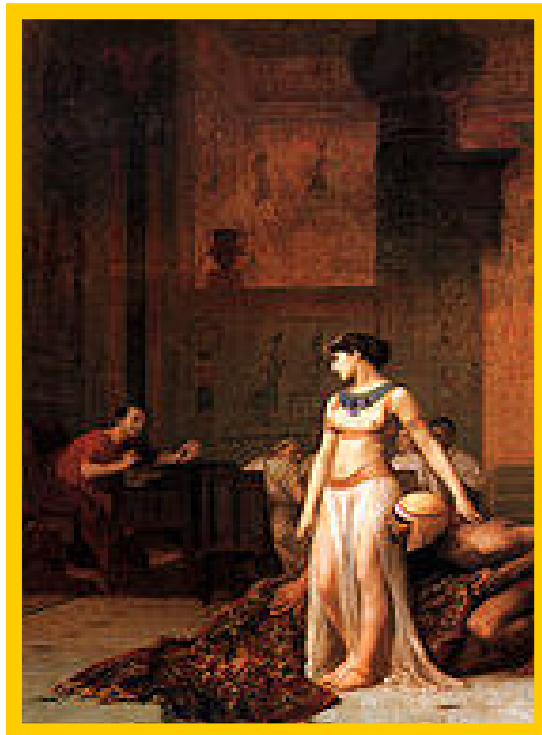


St Aiden's Homeschool



Antony & Cleopatra

By William Shakespeare

Presented by Donnette E Davis

ACT I

SCENE I. Alexandria. A room in CLEOPATRA's palace.

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 glow'd 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 gipsy'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 transform'd
Into a strumpet's fool: behold and see.

CLEOPATRA

If it be love indeed, tell me how much.

MARK ANTONY

There's beggary in the love that can be reckon'd.

CLEOPATRA

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

MARK ANTONY

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

Enter an Attendant

Attendant

News, my good lord, from Rome.

MARK 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.'

MARK 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!

MARK 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

Embracing

And such a twain can do't, in which I bind,
On pain of punishment, the world to weet
We stand up peerless.

CLEOPATRA

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

MARK ANTONY

But stirr'd 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.

MARK ANTONY

Fie, wrangling queen!
Whom every thing becomes, to chide, to laugh,
To weep; whose every passion fully strives
To make itself, in thee, fair and admired!
No messenger, but thine; and all alone
To-night 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 MARK ANTONY and CLEOPATRA with their train

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.

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 to-morrow. Rest you happy!

Exeunt

SCENE II. The same. Another room.

Enter CHARMIAN, IRAS, ALEXAS, and a Soothsayer

CHARMIAN

Lord Alexas, sweet Alexas, most any thing Alexas,
almost most absolute Alexas, where's the soothsayer
that you praised so to the queen? O, that I knew
this husband, which, you say, must charge 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.

Enter DOMITIUS ENOBARBUS

DOMITIUS 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.

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.

DOMITIUS ENOBRABUS

Mine, and most of our fortunes, to-night, 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 worky-day 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 worst follow worse, till the worst of all follow him laughing to his grave, fifty-fold a cuckold! Good Isis, hear me this prayer, though thou deny me a matter of more weight; good Isis, I beseech thee!

IRAS

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!

DOMITIUS ENOBRBUS

Hush! here comes Antony.

CHARMIAN

Not he; the queen.

Enter CLEOPATRA

CLEOPATRA

Saw you my lord?

DOMITIUS ENOBRBUS

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!

DOMITIUS ENOBRBUS

Madam?

CLEOPATRA

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

ALEXAS

Here, at your service. My lord approaches.

CLEOPATRA

We will not look upon him: go with us.

Exeunt

Enter MARK ANTONY with a Messenger and Attendants

Messenger

Fulvia thy wife first came into the field.

MARK ANTONY

Against my brother Lucius?

Messenger

Ay:

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

MARK ANTONY

Well, what worst?

Messenger

The nature of bad news infects the teller.

MARK 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 flatter'd.

Messenger

Labiens--
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—

MARK ANTONY

Antony, thou wouldst say,--

Messenger

O, my lord!

MARK ANTONY

Speak to me home, mince not the general tongue:
Name Cleopatra as she is call'd in Rome;
Rail thou in Fulvia's phrase; and taunt my faults
With such full licence 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

MARK ANTONY

From Sicyon, ho, the news! Speak there!

First Attendant

The man from Sicyon,--is there such an one?

Second Attendant

He stays upon your will.

MARK ANTONY

Let him appear.

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

Enter another Messenger

What are you?

Second Messenger

Fulvia thy wife is dead.

MARK ANTONY

Where died she?

Second Messenger

In Sicyon:

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

Gives a letter

MARK ANTONY

Forbear me.

Exit Second Messenger

There's a great spirit gone! Thus did I desire it:
What our contempt 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. How now! Enobarbus!

Re-enter DOMITIUS ENOBARBUS

DOMITIUS ENOBARBUS

What's your pleasure, sir?

MARK ANTONY

I must with haste from hence.

DOMITIUS 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.

MARK ANTONY

I must be gone.

DOMITIUS 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.

MARK ANTONY

She is cunning past man's thought.

Exit ALEXAS

DOMITIUS 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.

MARK ANTONY

Would I had never seen her.

DOMITIUS ENOBRBUS

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

MARK ANTONY

Fulvia is dead.

DOMITIUS ENOBRBUS

Sir?

MARK ANTONY

Fulvia is dead.

DOMITIUS ENOBRBUS

Fulvia!

MARK ANTONY

Dead.

DOMITIUS ENOBRBUS

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.

MARK ANTONY

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

DOMITIUS ENOBRBUS

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

MARK 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 link'd 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' the 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.

DOMITIUS ENOBARBUS

I shall do't.

Exeunt

SCENE III. The same. Another room.

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS, and ALEXAS

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 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.
But here comes Antony.

Enter MARK ANTONY

CLEOPATRA

I am sick and sullen.

MARK 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.

MARK ANTONY

Now, my dearest queen,--

CLEOPATRA

Pray you, stand further from me.

MARK 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.

MARK ANTONY

The gods best know,--

CLEOPATRA

O, never was there queen
So mightily betray'd! yet at the first
I saw the treasons planted.

MARK ANTONY

Cleopatra,--

CLEOPATRA

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

MARK ANTONY

Most sweet queen,--

CLEOPATRA

Nay, pray you, seek no colour 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 turn'd the greatest liar.

MARK ANTONY

How now, lady!

CLEOPATRA

I would I had thy inches; thou shouldst know
There were a heart in Egypt.

MARK 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 condemn'd Pompey,
Rich in his father's honour, 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?

MARK 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.

MARK ANTONY

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

CLEOPATRA

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

MARK ANTONY

My precious queen, forbear;
And give true evidence to his love, which stands
An honourable 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
Life perfect honour.

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