

Antony and Cleopatra

3.1

Enter Ventidius, with Silius and other Roman soldiers, as it were in triumph; the dead body of Pacorus borne before him

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,

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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.

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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. 15
Caesar and Antony have ever won
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 favour. 20
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, 25
But 'twould offend him, and in his offence
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, 30
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 35
The weight we must convey with's will permit,
We shall appear before him.±±On there; pass along.
Exeunt