

William Shakespeare

Antony and Cleopatra

EDITED BY A. R. BRAUNMULLER



PENGUIN BOOKS

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THE PELICAN SHAKESPEARE GENERAL EDITORS STEPHEN
ORGEL A. R. BRAUNMULLER



Antony and Cleopatra



Frontispiece to *Antony and Cleopatra* in Nicholas Rowe's edition of Shakespeare's works, 1709

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Publisher's Note

IT IS ALMOST half a century since the first volumes of the Pelican Shakespeare appeared under the general editorship of Alfred Harbage. The fact that a new edition, rather than simply a revision, has been undertaken reflects the profound changes textual and critical studies of Shakespeare have undergone in the past twenty years. For the new Pelican series, the texts of the plays and poems have been thoroughly revised in accordance with recent scholarship, and in some cases have been entirely reedited. New introductions and notes have been provided in all the volumes. But the new Shakespeare is also designed as a successor to the original series; the previous editions have been taken into account, and the advice of the previous editors has been solicited where it was feasible to do so.

Certain textual features of the new Pelican Shakespeare should be particularly noted. All lines are numbered that contain a word, phrase, or allusion explained in the glossarial notes. In addition, for convenience, every tenth line is also numbered, in italics when no annotation is indicated. The intrusive and often inaccurate place headings inserted by early editors are omitted (as is becoming standard practice), but for the convenience of those who miss them, an indication of locale now appears as the first item in the annotation of each scene.

In the interest of both elegance and utility, each speech prefix is set in a separate line when the speaker's lines are in verse, except when those words form the second half of a verse line. Thus the verse form of the speech is kept visually intact. What is printed as verse and what is printed as prose has, in general, the authority of the original texts. Departures from the original texts in this regard have only the authority of editorial tradition and the judgment of the Pelican editors; and, in a few instances, are admittedly arbitrary.

The Theatrical World

ECONOMIC REALITIES determined the theatrical world in which Shakespeare's plays were written, performed, and received. For centuries in England, the primary theatrical tradition was nonprofessional. Craft guilds (or "mysteries") provided religious drama - mystery plays - as part of the celebration of religious and civic festivals, and schools and universities staged classical and neoclassical drama in both Latin and English as part of their curricula. In these forms, drama was established and socially acceptable. Professional theater, in contrast, existed on the margins of society. The acting companies were itinerant; playhouses could be any available space - the great halls of the aristocracy, town squares, civic halls, inn yards, fair booths, or open fields - and income was sporadic, dependent on the passing of the hat or on the bounty of local patrons. The actors, moreover, were considered little better than vagabonds, constantly in danger of arrest or expulsion.

In the late 1560s and 1570s, however, English professional theater began to gain respectability. Wealthy aristocrats fond of drama - the Lord Admiral, for example, or the Lord Chamberlain - took acting companies under their protection so that the players technically became members of their households and were no longer subject to arrest as homeless or masterless men. Permanent theaters were first built at this time as well, allowing the companies to control and charge for entry to their performances.

Shakespeare's livelihood, and the stunning artistic explosion in which he participated, depended on pragmatic and architectural effort. Professional theater requires ways to restrict access to its offerings; if it does not, and admission fees cannot be charged, the actors do not get paid, the costumes go to a pawnbroker, and there is no such thing as a professional, ongoing theatrical tradition. The answer to that economic need arrived in the late 1560s and 1570s with the creation of the so-called public or amphitheater playhouse. Recent discoveries indicate that the precursor of the Globe playhouse in London (where Shakespeare's mature plays were presented) and the Rose theater (which presented Christopher Marlowe's plays and some of Shakespeare's earliest ones) was the Red Lion theater of 1567. Archaeological studies of the foundations of the Rose and Globe theaters have revealed that the open-air theater of the 1590s and later was probably a polygonal building with fourteen to twenty or twenty-four sides, multistoried, from 75 to 100 feet in diameter, with a raised, partly covered "thrust" stage that projected into a group of standing patrons, or "groundlings," and a covered gallery, seating up to 2,500 or more (very crowded) spectators.

These theaters might have been about half full on any given day, though the audiences were larger on holidays or when a play was advertised, as old and new were, through printed playbills posted around London. The metropolitan area's late-Tudor, early-Stuart population (circa 1590-1620) has been estimated at about 150,000 to 250,000. It has been supposed that in the mid-1590s there were about 15,000 spectators per week at the public theaters; thus, as many as 10 percent of the local population went to the theater regularly. Consequently, the theaters' repertoires - the plays available for this experienced and frequent audience - had to change often: in the month between September 15 and October 15, 1595, for instance, the Lord Admiral's Men performed twenty-eight times in eighteen different plays.

Since natural light illuminated the amphitheaters' stages, performances began between noon and two o'clock and ran without a break for two or three hours. They often concluded with a jig, a fencing display, or some other nondramatic exhibition. Weather conditions determined the season for

the amphitheatres: plays were performed every day (including Sundays, sometimes, to clerical dismay) except during Lent - the forty days before Easter - or periods of plague, or sometimes during the summer months when law courts were not in session and the most affluent members of the audience were not in London.

To a modern theatergoer, an amphitheater stage like that of the Rose or Globe would appear an unfamiliar mixture of plainness and elaborate decoration. Much of the structure was carved or painted, sometimes to imitate marble; elsewhere, as under the canopy projecting over the stage, to represent the stars and the zodiac. Appropriate painted canvas pictures (of Jerusalem, for example, if the play was set in that city) were apparently hung on the wall behind the acting area, and tragedies were accompanied by black hangings, presumably something like crepe festoons or bunting. Although these theaters did not employ what we would call scenery, early modern spectators saw numerous large props, such as the "bar" at which a prisoner stood during a trial, the "mossy bank" where lovers reclined, an arbor for amorous conversation, a chariot, gallows, tables, trees, beds, thrones, writing desks, and so forth. Audiences might learn a scene's location from a sign (reading "Athens," for example) carried across the stage (as in Bertolt Brecht's twentieth-century productions). Equally captivating (and equally irritating to the theater's enemies) were the rich costumes and personal props the actors used: the most valuable items in the surviving theatrical inventories are the swords, gowns, robes, crowns, and other items worn or carried by the performers.

Magic appealed to Shakespeare's audiences as much as it does to us today, and the theater exploited many deceptive and spectacular devices. A winch in the loft above the stage, called "the heavens," could lower and raise actors playing gods, goddesses, and other supernatural figures to and from the main acting area, just as one or more trap-doors permitted entrances and exits to and from the area, called "hell," beneath the stage. Actors wore elementary makeup such as wigs, false beards, and face paint, and they employed pig's bladders filled with animal blood to make wounds seem more real. They had rudimentary but effective ways of pretending to behead or hang a person. Supernumeraries (stagehands or actors not needed in a particular scene) could make thunder sounds (by shaking a metal sheet or rolling an iron ball down a chute) and show lightning (by blowing inflammable resin through tubes into a flame). Elaborate fireworks enhanced the effects of dragons flying through the air or imitated such celestial phenomena as comets, shooting stars, and multiple suns. Horses' hoofbeats, bells (located perhaps in the tower above the stage), trumpets and drums, clocks, cannon shots and gunshots, and the like were common sound effects. And the music of viols, cornets, oboes, and recorders was a regular feature of theatrical performances.

For two relatively brief spans, from the late 1570s to 1590 and from 1599 to 1614, the amphitheatres competed with the so-called private, or indoor, theaters, which originated as, or later represented themselves as, educational institutions training boys as singers for church services and court performances. These indoor theaters had two features that were distinct from the amphitheatres': their personnel and their playing spaces. The amphitheatres' adult companies included both adult men, who played the male roles, and boys, who played the female roles; the private, or indoor, theater companies, on the other hand, were entirely composed of boys aged about 8 to 16, who were, or could pretend to be, candidates for singers in a church or a royal boys' choir. (Until 1660, professional theatrical companies included no women.) The playing space would appear much more familiar to modern audiences than the long-vanished amphitheatres; the later indoor theaters were, in fact, the ancestors of the typical modern theater. They were enclosed spaces, usually rectangular, with the stage filling one end of the rectangle and the audience arrayed in seats or benches across (and sometimes lining) the building's longer axis. These spaces staged plays less frequently than the public theaters (perhaps only once a week) and held far fewer spectators than the

amphitheaters: about 200 to 600, as opposed to 2,500 or more. Fewer patrons mean a smaller gross income, unless each pays more. Not surprisingly, then, private theaters charged higher prices than the amphitheaters, probably sixpence, as opposed to a penny for the cheapest entry.

Protected from the weather, the indoor theaters presented plays later in the day than the amphitheaters, and used artificial illumination - candles in sconces or candelabra. But candles melt, and need replacing, snuffing, and trimming, and these practical requirements may have been part of the reason the indoor theaters introduced breaks in the performance, the intermission so dear to the heart of theatergoers and to the pocketbooks of theater concessionaires ever since. Whether motivated by the need to tend to the candles or by the entrepreneurs' wishing to sell oranges and liquor, or both, the indoor theaters eventually established the modern convention of the noncontinuous performance. In the early modern "private" theater, musical performances apparently filled the intermissions, which in Stuart theater jargon seem to have been called "acts."

At the end of the first decade of the seventeenth century, the distinction between public amphitheaters and private indoor companies ceased. For various cultural, political, and economic reasons, individual companies gained control of both the public, open-air theaters and the indoor ones, and companies mixing adult men and boys took over the formerly "private" theaters. Despite the death of the boys' companies and of their highly innovative theaters (for which such luminous playwrights as Ben Jonson, George Chapman, and John Marston wrote), their playing spaces and conventions had an immense impact on subsequent plays: not merely for the intervals (which stressed the artistic and architectonic importance of "acts"), but also because they introduced political and social satire as a popular dramatic ingredient, even in tragedy, and a wider range of actorly effects, encouraged by their more intimate playing spaces.

Even the briefest sketch of the Shakespearean theatrical world would be incomplete without some comment on the social and cultural dimensions of theaters and playing in the period. In an intensely hierarchical and status-conscious society, professional actors and their ventures had hardly any respectability; as we have indicated, to protect themselves against laws designed to curb vagabondage and the increase of masterless men, actors resorted to the near-fiction that they were the servants of noble masters, and wore their distinctive livery. Hence the company for which Shakespeare wrote in the 1590s called itself the Lord Chamberlain's Men and pretended that the public, money-getting performances were in fact rehearsals for private performances before that high court official. From 1598, the Privy Council had licensed theatrical companies, and after 1603, with the accession of King James I, the companies gained explicit royal protection, just as the Queen's Men had for a time under Queen Elizabeth. The Chamberlain's Men became the King's Men, and the other companies were patronized by the other members of the royal family.

These designations were legal fictions that half-concealed an important economic and social development, the evolution away from the theater's organization on the model of the guild, a self-regulating confraternity of individual artisans, into a proto-capitalist organization. Shakespeare's company became a joint-stock company, where persons who supplied capital and, in some cases, such as Shakespeare's, capital and talent, employed themselves and others in earning a return on that capital. This development meant that actors and theater companies were outside both the traditional guild structures, which required some form of civic or royal charter, and the feudal household organization of master-and-servant. This anomalous, maverick social and economic condition made theater companies practically unruly and potentially even dangerous; consequently, numerous official bodies - including the London metropolitan and ecclesiastical authorities as well as, occasionally, the royal court itself - tried, without much success, to control and even to disband them.

Public officials had good reason to want to close the theaters: they were attractive nuisances - they drew often riotous crowds, they were always noisy, and they could be politically offensive and socially insubordinate. Until the Civil War, however, anti-theatrical forces failed to shut down professional theater, for many reasons - limited surveillance and few police powers, tensions or outright hostilities among the agencies that sought to check or channel theatrical activity, and lack of clear policies for control. Another reason must have been the theaters' undeniable popularity. Curtailing any activity enjoyed by such a substantial percentage of the population was difficult, as various Roman emperors attempting to limit circuses had learned, and the Tudor-Stuart audience was not merely large, it was socially diverse and included women. The prevalence of public entertainment in this period has been underestimated. In fact, fairs, holidays, games, sporting events, the equivalent of modern parades, freak shows, and street exhibitions all abounded, but the theater was the most widely and frequently available entertainment to which people of every class had access. That fact helps account both for its quantity and for the fear and anger it aroused.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE OF STRATFORD-UPON-AVON, GENTLEMAN

Many people have said that we know very little about William Shakespeare's life - pinheads and postcards are often mentioned as appropriately tiny surfaces on which to record the available information. More imaginatively and perhaps more correctly, Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "Shakespeare is the only biographer of Shakespeare. . . . So far from Shakespeare's being the least known, he is the one person in all modern history fully known to us."

In fact, we know more about Shakespeare's life than we do about almost any other English writer's of his era. His last will and testament (dated March 25, 1616) survives, as do numerous legal contracts and court documents involving Shakespeare as principal or witness, and parish records in Stratford and London. Shakespeare appears quite often in official records of King James's royal court, and of course Shakespeare's name appears on numerous title pages and in the written and recorded words of his literary contemporaries Robert Greene, Henry Chettle, Francis Meres, John Davies of Hereford, Ben Jonson, and many others. Indeed, if we make due allowance for the bloating of modern, run-of-the-mill bureaucratic records, more information has survived over the past four hundred years about William Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, than is likely to survive in the next four hundred years about any reader of these words.

What we do not have are entire categories of information - Shakespeare's private letters or diaries, drafts and revisions of poems and plays, critical prefaces or essays, commendatory verse for other writers' works, or instructions guiding his fellow actors in their performances, for instance - that we imagine would help us understand and appreciate his surviving writings. For all we know, many such data never existed as written records. Many literary and theatrical critics, not knowing what might once have existed, more or less cheerfully accept the situation; some even make a theoretical virtue of it by claiming that such data are irrelevant to understanding and interpreting the plays and poems.

So, what do we know about William Shakespeare, the man responsible for thirty-seven or perhaps more plays, more than 150 sonnets, two lengthy narrative poems, and some shorter poems?

While many families by the name of Shakespeare (or some variant spelling) can be identified in the English Midlands as far back as the twelfth century, it seems likely that the dramatist's grandfather, Richard, moved to Snitterfield, a town not far from Stratford-upon-Avon, sometime before 1529. In Snitterfield, Richard Shakespeare leased farmland from the very wealthy Robert Arden. By 1552, Richard's son John had moved to a large house on Henley Street in Stratford-upon-Avon, the house that stands today as "The Birthplace." In Stratford, John Shakespeare traded as a glover, dealt in wool, and lent money at interest; he also served in a variety of civic posts, including "High Bailiff," the municipality's equivalent of mayor. In 1557, he married Robert Arden's youngest daughter, Mary. Mary and John had four sons - William was the oldest - and four daughters, of whom only Joan outlived her most celebrated sibling. William was baptized (an event entered in the Stratford parish church records) on April 26, 1564, and it has become customary, without any good factual support, to suppose he was born on April 23, which happens to be the feast day of Saint George, patron saint of England, and is also the date on which he died, in 1616. Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway in 1582, when he was eighteen and she was twenty-six; their first child was born five months later. It has been generally assumed that the marriage was enforced and subsequently unhappy, but these are only assumptions; it has been estimated, for instance, that up to one third of Elizabethan brides were pregnant when they married. Anne and William Shakespeare had three children: Susanna, who married a prominent local physician, John Hall; and the twins Hamnet, who died young in 1596, and

Judith, who married Thomas Quiney - apparently a rather shady individual. The name Hamnet was unusual but not unique: he and his twin sister were named for their godparents, Shakespeare's neighbors Hamnet and Judith Sadler. Shakespeare's father died in 1601 (the year of *Hamlet*), and Mary Arden Shakespeare died in 1608 (the year of *Coriolanus*). William Shakespeare's last surviving direct descendant was his granddaughter Elizabeth Hall, who died in 1670.

Between the birth of the twins in 1585 and a clear reference to Shakespeare as a practicing London dramatist in Robert Greene's sensationalizing, satiric pamphlet, *Greene's Groatsworth of Wit* (1592), there is no record of where William Shakespeare was or what he was doing. These seven so-called lost years have been imaginatively filled by scholars and other students of Shakespeare: some think he traveled to Italy, or fought in the Low Countries, or studied law or medicine, or worked as an apprentice actor/writer, and so on to even more fanciful possibilities. Whatever the biographical facts for those "lost" years, Greene's nasty remarks in 1592 testify to professional envy and to the fact that Shakespeare already had a successful career in London. Speaking to his fellow playwrights, Greene warns both generally and specifically:

... trust them [actors] not: for there is an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his tiger's heart wrapped in a player's hide supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you; and being an absolute Johannes Factotum, is in his own conceit the only Shake-scene in a country.

The passage mimics a line from *3 Henry VI* (hence the play must have been performed before Greene wrote) and seems to say that "Shake-scene" is both actor and playwright, a jack-of-all-trades. That same year, Henry Chettle protested Greene's remarks in *Kind-Heart's Dream*, and each of the next two years saw the publication of poems - *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*, respectively - publicly ascribed to (and dedicated by) Shakespeare. Early in 1595 he was named as one of the senior members of a prominent acting company, the Lord Chamberlain's Men, when they received payment for court performances during the 1594 Christmas season.

Clearly, Shakespeare had achieved both success and reputation in London. In 1596, upon Shakespeare's application, the College of Arms granted his father the now-familiar coat of arms he had taken the first steps to obtain almost twenty years before, and in 1598, John's son - now permitted to call himself "gentleman" - took a 10 percent share in the new Globe playhouse. In 1597, he bought a substantial bourgeois house, called New Place, in Stratford - the garden remains, but Shakespeare's house, several times rebuilt, was torn down in 1759 - and over the next few years Shakespeare spent large sums buying land and making other investments in the town and its environs. Though he worked in London, his family remained in Stratford, and he seems always to have considered Stratford the home he would eventually return to. Something approaching a disinterested appreciation of Shakespeare's popular and professional status appears in Francis Meres's *Palladis Tamia* (1598), a not especially imaginative and perhaps therefore persuasive record of literary reputations. Reviewing contemporary English writers, Meres lists the titles of many of Shakespeare's plays, including one not now known, *Love's Labor's Won*, and praises his "mellifluous & hony-tongued" "sugred Sonnets," which were then circulating in manuscript (they were first collected in 1609). Meres describes Shakespeare as "one of the best" English playwrights of both comedy and tragedy. In *Remains . . . Concerning Britain* (1605), William Camden - a more authoritative source than the imitative Meres - calls Shakespeare one of the "most pregnant witts of these our times" and joins him with such writers as Chapman, Daniel, Jonson, Marston, and Spenser. During the first decades of the seventeenth

century, publishers began to attribute numerous play quartos, including some non-Shakespearean ones, to Shakespeare, either by name or initials, and we may assume that they deemed Shakespeare's name and supposed authorship, true or false, commercially attractive.

For the next ten years or so, various records show Shakespeare's dual career as playwright and man of the theater in London, and as an important local figure in Stratford. In 1608-9 his acting company - designated the "King's Men" soon after King James had succeeded Queen Elizabeth in 1603 - rented, refurbished, and opened a small interior playing space, the Blackfriars theater, in London, and Shakespeare was once again listed as a substantial sharer in the group of proprietors of the playhouse. By May 11, 1612, however, he describes himself as a Stratford resident in a London lawsuit - an indication that he had withdrawn from day-to-day professional activity and returned to the town where he had always had his main financial interests. When Shakespeare bought a substantial residential building in London, the Blackfriars Gatehouse, close to the theater of the same name, on March 10, 1613, he is recorded as William Shakespeare "of Stratford upon Avon in the county of Warwick, gentleman," and he named several London residents as the building's trustees. Still, he continued to participate in theatrical activity: when the new Earl of Rutland needed an allegorical design to bear as a shield, or *impresa*, at the celebration of King James's Accession Day, March 24, 1613, the earl's accountant recorded a payment of 44 shillings to Shakespeare for the device with its motto.

For the last few years of his life, Shakespeare evidently concentrated his activities in the town of his birth. Most of the final records concern business transactions in Stratford, ending with the notation of his death on April 23, 1616, and burial in Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon.

THE QUESTION OF AUTHORSHIP

The history of ascribing Shakespeare's plays (the poems do not come up so often) to someone else began, as it continues, peculiarly. The earliest published claim that someone else wrote Shakespeare's plays appeared in an 1856 article by Delia Bacon in the American journal *Putnam's Monthly* - although an Englishman, Thomas Wilmot, had shared his doubts in private (even secretive) conversations with friends near the end of the eighteenth century. Bacon's was a sad personal history that ended in madness and poverty, but the year after her article, she published, with great difficulty and the bemused assistance of Nathaniel Hawthorne (then United States Consul in Liverpool, England), her *Philosophy of the Plays of Shakspeare Unfolded*. This huge, ornately written, confusing farrago is almost unreadable; sometimes its intents, to say nothing of its arguments, disappear entirely beneath near-raving, ecstatic writing. Tumbled in with much supposed "philosophy" appear the claims that Francis Bacon (from whom Delia Bacon eventually claimed descent), Walter Raleigh, and several other contemporaries of Shakespeare's had written the plays. The book had little impact except as a ridiculed curiosity.

