



WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
**ANTONY &
CLEOPATRA**

TEACHER PACK

ABOUT THIS PACK

This pack supports the RSC's 2017 production of *Antony & Cleopatra*, directed by Iqbal Khan. The production opened on 11 February 2017 at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon.

The activities provided in this pack are specifically designed to support KS3-4 students attending the performance and studying *Antony & Cleopatra* in school.

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These symbols are used throughout the pack:



READ

Notes from the production, background info or extracts



ACTIVITY

A practical or open space activity



WRITE

A classroom writing or discussion activity



LINKS

Useful web addresses and research tasks

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

The 2017 production of *Antony and Cleopatra*, directed by Iqbal Khan, is part of the RSC's Rome season, along with *Julius Caesar*, *Titus Andronicus* and *Coriolanus*. Angus Jackson, the season director, described this as an 'opportunity to explore the lifecycle of an Empire' tracing the story of Rome, through Shakespeare's text, from its early origins and the birth of an Empire through to its end in *Titus Andronicus*. You can watch Angus Jackson discussing why now feels like the right time to be staging Shakespeare's Roman plays at www.rsc.org.uk/education/goodofrome

In *Antony and Cleopatra*, Shakespeare focuses on the story of two powerful leaders, Cleopatra, the Queen of Egypt who is beholden to the Roman Empire and governed by them, and Mark Antony, one of the three pillars of the Roman Empire which had three rulers in the aftermath of Julius Caesar's assassination. While the play explores these characters' personal relationships it also brings to life the complicated political negotiations and interactions that followed this period.



Josette Simon as Cleopatra in the 2017 production of *Antony and Cleopatra*.
Photo by Helen Maybanks.

In staging the Rome plays in 2017, during a time of immense political change, the RSC has also invited A-Level students to take part in our 'For the Good of Rome' programme.

As part of this we have asked young people to think about how the themes of the play connect with their own lives, discussing whether they agree with the following statements:

- Politics is unfair because it will always be the few making decisions on behalf of the many
- The art of rhetoric has no power or place in modern politics
- The qualities we admire in male leaders are seen as negative in women

EXPLORING THE STORY



SYNOPSIS

A full synopsis of the play is available at:

<https://www.rsc.org.uk/antony-and-cleopatra/the-plot>



ACTIVITY 1: THE STORY

The following activity will introduce students to the play and ensure that the whole group is familiar with the story, particularly the political storylines which Iqbal Khan says 'are sometimes lost in performance or difficult to follow'. It is also an opportunity to introduce some of the key questions that will be explored in more depth in later activities.

- Divide students into small groups.
- Using the 'Story in 20 Minutes' Resource in this pack, assign a scene or two to each group.
- Ask each group to create a tableau or freeze frames for their scene or scenes.
 - Encourage them to narrate their scenes, explaining what happens in each scene before we see it.
- Ask the whole class to form a circle and invite each group into the middle to share their scene or scenes, in the order they happen in the play.
- In this play, Shakespeare opens with Egypt but why do you think he then spends so much time looking at the storyline of the Young Pompey? Especially as this isn't looked at again after the scene on Pompey's boat.



ACTIVITY 2: DISCOVERING THE CHARACTERS

While the focus in this play is often on the 'human' story of Antony and Cleopatra's relationship, this play is very much about politics – both in Egypt and across the Roman Empire. Director Iqbal Khan talks about the play as being on a 'vast scale', with much grander and larger implications than many of Shakespeare's other plays.

In *Antony & Cleopatra*, Shakespeare explores what happens in the years after Julius Caesar's assassination. At this time Rome is ruled over by three different men, the Triumvirate. Splitting the power this way was a precaution that was taken after Julius Caesar's death, and so at the start of the play three characters are equally responsible for the Roman Empire:

Lepidus
Mark Antony
Octavius Caesar

The play then charts their moves to jostle for and secure power, before ending with Octavius Caesar as the sole ruler of the Roman Empire. Octavius Caesar went on to name himself Augustus and became one of the greatest rulers of the Empire. Both Iqbal and the company referred to historical accounts throughout the rehearsal process and used facts and historical accounts to help them discuss and debate their characters' actions.

