Caesar—something you will never find to be
true—and that your rage could not be overcome, she sent
you a message that she was dead. But then she became
afraid of what effect the news might have on you, and she
sent me to tell you the truth. Now I'm afraid that I've arrived
too late.

ANTONY

Too late, good Diomed. Call my guard, please.

DIOMEDES

160 What ho, the Emperor's guard! The guard, what ho!
Come, your lord calls!

Enter four or five of the GUARD of Antony

ANTONY

Bear me, good friends, where Cleopatra bides.
'Tis the last service that I shall command you.

FIRST GUARD

Woe, woe are we, sir, you may not live to wear
All your true followers out.

ALL

165 Most heavy day!

ANTONY

Nay, good my fellows, do not please sharp fate
To grace it with your sorrows. Bid that welcome
Which comes to punish us, and we punish it,
Seeming to bear it lightly. Take me up.
170 I have led you oft; carry me now, good friends,
And have my thanks for all.

Exeunt, bearing ANTONY and the body of EROS

DIOMEDES

Hey there, the Emperor's guard! The guard, hey there!
Come, your lord is calling you!

Four or five GUARDS of ANTONY enter.

ANTONY

Good friends, carry me to where Cleopatra is. This is the last
service that I will command you to carry out.

FIRST GUARD

We are sorrowful, sorrowful, sir, that you will not live longer
than your followers.

ALL

Most sorrowful day!

ANTONY

No, my good friends, do not give cruel fate the satisfaction
of seeing your sorrows. If we welcome something that was
intended to punish us, we punish it in return by seeming
not to mind it. Pick me up. I have often led you; carry me
now, good friends. I thank you for everything.

*The GUARD exits, bearing ANTONY and the body of EROS;
DIOMEDES exits.*

Act 4, Scene 15

Shakespeare

Enter CLEOPATRA and her maids aloft, with CHARMIAN and IRAS

CLEOPATRA

O Charmian, I will never go from hence.

CHARMIAN

Be comforted, dear madam.

CLEOPATRA

No, I will not.
All strange and terrible events are welcome,
5 But comforts we despise. Our size of sorrow,
Proportioned to our cause, must be as great
As that which makes it.

Enter below DIOMEDES

How now? Is he dead?

DIOMEDES

His death's upon him, but not dead.
10 Look out o' th' other side your monument.
His guard have brought him thither.

Enter below ANTONY, and the guard bearing him

CLEOPATRA

O sun,
Burn the great sphere thou mov'st in. Darkling stand
The varying shore o' th' world! O Antony,
15 Antony, Antony! Help, Charmian, help, Iras, help!
Help, friends below! Let's draw him hither.

Shakescleare Translation

*CLEOPATRA and her maids enter with CHARMIAN and IRAS
on a raised platform above the stage.*

CLEOPATRA

Oh Charmian, I will never leave this place.

CHARMIAN

Be comforted, good madam.

CLEOPATRA

No, I will not. I welcome all strange and terrible events, but I
despise comfort. The size of our sorrow is proportionate to
the cause of our sorrow, and so it must be as great as the
cause.

DIOMEDES enters on the stage below.


What's going on? Is he dead?


DIOMEDES

His death is approaching fast, but he is not dead. Look out
from the other side of your tomb. His guards have brought
him there.

*ANTONY enters on the stage below, with a GUARD bearing
him.*

CLEOPATRA

Oh sun, burn up the path of your orbit and leave it . May
all the shores of the world lie in darkness! Oh Antony,
Antony, Antony! Help, Charmian, Iras, help! Help, friends
below! Let's draw him up here.

 As noted above, celestial bodies were thought to be fixed in concentric crystalline spheres, which guided their orbits. If the sun were to "burn the great sphere," as the original text puts it, in which it moved, it would fall out of orbit and leave the world in darkness.

ANTONY

Peace!
Not Caesar's valor hath o'erthrown Antony,
But Antony's hath triumphed on itself.

CLEOPATRA

20 So it should be, that none but Antony
Should conquer Antony, but woe 'tis so!

ANTONY

I am dying, Egypt, dying. Only
I here importune death awhile, until
Of many thousand kisses the poor last
25 I lay upon thy lips.

CLEOPATRA

I dare not, dear,
Dear my lord, pardon, I dare not,
Lest I be taken. Not th' imperious show
Of the full-fortuned Caesar ever shall
30 Be brooch'd with me. If knife, drugs, serpents, have
Edge, sting, or operation, I am safe.
Your wife Octavia, with her modest eyes
And still conclusion, shall acquire no honor
Demuring upon me. But come, come, Antony—
35 Help me, my women—We must draw thee up.
Assist, good friends.

They begin lifting him

ANTONY

Oh, quick, or I am gone.

CLEOPATRA

Here's sport indeed! How heavy weighs my lord!
Our strength is all gone into heaviness,
40 That makes the weight. Had I great Juno's power,
The strong-winged Mercury should fetch thee up
And set thee by Jove's side. Yet come a little.
Wishers were ever fools. Oh, come, come, come!

They heave ANTONY aloft to CLEOPATRA

And welcome, welcome! Die when thou hast lived.
45 Quicken with kissing. Had my lips that power,
Thus would I wear them out.

She kisses him

ALL

A heavy sight!

ANTONY

I am dying, Egypt, dying.
Give me some wine and let me speak a little.

CLEOPATRA

50 No, let me speak, and let me rail so high
That the false huswife Fortune break her wheel,
Provoked by my offense.

ANTONY

One word, sweet Queen:
Of Caesar seek your honor, with your safety—Oh!

ANTONY

Be at peace! Caesar's bravery did not overthrow me. I
conquered myself with my own bravery.

CLEOPATRA

That is how it should be, that no one should conquer
Antony except Antony himself—but what a pity that it has
come to pass!

ANTONY

I am dying, Queen of Egypt, dying. I just ask now that death
hold off for a short while, until I lay the poor last kiss of
many thousands of kisses on your lips.

CLEOPATRA

I dare not come down to you, dear. My dear lord, forgive me,
I dare not, for fear I will be captured. I will never serve as an
ornament to adorn the triumphal procession of Caesar, for
all his good fortune. As long as knives have edges, serpents
have teeth, or drugs have power, I will be safe from him.
Your wife Octavia, with her modestly lowered eyes and her
silent judgments, will get no honor from gazing upon me.
But come, come, Antony—help me, my women—we must
draw you up. Help, good friends.

The women begin lifting ANTONY up to the monument.

ANTONY

Oh, quick, or I will be dead.

CLEOPATRA

Here's a fine game! How heavy my lord is! All our strength is
dissolved by sadness —that's what makes the weight so
great. If I had great Juno's power, Mercury with his strong
wings would bring you up and set you at Jove's side.
Still, come a little closer. Wishing has always been a foolish
thing to do. Oh, come, come, come!

They heave ANTONY up to CLEOPATRA.

And welcome, welcome! Die only after you have lived. Let
kissing bring you back to life. If my lips had the power to do
that, I would wear them out like this.

CLEOPATRA kisses ANTONY.

ALL

A sad sight!

ANTONY


I am dying, Queen of Egypt, dying. Give me some wine and
let me speak a little.


CLEOPATRA


50 No, let me speak, I will complain and rant so bitterly that
deceitful, treacherous Fortune will be so provoked by my
insults that she will give up her power.

ANTONY

One word, sweet Queen. Appeal to Caesar to protect your
honor and your safety—oh!

 The term "heavy" in the original text could denote a large material weight or the emotion of sadness.

 Mercury was the winged messenger god.

 Fortune, often personified as a female deity, was represented with a wheel; by turning this wheel, she raised some people up and cast some people down. If Fortune were to "break her wheel," as the original text reads, she would lose the power she has exerted over Antony's and Cleopatra's fate.

CLEOPATRA

55 They do not go together.

ANTONY

Gentle, hear me.
None about Caesar trust but Proculeius.

CLEOPATRA

My resolution and my hands I'll trust,
None about Caesar.