Once proposed, however, the issue gained momentum among people whose conviction was the greater in proportion to their ignorance of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English literature, history, and society. Another American amateur, Catherine P. Ashmead Windle, made the next influential contribution to the cause when she published *Report to the British Museum* (1882), wherein she promised to open "the Cipher of Francis Bacon," though what she mostly offers, in the words of S. Schoenbaum, is "demented allegorizing." An entire new cottage industry grew from Windle's suggestion that the texts contain hidden, cryptographically discoverable ciphers - "clues" - to their authorship; and today there are not only books devoted to the putative ciphers, but also pamphlets, journals, and newsletters.

Although Baconians have led the pack of those seeking a substitute Shakespeare, in "*Shakespeare Identified* (1920), J. Thomas Looney became the first published "Oxfordian" when he proposed Edward de Vere, seventeenth earl of Oxford, as the secret author of Shakespeare's plays. Also for Oxford and his "authorship" there are today dedicated societies, articles, journals, and books. Less popular candidates - Queen Elizabeth and Christopher Marlowe among them - have had adherents, but the movement seems to have divided into two main contending factions, Baconian and Oxfordian. (For further details on all the candidates for "Shakespeare," see S. Schoenbaum, *Shakespeare's Lives*, 2nd ed., 1991.)

The Baconians, the Oxfordians, and supporters of other candidates have one trait in common - they are snobs. Every pro-Bacon or pro-Oxford tract sooner or later claims that the historical William Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon could not have written the plays because he could not have had the training, the university education, the experience, and indeed the imagination or background their author supposedly possessed. Only a learned genius like Bacon or an aristocrat like Oxford could have written such fine plays. (As it happens, lucky male children of the middle class had access to better education than most aristocrats in Elizabethan England - and Oxford was not particularly well educated.) Shakespeare received in the Stratford grammar school a formal education that would daunt many college graduates today; and popular rival playwrights such as the very learned Ben Jonson and George Chapman, both of whom also lacked university training, achieved great artistic success, without being taken as Bacon or Oxford.

Besides snobbery, one other quality characterizes the authorship controversy: lack of evidence. A

great deal of testimony from Shakespeare's time shows that Shakespeare wrote Shakespeare's plays and that his contemporaries recognized them as distinctive and distinctly superior. (Some of that contemporary evidence is collected in E. K. Chambers, *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems*, 2 vols., 1930.) Since that testimony comes from Shakespeare's enemies and theatrical competitors as well as from his co-workers and from the Elizabethan equivalent of literary journalists, it seems unlikely that, if any of these sources had known he was a fraud, they would have failed to record that fact.

Books About Shakespeare's Theater

Useful scholarly studies of theatrical life in Shakespeare's day include: G. E. Bentley, *The Jacobean and Caroline Stage*, 7 vols. (1941-68), and the same author's *The Professions of Dramatist and Player in Shakespeare's Time, 1590-1642* (1986); E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vols. (1923); R. A. Foakes, *Illustrations of the English Stage, 1580-1642* (1985); Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage*, 3rd ed. (1992), and the same author's *Play-going in Shakespeare's London*, 2nd ed. (1996); Edwin Nungezer, *A Dictionary of Actors* (1929); Carol Chillington Rutter, ed., *Documents of the Rose Playhouse* (1984).

Books About Shakespeare's Life

The following books provide scholarly, documented accounts of Shakespeare's life: G. E. Bentley, *Shakespeare: A Biographical Handbook* (1961); E. K. Chambers, *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems*, 2 vols. (1930); S. Schoenbaum, *William Shakespeare: A Compact Documentary Life* (1977); and *Shakespeare's Lives*, 2nd ed. (1991), by the same author. Many scholarly editions of Shakespeare's complete works print brief compilations of essential dates and events. References to Shakespeare's works up to 1700 are collected in C. M. Ingleby et al., *The Shakespeare Allusion-Book*, rev. ed., 2 vols. (1932).

The Texts of Shakespeare

As FAR AS WE KNOW, only one manuscript conceivably in Shakespeare's own hand may (and even this is much disputed) exist: a few pages of a play called *Sir Thomas More*, which apparently was never performed. What we do have, as later readers, performers, scholars, students, are printed texts. The earliest of these survive in two forms: quartos and folios. Quartos (from the Latin for "four") are small books, printed on sheets of paper that were then folded in fours, to make eight double-sided pages. When these were bound together, the result was a squarish, eminently portable volume that sold for the relatively small sum of sixpence (translating in modern terms to about \$5.00). In folios, on the other hand, the sheets are folded only once, in half, producing large, impressive volumes taller than they are wide. This was the format for important works of philosophy, science, theology, and literature (the major precedent for a folio Shakespeare was Ben Jonson's *Works*, 1616). The decision to print the works of a popular playwright in folio is an indication of how far up on the social scale the theatrical profession had come during Shakespeare's lifetime. The Shakespeare folio was an expensive book, selling for between fifteen and eighteen shillings, depending on the binding (in modern terms, from about \$150 to \$180). Twenty Shakespeare plays of the thirty-seven that survive first appeared in quarto, seventeen of which appeared during Shakespeare's lifetime; the rest of the plays are found only in folio.

The First Folio was published in 1623, seven years after Shakespeare's death, and was authorized by his fellow actors, the co-owners of the King's Men. This publication was certainly a mark of the company's enormous respect for Shakespeare; but it was also a way of turning the old plays, most of which were no longer current in the playhouse, into ready money (the folio includes only Shakespeare's plays, not his sonnets or other nondramatic verse). Whatever the motives behind the publication of the folio, the texts it preserves constitute the basis for almost all later editions of the playwright's works. The texts, however, differ from those of the earlier quartos, sometimes in minor respects but often significantly - most strikingly in the two texts of *King Lear*, but also in important ways in *Hamlet*, *Othello*, and *Troilus and Cressida*. (The variants are recorded in the textual notes to each play in the new Pelican series.) The differences in these texts represent, in a sense, the essence of theater: the texts of plays were initially not intended for publication. They were scripts, designed for the actors to perform - the principal life of the play at this period was in performance. And it follows that in Shakespeare's theater the playwright typically had no say either in how his play was performed or in the disposition of his text - he was an employee of the company. The authoritative figures in the theatrical enterprise were the shareholders in the company, who were for the most part the major actors. They decided what plays were to be done; they hired the playwright and often gave him an outline of the play they wanted him to write. Often, too, the play was a collaboration: the company would retain a group of writers, and parcel out the scenes among them. The resulting script was then the property of the company, and the actors would revise it as they saw fit during the course of putting it on stage. The resulting text belonged to the company. The playwright had no rights in it once he had been paid. (This system survives largely intact in the movie industry, and most of the playwrights of Shakespeare's time were as anonymous as most screenwriters are today.) The script could also, of course, continue to change as the tastes of audiences and the requirements of the actors changed. Many - perhaps most - plays were revised when they were reintroduced after any substantial absence from the repertory, or when they were performed by a company different from the one that originally commissioned the play.

Shakespeare was an exceptional figure in this world because he was not only a shareholder and actor in his company, but also its leading playwright - he was literally his own boss. He had, moreover, little interest in the publication of his plays, and even those that appeared during his lifetime with the authorization of the company show no signs of any editorial concern on the part of the author. Theater was, for Shakespeare, a fluid and supremely responsive medium - the very opposite of the great classic canonical text that has embodied his works since 1623.

The very fluidity of the original texts, however, has meant that Shakespeare has always had to be edited. Here is an example of how problematic the editorial project inevitably is, a passage from the most famous speech in *Romeo and Juliet*, Juliet's balcony soliloquy beginning "O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?" Since the eighteenth century, the standard modern text has read,

What's Montague? It is nor hand, nor foot,
Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
Belonging to a man. O be some other name!
What's in a name? That which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet.

(II.2.40-44)

Editors have three early texts of this play to work from, two quarto texts and the folio. Here is how the First Quarto (1597) reads:

Whats Mountagne ? It is nor band norfoote,
Nor arme, nortace, nor any other part.
Whats in a name? That which we call a Role,
By any other name would fmeell as (weer:

Here is the Second Quarto (1599):

Whats Mountagne? it is nor hand nor foote,
Nor arme nor face, ô be fome other name
Belonging to a man.
Whats in a name that which we call a role,
By any other word would smell as sweete,

And here is the First Folio (1623):

There is in fact no early text that reads as our modern text does - and this is the most famous speech in the play. Instead, we have three quite different texts, all of which are clearly some version of the same speech, but none of which seems to us a final or satisfactory version. The transcendently

beautiful passage in modern editions is an editorial invention: editors have succeeded in conflating and revising the three versions into something we recognize as great poetry. Is this what Shakespeare “really” wrote? Who can say? What we can say is that Shakespeare always had performance, not a book, in mind.

Books About the Shakespeare Texts

The standard study of the printing history of the First Folio is W. W. Greg, *The Shakespeare First Folio* (1955). J. K. Walton, *The Quarto Copy for the First Folio of Shakespeare* (1971), is a useful survey of the relation of the quartos to the folio. The second edition of Charlton Hinman’s *Norton Facsimile of the First Folio* (1996), with a new introduction by Peter Blayney, is indispensable. Stanley Wells, Gary Taylor, John Jowett, and William Montgomery, *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion*, keyed to the Oxford text, gives a comprehensive survey of the editorial situation for all the plays and poems.

THE GENERAL EDITORS

Introduction

AN ENDURING MEDIEVAL MYTH held that refugees from the Trojan War founded Britain. Trojan survivors, led by King Priam's son Aeneas, traveled first to Africa (where their leader wooed and abandoned the Carthaginian queen, Dido, an episode recalled in *Antony and Cleopatra*); thence to Italy, where they founded the Roman imperium; and then farther, under the leadership of Brut/Brit to Britain, where they built New Troy (London) and gave Shakespeare's first audiences a "foundation myth." Although sixteenth- and seventeenth-century historians challenged this myth, Shakespeare's audiences could and did see themselves as inheriting classical values and, along with those values, ancient enmities and prejudices. They could, thus, see themselves as inheritors of the Roman republic and, more frequently, the Roman empire. They could also see themselves as successors to Troy's culture (as opposed to that of Greece), and they could see themselves as having an intellectual, historical, even political, stake in the greatest preclassical civilization they knew, Ptolemaic Egypt, which was historically a Greek dominion.

King James I, who ascended the English throne in 1603, immediately became the official patron of Shakespeare's theater company. When Shakespeare and the first audiences of *Antony and Cleopatra* looked to their new king, they might well have seen confirmed a symbolic link with classical Rome. King James, his publicists, and his client-artists often represented the English king as "Caesar," his reign as classically imperial, and his diplomatic and commercial policies as a renewal of Rome's history. As English explorers and then colonists more and more traveled into North America, it is not far-fetched to suppose that Shakespeare's audiences conceived their nation as replicating in the "New World" the imperial domination of Rome in the Old.

In Cecil B. DeMille's 1934 movie *Cleopatra*, a character at a Roman dinner party asks, "Is Cleopatra black?" She is laughed down scornfully, yet the racial question is also a question about colonialism and the conquest of one people by another. As Shakespeare's main source, Plutarch's lengthy parallels between Greek and Roman notables, and one of Shakespeare's minor sources, Samuel Daniel's play *Cleopatra* (first published in 1594, revised and republished in 1599, still further revised - apparently in response to Shakespeare's play - and republished in 1607), make quite clear, the historical Cleopatra was of Macedonian-Greek descent, a member of the class and nationality that had ruled Egypt since Alexander the Great's conquest (332 B.C.) for three centuries before the historical period (approximately 40-30 B.C.) of Shakespeare's play. Shakespeare's, and his audience's, knowledge of and attitudes toward race, ethnicity, and related subjects are, however, extremely hard to define, even in our deeply confused modern terminology. For Shakespeare and us, the question extends from Shylock (a Jew) and the Moorish Prince of Morocco in *The Merchant of Venice* to Aaron in *Titus Andronicus* to Othello (both also Moors) to Caliban in *The Tempest*.

Roman speakers ladle Elizabethan-specific opprobrium - "witch," "fairy," "enchantress" - on Cleopatra, and the terms mark her as a stranger, dangerous and extra-humanly powerful, a being who threatens not just the play's imagined "Roman" order and reason but who could evoke some deeply felt English fears, or at least worries. It is unlikely that those fears were specifically racial rather than nationalistic or religious, that the earliest and later audiences understood Cleopatra as "black" rather than "Eastern" or "Asiatic," themselves strong markers of difference. The angriest, most unsophisticated, and possibly racist hostility toward Cleopatra occurs at the play's very start and therefore may establish attitudes to be confirmed or denied later. Evidently a loyal but disgusted

Roman soldier, the play's first speaker, one Philo, claims that Antony's "goodly eyes"

... now bend, now turn
The office and devotion of their view
Upon a tawny front. . . .

Philo concludes that Antony's "captain's heart . . . reneges all temper / And is become the bellows and the fan / To cool a gypsy's lust."

Romany people, dark-haired, dark-skinned, and ultimately of northern Indian origin, had begun to enter England in the sixteenth century, where they were named, as in other European languages, with a derivative of "Egyptian" - Gypsies. To call Egyptian Cleopatra a "gypsy" comes easily to Philo's lips and is satisfyingly insulting - just as it is when Antony describes her as "like a right gypsy" (IV.12.28) when he thinks she has sold out to Caesar. The epithet insults Cleopatra, though, only if she is *not* and was not generally considered to be a dark-skinned Romany and therefore, from a racist point of view, ugly or otherwise repellent or threatening. Since the historical Cleopatra was Greek-descended, all this makes good color sense and good vituperation. Most knowledgeable Elizabethans would probably have agreed with Mercutio, who thinks Cleopatra was no more a "gypsy" than Petrarch's Laura was a washer wench (*Romeo and Juliet*, II.4).

Philo's other obvious insult is "tawny." Like most color words, "tawny" is hard to define historically; it seems to have meant some brownish color, and Shakespeare elsewhere uses it to describe suntanned or sunburnt skin, which Elizabethan canons of beauty regarded as undesirable. "Front" does punful double duty: it means "forehead" and "military front lines" - Antony advances his arms against a dark-skinned foe. Almost as early in the play, Cleopatra describes herself as "with Phoebus' amorous pinches black"(I.5.28). The plain interpretation of her remark is that she has tan skin, pinched and therefore bruised (black-and-blue), by the sun god, Phoebus.

Performances shape this speech variously. Cleopatra here recollects her earlier relations with Antony while he is away in Rome: she may be exaggerating her undesirable, wrinkled, aged appearance; she may be remarking how wonderful Antony found her despite that appearance; she may be noting how beautiful she is, however her Roman enemies might try to make her appear unattractive. Cleopatra's motives are, as usual, opaque. As the play represents the racial issues, none of the possible choices available to an early modern English audience stresses her racial "blackness" as a component of her exotic beauty or ugliness.

For Shakespeare's Christian audience, the play's references to "Herod of Jewry" and "Great Herod" (I.2.29-30; III.3.3; III.6.73; IV.6.14) injected another set of cultural perceptions of difference, including the divisive issue of Jesus' execution. Historically, Herod was indeed "Great Herod," Herod the Great (73-4 B.C.), a violent man whom Antony and the play's Caesar sponsored as Judea's ruler, and a king toward whom Cleopatra was unrelentingly hostile in support of her own territorial ambitions - "That Herod's head / I'll have" (III.3.4-5). This Herod's two sons, Herod Archelaus and Herod Antipas, both later rulers in Judea, figure ominously in the biblical narratives well known to Shakespeare's audience. Seeking to extirpate the threat Jesus' birth posed, Archelaus ordered the death of all Judea's male children under two years old (see Matthew 2, especially 7-16), and, similarly anxious about his rule, Antipas ordered the execution of John the Baptist (Matthew 14:1-11). The great medieval Corpus Christi religious plays presented Herod Archelaus as the archetypal raging tyrant. Hamlet remembers him when he warns the players against out-Heroding Herod, and he is used by

Henry V to threaten Harfleur's citizens: "the mad mothers with their howls confused / Do break the clouds, as did the wives of Jewry / At Herod's bloody-hunting slaughtermen" (*Henry V*, III.3). Shakespeare's audience might have made a still common mistake and collapsed the two later Herods into one, making a further strong connection among the play's threatening Herod, the medieval dramatic tyrant, Caesar Augustus's (the later title of the play's "Caesar") order for a census that brought Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem (according to the Gospel account), the birth of Jesus, and the flight of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus into Egypt to escape Herod Antipas's enmity. Herod of Jewry, whichever "Herod" the audience might imagine - the historical ones, the biblical ones, or a medieval dramatic one - provides a further, ominous signifier of cultural difference here.

Antony and Cleopatra dramatizes a deeply fraught moment in European history, one especially significant for Shakespeare's first audiences: the end of republican Rome, the beginning of imperial Rome, the confusing and to that audience hateful animosity of the Roman-sponsored administration in Judea toward Jesus' parents and their people, the soon-to-come moment of the Messiah. Cleopatra and her Egyptian monarchy were strange and threatening and puzzling; so too were the Judea and Jewry of Herod. History and culture, belief and prejudice make the moment of *Antony and Cleopatra* demanding for Shakespeare's audiences and later ones. As any great play must, *Antony and Cleopatra* presents these demands as acts and as human relations.

Learning that Antony has made a politically advantageous marriage to Caesar's sister Octavia, Cleopatra describes her Roman lover - now, it seems, her betrayer - as a visual puzzle, a combination of mythic female monster (Gorgon) and mythic male god of war (Mars): "Though he be painted one way like a Gorgon, / The other way's a Mars" (II.5.116-17). Agelessly unwithered, aging Cleopatra, the hero famously accorded "infinite variety" (II.2.246), a character "Whom everything becomes" (I.1.49), cannot herself still Antony's changes. Later, Antony finds himself a "vapor" (IV.14.3) that "cannot hold this visible shape" (IV.14.14), a person or body as "indistinct / As water is in water" (IV.14.10-11). Authority melts from him even as his self-conception dissolves. Varying Cleopatra, unshaped Antony inhabit a drama that itself cannot easily be stilled.

Written about 1607, *Antony and Cleopatra* falls between the tragedies usually considered Shakespeare's greatest (*Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Lear*, *Macbeth*) and the tragicomedies (*Pericles*, *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest*) that conclude his career. Just as its dramatic geography joins East and West, Egypt and Rome, *Antony and Cleopatra* bridges high tragedy and splendid comedy. Mixing verbal styles and seemingly contradictory emotions and dramatic events topsy-turvy, the play resists generic, emotional, and intellectual pigeonholes. It mixes and inverts male and female, queen, peasant, and triumvir, Egyptian, Roman, Jew, middle age and youth, political calculation, nostalgic reminiscence, present pleasure, future - even immortal - hope, a republic past and an empire to come.

Like *Romeo and Juliet* and *Troilus and Cressida*, the title of *Antony and Cleopatra* names two central characters who are lovers, but the earlier tragedies are very different. Profoundly influential family histories engulf the loving young couples of the earlier plays. Romeo and Juliet struggle against ancient family feud; Troilus and Cressida, whose separation is almost casually initiated by her traitor father's desire to be reunited with his daughter, try to establish their love amidst her uncle Pandarus's self-interested scheming and the political manipulations of Troilus's family and their advisers and against the antagonistic example of Helen and Paris. By contrast, Antony is regularly stripped - or strips himself - of family ties. First, his Roman warrior wife Fulvia dies; later he abandons his new wife, Octavia, when he is "nodded," as Caesar nastily says, back to Cleopatra. Antony occasionally uses both loss and abandonment as self-castigation or self-pity: trying to extort love from Cleopatra, for example, he will recall Octavia:

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?

(III.13.106-9)

But these moments seem more attitudinizing than deeply felt, occasions when Antony plays to an audience rather than reproaching himself. Neither Fulvia's death nor Octavia's abandonment finally influences his behavior. As the play portrays Cleopatra's family, it consists principally of her children; Caesar critically lists them as "Caesarion, whom they call my father's son, / And all the unlawful issue that their lust / Since then hath made between them" (III.6.6-8). Like Antony, Cleopatra uses her family and its loss as a form of rhetorical emphasis:

From my cold heart let heaven engender hail

The next Caesarion smite,
Till by degrees the memory of my womb,
Together with my brave Egyptians all,
By the discandying of this pelleted storm,
Lie graveless. . . .

(III.13.159, 162-66)

The "next Caesarion" is Cleopatra's next male descendant, her future manchild, and his emotive significance here is dynastic, a future child subsumed in the lost memory of Cleopatra's line.

