

CLEOPATRA
SHOOTING SCRIPT

From:

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CLEOPATRA

THE TITLE BACKGROUNDS are selected frames from the finished film, each treated as if it were an illuminated frieze, faded by time, upon an ancient wall.

THE FINAL CREDIT is on a stop-frame of the OPENING SCENE. After the credit fades:

AN HISTORICAL EXCERPT - in Greek - establishing the setting, IS SUPERIMPOSED. A VOICE NARRATES - in English - the translated meaning of the excerpt:

NARRATOR

"...and so it fell out that at Pharsalia, in Greece, Caesar put his legions against those of the Great Pompey and did destroy them. Thus, by the folly of war amongst themselves, came the Romans to count Roman dead..."

1-3
(2 OUT)

EXT. BATTLEGROUND - PHARSALIA - DAY - STOP-FRAME

The stop-frame moves into action:

The battlefield is covered by the intermingled dead and dying of both Pompey and Caesar. Destroyed horses, broken wagons and impedimenta of war. A great carnage has taken place..

A small stream runs through. The blood of those who have died beside it has flowed into the water, and colored it..

Occasional funeral pyres are already burning; the smoke of others is visible beyond the hill. Battle standards, weapons, etc. are being collected and salvaged..

Incongruously, a few SHEPHERDS usher their sheep on to the field which is, after all, their grazing land. And circling endlessly overhead, birds of prey..

The shepherds and their sheep cross the path of JULIUS CAESAR as he rides slowly through the battlefield. He and his armor are stained with sweat and battle. His eyes are grim and sad as they survey the scene..

He is followed by some mounted officers. His chief-of-staff, RUFIO - and an infantry general, GERMANICUS. Two SUPPORTING OFFICERS. Plodding along beside them, on a donkey, is CAESAR'S BARBER - (by name, FLAVIUS). He is a small man, mute but by no means deaf, and a privileged companion to Caesar.

Caesar brings his horse to a halt, the others drawing alongside of him. He looks out over the carnage:

1-3 Cont.

CAESAR

The earth made wet with Roman blood,
by Romans. It was Pompey, not I,
who wanted it so..

(he tosses his
helmet to Flavius)

...get me water -

Flavius scrambles from his donkey and down toward the stream. CAMERA WITH HIM. From another direction, over another hill, a HORSEMAN can be seen approaching. Flavius exits from SHOT. The horseman continues to approach. He rides swiftly..

CAESAR AND GROUP. As the horseman - MARK ANTONY - rides in. His horse is covered with sweat; he, himself is grimy and blood-stained. More than any of them, Antony looks as if he had been in the midst of the melée..

He dismounts. Caesar calls out to him as he crosses:

CAESAR

Have we got him?

ANTONY

Pompey's gone, Caesar! Slipped through our fingers - disguised as a peddler, if you please..

CAESAR

A peddler. The Great Pompey..

RUFIO

(a grim smile)

He's left most of his merchandise behind..

CAESAR

(still to Antony)

Gone where?

ANTONY

There's a report he has a galley waiting at the coast - provisioned for a long voyage. Egypt, they say..

CAESAR

(nods)

Very likely. To ask for sanctuary - borrow money - borrow time. I thought it was over. It seems it's not..

Flavius comes up, with Caesar's water. As he drinks, Flavius swiftly pantomimes. Caesar understands. The others are a little mystified..

1-3 Cont. 1

CAESAR

(grimly)

According to Flavius, our gentle Greek shepherds are already looting the bodies. Double your burial detail, Germanicus. Any civilian caught molesting Roman dead is to be nailed up in his village square..

GERMANICUS

(a swift salute)

Caesar..

He rides off, followed by Domitius and Publius.

CAESAR

(to Antony)

When do you start back to Rome?

ANTONY

Whenever you say.

CAESAR

Then at once. Rome is best not left unwatched for too long - like one of your mistresses..

(Antony laughs)

And there's to be no question about your authority to act in my name. -

ANTONY

My word will be yours - and, as always, Caesar's word will be law..

CAESAR

Yes. Well, be sure to have at least three legions with you always - they help keep the law legal..

Antony smiles and nods. Then:

ANTONY

I find it odd, Caesar. Surely Pompey knew that you must go to Egypt in any case, on the business of Rome. Yet he chooses to escape there...

CAESAR

(smiles)

At times, the Fates seem to decree that men create their own disasters..

Antony salutes, starts toward his horse. Suddenly, Caesar calls after him:

1-3 Cont. 2

CAESAR

Antony - !
 (sombrely)
 Brutus. Have they found his body?

ANTONY

(caustically)
 His body? Brutus is alive, Caesar,
 trust our noble Brutus to survive.
 Captured most honorably, he was,
 and laid down his sword with great
 dignity - though a bit too easily..

CAESAR

He's to be pardoned.

ANTONY

Pardoned!

Both he and Rufio react incredulously.

CAESAR

Set Brutus free.

ANTONY

But it's not the first time he's
 fought against you, Caesar - would
 Brutus and Pompey have pardoned you?
 Oh, he'd have wept real tears, I'll
 grant you that, he'd have blubbered
 to the gods of his love for you
 while he pointed to your head on the
 top of a pike! No, Brutus is my
 prisoner, I took him myself -

CAESAR

Let him go!

A pause.

ANTONY

(quietly)
 As you command.
 (he lifts his
 arm in salute)
 Hail, Caesar..

He rides off. Caesar's look goes to Rufio's impassive
 face; then down to Flavius. From his donkey, Flavius
 stares at him sombrely. Abruptly, Caesar rides away.
 The others follow...

CAMERA PANS with them. They ride OUT OF SCENE. CAMERA
 HOLDS ON: a distinctive rock, or barren tree - from which
 a flock of VULTURES look down aimlessly upon the dead..

THE FRAME FREEZES TO A STOP. (SAME EFFECT AS OPENING OF SCENE NO. 1).

EFFECT DISSOLVE:

4 INT. PTOLEMY'S COMMAND TENT - DAY - STOP-FRAME

Once more, the "frieze" treatment. And once more an historical excerpt in Greek - narrated in English:

NARRATOR

"...and even as Caesar's galleys sailed the great sea to Egypt - it was happening that, just as the Romans, so the Egyptians made war one upon the other. For young King Ptolemy would no longer share the throne with his sister Cleopatra - and he drove her from the City of Alexandria and sought to destroy her..."

The stop-frame is a FULL SHOT. Sulking on a bejewelled chair near the entrance, scowling out at the white sand and imposing encampment about them, is PTOLEMY. About seventeen years old - resplendent in golden armor. In attendance nearby, several PRIESTS..

Behind Ptolemy's chair stands POTHINOS, Chief Eunuch and Court Chamberlain. He is turned toward, as if addressing:

A group seated before a food-laden table, apparently deep in deliberation. Most important are ACHILLAS, General of the Army of Egypt, and THEODOTOS, Chief Tutor to the King. There are other OFFICERS, DIGNITARIES, etc..

The stop-frame moves into action:

Pothinos gestures persuasively, crosses to the group about the table:

POTHINOS

- my dear Achilles, let us be reasonable men. Caesar has defeated Pompey.

ACHILLAS

Pompey, when he arrives, may ask for nothing more than sanctuary and safe conduct -

POTHINOS

Caesar, when he arrives, may ask for nothing more than Pompey -

THEODOTOS

May I speak? It is an exercise in simple logic.

(he turns and bows)

Perhaps his Majesty would care to follow it?

4 Cont.

PTOLEMY

No. You won't listen to me, why should I listen to you. You all just keep waiting and waiting, and talking and talking. I want my sister killed..

POTHINOS

She shall be, Divine Majesty. However, an important matter has come up -

PTOLEMY

Nothing is more important, I decree that nothing is more important than killing Cleopatra!

THEODOTOS

It is so decreed, your Majesty..

(he continues,
to the others)

Pompey, as a friend, can no longer help us. Nor, as an enemy, can he hurt us. Caesar, for the moment at least - is Rome. We cannot exist if Rome is our enemy. Therefore, we must do with Pompey what will be most pleasing to Caesar..

POTHINOS

Exquisitely stated, scholar. Even I could follow your logic. And certainly you, General? In any case, we must return immediately to the Palace at Alexandria - prepared to greet them, as they arrive, each in turn..

A shrill exclamation from Ptolemy. They all look over at him. Slowly, the young king rises to his feet and stares..

The tent flap. A magnificent BUTTERFLY rests on it, gently moving its wings..

Ptolemy stealthily crosses - catches the butterfly in his fingers. He turns to his bewildered court:

PTOLEMY

(proudly)

You were all fooled, weren't you? She fooled you all, didn't she - but not me! I've caught her, Cleopatra spying on us - !

He slams the butterfly to the floor. Its wings beat feebly...

5

INT. TEMPLE - CLEOPATRA'S ENCAMPMENT - NIGHT

CLEOPATRA. Young, vibrant, her belief in herself as Goddess and Queen as pure and unwavering as a fixed star. She is seated below the figure of ISIS. Cleopatra wears a light, transparent veil over her face. Her eyes are lightly closed.

Opposite her, the HIGH PRIESTESS performs a ritual of supplication. She is an hysteric; mystically obsessed by her dedication to Isis and to the supernatural. She is assisted by two young PRIESTESSES..

HIGH PRIESTESS

Oh Great Isis, of a thousand names
Green Goddess, Lady of Abundance,
The fire burns, the water flows,
And heaven is content
At the coming forth of Isis.
Fear not, daughter of our glory,
No evil thing shall happen unto thee.
Thou art Beloved of the Gods,
Mother of Horus, Daughter of Set.
Thou art come again today
In the Boat of the Sun
From its place of yesterday.
Until the night cometh and take thee away
All shall be safe, and shall grow,
And shall be blessed by thy pains of birth.
Arise, Isis of a thousand names,
And come forth to thy people of the two lands.

The High Priestess prostrates herself, as do her two assistants. A pause. Cleopatra opens her eyes..

CLEOPATRA

And as we look into tomorrow - ?

The High Priestess stares into the shallow pool before her. She makes an encircling motion with her arms. The water becomes agitated, with ever-increasing ripples..

HIGH PRIESTESS

The fire burns, the water flows..

CLEOPATRA

What more - ?

HIGH PRIESTESS

The water flows, the waves blown by winds..

CLEOPATRA

And more - ?

HIGH PRIESTESS

There is blown on the waves - the winds of Destiny....nothing more.

5 Cont.

The waters of the pool become quiet.

Another pause. Cleopatra rises in silence. The priestesses do not stir. She turns to the image of Isis. She removes her veil, places it on the goddess. She goes out..

6 CORRIDOR OUTSIDE TEMPLE - NIGHT

CHARMIAN waits for her. Cleopatra hands over the religious cloak she has worn, then strides briskly into:

7 CLEOPATRA'S COMMAND TENT - NIGHT

The furnishings in sharp contrast to the lush extravagance of Ptolemy's tent. But superb war maps are displayed. Terrain boxes, with miniature military equipment and forces..

Grouped about such a terrain box are APOLLODORUS, SOSIGENES, RAMOS, a couple of SAVANTS, some MERCENARY OFFICERS, etc. APOLLODORUS, an attractive Syrian, is major-domo, watchdog, confidant, scribe and occasional bed-mate to Cleopatra. His love for her consumes him. SOSIGENES epitomizes the intellectual and sophisticated nature of the Ptolemaic Age - and particularly that of Cleopatra's regime. He is essentially a scientist; by avocation, a philosopher and statesman. RAMOS, Cleopatra's Chief-of-Staff, is a young and dedicated Egyptian soldier.

They turn and bow respectfully as Cleopatra enters, followed by Charmian. They remain so until their Queen speaks. She addresses Ramos with simulated lightness:

CLEOPATRA

(lightly)

Our position remains the same, does it, Ramos? Hopeless - but not serious?

RAMOS

We have acquired a few small boats. When the time comes, your Majesty will be safely evacuated -

CLEOPATRA

(smiles; crosses to the terrain box)

As long as you serve me, Ramos, never say our lines are "fluid" when they're broken, or "withdraw" for defeated - or "evacuated" when you mean run away. I will not run away.