Encourage students to research and explore what these three political leaders did, according to historical accounts. What facts and information can they find about Lepidus, Mark Antony and Octavius Caesar before he became Augustus?

NOTES FROM THE REHEARSAL ROOM

During the rehearsal process, the company spent time questioning character motivations and discussing why characters behaved as they did. There are no soliloquies in this play and the original text is structured in over 40 scenes. The company discussed how this makes it feel quite frantic and fast, like the audience isn't meant to know what motivates the characters. Historically, these events also spanned 10 years but the company inferred that Shakespeare's version seemed to condense this into a matter of months. To help them do both these things, Iqbal asked the acting company to work through each scene and consider key questions to help piece together the motivations and timelines of each character. For example, how politically aware is Cleopatra and how important is this for her?

- Arrange students into groups of three and provide them with one of the character slips. Each character slip contains information about one of the Triumvirate: Lepidus, Mark Antony or Octavius Caesar.
- Invite each group to create a freeze frame or tableau that shows that leader in action. Encourage them to think about how that leader holds control, why people listen to that leader; how can they show that they are wise or that they are considered a war hero?
- Allow each group the opportunity to share their freeze frame, reading two of the quotes they've been given to explain their choices. Reflect with students as they watch them on what they think motivates each of these characters, how are they different? Which styles of leadership might clash or cause disagreements?
- Ask students to think, as the company did when exploring the characters' behaviour in each scene, about what the key questions are for each of these three rulers. What are the main things you need to know about them and their reasons for acting at the beginning of the play?

- Encourage each group of three to join together with another group so that you have groups of six students. Assign each group one of the main settings in the play: Rome or Egypt.

- Share with the groups a list of all the characters from Rome and all the character from Egypt. This could be taken from the front of any play edition. Explain that the Roman Empire required three rulers, partly, because it was so vast and Mark Antony has been in Egypt for years at the start of the play. In Egypt, he has continued a relationship with the Queen, Cleopatra, and rumours of his drinking and partying are well known in Rome. He has also not been sending enough goods back to the Empire causing the others to question his loyalty. The play is set across both these places and shows us very different groups of people.
- Ask each group to create a second freeze frame, including all of the characters from Rome or Egypt, like a snapshot of either Rome or Egypt. Remind students to think about the personalities and questions they have already raised about the Triumvirate, as these three will appear in their freeze frames as well. What threats are there against Lepidus and Octavius Caesar and why might they be wary of Mark Antony? Who else would they be wary of?
- Invite each group to share their images of Egypt and Rome. As they share them, allow the presenting group to explain who is who and to introduce their characters to those watching.
- Reflect with the whole group on what the relationships and connections might be between characters and why each group has chosen the frame they have chosen for each setting. Discuss with them who the outsiders are in each image, who looks or seems uncomfortable? What would happen if you took Mark Antony or Enobarbus and put them in the Rome setting, where they are both from? What are the key differences between Egypt and Rome? Even if they aren't obvious in the still images, discuss what they might be. Octavius Caesar and Lepidus are constantly asking Mark Antony to come back to Rome, but he chooses to stay in Egypt. Apart from Cleopatra, what might be attractive to him about staying there?

THE WORLD OF EGYPT

NOTES FROM THE REHEARSAL ROOM

During rehearsal, Movement Director Villmore James worked with the company every day on movement sequences which helped them to think about the different ways in which Romans and Egyptians might move. This work can be seen in the opening sequence of the play which sets the scene in Egypt. Iqbal talked about Egypt as being a place that was very fluid and expressionistic, where Rome is measured and controlled. This also led to discussions of how Roman characters, such as messengers and Antony's soldiers, would feel in this space but also why Antony would rather be there.