These passages, including Caesar's list, construe family ties as political, not personal, whereas the earlier two-hero tragedies generally show the family as separate from peripheral political interests (*Romeo and Juliet*) or (in *Troilus and Cressida*) as personally manipulated hooks upon which largely extra-familial war aims sometimes depend. Family becomes political when family members are themselves important political actors, as Antony and Cleopatra are, and Romeo, Juliet, Cressida, and Troilus are not. For Cleopatra, Caesar, and Antony family matters are political matters. Cleopatra and Antony act upon the world stage, and their actions consequently have or may have high tragic effects; the earlier lovers are almost exclusively involved in what would be, in another dramatic world, domestic comedy. Where the earlier tragedies kept the political and familial worlds relatively or even exclusively separate, *Antony and Cleopatra* mixes the genres of domestic-comedies-turned-tragedies (the earlier two plays) with world-shaking actions that are often represented as domestic comedy - tragedy-turned-comedy-turned-tragedy again.

Cleopatra and Antony are world actors who act foolishly, who simultaneously play both state tragedy and domestic comedy. Their actions, their political and military failures, remake the Mediterranean world, and their possible failure threatens to humiliate them before the Roman populace, as Antony fears (IV.14.72-77) and Cleopatra vividly imagines:

Shall they hoist me up
And show me to the shouting varletry
Of censuring Rome?

Saucy lictors
Will catch at us like strumpets, and scald rhymers
Ballad us out o' tune. . . .

Antony
Shall be brought drunken forth, and I shall see
Some squeaking Cleopatra boy my greatness
I' th' posture of a whore.

(V.2.55-57, 215-17, 219-22)

Strumpets and whores and drunks - Cleopatra, her court, her lover will become a scabby ("scald") joke about seduction, sexual obsession, and excess of all sorts.

In *Antony and Cleopatra*, the seesaw structure of the earlier two-hero tragedies (Montague/Capulet, Greek/ Trojan) continues: Roman/Egyptian. The play may simplify itself into these national or racial or cultural dichotomies, and at first glance it seems easy to draw up a list. Thus, according to the Romans and some Egyptians some of the time, Rome represents honor and duty while Egypt is a place of distracting sensual pleasure. The conflicting pressures appear immediately in Antony's reaction to Fulvia's death (I.2.) and Caesar's self-interested tirade: "If," he says, Antony

filled
His vacancy with his voluptuousness,
Full surfeits and the dryness of his bones
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
And so rebel to judgment.

(I.4.25-33)

Antony's and Caesar's "state" and the seriousness of the times demand only maturity, judgment, experience, not boyishly self-indulgent voluptuousness.

The conversion of family-feeling into politics, the political authority of the two central actors and their necessary sensitivity to scandal and public opinion sharply distinguish Cleopatra and Antony from Juliet, Cressida, Troilus, and Romeo. All these differences help define the special quality of *Antony and Cleopatra* as a two-hero drama. Still, it is Shakespeare's last play in this difficult tragic form, and - perhaps as an aging artist's venture? - it is a play whose lover-heroes are notably middle-

aged and aware of time's passing and authority's ebb, aware of wrinkles, of gray hair, of fading sexual attractiveness.

The aging or the youthful human body becomes one of the play's most evocative battlegrounds. Though Caesar was historically twenty-three as the play opens, Cleopatra calls him "scarce-bearded" - world-sharing Caesar lacks a mature man's hairy chin. Cleopatra, who cheerfully (?) and attractively describes herself as "wrinkled deep in time," was historically thirty-eight, and Antony, who hopes he has the "spirit of a youth" even as he agrees his hair mingles white and brown, was fifty-two. Antony recalls Philippi, when he "struck / The lean and wrinkled Cassius" (III.11.36-37); himself wrinkled now, he must "To the young man," Caesar, "send humble treaties, dodge / And palter in the shifts of lowness" (III.11.62- 63). Self-pityingly, he imagines that Caesar, who "wears the rose / Of youth upon him," requires Cleopatra to offer "this grizzled head" as the price of her freedom and, perhaps, sovereignty over her kingdom. Just as Caesar earlier portrayed Antony as an aging playboy, a *boy*, so Antony continues, "He calls me boy, and chides as he had power / To beat me out of Egypt" (IV.1.1-2). More significant than this schoolyard nastiness is Antony's sense of how time has passed and with it his physical endurance as well as his political greatness: Caesar, he admits, "seems / Proud and disdainful, harping on what I am, / Not what he knew I was" (III.13.141-43). "Not what he knew I was" powerfully states the passage of time, the loss of physical prowess and political authority. Most of all, it admits the loss of *dignity*.

Living in "such time / That drums him [Antony] from his sport and speaks as loud / As his own state and ours [Caesar's]" and mastering time are also Roman, not Egyptian, goals and, even more important, a Roman talent. Caesar ominously promises that "the time shall not / Outgo my thinking on" (III.2.60-61) Antony and his marriage to Octavia. Antony is at least momentarily grateful that Pompey's military adventures have so shaken the world: "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" (II.6.50-52). As Antony's ambivalent balance between timeliness and a contrary untimely or ill-timed purpose suggests, the passage of time may also mark a movement from "Roman" to "Egyptian" behavior. When Caesar recalls Antony's past Roman greatness, it is in terms of hardship suffered, of endurance, as opposed to his present Egyptian "lascivious wassails."

Reveling on the banks of the Nile turns dutiful Roman soldiers into errant boys. It also turns men and boys into women:

he fishes, drinks, and wastes
The lamps of night in revel; is not more manlike
Than Cleopatra, nor the queen of Ptolemy
More womanly than he. . . .

(I.4.4-7)

Even before Caesar voices his hostility, Enobarbus and Charmian have been momentarily confused over which leader is about to enter: "Hush, here comes Antony. / Not he, the queen" (I.2.78). Throughout the second half of the play, the interchange of meanings and values, purposes and desires between Cleopatra and Antony makes them, for themselves and for others, so intermingled that all find it difficult and perhaps not even necessary to distinguish queen and triumvir in terms of female and male.

The Roman way is very different, stringently separating man from boy, male from female, husband

from wife. Where Caesar represents himself as both a model Roman and the defender of Roman values, he represents his sister Octavia as a model Roman wife and mother: she should “prove such a wife / As my thoughts make thee . . . the piece of virtue” (III.2.25-26, 28). An apparently “neutral” observer agrees Octavia is “of a holy, cold, and still conversation,” and Cleopatra has to assault a messenger (II.5) to ensure he reports ill of Octavia’s voice, stature, and appearance (III.3). Octavia plainly stands in dramaturgical opposition to Cleopatra, just as Cleopatra stands in opposition to Caesar, and Rome opposes Egypt. Between each pair - the play’s ordering implies - Antony must choose, a middle-aged Prince Hal caught between his successful, stern-faced father (Henry IV/Caesar) and the joyously irresponsible failure, Falstaff/Cleopatra. Like his supposed ancestor Hercules, Antony stands at a crossroads where one path leads to heavenly Virtue, the other to hellish Vice. Rome, Caesar, marriage, and world domination one way; Egypt, Cleopatra, sensual indulgence, and political failure the other. Or so the play may be understood.

These classically elegant orderings of opposed tensions are no sooner hinted than they begin to fail and dissatisfy. The play throws many ambiguities over what seem its most persuasive and satisfying structures. There are so many ambiguities, in fact, that eventually we must accept their unsettling force as superior to the reassuring stasis of paired and tripled opposition.

Consider the frequent contrast of Egyptian extravagance and Roman restraint. Throughout the play we *hear* of Cleopatra’s and Antony’s excess: their first meeting, their transvestite sex games, their banquets, drunkenness, déclassé mock fights with “knaves,” and so forth - an almost endless catalogue of rule-breaking. Yet those accounts are always *accounts*; they are reports transmitted to us, usually through a prejudiced Roman lens or, perhaps just as distorting, the romantic, now bittersweet memories of Antony and Cleopatra themselves. Antony proposes “one other gaudy night” (III.13.183) before what will prove his decisive naval defeat at Actium, and Cleopatra and Enobarbus recall many a midnight revel on the banks of the Nile. Yet the only “Egyptian bacchanals” (II.7.102) the play dramatizes - an all-male party where even cool Caesar’s cheeks are “burnt” and his brain “grows fouler” with wine, where Lepidus, “the third part of the world,” is “high-colored” and carried home helplessly drunk - is aboard Pompey’s galley in Rome, not Egypt.

Before the grand, historically important figures have their bacchanal, their subordinates meet at arm’s length. The men who actually do and suffer war’s ugly business share their bottom-up views of high politics, high loves. One, Pompey’s follower Menas, offers to kill his leader’s enemies:

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.

(II.7.69-72)

And Pompey, eager for dominion, fearful of dishonor, reluctantly demurs:

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.

Kill first, tell later. Profit, and victory, first; honor after. Does this little episode represent Roman honor or Egyptian treachery?

Before that dishonorable, clever victory forfeited, Antony's and Pompey's followers converse in a relaxed prelude to their leaders' meeting. Enobarbus explains Antony's fascination and seeming dereliction from Roman duty when he describes Cleopatra and Antony's first meeting:

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
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,
It beggared all description. She did lie
In her pavilion, cloth-of-gold of tissue,
O'er picturing that Venus where we see
The fancy outwork nature. . . .

(II.2.201-11)

And Enobarbus goes on.

In performance, there have been two main ways to deliver this speech: as awe or as smut. Performed one way, Cleopatra enthralls Enobarbus as Enobarbus says Cleopatra enthralled Antony - she surpasses painters' and sculptors' finest imaginings of Venus, the most beautiful goddess. Performed another way, Cleopatra is male fantasy, a sexy, disembodied lust icon, more appropriate for a poster than for worship. The so-called barge speech - and the choices it forces on the director - tells us at least as much about the speaker as about the scene and character he describes, as do so many other moments in the play.

Sexy, even raunchy (Shakespeare's word is "riggish"), Cleopatra undoubtedly is, but the play's joyous verbal celebration of sexuality begins with the Roman Enobarbus's wittily smutty "light answers" - Antony's rebuke of his subordinate's response to news that Antony's wife, Fulvia, "a great spirit," he says, has died. Jollyng his despondent master and acknowledging Egypt's powerful attractions, Enobarbus makes ambivalent Roman jokes about "celerity in dying" (eager sexual climax), about "a wonderful piece of work" (Cleopatra, a wonder of the world of sexuality), about "the business you have broached here" in Egypt (both political "business" and the broaching or opening of Cleopatra's, "Egypt's," body). Once again, purportedly Egyptian qualities prove to be Roman. Enobarbus's ambivalence echoes the audience's. For Enobarbus, ambivalence leads to mortal heartbreak, when he is caught between pragmatic reasoning and idealistic emotion (IV.6): loyalty to Antony; a frank recognition of his weaknesses and the strong toils (as Caesar says, V.2.347) they both recognize in the "East"; an equally frank recognition of the military and political folly they both acknowledge, and Antony embraces.

As an element in the drama, Enobarbus sketches Antony's experiences at a less exalted level; he serves Antony (and Shakespeare) as Gloucester does Lear. Though she has far more numerous followers than Antony, Cleopatra has none who amplify her situation the way Enobarbus's words and acts do Antony's; indeed, some of the most revealing remarks about Antony come in Enobarbus's arguments with Cleopatra, arguments that manage to reveal little about her motives and purposes. For much of the play, Cleopatra is what others make of her. Brief, often magical, scenes in Egypt when Antony is away offer glimpses of her attitudes and values, but these episodes mostly "confirm" or extend the already hopelessly contradictory Roman views of her. The audience only begins to have some sort of direct experience of Cleopatra once Antony is dead. She hardly becomes "knowable," but the veil of Roman rancor and envy no longer so manifestly lies between audience and hero.

Shakespeare's unprecedented decision to remove so important a character as Antony with about one sixth of the play (all of Act V in modern editions) remaining - a dramaturgical gamble other Jacobean playwrights hardly ever dared - leaves the audience to watch Cleopatra's fashioning of her own death and, just as important, her refashioning of what Antony's life and death mean. Suddenly, interpretation - which earlier had arisen in the watching, commenting, reacting characters around the central couple - now falls first to the dying Antony, who bungles self-interpretation almost as badly as he botches suicide, and then to Cleopatra.

She says she "dreamt there was an emperor Antony," one whose

legs bestrid the ocean; his reared arm
Crested the world . . .

For his bounty,
There was no winter in't: an Antony it was
That grew the more by reaping. . . .
(V.2.83-84, 87-89)

When the stolid Roman Dolabella soberly denies Cleopatra's dream, he only elicits a grander - or is it only more grandiose? - vision of Antony:

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
An Antony were nature's piece 'gainst fancy,
Condemning shadows quite.
(V.2.97-101)

This comparison, in which Antony becomes nature's triumphant rebuke to the highest human artistic imaginings ("shadows"), recalls and then overgoes Enobarbus's claim that Cleopatra on her barge overpictured the painters' and sculptors' imagined Venus. Artists have fancies and Cleopatra first has a dream, but then her recalled Antony is past the size of dreaming and far beyond "fancy." The speech is one of Shakespeare's most powerful and successful "metadramatic" moments, since the claims of

artistic (even human) transcendence are, of course, conveyed in his words and spoken by a most human actor.

Perhaps still more profound or desperate than Cleopatra's remaking of the Antony we have seen lurching among imagined selves, struggling simultaneously to retain a time-defying "Roman" martial greatness and to achieve a time-denying "Egyptian" greatness as Cleopatra's partner, is Cleopatra's further, concluding effort to supersede the very values through which the play has construed the meanings of Cleopatra and Antony. Or, since so much rests in the interpreting times, it might be better to say she seeks to refashion the play's celebrities represented as "Antony" and "Cleopatra" and their story.

Cleopatra's long dying is - she claims - after the high Roman fashion (IV.15.90): she melds in death Egypt and Rome. She will beat her Roman enemies at their own game, the game of dominating time, for time's passage inevitably ends in human death:

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
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.

(V.2.1-8)

The paradoxes are clear and not susceptible to logical "solution." Beggars and emperors all die, all suckle dung. We are all death's suitors. To end by suicide our common oppression does end accident and change, but how is it "great"? Or how may it be *made* great?

Antony's tentative answer was to be "A bridegroom in my death and run into't / As to a lover's bed" (IV.14.100- 101). His run, however, proves an ungainly limp; defeated at sea and on land, Antony defeats himself and fails to commit an "appropriate" Roman suicide and lives long enough to know that he has been the apparent victim of another one of Cleopatra's love tricks - a clumsy sacrifice to farce. Cleopatra remakes Antony's failed *Liebestode* and offers the play's concluding emotional answer to the unanswerable: "I am again for Cydnus, / To meet Mark Antony." Dying, Antony supposed himself a bridegroom. Cleopatra finally goes further: "Husband, I come: / Now to that name my courage prove my title!"

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Note on Sources and Dates

SHAKESPEARE'S MAIN DOCUMENTARY source for *Antony and Cleopatra* was Thomas North's translation (from Amyot's earlier French translation) of Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romanes* (1579 and later, expanded, editions). At several points in the play, Shakespeare closely versifies North's typically exuberant Elizabethan translation. Plutarch "paralleled" famous Greek and Roman personages; he joined Antony with Demetrius of Macedonia, another martial hero who had early success and final, military-political, failure. It seems likely that Shakespeare also knew in Latin, or French, or in Thomas Lodge's 1602 English translation, Flavius Josephus's *Antiquities of the Jews*. Cleopatra (she was typically the sole title character) was the subject of many Continental and English plays throughout the sixteenth century, and Shakespeare probably knew more than the title of one or more of these plays. For further details and generous extracts, see Geoffrey Bullough, *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*, 8 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, and London: Routledge, 1957-75), vol. V (1964).

Cleopatra was born in 69 B.C., Antony about 83 B.C.; both died in 30 B.C. Gaius Octavius (sometimes "Octavian" and regularly called "Caesar" in *Antony and Cleopatra*) became the first Roman emperor, Augustus, and died A.D. 14. The assassination of Julius Caesar in 44 B.C. led to the formation of a series of triumvirates, the last of which (Antony, Octavius Caesar, Lepidus) began in 43 B.C. and effectively collapsed in 36 B.C.; in the immediate aftermath of Julius Caesar's death, this triumvirate defeated Julius Caesar's principal assassins, Brutus and Cassius, at Philippi in 42 B.C. Fulvia was Antony's third wife and he her third husband; she died in 40 B.C. The play's Pompey was the younger son of Pompey the Great and generally supported Antony against Octavius Caesar; the play depicts the Pact of Misenum (39 B.C.), but in the next year Octavius attacked Pompey's forces and eventually drove him to death by execution in Asia (36 B.C.). Octavius's decisive defeat of Antony occurred at sea near Actium in September 31 B.C. (compare *Antony and Cleopatra*, III.8-11), though the military struggle continued for a while longer.

Note on the Text

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA was first published in the folio of 1623, apparently printed from Shakespeare's manuscript or from a transcription of it. Undivided into acts and scenes, the folio text lacks some important stage directions and includes "ghost" characters, confusing or inadequately distinguished character names, and other anomalies that might have been removed in a text fully prepared for production. The act/scene divisions in this edition are editorial, not original. The following list of departures from the folio attempts to list changes affecting interpretation; it omits typographical errors (i.e., those that do not produce a plausible word), uncontroversial modernizations, relineation, and places where speech prefixes and proper names have been standardized. The adopted reading (including speech prefixes - all are derived from the editorial tradition) appears in italics and is followed by the folio reading in roman.

I.1 18 *me!* me, 39 *On One* 50 *whose* who

I.2 39 *fertile* foretell 60 *Charmian* Alexas 79 *Saw* Save 109 *minds* windes 111 **s.d.** *a second* another 110 *SECOND* 1. 114, 115 *THIRD* (not in F) 137 *occasion* an occasion 178 *leave* love 183 *Hath* Have 194 *place is* places; *requires* require

I.3 20 *What*, What 24 *know* - know. 25 *betrayed* betrayèd 33 *sued* suèd 43 *services* Servicles 51 *thrived* thrivèd 80 *blood: No more.* blood no more? 82 *my* (not in F)

I.4 3 *Our One* 8 *Vouchsafed* vouchsafe 9 *the abstract* th' abstracts 21 *smell* smels 44 *deared* fear'd 46 *lackeying* lacking 47 *SECOND* (not in F) 49 *Make* Makes 56 *wassails* Vassailles 75 *we* me

I.5 5 *time* time: 29 *time?* time. 34 **s.d.** *Alexas* Alexas from Caesar 50 *dumbed* dumbe 61 *man* mans

II.1 2, 5 *MENECRATES* Mene.; 16, 18, 38 *MENAS* Mene.; 21 *waned* wand 41 *warred* wan'd 43 *greater.* greater, 44 *all*, all:

II.2 76-77 *you . . . Alexandria;* you, . . . Alexandria 113 *soldier* Souldier, 122-23 *staunch,* . . . world staunch . . . world: 128 *so say* 129 *reproof* prooffe 130 *deserved* deservèd 155-56 *hand: / Further* hand / Further 158 **s.d.** [*They clasp hands.*] (not in F) 180 **s.d.** [*Exeunt.*] Exit omnes. 204 *lovesick with.* Lovesicke. / With 214 *glow* glove 216 *gentlewomen* Gentlewoman 233 "no" no; *heard* hard 238 *plowed* ploughèd 242 *And, breathless,* And breathlesse

II.3 8 *OCTAVIA* (not in F) 19 *high, unmatchable* high unmatchable 21 *afeard* a fear 23 *thee; no more but when to thee.* thee no more but: when to thee, 29 *away* alway

II.5 2 *ALL* Omnes 10-11 *river: there, / My . . . off,* River there / My . . . off. 12 *finned* fine 28 *him,* him. 43 *is 'tis* 96 *face, to me* face to me, 111 *Alexas;* Alexas 115 *not, Charmian,* not Charmian,

II.6 **s.d.** *Agrippa, with* Agrippa, Menas, with 19 *is his* 30 *present - how you take* present how you take) 39 *ANTONY . . . LEPIDUS* Omnes 43 *telling,* telling. 52 *gained* gainèd 58 *composition* composition 66 *meanings* meaning 69 *of* (not in F) 81 *CAESAR . . . LEPIDUS* All 81 **s.d.** *all but* Manet

II.7 16 **s.d.** [*and a Boy*] (not in F) 90 *is he is* 98 *grows* grow 100 *all; four days* all, four dayes, 110 *bear* beate 112 *BOY* [*Sings.*] (not in F) 119 *off of* 123 *Splits* Spleet's 127 *father's* Father 128-29 *not. / Menas* not Menas

III.1 3 *body* body, 4 *army.* Army 5 *SILIUS* Romaine (throughout scene)