7 Cont.

APOLLODORUS

(quietly)

If necessary, I would drag you into
the boat myself..

Cleopatra turns on him in sudden, almost savage sharpness..

CLEOPATRA

On your knees..

He sinks to his knees. She looks down in cold anger.

CLEOPATRA

Speak to me once more in that fashion,
Apollodorus, and I promise you your
tongue will be cut out. I am your
Queen. And more. I am Egypt..

(she looks at
them all)

I am all of you, and all of the
people who populate my land. I am
the land itself and the water which
nourishes that land - run away from
Egypt? I? How? As soon tell one
beat of my heart to run from the
next..

APOLLODORUS

Your brother, Pothinos and the rest -
they will kill you horribly.

CLEOPATRA

Neither Ptolemy nor any other man
will kill me. While Egypt lives, I
will live....now get up.

(she turns to Ramos)

There was much movement of horses
and men very late last night - why?

RAMOS

The Cappodocian mercenaries had not
been paid in many weeks -

CLEOPATRA

And so they've deserted us..

APOLLODORUS

Worse. They've gone over to Ptolemy's
camp..

Cleopatra turns to Sosigenes. Theirs is a warm and
intimate relationship..

CLEOPATRA

You haven't had much to say..

7 Cont. 1

SOSIGENES

I'm too old to be dropping to my knees.

CLEOPATRA

Yes, you are getting on - and your mind isn't what it used to be -

SOSIGENES

Whose is?

CLEOPATRA

Oh you can tell about the stars and take away fevers and rearrange the calendar, but when it comes to a way out of this mess we're in...

(a grim smile)

Sosigenes, couldn't you invent wings for us all? Then we could simply fly over my idiot brother and his army, safely home to Alexandria..

SOSIGENES

Wings, they're nothing new to us Greeks. Why, hundreds of years ago, a Greek built a perfect pair - out of the finest wax - he flew like a bird..

CHARMIAN

(apart from the others)

What happened?

SOSIGENES

He flew too near the sun, Charmian. The wax melted. Moral: let man first learn to live properly on earth..

Cleopatra has found it difficult to continue to disguise her deep concern.

CLEOPATRA

Is there nothing to do, then, but wait - until they choose to destroy us? Is there no help anywhere - for those who cannot pay for it?

SOSIGENES

Among men? Wings would be easier to find..

CLEOPATRA

Pompey has had so much gold from Egypt..

(to Ramos)

You say we have boats. Perhaps if we could intercept Pompey and his army -

7 Cont. 2

RAMOS

Pompey's army? His wife, children
and some servants....he's thrown
himself on the mercy of Pothinos
and Theodotos -

APOLLODORUS

He'd find more mercy, thrown to
the crocodiles..

SOSIGENES

It is entirely possible that he will
be.

(they look questioningly
at him)

The Mighty Caesar will arrive in
Alexandria soon - in pursuit of
the Great Pompey...

(to Ramos)

Is it true that he comes with only
a handful of ships, and no more than
two legions..?

RAMOS

(nods)

I can't understand that, it's not
like Caesar...he's faced great odds
before, but to let Achilles outnumber
him more than ten to one -

CLEOPATRA

(relieved)

Well, if you can't understand it,
then neither can Achilles. He won't
attack us now, at any rate - not with
Caesar's galleys approaching
Alexandria. Caesar's galleys...

(she is reminded
of something)

'...blown on the waves - the winds
of Destiny..'

Thoughtfully, she moves apart from the others, and sits.
Sosigenes addresses her, but she seems not to hear..

SOSIGENES

You must remember that Caesar's
business in Alexandria is only
incidentally concerned with capturing
Pompey - his real mission, as pro-consul
of Rome, is to settle the dispute
between you and Ptolemy. To bring
peace to Egypt - and more wheat to
Rome..

Cleopatra, head back reflectively, speaks up:

7 Cont. 3

CLEOPATRA

Tell me about him..

SOSIGENES

Caesar?

CLEOPATRA

Years ago, you went with that
drunken sot, my father, to Rome.
Was Caesar one of the men he
bribed?

SOSIGENES

Caesar was the one he couldn't..

CLEOPATRA

His standards were so much higher
than the rest -

SOSIGENES

No, his price.

CLEOPATRA

Then he's like the others, after all?

SOSIGENES

He's the only different Roman I've
ever met. He neither drinks nor
stuffs himself. He thinks, he reads
a lot. And he's cold. Icy cold..

CLEOPATRA

I have heard he grows warmer in the
presence of women..

SOSIGENES

He has quite a reputation in that
respect - for my part, I could never
understand it. If I were a woman,
Caesar would not appeal to me..

CLEOPATRA

How fortunate for both of you, you're
not. Ramos, you were trained by the
Romans, is he liked by his men?

RAMOS

They worship him..

CLEOPATRA

(to Sosigenes)

And whom does Caesar worship?

SOSIGENES

Caesar.

7 Cont. 4

CLEOPATRA

(to Ramos)

You hold him in such high regard -

RAMOS

There is only one Caesar.

CLEOPATRA

- yet he comes to Alexandria with
so few troops...will Achilles fight
him?

RAMOS

Not until he is certain the odds
favor him overwhelmingly..

CLEOPATRA

(to Sosigenes)

And Pothinos? Will he have Pompey
killed in order to please Caesar?

SOSIGENES

Probably.

CLEOPATRA

(rising)

Will it please him, do you think?

SOSIGENES

Put yourself in Caesar's place.
Would it please you?

CLEOPATRA

No.

She starts toward the exit leading to the beach and
sea. She pauses.

CLEOPATRA

My brother is both evil and insane -
and Egypt would be well rid of him.
Yet - if he were helpless - I could
not trust or thank the man who would
murder him, just to please me.
Because that man would murder me to
please someone else..

She leaves the tent. Charmian follows her..

8

EXT. CLEOPATRA'S ENCAMPMENT - NIGHT (AND BLUE BACKING)The ragged miscellany of Cleopatra's ARMY are sprawled
and huddled about fires. They cook, sleep, gamble,
quarrel, drink, etc..

8 Cont.

As CLEOPATRA comes out, followed by CHARMIAN, some look up and greet her - and some do not. Thoughtfully, Cleopatra makes her way through them toward the sea..

APOLLODORUS comes out of the tent. He follows, within a protective distance..

Near the shore. Cleopatra pauses, turns, summons Apollodorus to her. Charmian waits, some distance away..

Cleopatra stands close to him, looks up at Apollodorus:

CLEOPATRA

So if it were necessary you'd drag me into the boat yourself..?

APOLLODORUS

Yes.

CLEOPATRA

There are only certain times when you are privileged to say what you like..

APOLLODORUS

I try to remember. It isn't easy..

She reaches up, presses her hand for an instant against his cheek. He takes it in his, kisses it. She moves away, once more toward the water. He looks after her..

At the water's edge. Cleopatra rests against a rock, looks moodily out to sea..

Charmian squats nearby. Apollodorus moves closer, to watch over her..

From somewhere above, in the camp, a young VOICE sings a plaintive foreign song..

The waves roll in over the sand. Cleopatra stares down at them, then out to sea - as if listening for some word of what is to come..

DISSOLVE

9

EXT. CAESAR'S GALLEY - AT SEA - DAYBREAK

THE DISSOLVE is to the SAIL, filled by the breeze, bearing Caesar's insignia. In the b.g., the three or four escorting galleys..

A LOOKOUT. Slouched casually at his post. He yawns, stretches, and stares - in frightened disbelief..

9 Cont.

LOOKOUT'S P.O.V. On the horizon, against the just-breaking day, the flash of a reflected light..

THE LOOKOUT. He shouts down at the deck..

LOOKOUT

A light! A light!

THE DECK. From below, AGRIPPA hurries up on deck. He is Caesar's admiral, a man of about forty. Agrippa is followed up by RUFIO, then CAESAR - obviously awakened from his sleep. FLAVIUS, of course, dogs Caesar's steps..

The Lookout shouts down to Agrippa..

LOOKOUT

My Lord Agrippa, the Gods have set a mysterious light upon the sea - !

AGRIPPA

(looking)

Not the Gods -

LOOKOUT

But it moves toward us!

AGRIPPA

No, it is we who move toward it -
(to a passing
deck OFFICER)

The men are not to be afraid - it is the light of Alexandria. Signal the other galleys..

The officer salutes and leaves. Caesar comes in to stand beside Agrippa. Rufio and Flavius with him..

RUFIO

(excitedly - to Agrippa)

A light to be seen this far at sea - why, we must still have a day and night of sail!

AGRIPPA

Almost..

RUFIO

(to Caesar)

These people, sir, these Alexandrians who can make such a light - who, you tell me, have a library second to none in the world - why are they not better at war?

9 Cont. 1

CAESAR

One reads books indoors, Rufio -
one makes wars outdoors. One cannot
be in two places at once...

(to Agrippa)

My galley will enter the royal harbor
alone. You will land the men at both
the Eastern and Western Harbors. Then
keep all galleys dispersed and under
heavy guard..

(Agrippa nods.)

Caesar moves away
a little. Flavius
is at his side.)

...so, at last I shall see it, Flavius.
Alexander's city. He built it, he
made it the capital of a world that
belonged to him. At thirty-two..

DISSOLVE:

10 EXT. PHAROS - COMPOSITE - DAY

The DISSOLVE is to the TOP OF THE PHAROS, in the f.g.,
with CAESAR'S APPROACHING GALLEYS in the b.g. The oil
lamps are extinguished - but the huge many-faceted
metal reflector continues to revolve, catching and
throwing off the sunlight..

CLOSER. TWO GUARDS - their backs to CAMERA - stare down
at the ships through devices for shielding their eyes
against the sun. One of them runs TOWARD CAMERA, shouts
DOWN and OFF:

GUARD

Ships of Rome! Ships of Rome!

11 EXT. PALACE FORECOURT - ALEXANDRIA - CLOSE - DAY

A gigantic hanging ALARM is struck with great hammers,
alternately by two slaves..

DISSOLVE:

12-13 OUT

14 EXT. HARBOR - ALEXANDRIA - DAY

CAESAR'S GALLEY, sails down, easing toward a landing.
The gunwales are lined by armed soldiers, their shields
turned outward. CAMERA PANS with the galley to DISCLOSE:

THE SQUARE BEFORE THE PALACE. It is occupied by a
teeming market. Stalls and barrows selling wares of
every kind. But all activity is at a standstill. The
eyes of the populace are on the arriving galley..

14 Cont.

THE MARKET CROWD. They watch impassively. Some stroll forward to watch; most, however, remain where they are..

THE GALLEY. Being made fast. The landing stage is run out to the wharf. Some legionnaires trot down it smartly, stand at attention in formation..

THE DECK. CAESAR, followed by RUFIO, AGRIPPA, GERMANICUS, FLAVIUS and some OFFICERS. He crosses to the head of the landing stage, pauses to look at the crowd:

THE MARKET CROWD. They stare up at Caesar, their attitude inscrutable..

THE DECK. Rufio and Germanicus exchange puzzled looks, Caesar purses his lips thoughtfully..

AGRIPPA

We seem to have arrived on their market day -

(to Caesar)

One day each week, they're permitted into the Royal Enclosure..

RUFIO

(breaking in)

Market day or not - where is the guard of honor for Caesar? Some representative, at least, of the royal or military -

A FLOURISH of Egyptian trumpets. Germanicus touches Rufio's arm; indicates:

15 THE PALACE ENTRANCE - DAY

The doors open. The ROYAL RETINUE appears. Great pomp and splendor...

16 THE GALLEY DECK - DAY

The reaction of Caesar and his staff..

17 THE MARKET CROWD - DAY

They turn their backs to Caesar, face the Palace and the emerging PRIESTS and NOBLES..

18 THE PALACE ENTRANCE - DAY

PTOLEMY, with full escort, is carried out on his ornate throne...

19 THE MARKET CROWD - DAY

The entire mass of people prostrates itself before its ruler..

20

THE GALLEY DECK - DAY

As the Romans stare across the prostrate Alexandrians.
No sign of recognition or greeting from the Palace steps.
Caesar's generals are angry..