ANTONY

60 The miserable change now at my end
Lament nor sorrow at, but please your thoughts
In feeding them with those my former fortunes,
Wherein I lived the greatest prince o' th' world,
The noblest, and do now not basely die,
65 Not cowardly put off my helmet to
My countryman —a Roman by a Roman
Valiantly vanquished. Now my spirit is going,
I can no more.

CLEOPATRA

Noblest of men, woo't die?
70 Hast thou no care of me? Shall I abide
In this dull world, which in thy absence is
No better than a sty? O see, my women,
The crown o' th' earth doth melt. My lord!

ANTONY dies.

Oh, withered is the garland of the war.
75 The soldier's pole is fall'n! Young boys and girls
Are level now with men. The odds is gone,
And there is nothing left remarkable
Beneath the visiting moon.

CHARMIAN

Oh, quietness, lady!

CLEOPATRA swoons.

IRAS

80 She's dead too, our sovereign.

CHARMIAN

Lady!

IRAS

Madam!

CHARMIAN

O madam, madam, madam!

IRAS

Royal Egypt, Empress!

CLEOPATRA stirs.

CLEOPATRA

He cannot do both ⁵.

ANTONY

Gentle lady, listen to me. Don't trust any of Caesar's
followers except Proculeius.

CLEOPATRA

I'll trust my determination and my own hands. I won't trust
anyone around Caesar.

ANTONY

Do not lament or be sorry for the miserable turn that my life
has taken. Rather, please yourself by thinking about the
great fortunes I enjoyed in the past, when I was the greatest
and noblest prince in the world. I do not die dishonorably
now, nor do I surrender like a coward to my fellow
countryman. I am a Roman who has been bravely
conquered by another Roman ⁶. Now my last breath is
leaving me. I cannot speak any more.

CLEOPATRA

Noblest of men, are you dying? Don't you care about me?
Can I remain in this dull world, which will be no better than
a pigsty when you are gone from it? Oh look, my women,
the greatest monarch of the earth is fading away. My lord!

ANTONY dies.

Oh, the glories that crown battle are all gone now. The
guide ⁷ of every soldier has fallen! The men that are left
now are no better than young boys and girls. There is no
person of distinction left among humankind, and there is
no longer anything remarkable on earth ⁸.

CHARMIAN

Oh, be calm, my lady!

CLEOPATRA faints.

IRAS

She's dead too, our queen.

CHARMIAN

Lady!

IRAS

Madam!

CHARMIAN

Oh madam, madam, madam!

IRAS

Royal Queen of Egypt, Empress!

CLEOPATRA stirs.

⁵ Cleopatra might be able to make herself safe by surrendering to Caesar, but she would lose her honor when he led her as a captive in his triumphal procession.

⁶ Romans had a high regard for their own civilization and culture as compared with other peoples; it would be a disgrace for a Roman to be killed or conquered by anyone but a fellow Roman.

⁷ The term "pole" in the original text refers to the pole star, or the North Star, which stays in a fixed position in the sky and so is used as a guide by navigators; it may also refer to a military standard, a flag raised on a pole.

⁸ Authors in Shakespeare's time frequently denoted the earth as everything that existed beneath the moon. In the original text, Cleopatra refers to everything "beneath the visiting moon" (visiting because it goes through phases) to refer to the whole world.

CHARMIAN

85 Peace, peace, Iras.

CLEOPATRA

No more but e'en a woman, and commanded
By such poor passion as the maid that milks
And does the meanest chares. It were for me
To throw my scepter at the injurious gods,
90 To tell them that this world did equal theirs
Till they had stolen our jewel. All's but naught.
Patience is sottish, and impatience does
Become a dog that's mad. Then is it sin
To rush into the secret house of death
95 Ere death dare come to us? How do you, women?
What, what, good cheer! Why, how now, Charmian?
My noble girls! Ah, women, women! Look,
Our lamp is spent, it's out. Good sirs, take heart.
We'll bury him, and then, what's brave, what's noble,
100 Let's do 't after the high Roman fashion
And make death proud to take us. Come, away.
This case of that huge spirit now is cold.
Ah, women, women! Come. We have no friend
But resolution, and the briefest end.

Exeunt, those above bearing off ANTONY's body

CHARMIAN

Peace, peace, Iras.

CLEOPATRA

I am no longer a queen but just an ordinary woman. I am overpowered by the same unworthy emotions as any milkmaid who performs the humblest chores. It would be more fitting for me to hurl my scepter at the gods who have injured me and tell them that this earthly world was as good as their divine world until they stole away the greatest man. Everything is worthless. It is idiotic to be patient and endure things calmly, and to become impatient is quickly to become like a mad dog. In that case, is it really sinful to rush towards death before death comes to us naturally? How are you, my women? What, what, be cheerful! Why, how are you doing there, Charmian? My noble girls! Ah, women, women! Look, our lamp has run out of oil, it's gone out. Good women, take heart. We'll bury him, and then, whatever is brave or noble, we'll do it in the noble Roman style, and die so nobly that death will be proud to take us. Come, away. The body that contained that great spirit is now cold. Ah, women, women! Come. The only thing that can help us is determination, and the quickest possible death.

CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS, and the maids exit, bearing away ANTONY'S body.

Act 5, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Enter CAESAR, with AGRIPPA, DOLABELLA, MAECENAS, GALLUS, and PROCULEIUS, and his council of war

CAESAR

Go to him, Dolabella, bid him yield.
Being so frustrate, tell him, he mocks
The pauses that he makes.

DOLABELLA

Caesar, I shall.

Exit

Enter DERCETUS, with the sword of ANTONY

CAESAR

5 Wherefore is that? And what art thou that dar'st
Appear thus to us?

DERCETUS

I am called Dercetus.
Mark Antony I served, who best was worthy
Best to be served. Whilst he stood up and spoke,
10 He was my master, and I wore my life
To spend upon his haters. If thou please
To take me to thee, as I was to him
I'll be to Caesar. If thou pleasest not,
I yield thee up my life.

CAESAR

15 What is 't thou say'st?

DERCETUS

I say, O Caesar, Antony is dead.

Shakescleare Translation

CAESAR enters with AGRIPPA, DOLABELLA, MAECENAS, GALLUS, PROCULEIUS, and CAESAR'S council of war.

CAESAR

Go to Antony, Dolabella, and tell him to surrender. His delay in doing so makes him look ridiculous.

DOLABELLA

Caesar, I will.

DOLABELLA exits.

DERCETUS enters with the sword of ANTONY.

CAESAR

What is that? And who are you to dare and appear before me armed?

DERCETUS

My name is Dercetus. I served Mark Antony, who was the man most worthy of being served. While he was alive, he was my master, and I used my life to oppose those who hated him. If it pleases you to employ me as Antony did I'll be loyal to you, Caesar. If not, I surrender my life to you.

CAESAR

What do you mean?

DERCETUS

I mean, Caesar, that Antony is dead.

CAESAR

The breaking of so great a thing should make
A greater crack. The round world
Should have shook lions into civil streets
20 And citizens to their dens. The death of Antony
Is not a single doom. In the name lay
A moiety of the world.

DERCETUS

He is dead, Caesar,
Not by a public minister of justice,
25 Nor by a hired knife, but that self hand
Which writ his honor in the acts it did
Hath, with the courage which the heart did lend it,
Splitted the heart. This is his sword.
I robbed his wound of it. Behold it stained
30 With his most noble blood.

CAESAR

Look you, sad friends,
The gods rebuke me, but it is tidings
To wash the eyes of kings.

AGRIPPA

And strange it is
35 That nature must compel us to lament
Our most persisted deeds.

MAECENAS

His taints and honors
Waged equal with him.

AGRIPPA

A rarer spirit never
40 Did steer humanity, but you gods will give us
Some faults to make us men. Caesar is touched.

MAECENAS

When such a spacious mirror's set before him,
He needs must see himself.

CAESAR

O Antony,
45 I have followed thee to this, but we do launch
Diseases in our bodies. I must perforce
Have shown to thee such a declining day,
Or look on thine. We could not stall together
In the whole world. But yet let me lament
50 With tears as sovereign as the blood of hearts
That thou, my brother, my competitor
In top of all design, my mate in empire,
Friend and companion in the front of war,
The arm of mine own body, and the heart
55 Where mine his thoughts did kindle—that our stars,
Unreconcilable, should divide
Our equalness to this. Hear me, good friends—

Enter an EGYPTIAN

But I will tell you at some meeter season.
The business of this man looks out of him.
60 We'll hear him what he says. *(to EGYPTIAN)* Whence are
you?