III.2 10 *AGRIPPA* Ant. **16** *figures* Figure **20** *beetle*. [...] So - Beetle, so: **49** *full* the full **59** *wept* weepe
III.3 18 *lookedst* look'st
III.4 8 *them* then **9** *took't* look't **24** *yours* your **30** *Your* You **38** *has* he's
III.5 12 *world* would; *hast* hadst; *chaps*, chaps **14** *the one* (not in F)
III.6 13 *he there proclaimed the kings* hither proclaimed the King **19** *reported*, reported **22** *know* knowes **28** *triumvirate* Triumpherate **29** *being, that* being that, **72** *Manchus* Mauchus **79** *do* does
III.7 4 *it is* it it **5** *Is't not* If not, **20** *Canidius* Camidias **21** *Brundusium* Brandusium **23** *Toryne* Troine **35** *muleters* Militers **51** *Actium* Action **72** *CANIDIUS* Ven. **78** *Well* Well, **80** *in* with
III.8 6 *s.d.* *Exeunt* exit
III.10 s.d. *Enobarbus* Enobarbus and Scarus **14** *June* Inne **28** *he* his
III.11 6 *ALL* Omnes **19** *that* them **22** *pray*, pray **44** *He is* Hee's **47** *seize* cease **56** *followed* followèd **58** *tow* stowe **59** *Thy* The
III.13 10 *merèd* meered **26** *caparisons* comparisons **55** *Caesar* Caesars **57** *feared* fearèd **60** *deserved* deservèd **74** *this* this; *deputation* disputation, **90** *me. Of late*, me of late. **103** *again*. This againe, the **112-13** *eyes*, / *In . . . filth* eyes / *In . . . filth*, **132** *a* he **137** *whipped for . . . him*. whipt. For . . . him, **162** *smite*, smile **165** *discandying* discandering **168** *sits* sets **178** *sinewed* sinewèd **199** *on* in **201** *s.d.* *Exit* Exeunt
IV.1 3 *combat*, combat.
IV.2 1 *No*. No? **12** *And thou* Thou **19** *ALL* Omnes
IV.3 7 *THIRD SOLDIER* 2 **8** *FOURTH SOLDIER* 2 **10** *THIRD SOLDIER* 1 **15** *loved* lovèd **17, 22** *ALL* Omnes
IV.4 5-6 *too*. / *What's* too, Anthony. / *What's* **6** *ANTONY* (not in F) **8** *CLEOPATRA* (not in F) **24** *CAPTAIN* Alex. **32** *thee* thee. **33** *steel*. Steele,
IV.5 1, 3, 6 *SOLDIER* Eros **17** *Dispatch*. Dispatch **17** *s.d.* *Exeunt* Exit
IV.6 20 *more* mote **36** *do't, I feel*. doo't. I feele
IV.7 8 *s.d.* *far off* (in F after "heads," line 6)
IV.8 18 *My Mine* **23** *favoring* savouring **26** *Destroyed* Destroyèd
IV.12 4 *augurers* Auguries **9** *s.d.* *Alarum . . . sea fight* (in F before line 1) **10** *betrayed* betrayèd **21** *spanieled* pannelled
IV.13 10 *death*. death
IV.14 4 *towered* toward **10** *dislimns* dislimes **19** *Caesar* Caesars **77** *ensued* ensuèd **95** *s.d.* *Kills himself* (in F after line 93) **104** *ho* how **144** *s.d.* *Exeunt* Exit
IV.15 54 *lived the* lived. The **76** *e'en* in **86** *What, what!* What, what
V.1 s.d. *Maecenas* Menas **3** *s.d.* *DERCETUS* Decretas **5, 13, 19** *DERCETUS* Decretas (or "Dec.") **28** *AGRIPPA* Dol. **31** *AGRIPPA* Dola. **36** *followed* followèd **48** *s.d.* *Enter an Egyptian* (in F after "says," line 51) **53** *all she has*, all, she has **54** *intents* desires intents, desires, **59** *live* leave **68** *s.d.* *Exit* Exit Proculeius
V.2 s.d. (F adds *and Mardian*) **35** *You* Pro. [s.p.] You **56** *varletry* Varlotarie **66** *me* (not in F) **81** *O, o'* **105** *smites* suites **140** *valued* valewèd **152** *followed* followèd **184** *price* prize **217** *Ballad* us out o'

Ballads us out a **224** *my mine* **318** *awry away* **319** *s.d. in.* in, and Dolabella. **325** *here!* *Charmian* here
Charmian **341** *diadem* diadem; **342** *mistress*; Mistris **365** *Exeunt* Exeunt omnes

[NAMES OF THE ACTORS

MARK ANTONY (*Marcus Antonius*) }
CAESAR (*Octavius Caesar*) } *triumvirs*
M. AEMILIUS LEPIDUS }

OCTAVIA, *sister to Caesar and wife to Antony*

ENOBARBUS (*Domitius Enobarbus*) }
VENTIDIUS }
EROS } *friends*
SCARUS } *to Antony*
DERCETUS }
DEMETRIUS }
PHILO }

CANIDIUS, *lieutenant general to Antony*

MAECENAS }
AGRIPPA } *friends to Caesar*
DOLABELLA }
PROCULEIUS }
THIDIAS }
GALLUS }

TAURUS, *lieutenant general to Caesar*

POMPEY (*Sextus Pompeius*)

MENAS }
MENEKRATES } *friends to Pompey*
VARRIUS }

ROMAN OFFICER UNDER VENTIDIUS

A SCHOOLMASTER, *ambassador from Antony to Caesar*

CLEOPATRA, *Queen of Egypt*

ALEXAS
MARDIAN
SELEUCUS
DIOMEDES
IRAS
CHARMIAN

} *attendants on Cleopatra*

A SOOTHSAYER

A CLOWN

OFFICERS, SOLDIERS, MESSENGERS, ATTENDANTS

SCENE: *The Roman Empire*]

Antony and Cleopatra

 **I.1. 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
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
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

If it be love indeed, tell me how much.

ANTONY

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

I.1 Alexandria **1** *dotage* foolish affection **4** *plated* armored **5** *office* duty **6** *tawny front* brown (or suntanned: see I.5.28) face **8** *reneges* rejects; *temper* moderation **10** *gypsy* (1) native of Egypt (where European Gypsies were erroneously thought to originate), (2) deceitful woman **10** **s.d.** *Flourish* musical fanfare (for a person of the highest authority); *train* retinue **12** *The triple . . . world* one of the three "pillars" of the world (the others being Octavius Caesar and Lepidus) **13** *fool* dupe

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 Grates me! The sum.

CLEOPATRA

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

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
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
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 dungy earth alike
Feeds beast as man. The nobleness of life
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.

16 *bound* limit **17** *new . . . earth* (the phrase is biblical, describing the new Jerusalem: see Isaiah 65:17 and Revelations 21:1-4) **18** *Grates . . . sum* it annoys me; be brief **20** *Fulvia* Antony's wife **21** *scarce-bearded* hardly grown up enough to have a beard (Caesar was twenty-three) **23** *Take in* conquer; *enfranchise* set free **26** *dismission* discharge (from serving in Egypt) **28** *process* summons **31** *homager* subordinate; *else* or else **34** *ranged* arranged in order (i.e., like an army)

CLEOPATRA Excellent falsehood!
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,
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!
Whom everything 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
The qualities of people. Come, my queen;
Last night you did desire it. - Speak not to us.
*Exeunt [Antony and Cleopatra] with the train
[and Messenger].*

DEMETRIUS

Is Caesar with Antonius prized so slight?

PHILO

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

37 *thus* (perhaps indicating an embrace; perhaps a general reference to their way of life) **39** *weet* know **42** *the fool . . . not* i.e., foolish enough to believe you **44** *Love . . . hours* (the hours were imagined as women serving Venus, goddess of love) **45** *confound* (1) waste, (2) mix **46** *stretch* pass **49** *becomes* (1) is transformed into, (2) adorns, graces **50** *passion* mood **56** *prized* valued **58** *property* distinction

DEMETRIUS I am full sorry

That he approves the common liar, who
Thus speaks of him at Rome; but I will hope
Of better deeds tomorrow. Rest you happy. *Exeunt.*

1.2 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? O that I knew this husband which, you say, must change his horns with garlands!

ALEXAS Soothsayer!

SOOTHSAYER Your will?

CHARMIAN Is this the man? Is't you, sir, that know things?

SOOTHSAYER

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

ALEXAS Show him your hand.

ENOBARBUS

Bring in the banquet quickly; wine enough
Cleopatra's health to drink.

CHARMIAN 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.

60 *approves* confirms **1.2** Alexandria **s.d.** *Enter Enobarbus . . . Alexas* (thus in folio, but Lamprius [who may be "a Soothsayer"], Rannius, and Lucillius are mute here and do not appear elsewhere) **2** *absolute* perfect **4-5** *must . . . garlands* trade a wedding wreath for a cuckold's traditional symbol, horns on the forehead (?)

CHARMIAN He means in flesh.

IRAS No, you shall paint when you are old.

CHARMIAN Wrinkles forbid!

ALEXAS Vex not his prescience, be attentive.

CHARMIAN Hush!

SOOTHSAYER

You shall be more loving than beloved.

CHARMIAN I had rather heat my liver with drinking.

ALEXAS Nay, hear him.

CHARMIAN 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 O excellent! I love long life better than figs.

SOOTHSAYER

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

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

SOOTHSAYER

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 Nay, come, tell Iras hers.

ALEXAS We'll know all our fortunes.

19 *He . . . flesh* he means that you will put on weight **25** *liver* (the organ regarded as the seat of love) **29** *Herod* (an anachronistic reference to Herod Archelaus, who massacred the infant boys of Judea and became an archetypal tyrant in English drama) **31** *companion me with* make me equal to **33** *figs* (figs were a slang analogue of penis and testicles) **34** *proved* experienced **36** *have no names* i.e., have no names derived from fathers **37** *wenches* girls **40** *I . . . witch* i.e., I can see that you have no prophetic powers **41** *privy to* in on the secret of

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

IRAS There's a palm presages chastity, if nothing else.

CHARMIAN E'en as the o'erflowing Nilus presageth 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 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 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 worser thoughts heavens mend! Alexas - come, his fortune, his fortune. O, 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, fiftyfold a cuckold. Good Isis, hear me this prayer, though thou deny me a matter of more weight; good Isis, I beseech thee.

IRAS 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 Amen.

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

51 *oily palm* sweaty hand (thought to indicate sensuality) **51-52** *fruitful prognostication* prophetic sign of fertility **60** *Not . . . nose* (Iras prefers a long penis to a long nose) **63** *go* have sexual intercourse; *Isis* Egyptian goddess of earth, fertility, and the moon **71** *loose-wived* married to an unfaithful wife **72-73** *keep decorum* i.e., act as suits his quality (see V.2.17 n.)

ENOBARBUS

Hush, here comes Antony.

CHARMIAN Not he, the queen.

CLEOPATRA

Saw you my lord?

ENOBARBUS No, lady.

CLEOPATRA Was he not here?

CHARMIAN No, madam.

CLEOPATRA

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

Here at your service. My lord approaches.
Enter Antony with a Messenger.

CLEOPATRA

We will not look upon him. Go with us.
Exeunt [all but Antony and the Messenger].

MESSENGER

Fulvia thy wife first came into the field.

ANTONY

Against my brother Lucius?

MESSENGER Ay.

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

ANTONY Well, what worst?

MESSENGER

The nature of bad news infects the teller.

77 s.d. (the folio places Cleopatra's entrance here and performances explain Enobarbus's mistake as sincere or ironic; alternatively, Cleopatra may enter after "Not he, the queen") 82 *Roman thought* sobering (?) consideration of duty 90 *time's state* conditions of the moment 92 *issue* success 93 *drave* drove (a northern English word form)

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,
I hear him as he flattered.

MESSENGER Labienus -

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

ANTONY Antony, thou wouldst say.

MESSENGER O, my lord.

ANTONY

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. O, then we bring forth weeds
When our quick minds lie still, and our ills told us
Is as our earring. Fare thee well awhile.

MESSENGER

At your noble pleasure. *Exit Messenger.*
Enter [a Second] Messenger.

ANTONY

From Sicyon, how the news? Speak there!

SECOND MESSENGER

The man from Sicyon -

ANTONY Is there such a one?

SECOND MESSENGER

He stays upon your will.

98 *as as if; Labienus* Quintus Labienus, who had been sent by Brutus and Cassius to seek aid against Antony and Octavius Caesar from Orodes, King of Parthia, and was now commanding a Parthian army **100** *Extended* seized **104** *home* plainly; *mince . . . tongue* don't soften what everybody is saying **107** *license* freedom **109** *quick* live, fertile **110** *earing* being plowed (to uproot the weeds) **114** *stays upon* waits

ANTONY Let him appear.

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

Enter another Messenger, with a letter.

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
Importeth thee to know, this bears.

[Gives a letter.]

ANTONY Forbear me.

[Exit Messenger.]

There's a great spirit gone! Thus did I desire it.

What our contempts doth often hurl from us,

We wish it ours again. The present pleasure,

By revolution lowering, does become

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:

Ten thousand harms, more than the ills I know,

My idleness doth hatch.

Enter Enobarbus.

How now, Enobarbus!

ENOBARBUS What's your pleasure, sir?

ANTONY I must with haste from hence.

ENOBARBUS 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.

120 *Importeth* concerns; *Forbear* leave **124** *By revolution lowering* i.e., moving downward on the revolving wheel of our opinions **127** *enchanting* (Roman speakers often attribute magical powers to Cleopatra)

ENOBARBUS 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, which commits some loving act upon her, she hath such a celerity in dying.

ANTONY She is cunning past man's thought.

ENOBARBUS 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 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 Fulvia?

ANTONY Dead.

ENOBARBUS 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, 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.

138 *die* (1) cease to exist, (2) Elizabethan slang for "have orgasm," a meaning repeated in *die*, *dies*, *die*, and *dying* (138, 141, 144) **142** *moment* cause; *mettle* vigor **150** *makes* manufactures **151** *Jove* i.e., Jupiter Pluvius, Roman god of rain **163** *the tailors* i.e., that the gods are the tailors **165** *members* i.e., male sexual organs; (*cut* and *case*, l. 166, are slang for female genitalia)

ANTONY

The business she hath broachèd 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 deserver
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.*

170 *broachèd* opened up **172** *business* . . . *broached* i.e., the sex acts you have entered upon **174** *abode* staying **176** *break* tell **177** *expedience* expedition **179** *touches* motives **181** *contriving* i.e., acting in my interest **182** *at home* to return home; *Sextus Pompeius* son of Pompey the Great, now (after Julius Caesar's death) a pirate **186** *throw* transfer **189** *blood and life* vital energy **190** *going on* evolving **191** *danger* endanger **192** *courser's hair* (horsehairs in water were thought to come to life as small serpents) **194** *place* rank

 **I.3 Enter Cleopatra, Charmian, Alexas, and Iras.**

CLEOPATRA

Where is he?

CHARMIAN I did not see him since.

CLEOPATRA

See where he is, who's with him, what he does.

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

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.

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.

It cannot be thus long; the sides of nature

Will not sustain it.

ANTONY Now, my dearest queen -

1.3 Alexandria **3** *sad* serious **8** *I do not* that I am not doing **11** *Tempt* try; *I wish* I wish
you would **13** *sullen* melancholy **14** *breathing* utterance **16** *sides of nature* human body

CLEOPATRA

Pray you stand farther from me.

ANTONY What's the matter?

CLEOPATRA

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

The gods best know -

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

ANTONY Cleopatra -

CLEOPATRA

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 Most sweet queen -

CLEOPATRA Nay, pray you seek no color for your going, But bid farewell and go. When you sued
staying, Then was the time for words: no going then, Eternity was in our lips and eyes, 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?

20 *the married woman* i.e., Fulvia **32** *color* pretext **33** *sued* begged for **36** *bent* curve **37**
a race of heaven of heavenly origin; perhaps also "of heavenly flavor"

CLEOPATRA

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
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,
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
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

She's dead, my queen.
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!

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.

41 *Egypt* i.e., both Cleopatra and her sovereign state **44** *in . . . you* for you to keep and use **45** *civil swords* i.e., civil war **48** *scrupulous faction* contest over trifles **52** *state government* **53-54** *grown . . . change* i.e., ill through peace, would cure itself by letting blood **54** *particular* personal concern **55** *safe secure* **61** *garboils* disturbances; *best* best news of all **63-64** *sacred vials . . . water* (a reference to the practice of consecrating bottles of tears to the dead)

ANTONY

Quarrel no more, but be prepared to know
The purposes I bear, which are, or cease,
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 -
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 So Fulvia told me.
I prithee turn aside and weep for her;
Then bid adieu to me and say the tears
Belong to Egypt. Good now, play one scene
Of excellent dissembling, and let it look
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.
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.

68 *fire* i.e., the sun **69** *quickens* vivifies; *Nilus' slime* fertile mud left by the Nile's annual overflow **70** *servant* both vassal and lover **71** *affects* chooseth; *lace* i.e., the fastenings that hold clothing close to her heart and lungs **73** *So* provided that; *forbear* desist **74** *stands* will sustain **75** *told* taught (Cleopatra ironically comments on how faithful Antony was to Fulvia) **81** *meetly* well suited **82** *target* shield **84-85** *How . . . chafe* i.e., how becomingly he plays his role of angry Hercules (from whom Antony supposedly descended)

CLEOPATRA 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 -
O, my oblivion is a very Antony,
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
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,
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
That thou residing here goes yet with me,
And I hence fleeting here remain with thee.
Away! *Exeunt.*



I.4 Enter Octavius [Caesar], reading a letter, Lepidus, and their train.

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
 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
 A man who is the abstract of all faults
 That all men follow.

90 *my . . . Antony* my forgetfulness is like Antony, who is now leaving (i.e., forgetting) me **91** *I . . . forgotten* (1) I have forgotten what I was going to say, (2) I am all forgotten by Antony **91-92** *But . . . subject* if you were not the queen of trifling **96** *my becomings* (1) those things that grace me, (2) my changes (see I.1.49) **97** *Eye* look

I.4 Rome **3** *competitor* partner

LEPIDUS I must not think there are
 Evils enow to darken all his goodness:
 His faults in him seem as the spots of heaven,
 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
 Amiss to tumble on the bed of Ptolemy,
 To give a kingdom for a mirth, to sit
 And keep the turn of tippling 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
 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
 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

And so rebel to judgment.

Enter a Messenger.

6 *Ptolemy* Cleopatra's dead brother and husband **7** *audience* i.e., to Caesar's messengers (cf. I.1) **9** *abstract* epitome **11** *enow* enough **12-13** *His . . . blackness* i.e., just as stars seem brighter against night's darkness, so Antony's faults contrast with his virtues **14** *purchased* acquired **19** *keep . . . of* take turns **20** *stand the buffet* trade blows **22** *his composure* that man's character **24** *foils* disgraces **24-25** *when . . . lightness* when his levity puts so heavy a burden upon us **26** *vacancy* leisure **27-28** *Full . . . him* i.e., let his own physical symptoms be the reckoning **28** *confound* frustrate, waste **30** *his . . . ours* his and our greatness **31** *rate* berate; *mature in knowledge* old enough to know better

LEPIDUS Here's more news.

MESSENGER

Thy biddings have been done and every hour,
Most noble Caesar, shalt thou have report
How 'tis abroad. Pompey is strong at sea,
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.
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,
Goes to and back, lackeying the varying tide
To rot itself with motion.

[Enter a Second Messenger.]

SECOND MESSENGER Caesar, I bring thee word
Menecrates and Menas, famous pirates,
Make the sea serve them, which they ear and wound
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.
No vessel can peep forth but 'tis as soon
Taken as seen; for Pompey's name strikes more
Than could his war resisted.

CAESAR Antony,
Leave thy lascivious wassails. When thou once
Was beaten from Modena, where thou slew'st
Hirtius and Pansa, consuls, at thy heel
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
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 -
It wounds thine honor that I speak it now -
Was borne so like a soldier that thy cheek
So much as lanked not.

33 *to* against **39** *discontents* discontented **40** *Give* declare **41** *from* . . .
state since human history began (i.e., the creation of the world) **44** *Comes*
deared becomes beloved; *common body* common people **45** *flag* iris (a
flower) **46** *lackeying* following obsequiously (as a servant might) **52** *Lack*
blood grow pale; *flush* vigorous **54-55** *strikes* . . . *resisted* is more effective
than his forces would be if opposed **56** *wassails* carousings

LEPIDUS 'Tis pity of him.

CAESAR

Let his shames quickly
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,
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

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.*

62 *stale* urine; *gilded* yellow-colored **63** *deign* accept **71** *lanked* thinned **78** *be able*
muster **79** *front* confront **84** *bond* duty

 **I.5 Enter Cleopatra, Charmian, Iras, and Mardian.**

CLEOPATRA Charmian!

CHARMIAN Madam?

CLEOPATRA

Ha, ha. Give me to drink mandragora.

CHARMIAN Why, madam?