RUFIO

We'll teach them some manners..

(to Agrippa)

Run up a signal. Have the Tenth
take over the East and South Gates
at once -

CAESAR

No. Keep them out of sight..

(he smiles)

A spontaneous display of loyalty
to King Ptolemy, that's all -
perhaps a little over-rehearsed..

The GONG IS STRUCK in the Palace Forecourt..

21

THE MARKET CROWD - DAY

They rise to their feet, and go about their business of
buying and selling..

22

THE PALACE STEPS - DAY

The young King is hot and uncomfortable. But POTHINOS
is in high good humor as he smiles at ACHILLAS and
THEODOTOS who flank him:

POTHINOS

We shall now have the privilege of
watching Mighty Caesar battle his
way through our market place..

23

THE GALLEY DECK - DAY

Germanicus barks at a YOUNG OFFICER:

GERMANICUS

Marcellus!

(he snaps to
attention)

A dozen front rank men - swords
only - I want a path cleared on a
direct line to the palace steps -
then as many more as you need to
keep it open - !

Marcellus salutes, turns briskly..

CAESAR

Marcellus!

23 Cont.

Marcellus stops, just as briskly. Caesar turns to the bewildered Germanicus..

CAESAR

That is precisely what they hope we will be idiotic enough to do. Manhandle their people. There appears to be at least one good brain under all those hats and wigs..

(to Rufio)

Since this is their market day, Rufio - we shall go marketing.

RUFIO

You're not serious - ?

CAESAR

We shall shop our way to the Palace steps..

(to Flavius)

Do you have my money?

Flavius grins, slaps an enormous money bag at his waist.

CAESAR

Everything is to be paid in coin.

(to Marcellus)

Have the men put away their swords and carry their money bags in hand. They're to move slowly, not too slowly - not too far apart - through the crowd, and to regroup at the foot of the steps..

Marcellus salutes, leaves. Caesar continues, to Rufio and Germanicus:

CAESAR

You two follow behind me...

(to Agrippa)

After you've secured your ships, come to my quarters in the Palace, wherever they are..

Casually, he strolls down the landing plank - followed by Flavius - and into the market. Rufio and Germanicus follow. In the b.g., Marcellus can be seen supervising the legionnaires as they sheath their swords and get out their purses..

24

THE PALACE STEPS - DAY

The royal group exchange mystified looks as they observe the strange Roman manoeuver..

25 FULL SHOT - DAY

As the legionnaires, their armor visible against the crowded civilian background, infiltrate the market place. Smoothly they move from vendor to vendor, from stall to stall - with Caesar leading the way...

26 MOVING CLOSE - CAESAR

He has just left a STALL SELLING ROPE AND TALLOW; in the b.g., Flavius is paying the OWNER. As Caesar proceeds to the next one, some of the VENDORS get out of his way furtively, but a FEW smile and show their wares. He pauses before a:

STALL displaying OIL and WINE in amphorae. The OWNER bows humbly..

CAESAR

Ah, the oil of olives - and wine
from Samos. How much for your wine?
(the owner holds
up four fingers)
Four drachmae?

Flavius comes up. He is visibly outraged at the price..

CAESAR

Sixty of the wine for my men -
(to Flavius)

Pay him.
(Flavius holds up
four fingers
incredulously as
though to ask: four?)

Pay him.

Caesar walks on. CAMERA HOLDS ON Flavius, who turns angrily to the stall-owner. He holds up two fingers. The owner yells in pain. Flavius starts away. The owner grabs him. He holds up three fingers. Flavius nods, and pays...

CAESAR. He is now surrounded by smiling, eager vendors and shoppers. He holds in his arms the BABY of one of the WOMEN. He dandles it, he kisses it - just as Flavius comes up. A reaction of distaste from Flavius... but the crowd loves it. Caesar hands back the baby, takes a piece of cheese from a VENDOR'S tray as he moves on..

CAESAR

Give them each a coin - and stop
haggling!

Flavius gives a coin to the woman. He gives a coin to the cheese vendor, takes a piece for himself. He bites into it, gags. He takes the coin back from the cheese vendor, and follows Caesar..

27

THE PALACE STEPS - DAY

POTHINOS, ACHILLAS and THEODOTOS watch grimly as the ROMANS make their way through the ever-more-friendly crowd. PTOLEMY stirs fretfully, snaps at them:

PTOLEMY

You said the Romans were going to push the people back and make them angry - why aren't they doing what you said they'd do?

Pothinos remains silent..

ACHILLAS

Your king has asked you a question, Lord Chamberlain..

POTHINOS

The - ah - Romans have degenerated minds, Most High Majesty, they - ah - do the unexpected..

ACHILLAS

Particularly one Roman. The master of the unexpected..

THEODOTOS

...but with so few men.

He smiles blandly. So does Pothinos. But not Achilles..

28

THE MARKET PLACE - DAY

CAESAR. Near the palace steps. CAMERA WITH HIM - to a FLOWER SELLER. She is an AGED CRONE who stares up at Caesar antagonistically. Nearby, some PRETTY YOUNG GIRLS. Their smiles are much more friendly..

CAESAR

Ah, the famous desert rose of Alexandria...

(he scoops them
all up)

Surprised, mother? In the arms of a Roman, but they haven't turned black -

The young girls giggle. The crone remains stony-faced. Flavius comes up. Caesar hands him the roses.

CAESAR

If you don't wither them, nothing will -

The girls laugh again. Caesar looks over, smiles and winks at them. He pulls one single rose from Flavius' arms...smells it:

28 Cont.

CAESAR

They should be sold only to young
lovers...

(he bows to the
old crone, presents
her with it)

...much too dangerous for you and
me, eh, mother?

The old crone takes the rose. Slowly, she breaks into
a toothless grin. In sudden shyness, she holds her
hand to her face and turns away..

The crowd around them roars with laughter and approval.
Caesar starts up the Palace steps..

RUFIO. Not far away. He grins admiringly..

RUFIO

Hail, Caesar..

He continues on..

29

EXT. PALACE ENTRANCE - DAY

As CAESAR, followed by FLAVIUS, mounts the steps to
confront the Royal party..

During the ensuing SCENE, the Roman legionnaires finish
their infiltration through the market-place and assume
pre-arranged positions. RUFIO, GERMANICUS, and OTHER
OFFICERS gradually make their way to Caesar's side...

At Caesar's approach, the Royal retinue bows formally -
all except PTOLEMY, of course. Caesar eyes them affably:

CAESAR

You all look so impressive. Which
of you is King?

POTHINOS

(ritually)

His Divine Majesty, my Lord Ptolemy,
Lord of the Upper Regions and of
the Lower Regions, Son of Ra, of
Horus and of Thoth, Beloved of Ptah -

The PRIESTS murmur in unison. Caesar interrupts:

CAESAR

-etcetera, etcetera, you welcome me.
And I, Gaius Julius Caesar, Consul
of the Roman Senate, Pontifex Maximus,
etcetera, etcetera, thank you. From
the Senate and People of Rome, hail
to King Ptolemy and -

29 Cont.

CAESAR (cont'd.)
 (he makes a show of
 looking for her)
 - his sister and co-ruler, Queen
 Cleopatra?

There is a slight pause. Ptolemy speaks up:

PTOLEMY
 They won't tell you so - but
 Cleopatra is dead! She tried to
 kill me - and then we chased her
 into the desert - and she died
 there...

POTHINOS
 (breaks in smoothly)
 Ah - whereas it is true that His
 Majesty's sister repeatedly plotted
 to have him killed, it is not true
 that Cleopatra is dead. Whereas it
 is true that she - ah - fled from
 Alexandria -

CAESAR
 (breaks in)
 I seem to be forever interrupting
 you, but the search for truth can
 go on and on...Pothinos, isn't it?
 Lord Chamberlain and Chief Eunuch to
 King Ptolemy?
 (Pothinos nods)
 An exalted rank, attained not without
 certain - shall we say - sacrifice..?
 (he moves to
 Theodotos)
 ...Theodotos, am I right? Tutor to
 His Majesty in history, philosophy
 and - ambition...
 (he moves to Achilles)
 ...and Achilles. I am told you're a
 good soldier. As one to another,
 then - where is Queen Cleopatra?

ACHILLAS
 With her army.

CAESAR
 And how many of your men between her
 and Alexandria?

ACHILLAS
 Enough.

THEODOTOS

May I speak? Surely you have come here in peace, Mighty Caesar - nor do we present ourselves to you in anything but warm and respectful welcome..

POTHINOS

Actually, our only problem being an internal one of concern only to us - why have you come, Caesar?

CAESAR

(smiles)

Must it be stated? Perhaps it is just as well. As we all know, when the father of both Ptolemy and Cleopatra died - he named the two of them to rule jointly over Egypt. Rome was appointed their guardian, and the executor of his will. I have come, in the name of Rome, to ask why Queen Cleopatra has been deposed - to resolve the differences between her and Ptolemy - and to see that they peacefully resume their joint rulership of Egypt..

POTHINOS

That will be difficult. Cleopatra has forfeited her right -

CAESAR

I shall try to decide justly..

PTOLEMY

(an outburst)

No, no, no!

(lividly - at his advisors)

It never works out the way you say it will! 'Oh, we'll welcome Caesar nicely and let him get tired of waiting for Cleopatra, and then he'll recognize you as the true King and go back to Rome' - don't you see he's going to send for her? He's going to bring Cleopatra back!

THEODOTOS

(quickly)

Surely it is obvious, Great Caesar, how she has terrorized this poor boy -

CAESAR

It is true, your Majesty, that I have, in fact, already summoned Cleopatra. But General Achilles has undoubtedly made sure she will neither receive my summons nor be able to answer it..

PTOLEMY

Cleopatra will find a way. She knows witchcraft, she can assume many forms - her favorite one is the butterfly..

(half-rising from his throne, calling out:)

...are there any here now? Bring them to me if there are!

(to Caesar - sadly)

I kill as many as I can - but it's never the right one...

POTHINOS

(nervously)

The sun which sheds its grace upon the Ruler of the Two Lands - burns too brightly perhaps. If our Lord Ptolemy - ah - wishes to retire -

PTOLEMY

I wish nothing of the kind! I'm not going to be put out of the way until I've watched you give him that - !

He points at a large wicker-covered crock which stands nearby. Caesar turns alertly to look at it..

POTHINOS

A thousand pardons, Divine Majesty, I had almost forgotten...

(smiling, to Caesar)

...my Lord Ptolemy wishes to enhance his welcome to Caesar by a - gift of some importance..

CAESAR

(eyes on the crock)

Most generous...

POTHINOS

You spoke so convincingly of your reasons for visiting Egypt - it quite escaped my mind that you were omitting one further, more personal, purpose for coming here..

CAESAR

(beginning to suspect)
Say what you have to say quickly
and simply, Pothinos..

PTOLEMY

(eagerly)
The ring! Give him Pompey's ring - !

Caesar looks sharply at Ptolemy, then at Achilles -
who holds out his clenched fist to Caesar. He opens
it, to disclose on his palm: POMPEY'S RING..

Slowly, Caesar takes it. His entire attention is now
fixed on the wicker crock..

RUFIO, GERMANICUS and other officers. Their attention,
too...

THE ROMAN LEGIONNAIRES. In the vicinity of the crock.
Although at rigid attention, their eyes flicker toward
it..

POTHINOS smiles blandly..

POTHINOS

And now, the token of His Majesty's
affection for Rome - and regard for
Caesar..

He gestures toward the jar..

A NUBIAN SLAVE lifts off the lid and plunges his hand
into the mixture of wine and honey it contains. When
the top of the object he pulls out is barely visible:

CAESAR. A sharp intake of breath and a tightening of
the jaw his only visible reaction..

THEODOTOS AND ACHILLAS. The scholar smiles proudly;
Achillas grimly watches Caesar..

THEODOTOS

Dead men, they say, do not bite..

THE LEGIONNAIRES. A stirring in their ranks. A look
from GERMANICUS, and they are still..

PTOLEMY. He leans forward eagerly..

PTOLEMY

Does it please you, Caesar? They
said it would please you very much..