EGYPTIAN

A poor Egyptian yet, the Queen my mistress,
Confined in all she has, her monument,
Of thy intents desires instruction,
65 That she preparedly may frame herself
To th' way she's forced to.

CAESAR

It should cause a greater disturbance when someone so
great dies. The globe should have shaken so much that
lions left their dens and entered the city streets and the
citizens fled to the lions' dens. His death was not the death
of an ordinary man. He controlled half of the world.

DERCETUS


He is dead. He wasn't killed by a public minister of justice or
a hired assassin. With a courageous heart, he killed himself
with the same hand that he performed many honorable
acts. This is his sword. I took it away after it wounded him.
See how it's stained with his most noble blood.

CAESAR

[Weeping] See, my sad friends, the gods might criticize me
for weeping, but this news is enough to make even a king
cry.

AGRIPPA

And it is strange that our nature makes us weep for
something that we tried hard to achieve .

 Agrippa notes how odd it is that Caesar cries over Antony's death when he himself had been seeking to kill Antony.

MAECENAS

His flaws and his virtues fought inside him, both with equal
power.

AGRIPPA


No man was ever governed with such an uncommonly
noble spirit. But the gods give us some faults to make us
human. Caesar is emotional over the news.

MAECENAS

When he thinks about such a great man, he sees what he
himself could become.

CAESAR

Oh Antony, I was trying to end your life, but we have to get
rid of a disease if it threatens our body . Either I would
have had to die, or you would have. The world wasn't big
enough for both of us. But I will still weep, with tears as
powerful as the blood in my heart, for you, my brother, my
greatest competitor, my co-ruler of the empire, my friend
and companion on the battlefield, the arm of my own body,
and to whom I confided all my thoughts—I weep that our
partnership was divided by our irreconcilable fates. Listen
to me, good friends—

 Caesar may be referring to his own body, claiming that he sought Antony's death in order to save himself; the body was also a common metaphor for the nation-state, so he may also be saying that he had to kill Antony in order to save the Roman Empire.

An EGYPTIAN enters.

CAESAR

But I'll tell you what I have to say at a more appropriate
time. This man looks like he's here on urgent business. We'll
hear what he has to say.

[To the EGYPTIAN] Who sent you?

EGYPTIAN

That poor Egyptian, the Queen my mistress. She has locked
herself in her tomb—which is now all she has left—and she
wants to know what you intend to do, so that she can
prepare herself for her fate.

CAESAR

Bid her have good heart.
 She soon shall know of us, by some of ours,
 How honorable and how kindly we
 70 Determine for her, for Caesar cannot live
 To be ungentle.

EGYPTIAN

So the gods preserve thee!

Exit

CAESAR

Come hither, Proculeius. Go and say
 We purpose her no shame. Give her what comforts
 75 The quality of her passion shall require,
 Lest, in her greatness, by some mortal stroke
 She do defeat us, for her life in Rome
 Would be eternal in our triumph. Go,
 And with your speediest bring us what she says
 80 And how you find of her.

PROCULEIUS

Caesar, I shall.

Exit PROCULEIUS

CAESAR

Gallus, go you along.

Exit GALLUS

Where's Dolabella,
 To second Proculeius?

ALL

85 Dolabella!

CAESAR

Let him alone, for I remember now
 How he's employed. He shall in time be ready.
 Go with me to my tent, where you shall see
 How hardly I was drawn into this war,
 90 How calm and gentle I proceeded still
 In all my writings. Go with me and see
 What I can show in this.

Exeunt

CAESAR

Tell her to take comfort. I will soon send some messengers
 to tell her how honorable and kind my plans are for her. For
 it is impossible for me not to be gracious and noble.

EGYPTIAN

May the gods bless you.

The EGYPTIAN exits.

CAESAR

Come here, Proculeius. Go and tell Cleopatra that we have
 no intention of disrespecting her. Give her whatever
 comforts she requires, given her current emotional state.
 Otherwise, her nobility may lead her to kill herself and so
 prevent me from gaining undying glory by bringing her to
 Rome as my captive. Go, and then report back with her
 response quickly and tell me how she appears.

PROCULEIUS

Caesar, I will.

PROCULEIUS exits.

CAESAR

Gallus, get going.

GALLUS exits.

Where's Dolabella? I want him to go with Proculeius.

ALL

Dolabella!

CAESAR

Forget it, I just remembered that I sent him on an errand.
 He'll be ready shortly. Come with me to my tent, and see
 how I was drawn into this war against my will and how calm
 and gentle I always was. Come with me and I will prove it.

CAESAR, AGRIPPA, MAECENAS, and the council exit.

Act 5, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, and IRAS

CLEOPATRA


My desolation does begin to make
 A better life. 'Tis paltry to be Caesar.
 Not being Fortune, he's but Fortune's knave,
 A minister of her will. And it is great
 5 To do that thing that ends all other deeds,
 Which shackles accidents and bolts up change,
 Which sleeps and never palates more the dung,
 The beggar's nurse, and Caesar's.

Enter PROCULEIUS


Shakesclore Translation

CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, and IRAS enter.

CLEOPATRA

My isolation has helped me better understand my life. It's
 no great thing to be Caesar. He doesn't control his own fate,
 he's controlled by fate, and does whatever fortune dictates.
 And it is great, to do that deed  that puts an end to
 everything else, that puts a stop to all the accidents of
 fortune and to all change, that makes us sleep forever so
 that we never eat food from the earth again—food that
 nourishes beggars as well as great men like Caesar.

PROCULEIUS enters.

 That deed or "that thing" refers to suicide.

PROCULEIUS

Caesar sends greeting to the Queen of Egypt,
10 And bids thee study on what fair demands
Thou mean'st to have him grant thee.

CLEOPATRA

What's thy name?

PROCULEIUS

My name is Proculeius.

CLEOPATRA

Antony
15 Did tell me of you, bade me trust you, but
I do not greatly care to be deceived,
That have no use for trusting. If your master
Would have a queen his beggar, you must tell him,
That majesty, to keep decorum, must
20 No less beg than a kingdom. If he please
To give me conquered Egypt for my son,
He gives me so much of mine own as I
Will kneel to him with thanks.

PROCULEIUS

Be of good cheer.
25 You're fall'n into a princely hand. Fear nothing.
Make your full reference freely to my lord,
Who is so full of grace that it flows over
On all that need. Let me report to him
Your sweet dependency, and you shall find
30 A conqueror that will pray in aid for kindness
Where he for grace is kneeled to.

CLEOPATRA

Pray you, tell him
I am his fortune's vassal, and I send him
The greatness he has got. I hourly learn
35 A doctrine of obedience, and would gladly
Look him i' th' face.

PROCULEIUS

This I'll report, dear lady.
Have comfort, for I know your plight is pitied
Of him that caused it.

GALLUS and Roman soldiers enter from behind and take CLEOPATRA prisoner

GALLUS

40 You see how easily she may be surprised.
(to the soldiers) Guard her till Caesar come.

IRAS

Royal Queen!

CHARMIAN

O Cleopatra! Thou art taken, Queen.

CLEOPATRA draws a dagger

CLEOPATRA

Quick, quick, good hands.

PROCULEIUS seizes the dagger

PROCULEIUS

45 Hold, worthy lady, hold!
Do not yourself such wrong, who are in this
Relieved but not betrayed.

CLEOPATRA

What, of death too,
That rids our dogs of languish?

PROCULEIUS

Caesar sends greetings to the Queen of Egypt and asks
what requests you have for him.

CLEOPATRA

What is your name?

PROCULEIUS

My name is Proculeius.

CLEOPATRA

Antony told me about you and told me to trust you, but I
am still hesitant to trust people, since I do not like being
deceived. If your master wants me, a queen, to beg for
favours from him, then you must tell him that a queen, if she
is to act appropriately, cannot ask for anything less than a
kingdom. If Caesar is willing to give Egypt back to me so I
can make my son its ruler, then I will kneel down and thank
him for giving me back what is rightfully mine.