CLEOPATRA

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

CHARMIAN You think of him too much.

CLEOPATRA

O, 'tis treason!

CHARMIAN Madam, I trust, not so.

CLEOPATRA

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
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:
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?

O happy horse, to bear the weight of Antony!

Do bravely, horse! For wot'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?"

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
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.

Enter Alexas.

1.5 Alexandria 3 *Ha, ha* (an ambiguous and conventional phrase, perhaps indicating a yawn); *mandragora* mandrake (a drug) **11** *unseminared* castrated **12** *affections* desires **21** *O . . . Antony* (Cleopatra bawdily equates riding with sexual intercourse)

ALEXAS Sovereign of Egypt, hail!

CLEOPATRA

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

ALEXAS

Last thing he did, dear queen,
He kissed - the last of many doubled kisses -
This orient pearl. His speech sticks in my heart.

CLEOPATRA

Mine ear must pluck it thence.

ALEXAS "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,
And soberly did mount an arm-gaunt steed,
Who neighed so high that what I would have spoke
Was beastly dumb'd by him.

22 *wot'st knowest* **23** *demi-Atlas* half-Atlas (i.e., Antony and Caesar jointly hold up the world, as the god Atlas alone legendarily did) **24** *burgonet* helmet **28** *Phoebus* the sun **29** *Broad-fronted* wide-browed; *Caesar* Julius Caesar **33** *aspect* gaze **36-37** *that . . . thee* (Cleopatra compares Antony to the alchemists' great medicine that turned baser metals to gold) **38** *brave* splendid **41** *orient* lustrous **43** *firm* constant

CLEOPATRA What was he, sad or merry?

ALEXAS

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,
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. - Met'st thou my posts?

ALEXAS

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.
Welcome, my good Alexas. Did I, Charmian,
Ever love Caesar so?

CHARMIAN O that brave Caesar!

CLEOPATRA

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

CHARMIAN The valiant Caesar!


CLEOPATRA

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

48 arm-gaunt toughened for war (?), battle-hungry (?) *50 dumb'd* silenced *56 make . . .*
his imitate Antony's demeanor *61 posts* messengers *62 several* distinct, separate *71*
paragon compare

CHARMIAN 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. But come, away,
Get me ink and paper.
He shall have every day a several greeting,
Or I'll unpeople Egypt. *Exeunt.*

 **II.1 Enter Pompey, Menecrates, and Menas, in warlike manner.**

POMPEY

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

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

POMPEY

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

MENECRATES 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
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.

73 salad days green youth

II.1 Messina 4-5 *Whiles . . . for* i.e., the thing we pray for loses its worth even while we pray **10** *crescent* increasing; *auguring* prophesying **11** *it . . . full* i.e., my hope (for victory) will come about completely **13** *without doors* outside, on the battlefield (rather than in bed with Cleopatra)

MENAS Caesar and Lepidus
Are in the field; a mighty strength they carry.

POMPEY

Where have you this? 'Tis false.

MENAS From Silvius, sir.

POMPEY

He dreams. I know they are in Rome together,
Looking for Antony. But all the charms of love,
Salt Cleopatra, soften thy waned lip!
Let witchcraft join with beauty, lust with both,
Tie up the libertine in a field of feasts,
Keep his brain fuming. Epicurean cooks

Sharpen with cloyless sauce his appetite,
That sleep and feeding may prorogue his honor
Even till a Lethe'd dullness -
Enter Varrius. How now, Varrius?

VARRIUS

This is most certain that I shall deliver:
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
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
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
Not moved by Antony.

21 *Salt* lustful; *waned* faded **25** *cloyless* which never cloy **26** *prorogue* suspend **27**
Lethe'd dullness i.e., an oblivion as deep as that which comes from
drinking of the river Lethe in the underworld **31** *A space . . . travel* time
enough for even a longer journey **33** *surfeiter* one who indulges to excess
36 *opinion* i.e., of ourselves **38** *hope* expect **39** *greet* get on

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,
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
Our lives upon to use our strongest hands.
Come, Menas. *Exeunt.*

II.2 *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.

ENOBARBUS I shall entreat him
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 'Tis not a time
For private stomaching.

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

41 *brother* (cf. I.2.87-93) **45** *pregnant* obvious; *square* quarrel **50-51** *stands . . . upon* is
a matter of life and death

II.2 Rome **4** *like himself* as befits his greatness **8** *I . . . shave't* i.e., I would dare Caesar
to pluck it (a gross insult) **9** *stomaching* resentment

LEPIDUS

But small to greater matters must give way.

ENOBARBUS

Not if the small come first.

LEPIDUS 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 Caesar, Maecenas, and Agrippa.

ANTONY

If we compose well here, to Parthia.
Hark, Ventidius.

CAESAR I do not know,
Maecenas; ask Agrippa.

LEPIDUS

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 Welcome to Rome.

ANTONY Thank you.

CAESAR Sit.

ANTONY Sit, sir.

15 *compose* reach agreement **24** *The rather for* all the more because **26** *Nor . . . matter*
and let not ill temper make matters worse **28** *thus* (Antony makes some courteous
gesture)

CAESAR Nay then.
[They sit.]

ANTONY
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
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
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
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
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

36 or . . . or either . . . or **39** *derogately* disparagingly **44** *practice on* plot
against **45** *question* subject of debate **49** *you were* . . . war the war was carried on in
your name **51** *urge me* use my name **52** *reports* reporters **55**
stomach desire **56** *Having* . . . *cause* i.e., I have as much cause as you to resent it

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
You patched up your excuses.

ANTONY Not so, not so:
I know you could not lack, I am certain on't,
Very necessity of this thought, that I,
Your partner in the cause 'gainst which he fought,
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 Would we had all such wives, that the men
might go to wars with the women.

ANTONY
So much uncurbable, her garboils, Caesar,
Made out of her impatience - which not wanted
Shrewdness of policy too - I grieving grant
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
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
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.

57 *patch* piece together **65** *with . . . attend* regard with pleasure **68** *snaffle*
bridle bit (to control a horse) **69** *pace* train to walk steadily (i.e., one third
of the world is an easily managed horse) **72** *garboils* commotions **79** *missive*
messenger (see I.1.18 ff.) **81-82** *did . . . morning* was not myself **83**
myself my condition

CAESAR You have broken
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,
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:

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,
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

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 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.

86 *question* argument **97** *mine own knowledge* awareness of my actions **99** *make poor*
demean **108** *atone* reconcile

ANTONY

Thou art a soldier only. Speak no more.

ENOBARBUS 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
We shall remain in friendship, our conditions
So differing in their acts. Yet if I knew
What hoop should hold us staunch, from edge to edge
O' th' world I would pursue it.

AGRIPPA Give me leave, Caesar.

CAESAR 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:
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,
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
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
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.

of rashness because of your rashness (in ignoring Antony's bond to Cleopatra)

ANTONY Will Caesar speak?

CAESAR

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?

CAESAR 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
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
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.

140 *jealousies* suspicions, mistrusts **142-43** *would be . . . be* would be taken for . . . are taken for **154** *so fairly shows* look so hopeful **155-56** *Let . . . act* i.e., give me your hand as pledge of this agreement **162** *Fly off* break away (from this agreement)

ANTONY

I did not think to draw my sword 'gainst Pompey,
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.

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

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
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 Noble Antony,
Not sickness should detain me. *Flourish. [Exeunt.]*
Mane[n]t Enobarbus, Agrippa, Maecenas.

MAECENAS Welcome from Egypt, sir.

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

AGRIPPA Good Enobarbus.

164 *strange* unusual **166** *remembrance* readiness to acknowledge favors **168** *presently*
at once **170** *Misena* (an Italian port) **173** *fame* report **182** *Half* i.e., sharing it with
Agrippa

MAECENAS 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 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 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 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
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,
It beggared all description. She did lie
In her pavilion, cloth-of-gold of tissue,

O'er picturing that Venus where we see
The fancy outwork nature. On each side her
Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,
With divers-colored fans, whose wind did seem
To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
And what they undid did.

186 *digested* arranged; *stayed* . . . *by't* kept at it, "lived it up" **187-88** *we* . . .
drinking i.e., we ruffled the dignity of the day (personified) by sleeping
through it, and made night light (i.e., bright, lightheaded, and wanton) with
drinking parties **191** *by* compared to **195** *square* fair **196-97** *pursed up*
pocketed, put in a purse (but with a suggestion of pursed lips for kissing)
198 *appeared* came before the public **198-99** *devised* invented **209** *cloth of-gold of*
tissue cloth interwoven with gold threads **210** *O'er picturing* outdoing the picture of
211 *fancy* i.e., the painter's imagination

AGRIPPA O, rare for Antony.

ENOBARBUS

Her gentlewomen, like the Nereides,
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
A strange invisible perfume hits the sense
Of the adjacent wharfs. The city cast
Her people out upon her; and Antony,
Enthroned i' th' marketplace, did sit alone,
Whistling to th' air; which, but for vacancy,
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,
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
For what his eyes eat only.

AGRIPPA Royal wench!

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

214 *glow* make glow (as if heated) **216** *Nereides* sea nymphs **217** *tended* . . . *eyes* waited
on her every glance **218** *made* . . . *adornings* made their postures of submission

decorative (as in a tableau) **221** *yarely frame* nimbly perform **226** *but for vacancy*
except that it would have left a vacuum **235** *ordinary meal* **238** *cropped bore fruit* (i.e.,
Julius Caesar's son, Caesarion)

ENOBARBUS I saw her once
Hop forty paces through the public street;
And having lost her breath, she spoke, and panted,
That she did make defect perfection
And, breathless, power 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
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 blessed lottery to him.

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

ENOBARBUS Humbly, sir, I thank you. *Exeunt.*

 **II.3 Enter Antony, Caesar, Octavia between them.**

ANTONY

The world and my great office will sometimes
Divide me from your bosom.

OCTAVIA All which time

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

241 *defect* i.e., the resulting breathlessness **249** *Become . . . her* are so becoming to her
250 *riggish* lewd **253** *lottery* gift of fortune **II.3** The house of Octavius Caesar

ANTONY Good night, sir. My Octavia,
Read not my blemishes in the world's report:
I have not kept my square, but that to come
Shall all be done by th' rule. Good night, dear lady.

OCTAVIA Good night, sir.

CAESAR Good night. *Exit [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

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

Caesar's.

Therefore, O Antony, stay not by his side.

Thy demon, that thy spirit which keeps thee, is
Noble, courageous, high, unmatchable,

Where Caesar's is not. But near him thy angel

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,
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.

6 *square* carpenter's square (i.e., I have not followed the straight and narrow) **13**
motion mind **18** *demon* guardian angel **21** *afeard* i.e., timorous **26** *thickens* dims

ANTONY Get thee gone.

Say to Ventidius I would speak with him.

Exit [Soothsayer.]

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
Under his chance. If we draw lots, he speeds;
His cocks do win the battle still of mine
When it is all to nought, and his quails ever
Beat mine, inhooped, at odds. I will to Egypt:
And though I make this marriage for my peace,
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.*

II.4 Enter Lepidus, Maecenas, 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

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

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

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

31 *art or hap* skill or chance **33** *cunning* skill **34** *chance* luck; *speeds* wins **35** *still* always **36** *it . . . nought* i.e., the odds are everything to nothing in my favor **37** *inhooded* i.e., fighting confined within a hoop **II.4** Lepidus's house **6** *Mount* i.e., Misena (see II.2.170) **8** *about* roundabout

BOTH Sir, good success.

LEPIDUS Farewell. *Exeunt.*

 **II.5 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.

CLEOPATRA

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

CHARMIAN

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,
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,
I'll think them every one an Antony,
And say, "Ah, ha! You're caught!"

CHARMIAN 'Twas merry when

You wagered on your angling, when your diver
Did hang a salt fish on his hook, which he
With fervency drew up.

CLEOPATRA That time - O 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;
Then put my tires and mantles on him, whilst
I wore his sword Philippan.

Enter a Messenger. O, from Italy!
Ram thou thy fruitful tidings in mine ears,
That long time have been barren.

II.5 Alexandria 10 angle fishing tackle 17 salt dried

MESSENGER 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
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
Down thy ill-uttering throat.

MESSENGER

Good madam, hear me.

CLEOPATRA Well, go to, I will.

But there's no goodness in thy face if Antony
Be free and healthful; so tart a favor
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:
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.

22 tires headdresses *23 Philippan* (so called because he had beaten Brutus and Cassius with it at the Battle of Philippi) *33 well* i.e., in heaven; *bring . . . that* say that you mean that *37 goodness* i.e., truth *38 tart a favor* sour a face *41 Not . . . man* not in human shape

MESSENGER Madam, he's well.

CLEOPATRA Well said.

MESSENGER

And friends with Caesar.

CLEOPATRA Thou'rt an honest man.

MESSENGER

Caesar and he are greater friends than ever.

CLEOPATRA

Make thee a fortune from me.

MESSENGER But yet, madam -

CLEOPATRA

I do not like “But yet,” it does allay
The good precedence: fie upon “But yet”!
“But yet” is a jailer to bring forth
Some monstrous malefactor. Prithee, friend,
Pour out the pack of matter to mine ear,
The good and bad together: he’s friends with Caesar,
In state of health, thou sayst, and thou sayst, free.

MESSENGER

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

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.* Thou shalt be whipped with wire and
stewed in brine, Smarting in ling’ring pickle.

50-51 *allay . . . precedence* debase what went before

MESSENGER Gracious madam,

I that do bring the news made not the match.

CLEOPATRA

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

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

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 afeard to come.

CLEOPATRA 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.
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.

63 *spurn* kick **64** **s.d.** *hales* drags **66** *pickle* pickling solution **71** *boot* benefit **72** *modesty*
humble condition

MESSENGER I have done my duty.

CLEOPATRA

Is he married?
I cannot hate thee worser than I do
If thou again say "Yes."

MESSENGER He's married, madam.

CLEOPATRA

The gods confound thee! Dost thou hold there still?

MESSENGER

Should I lie, madam?

CLEOPATRA O, 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
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
Seems much unequal. He's married to Octavia.

CLEOPATRA

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

84 *cause* i.e., by loving Antony **92** *confound* destroy **94** So even though
96 *Hadst . . . face* were you as handsome as Narcissus (in Greek legend, Narcissus fell
in love with his image reflected in a stream) **99** *Take . . . you* don't
be angry that I'd rather not anger you (i.e., by answering) **101** *unequal* unjust **103** *That . . .*
. . . *of* i.e., who are not really hateful, like the news you bring

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,
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.]

Let him forever go! - let him not, Charmian,
Though he be painted one way like a Gorgon,
The other way's a Mars. *[To Mardian]* Bid you Alexas
Bring me word how tall she is. - Pity me, Charmian,
But do not speak to me. Lead me to my chamber.
Exeunt.

II.6 Flourish. Enter Pompey [and Menas] at one door, with Drum and Trumpet; at another, Caesar, Lepidus, Antony, Enobarbus, Maecenas, 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
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.

104-6 *merchandise . . . undone* (i.e., the salable goods, *merchandise*, you have brought - news of Antony's marriage - are too expensive, *dear*, for me to resell; they are yours to market and I hope you are bankrupted, *undone*, when you seek a buyer) **116** *Gorgon Medusa* (the sight of whose ugly face turned men to stone)

II.6 Misenum **2** *meet* suitable

POMPEY 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,
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 all-honored, honest, Roman Brutus,
With the armed rest, courtiers of beauteous freedom,
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
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 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.

7 tall bold 10 factors agents, go-betweens 11 Wherefore why 13 ghosted haunted 17 courtiers wooers, followers 24 fear frighten 25 speak fight (see l. 3) 26 o'ercount outnumber 27 o'ercount cheat; house (Plutarch says that Antony had bought this house but not paid for it) 28 cuckoo (a bird that lays its eggs in the nests of other birds) 29 as thou mayst as long as you can

LEPIDUS Be pleased to tell us -

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 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

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

I came before you here a man prepared

To take this offer; but Mark Antony

Put me to some impatience. Though I lose

The praise of it by telling, you must know,

When Caesar and your brother were at blows,

Your mother came to Sicily and did find

Her welcome friendly.

ANTONY I have heard it, Pompey,

And am well studied for a liberal thanks,

Which I do owe you.

POMPEY Let me have your hand:

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.

30 from the present off the topic 33 embraced if accepted 34 a larger for 30 *from the present* off the topic 33 *embraced* if accepted 34 *a larger fortune* i.e., war with the triumvirs 38 *edges* swords 39 *targes* shields 47 *studied for* prepared with

CAESAR 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
To make my heart her vassal.

LEPIDUS Well met here.

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

CAESAR 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
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 And fair words to them.

POMPEY
Then so much have I heard,
And I have heard Apollodorus carried -

ENOBARBUS
No more of that. He did so.

POMPEY What, I pray you?

ENOBARBUS
A certain queen to Caesar in a mattress.

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

54 *counts* tallies (as on a scoring stick) 58 *composition* agreement

ENOBARBUS Well;
And well am like to do, for I perceive

Four feasts are toward.

POMPEY 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
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:
Will you lead, lords?

CAESAR, ANTONY, LEPIDUS Show's the way, sir.

POMPEY Come.

Exeunt [all but] Enobarbus and Menas.

MENAS *[Aside]* Thy father, Pompey, would ne'er have made this treaty. - You and I have known, sir.

ENOBARBUS At sea, I think.

MENAS We have, sir.

ENOBARBUS You have done well by water.

MENAS And you by land.

ENOBARBUS 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.

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

MENAS And you by land.

ENOBARBUS There I deny my land service. But give me your hand, Menas. If our eyes had authority, here they might take two thieves kissing.

MENAS All men's faces are true, whatsome'er their hands are.

73 toward coming up 78 plainness bluntness 83 known met 95 authority i.e., the powers of arrest

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

MENAS No slander, they steal hearts.

ENOBARBUS 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.

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

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 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 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 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 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.

99 *true* (1) honest, (2) without makeup **106** *You've said* i.e., you are quite right **112** *Pray ye* i.e., how's that again **117** *made more* played more part **119** *band* bond, pledge **122** *still* quiet, gentle; *conversation* way of life **129** *use . . . affection* indulge his passion **130** *occasion* convenience

MENAS 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.*

II.7 *Music plays. Enter two or three Servants, 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 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 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 live have a reed that will do me no service as a partisan I could not heave.

FIRST SERVANT 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, Menas, with other Captains [and a Boy].*

II.7 Aboard Pompey's galley in the port of Misenum **2** *plants* feet (with pun on the usual sense: cf. *ill-rooted*) **5** *alms drink* drink drunk on behalf of one too far gone to continue his part in a round of toasts (Lepidus has been tricked into drinking more than the rest) **7** *No more* i.e., no more quarreling **12** *live* lief **13** *partisan* spear **14-16** *To . . . cheeks* (Lepidus, a little man in a part too big for him, is compared first to a heavenly body that fails to perform its function in its *sphere*, and then to a face without eyes; *disaster*, carrying the image back on itself, likens the face without eyes to a heaven without stars.) **16 s.d.** *sennet* distinctive set of trumpet notes announcing important persons

ANTONY

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 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 Sit - and some wine! A health to Lepidus!

LEPIDUS 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 Nay, certainly, I have heard the Ptolemies' pyramises are very goodly things; without contradiction I have heard that.

MENAS

Pompey, a word.

POMPEY Say in mine ear. What is't?

MENAS

Forsake thy seat, I do beseech thee, captain,
And hear me speak a word.

POMPEY Forbear me till anon.

[Menas] whispers in's ear.

This wine for Lepidus!

LEPIDUS What manner o' thing is your crocodile?

ANTONY 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

18 scales graduations **19-20** dearth/Or foison famine or plenty **30** ne'er out never give up **31** in drunk **34** pyramises (apparently Lepidus's drunken rendering of "pyramids")

it 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 'Tis a strange serpent.

ANTONY 'Tis so, and the tears of it are wet.

CAESAR Will this description satisfy him?

ANTONY With the health that Pompey gives him; else he is a very epicure.

[Menas whispers again.]

POMPEY

Go hang, sir, hang! Tell me of that? Away!
Do as I bid you. - Where's this cup I called for?

MENAS

If for the sake of merit thou wilt hear me,
Rise from thy stool.

POMPEY I think thou'rt mad.

[Rises and walks aside.] The matter?

MENAS

I have ever held my cap off to thy fortunes.

POMPEY

Thou hast served me with much faith. What's else to say? -

Be jolly, lords.

ANTONY These quicksands, Lepidus,

Keep off them, for you sink.

MENAS

Wilt thou be lord of all the world?

POMPEY What sayst thou?

MENAS

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

POMPEY

How should that be?

43, 46 *it own* its own **44** *transmigrates* i.e., its soul takes over the body of some other creature (Antony is teasing the drunken Lepidus) **48** *tears* i.e., its "crocodile tears" **56** *held . . . off* i.e., been devoted

MENAS 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

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

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 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 *[Aside]*

For this, 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

Bear him ashore. I'll pledge it for him, Pompey.

