

To the Seminar Group, ESAA08: in **D34** AGAIN!

Dear Colleagues,

These are two passages from *Antony and Cleopatra*, which we will look at on Thursday.

We will start with the **SECOND!**

Please look at them before the seminar, focusing particularly on:

- rhetorical structure
- metre
- rhythm
- alliteration
- length of syllables
- sound of consonants

Please start with the second, and if you have time, turn to the first.

Good luck and bon courage!

Gerard Kilroy

## *Antony and Cleopatra*

II.2 [Enobarbus describes Cleopatra]

ENOBARBUS

I will tell you.

The barge she sat in, like a burnished throne,  
Burned on the water. The poop was beaten gold;  
Purple the sails, and so perfumed that  
The winds were lovesick with them. The oars were silver,  
Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke and made  
The water which they beat to follow faster,  
As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,  
It beggared all description. she did lie  
In her pavilion, cloth-of-gold of tissue,  
O'er picturing that Venus where we see  
The fancy outwork nature. On each side her  
Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling cupids  
With divers-coloured fans, whose wind did seem  
To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,  
And what they undid did.

AGRIPPA

O rare for Antony!

ENOBARBUS

Her gentlewomen, like the Nereides,  
So many mermaids, tended her i'th'eyes,  
And made their bends adornings. At the helm  
A seeming mermaid steers. The silken tackle  
Swell with the touches of those flower-soft hands,  
That yarely frame the office. From the barge  
A strange invisible perfume hits the sense  
Of the adjacent wharfs. The city cast  
Her people out upon her; and Antony,  
Enthroned i'th'market place, did sit alone,  
Whistling to th'air; which, but for vacancy,  
Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too,  
And made a gap in nature.

V.2 [Cleopatra passes from life to history]

CLEOPATRA

Give me my robe; put on my crown; I have  
Immortal longings in me. Now no more  
The juice of Egypt's grape shall moist this lip.  
Yare, yare, good Iras; quick – methinks I hear  
Antony call. I see him rouse himself  
To praise my noble act. I hear him mock  
The luck of Caesar, which the gods give men  
To excuse their after wrath. Husband, I come.  
Now to that name my courage prove my title!  
I am fire and air; my other elements  
I give to baser life. So, have you done?  
Come then, and take the last warmth of my lips.  
Farewell, kind Charmian, Iras, long farewell.

*She kisses them. Iras falls and dies*

Have I the aspic in my lips? Dost fall?  
If thou and nature can so gently part,  
The stroke of death is as a lover's pinch,  
Which hurts, and is desired. Dost thou lie still?  
If thus thou vanishest, thou tellst the world  
It is not worth leave-taking.

CHARMIAN

Dissolve, thick cloud, and rain, that I may say  
The gods themselves do weep.

CLEOPATRA

*This proves me base;*  
If she first meet the curled Antony,  
He'll make demand of her, and spend that kiss  
Which is my heaven to have. Come thou mortal wretch,  
With thy sharp teeth this knot intricate  
Of life at once untie. Poor venomous fool,  
Be angry, and dispatch. O couldst thou speak,  
That I might hear thee call great Caesar ass  
Unpolicied!

CHARMIAN

O eastern star!

CLEOPATRA

*Peace, peace!*  
Dost thou not see my baby at my breast,  
That sucks the nurse asleep?

CHARMIAN

O break! O, break!

CLEOPATRA

As sweet as balm, as soft as air, as gentle –  
O, Antony! Nay, I will take thee too.

*She applies another asp to her arm*

What should I stay –

CHARMIAN

In this vile world? So, fare thee well.

Now boast thee, death, in thy possession lies  
A lass unparalleled. Downy windows, close;  
And golden Phoebus never be beheld  
Of eyes again so royal! Your crown's awry;  
I'll mend it, and then play –

GUARD

Where's the Queen?

CHARMIAN

Speak softly, wake her not.

GUARD

Caesar hath sent –

CHARMIAN

Too slow a messenger.