PROCULEIUS

Take comfort. You've been conquered by a noble and
generous man. Don't be afraid of anything. Make all your
requests to my lord without hesitation. His generosity is so
great that he will willingly meet your needs. Let me report
back to him how humbly you acknowledge his power, and
you'll find that this conquerer will beg you to tell him new
ways to show kindness to you, once you've knelt down to
ask him for mercy.

CLEOPATRA

Please, tell him that I am at the mercy of fortune and that I
acknowledge the great power he has won through his good
fortune. Every hour I learn to become more obedient, and I
would gladly speak to him face to face.

PROCULEIUS

I'll tell him this, dear lady. Take comfort, for I know that
Caesar, who put you in this position, pities you for what he's
done.

GALLUS and Roman soldiers enter from behind and take CLEOPATRA prisoner.

GALLUS

[To the soldiers] You see how easily someone can sneak up
on her. Guard her until Caesar arrives.

IRAS

Royal Queen!

CHARMIAN

Oh Cleopatra! You are captured, Queen.

CLEOPATRA draws a dagger.

CLEOPATRA

[Moving as if to stab herself] Act quickly, my good hands.

PROCULEIUS seizes the dagger.

PROCULEIUS

Stop, worthy lady, stop! Do not do yourself such wrong. We
are trying to help you, not betray you.

CLEOPATRA

What, you are depriving me of my death, too? Even dogs are
allowed to die to avoid prolonged suffering.

PROCULEIUS

50 Cleopatra,
Do not abuse my master's bounty by
Th' undoing of yourself. Let the world see
His nobleness well acted, which your death
Will never let come forth.

CLEOPATRA

55 Where art thou, Death?
Come hither, come! Come, come and take a queen
Worth many babes and beggars!

PROCULEIUS

Oh, temperance, lady!

CLEOPATRA

Sir, I will eat no meat, I'll not drink, sir.
60 If idle talk will once be necessary,
I'll not sleep neither. This mortal house I'll ruin,
Do Caesar what he can. Know, sir, that I
Will not wait pinioned at your master's court,
Nor once be chastised with the sober eye
65 Of dull Octavia. Shall they hoist me up
And show me to the shouting varletry
Of censuring Rome? Rather a ditch in Egypt
Be gentle grave unto me. Rather on Nilus' mud
Lay me stark naked and let the waterflies
70 Blow me into abhorring. Rather make
My country's high pyramids my gibbet
And hang me up in chains!

PROCULEIUS

You do extend
These thoughts of horror further than you shall
75 Find cause in Caesar.

Enter DOLABELLA

DOLABELLA

Proculeius,
What thou hast done thy master Caesar knows,
And he hath sent for thee. For the Queen,
I'll take her to my guard.

PROCULEIUS

80 So, Dolabella,
It shall content me best. Be gentle to her.
(*to CLEOPATRA*) To Caesar I will speak what you shall
please,
If you'll employ me to him.

CLEOPATRA

85 Say I would die.

Exit PROCULEIUS

DOLABELLA

Most noble Empress, you have heard of me?

CLEOPATRA

I cannot tell.

DOLABELLA

Assuredly you know me.

CLEOPATRA

No matter, sir, what I have heard or known.
90 You laugh when boys or women tell their dreams.
Is 't not your trick?

DOLABELLA

I understand not, madam.

PROCULEIUS

Cleopatra, do not show such ingratitude to my master's
generosity by killing yourself. Let the world have a chance
to see how nobly he acts; if you die, his nobility cannot be
displayed.

CLEOPATRA

Where are you, Death? Come here, come! Come, come, and
kill me, a queen, who is worth more than the babies and
beggars that you so frequently kill!

PROCULEIUS

Oh, be patient, my lady!

CLEOPATRA

Sir, I will eat no food and I will not drink, sir. Even if it takes
idle chatter to keep me awake, I won't sleep either. I'll
destroy my own body, no matter what Caesar tries to do.
You should know, sir, that I won't wait around to be a
captive at your master's court, or to be judged with solemn
looks from dull Octavia. Shall they hoist me up and display
me to the shouting mobs of Rome with all their harsh
judgments? I'd rather have a friendly grave in a ditch in
Egypt. I'd rather be laid stark naked in the mud on the
shores of the Nile and let waterflies lay eggs on me until I
become disgusting. I'd rather you turned Egypt's tall
pyramids into a gallows and hung me from them in chains!

PROCULEIUS

You'll learn from Caesar that you're alarming yourself
needlessly.

DOLABELLA enters.

DOLABELLA

Proculeius, your master Caesar knows what you have done,
and he's sent for you. As for the Queen, I'll guard her.

PROCULEIUS

That sounds fine to me, Dolabella. Be gentle with her.

[To CLEOPATRA] I'll tell Caesar whatever you wish, if you'll
send a message to him through me.

CLEOPATRA

Tell him I wish to die.

PROCULEIUS exits.

DOLABELLA

Most noble Empress, have you heard of me?

CLEOPATRA

I cannot tell.

DOLABELLA

I'm sure that you know me.

CLEOPATRA

It doesn't matter, sir, what I have heard or known. You laugh
when boys or women tell you about their dreams. Isn't that
your habit?

DOLABELLA

I don't understand, madam.

CLEOPATRA

I dreamt there was an emperor Antony.
Oh, such another sleep, that I might see
95 But such another man!

DOLABELLA

If it might please ye—

CLEOPATRA

His face was as the heavens, and therein stuck
A sun and moon, which kept their course and lighted
The little “O,” the earth.

DOLABELLA

100 Most sovereign creature—

CLEOPATRA

His legs bestrid the ocean. His reared arm
Crested the world. His voice was propertied
As all the tunèd spheres, and that to friends.
But when he meant to quail and shake the orb,
105 He was as rattling thunder. For his bounty,
There was no winter in ’t, an autumn ’twas
That grew the more by reaping. His delights
Were dolphinlike; they showed his back above
The element they lived in. In his lively
110 Walked crowns and crownets. Realms and islands were
As plates dropped from his pocket.

DOLABELLA

Cleopatra—

CLEOPATRA

Think you there was or might be such a man
As this I dreamt of?

DOLABELLA

115 Gentle madam, no.

CLEOPATRA

You lie up to the hearing of the gods.
But if there be nor ever were one such,
It’s past the size of dreaming. Nature wants stuff
To vie strange forms with fancy, yet t’ imagine
120 An Antony were nature’s piece ’gainst fancy,
Condemning shadows quite.

DOLABELLA

Hear me, good madam.
Your loss is as yourself, great, and you bear it
As answering to the weight. Would I might never
125 O’ertake pursued success, but I do feel,
By the rebound of yours, a grief that smites
My very heart at root.

CLEOPATRA

I thank you, sir.
Know you what Caesar means to do with me?

DOLABELLA

130 I am loath to tell you what I would you knew.

CLEOPATRA

Nay, pray you, sir.

DOLABELLA

Though he be honorable—

CLEOPATRA

I dreamt Antony was emperor. Oh, I wish I could sleep again
like that, so I could dream about another man like that!

DOLABELLA

If you care to—

CLEOPATRA

His face was as bright and majestic as the heavens. In his
face were two bright orbs, like the sun and moon, that
followed their course and shed light on this whole round
planet, the earth.

DOLABELLA

Most royal lady—

CLEOPATRA

He was so tall that his legs straddled the ocean. His
upraised arm reached across the whole world. When he
spoke to friends, his voice had the same qualities
as [musical spheres](#). But when he wanted to frighten and
shake the world, his voice rumbled like thunder. His
generosity was endless. It was like an autumn harvest, that
grew more bountiful the more you drew from it. The things
he took delight in revealed his extraordinary character; just
as a dolphin’s fin rises above the water, his character made
him rise above the level of common people. Kings and
princes were his servants. He could give away realms and
islands as easily as he could drop silver coins from his
pocket.