ENOBARBUS

Here's to thee, Menas.

MENAS Enobarbus, welcome.

POMPEY Fill till the cup be hid.

62 *But entertain it* only accept the idea **67** *pales* encircles **69** *competitors* partners **76** *Mine honor, it* i.e., my honor comes from profit **80** *palled* decayed **83** *I'll . . . him* (cf. 1.5: Antony is now taking an alms drink)

ENOBARBUS There's a strong fellow, Menas. [*Points to the Servant who carries off Lepidus.*]

MENAS Why?

ENOBARBUS A 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

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 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

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

ENOBARBUS Ha, my brave emperor!

Shall we dance now the Egyptian bacchanals
And celebrate our drink?

POMPEY 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.

Make battery to our ears with the loud music;

88 *A he* **91** *go on wheels* whirl smoothly **92** *reels* whirls **95** *Strike the vessels* broach the casks **96** *forbear't* i.e., pass up this toast **99** *Possess it* down

The while I'll place you; then the boy shall sing.
The holding every man shall bear 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,
Plumpy Bacchus with pink eyne!
In thy vats our cares be drowned,
With thy grapes our hairs be crowned.
Cup us till the world go round,
Cup us till the world go round!

CAESAR
What would you more? Pompey, good night. Good
brother,
Let me request you off. Our graver business
Frowns at this levity. Gentle lords, let's part;
You see we have burned our cheeks. Strong Enobarb
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
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 Enobarbus and Menas.]
Menas, I'll not on shore.

MENAS No, to my cabin.

110 *holding* refrain **113** *pink* half-closed **119** *off* to come away **123** *disguise* dancing
and drinking **124** *Anticked* made fools of **125** *try you* compete with you in drinking

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.

MENAS

Hoo! Noble captain, come. *Exeunt.*

III.1 Enter Ventidius as it were in triumph, the dead body of Pacorus borne before him [with Silius and other Romans].

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,
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
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,
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

III.1 A battlefield in Syria **1** *darting Parthia* (Parthian warriors threw darts - spears - at their enemies and then retreated, protected by a volley of arrows - the feared "Parthian shot," where seeming retreat was really attack) **4** *Orodes* King of Parthia **5** *Marcus Crassus* member of the first triumvirate, killed by the Parthians **12** *A lower place* an underling

More in their officer than person. Sossius,
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,
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 Thou hast, Ventidius, that
Without the which a soldier and his sword
Grants scarce distinction. Thou wilt write to Antony?

VENTIDIUS

I'll humbly signify what in his name,
That magical word of war, we have effected;
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
The weight we must convey with's will permit,
We shall appear before him. - On, there, pass along.
Exeunt.

☞ **III.2 Enter Agrippa at one door, Enobarbus at another.**

AGRIPPA

What, are the brothers parted?

ENOBARBUS

They have dispatched with Pompey; he is gone;

26 *in his offense* in offending him **27** *that* i.e., discretion **33** *horse* cavalry
34 *jaded* driven weary

III.2 Caesar's house in Rome **1** *parted* departed

The other three are sealing. Octavia weeps
To part from Rome; Caesar is sad, and Lepidus
Since Pompey's feast, as Menas says, is troubled
With the greensickness.<

AGRIPPA 'Tis a noble Lepidus.

ENOBARBUS

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

AGRIPPA

Nay, but how dearly he adores Mark Antony!

ENOBARBUS

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!

ENOBARBUS

Would you praise Caesar, say "Caesar"; go no further.

AGRIPPA

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

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.

[Trumpet within.] So -

This is to horse. Adieu, noble Agrippa.

3 *sealing* concluding agreements **6** *greensickness* iron-deficiency anemia (according to Elizabethan lore, lovesick adolescent girls suffered this condition, and Lepidus is likened to a girl in his relations to Caesar and Antony) **12** *Arabian bird* i.e., unique (like the mythical phoenix, of which only one was supposed to exist at a time) **20** *shards*
wings

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
As my thoughts make thee, and as my farthest band
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
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 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!
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!

ANTONY

The April's in her eyes; it is love's spring,
And these the showers to bring it on. Be cheerful.

26-27 *As my thoughts . . . approval* such as I think you are and as you will confirm my

most extreme oath **28** *piece* paragon **32** *mean* intermediary **35** *curious* punctiliously exacting

OCTAVIA

Sir, look well to my husband's house; and -

CAESAR What,
Octavia?

OCTAVIA I'll tell you in your ear.

ANTONY

Her tongue will not obey her heart, nor can
Her heart inform her tongue - the swansdown feather
That stands upon the swell at the full of tide,
And neither way inclines.

ENOBARBUS

Will Caesar weep?

AGRIPPA He has a cloud in's face.

ENOBARBUS

He were the worse for that were he a horse;
So is he, being a man.

AGRIPPA Why, Enobarbus,

When Antony found Julius Caesar dead,
He cried almost to roaring; and he wept
When at Philippi he found Brutus slain.

ENOBARBUS

That year indeed he was troubled with a rheum.
What willingly he did confound he wailed,
Believe't, till I wept too.

CAESAR 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; [*Embracing Caesar*] thus I let
you go,

48-50 *the swansdown . . . inclines* i.e., her feelings for husband and brother are evenly balanced **51-59** *Will . . . too* (Enobarbus and Agrippa talk aside) **52** *horse* (horses with darker markings [*clouds*] on the face were thought to be inferior) **57** *rheum* running at the eyes **58** *confound* defeat **60** *still* always **60-61** *the time . . . you* i.e., my thoughts of you will not be left behind (as in a race) by time

And give you to the gods.

CAESAR Adieu, be happy!

LEPIDUS

Let all the number of the stars give light
To thy fair way!

CAESAR Farewell, farewell!

Kisses Octavia.

ANTONY Farewell!

Trumpets sound. Exeunt.

 **III.3 Enter Cleopatra, Charmian, Iras, and Alexas.**

CLEOPATRA

Where is the fellow?

ALEXAS Half afeard to come.

CLEOPATRA

Go to, go to.

Enter the Messenger as before.

Come hither, sir.

ALEXAS Good majesty,

Herod of Jewry dare not look upon you

But when you are well pleased.

CLEOPATRA That Herod's head

I'll have; but how, when Antony is gone

Through whom I might command it? Come thou near.

MESSENGER

Most gracious majesty!

CLEOPATRA Didst thou behold Octavia?

MESSENGER

Ay, dread queen.

CLEOPATRA Where?

MESSENGER Madam, in Rome.

I looked her in the face, and saw her led

Between her brother and Mark Antony.

III.3 Alexandria 3 Herod i.e., even Herod (traditionally represented as a tyrant)

CLEOPATRA

Is she as tall as me?

MESSENGER She is not, madam.

CLEOPATRA

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.

What majesty is in her gait? Remember,
If e'er thou lookedst on majesty.

MESSENGER She creeps:
Her motion and her station are as one.
She shows a body rather than a life,
A statue than a breather.

CLEOPATRA Is this certain?

MESSENGER
Or I have no observance.

CHARMIAN Three in Egypt
Cannot make better note.

CLEOPATRA He's very knowing,
I do perceive't. There's nothing in her yet.
The fellow has good judgment.

CHARMIAN Excellent.

CLEOPATRA
Guess at her years, I prithee.

MESSENGER Madam,
She was a widow -

CLEOPATRA Widow? Charmian, hark.

MESSENGER
And I do think she's thirty.

14 *good* i.e., as I am **19** *Her . . . one* even in motion she is still

CLEOPATRA
Bear'st thou her face in mind? Is't long or round?

MESSENGER
Round even to faultiness.

CLEOPATRA
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 There's gold for thee.
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
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

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

I warrant you, madam. *Exeunt.*

29 *long or round* (thought to be signs, respectively, of prudence and folly) **34** *As . . . it*
i.e., so low she would wish it no lower **38** *proper* attractive **40** *harried* mistreated **41** *no*
such thing nothing much

III.4 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
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,
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,
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,
Prays, and destroys the prayer; no midway
'Twixt these extremes at all.

ANTONY Gentle Octavia,
Let your best love draw to that point which seeks
Best to preserve it. If I lose mine honor,
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

III.4 Athens **3** *semblable* like **4** *read it* (to show the public what benefactions they might expect from him) **8** *narrow measure* little credit **10** *from his teeth* grudgingly **12** *Stomach* resent **15** *presently* at once **24** *branchless* pruned (of my honors) **26** *war* armed force (?)

Shall stain your brother. Make your soonest haste;
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

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;
Choose your own company, and command what cost
Your heart has mind to. *Exeunt.*

III.5 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 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 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?

27 *stain* eclipse 28 *So . . . yours* that way you'll gain what you wish (?)

III.5 5 *success* outcome 7 *rivalry* partnership 10 *appeal* accusation 11 *up* jailed 12
chaps jaws

EROS

He's walking in the garden - thus - and spurns
The rush that lies before him; cries "Fool Lepidus!"
And threats the throat of that his officer
That murdered Pompey.

ENOBARBUS 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;
But let it be. Bring me to Antony.

EROS Come, sir. *Exeunt.*

III.6 Enter Agrippa, Maecenas, 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
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
Of lower Syria, Cyprus, Lydia,
Absolute queen.

MAECENAS This in the public eye?

CAESAR

I' th' common showplace, where they exercise.

15 *thus* (Eros imitates Antony's angry walking) **16** *rush* reed (a floor covering) **17** *that*
his officer that officer of his

III.6 Caesar's house in Rome **1** *Contemning* scorning **3** *tribunal* dais **6**
my father's (Octavius, though actually a grandnephew, had been adopted by
Julius Caesar) **9** *stablishment* rule **12** *showplace* theater, arena

His sons he there proclaimed the kings of kings:
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,
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 know it, and have now received
His accusations.

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
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

'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,
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.

17 *Isis* (cf. I.2.63 n.) **20** *queasy* nauseated **25** *spoiled* despoiled; *rated* allotted **26** *isle* i.e.,
Sicily

Enter Octavia with her train.

OCTAVIA

Hail, Caesar, and my lord! Hail, most dear Caesar!

CAESAR

That ever I should call thee castaway!

OCTAVIA

You have not called me so, nor have you cause.

CAESAR

Why have you stolen upon us thus? You come not
Like Caesar's sister. The wife of Antony
Should have an army for an usher, and
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,
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
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
My grievèd ear withal; whereon I begged
His pardon for return.<

CAESAR Which soon he granted,
Being an abstract 'tween his lust and him.

OCTAVIA
Do not say so, my lord.

CAESAR I have eyes upon him,
And his affairs come to me on the wind.
Where he is now?

OCTAVIA My lord, in Athens.

53 left unloved thought not to exist 61 abstract shortcut

CAESAR
No, my most wrongèd sister, Cleopatra
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
Of Paphlagonia; the Thracian king, Adallas;
King Manchus of Arabia; King of Pont;
Herod of Jewry; Mithridates, King
Of Comagene; Polemon and Amyntas,
The kings of Mede and Lycaonia;
With a more larger list of scepters.

OCTAVIA
Ay me most wretched,
That have my heart parted betwixt two friends
That do afflict each other!

CAESAR Welcome hither.
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;
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
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.

82 *negligent danger* danger through negligence **88** *mark* reach **89** *makes*
his make their; *ministers* agents

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 Is it so, sir?

CAESAR

Most certain. Sister, welcome. Pray you
Be ever known to patience. My dear'st sister! *Exeunt.*

☞ III.7 *Enter Cleopatra and Enobarbus.*

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 Well, is it, is it?

CLEOPATRA

Is't not denounced against us? Why should not we
Be there in person?

ENOBARBUS [*Aside*]

Well, I could reply:
If we should serve with horse and mares together,
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

94 *large* uninhibited **96** *regiment* rule; *trull* whore **97** *noises it* clamors

99 *Be . . . patience* be always calm

III.7 Antony's camp near Actium **3** *forspoke* opposed **5** *denounced* declared **8** *merely*
entirely **10** *puzzle* paralyze

What should not then be spared. He is already
Traduced for levity; and 'tis said in Rome
That Photinus, an eunuch, and your maids
Manage this war.

CLEOPATRA Sink Rome, and their tongues rot
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.
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 Toryne? - You have heard on't, sweet?

CLEOPATRA

Celerity is never more admired
Than by the negligent.

ANTONY A good rebuke,
Which might have well becomed the best of men
To taunt at slackness. Canidius, we
Will fight with him by sea.

CLEOPATRA By sea; what else?

CANIDIUS

Why will my lord do so?

ANTONY For that he dares us to't.

ENOBARBUS

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.

16 *charge* responsibility **17** *president* ruler **23** *take in* seize **29** *For that* because

ENOBARBUS Your ships are not well manned;
Your mariners are muleters, reapers, people
Ingrossed by swift impress. In Caesar's fleet
Are those that often have 'gainst Pompey fought;
Their ships are yare, yours, heavy. No disgrace
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,
Distract your army, which doth most consist
Of war-marked footmen, leave unexecuted
Your own renownèd knowledge, quite forgo
The way which promises assurance, and
Give up yourself merely to chance and hazard
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
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 Toryne.

ANTONY

Can he be there in person? 'Tis impossible;
Strange that his power should be. Canidius,
Our nineteen legions thou shalt hold by land

35 *muleters* mule drivers (i.e., peasants) **36** *Ingrossed* collected wholesale;
impress draft **38** *yare* nimble **39** *fall* befall **43** *Distract* divide **57** *power*
army

And our twelve thousand horse. We'll to our ship.
Away, my Thetis!

Enter a Soldier. How now, worthy soldier?

SOLDIER

O noble emperor, do not fight by sea,
Trust not to rotten planks. Do you misdoubt
This sword and these my wounds? Let th' Egyptians
And the Phoenicians go a-ducking; we
Have used to conquer standing on the earth
And fighting foot to foot.

ANTONY Well, well, away!

Exit Antony [with] Cleopatra and Enobarbus.

SOLDIER

By Hercules, I think I am i' th' right.

CANIDIUS

Soldier, thou art; but his whole action grows
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,
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
Beguiled all spies.

CANIDIUS Who's his lieutenant, hear you?

SOLDIER

They say, one Taurus.

CANIDIUS Well I know the man.

Enter a Messenger.

60 *Thetis* a sea goddess **60 s.d.** *Soldier* (this speaker may be identical with Scarus in III.10 and IV.7) **64** *a-ducking* (1) jumping in the sea, (2) singing **68-69** *action . . . on't* battle plan does not acknowledge his force's strength **75** *Carries . . . belief* travels (like an arrow) **76** *distractions* detachments **77** *Beguiled* deceived

MESSENGER

The emperor calls Canidius.

CANIDIUS

With news the time's in labor and throws forth
Each minute some. *Exeunt.*

III.8 *Enter Caesar [and Taurus], with his Army, 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

The prescript of this scroll. Our fortune lies

Upon this jump. *Exeunt.*

☞ III.9 *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 [with Enobarbus].*

☞ **III.10** *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.

III.8 A battlefield near Actium **6** *jump* hazard farther than expected

III.9 2 *battle* battle line (of ships)

III.10 1 *Naught* ruined

Th' *Antoniad*, the Egyptian admiral,
With all their sixty, fly and turn the rudder:
To see't mine eyes are blasted.

Enter Scarus.

SCARUS 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
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,
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,
Hoists sails, and flies.

ENOBARBUS

That I beheld.
Mine eyes did sicken at the sight, and could not
Endure a further view.

SCARUS She once being luffed,
The noble ruin of her magic, Antony,
Claps on his sea wing, and, like a dotting mallard,
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.

2 *admiral* flagship **3** *sixty* i.e., sixty Egyptian ships **5** *synod* assembly **6** *cantle* segment
9 *like . . . pestilence* like the plague when its certain symptoms have been seen **10**
ribaudred foul, obscene (?) **13** *elder* i.e., superior **14** *breese* stinging fly (with pun on
“breeze”) **18** *luffed* headed into the wind to fly (?), disengaged (?) **20** *mallard* drake

CANIDIUS

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.
O, he has given example for our flight
Most grossly by his own.

ENOBARBUS 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.

CANIDIUS To Caesar will I render
My legions and my horse; six kings already
Show me the way of yielding.

ENOBARBUS I'll yet follow
The wounded chance of Antony, though my reason
its in the wind against me. [*Exeunt.*]

III.11 *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 for ever. I have a ship
Laden with gold: take that, divide it. Fly,
And make your peace with Caesar.

ALL Fly? Not we.

ANTONY

I have fled myself and have instructed cowards

27 *what ... himself* (cf. I.1.57-59) 29 *are you thereabouts* i.e., is that where
your thoughts are 36 *chance* fortunes 37 *Sits . . . me* dissuades me (reason
rides the contrary wind of Antony's ill fortune)

III.11 Alexandria 3 *so . . . world* i.e., like a traveler after nightfall

To run and show their shoulders. Friends, be gone.

I have myself resolved upon a course
Which has no need of you. Be gone.
My treasure's in the harbor. Take it! O,
I followed that I blush to look upon.
My very hairs do mutiny, for the white
Reprove the brown for rashness, and they them
For fear and doting. Friends, be gone. 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
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,
Therefore I pray you. I'll see you by and by.
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!

ANTONY No, no, no, no.

EROS See you here, sir?

ANTONY O fie, fie, fie!

CHARMIAN Madam!

IRAS Madam, O good empress!

EROS Sir, sir!

ANTONY

Yes, my lord, yes. He at Philippi kept
His sword e'en like a dancer, while I struck

12 *that* what **17** *Sweep* i.e., with Caesar **18** *loathness* reluctance **19** *that*
i.e., himself **23-24** *I . . . pray you* i.e., I have lost the right to order you, so I
entreat you **29-50** *No . . . swerving* (Antony carries on an imaginary conversation and
does not recognize the others' presence) **35-36** *kept . . .*
dancer i.e., never drew his sword

The lean and wrinkled Cassius; and 'twas I
That the mad Brutus ended. He alone
Dealt on lieutenantry, and no practice had
In the brave squares of war: yet now - no matter.

CLEOPATRA Ah, stand by.

EROS The queen, my lord, the queen.

IRAS

Go to him, madam, speak to him;
He is unqualified with very shame.

CLEOPATRA

Well then, sustain me. O!

EROS

Most noble sir, arise. The queen approaches.
Her head's declined, and death will seize her, but
Your comfort makes the rescue.

ANTONY

I have offended reputation,
A most unnoble swerving.

EROS Sir, the queen.

ANTONY

O, whither hast thou led me, Egypt? See
How I convey my shame out of thine eyes
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 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
Command me.

39 *Dealt on lieutenantry* relied on subordinates **40** *squares* bodies of troops in square formations **44** *unqualitied* not himself **47** *but* unless **53** *looking back* thinking on the past **60** *beck* beckoning

CLEOPATRA O, my pardon!

ANTONY Now I must
To the young man send humble treaties, dodge
And palter in the shifts of lowness, who
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 Pardon, pardon!

ANTONY
Fall not a tear, I say: one of them rates
All that is won and lost. Give me a kiss;
Even this repays me. - We sent our schoolmaster.
Is a come back? - Love, I am full of lead. -
Some wine, within there, and our viands! Fortune knows
We scorn her most when most she offers blows.
Exeunt.

☞ **III.12 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
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.

62 *treaties* proposals **63** *palter* equivocate; *shifts of lowness* deceits of the powerless **69**
Fall let fall; *rates* equals **71** *schoolmaster* i.e., his children's tutor **72** *lead* i.e., heavy
grief **III.12** The camp of Octavius Caesar in Egypt

AMBASSADOR

Such as I am, I come from Antony.
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
Requires to live in Egypt; which not granted,
He lessons 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,
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
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 Bring him through the bands.

[Exit Ambassador.]

[To Thidias]

To try thy eloquence now 'tis time. Dispatch.
From Antony win Cleopatra. Promise,
And in our name, what she requires; add more,
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;

10 *sea* i.e., the ultimate source of *dew* **12** *Requires* requests **13** *lessons* disciplines **14**
breathe i.e., go on living **18** *circle* crown **19** *hazarded . . . grace*
gambled on your mercy **21** *audience* a hearing; so provided **25** *bands*
troops

Make thine own edict for thy pains, which we
Will answer as a law.

THIDIAS 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.*

III.13 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
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,
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 Prithèe peace.

Enter the Ambassador, with Antony.

ANTONY

Is that his answer?

32 *Make . . . edict* name your own price (as reward) **34** *becomes his flaw* takes his fall
(and see I.1.49-51) **35-36** *And . . . moves* and what you think his every move reveals

III.13 Cleopatra's palace, Alexandria **3** *will desire* **5** *ranges* battle lines **8** *nicked* (1) cut,
(2) cheated **10** *merèd question* sole matter at issue **11** *course* chase

AMBASSADOR

Ay, my lord.