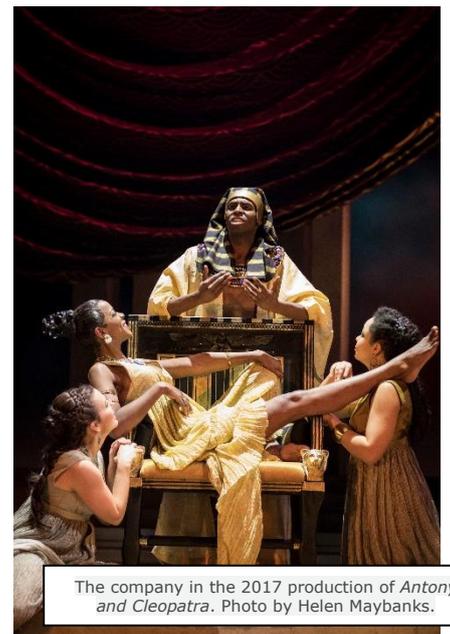


ACTIVITY 3: ROME IN EGYPT

The very first scene of the play introduces us to Mark Antony, Cleopatra and brings news from Rome that causes Mark Antony to have to act and sets in motion the events of the rest of the play. In the following activity students will explore the events of this scene as well as considering why Shakespeare begins the play in Egypt.

- Ask students to think about what they associate with 'Egypt' and what they think the Roman Empire would have associated with Egypt. Share the below quote with them from the play, describing the Egyptian Queen and her kingdom.
- Organise students into groups of four or five and share with them the list of characters who appear in the opening scene. Ask them to work together to create a freeze frame of the scene before Demetrius, the Roman messenger appears. What is the court of Egypt like? How comfortable are Cleopatra and Antony with each other? What are the servants and attendants like? How can you convey the atmosphere of Egypt in your scene?
- Ask students to then create a second freeze frame in their groups, once Demetrius has entered the scene. How do they think Cleopatra will feel about this messenger? Is she curious or threatened? How does Mark Antony feel? Is he relieved to have news from home or frustrated at the interruption and interference? How do you think Demetrius feels about suddenly being in Egypt? Is he able to trust Mark Antony and see him as an ally or is there a distrust in him? Is he sure that Mark Antony is on his side, the side of Rome?
- Invite students to then rehearse the section of the script they have been given, starting with their freeze frames and then animating the second one to show the news from Rome and the reactions of both Cleopatra and Antony to this news.
- Allow students to share their versions of this short scene, starting by sharing their freeze frames of Egypt, the messenger's arrival and then moving into their performance of the scene.
- Reflect with students on how Antony and Cleopatra each react to the messenger's arrival and the news he brings.
 - We never get to hear the news in this scene; what does Cleopatra think the news might be? Does Antony reveal what he thinks it might

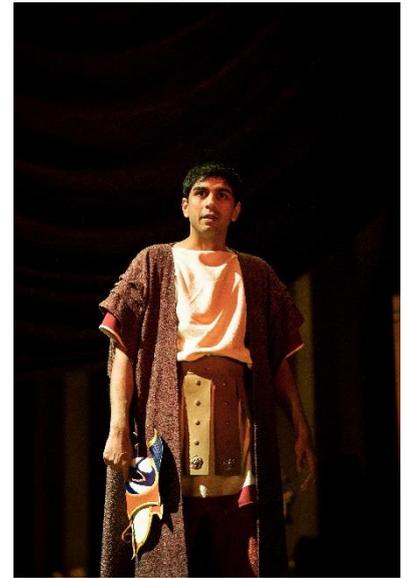
The company in the 2017 production of *Antony and Cleopatra*. Photo by Helen Maybanks.



The company in the 2017 production of *Antony and Cleopatra*. Photo by Helen Maybanks.

be?

- o Antony says a lot of things about Rome to calm Cleopatra, how do you think the messenger from Rome would react to hearing such things? Especially when he says 'Let Rome in Tiber melt'? Who is Antony loyal to?
 - o Why do you think Cleopatra is so keen to hear the news from Rome? Are all the reasons personal or are some political?
 - o Why do you think Shakespeare opens the play in this way, showing the relationship between Antony and Cleopatra but not revealing what the news or message is? Where does this place the emphasis and what does it make you think about their relationship?
- Share with students what Antony reveals in Scene 3 of the play, when he shares the news with Cleopatra. This short extract can be found in the Resource Materials.
 - Ask students to read this together, taking one line each and reading it out loud until everyone has spoken. This may mean that students hear the language more than once.
 - During rehearsal, the company discussed how Antony could deliver this news more gracefully, he is very blunt in the way he announces that Fulvia's death will be the thing she cares about. Ask students to think about why he might do this and also why Cleopatra reacts the way that she does. What are Antony's reasons that he must act?



Dharmesh Patel as Ventitidus in the 2017 production of *Antony and Cleopatra*. Photo by Helen Maybanks.