CAESAR. He squints up at the sun. Then to Ptolemy..

CAESAR

The sun does shed its grace too
brightly...

(to Pothinos,
coldly)

It has become too hot here for Kings.

Pothinos nods. He claps his hands:

POTHINOS

My Lord Ptolemy will retire..!

Ptolemy starts to object - but Caesar's expression stops him. The Nubians lift his throne, the priests gather around it. Caesar turns to Rufio..

CAESAR

(quiet bitterness)

For His Majesty - a Roman Guard
of Honor..

Rufio signals MARCELLUS, positioned by the Legionnaires. A platoon forms quickly about the King's throne; it escorts him into the Palace..

Caesar regards Pothinos, Theodotos and Achilles with a cold, unwavering look...

CAESAR

It was not by your hand, of course...

ACHILLAS

If, as you say, you've been told of
me - you know better, Caesar.

CAESAR

(nods; then, to
Pothinos)

My troops are to be properly fed
and properly housed..

THEODOTOS

May I speak - ?

CAESAR

Not until you are spoken to.

(continuing to
Pothinos)

For myself, I shall require rooms
in the Palace..

POTHINOS

They are in readiness for you, Great
Caesar. I shall consider myself
honored personally to escort you..

CAESAR

Anyone but you...
 (he turns from him,
 crosses to Rufio)
 Find the rest of Pompey. Tear out
 a thousand tongues, but find him.
 Have him purified, the coin in his
 mouth, and the rest - honorably..

RUFIO

Of course..

Caesar looks down at Pompey's ring. Then he turns to enter the Palace. Alone, except for Flavius behind him..

Germanicus and some legionnaires follow Caesar. Two Romans are now in charge of the crock. Rufio gestures to them. They follow him, carrying it down toward Caesar's galley..

The Palace Steps have become empty of Romans...

Pothinos, Theodotos and Achilles are left, together with some attendant Egyptian soldiers and dignitaries..

ACHILLAS

He was not pleased.

POTHINOS

No, he was not. Achilles, you must return to your army immediately - and Cleopatra must be destroyed at once..

ACHILLAS

And then - ?

THEODOTOS

If, instead of a scholar, I were a general - do you know what would fill my dreams at night, Achilles?
 (Achillas looks
 at him)

To make the history which scholars but record and teach. As that man will, who - as someone, sometime, must - destroys the Mighty Caesar..

He smiles nervously. So does Pothinos. But not Achilles..

ACHILLAS

Just once more, let me say it.
Julius Caesar does not sail into
the harbor of a country - possibly
unfriendly - with barely enough
troops to hold the Royal Enclosure,
let alone the City of Alexandria..

THEODOTOS

But he has, my dear Achilles..

ACHILLAS

So it appears..

POTHINOS

I have never known a General more
reluctant to accept easy immortality..

He touches Theodotos with his fan. They and their
followers start into The Palace..

Achillas remains alone for an instant. He chews
nervously at his lip. Then, as if in decision, he
turns and strides away. His officers follow..

Their path is through the crowd, and it is cleared
for them savagely and swiftly by guards manhandling
the people in brutal fashion...

DISSOLVE:

INT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT - DAY

AGRIPPA and RUFIO enter. CAMERA with THEM as they cross
to CAESAR, at one of the openings to the terrace..

Five or six LEGIONNAIRES, under MARCELLUS, are busy
getting Caesar's gear into place. Some chests, his
bed, etc. A CLERK of the Legion is laying out maps,
dividers, rulers, etc., on Caesar's table. FLAVIUS
unpacks and arranges Caesar's armor and wardrobe..

Caesar stares absently out to sea. He holds Pompey's
ring in one hand, a gold chain in the other..

The two officers exchange the briefest of looks before
Agrippa speaks:

AGRIPPA

Both the Tenth and Twelfth are
landed, Caesar - and all ships
secure..

Caesar, still turned away:

CAESAR

Pompey - ?

30 Cont.

RUFIO

Everything done properly - with
full honors..

Caesar turns to them. He tries not to betray the deep
emotional identification he feels with Pompey's fate..

CAESAR

One mistake. If Pompey's one mistake
at Pharsalia had been mine instead
of his - it would have been my head..

He starts to put Pompey's ring on the golden chain.
Suddenly his hand jerks in a spasm-like contraction.
The ring clatters to the floor..

FLAVIUS. He whirls instantly in reaction to the SOUND.
He hurries across to pick up the ring, brings it to
Caesar. He looks up at him with concern..

CAESAR

(tensely)
Rings have been dropped before -
finish your work!

Flavius nods, and withdraws. The Clerk and other
Legionnaires have already done their chores and left..

Caesar pinches the bridge of his nose - a characteristic,
and sometimes effective, gesture of the epileptic in an
effort to stop the cycle of muscular spasm before it
fully develops....he turns to Rufio and Agrippa:

CAESAR

(to Agrippa)
Without weakening the security of
our ships, have you enough men to
occupy the causeway that flanks
them?

AGRIPPA

Only just..

CAESAR

Then do it. Our escape to the sea -
if it becomes necessary - must be
there for us..

RUFIO

General Achilles has left the Palace -
and the city - to rejoin his army..

CAESAR

Already? I assume he intends to wipe
out Cleopatra's handful of mercenaries
as quickly as possible - then bring
the rest of his army back here..

30 Cont. 1

AGRIPPA

(smiling)

To, wipe you out - ?

CAESAR

It's quite a temptation, you'll admit...well, he won't be at us for the remainder of today at any rate. Rufio, see that the gates are well manned - use the Tenth Slingers. We'll meet again here for the evening meal, and talk further -

He has crossed to sit on his bed. Rufio and Agrippa start out -

CAESAR

- and, Rufio...

(Rufio pauses)

You might alert the night watch. In case Cleopatra manages to get word through. Anything strange or unusual is to be reported..

(he smiles)

A night-butterfly, perhaps..

Rufio and Agrippa go out. Flavius follows them to the door, bolts it securely. Then he returns to Caesar..

Caesar, sitting on his bed, has put Pompey's ring on the golden chain. He watches it dangle..

Flavius gets on the bed, kneels behind Caesar's back. Professionally, soothingly, he starts to massage Caesar's neck and shoulders..

CAESAR

Don't worry, I'm not going to have an attack - it's come and gone..ah, that's good...the Falling Sickness. A stupid thing to call it, and insulting - deeper, Flavius, deeper - doesn't everyone, in his time, fall? It's just that some of us fall from greater heights than others..

His eyes are closed, his voice trails off. Flavius continues his soothing rub. CAMERA RESTS ON: Pompey's ring, dangling from Caesar's hand, swinging to and fro...

DISSOLVE:

31

FULL SHOT - ROYAL HARBOR - NIGHT

Huge braziers and many large torches bathe the entire enclosure in irregular patterns of light and shadow...

31 Cont.

The Palace itself is patrolled by ROMAN LEGIONNAIRES..

The waterfront and the "Jetty" are under watch by EGYPTIAN SOLDIERS. A small GROUP OF OFFICERS - (the leader's name is HAKIM) - play at backgammon on the Harbor steps..

Suddenly - from the jetty - a SHOUTED CHALLENGE. BOWMEN, and guards carrying torches, run toward it..

The officers scramble to their feet, look off:

32 HAKIM'S P.O.V. - NIGHT

A small boat appears through an arch under the "jetty". In the boat are four or five rolled-up rugs..

APOLLODORUS, disguised as a rug merchant, propels the boat from the stern. Crouched in the bow, also disguised, is CHARMIAN...

33 APOLLODORUS' P.O.V. - NIGHT

Hakim, flanked by officers and bowmen, gesturing for Apollodorus to come in...

HAKIM
(shouting)
You, there! Bring your boat in!

34 APOLLODORUS - IN THE BOAT - NIGHT

He and Charmian exchange a quick look. He sets up a loud wail:

APOLLODORUS
A thousand pardons, Mighty Ones!
Some unkind fate has brought this
unfortunate seller of rugs by
mistake into the Royal Harbor! I
hasten to go - !

He sculls quickly, turning the boat..

35 HAKIM - ON THE STEPS - NIGHT

He signals a couple of nearby bowmen. They let fly..

36 THE BOAT - NIGHT

One of the arrows misses; the other buries itself in one of the rugs. Charmian cries out, throws herself over the rugs..

36 Cont.

APOLLODORUS

Well and truly shot, oh mighty one!
 All Egypt gives thanks to Isis to
 be guarded by such an arm! I go!
 I go - !

HAKIM'S VOICE

Come in at once - or be stuck like
 a pig!

Again, Apollodorus and Charmian exchange looks.
 Grimly, Apollodorus heads toward the steps..

APOLLODORUS

(still wailing:)

I come! I come - ! Have mercy,
 great and noble ones...

He sculls his boat out of CAMERA..

37 THE HARBOR STEPS - NIGHT

Hakim, a few officers and men - the rest have returned
 to their stations - await the boat. It is preceded by
 Apollodorus' wail..

APOLLODORUS' VOICE

...it is so seldom that we bring
 our miserable rugs to the city -
 but being told that the dull-witted
 Romans have come with much gold -

The boat eases into CAMERA, comes to a stop against the
 steps..

APOLLODORUS

- it was my misfortune of a wife who
 became dazzled by the lights and
 misled me here to the Royal steps..!
 (snarling at Charmian)
 Curse the day I relieved your father
 of an unwanted daughter!

CHARMIAN

(likewise)

Hasten the day I shall be rid of an
 unwanted husband!

The boat is held fast by soldiers. Hakim, javelin in
 hand, comes down the steps to it..

HAKIM

Stop your squabbling, get out of the
 boat - I want to see this miserable
 merchandise of yours..

37 Cont.

Apollodorus starts out. As he passes Charmian, she stands. Rudely he shoves her down - on a particular rug..

CHARMIAN

See, masters, how gentle, how loving a man I have - if only he were a man when it matters most to a woman!

Hakim laughs. He's in the boat, poking idly at the rugs...he stands by Charmian..

HAKIM

Here, let me see you.....stand up -

Charmian rises very slowly, her body close to Hakim's. Only her eyes can be seen through the hood she wears. Roughly, he throws it back...

She stares at him provocatively, her lips parted, her bodice opened beyond the legal limit. Hakim's eyes gleam..

HAKIM

An unwanted daughter, eh? Has your father any more?

CHARMIAN

(cooly)

There is only one like me..

HAKIM

(up at Apollodorus)

Peddler, you've been selling the wrong merchandise!

The officers laugh. Apollodorus gestures miserably..

CHARMIAN

How often have I told him I could make our fortune in a day - if he were not so jealous!

HAKIM

(laughs)

Let him make his own, then - his way - and you, yours - your way...!

He takes her hand, leads her to the top of the stairs. Charmian smiles invitingly at the other officers..

HAKIM

(to Apollodorus)

Take your motheaten rugs, and go -

(to the officers)

- bring the dice!

(to Charmian)

We'll need them, eh?

37 Cont. 1

Charmian laughs with them. Without a glance at Apollodorus, she hurries toward a shadowed area with the officers..

Apollodorus calls after them, sadly:

APOLLODORUS

Oh, mighty ones - would you rob
me of everything - ?

He looks around carefully. Swiftly, he descends the steps, gets into the boat..

Carefully, he hoists one tied-up rug to his shoulder. Hurriedly - but casually - he mounts the steps with it, heads toward the Palace..

38 EXT. SHADOWED AREA - NIGHT

Charmian, with a throaty laugh, breaks away from Hakim's impassioned caress. Another officer reaches for her. Coyly, she eludes him - and manages to sneak a look in the direction taken by Apollodorus:

39 CHARMIAN'S P.O.V. - NIGHT

Apollodorus, the rug on his shoulder, heading toward the side of the Palace..

40 SHADOWED AREA - NIGHT

Charmian sighs with relief. The officer comes at her again. She clouts him on the side of the head. She uses hands and feet, yells bloody murder:

CHARMIAN

(screaming)

Help! Help! Rape! Murder! Rape!

41 EXT. SIDE OF PALACE - NIGHT

MARCELLUS and a ROMAN GUARD. They hear Charmian's screams; they start toward them on the run...CAMERA PANNING THEM TO:

APOLLODORUS. Hidden, as the Romans pass through..