DOLABELLA

Cleopatra—

CLEOPATRA

Do you think there was, or could be, a man like the one I
dreamed of?

DOLABELLA

Gentle madam, no.

CLEOPATRA

You lie so blatantly that even the gods can hear you! But if
there is or ever was such a man, he’s greater than anything
that could be dreamed up. Nature cannot create creatures
as strange as the ones we can imagine, but if nature could
create a man like Antony, it would outdo even the
imagination, and reveal how pathetic and worthless our
imaginary visions are.

DOLABELLA

Listen to me, good madam. Your loss is great because you
yourself are great, and you bear it like the heavy burden it
is. May I never achieve the success I seek if this is not true:
that from sympathizing with your grief, I feel a grief that
strikes deep in my own heart.

CLEOPATRA

I thank you, sir. Do you know what Caesar intends to do
with me?

DOLABELLA


It pains me to tell you what I want you to know.

CLEOPATRA

No, please, go on, sir.

DOLABELLA

Even though Caesar is honorable—

 The crystalline spheres, within which the celestial bodies were set, were thought to produce beautiful music when they turned and resonated with each other; this divine music was inaudible to humans.

CLEOPATRA

He'll lead me, then, in triumph.

DOLABELLA

Madam, he will. I know 't.

Flourish. Enter CAESAR, PROCULEIUS, GALLUS, MAECENAS, and other ATTENDANTS

ATTENDANTS

135 Make way there! Caesar!

CAESAR

Which is the Queen of Egypt?

DOLABELLA

(to CLEOPATRA) It is the Emperor, madam.

CLEOPATRA kneels

CAESAR

Arise, you shall not kneel.
I pray you, rise. Rise, Egypt.

CLEOPATRA

140 Sir, the gods
Will have it thus. My master and my lord
I must obey.

CLEOPATRA stands

CAESAR

Take to you no hard thoughts.
The record of what injuries you did us,
145 Though written in our flesh, we shall remember
As things but done by chance.

CLEOPATRA

Sole sir o' th' world,
I cannot project mine own cause so well
To make it clear, but do confess I have
150 Been laden with like frailties which before
Have often shamed our sex.

CAESAR

Cleopatra, know
We will extenuate rather than enforce.
If you apply yourself to our intents,
155 Which towards you are most gentle, you shall find
A benefit in this change, but if you seek
To lay on me a cruelty by taking
Antony's course, you shall bereave yourself
Of my good purposes and put your children
160 To that destruction which I'll guard them from
If thereon you rely. I'll take my leave.

CLEOPATRA


And may, through all the world! 'Tis yours, and we,
Your scutcheons and your signs of conquest, shall
Hang in what place you please. Here, my good lord.


She gives him a scroll

CAESAR

165 You shall advise me in all for Cleopatra.

CLEOPATRA

He'll lead me  in his triumphal procession, then.

 Caesar will display her as his captive, conquered enemy to increase his glory during his triumphal procession.

DOLABELLA

Madam, he will. I know it.

A flourish of trumpets sounds. CAESAR, PROCULEIUS, GALLUS, MAECENAS, and other ATTENDANTS enter.

ATTENDANTS

Make way there! Caesar is coming!

CAESAR

Which person is the Queen of Egypt?

DOLABELLA

[To CLEOPATRA] It is the Emperor, madam.

CLEOPATRA kneels.

CAESAR

Get up, you shouldn't kneel. Please, rise. Rise, Queen of Egypt.

CLEOPATRA

Sir, this is what the gods have willed. I must obey my lord and master.

CLEOPATRA stands.

CAESAR

Please don't hold any grudges. Even though our bodies still bear the wounds from battle, we'll agree to forget about the injuries you inflicted on us, treating them as accidents.

CLEOPATRA

Only ruler of the world, I cannot explain my side of the story well enough to make it clear. I can only confess that I have some of the same weaknesses that have often brought shame to women.

CAESAR

Cleopatra, you should know that I intend to excuse your offenses rather than dwell on them. If you agree to go along with my plans, which are very generous, you'll find that this change will benefit you. But if you try to injure me by killing yourself as Antony did, you'll lose all the generosity I intend to show you and ensure that I destroy your children—which I will not do if you submit to me. I'll leave you now.

CLEOPATRA

And you may go freely wherever you like in the world! The world is yours, and just as you can freely display the shields of your conquered enemies, you can do whatever what you like with me.

CLEOPATRA gives CAESAR a scroll.

CAESAR

You will let me know everything you need.

CLEOPATRA

This is the brief of money, plate, and jewels
I am possessed of. 'Tis exactly valued,
Not petty things admitted. Where's Seleucus?

Enter SELEUCUS

SELEUCUS

Here, madam.

CLEOPATRA

170 This is my treasurer. Let him speak, my lord,
Upon his peril, that I have reserved
To myself nothing. — Speak the truth, Seleucus.

SELEUCUS

Madam, I had rather seal my lips
Than to my peril speak that which is not.

CLEOPATRA

175 What have I kept back?

SELEUCUS

Enough to purchase what you have made known.

CAESAR

Nay, blush not, Cleopatra. I approve
Your wisdom in the deed.

CLEOPATRA

See, Caesar! Oh, behold
180 How pomp is followed! Mine will now be yours,
And, should we shift estates, yours would be mine.
The ingratitude of this Seleucus does
Even make me wild. (*to SELEUCUS*) O slave, of no more
trust
185 Than love that's hired!
What, goest thou back? Thou shalt
Go back, I warrant thee! But I'll catch thine eyes,
Though they had wings. Slave, soulless villain, dog!
Oh, rarely base!

CAESAR

190 Good Queen, let us entreat you—

CLEOPATRA

O Caesar, what a wounding shame is this,
That thou, vouchsafing here to visit me,
Doing the honor of thy lordliness
To one so meek, that mine own servant should
195 Parcel the sum of my disgraces by
Addition of his envy! Say, good Caesar,
That I some lady trifles have reserved,
Immement toys, things of such dignity
As we greet modern friends withal, and say
200 Some nobler token I have kept apart
For Livia and Octavia, to induce
Their mediation, must I be unfolded
With one that I have bred? The gods! It smites me
Beneath the fall I have. (*to SELEUCUS*) Prithee, go
205 hence,
Or I shall show the cinders of my spirit
Through th' ashes of my chance. Wert thou a man,
Thou wouldst have mercy on me.

CAESAR

Forbear, Seleucus.

CLEOPATRA

Here's an inventory of all the money, precious metals, and
jewels that I own. I've calculated the exact value of
everything except for the smaller items. Where's Seleucus?

SELEUCUS enters.

SELEUCUS

I'm here, madam.

CLEOPATRA

[*To CAESAR*] This is my treasurer. He will tell you on his
honor, my lord, that I haven't held back anything for myself.

[*To SELEUCUS*] Speak truthfully, Seleucus.


SELEUCUS


Madam, I would rather not speak than risk endangering
myself by saying something false.

CLEOPATRA

What have I held back?

SELEUCUS

You've held back  enough treasure to buy back
everything you listed on that inventory.

 Cleopatra has given Caesar an inventory or list of some of her treasures, but she also purposefully left many treasures off the list so that Caesar would be unaware that she possessed them, making it easier for her to hide the treasure and use it for herself.

CAESAR

No, don't blush, Cleopatra. I approve of the wisdom you
demonstrated in this trick.

CLEOPATRA

See, Caesar! Oh, see what happens when all the spectacle is
over! My followers will now be your followers, and if we
exchanged our positions, your followers would be my
followers. Still, Seleucus's ingratitude makes me wild with
anger.

[*To SELEUCUS*] Oh you villainous man, you are less
trustworthy than a mercenary! What, do you retreat from
me? I bet you do! But even if your eyes had wings to fly
away, I would catch them. Scoundrel, soulless villain, dog!
Oh, you uncommonly corrupt man!

CAESAR

Good Queen, let me ask you to—

CLEOPATRA

Oh Caesar, I am so ashamed—you agreed to visit me here
and honor me in my humiliation with your great presence,
and my own servant adds to all my disgraces out of spite!
Let's suppose, good Caesar, that I did hold back some little
feminine, insignificant trinkets, the kind of common items
that we give them away to our ordinary friends; and let's
suppose that I did hold back some more valuable objects to
give to your wife Livia and to Octavia, to persuade them to
intervene for me—even supposing all that, do I deserve to
be betrayed by a servant I have nurtured? The gods! This
causes me more agony than the embarrassment I've
already endured.