POMPEY AND POLITICS

One of the greatest threats to the rulers of Rome in the play is the young Pompey. It's news of him gathering forces that makes Antony leave Cleopatra, and also that motivates Octavius Caesar to mobilise his forces. Pompey is the son of Gnaeus Pompey or Great Pompey, the great rival of Julius Caesar. So, Young Pompey has an impressive legacy to follow just as Octavius Caesar does.

NOTES FROM THE REHEARSAL ROOM

During rehearsal, the company looked at the different styles of leadership that Pompey, Octavius Caesar and Mark Antony use as well as the similarities between Caesar and Pompey. Iqbal commented as they worked through the text that it feels as though no character ever really says what they are thinking in this play, although it could be argued that Octavius Caesar is the most honest character as he never tries to be something different from himself to appease others. Iqbal also discussed with Ben Allen, who plays Octavius Caesar, how his character is the closest thing to a 'villain' in the play but that Shakespeare never writes him that way.



ACTIVITY 4: LEADERSHIP STYLES

Pompey behaves in a very different way to Octavius Caesar and the rest of the Triumvirate. The company talked about his style of leadership being one of honour and idealism, rather than being realistic he seems very keen to think the best of situations and often dismisses the wisdom and intelligence of those around him who try to be realistic. The following activity will explore the scene in which Pompey and Caesar negotiate and provides an opportunity to explore some of these differences.

- Ask four students to stand in the centre of the room with the rest of the group in a circle around them.
- Provide the rest of the students with quotes and extracts from the text on each of the four leaders: Lepidus, Octavius Caesar, Mark Antony and Pompey. This will build on the information they learnt about them in Activity 2 if they have already looked at the Triumvirate. Appoint each of the four students in the middle of the room to represent one of these four characters and make sure the rest of the group know who is representing who.
- Invite students to read their quotes and information out loud, before laying it on the ground in front of the character it teaches them something about.
- After hearing all of the information about themselves and how the other characters see them, look at Act 2 Scene 5 where the four leaders strike their bargain and agree a level of peace.
- Take a small section of the script and encourage the four students to read it out, thinking about the information and quotes they have been given.
- Pause the action as the four students read Act 2 Scene 5, asking them and the rest of the group watching to comment on how and why they are behaving the way they are behaving. Remind them that Iqbal Khan, the Director, believed that no one in this play really says what they are thinking and so the company had to interrogate scenes like this one to find out why they thought characters were acting the way they do.
- Reflect with students, after seeing the whole scene read out, on what each character has achieved in this scene. Knowing what they do about each character, do they think they are happy and satisfied with the outcomes? What do they think the next action of each character will be? Based on what they know of their personalities how do they think each character feels after this scene has taken place?
- Explain to students that one of the methods that actors can use to help them understand why their character is acting and speaking the way they are is through creating a backstory for them. Invite students to think about the backstory for Pompey and Octavius Caesar; what do they think the main motivators are for these two characters. For example, living up to expectations and his Father's legacy might be Pompey's while proving that efficiency and responsibility are better leadership qualities than impulsiveness and partying might be Octavius Caesar's.
 - Octavius Caesar uses his sister to try and keep peace with Mark Antony while Pompey agrees peace despite wanting war; what do these actions tell us about them?



Antony Byrne as Mark Antony and Ben Allen as Octavius Caesar in the 2017 production of *Antony and Cleopatra*. Photo by Helen Maybanks.



David Burnett as Pompey in the 2017 production of *Antony and Cleopatra*. Photo by Helen Maybanks.

WAYS TO EXTEND THIS WORK

- The question of effective leadership is one which is still extremely relevant today. As part of 'For the Good of Rome', we are asking students to think about whether Politics is inherently unfair because it will always be the many making decisions on behalf of the few.
- Discuss this provocation with students: is it true in the play? Is it true for society now?
- Invite students to take part in our **film challenge**, responding to this statement. Can a leader, however great their qualities, ever represent everyone? Is this important?
- The film challenge closes for submissions on 15 September 2017.