Apollodorus blows a kiss in Charmian's direction, then hurries with his precious bundle into the Palace..

42 INT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CAESAR, RUFIO, AGRIPPA, GERMANICUS, and ATTENDANT OFFICERS. They are working over a map of Alexandria, fastened to the map table by daggers.

42 Cont.

Caesar wears Pompey's ring, on the golden chain, about his neck. From time to time, he presses the bridge of his nose..

CAESAR

(indicating)

We must consider the Royal Enclosure as a city within a city. For the time being this is what we must hold - the Moon Gate and three others. Here, here and here -

(to Rufio)

- how are we placed?

RUFIO

The Tenth slingers on the Moon Gate, the rest in reserve. The Twelfth holding all other positions - very thin, Caesar..

CAESAR

For the time being, deep enough -
(to Germanicus)

Have you tested these wells?

GERMANICUS

The water's brackish, but fit to drink -

CAESAR

- so far. Keep an eye on them. Watch the corn and wheat..

AGRIPPA

(confidently)

Why, with our supplies secure, we could hold indefinitely -

CAESAR

A week, perhaps - but for the time being, time enough..

His hand goes to the bridge of his nose..

AGRIPPA

(a bit irritated)

You keep saying that.

CAESAR

(absently)

Do I, Agrippa? What?

AGRIPPA

'For the time being'. How much time, time for what - ?

He is interrupted by:

42 Cont. 1

FLAVIUS. Who comes in excitedly, a ROMAN SENTRY behind him, the door left open:

CAESAR

What do you want?

Flavius acts out his news. The pantomime will, of course, be clear to the audience and a puzzle to Caesar's officers: that a tall man carrying a rug has come to give it to Caesar as a gift from Queen Cleopatra..

CAESAR

(to Flavius)

Can he be trusted?

Flavius hesitates, then nods. Caesar turns to his officers...

CAESAR

It seems that someone has brought me a gift. From Queen Cleopatra..

Flavius pulls Caesar's sleeve, pantomimes to him..

CAESAR

Apparently a rug peddler, but Flavius doubts it. He seems to know the Palace extremely well - popped into the corridor out of a secret passage none of our men knew about..

GERMANICUS

I wouldn't put it past Pothinos to send an assassin in Cleopatra's name..

CAESAR

(to the sentry)

Have him come in..

The sentry goes out. Caesar, Agrippa, Rufio and Germanicus all face the door. The last three hold their hands in readiness upon their swords..

APOLLODORUS comes in. He now carries the rug in his arms as if it were a bride being carried over a threshold. He confronts the four men:

RUFIO

Are you the one who brings a gift from Cleopatra?

(Apollodorus nods)

Then put it down - and go.

APOLLODORUS

It is the command of my Queen that
I deliver her gift personally to
Caesar..

AGRIPPA

(steps forward)

I am Caesar. Lay it here before
me..

APOLLODORUS

(smiles)

Forgive me, my Lord Admiral Agrippa,
but you're not Caesar. Nor you,
General Rufio - nor you, Germanicus.
Even if I had not studied your
likenesses - there is only one here
who wears no sword..

(to Caesar)

..and my Queen's gift is for the eyes
of Caesar, alone.

CAESAR

That rug seems harmless enough..

RUFIO

No, Caesar -

CAESAR

But you might loan me your sword,
Rufio. It may require some cutting...

Reluctantly, the officers leave. Apollodorus, Caesar
and the rug are alone..

CAESAR

That's an odd way to carry a rug.
Wouldn't it be easier to sling it
over your shoulder..?

APOLLODORUS

(setting it down
carefully)

It was less comfortable that way..

CAESAR

(approaching it)

For you - or the rug?

He stands over it, Rufio's sword in hand..

APOLLODORUS

(hastily)

That sword, Caesar - the rug is
such a delicate weave - if I may
untie it for you...?

42 Cont. 3

CAESAR

Turn it over first..

APOLLODORUS

(aghast)

What?

CAESAR

Turn it over.

APOLLODORUS

But - but - the rug is now right
side up...

CAESAR

I understand. I want it wrong
side up...(Apollodorus stares
at him)...shall I flip it over with my
sword?

APOLLODORUS

No, no...

Reluctantly and tenderly, he turns the bundle over..

CAESAR

I find one can always tell more
about the quality of merchandise -
by examining the backside first..Then, deftly he cuts the cords with his sword. He
reaches down and with a quick motion unrolls the rug..CLOSE - CLEOPATRA. As she rises slightly with the
lifting of the rug, then drops back - on her face,
backside up.CAESAR - staring down...APOLLODORUS - rigid with apprehension..CLEOPATRA - her face grimy and sweaty, she turns it
slowly to look up at Caesar..APOLLODORUS. Simultaneously, ritually, he starts to
intone:

APOLLODORUS

All hail Cleopatra - kindred of
Horus and of Ra - Beloved of the
Moon and Sun - daughter to Isis -
and of Upper and Lower Egypt, Queen..CAESAR. The inappropriateness of Apollodorus' majestic
introduction strikes him as funny. He starts to laugh..

42 Cont. 4

CLEOPATRA. She sits up. A thousand aches hit her from having been rolled up so long. She groans...

APOLLODORUS. He can't help himself. He, too, starts to laugh..

CLEOPATRA. Glaring at him. Then at Caesar. Then the absurdity of her position hits her, as well. She smiles..

Caesar helps her to her feet. She stretches, stiffly. Caesar crosses to a table, scribbles on a wax tablet, presses his stamp into it. He hands the tablet to Apollodorus:

CAESAR

Here - give this to the Commander of the Night Watch. He'll see that the Queen's quarters are made ready and available to her..

Apollodorus bows, starts backing out...

CLEOPATRA

Stay where you are.
(Apollodorus does so)
Have I dismissed you?

APOLLODORUS

No, your Majesty..

CLEOPATRA

(to Caesar)
This is my palace. All of it is therefore available to me at my will. I am not your prisoner, Caesar - if anything, you are my guest..

CAESAR

(a short bow)
Most kind..

CLEOPATRA

As for having my quarters - as you put it - made ready. Charmian, my chief handmaiden, has by now brought the others out of hiding. They should almost have finished -

CAESAR

I'm afraid that's impossible. We've had the doors under heavy guard..

CLEOPATRA

There are doors - and doors..

CAESAR

Ah, of course. You must take me on a tour some time - within the walls of your palace. By the way, we've plugged quite a few peep-holes in these..

CLEOPATRA

Yes, I notice you found most of them...
(to Apollodorus)
..what are you waiting for?

APOLLODORUS

Permission to leave..

CLEOPATRA

Granted.

Apollodorus bows, and starts out.

CLEOPATRA

Apollodorus -
(he pauses. She
looks at him in a
way meant only for
him)
- thank you.

Apollodorus smiles. He has been amply repaid. He goes out..

Caesar pinches at his nose..

CAESAR

Well. I'm pleased that you received my summons after all, and were able to -

CLEOPATRA

Summons? I'm pleased to say I received nothing of the kind - and surprised that you thought I'd answer one -

CAESAR

(patiently)
Young lady. The voyage in your non-magic carpet has apparently not tired you, but I have had an exhausting day..

He reaches aimlessly for a piece of fruit in a large bowl..

42 Cont. 6

CLEOPATRA

It is essential that we understand each other, Caesar. Only through me can you hope to escape from the desperate situation in which you find yourself.

(Caesar, about to bite, stares at her)

I wouldn't bite into that if I were you. Did you bring it with you?

(he shakes his head)

Have you had it tasted? If neither, it's probably poisoned..

CAESAR

At least, it's another way out of the desperate situation in which I find myself..

He bites, and chews away..

CLEOPATRA

You're being tolerant of me, aren't you? Is it because you're so much older..?

Caesar stops chewing. Cleopatra has crossed to his map table. She glances down..

CLEOPATRA

Your maps are inferior and out of date -

CAESAR

They, and I, have aged together..

CLEOPATRA

- compared to mine. The lakes to the west are poorly marked - certain important hill positions are not even noted..

CAESAR

I must arrange for you to address my map-makers and general staff..

CLEOPATRA

We've gotten off to a bad start, haven't we? I've done nothing but rub you the wrong way -

CAESAR

I'm not sure that I want to be rubbed by you at all, young lady..

He sits. Cleopatra looks at him for a moment..

CAESAR

It is permissible for me to sit,
isn't it?

CLEOPATRA

Caesar. As quickly as possible,
you must set me alone on the Throne
of Egypt..

CAESAR

(firmly)

My mission here is to put an end to
the tiresome squabbling between your
brother and you -

CLEOPATRA

(interrupting)

You're not a fool! Or are you?

CAESAR

Immodestly, perhaps - no.

CLEOPATRA

You've seen my brother - and listened
to him? And the truly evil men to
whom he belongs?

CAESAR

(a bit uncomfortably)

Yes..

CLEOPATRA

Shall we agree, you and I, upon what
Rome really wants - has always wanted -
of Egypt? Corn, grain, treasure.
It's the old story. Roman greatness
based upon Egyptian riches. You shall
have them, you shall have them all.
And in peace. But there is only one
way. My way. Make me Queen.

CAESAR

(coldly)

That sounds very much like an
ultimatum -

CLEOPATRA

There is no other way.

CAESAR

From one whose total assets, up to
a few minutes ago, were two devoted
slaves and a rolled-up carpet..

CLEOPATRA

But now I have you, Caesar. Besides, there are my armies - and the simple fact that no mortal hand can destroy me..

CAESAR

Ah, yes. I seem to recall some mention of an obsession you have about your divinity...Isis, isn't it?

CLEOPATRA

(simply)

I shall have to insist that you mind what you say. I am Isis. I am worshipped by millions who believe it. You are not to confuse what I am with the so-called divine origin which every Roman general seems to acquire together with his shield - it was Venus you chose to be descended from, wasn't it?

Caesar rises abruptly. He's had enough..

CAESAR

I must now do a little insisting of my own. First, your journey has tired you, after all, and you wish to retire -

CLEOPATRA

I'm not your servant, Caesar. Don't dismiss me..

CAESAR

Secondly, you have no armies, young lady. Such as they were, they are gone. Because you could not pay them. The riches of Egypt are obviously not available even for your own use, much less to give away -

(he starts for
the door)

- perhaps, in a day or two, we shall speak again..

CLEOPATRA

(sits deliberately)

That may be too late - for both of us..

CAESAR

For the time being, every precaution will be taken to keep your presence in the Palace a secret from Pothinos and -

CLEOPATRA

(up again, breaking in:)
How can you know so little about
where you are - and what you're
doing? Even now, as we talk, the
news of my arrival is being spread
by a thousand tongues -

CAESAR

Your safety will be my responsibility..

CLEOPATRA

And what about your own?

CAESAR

I am prepared, I believe. For
the time being...

CLEOPATRA

Oh, I hope so...
(she starts for the
door, hesitates)
I hope you are as wise, as brilliant -
the God they say you are. You Roman
generals become divine so quickly.
A few victories, a few massacres....
only yesterday Pompey was a God.
They murdered him, didn't they?

Caesar's hand goes to Pompey's ring..

CAESAR

Yes..

CLEOPATRA

Because they thought it would please
you. It didn't, did it?

CAESAR

No..

CLEOPATRA

That was stupid of them. But then,
forgive me, Pompey was stupid, too..

CAESAR

Perhaps. Yet everyone is somebody's
hero. Today, I - found myself
remembering how my daughter loved
him. She died trying to bear him
a son. She gave him this ring...

He takes the chain from about his neck, holds it out.
Cleopatra crosses to look at it. Then up at Caesar:

CLEOPATRA

(gently)

Yes...you must be very tired.
Sleep well tonight, Caesar. These
next days may be difficult for you.
Goodnight.

She crosses to the door, opens it. RUFIO, AGRIPPA,
and GERMANICUS are waiting to come in. As they enter:

CAESAR

(to Germanicus)

Germanicus, a guard to escort Queen
Cleopatra to her apartments..