ANTONY

The queen shall then have courtesy, so she
Will yield us up.

AMBASSADOR He says so.

ANTONY Let her know't. -

To the boy Caesar send this grizzled head,
And he will fill thy wishes to the brim
With principalities.

CLEOPATRA That head, my lord?

ANTONY

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
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 caparisons apart
And answer me declined, sword against sword,
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
Do draw the inward quality after them
To suffer all alike. That he should dream,
Knowing all measures, the full Caesar will

22 *Something particular* i.e., some personal heroism **23** *ministers* agents
26 *caparisons* trappings - i.e., *coin, ships, legions* (the folio reads "comparisons") **27**
declined i.e., in years and status **29** *high-battled* possessing powerful troops **30** *Unstate*
abdicate **30-31** *be . . . sworder* be exposed as a
public spectacle in a gladiatorial duel **31** *sworder* gladiator **32** *A parcel* i.e.,
part and parcel **33** *quality* nature **34** *To . . . alike* so that both decline together **35**
Knowing all measures being a good judge (of power and weakness)

Answer his emptiness! Caesar, thou hast subdued
His judgment too.

Enter a Servant.

SERVANT 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.
The loyalty well held to fools does make
Our faith mere folly: yet he that can endure
To follow with allegiance a fallen lord
Does conquer him that did his master conquer
And earns a place i' th' story.

Enter Thidias.

CLEOPATRA Caesar's will?

THIDIAS

Hear it apart.

CLEOPATRA None but friends: say boldly.

THIDIAS

So, haply, are they friends to Antony.

ENOBARBUS

He needs as many, sir, as Caesar has,
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 entreats
Not to consider in what case thou stand'st
Further than he is Caesar.

41 square quarrel **48 haply** most likely **52 Whose . . . are** i.e., we are friends with Antony's friends **54-55 Not . . . Caesar** i.e., not to think about your situation beyond realizing that you have to do with (a generous conqueror like) Caesar

CLEOPATRA Go on: right royal.

THIDIAS

He knows that you embrace not Antony
As you did love, but as you feared him.

CLEOPATRA O!

THIDIAS

The scars upon your honor therefore he
Does pity as constrained blemishes,
Not as deserved.<

CLEOPATRA He is a god and knows
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
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
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

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.
Tell him, from his all-obeying breath, I hear
The doom of Egypt.

66 *require* request **71** *shroud* shelter **74** *in deputation* i.e., through you as a deputy **77**
all-obeying that all obey **78** *doom* judgment, verdict

THIDIAS 'Tis your noblest course:
Wisdom and fortune combating together,
If that the former dare but what it can,
No chance may shake it. Give me grace to lay
My duty on your hand.

CLEOPATRA Your Caesar's father oft,
When he hath mused of taking kingdoms in,
Bestowed his lips on that unworthy place,
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
To have command obeyed.

ENOBARBUS [*Aside*] You will be whipped.

ANTONY
Approach there! Ah, you kite! Now, gods and devils!
Authority melts from me. Of late, when I cried "Ho!"
Like boys unto a muss, kings would start forth,
And cry "Your will?" Have you no ears? I am
Antony yet.

Enter a Servant.

Take hence this jack and whip him.

ENOBARBUS [*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
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.

80 *If . . . can* if discretion confines itself to the possible **82** *My duty* i.e., a kiss **89** *kite*
bird of prey, scavenger (also slang for "whore") **91** *muss* scramble **93** *jack* knave

THIDIAS

Mark Antony -

ANTONY Tug him away. Being whipped,
Bring him again. This jack of Caesar's shall
Bear us an errand to him.

Exeunt [Servants] with Thidias.

You were half blasted ere I knew you. Ha!
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 Good my lord -

ANTONY

You have been a boggler ever.
But when we in our viciousness grow hard -
O misery on't! - the wise gods seel our eyes,
In our own filth drop our clear judgments, make us
Adore our errors, laugh at's while we strut
To our confusion.

CLEOPATRA O, 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,
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

To let a fellow that will take rewards
And say "God quit you!" be familiar with
My playfellow, your hand, this kingly seal

105 *blasted* (1) withered, (2) cursed **108** *abused* betrayed **109** *feeders* menials **110**
boggler shifty one **112** *seel* sew up **117** *trencher* plate; *fragment*
leftover **119** *vulgar fame* common gossip **120** *Luxuriously* lustfully **124**
quit repay

And pligher of high hearts. O that I were
Upon the hill of Basan to outroar
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

Soundly, my lord.

ANTONY Cried he and begged a pardon?

SERVANT

He did ask favor.

ANTONY

If that thy father live, let him repent
Thou wast not made his daughter; and be thou sorry
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
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
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,
As he shall like, to quit me. Urge it thou.
Hence with thy stripes, be gone! *Exit Thidias.*

126-28 *O ... herd* (Supposing he wears the cuckold's horns, Antony wishes to withdraw among the roaring bulls of Bashan, biblical symbols of cruelty.) **129** *like* to act like **131** *yare* nimble **132** *a* he **140** *entertainment* reception (here) **146** *orbs* the spheres in which they turn **149** *Hipparchus* (who had earlier revolted to Caesar); *enfranchèd* freed

CLEOPATRA

Have you done yet?

ANTONY Alack, our terrene moon
Is now eclipsed, and it portends alone
The fall of Antony.

CLEOPATRA 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 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,
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 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.
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.

153 our . . . moon i.e., Cleopatra, our terrestrial Isis or moon goddess *155 stay his time*
wait out his fury *157 one . . . points* his valet *161 determines* melts *163 the memory . . .*
womb i.e., my offspring *165 discandying* melting (as if it were hard candy) *171 fleet*
are afloat *172 heart* courage *174 in blood* (1) bloody, (2) with blood up, spirited *175*
our chronicle our place in history

CLEOPATRA
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
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.
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
Call all his noble captains to my lord.

ANTONY

Do so, we'll speak to them, and tonight I'll force
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 frightened out of fear, and in that mood
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
Some way to leave him. *Exit.*

179 *maliciously* fiercely **180** *nice* able to be "choosy" **183** *gaudy* luxurious (i.e., in feasting and drinking) **192** *sap* i.e., life, hope **197** *estridge* hawk

 **IV.1 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
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
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,
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.*



IV.2 Enter Antony, Cleopatra, Enobarbus, Charmian, Iras, Alexas, with others.

ANTONY

He will not fight with me, Domitius?

ENOBARBUS No.

IV.1 The camp of Octavius Caesar 9 *Make boot* take advantage 12 *files* troops 14 *fetch him in* capture him 16 *waste* consumption (but not “squandering”)

IV.2 Cleopatra’s palace, Alexandria

ANTONY

Why should he not?

ENOBARBUS

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

I’ll strike, and cry “Take all!”

ANTONY Well said, come on;
Call forth my household servants; let’s tonight
Be bounteous at our meal.
Enter three or four Servitors.
Give me thy hand,
Thou hast been rightly honest, so hast thou,
And thou, and thou, and thou. You have served me well,
And kings have been your fellows.

CLEOPATRA What means this?

ENOBARBUS

’Tis one of those odd tricks which sorrow shoots
Out of the mind.

ANTONY And thou art honest too.
I wish I could be made so many men,
And all of you clapped up together in
An Antony, that I might do you service
So good as you have done.

ALL The gods forbid!

ANTONY

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.

5 *Or either* 7 *Woo't wilt* (i.e., will thou) 8 *Take all* winner take all 13-15 *What . . . mind*
(here and in ll. 23-24 Enobarbus and Cleopatra talk aside) 16 *so many men* i.e., so many
men as you are

CLEOPATRA What does he mean?

ENOBARBUS

To make his followers weep.

ANTONY 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

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 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!

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,

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.*

IV.3 *Enter a Company of Soldiers.*

FIRST SOLDIER

Brother, good night. Tomorrow is the day.

25 period end 33 yield repay 38 Grace grow may virtues spring up (with a pun on "grace" as one name for the herb rue)

IV.3 Alexandria

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

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.

They place themselves in every corner of the stage.

FOURTH SOLDIER

Here we; and if tomorrow

Our navy thrive, I have an absolute hope

Our landmen will stand up.

THIRD SOLDIER 'Tis a brave army,

And full of purpose.

Music of the hautboys is under the stage.

SECOND SOLDIER Peace! What noise?

FIRST SOLDIER List, list!

SECOND SOLDIER

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 Peace, I say!

What should this mean?

8 *Here we* i.e., here is our post **11 s.d.** *hautboys* loud-sounding musical instruments of the shawm family **13 signs** signifies

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.

SECOND SOLDIER 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

Follow the noise so far as we have quarter.
Let's see how it will give off.

ALL

Content. 'Tis strange. *Exeunt.*

☞ **IV.4 Enter Antony and Cleopatra, with [Charmian and] others.**

ANTONY 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.

If fortune be not ours today, it is

Because we brave her. Come.

CLEOPATRA Nay, I'll help too.

What's this for?

ANTONY Ah, let be, let be! Thou art

The armorer of my heart. False, false; this, this.

15 *Hercules* (cf. I.3.84-85 n.) 20 *as . . . quarter* as our watch extends IV.4 The palace of
Cleopatra 3 *thine iron* i.e., this armor of mine 5 *brave* defy 7 *False* wrong

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 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.

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.

Good morrow to thee, welcome.

Thou look'st like him that knows a warlike charge.

To business that we love we rise betime

And go to't with delight.

SOLDIER A thousand, sir,

Early though't be, have on their riveted trim,

And at the port expect you.

Shout. Trumpets flourish. Enter Captains and Soldiers.

CAPTAIN

The morn is fair. Good morrow, General.

ALL

Good morrow, General.

ANTONY 'Tis well blown, lads.

This morning, like the spirit of a youth

That means to be of note, begins betimes.

So, so. Come, give me that. This way. Well said.

10 *Briefly* in a moment **15** *tight* adroit **18** *workman* craftsman, expert **19** *charge* duty **20** *betime* early **22** *riveted trim* armor (in Shakespeare's day, but not Antony's, armor was sometimes riveted on the warrior) **23** *port* gate **25** *blown* opened (i.e., the morning) **28** *said* done (spoken to Cleopatra, who is adjusting his armor or handing him something)

Fare thee well, dame. 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. You that will fight,

Follow me close. I'll bring you to't. Adieu.

Exeunt [Antony, Eros, Captains, and Soldiers].

CHARMIAN

Please you retire to your chamber?

CLEOPATRA Lead me.

He goes forth gallantly. That he and Caesar might

Determine this great war in single fight!

Then Antony - but now - well, on. *Exeunt.*

☞ **IV.5 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,
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?
One ever near thee. Call for Enobarbus,
He shall not hear thee, or from Caesar's camp

Say "I am none of thine."

ANTONY What sayest thou?

31 *check* reproof **32** *mechanic* ceremonious (and therefore "vulgar, commonplace")

IV.5 Alexandria 1, 3, 6, 10, 11 *SOLDIER* (The folio assigns the first three speeches to Eros, the last two to Soldier; some editors think Scarus is the speaker here; cf. *thy scars* in l. 2.)

SOLDIER Sir,
He is with Caesar.

EROS Sir, his chests and treasure
He has not with him.

ANTONY Is he gone?

SOLDIER Most certain.

ANTONY
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. O, my fortunes have
Corrupted honest men! Dispatch. - Enobarbus!
Exeunt.

☞ **IV.6 Flourish. Enter Agrippa, 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

The time of universal peace is near.
Prove this a prosperous day, the three-nooked world
Shall bear the olive freely.
Enter a Messenger.

MESSENGER Antony

Is come into the field.

14 *subscribe* sign **IV.6** The camp of Octavius Caesar **5** *universal peace* worldwide Roman domination (so-called Pax Romana) **6** *Prove* should this prove to be; *three-nooked* three-cornered (e.g., Africa, Asia, Europe, or a world once ruled by three men, the triumvirs)

CAESAR Go charge Agrippa

Plant those that have revolted in the van,
That Antony may seem to spend his fury
Upon himself. *Exeunt [all but Enobarbus].*

ENOBARBUS

Alexas did revolt and went to Jewry on
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
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
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.

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
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

9 *van* front lines **11** *himself* i.e., his own former soldiers **12** *Jewry* Judea
13 *dissuade* i.e., from Antony **17** *entertainment* employment **26** *safed* gave
safe-conduct to **34** *blows* (1) makes swell (?), (2) strikes (?)

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.*

☞ **IV.7 Alarum. Drums and Trumpets. Enter Agrippa [and Soldiers].**

AGRIPPA

Retire! We have engaged ourselves too far.
Caesar himself has work, and our oppression
Exceeds what we expected. *Exit [with Soldiers].*
Alarums. Enter Antony, and Scarus wounded.

SCARUS

O my brave emperor, this is fought indeed!
Had we done so at first, we had driven 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 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.

IV.7 A field near Alexandria **2** *our oppression* the pressure on us **6** *clouts* bandages **8** *H*
(pun on "ache," which was pronounced "aitch") **9** *bench holes* privy holes **10** *scotches*
gashes

SCARUS 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
For thy good valor. Come thee on.

SCARUS I'll halt after.
Exeunt.

☞ **IV.8 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. Tomorrow,
Before the sun shall see's, we'll spill the blood
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,
Tell them your feats, whilst they with joyful tears
Wash the congealment from your wounds and kiss
The honored gashes whole.

Enter Cleopatra.

[To Scarus] Give me thy hand;
To this great fairy I'll commend thy acts,
Make her thanks bless thee. - O thou day o' th' world,
Chain mine armed neck; leap thou, attire and all,
Through proof of harness to my heart, and there
Ride on the pants triumphing!

12 score mark **14** runner a foe who runs away **16** halt limp

IV.8 Before the gates of Alexandria **2** gests deeds **7** shown proved; *Hectors* i.e., imitators of doomed Troy's greatest hero **8** clip hug **12** fairy being with magical powers **13** day light **15** proof of harness i.e., impenetrable armor **16** Ride . . . pants i.e., as if his heart were a panting steed

CLEOPATRA Lord of lords!

O infinite virtue, com'st thou smiling from
The world's great snare uncaught?

ANTONY My nightingale,

We have beat them to their beds. What, girl! Though
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. -
Kiss it, my warrior. - He hath fought today
As if a god in hate of mankind had
Destroyed in such a shape.

CLEOPATRA I'll give thee, friend,
An armor all of gold; it was a king's.

ANTONY

He has deserved it, were it carbuncled
Like holy Phoebus' car. Give me thy hand.
Through Alexandria make a jolly march;
Bear our hacked targets like the men that owe them.
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,
Make mingle with our rattling tabourines,
That heaven and earth may strike their sounds together,
Applauding our approach. *Exeunt.*

17 *virtue* valor **18** *snare* dangers in the world outside their embrace (ll. 14- 16) **22** *Get* .
. . *of* hold our own with **28** *carbuncled* jeweled **29** *holy Phoebus' car* the sun god's
chariot **31** *targets* shields; owe own

IV.9 Enter a Sentry and his Company [of Watchmen]. 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 WATCHMAN This last day was
A shrewd one to's.

ENOBARBUS O, bear me witness, night -

SECOND WATCHMAN

What man is this?<

FIRST WATCHMAN Stand close and list him.

ENOBARBUS

Be witness to me, O thou blessèd moon,
When men revolted shall upon record
Bear hateful memory, poor Enobarbus did
Before thy face repent!

SENTRY Enobarbus?

SECOND WATCHMAN Peace!

Hark further.

ENOBARBUS

O sovereign mistress of true melancholy,
The poisonous damp of night disponge 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,
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,

IV.9 The camp of Octavius Caesar **3** *shiny* light; *embattle* prepare for battle
5 *shrewd* bitterly painful **6** *list* listen to **8-9** *When . . . memory* when traitors go down in
history shamed **13** *disponge* squeeze (as from a sponge)
17 *Which* (refers to *heart*); *dried* (sorrow was thought to dry up the blood)
20 *in . . . particular* i.e., yourself

But let the world rank me in register

A master-leaver and a fugitive.

O Antony! O Antony!

[Dies.]

FIRST WATCHMAN Let's speak
To him.

SENTRY Let's hear him, for the things he speaks
May concern Caesar.

SECOND WATCHMAN Let's do so. But he sleeps.

SENTRY
Swoons rather, for so bad a prayer as his
Was never yet for sleep.

FIRST WATCHMAN Go we to him.

SECOND WATCHMAN
Awake, sir, awake, speak to us.

FIRST WATCHMAN Hear you, sir?

SENTRY
The hand of death hath rought 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 is fully out.

SECOND WATCHMAN
Come on then. He may recover yet.
Exeunt [with the body].

 **IV.10** *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.

21 *in register* in its records **22** *master-leaver* (1) runaway servant, (2) outstanding traitor **26** *Swoons* faints **29** *raught* reached **30** *demurely* softly **IV.10** A field near Alexandria

ANTONY

I would they'd fight i' th' fire or i' th' air;
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
And look on their endeavor. *Exeunt.*

☞ **IV.11 *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.*

 **IV.12 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.*

SCARUS Swallows have built
In Cleopatra's sails their nests. The augurers
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
Of what he has, and has not.

3 *fire . . . air* i.e., everywhere (with the two other elements, water and earth,
sea and *land* in ll. 1-2) **4** *foot* infantry **8** *appointment* equipment (hence
“preparation”)

IV.11 1 *But being* unless we are

IV.12 8 *fretted* (1) worn, (2) varied, mixed

Alarum afar off, as at a sea fight.

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
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, be gone. [*Exit Scarus.*]
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
On blossoming Caesar; and this pine is barked
That overtopped them all. Betrayed I am.
O 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,
Like a right gypsy hath at fast and loose

Beguiled me to the very heart of loss.

What, Eros, Eros!

Enter Cleopatra.

Ah, thou spell! Avaunt!

CLEOPATRA

Why is my lord enraged against his love?

ANTONY

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;

13 *Triple-turned* i.e., from Pompey, from Julius Caesar, and now from himself **16**

charm magician, charmer **22** *discandy* melt **23** *barked* stripped

25 *grave* deadly **27** *my crownet . . . end* the crown and goal of my life **28**

right true; *fast and loose* (a confidence game) **29** *Beguiled* cheated, enticed

30 *Avaunt* be gone **33** *triumph* triumphal procession (in Rome)

Follow his chariot, like the greatest spot

Of all thy sex! Most monsterlike be shown

For poor'st diminutives, for dolts, and let

Patient Octavia plow thy visage up

With her preparèd nails. *Exit Cleopatra.*

'Tis well thou'rt gone,

If it be well to live; but better 'twere

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

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! *Exit.*

🌀 **IV.13 Enter Cleopatra, Charmian, Iras, Mardian.**

CLEOPATRA

Help me, my women! O, he's more mad
Than Telamon for his shield; the boar of Thessaly
Was never so embossed.

CHARMIAN To th' monument!

There lock yourself, and send him word you are dead.
The soul and body rive not more in parting
Than greatness going off.

37 *diminutives* little people (i.e., the populace) **43** *Nessus* (Fatally wounded by Hercules with a poisoned arrow, the centaur Nessus persuaded Hercules' wife to give his bloodstained shirt to her husband, telling her it would assure his love for her. The shirt so poisoned Hercules that in his agony he threw his page Lichas, who had brought it, to the skies and set about destroying himself.) **44** *Alcides* Hercules

IV.13 Cleopatra's palace **2** *Telamon* Ajax Telamon (who went mad when Achilles' shield was given not to him but to his rival, Ulysses); *boar of Thessaly* (sent by Artemis to ravage Thessaly in punishment for omitted sacrifices) **3** *embossed* foaming at the mouth from exhaustion; *monument* tomb (which, like other Egyptian rulers, Cleopatra had prepared in advance) **5** *rive* rend

CLEOPATRA To th' monument!

Mardian, go tell him I have slain myself.
Say that the last I spoke was "Antony"
And word it, prithee, piteously. Hence, Mardian,
And bring me how he takes my death. To th' monument! *Exeunt.*

 **IV.14 Enter Antony and Eros.**

ANTONY

Eros, thou yet behold'st me?

EROS Ay, noble lord.

ANTONY

Sometime we see a cloud that's dragonish,
A vapor sometime like a bear or lion,
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 Ay, 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

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,
Which whilst it was mine had annexed unto't

IV.14 Near Cleopatra's palace **8** *black vesper's pageants* i.e., shows (the sunset) put on by vesper (evening) and heralding the coming of night (and figuratively, death) **10** *rack dislimns* cloud effaces **15** *Egypt* i.e., Cleopatra

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
Ourselves to end ourselves.

Enter Mardian. O, thy vile lady!
She has robbed me of my sword.

MARDIAN No, Antony.