[*To SELEUCUS*] Get out of here, or I'll show what's left of my
strong will with what resources luck has left me. If you were
a real man, you would have had sympathy for me.

CAESAR

Hold back, Seleucus.

*Exit SELEUCUS***CLEOPATRA**

210 Be it known that we, the greatest, are misthought
For things that others do, and when we fall
We answer others' merits in our name,
Are therefore to be pitied.

CAESAR

Cleopatra,
215 Not what you have reserved nor what acknowledged
Put we i' th' roll of conquest. Still be 't yours.
Bestow it at your pleasure, and believe
Caesar's no merchant, to make prize with you
Of things that merchants sold. Therefore be cheered.
220 Make not your thoughts your prison. No, dear Queen,
For we intend so to dispose you as
Yourself shall give us counsel. Feed and sleep.
Our care and pity is so much upon you
That we remain your friend. And so, adieu.

CLEOPATRA

225 My master, and my lord!

CAESAR

Not so. Adieu.

*Flourish. Exeunt CAESAR and his train***CLEOPATRA**

He words me, girls, he words me, that I should not
Be noble to myself. But, hark thee, Charmian.

*She whispers to CHARMIAN***IRAS**

230 Finish, good lady. The bright day is done,
And we are for the dark.

CLEOPATRA

(to CHARMIAN) Hie thee again.
I have spoke already, and it is provided.
Go put it to the haste.

CHARMIAN

Madam, I will.

*Enter DOLABELLA***DOLABELLA**

235 Where's the Queen?

CHARMIAN

Behold, sir.

*Exit***CLEOPATRA**


Dolabella!

DOLABELLA

240 Madam, as thereto sworn by your command,
Which my love makes religion to obey,
I tell you this: Caesar through Syria
Intends his journey, and within three days
You with your children will he send before.
Make your best use of this. I have performed
Your pleasure and my promise.

*SELEUCUS exits.***CLEOPATRA**

Let it be known that we, the greatest, are misjudged for the
things other people do, and when we fall, we have to
answer for the things that others have done in our name
. We should therefore be pitied.

 Cleopatra may be trying to imply that it was Seleucus, not herself, who held back the treasure from Caesar, to shift the blame on him.

CAESAR

Cleopatra, I don't claim as a right of conquest either the
treasure you have held back or the treasure you have
declared in your inventory. Let it all still belong to you. Do
what you like with it, and do not think that I am like a
common merchant, so concerned with material things that
I would haggle with you over your property. Therefore, be
cheerful. Don't imprison yourself in gloomy thoughts. No,
dear, Queen, because I intend to treat you in whatever way
you yourself advise me to. Eat and sleep. I have so much
care and pity for you that I will continue to be your friend.
And so, goodbye.

CLEOPATRA

My master, and my lord!

CAESAR

I am not your master or your lord. Goodbye.

*A flourish of trumpets sounds. CAESAR and his followers exit.***CLEOPATRA**

He tries to pacify me with empty words, girls, empty words,
so that I will not do the noble thing and commit suicide.
But, listen to me, Charmian.

*CLEOPATRA whispers to CHARMIAN.***IRAS**

Wrap things up, my lady. The bright day is over and night is
upon us.

CLEOPATRA

[To CHARMIAN] Hurry back. I have already given
instructions, and everything is arranged. Go set things in
motion quickly.

CHARMIAN

Madam, I will.

*DOLABELLA enters.***DOLABELLA**

Where is the Queen?


CHARMIAN


She's there, sir.

*CHARMIAN exits.***CLEOPATRA**

Dolabella!

DOLABELLA

Madam, I vowed to obey your commands, and my devotion
compels me to uphold that vow. Therefore, I must tell you
this: Caesar intends to travel back through Syria, and within
three days, he'll send you and your children on the road
ahead of him . Make the best use of this information that
you can. I've carried out my promise and served you well.

 Caesar has no intention of allowing Cleopatra and her children to remain in Egypt as its rulers; he plans to bring them to Rome, which is Cleopatra's greatest fear.

CLEOPATRA

245 Dolabella,
I shall remain your debtor.

DOLABELLA

I your servant.
Adieu, good Queen. I must attend on Caesar.

CLEOPATRA

Farewell, and thanks.

Exit DOLABELLA

250 Now, Iras, what think'st thou?
Thou an Egyptian puppet shalt be shown
In Rome, as well as I. Mechanic slaves
With greasy aprons, rules, and hammers shall
Uplift us to the view. In their thick breaths,
255 Rank of gross diet, shall be enclouded,
And forced to drink their vapor.

IRAS

The gods forbid!

CLEOPATRA

Nay, 'tis most certain, Iras. Saucy lictors
Will catch at us like strumpets, and scald rhymers
260 Ballad us out o' tune. The quick comedians
Extemporally will stage us and present
Our Alexandrian revels. Antony
Shall be brought drunken forth, and I shall see
Some squeaking Cleopatra boy my greatness
265 I' th' posture of a whore.

IRAS

Oh, the good gods!

CLEOPATRA

Nay, that's certain.

IRAS

I'll never see 't! For I am sure mine nails
Are stronger than mine eyes.

CLEOPATRA

270 Why, that's the way
To fool their preparation and to conquer
Their most absurd intents.

Enter CHARMIAN

Now, Charmian!
Show me, my women, like a queen. Go fetch
275 My best attires. I am again for Cydnus,
To meet Mark Antony. —Sirrah Iras, go.—
Now, noble Charmian, we'll dispatch indeed,
And when thou hast done this chare I'll give thee leave
To play till doomsday. (to IRAS) Bring our crown and
280 all.

Exit IRAS. A noise within

Wherefore's this noise?

Enter a GUARDSMAN

GUARDSMAN

Here is a rural fellow
That will not be denied your Highness' presence.

CLEOPATRA

Dolabella, I will always be in your debt.

DOLABELLA

And I will always be your servant. Goodbye, good Queen. I
must go to Caesar.

CLEOPATRA

Goodbye, and thank you.

DOLABELLA exits.

Now, Iras, what do you think about this? You'll be displayed
in Rome like an Egyptian puppet, and so will I. Common
laborers with greasy aprons, rulers, and hammers will lift us
up for everyone to see. We'll be suffocated by their foul
breath that stinks from the unwholesome food they eat,
and forced to breathe in their stench.

IRAS

May the gods forbid it!

CLEOPATRA

No, it will certainly happen, Iras. Insolent officers ⁷ will
grab at us as if we were prostitutes, and good-for-nothing
poets will make up vulgar ballads about us. Witty actors will
improvise plays about us and dramatize the parties we had
in Alexandria. They'll bring out some drunken man to play
Antony, and I'll see some squeaky-voiced boy ⁸ play me,
in all my greatness, as if I were nothing more than a whore.

IRAS

Oh, may the good gods forbid it!

CLEOPATRA

No, it's certain.

IRAS

I'll never see it! For I'm sure I have enough will-power to
tear out my eyes with nails first.

CLEOPATRA

Why, that's the best way to ruin their plans and undermine
the terrible things they intend to do.

CHARMIAN enters.

CLEOPATRA

Now, Charmian! Dress me, my women, like a queen. Go get
my best robes. I am going to Cydnus ⁹, to meet Mark
Antony.

[To IRAS] Iras, get going.

[To CHARMIAN] Now, noble Charmian, we'll put our plans
into action, and when you've done this task, I give you
permission to do as you please until the end of the world.

[To IRAS] Bring my crown and everything.

IRAS exits. There is a noise offstage.

What's this noise?

A GUARDSMAN enters.

GUARDSMAN

Here's a country peasant who insists on seeing the Queen.
He brings you figs.

⁷ A "lictor" was a Roman civil servant who served as a bodyguard for magistrates/judges.

⁸ In Shakespeare's time, all actors (including the actor who would have played Cleopatra) were male.