Germanicus barks an order into the corridor. A guard
of enormous Romans forms about Cleopatra. Almost lost
in their midst, she smiles up at them..

CLEOPATRA

The corridors are dark, gentlemen,
but you mustn't be afraid. I am
with you..

And she sweeps off, like a canoe with an escort of
battleships..

Rufio and Agrippa approach Caesar at his map table.
He's exhausted; he tries to whip his weary brain into
completing the business at hand..

RUFIO

Don't you think we've covered about
everything we can tonight, sir?
Perhaps a fresh start in the morning -

CAESAR

No, there are a few more matters....
for one thing, Rufio, has it occurred
to you that our maps of this area are
not quite what they should be?

RUFIO

Why, no - what makes you think
they're not - ?

CAESAR

I have an instinct about such things..

PALACE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

CLEOPATRA, enveloped by her guard, on the way to her
apartments. As they pass CAMERA, out of a shadowed
hiding-place appears LOTOS. One of Cleopatra's
handmaidens..

43 Cont.

Frightened, Lotos looks after Cleopatra - then hurries OFF in the opposite direction..

44 INT. CLEOPATRA'S APARTMENTS - NIGHT

As CLEOPATRA enters. The GUARD remains outside, but GERMANICUS follows her in...

With APOLLODORUS and CHARMIAN at their head, her PERSONAL STAFF awaits Cleopatra. HANDMAIDENS, MUSICIANS, THE BLIND RECITER, BATH ATTENDANTS, etc....

Beaming with happiness, they all prostrate themselves - except Charmian, Apollodorus, and THE BLIND RECITER..

CLEOPATRA

(delighted)

Oh get up, all of you - it's so good to see you again - !

(to Charmian)

Nothing taken or destroyed?

CHARMIAN

Everything just where we had hidden it..

APOLLODORUS

Even the library - it's been left in perfect order..

CLEOPATRA

(grimly)

How certain they must have been that I'd never return..

She moves on to the Blind Reciter. (PHOEBUS). He turns his blind eyes toward her as she approaches. His hand goes out; she gives him hers. He kisses it..

CLEOPATRA

And you, Phoebus - who has taken care of you all this time - ?

PHOEBUS

(smiles)

The eyes that have always seen for me, your Majesty...

CLEOPATRA

Eiras! Where is she?

There is a joyous cry from the direction of the bath. A lovely blonde YOUNG GIRL - no more than fourteen - hurries toward Cleopatra, tearful with happiness. She sinks at her feet...

44 Cont.

EIRAS

Majesty, majesty...

CLEOPATRA

(raising her)

Eiras....but you're no longer a
child. You've grown so..

EIRAS

While you were gone - it was as
if the sun had been taken away..Cleopatra kisses her. Then, turning, becomes aware
of:Germanicus. Still present, awe-struck by the opulence
and beauty surrounding him..

CLEOPATRA

You.

(Germanicus comes
to attention)

You may go now..

GERMANICUS

Yes, your Majesty.

CLEOPATRA

And as you go, take with you those
over-sized blockheads outside my
door..

GERMANICUS

Caesar requires that your guard
remain..

CLEOPATRA

He does, does he?

(she whips her dagger
out of its sheath)And what if I should stab one of
them?

GERMANICUS

Your Majesty will be disarmed -
and the guard replaced..

CLEOPATRA

Typical Roman bluff - we'll see
about that..!

She dashes to the door, whips it open -

APOLLODORUS

Your Majesty! Please..
(she turns to him)
For the time being..

44 Cont. 1

Cleopatra subsides. Germanicus holds out his hand for the dagger..

GERMANICUS

May I - ?

CLEOPATRA

No. Not until after I've stabbed one of you..

Germanicus bows, and goes. Cleopatra waits. Then she opens the door swiftly. The guard is there, in full force. She slams the door, turns on Apollodorus..

CLEOPATRA

'For the time being!. You're beginning to sound like Caesar..

She starts toward the secret aperture, Apollodorus with her..

APOLLODORUS

I meant only that you should have as much protection as possible -

CLEOPATRA

You admire him, don't you?

APOLLODORUS

(quietly)
The question is - how much do you?

CLEOPATRA

(ignoring his point)
Protection! Guards outside bedroom doors while destruction hangs over him, over all of us - a prisoner in my own palace, my destiny in the hands of a man who eats unwashed fruit..

They've arrived at the statue which hides the secret passage. She swings it open...she enters. Apollodorus follows. The statue closes behind them..

45

INT. SECRET PASSAGEWAY - NIGHT

Cleopatra starts down the passage..

APOLLODORUS

Cleopatra..

She stops. He comes up to her. Almost savagely, they kiss - as if to satisfy a desperate immediate physical need. Cleopatra draws away...then they go on.

45 Cont.

They arrive at the other side of the Sphinx over the door in Caesar's apartment. Cleopatra removes the two tiny eyepieces painted to match the color of her eyes.

She looks through:

46 CLEOPATRA'S P.O.V. - CAESAR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CAESAR at his map table. RUFIO and AGRIPPA alongside. FLAVIUS serves wine to the two generals; there is no glass before Caesar..

Agrippa is reading from parchments. Rufio holds some in his hands, too..

AGRIPPA

(reading)

"...actually of Macedonian descent, no Egyptian blood - officially admitted, that is - "

(he looks up)

I wish Cicero would spare us his personal comments on these reports...

CAESAR

(his eyes almost shut with weariness)

That's all Cicero is. One endless personal comment..

AGRIPPA

(continues to read)

"...reputed to be extremely intelligent, and sharp of wit. Queen Cleopatra is widely read, well versed in the natural sciences and mathematics. She speaks seven languages proficiently - "

47 PASSAGEWAY - CLEOPATRA - WATCHING

Extremely well pleased at what she hears. She does not object when Apollodorus tries to listen, too..

48 CAESAR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Agrippa, continuing:

AGRIPPA

" - were she not a woman, one would consider her to be an intellectual.."

(he looks up again)

Nothing bores me so much as an intellectual -

CAESAR

Makes a better admiral of you, Agrippa..

48 Cont.

RUFIO

(grins)

Here's something perhaps of more interest to the navy...

(he reads, now)

"...often arrogant in manner, and of a violent temper. Relentless, and utterly without scruple. In attaining her objectives, Cleopatra has been known to employ torture, poison, and even her own sexual talents - which are said to be considerable...

The men laugh..

49 PASSAGEWAY - CLEOPATRA - WATCHING

She is not amused. She pushes Apollodorus away..

50 CAESAR'S APARTMENTS - NIGHT

Rufio, continuing:

RUFIO

"Her lovers, I am told, are listed more easily by number than by name. It is said that she chooses, in the manner of a man, rather than wait to be chosen after womanly fashion..."

(he grins at Caesar)

More reason than we thought for not wanting to leave you alone with her, eh, sir?

CAESAR

(wearily, unheeding)

Sorry, Rufio, I wasn't listening..

AGRIPPA

You're not inclined to trust this Cleopatra, are you?

CAESAR

Trust? Not for a minute....'trust'. The word has always made me - apprehensive. Like wine, whenever I've tried it, the after-effects have - not been good. And so, I've given up wine - and trusting...

He's in a strange, depressed mood. He pushes back his chair, rises. His officers recognize his moodiness; it makes them ill at ease..

51 PASSAGEWAY - CLEOPATRA - WATCHING

She, too, is aware of Caesar's strange depression. It puzzles her..

52 CAESAR'S APARTMENTS - NIGHT

Absently, he fingers Pompey's ring as he says goodnight to his officers:

CAESAR

(with an effort)

It's been a long and difficult day, gentlemen. The next few may be even longer, and more difficult. Good night..

They salute, and go. Caesar is alone..

He sinks back into his chair. He starts to cradle his head on his arms as if to sleep - when Pompey's ring hits the table. Slowly Caesar removes the chain from about his neck; then slowly, he rises..

He stares down at the ring in the palm of his hand, closes his fist over it convulsively. Suddenly, savagely, he throws the ring across the room. Then, instantaneously, with a cry of remorse, hurries to retrieve it...

53 PASSAGEWAY - CLEOPATRA - WATCHING

Fascinated and bewildered by his behavior. Suddenly her eyes widen in horror as she sees:

54 CAESAR'S APARTMENTS - NIGHT

Caesar, on his way across the room, brought up short as if jerked backwards by an invisible rope. His hands go to his throat. He gags, manages to call:

CAESAR

(hoarsely)

Flavius...!

His leg muscles contract, he topples. Curled up on the floor, he is shaken by the spasms of epilepsy..

55 PASSAGEWAY - CLEOPATRA - WATCHING

About to turn to Apollodorus for help, when she sees:

56 CAESAR'S APARTMENTS - NIGHT

FLAVIUS rushes in, sizes up the situation at a glance..

He hurries to Caesar's military chest, whips it open, takes from it a padded ivory stick. He goes to Caesar,

56 Cont.

drops beside him - then pries open Caesar's jaw and forces the stick between his clenched teeth...

With all of his strength, he fights to control Caesar's convulsions. He cradles his master in his arms, massaging and soothing him...

57 PASSAGEWAY - CLEOPATRA - WATCHING

Neither frightened nor repelled by what she has seen - but rather awed. As if she had been witness to the secret ritual of a Divinity..

She replaces the eye-pieces. She turns to Apollodorus:

CLEOPATRA

(quietly)

Has Sosigenes arrived in the City yet?

APOLLODORUS

(shakes his head)

He and Ramos can ride only at night, remember - and Sosigenes is not young..

CLEOPATRA

I shall want to see him at once, no matter when..

Thoughtfully, she returns down the passageway. Apollodorus follows her..

58 CAESAR'S APARTMENTS - NIGHT

Flavius has managed to drag Caesar to his army bed. The attack is almost over; Caesar breathes deeply, hoarsely. Flavius starts to undress his master..

QUICK DISSOLVE OR CUT:

59 CLEOPATRA'S DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

THE GIRL MUSICIANS play. This MUSIC is to contrast with Caesar's harsh breathing until indicated..

Cleopatra, being undressed by Charmian and Eiras. Her thoughts remain with Caesar..

QUICK DISSOLVE OR CUT:

60 CAESAR'S APARTMENTS - NIGHT

Caesar in his bed. His face and body running with sweat. Flavius washes him carefully with wet cloths...

QUICK DISSOLVE OR CUT:

61 CLEOPATRA'S BATH - NIGHT

Cleopatra being bathed by her attendants. The MUSIC continues. Cleopatra's thoughts remain with Caesar..

QUICK DISSOLVE OR CUT:

62 CAESAR'S APARTMENTS - NIGHT

Quiet. Crouched on the floor beside Caesar's bed is Flavius. Caesar is peacefully asleep..

QUICK DISSOLVE OR CUT:

63 CLEOPATRA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Asleep on mats near Cleopatra's sleeping-alcove, are Charmian and Eiras. CAMERA MOVES to Cleopatra, in her bed. Her eyes are open. Her thoughts are with Caesar..

LONG DISSOLVE TO:

64-69 EXT. PTOLEMY'S ENCAMPMENT - DAWN

It is in the process of breaking up. The tents in the command compound are being dismantled. Supplies of all kinds, weapons and war machines, animals, etc., are being sorted and loaded on to all manner of carriers..

In the f.g., ACHILLAS surrounded by OFFICERS. Among the latter, we should recognize one or two of the MERCENARY GENERALS of Cleopatra's camp. Nearby, stands an exhausted COURIER. Being led off - his equally exhausted horse..

Achillas is reading a scroll - obviously brought to him by the courier. He finishes, lets it roll shut. He thinks for a moment. Then suddenly sniffs:

ACHILLAS

What's that smell?

(brings the scroll to
his nose; snorts)

Pothinos and his perfumed
parchment..

(to his staff)

Well, this accounts for the
mysterious overnight disbanding
of Cleopatra's army. She's in
the Palace at Alexandria -
under the protection of Caesar..

He paces, considers the situation. A TEUTON GENERAL indicates the Mercenaries from Cleopatra's camp..

64-69 Cont.

TEUTON GUARD

Now that the rest of her Mercenaries have come over to you, Achilles - Caesar's two legions begin to grow smaller and smaller..