WOMEN AND POWER

NOTES FROM THE REHEARSAL ROOM

While rehearsing and experimenting with the scenes between Octavia and Octavius Caesar, the company agreed that the relationship between brother and sister in the play seemed to be very close, making the marriage between Mark Antony and Octavia a real attempt to reconcile. Iqbal talked about the realities of marriages and alliances and what Octavia's expectations would have been as part of these discussions. At this point, he explained, Octavia would have been the most powerful woman in the world and yet her freedom to do anything with that power is very limited.

Two very powerful women become entangled in the political negotiations around the Empire of Rome in *Antony and Cleopatra*; Cleopatra and Octavia.

The following activities will allow students to explore some of the key moments for these characters.

WAYS TO EXTEND THIS WORK

- Ask students to consider the way in which women are treated in this play. Cleopatra might be a Queen, but her home is under the dominion of Rome and Antony and Octavia, the most powerful and influential woman in Rome, is used to secure an alliance between men. Do they think these women have the qualities of good leaders?
- Discuss with students whether the qualities they look for in female leaders, in political candidates today, are the same as the ones we value in men?
- As part of the 'For the Good of Rome' **film challenge**, invite students to respond to the idea that the qualities we admire in men are seen as weaknesses in women.
- The film challenge closes for submissions on 15 September 2017.



ACTIVITY 5: ALLIANCES AND AGREEMENTS

Octavia's marriage is very much a contractual agreement, made between her brother and Mark Antony and meant to keep the peace. This activity explores the scene in which Octavia returns to visit her brother, when he believes that Mark Antony has not kept to the agreement.

- Provide students with a copy of the scene in which Octavia returns to try and stop her brother threatening her husband.
- Arrange students into pairs and ask them to look at Octavius Caesar's opening speech to her. Ask them to work through the language, reading it together while standing back to back.
- Invite students to discuss what they heard in their pairs while reading and to find three things the speech tells them about the way in which Octavia has arrived to discuss the situation with her brother and how Octavius feels about it.
- Allow students to share their findings and to discuss what this tells them about both characters: Octavia and Octavius.
- Ask one or two pairs to read the exchange again, standing back to back, with the rest of the group watching and listening. What do those watching think Octavia is worried about? What is Octavius, her brother, worried about?



- Explain to students that while rehearsing Lucy Phelps, who plays Ocatvia, discovered that this journey to talk to her brother and act as a 'go-between' for Mark Antony and Octavius was made by her several times and on the last occasion she was seven months pregnant. The journey would have taken her weeks and would have been very uncomfortable. In the production, while she doesn't appear seven months pregnant, Lucy has used this to help her performance.



ACTIVITY 6: CLEOPATRA'S QUALITIES

Cleopatra is a historical figure who has been described in lots of different ways by her successors and by historians, most of the accounts being negative. Discuss with students the phrase 'the victors write history'; who would be the victor at the end of this play? How do they think he would go on to describe Cleopatra, or ask others to describe her in approved accounts? What difference do they think this would have made to Shakespeare and to his audiences?

- Provide students with the two historical accounts of Cleopatra. How would they describe this ruler in three words?
- Organise students into groups of four and share with them the extract entitled Cleopatra's Court in the Resource materials. As them to read it through together, taking turns to read each of the parts.
- Ask students to play the scene with Cleopatra behaving exactly as they think she would from the historical accounts they looked at, using the words that they used to define her to help them. Encourage the students in the other three roles to react to her as though she was all of those things as well.
- Allow one or two groups to share their 'historical' versions of Cleopatra. Do they think these versions work? Does the text make sense when Cleopatra is portrayed this way? Do they think this is the kind of character Shakespeare had in mind? Why? What in the language she and others use suggests this is/isn't the case?
- Ask students to continue exploring the scene and to pick out two lines that they think show them the most about what she is really like as a person and/or as a ruler.
- Invite students to share the lines they have selected. Hearing these lines ask them to think about the figure Shakespeare presents. How would they describe this ruler in three words?
- Compare the three words they have taken from their impressions of the text with the three they generated from historical accounts. Do they think she behaves the same way in every scene in the text? If not, what does that show about her? Is she changeable or adaptable, and why is one a negative quality while the other is positive?



Josette Simon as Cleopatra in the 2017 production of *Antony and Cleopatra*. Photo by Helen Maybanks.