⁹ Cydnus was the river where Cleopatra was sailing on her barge when she first met Mark Antony. She imagines reuniting with him in the afterlife on a heavenly version of that river.

He brings you figs.

CLEOPATRA

285 Let him come in.

Exit GUARDSMAN

What poor an instrument
May do a noble deed! He brings me liberty.
My resolution's placed, and I have nothing
Of woman in me. Now from head to foot
290 I am marble-constant. Now the fleeting moon
No planet is of mine.

Enter GUARDSMAN, and COUNTRYMAN bringing in a basket

GUARDSMAN

This is the man.

CLEOPATRA

Avoid, and leave him.

Exit GUARDSMAN

295 Hast thou the pretty worm of Nilus there,
That kills and pains not?

COUNTRYMAN

Truly, I have him, but I would not be the party that
should desire you to touch him, for his biting is
immortal. Those that do die of it do seldom or never
recover.

CLEOPATRA

300 Remember'st thou any that have died on 't?

COUNTRYMAN

Very many, men and women too. I heard of one of them no
longer than yesterday—a very honest woman, but
something given to lie, as a woman should not do but in
the way of honesty—how she died of the biting of it,
305 what pain she felt. Truly, she makes a very good report
o' th' worm. But he that will believe all that they say
shall never be saved by half that they do. But this is
most falliable, the worm's an odd worm.

CLEOPATRA

Get thee hence, farewell.

COUNTRYMAN

310 I wish you all joy of the worm.

He sets down his basket

CLEOPATRA

Farewell.

CLEOPATRA

Let him come in.

The GUARDSMAN exits.

See how a humble person can help accomplish a noble
deed! This peasant brings me freedom. I am fully resolved
to do this, and I have no more feminine fear or weakness in
me. Now I am so completely dedicated to my purpose that
my will cannot be shaken. Now I am unchangeable ¹⁰.

¹⁰ The moon, whose visible shape changes constantly as it goes through its phases, was a symbol of changeableness and inconstancy. By rejecting the "fleeting moon," as the original text says, Cleopatra insists that her will cannot be changed.

A GUARDSMAN enters, along with a COUNTRYMAN carrying a basket.

GUARDSMAN

This is the man.

CLEOPATRA

Get out, and leave him here.

The GUARDSMAN exits.

[To the COUNTRYMAN] Did you bring that attractive serpent
of the Nile, the one that kills without causing pain?

COUNTRYMAN

Yes, I have him, but I wouldn't advise you to touch him, for
his bite is fatal. Those that die from the bite seldom or
never recover ¹¹.

¹¹ This is a joke; as with the gravediggers in "Hamlet," this lower-class character adds an element of dark humor to a scene that deals with death.

CLEOPATRA

Do you know of any people who have died from it?

COUNTRYMAN

Very many, both men and women. I heard of one just
yesterday. She was a very honest woman, but had a slight
tendency to lie, which women should not do except when
it's honest ¹². I heard she died from its bite and the pain.
Really, she had very favorable things to say about the
serpent. But if you believe what they say about the serpent
and act on it, you'll never reach heaven ¹³. But this is
definitely certain ¹⁴, that the serpent is an odd creature.

¹² "Lie" can mean "to tell a falsehood" or "to sleep with someone." No woman should lie with a man unless it is "honest" to do so, that is, unless he is her husband.

¹³ According to Christian teaching, killing oneself means that one cannot go to heaven, or be "saved," as the original text puts it. If Cleopatra believes the rumors that the serpent's bite can kill and uses the serpent to commit suicide, she won't be able to go to heaven.

¹⁴ In the original text, the man mistakenly says "falliable" for "infallible," or certain.

CLEOPATRA

Get going, goodbye.

COUNTRYMAN

I wish you luck with the serpent.

The COUNTRYMAN puts down his basket.

CLEOPATRA

Goodbye.

COUNTRYMAN

You must think this, look you, that the worm will do his kind.

CLEOPATRA

Ay, ay. Farewell.

COUNTRYMAN

315 Look you, the worm is not to be trusted but in the keeping of wise people, for indeed there is no goodness in the worm.

CLEOPATRA

Take thou no care. It shall be heeded.

COUNTRYMAN

320 Very good. Give it nothing, I pray you, for it is not worth the feeding.

CLEOPATRA

Will it eat me?

COUNTRYMAN

325 You must not think I am so simple but I know the devil himself will not eat a woman. I know that a woman is a dish for the gods, if the devil dress her not. But, truly, these same whoreson devils do the gods great harm in their women, for in every ten that they make, the devils mar five.

CLEOPATRA

Well, get thee gone. Farewell.

COUNTRYMAN

Yes, forsooth. I wish you joy o' th' worm.

Exit

Enter IRAS with royal attire

CLEOPATRA

330 Give me my robe. Put on my crown. I have immortal longings in me. Now no more the juice of Egypt's grape shall moist this lip.

The women dress her

Yare, yare, good Iras, quick. Methinks I hear

335 Antony call. I see him rouse himself to praise my noble act. I hear him mock the luck of Caesar, which the gods give men to excuse their after wrath. —Husband, I come! Now to that name my courage prove my title! I am fire and air, my other elements

340 I give to baser life. —So, have you done? Come then and take the last warmth of my lips. Farewell, kind Charmian. Iras, long farewell.

She kisses them. IRAS falls and dies

Have I the aspic in my lips? Dost fall?

345 If thou and nature can so gently part, The stroke of death is as a lover's pinch, Which hurts, and is desired. Dost thou lie still? If thus thou vanishest, thou tell'st the world It is not worth leave-taking.

COUNTRYMAN

Be careful, you should be aware that the serpent will do what serpents typically do.

CLEOPATRA

Yes, yes. Goodbye.

COUNTRYMAN

See here, it isn't safe for anyone except a wise person to hold on to that serpent, for it really is a dangerous animal.

CLEOPATRA

Don't worry. I will listen to your warnings.

COUNTRYMAN

Very good. Don't give it any food, I advise you, for it isn't worth keeping alive.

CLEOPATRA

Will it eat me?

COUNTRYMAN

You can't think I'm so foolish—I know that even the devil would not eat a woman. I know that a woman is worthy food for the gods, so long as the devil doesn't corrupt her. But in fact, those terrible devils do the gods great harm by ruining so many women. For every ten women the gods make, the devil ruins five.

CLEOPATRA

Well, get going. Goodbye.

COUNTRYMAN

Yes, indeed. I wish you luck with the worm.

The COUNTRYMAN exits.

IRAS enters with royal clothing.

CLEOPATRA

Give me my robe. Put on my crown. I long to enter into the afterlife. I will never again drink wine made from Egypt's grapes.

IRAS and CHARMIAN dress CLEOPATRA.

Quickly, quickly, good Iras, quickly. I think I hear Antony calling me. I see his spirit lifting itself up to praise my noble act. I hear him mocking Caesar's fortunes; the gods may give men good luck at first, but only to make up for giving them bad luck later.

[*As if to ANTONY*] Husband, I'm coming! Now may I be brave enough to prove myself worthy to call you husband! Now I am only a soul¹⁵, I leave my body behind on earth where coarser, less noble creatures live.

[*To her women*] So, have you finished? Come then and receive my final kiss. Farewell, kind Charmian. Iras, farewell forever.

CLEOPATRA kisses IRAS and CHARMIAN. IRAS falls and dies.

Do I have poison in my lips? Do you fall? If you can die so peacefully, then death's stroke hurts no more than a lover's pinch, a pain that we desire. Are you dead? If you depart like this, you tell the world that it isn't worth saying goodbye to.

¹⁵ Of the four elements—fire, air, earth, and water—fire and air were thought to be the lightest and most rarified, and so were associated with the soul. Earth and water, the heavier elements, were associated with the body, as well as with the earthly world that the soul would depart from at death.

CHARMIAN

350 Dissolve, thick cloud, and rain, that I may say
The gods themselves do weep!

CLEOPATRA

This proves me base.
If she first meet the curlèd Antony,
He'll make demand of her and spend that kiss
Which is my heaven to have. —Come, thou mortal wretch,

She places an asp on her breast

355 With thy sharp teeth this knot intricate
Of life at once untie. Poor venomous fool
Be angry and dispatch. Oh, couldst thou speak,
That I might hear thee call great Caesar ass
Unpolicied!