EGYPTIAN GENERAL

The question now becomes - under whose protection will Caesar be?

They laugh..

YOUNG OFFICER

Any change in our orders, sir? Shall we continue to break up camp and return to Alexandria?

Achillas nods slowly..

ACHILLAS

No change. They are to take their assigned positions - surrounding the Royal Enclosure...and one more thing.

(suddenly purposeful)

An urgent message to Admiral Varos. He is to man and arm our fleet - secretly and immediately. I want the Roman ships blockaded in Alexandria harbor - I want Caesar's escape to the sea cut off!

The young officer salutes. He runs toward some horses in the b.g. He mounts one and rides off..

TEUTON OFFICER

(with satisfaction)

In two days we will have Caesar surrounded, in three the blockade will be ready - and in four..?

ACHILLAS

(pompously)

Let me tell you, Barbaros. There are those who study and teach history - and there are those who make it..

(his pomposity fades)

Still...I cannot help thinking that Caesar is up to something. This is all much too easy..

He paces away, reflectively.

Continued

64-69 Cont. 1

EGYPTIAN GENERAL

We must remember, Achilles - our king is in the Palace, at Caesar's mercy..

ACHILLAS

(absently)

He won't hurt Ptolemy..

EGYPTIAN GENERAL

But Pothinos and Theodotos - they're in the Palace, too..

ACHILLAS

Ah, yes. I'd almost forgotten about them..

He grins. Then he stops grinning, starts wondering about Caesar..

DISSOLVE TO:

70

INT. CLEOPATRA'S APARTMENT - DAY

CLEOPATRA, fully covered by one of her countless exquisite peignoirs, at her morning meal. She is served by CHARMIAN, EIRAS and the YOUNG HANDMAIDEN OF THE CORRIDOR (LOTOS)..

Continued

70 Cont.

PHOEBUS - the Blind Reciter - speaks a poem of Catullus to musical accompaniment:

PHOEBUS

It is autumn again, my best loved Lesbia,
look!
The torrents of Roman leaves are falling,
falling.
And lovers revive in kisses the promise of
Spring,
Which will end the Winter world with new
nightingales calling.
The Seasons bore our love and ripened its
tomorrow,
Yet love must bring despair one day -
as beauty, sorrow...

He pauses, lifts his head alertly, as an animal might
when scenting an intruder..

CLEOPATRA

Why do you stop, Phoebus - ?

PHOEBUS

The corridor. There is movement..

CLEOPATRA

That's how the Romans frighten the
enemy - by stamping their elephant
feet..

PHOEBUS

No, this is one man - followed by
others. Caesar, I would say..

CLEOPATRA

(smiling)
Would you - ?
(she rises; to
Charmian)
Apollodorus will certainly delay
him..
(to Eiras and
the others)
..we must not disappoint the Mighty
Caesar. The Romans tell fabulous
tales of my bath and handmaidens -
and my morals -
(to Eiras)
- undress me -
(to the others)
- you are all to wear just enough to
make him wish you had worn even less -
or much more...

The girls laugh, and prepare..

71

CORRIDOR OUTSIDE CLEOPATRA'S APARTMENT - DAY

CAESAR and ESCORT (neither RUFIO nor AGRIPPA among them) approach. APOLLODORUS, standing before the doors, between the guard, greets him. Caesar is wearing his ceremonial armor (the reason will be shortly evident).

CAESAR

Cleopatra has requested an audience with me -

APOLLODORUS

That was yesterday, Caesar..

CAESAR

I have been occupied with important matters -

APOLLODORUS

The Queen is at present occupied with her bath. Perhaps Caesar could return later - or tomorrow?

CAESAR

I'm afraid not -
(to some guards)
Hold him. Don't hurt him..

They do so..

CAESAR

You're a good man, Apollodorus.
I hope you're appreciated..

He gestures. The door is opened for him. He turns to his officers:

CAESAR

Wait here for me.

He goes in.

72

INT. CLEOPATRA'S APARTMENT - DAY

CAESAR enters, looking about curiously. The SOUND of MUSIC. PHOEBUS' voice, reciting:

PHOEBUS' VOICE

(OFFSCENE)

Ah then, let us live and love
Without one thought for the gossip of
The virgins now grown old and still..

CAMERA PANS with Caesar, to disclose:

HIS P.O.V. (Some distance). CLEOPATRA, apparently nude, stretched out on a linen-covered marble massage table. She is literally surrounded by handmaidens at work on her. One at each foot; one at each hand; EIRAS at the

72 Cont.

head of the table combing her hair; two at each side of her, applying lotions, etc., to her body..

Near the table, four or five others dance to the music - throwing flower petals into the air..

CHARMIAN, from a raised step, supervises the operation:

CHARMIAN

Just a touch of that henna dye on the toenails - more on the fingernails.... you must not use the same rouge for the kneecaps and the breasts - a bit more shadowing for her Majesty's armpits..

CAESAR. He's amused and intrigued. He moves closer:

CLEOPATRA and GROUP. The music, dancing, reciting, ministrations and Charmian continue:

PHOEBUS

Suns go down and may return,
But once put out our own brief light
We sleep through one eternal night -

CHARMIAN

(at the same time)
Don't forget the blue kohl for the eyelids - perhaps just a sprinkling of silver dust....Eiras, a paste of powdered gems and perfume for the Queen's navel -

It is time for her to spot Caesar. She does. She cries out in virginal horror -

CHARMIAN

An intruder! A man! Help - !

The girls join in the outcry, they all rush to shield Cleopatra. She is turned over quickly, and covered - almost - with many rather too-small towels. The music and Phoebus stop..

CAESAR. He holds his ground, manfully. Then, as the tumult quiets:

CLEOPATRA looks up at him, framed by the protective barrier of girls:

CLEOPATRA

Oh, it's you..

CAESAR

You wanted to see me - ?

CLEOPATRA

I summoned you. Yesterday. To an audience in my Throne Room. I was told I was not permitted to go there..

CAESAR

For one thing it is too close to the quarters occupied by your brother, Pothinos, Theodotos, and the rest -

CLEOPATRA

(breaking in, nearly rising out of the towels)

I will not be told where to go and where not to go!

CAESAR

(continues calmly)

For another, it has been taken over by twenty of my junior officers as their living quarters..

CHARMIAN

I can imagine what those floors must look like..

CLEOPATRA

They're only junior elephants, Charmian, it's not until they become generals that they really -

CAESAR

Since there is obviously nothing you want of me -

He turns to go..

CLEOPATRA

(up again)

Except my throne!

(as he turns back, she quiets again)

At least you're dressed properly for my presence. Your best armor?

CAESAR

Almost. But I'm afraid it isn't being worn in your honor..

CLEOPATRA

I know. This morning, early, you paid a formal visit to the tomb of Alexander. You remained alone beside the sarcophagus for some time -

CAESAR

(quietly)

I would like very much to know how
you know -

CLEOPATRA

(unheeding)

- just staring down at him. And
then - you cried. Why did you
cry, Caesar..?

There is a pause.

CAESAR

(lightly)

That man recites beautifully. Is
he blind?

EIRAS

(menacingly)

Don't you hurt him..

CAESAR

(smiles)

I won't, not anyone who reads Catullus
that well.

CLEOPATRA

Catullus doesn't approve of you.
Why haven't you had him killed?

CAESAR

(smiles)

Because I approve of him..

(he recites:)

"My desire to please you, Caesar,
Is very slight.
Nor do I greatly care to know
If you are black or white."

A few of the girls giggle. Cleopatra smiles. Then:

CLEOPATRA

Achillas is moving his entire army
to Alexandria. By tonight, he'll
outnumber you twenty to one, thirty
to one - he'll have the Royal
Enclosure entirely surrounded..

CAESAR

Except to the sea..

CLEOPATRA

Are you planning to sail away,
Great Caesar - ?

CAESAR

Not for the time being..

CLEOPATRA

(growing angry)

Then how - what do you intend to do about it!

CAESAR

My very best..

Cleopatra sits up swiftly. From this point on she keeps Charmian and Eiras pretty busy with the towels..

CLEOPATRA

Achillas may attack tomorrow, the next day - whenever it suits him!

CAESAR

Very probable..

CLEOPATRA

Who's to defeat him - those cattle you keep outside my door? In your wildest dreams, Caesar, how long can you possibly hold the gates of this enclosure against such odds? And if you say once more, 'for the time being' - !

CAESAR

(enjoying himself)

My officers say anything from a week to - indefinitely. What do you estimate?

CLEOPATRA

Before you're without water? Without food? Your troops slaughtered - even at the rate of ten or twenty of his to one Roman? Or picked off from the roof-tops - poisoned in the brothels? A few days, Caesar. At the most, a few days..

CAESAR

I'm inclined to agree with you..

(to Phoebus)

Do you know this of Catullus?

(he recites)

"Give me a thousand and a thousand kisses -
And when we have many thousand more
We will scramble them, forget the score,
So evil envy will not know how high
The count and cast its evil eye.."

He addresses his rendition to Eiras and, as he finishes, kisses her lightly on the mouth. She is overcome with embarrassment. Caesar smiles at her, at them all, then at Cleopatra..

72 Cont. 4

CAESAR

It couldn't possibly have been as
pleasant in the Throne room...

He goes out. Slowly, Cleopatra sinks back upon the
table. Charmian begins to massage her neck and throat...

CHARMIAN

(flatly)

My desire to please you, Caesar,
Is very slight -

CLEOPATRA

(cutting her off)

Be still. Phoebus -

PHOEBUS

My lady?

CLEOPATRA

That last, again. He read it badly -
but it pleased me..

Phoebus signals the musicians. Then he begins:

PHOEBUS

Give me a thousand and a thousand kisses -
And when we have many thousand more
We will scramble them, forget the score...

Cleopatra listens - puzzled and intrigued by her growing
fascination with Caesar..

She closes her eyes under the soothing massage. Phoebus
and the music continue..

73

CORRIDOR OUTSIDE CLEOPATRA'S APARTMENTS - DAY

CAESAR, his ESCORT with him, returning from his visit
with Cleopatra. He pauses, as he sees:

AGRIPPA, perhaps an OFFICER or TWO with him, hurrying
to meet Caesar..

AGRIPPA

Caesar - a word - it's important..

Caesar gestures to some officers. They station
themselves on watch against eavesdroppers..

AGRIPPA

The Egyptian war galleys in the
Eastern Harbor - they've been taking
on men and armaments all day..

CAESAR

When will they be prepared to move
against us?

Flavius starts undoing Caesar's armor, as Caesar reads the scroll. He's pleased..

CAESAR

Even better than I had hoped.
You'd best be on your way, you
haven't much time -

RUFIO

Hail, Caesar..

He salutes. He goes out. Caesar smiles. He crosses to the small stove which Flavius uses. He drops the scroll into it. He watches it flare and burn..

DISSOLVE TO:

BUR-1
BUR-2
etc.

OUT

75

EXT. ACHILLAS' COMMAND POST - NIGHT

Shooting toward interior. AN OFFICER enters SCENE, pulls aside a flap revealing the interior:

ACHILLAS sits at his table, eating heartily. He looks up to the officer:

OFFICER

My Lord Achilles - the Romans are
burning our fleet!

Achillas rises hastily, hurries out after the officer..

76-80

EXT. ACHILLAS' COMMAND POST - MATTE SHOT

ACHILLAS and the OFFICER enter SCENE, stare out at the burning fleet and city. ANOTHER OFFICER joins them. MEN and OFFICERS nearby stare in the same direction..

ACHILLAS

Not only the fleet - but part of
the City, too..

OFFICER

(the newly-arrived one)
Our reports say the panic is
spreading even faster than the
fire -

ACHILLAS

(reflectively)

Between them, they'll keep quite a few Romans busy for the rest of the night. Caesar must have a large part of his force committed to the harbor area..

(decisively)

I want an immediate concentrated attack upon the Moon Gate to the Royal Enclosure! The Moon Gate only!

The newly-arrived OFFICER hurries off. Achilles to the other..

ACHILLAS

We'll make him commit what he has left to the defense of one gate - let his reserves come out and chase us for a while - then march in as we please..