As part of our 'For the Good of Rome' programme we discussed the question of whether or not we admire different qualities in male and female leaders with Josette Simon and a panel of other contributors. You can watch that discussion in a recorded version of our **live stream from 8 May** 2017.

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RESOURCES

THE STORY IN 20 MINUTES

1. Before the play starts, Antony's wife FULVIA, who is living near Rome, hears her husband's having an affair with CLEOPATRA. She persuades Antony's brother to start a civil war with OCTAVIUS CAESAR. This civil war goes badly for Fulvia and after losing a crucial battle to Caesar's troops she flees to exile in Sicyon in Greece. Here she dies of a lingering illness.
2. In Egypt, a MESSENGER rushes in bringing news to ANTONY, with a letter containing details of his wife's death. Antony reads the letter and realises he must return to Rome and his responsibilities there, but CLEOPATRA does not want him to go and tries all kinds of emotional blackmail to keep him with her, including feigning illness, ranting and raving, crying and begging.

CLEOPATRA Help me away, dear Charmian. I shall fall -

ANTONY And I, hence fleeting, here remain with thee. Away!

Antony leaves Cleopatra alone in Egypt. She sends letters every day to Antony and spends her time fishing with CHARMIAN, IRAS, ALEXIS and MARDIAN.

CLEOPATRA He shall have every day a several greeting,
Or I'll unpeople Egypt

3. In Rome Antony, Caesar and LEPIDUS, each with their followers, approach one another very carefully.

CAESAR Welcome to Rome

ANTONY Thank you

CAESAR Sit

ANTONY Sit, Sir

CAESAR Nay, then

Caesar is angry because Antony's wife has gone to war with him and he thinks Antony must have known about it, but Antony says that he didn't. AGRIPPA suggests that Antony should marry Caesar's sister OCTAVIA to help keep the peace. Antony agrees to this political union and Caesar gives Antony her hand.

4. POMPEY, the son of Pompey the Great, has had time to build up an army in Sicily while Caesar and Antony have been busy with their own arguments. LEPIDUS, CAESAR AND ANTONY decide to work together and make war on Pompey. After an important battle, a truce is reached, prisoners are traded and Pompey holds a feast for everyone. At the feast everyone gets very drunk, especially Lepidus, who isn't used to drinking.

POMPEY A health to Lepidus

LEPIDUS I am not so well as I should be

5. After he has married Octavia and fought against Pompey, Antony does not return to Rome as he is expected to, but rather goes back to Cleopatra and Egypt

ANTONY And though I make this marriage for my peace,
 I'th'East my pleasure lies.

They stop off in Athens where ENOBARBUS hears the latest news: Caesar and Lepidus went to war again with Pompey but Caesar has imprisoned Lepidus and he has died. This means Rome now only has two leaders instead of three - Caesar and Antony.

6. Caesar is angry at Antony for leaving his sister and going back to Egypt.

CAESAR I'th'market place on a tribunal silver'd
 Cleopatra and himself in chairs of gold
 Were publicly enthron'd

Octavia visits her brother and tries to stop him declaring war on Antony but Caesar also sees this as his opportunity to take sole charge of the Roman Empire. War is declared.

7. Antony and his armies are stronger than Caesar's if they fight by land. But Antony decides to fight by sea. ENOBARBUS begs him not to.

ENOBARBUS Your ships are not well mann'd;
 Your mariners are muleters, reapers
 In Caesar's fleet
 Are those that often have 'gainst Pompey fought,

8. The Battle of Actium, between Antony and Caesar, is fought mainly at sea. It is a terrible day for Antony and Cleopatra and they suffer huge losses.

ENOBARBUS Naught, naught, all naught! I can behold no longer.
SCARUS rushes in, terribly upset, crying.

SCARUS We have kiss'd away/Kingdoms and provinces.

Cleopatra, becoming frightened in the midst of battle, sails away with her fleet of ships and Antony follows her with his own.

SCARUS I never saw an action of such shame

9. Cleopatra is terrified and locks herself away in a monument, sending word to Antony that she is dead. Antony is wracked with guilt and he tells his three attendants that he knows he is going to die and that they should take his wealth and try to make peace with Caesar.

ANTONY The land bids me tread no more upon't!
It is asham'd to bear me!

He asks an attendant to kill him but they kill themselves instead leaving Antony to fall on his own sword. Dying, he asks to be taken to Cleopatra as his dying wish and is returned to Rome.