CHARMIAN

360 O eastern star!

CLEOPATRA

Peace, peace!
Dost thou not see my baby at my breast,
That sucks the nurse asleep?

CHARMIAN

Oh, break! Oh, break!

CLEOPATRA

365 As sweet as balm, as soft as air, as gentle—
O Antony!—Nay, I will take thee too.

Applying another asp to her arm

What should I stay—

Dies

CHARMIAN

In this wild world? So, fare thee well.
Now boast thee, Death, in thy possession lies
370 A lass unparalleled. Downy windows, close,

She closes CLEOPATRA'S eyes

And golden Phoebus never be beheld
Of eyes again so royal! Your crown's awry.
I'll mend it and then play—

Enter the GUARD, rustling in

FIRST GUARD

Where's the Queen?

CHARMIAN

375 Speak softly. Wake her not.

FIRST GUARD

Caesar hath sent—

CHARMIAN

Too slow a messenger.

She applies an asp to herself.

Oh, come apace, dispatch! I partly feel thee.

CHARMIAN

May the thick clouds dissolve and rain so that I can say the
gods themselves weep!

CLEOPATRA

Iras's act makes mine seem less noble. If she meets the
curly-haired Antony in the afterlife before I do, he'll speak to
her and give her that heavenly kiss that belongs to me.

[To the serpent] Come, you wretched, poisonous thing.

CLEOPATRA places a serpent on her breast.

With your sharp teeth, end my life immediately. Poor silly
venomous thing, get angry and finish me off. Oh, if only you
could speak, so I could hear you call great Caesar an [ass](#) ¹⁶
now that I've outwitted him!

¹⁶ The serpent's hissing would make a "ss" sound like the one found in "ass."

CHARMIAN

Oh goddess [!](#) ¹⁷

¹⁷ The "eastern star" in the original text refers to Venus, Roman goddess of love; Charmian evokes Venus to refer to Cleopatra.

CLEOPATRA

Quiet, quiet! Don't you see this baby that's lulling me to
sleep by sucking on my breast?

CHARMIAN

Oh, I wish my heart would break!

CLEOPATRA

This feeling is as sweet as perfumed oil, as soft as air, as
gentle—O Antony!—Oh yes, I will take you too.

CLEOPATRA places another serpent on her arm.

Why should I stay—

CLEOPATRA dies.

CHARMIAN

In this wild world? So, farewell. Now, Death, you can boast
that you have taken a woman who has no equal. Let's close
these soft eyelids.

CHARMIAN closes CLEOPATRA'S eyes.

And may no person as royal ever live to see the sun! Your
crown is askew. I'll adjust it and then play—

The GUARD enters with armor clattering.

FIRST GUARD

Where's the Queen?

CHARMIAN

Speak softly. Don't wake her up.

FIRST GUARD

Caesar has sent—

CHARMIAN

A messenger that was too slow.

CHARMIAN puts a serpent on her body.

Oh, hurry up, finish me off! I partly feel the poison working.

FIRST GUARD

380 *(calling)* Approach, ho! All's not well. Caesar's
beguiled.

SECOND GUARD

There's Dolabella sent from Caesar. Call him.

Exit SECOND GUARD

FIRST GUARD

What work is here, Charmian? Is this well done?

CHARMIAN

It is well done and fitting for a princess
Descended of so many royal kings.

385 Ah, soldier!

CHARMIAN dies

Enter DOLABELLA

DOLABELLA

How goes it here?

SECOND GUARD

All dead.

DOLABELLA

Caesar, thy thoughts
Touch their effects in this. Thyself art coming
390 To see performed the dreaded act which thou
So sought'st to hinder.

Enter CAESAR and all his train, marching

ALL

A way there, a way for Caesar!

DOLABELLA

O sir, you are too sure an augurer.
That you did fear is done.

CAESAR

395 Bravest at the last,
She leveled at our purposes and, being royal,
Took her own way. The manner of their deaths?
I do not see them bleed.

DOLABELLA

Who was last with them?

FIRST GUARD

400 A simple countryman that brought her figs.
This was his basket.

CAESAR

Poisoned, then.

FIRST GUARD

Oh, Caesar,
This Charmian lived but now. She stood and spake.
405 I found her trimming up the diadem
On her dead mistress. Tremblingly she stood
And on the sudden dropped.

CAESAR

Oh, noble weakness!
If they had swallowed poison, 'twould appear
410 By external swelling, but she looks like sleep,
As she would catch another Antony
In her strong toil of grace.

FIRST GUARD

[Calling] Hey there, come here! Something's gone wrong.
Caesar has been tricked.

SECOND GUARD

There's Dolabella, who was sent from Caesar. Call him.

The SECOND GUARD exits.

FIRST GUARD

What happened here, Charmian? Was this a good thing to
do?

CHARMIAN

It was a good thing to do, and it was fitting for a princess
who was descended from so many royal kings. Ah, soldier!

CHARMIAN dies.

DOLABELLA enters.

DOLABELLA

What's going on here?

SECOND GUARD

They are all dead.

DOLABELLA

Caesar, this is the effect of all your planning. You'll arrive
and see she's done the dreaded act you tried so hard to
prevent.

CAESAR and all his followers enter, marching.

ALL

Make way there, make way for Caesar!

DOLABELLA

Oh sir, your prediction came true. What you feared has
happened.

CAESAR

She was bravest at the very end; she guessed what I
planned to do and, being noble, took matters into her own
hands. How did they die? I don't see any blood.

DOLABELLA

Who was the last person with them?

FIRST GUARD

A simple peasant who brought her figs. This was his basket.

CAESAR

They must have been poisoned, then.

FIRST GUARD

Oh, Caesar, this woman Charmian was alive until a moment
ago. She stood and spoke. I found her adjusting the crown
of her dead mistress. She stood trembling and then
suddenly collapsed.

CAESAR

Oh, these women were weak but noble, too! If they had
taken poison, we would be able to tell by the swelling of
their bodies, but Cleopatra just looks as if she were
sleeping—as if she were dreaming of catching another man
like Antony with her strong, bewitching charms.

DOLABELLA

Here on her breast
There is a vent of blood, and something blown.
415 The like is on her arm.

FIRST GUARD

This is an aspic's trail, and these fig leaves
Have slime upon them, such as th' aspic leaves
Upon the caves of Nile.

CAESAR

Most probable
420 That so she died, for her physician tells me
She hath pursued conclusions infinite
Of easy ways to die. Take up her bed
And bear her women from the monument.
She shall be buried by her Antony.
425 No grave upon the earth shall clip in it
A pair so famous. High events as these
Strike those that make them, and their story is
No less in pity than his glory which
Brought them to be lamented. Our army shall
430 In solemn show attend this funeral,
And then to Rome. Come, Dolabella, see
High order in this great solemnity.

Exeunt, bearing the dead bodies

DOLABELLA

There's a trail of blood here on her breast, and some
discharge. The same thing appears on her arm.

FIRST GUARD

This is the trail of a serpent. These fig leaves have a slimy
discharge on them too, just as a serpent leaves in the caves
of the Nile.

CAESAR

It's most likely that she died from the serpents' bite, for her
doctor tells me that she performed countless experiments
to find easy ways to die. Pick up her bed and carry her
women out of the tomb. She will be buried beside her
Antony. No grave on earth will contain such a famous
couple. Great events like these strike the hearts of those
who brought them about. The pity of their story is as great
as the glory of that person ¹⁸ who brought them to this
lamentable end. Our army will solemnly watch this funeral,
and then they will go to Rome. Come, Dolabella, and
observe the great decorum ¹⁹ that this solemn occasion
requires.

CAESAR exits with his followers, who carry the dead bodies.

¹⁸ The pity inspired by Antony and Cleopatra's downfall is as great as the glory of Caesar, the one who brought about their downfall.

¹⁹ "High order," in the original text, refers to decorum, what is ordered or fitting for an occasion.

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