

Antony and Cleopatra abbreviated

Act 2, Scene 2

Enchantment

Situation: Enobarbus, an aide to Antony, vividly tells two of Caesar's aides, Maecenas and Agrippa, of the setting and the moment when Antony first laid eyes on Cleopatra. But when Maecenas mentions that Antony "must leave her utterly," having learned that Antony plans to marry Caesar's sister, Enobarbus quickly responds "He will not."

MAECENAS TO ENOBARBUS: Welcome from Egypt, sir. You stayed well by 't in Egypt.

ENOBARBUS: Ay, sir, we did sleep day out of countenance and made the night light with drinking.

MAECENAS: Eight wild boars roasted whole at a breakfast, and but twelve persons there. Is this true?

ENOBARBUS: This was but as a fly an eagle.

MAECENAS: She's a most triumphant lady, if report be square to her.

ENOBARBUS: When she first met Mark Antony, she pursed up his heart upon the river of Cydnus. I will tell you.

Enobarbus to Maecenas and Agrippa, No. 1

She sat in a beaten gold burnished throne,
In the stern, where sails of a purple tone
Were so perfumed that the lovesick winds were
Calmed. The barge's silver oars were stroked to
The tune of flutes, making the waves faster.
She, in her gold-threaded silk, did outdo
All pictures of Venus. Dimpled boys stood
As smiling Cupids next to her and would
With divers-colored fans cool her. Tending
Her, as the most graceful mermaids, were her
Gentlewomen, bowing to her. Wending
To the wharfs, leaving lone Antony, were
The people, out to see her. He did reach
Out to gaze on her and there made the breach.

AGRIPPA: O, rare for Antony! Rare Egyptian!

Enobarbus to Maecenas and Agrippa, No. 2

Upon her landing, Antony sent for
Her, inviting her then to supper. Or,
Rather, be her guest, she replied. Ever
Courteous Antony, to whom the word
"No" as an answer women have never

Been heard to speak, to the grand feast was lured,
Where he paid with his heart, his meal eaten
Only by his eyes. I saw breath taken
From her as she hopped forty paces through
The public street only to see her pour
Breath forth. Other women feed sweets to woo,
Where she wins men's hearts through her cunning lore.
Priests bless her. She makes what's vile attractive.
He'll leave her not as long as he doth live.

MAECENAS: Now Antony must leave her utterly.

ENOBARBUS: Never. He will not. Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale her infinite variety.

MAECENAS: If beauty, wisdom, modesty can settle the heart of Antony, Octavia is a gift to him.

AGRIPPA: Let us go.