My mistress loved thee and her fortunes mingled
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
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,
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 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!
Heart, once be stronger than thy continent,

19 *Packed cards* made a deceitful arrangement **20** *triumph* (1) victory, (2) trump **23** *sword* manhood and soldiership **29** *unto . . . hand* ready without your effort **33-34** *she rendered . . . in her* i.e., she returned to the living world the part of you figuratively written on her heart **38** *sevenfold* having seven thicknesses **39** *battery* battering (of grief) **40** *continent* i.e., that which contains thee

Crack thy frail case! Apace, Eros, apace.
No more a soldier. Bruisèd pieces, go;
You have been nobly borne. - From me awhile.
Exit Eros.

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
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,
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
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,
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.

46 *length* i.e., of life **49** *Seal* bring all to a close (as in sealing a document or will) **51** *Where . . . flowers* i.e., in the Egyptian fields (the happy afterlife in Greek myth) **52** *port* behavior **53** *want troops* lack admirers because we are faithful, whereas Aeneas abandoned Dido to fulfill his Roman destiny **54** *haunt* company, group (of ghosted dead) **59** *to lack* for lacking **63** *exigent* need **65** *prosecution* pursuit

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 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
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 thou thy honest sword, which thou hast worn
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

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!

EROS

My sword is drawn.

ANTONY Then let it do at once

The thing why thou hast drawn it.

72 *windowed* i.e., watching from a window 73 *pleached* folded 74 *corrigit*
submissive 75 *penetrative* penetrating; *wheeled seat* chariot 77 *His . . . ensued* the
baseness of him that followed 83 *precedent* former

EROS My dear master,

My captain, and my emperor, let me say,
Before I strike this bloody stroke, farewell.

ANTONY

'Tis said, man, and farewell.

EROS

Farewell, great chief. Shall I strike now?

ANTONY Now, Eros.

EROS

Why, there then! Thus I do escape the sorrow
Of Antony's death.

Kills himself.

ANTONY 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
[Falls on his sword.]

I learned of thee. How, not dead? Not dead?

The guard, ho! O, dispatch me!

Enter [Dercetus and] a [Company of the] Guard.

FIRST GUARD What's the noise?

ANTONY

I have done my work ill, friends. O, make an end
Of what I have begun.

SECOND GUARD The star is fall'n.

FIRST GUARD And time is at his period.

ALL Alas, and woe!

98-99 *got . . . record* beaten me to a noble man in history **104 s.d.** *Dercetus* (this name and spelling derive from the first speech prefix for this character in the folio and from Shakespeare's historical source; editors have also adopted "Decretas" and "Dercetas")
109 *period* end

ANTONY Let him that loves me strike me dead.

FIRST GUARD Not I.

SECOND GUARD Nor I.

THIRD GUARD Nor anyone.

Exeunt [the Guards].

DERCETUS

Thy death and fortunes bid thy followers fly.
This sword but shown to Caesar with this tidings
Shall enter me with him.
Enter Diomedes.

DIOMEDES

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 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

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;
But fearing since how it might work, hath sent
Me to proclaim the truth, and I am come,
I dread, too late.

117 *enter* recommend **127** *disposed* made terms **128** *purged* expelled

ANTONY

Too late, good Diomed. Call my guard, I prithee.

DIOMEDES

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 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.

I have led you oft; carry me now, good friends,

And have my thanks for all.

Exeunt [Diomedes and the Guard], bearing Antony

[and Eros].

☞ **IV.15 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,

IV.15 Before the monument of Cleopatra **s.d.** *Maids* (probably a redundant reference to Charmian and Iras); *aloft* (the original staging of this scene and of V.2 is unknown)

But comforts we despise. Our size of sorrow,

Proportioned to our cause, must be as great

As that which makes it.

Enter Diomed [below].

How now? Is he dead?

DIOMEDES

His death's upon him, but not dead.

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,

Antony, Antony! Help, Charmian, help, Iras, help:

Help, friends below, let's draw him hither.

ANTONY Peace!

Not Caesar's valor hath o'erthrown Antony,

But Antony's hath triumphed on itself.

CLEOPATRA

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

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
Be brooched with me, if knife, drugs, serpents have
Edge, sting, or operation. I am safe.
Your wife Octavia, with her modest eyes

4 *we* (royal plural) **11** *darkling* in the dark **20** *importune* beg (i.e., to delay) **22** *dare not* i.e., dare not descend to Antony's side **26** *brooched* adorned

And still conclusion, shall acquire no honor
Demuring upon me. But come, come, Antony!
Help me, my women - we must draw thee up -
Assist, good friends.

ANTONY O, quick, or I am gone.

CLEOPATRA

Here's sport indeed! How heavy weighs my lord!
Our strength is all gone into heaviness;
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. O, come, come, come.
They heave Antony aloft to Cleopatra.
And welcome, welcome! Die when thou hast lived,
Quicken with kissing. Had my lips that power,
Thus would I wear them out.

ALL A heavy sight!

ANTONY

I am dying, Egypt, dying.
Give me some wine, and let me speak a little.

CLEOPATRA

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. O!

CLEOPATRA

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.

29 *still conclusion* wordless censure **30** *Demuring* looking gravely or soberly (see

V.2.54-55) **34** *heaviness* (with pun on “grief”) **40** *Quicken* come back to life **45** *huswife* housewife (the word demeans a goddess and had a further slang meaning of “worthless woman” - hence, “hussy”)

ANTONY

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,
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?
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,
[*Antony dies.*]

The crown o’ th’ earth doth melt. My lord!
O, withered is the garland of the war;<
The soldier’s pole is fallen. Young boys and girls<
Are level now with men. The odds is gone,<
And there is nothing left remarkable
Beneath the visiting moon.
[*Starts to collapse.*]

CHARMIAN O, quietness, lady!

IRAS She’s dead too, our sovereign.

CHARMIAN Lady!

IRAS Madam!

CHARMIAN O madam, madam, madam!

IRAS Royal Egypt! Empress!

CHARMIAN 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

60 *woo’t* wilt thou **65** *garland* . . . *war* flower of all soldiers **66** *pole* i.e.,
polestar (?) (other possible meanings include the maypole and the phallus)
67 *odds* measurement of great and little, significant and trivial **79** *chares*
chores

To throw my scepter at the injurious gods,
To tell them that this world did equal theirs

Till they had stol'n 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
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,
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, bearing off Antony's body.

☞ **V.1 Enter Caesar, Agrippa, Dolabella, Maecenas, [Gallus, Proculeius,] with 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

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

83-84 *Patience . . . mad* both patience and sorrow are now irrelevant to the point **89** *sirs* i.e., Cleopatra's women **95** *briefest* quickest
V.1 The camp of Octavius Caesar **2** *frustrate* helpless **2-3** *he mocks . . . makes* i.e., to delay surrendering is ridiculous **3 s.d.** *Dercetus* (see note IV.14.104 s.d.) **5** *thus* i.e., with a naked, bloody sword

Best to be served. Whilst he stood up and spoke,
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 What is't thou sayst?

DERCETUS

I say, O Caesar, 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
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
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
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
That nature must compel us to lament
Our most persisted deeds.

MAECENAS His taints and honors
Waged equal with him.

16 *civil city* **18** *single doom* individual, particular fate (with allusion to Doomsday, the Christian Last Judgment) **19** *moiety* half **21** *self* same **30** *persisted* i.e., persisted in **31** *Waged equal with* were evenly balanced in

AGRIPPA A rarer spirit never
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,
I have followed thee to this. But we do lance
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
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
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;
We'll hear him what he says. Whence are you?

EGYPTIAN

A poor Egyptian yet. The queen my mistress,
Confined in all she has, her monument,
Of thy intents desires instruction,
That she preparedly may frame herself
To th' way she's forced to.

CAESAR Bid her have good heart.

She soon shall know of us, by some of ours,

39 *stall* dwell **40-48** *But yet . . . to this* (this complex sentence begins as praise of Antony, then restarts as a lament about fate) **41** *sovereign* potent **42** *competitor* partner **43** *In . . . design* in every lofty enterprise **46** *his* its **47** *Unreconcilable* (a rare spelling) **50** *looks . . . him* shows in his eyes **52** *yet still* (but only for a moment)

How honorable and how kindly we
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
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
And how you find of her.

PROCULEIUS Caesar, I shall. *Exit.*

CAESAR

Gallus, go you along. [*Exit Gallus.*] Where's Dolabella,
To second Proculeius?

ALL 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,
How calm and gentle I proceeded still
In all my writings. Go with me, and see
What I can show in this. *Exeunt.*

🌀 V.2 Enter Cleopatra, Charmian, Iras.

CLEOPATRA

My desolation does begin to make

63 *passion* grief **66** *eternal* eternally memorable **67** *with . . . speediest*
quick as you can **76** *writings* dispatches (to Antony)

V.2 Before the monument of Cleopatra **s.d.** (the folio includes Mardian,
who has, however, no speech or action in the scene)

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
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.

PROCULEIUS

Caesar sends greeting to the Queen of Egypt,
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

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
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:

You're fallen 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

2 *A better life* i.e., a truer estimate of values **3** *knave* servant **7** *palates*

tastes; *dung* i.e., both the fruits of the earth and dirt, which are everyone's nurse (see I.1.35-36 for Antony's similar contempt) **14** *to be deceived* whether I am deceived or not **17** *keep decorum* i.e., act as majesty is expected to (in life and theater) **20** *as that* **23** *Make . . . reference* entrust your case

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
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.

[Enter Roman Soldiers, who seize Cleopatra.]
You see how easily she may be surprised.
Guard her till Caesar come.

IRAS Royal queen!

CHARMIAN O Cleopatra! Thou art taken, queen.

CLEOPATRA
Quick, quick, good hands!
[Draws a dagger.]

PROCULEIUS Hold, worthy lady, hold!
[Disarms her.]
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 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 Where art thou, death?
Come hither, come! Come, come, and take a queen
Worth many babes and beggars!

PROCULEIUS O, temperance, lady!

27 *pray . . . kindness* ask your aid in naming kindnesses he can do for you **30** *got* i.e., won from me **41** *Relieved* rescued **42** *languish* frustrated longing **45** *acted* put into effect

CLEOPATRA

Sir, I will eat no meat, I'll not drink, sir -
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
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 nak'd and let the water flies
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
Find cause in Caesar.

Enter Dolabella.

DOLABELLA Proculeius,
What thou hast done thy master Caesar knows,
And he hath sent me for thee. For the queen,
I'll take her to my guard.

PROCULEIUS 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 Say I would die.
Exit Proculeius [with Soldiers].

DOLABELLA
Most noble empress, you have heard of me?

CLEOPATRA
I cannot tell.

DOLABELLA Assuredly you know me.

50 *If . . . necessary* even if I must for the present moment resort to words, not acts **51**
mortal house body **56** *varletry* mob **60** *Blow me* make me swell

CLEOPATRA
No matter, sir, what I have heard or known.
You laugh when boys or women tell their dreams;
Is't not your trick?

DOLABELLA I understand not, madam.

CLEOPATRA

I dreamt there was an emperor Antony.
O, such another sleep, that I might see
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, th' earth.

DOLABELLA Most sovereign creature -

CLEOPATRA

His legs bestrid the ocean; his reared arm
Crested the world; his voice was propertyed
As all the tunèd spheres, and that to friends;
But when he meant to quail and shake the orb,
He was as rattling thunder. For his bounty,
There was no winter in't: an Antony it was
That grew the more by reaping. His delights
Were dolphinlike, they showed his back above
The element they lived in. In his livery
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 Gentle madam, no.

84-85 was propertyed/As i.e., made music like 86 quail cow; orb earth 88 Antony (the folio's reading, often emended to "autumn") 89 grew . . . reaping gave further gifts (his bounty) where gifts had earlier been given 89-91 His . . . lived in i.e., his delight rose above ordinary pleasure-taking as a dolphin rises above its element, the sea 92 crowns and crownets i.e., kings and aristocrats 93 plates coins

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
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
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

I am loath to tell you what I would you knew.

CLEOPATRA

Nay, pray you, sir.

DOLABELLA Though he be honorable -

CLEOPATRA

He'll lead me, then, in triumph?

DOLABELLA

Madam, he will. I know't.

*Flourish. Enter Proculeius, Caesar, Gallus, Maecenas,
and others of his train.*

ALL

Make way there! Caesar!

CAESAR

Which is the Queen of Egypt?

DOLABELLA

It is the emperor, madam.

Cleopatra kneels.

98-101 *Nature . . . quite* i.e., nature rarely can compete (as in a betting contest) with man's imagination in creating outstanding forms of excellence, but if she created an Antony, he would be her masterpiece, outdoing the unreal images of imagination altogether **103-4** *Would . . . do* i.e., may I never have success if I do not

CAESAR

Arise! You shall not kneel:

I pray you rise, rise, Egypt.

CLEOPATRA [*Rising*] Sir, the gods

Will have it thus. My master and my lord

I must obey.

CAESAR Take to you no hard thoughts.

The record of what injuries you did us,

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

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,
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
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.
[Offering a scroll]

CAESAR

You shall advise me in all for Cleopatra.

122 *project* set forth **126** *enforce* emphasize (them) **127** *apply* conform **136** *scutcheons*
coats of arms (here, those captured by the victor and triumphantly displayed)

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

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 seel my lips
Than to my peril speak that which is not.

CLEOPATRA 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! O, behold,
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 - O slave, of no more trust
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!
O rarely base!

CAESAR Good queen, let us entreat you.

CLEOPATRA
O Caesar, what a wounding shame is this,
That thou vouchsafing here to visit me,

139 *brief* catalogue **146** *seel* sew up **152** *Mine* i.e., my followers **153** *estates* positions

Doing the honor of thy lordliness
To one so meek, that mine own servant should
Parcel the sum of my disgraces by
Addition of his envy. Say, good Caesar,
That I some lady trifles have reserved,
Immoment toys, things of such dignity
As we greet modern friends withal; and say
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 hence,
Or I shall show the cinders of my spirits
Through th' ashes of my chance. Wert thou a man,
Thou wouldst have mercy on me.

CAESAR Forbear, Seleucus.
[*Exit Seleucus.*]

CLEOPATRA
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,
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 price with you
Of things that merchants sold. Therefore be cheered,
Make not your thoughts your prisons. No, dear queen,
For we intend so to dispose you as
Yourself shall give us counsel. Feed and sleep.

164 *Parcel* (1) number, (2) add to **166** *lady* feminine **167** *Immoment* insignificant **168**
modern common **170** *Livia* Caesar's wife **172** *With* by
174 *cinders* embers **175** *chance* fortune **177** *misthought* misjudged **179**

merits . . . name misdeeds done in our name (as if Seleucus had falsified the inventory for his own gain) **183** *Bestow* use **184** *make price* appraise **186** *Make . . . prisons* i.e., only in your own conceptions are you a prisoner **187** *you* of you

Our care and pity is so much upon you
That we remain your friend; and so adieu.

CLEOPATRA

My master, and my lord!

CEASAR 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.

[Whispers to Charmian.]

IRAS

Finish, good lady; the bright day is done,
And we are for the dark.

CLEOPATRA Hie thee again.

I have spoke already, and it is provided;
Go put it to the haste.

CHARMIAN Madam, I will.

Enter Dolabella.

DOLABELLA

Where's the queen?

CHARMIAN Behold, sir. *[Exit.]*

CLEOPATRA Dolabella!

DOLABELLA

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.

CLEOPATRA Dolabella,

I shall remain your debtor.

DOLABELLA I, your servant.

Adieu, good queen; I must attend on Caesar.

CLEOPATRA

Farewell, and thanks. *Exit [Dolabella].*

192 *words* deceives with words **193** *noble* i.e., by suicide

Now, Iras, what think'st thou?
Thou, an Egyptian puppet, shall 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,
Rank of gross diet, shall we 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
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
I' th' posture of a whore.

IRAS O the good gods!

CLEOPATRA

Nay, that's certain.

IRAS

I'll never see't! For I am sure my nails
Are stronger than mine eyes.

CLEOPATRA 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
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

210 *Mechanic slaves* i.e., manual laborers **213** *Rank of* offensive because of
215 *Saucy lictors* insolent officers **216** *scald* scabby **221** *squeaking* i.e., because
women's parts were acted by adolescent boys; *boy* satirize **229-30**
again . . . Antony (Enobarbus describes this meeting, II.2.200 ff.) **232** *chare*
chore

To play till doomsday. - Bring our crown and all.
[Exit Iras.] A noise within.

Wherefore's this noise?

Enter a Guardsman.

GUARD Here is a rural fellow

That will not be denied your highness' presence:
He brings you figs.

CLEOPATRA

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

I am marble-constant; now the fleeting moon

No planet is of mine.

Enter Guardsman and Clown [with basket].

GUARD This is the man.

CLEOPATRA

Avoid, and leave him. *Exit Guardsman.*

Hast thou the pretty worm of Nilus there,

That kills and pains not?

CLOWN 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 Remember'st thou any that have died on't?

CLOWN 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, what pain she felt. Truly, she makes a very good report o' th' worm; but he that will believe all that

239 placed fixed **242 s.d.** Clown rural laborer **243** Avoid go **244** worm serpent (asp) **248** immortal mortal - i.e., deadly (the clown makes significant verbal substitutions and puns throughout his speeches) **250** died (also slang for sexual climax) **252** honest (1) truth-telling, (2) sexually chaste **253** lie (1) tell falsehoods, (2) engage in sexual intercourse

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.

CLOWN I wish you all joy of the worm. *[Sets down his basket.]*

CLEOPATRA Farewell.

CLOWN You must think this, look you, that the worm will do his kind.

CLEOPATRA Ay, ay; farewell.

CLOWN 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.

CLOWN Very good. Give it nothing, I pray you, for it is not worth the feeding.

CLEOPATRA Will it eat me?

CLOWN 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.

CLOWN Yes, forsooth. I wish you joy o' th' worm. *Exit. [Enter Iras with a robe, crown, etc.]*

CLEOPATRA

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.
Yare, yare, good Iras; quick. Methinks I hear
Antony call. I see him rouse himself
To praise my noble act. I hear him mock

258 *falliable* i.e., infallible **263** *his kind* i.e., what may be expected from his
species **274** *dress* (1) clothe, (2) prepare for eating **275** *whoreson* (a common
Elizabethan term of abuse, not meant literally here) **280** (this episode
recalls Antony's dressing in IV.4) **283** *Yare* nimbly

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
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.
[Kisses them. Iras falls and dies.]
Have I the aspic in my lips? Dost fall?
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.

CHARMIAN

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,

[To an asp, which she applies to her breast]

With thy sharp teeth this knot intricate
Of life at once untie. Poor venomous fool,
Be angry, and dispatch. O, couldst thou speak,
That I might hear thee call great Caesar ass
Unpolicied!

CHARMIAN O eastern star!

CLEOPATRA Peace, peace!
Dost thou not see my baby at my breast,
That sucks the nurse asleep?

287 *excuse . . . wrath* justify later ill fortune (or divine punishment) **289** *fire and air* (the lighter of the four elements, thought of as belonging to immortality); *other elements* i.e., water and earth, the heavier elements, bequeathed by Cleopatra to mortality **293** *aspic* asp **301** *curlèd* curly-haired **304** *intrinsicate* entangled **306** *dispatch* make haste **308** *Unpolicièd* outwitted; *eastern star* the planet, hence the goddess, Venus

CHARMIAN O, break! O, break!

CLEOPATRA

As sweet as balm, as soft as air, as gentle -
O Antony! Nay, I will take thee too:
[Applies 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
A lass unparalleled. Downy windows, close;
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 Speak softly, wake her not.

FIRST GUARD

Caesar hath sent -

CHARMIAN Too slow a messenger.

[To a third asp]

O, come apace, dispatch, I partly feel thee.

FIRST GUARD

Approach, ho! All's not well: Caesar's beguiled.

SECOND GUARD

There's Dolabella sent from Caesar. Call him.

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.
Ah, soldier!
Charmian dies.

Enter Dolabella.

323 *beguiled* tricked

DOLABELLA

How goes it here?

SECOND GUARD All dead.

DOLABELLA Caesar, thy thoughts
Touch their effects in this. Thyself art coming
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 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

A simple countryman, that brought her figs.
This was his basket.

CAESAR Poisoned, then.

FIRST GUARD O Caesar,
This Charmian lived but now; she stood and spake.
I found her trimming up the diadem
On her dead mistress; tremblingly she stood,
And on the sudden dropped.

CAESAR O noble weakness!
If they had swallowed poison, 'twould appear
By external swelling; but she looks like sleep,
As she would catch another Antony
In her strong toil of grace.

DOLABELLA Here on her breast
There is a vent of blood, and something blown;
The like is on her arm.

330 *Touch their effects* meet fulfillment **335** *leveled at* guessed **347** *toil* net **348** *vent*
discharge; *blown* swelled

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

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.
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
In solemn show attend this funeral,
And then to Rome. Come, Dolabella, see
High order in this great solemnity. *Exeunt.*

354 *conclusions* experiments **355** *die* (one last sexual pun: see I.2.138 n.) **358** *clip* clasp
360 *Strike* touch

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