(he grins)

We shall have our morning meal in the Palace. Served to us, perhaps, by the Mighty Caesar..

He re-enters his tent. The officer goes off. CAMERA remains on the mounting activity of the camp..

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CLEOPATRA'S LIBRARY - NIGHT

CLEOPATRA sits with SOSIGENES. She watches as he draws an arched line. It outlines heavily the arched back of an anatomical figure already on the papyrus in thinner lines..

SOSIGENES

It is called an epilepse - because of the arching caused by the muscular spasms, the contortions. The Greeks of early days considered those who suffered from it - to be favored by the gods..

CLEOPATRA

I know. The gods themselves were said to have this - falling sickness..

SOSIGENES

(smiles)

It's the one illness gods suffer from. They fall..

CLEOPATRA

A man who had this - epilepse. How would they favor him?

SOSIGENES

It would depend upon the man..

CLEOPATRA

One already great and powerful..

SOSIGENES

(carefully)

To such a man - I know of no disease more cruel..

CLEOPATRA

Why?

SOSIGENES

Because it becomes progressively worse - and, in time, affects the brain..

(Cleopatra is silent)

I have seen men of brilliance and wisdom, thus afflicted - in time go mad with delusion. The wildest dreams of glory alternate with black despair, rage and weeping -

CLEOPATRA

Such a man must then welcome death..

81 Cont.

SOSIGENES

At least they have no fear of it.
This sometimes helps one to become
great and powerful..

CLEOPATRA

The Great Alexander, they say - had
this falling sickness..

SOSIGENES

And - so they say - the Mighty
Caesar, too..

He tactfully avoids Cleopatra's reaction. He indicates
the model of a measuring device..

SOSIGENES

I have contrived a device whereby
large areas of land can be accurately
measured and registered -
(he smiles)
- the lawyers will not thank me, but
the judges will..

APOLLODORUS bursts in. He is pale with anxiety..

APOLLODORUS

Your Majesty, forgive me - Sosigenes -
the library!

Sosigenes, his heart stopped, stares at him..

CLEOPATRA

What are you talking about?

APOLLODORUS

The Romans - they've set fire to the
Egyptian fleet!

CLEOPATRA

About time. What of it?

APOLLODORUS

Come see for yourself - the fire has
spread to the city!

CLEOPATRA

(alarmed, now)
The city..

She starts out, followed by Apollodorus.

APOLLODORUS

Not a great area - only a few
buildings - but the library is
burning - !

81 Cont. 1

Sosigenes is alone. He rises slowly..

SOSIGENES

The Great Library...

He hastens after them, CAMERA PANNING with him.

In the b.g., Cleopatra and Apollodorus arrive at Cleopatra's bedroom. The flames can be seen reflected on the ceiling, the walls, the draperies about her bed..

82 CLEOPATRA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CHARMIAN and EIRAS are already there..

EIRAS

Will it reach us - will the Palace catch on fire - ?

CHARMIAN

Be still..

EIRAS

Phoebus will be frightened - !

CLEOPATRA

We're perfectly safe, Eiras..

She senses, rather than sees, the presence of Sosigenes:

Sosigenes. Pressed against the wall furthest from the fire, reflections of the flames flickering across his tragic face. Tears glisten in his eyes. He recounts, as if recalling dead children..

SOSIGENES

Aristotle's manuscripts...the Platonic commentaries...the plays - the histories...the testament of the Hebrew God, the Book of Books...

Cleopatra. Sosigenes' reaction personalizes for her the wanton destruction taking place. In a cold fury, she starts out - CAMERA WITH HER..

83 CLEOPATRA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CLEOPATRA strides across it, on her way to the door. APOLLODORUS hurries after her..

She arrives at the door, throws it open. Instantly a web of swords and lances bars her way. A YOUNG OFFICER is on the other side of it..

83 Cont.

CLEOPATRA

I have tolerated this childish nonsense much too long! Stand aside -

YOUNG OFFICER

Your Majesty, my orders from Caesar -

Apollo-dorus has come up to take Cleopatra's arm..

CLEOPATRA

Your orders from the Queen of Egypt - are to let me through!

YOUNG OFFICER

I'm sorry..

Cleopatra yanks loose from Apollo-dorus, throws herself at the crossed spears. The embarrassed guards try not to hurt her. Apollo-dorus goes to her aid - is held off by two of the men..

Cleopatra kicks, butts - finally yanks a short sword out of a guard's scabbard. She starts swinging wildly..

YOUNG OFFICER

(in despair)

Let her through!

The guards part suddenly - and gratefully. Cleopatra nearly falls out into the corridor. She recovers her balance, and dignity..

YOUNG OFFICER

I shall have to report this to Caesar, your Majesty..

CLEOPATRA

I'll deliver your message. I happen to be going that way..

84 CORRIDOR OUTSIDE CLEOPATRA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sword in hand, CLEOPATRA strides down the corridor like an avenging Fury..

The guards - still holding back Apollo-dorus - stare after her with mingled awe and incredulity..

85 INT. CIRCULAR ROOM - CAESAR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The door to the reception room is closed.

CAESAR, in a plain tunic, is at his map table. With him are AGRIPPA, GERMANICUS and A SMOKE-STAINED OFFICER still in wet equipment, who was involved in the burning of the Egyptian fleet..

85 Cont.

SMOKE-STAINED OFFICER

(to Caesar)

The wind blew these burning galleys
right into the merchant shipping -

AGRIPPA

At least five or six burned and sank
right here -

CAESAR

And our own ships?

AGRIPPA

Safe and dry. There's a problem
about prisoners, they're surrendering
in droves, I need help -

CAESAR

Not one man. I may even want your
sailors before long..

Suddenly, one hell of a hubbub outside the closed
door. Caesar and the rest turn to it. He pulls
open the door:

CLEOPATRA has begun a repeat of her earlier rumble
with the Roman guard. But these are a tougher
breed. One of them simply holds her, hitting and
kicking, high in the air. She's been disarmed..

Caesar signals. The guard sets her down. In complete
silence, with quiet dignity she enters the room..

For an instant Caesar and Cleopatra confront each other.
Caesar has thus far seen her only begrimed by travel
or covered by random towels; she is beautiful to look
at..

CAESAR

I believe this is the first time I've
seen you properly dressed..

(His officers chuckle.

Cleopatra looks at
him steadily..)

And for the first time I am aware
of how very beautiful you are..

CLEOPATRA

(calmly)

It seems to me you get balder every
day..

The officers' amused smiles vanish. The deliberate
insult makes them exchange uncomfortable looks..

85 Cont. 1

CAESAR
 (equally calm)
 And busier..
 (he crosses to
 the door)
 Actually, we're extremely busy right
 now, so if you will excuse us -

CLEOPATRA
 (not moving)
 Do you smell smoke?

Caesar pauses by the door, begins to sense the intent
 of the visit..

CAESAR
 We found it necessary to burn the
 Egyptian Fleet -

CLEOPATRA
 When last seen, the ships were in
 the water. Did you find it necessary
 to burn them in the city streets?

CAESAR
 Some merchant ships caught fire. The
 burning masts fell into the streets,
 some houses -

CLEOPATRA
 One of them - the Great Library of
 Alexandria..

CAESAR
 I've been told about that. I'm
 extremely sorry -
 (he starts toward
 his map table)
 Now if you don't mind, I must ask
 you -

CLEOPATRA
 I do mind. Are you putting the
 fire out?

CAESAR
 (his tension building)
 We are trying to form the Egyptian
 prisoners into fire brigades -

CLEOPATRA
 Romans only start fires - is that
 it?

CAESAR

(near exploding)

Have you broken out of the nursery, young lady - to come irritate the adults? Some other time, we have work to do!

CLEOPATRA

Great, strong, Roman man's work, no doubt!

CAESAR

Say what you have to say, and get out!

CLEOPATRA

I'll get out when I choose!

AGRIPPA

Shall we remove her for you, Caesar?

CAESAR

No, let the child play Queen..

GERMANICUS

Perhaps if we were to leave..

CLEOPATRA

Please don't go. What I have to say is meant for all of you..

She walks slowly before them for an instant, eyeing them as if they were backward students..

CLEOPATRA

(a quiet start)

If possible, I would like to define - in terms simple enough to be understood by you hulking all-conquering heroes - what a library is. I wonder..have any of you ever heard of something called - a thought? An idea? A philosophic principal - a scientific discovery - a book, a poem, a play - a simple sunset told in words that only one man in all of time will use to tell it?

(she whirls suddenly on Caesar)

How dare you and the rest of your barbarians set fire to my library? Play conqueror all you want Mighty Caesar! Rape, murder, pillage thousands, even millions of human beings - but neither you nor any other barbarian has the right to destroy one human thought!

85 Cont. 3

Caesar's nerves have been on edge anyway - and now to be thus excoriated before his subordinates - he has winced noticeably at her use of "barbarian" - he pounds the map table with his fist. He rises -

CAESAR

(roaring)

Enough! Everybody clear out - and leave me alone with her!

(The officers start out)

I'll send for you when I've finished - it won't be long..

The officers go. The doors close behind them. Cleopatra hasn't moved. Her glance at Caesar is unafraid..

CLEOPATRA

Swords? Javelins? Or are you going to set me on fire?

CAESAR

(icily)

The time has come, I think, for us to understand each other. Whatever else I may be in your opinion, first of all I am Caesar.

CLEOPATRA

And I am Cleopatra, Queen, daughter of Isis -

CAESAR

(overriding her)

If I say so, and when I say so, you are what I say you are! Nothing more!

CLEOPATRA

Hail, Caesar..

He strides toward her..

CAESAR

You. The descendant of generations of in-bred, incestuous mental defectives - how dare you call any one barbarian?

CLEOPATRA

Barbarian!

CAESAR

Daughter of an idiotic flute-playing drunkard who bribed his way to the throne of Egypt -

CLEOPATRA

Your price was too high, remember?

CAESAR

You call me barbarian? You play goddess with me - I who have been to the limits of the world and beyond, and brought it all together into one place - this hand!

It trembles with rage as he holds it out to her. She hits at it with her fist. He grabs her, holds her pressed close to him...

CAESAR

I am fed to the teeth with the smug condescension of you worn-out pretenders! Parading on the ruins of your past glories -

CLEOPATRA

Future glories will be based upon them - it's the future that concerns me!

She tries to squirm out of his arm. She can't..

CAESAR

Then if it does, keep out of my affairs - and do as I say!

CLEOPATRA

(incredulous)

Do as you say? Literally? As if - I were something you had conquered?

CAESAR

If I choose to regard you as such...

He now becomes conscious of her extreme closeness. His feelings are mixed; yet he cannot retreat from his purpose of utterly dominating her..

CLEOPATRA

(quietly)

That hand, by the way - which has gathered together the limits of the world - is also on me, Caesar..

CAESAR

I'm aware of that.

CLEOPATRA

Then am I to understand you feel free to do whatever you want with me - whenever you want..?

85 Cont. 5

CAESAR

Yes. I want that understood..

He takes her into his arms. She doesn't resist..

CLEOPATRA

Won't you at least wear your laurel wreath - so that I can be reminded it's the Great Caesar who honors me so..?

He kisses her. She submits. As their lips part:

CLEOPATRA

Will this go toward paying Egypt's debt to you? How much for me, Divine Caesar?

CAESAR

You talk too much..

He kisses her again, removes part of her gown..

CLEOPATRA

I promise you. You won't like me this way....

Suddenly - from a distance - a muffled, booming NOISE. (The Egyptian ballista's first projectile hitting the Moon Gate). Caesar's head lifts alertly..

A pounding on the doors of the room..

AGRIPPA'S VOICE

Caesar! An attack on the Moon Gate!

Caesar leaps toward the rack holding his armor. The doors fly open. FLAVIUS hurries in -

Agrippa shouts in from the reception room -

AGRIPPA

The Moon Gate! An attack in force!

Caesar and Flavius gather up armor and weapons. They rush out - without so much as a backward glance at Cleopatra..

The entrance hall clears; even the guards are pressed into service..

Cleopatra sits alone on Caesar's bed. Thoughtfully, she refastens her dress..