

Antony and Cleopatra

3.6

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' market place on a tribunal silvered,
Cleopatra and himself in chairs of gold
Were publicly enthroned. At the feet sat 5
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, 10
Absolute queen.

MAECENAS This in the public eye?

CAESAR

I'th' common showplace, where they exercise.
His sons he there proclaimed the kings of kings;
Great Media, Parthia, and Armenia
He gave to Alexander. To Ptolemy he assigned 15
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, 20
Will their good thoughts call from him.

CAESAR

knows it,

The people

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 25
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. 30

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, 35
And other of his conquered kingdoms,
I demand the like.

MAECENAS He'll never yield to that.

CAESAR

Nor must not then be yielded to in this.

Enter Octavia with her train

OCTAVIA

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

CAESAR

That ever I should call thee castaway! 40

OCTAVIA

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

CAESAR

Why have you stol'n upon us thus? You come not
Like Caesar's sister. The wife of Antony
Should have an army for an usher, and
The neighs of horse to tell of her approach 45
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 50
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, 55

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 grieveÁd ear withal, whereon I begged
His pardon for return.

CAESAR Which soon he granted, 60
Being an obstruct '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 is he now?

OCTAVIA My lord, in Athens.

CAESAR
No, my most wrongeÁd sister. Cleopatra 65
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 70
Of Paphlagonia; the Thracian King Adallas;
King Malchus of Arabia; King of Pont;
Herod of Jewry; Mithridates, King
Of Comagene; Polemon and Amyntas,
The Kings of Mede and Lycaonia; 75
With a more larger list of sceptres.

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

CAESAR Welcome hither.
Your letters did withhold our breaking forth
Till we perceived both how you were wrong led 80
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; 85
Nothing more dear to me. You are abused
Beyond the mark of thought, and the high gods,
To do you justice, makes their ministers
Of us and those that love you. Best of comfort,

And ever welcome to us.

AGRIPPA Welcome, lady.

90

MAECENAS Welcome, dear madam.

Each heart in Rome does love and pity you.

Only th'adulterous Antony, most large

In his abominations, turns you off,

And gives his potent regiment to a trull

95

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