10. Antony and Cleopatra are reunited for a short while, before Antony dies of his wound.

CLEOPATRA So it should be, that none but Antony
Should conquer Antony; but woe 'tis so!

ANTONY I am dying, Egypt, dying –

Cleopatra is then captured by the Romans and taken prisoner. Rather than be used by Caesar to make a point, Cleopatra kills herself by allowing poisonous snakes, or asps, to bite her. Caesar commands they be buried together.

CHARACTER SLIPS: THE TRIUMVIRATE

LEPIDUS

You are the oldest of the Triumvirate and want to ensure peace between its three rulers, this makes you quite cautious. Despite Antony's behaviour you want to see the best in him and remember his achievements

'Noble friends,
That which combined us was most great, and let not
A leaner action rend us.'

'Lepidus flatters both (Antony and Caesar),
Of both is flatter'd; but he neither loves,
Nor either cares for him'

'You (Lepidus) are too indulgent'

OCTAVIUS CAESAR

You are the heir of Julius Caesar and have a very practical way of ruling and leading. You can be frustrated when others don't take the actions you think are best and when they act irresponsibly or slowly.

'You (Antony) have broken
The article of your oath; which you shall never
Have tongue to charge me with.'

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

'If thou dost play with him at any game
Thou art sure to loose; and of that natural luck
He beats thee 'gainst the odds'

MARK ANTONY

You are famous throughout the Roman Empire as a great soldier who has won many battles and victories and are considered a legend by the people of the Empire, but also as someone who likes to enjoy parties and drink.

"His faults in him seem as the spots of heaven"

'This is the news: he fishes, drinks, and wastes
The lamps of night in revel; is not more man-like
Than Cleopatra; nor the queen of Ptolemy
More womanly than he; hardly gave an 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'

ACT 1 SCENE 1

Extract (Edited by RSC Education)

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

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

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

ANTONY Then must thou needs find out new heaven, new Earth.

DEMETRIUS News, my good lord, from Rome.

ANTONY Grates me, the sum.

CLEOPATRA Nay, hear him, 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?
The messenger!

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 wit
We stand up peerless.

CLEOPATRA Excellent falsehood!
Why did he marry Fulvia and not love her?

ANTONY But stirred by Cleopatra.

Now for the love of Love and her soft hours,
Let's not confound the time with conference harsh.
Now, what sport tonight?

CLEOPATRA Hear the ambassador.

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.

They exit.

DEMETRIUS Is Caesar with Antonius prized so slight?

VENTIDIUS 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.

CHARACTER SLIPS: YOUNG POMPEY

YOUNG POMPEY

You are driven by a sense of honour to try and follow in your Father's footsteps. You want to secure great victories and impress others and this means you sometimes take risks and don't seem to listen to the advice of leaders who are more experienced than you are.

"The people love me, and the sea is mine;
My powers are crescent, and my auguring hope
Says it will come to th' full."

"Pompey is strong at sea,
And it appears he is beloved of those
That only have feared Caesar"

HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS OF CLEOPATRA

"For her beauty, as we are told, was in itself not altogether incomparable, nor such as to strike those who saw her; but converse with her had an irresistible charm, and her presence, combined with the persuasiveness of her discourse and the character which was somehow diffused about her behaviour towards others, had something stimulating about it. There was sweetness also in the tones of her voice; and her tongue, like an instrument of many strings, she could readily turn to whatever language she pleased..."

PLUTARCH

"For she was a woman of surpassing beauty, and at that time, when she was in the prime of her youth, she was most striking; she also possessed a most charming voice and a knowledge of how to make herself agreeable to every one. Being brilliant to look upon and to listen to, with the power to subjugate every one, even a love-sated man already past his prime, she thought that it would be in keeping with her rôle to meet Caesar, and she reposed in her beauty all her claims to the throne. She asked therefore for admission to his presence, and on obtaining permission adorned and beautified herself so as to appear before him in the most majestic and at the same time pity-inspiring guise. When she had perfected her schemes she entered the city"

DIO

You can read more about how Shakespeare relied on his sources, and how their contradictions may be the reason his character of Cleopatra is so changeable, on the [**RSC Site**](#).

