

CRY HAVOC! (ASK QUESTIONS LATER)

EPISODE 5 - TAKING SIDES

Written by

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Edited with additional material

by David K. Barnes

CAST

Sarah Agha as Charmian
Lara Sawalha as Cleopatra
Sarah Lambie as Octavia
Andy Secombe as Lepidus
Harry Roebuck as Gaius Octavius Caesar
Benjamin Garrison as Quintus
Lowri Ann Davies as Bassilla
Pip Gladwin as Drusus
Tom Crowley as Mascis
Nico Vettese as Milo
Natalie Winter as Mirta
Mark Nicholson as Rufus
Ian Hayles as Merchant 1
Ben Garrison as Merchant 2
Helen Gould as Merchant 3
Ryan Hopevere-Anderson as Driver
Helen Gould as Sekhmet

CONTENT NOTES

- Abuse of Power (recurring theme)
- Vicarious Embarrassment
- Alcohol & Alcohol use
- SFX: misophonia (drinking)

Cleopatra is looking out of the window upon a civilised Roman street; GENTLE STREET ATMOS. Off, CHARMIAN directs servants in the anteroom. Some wildtrack of SERVANTS MOVING FURNITURE.

CLEOPATRA
An ordinary morning in Rome... A little too ordinary, perhaps...

CHARMIAN (O.S.)
Come on, people. Let's get this place looking regal, shall we?

CLEOPATRA
(calls)
Charmian!

Charmian quickly ENTERS Cleopatra's room.

CHARMIAN
My lady?

CLEOPATRA
Come in. Shut the door.

Charmian SHUTS THE DOOR.

CHARMIAN
We should have the last few pieces of furniture moved in for you in-

CLEOPATRA
(interrupting)
Charmian, I need to use your skills of observation. Come over to the window. Tell me what you see.

Charmian CROSSES THE ROOM to stand by Cleopatra.

CHARMIAN
(takes a look)
I see a quiet, respectable street. Very few people. There's a guard on each corner but neither of them are looking this way. Our hosts want us to feel secure but unobserved.

CLEOPATRA
Mmhmm...

CHARMIAN

But considering how quiet it is,
that merchant over there has chosen
a very odd spot to sell his wares.

CLEOPATRA

You conclude?

CHARMIAN

They're spying on us while doing
whatever they can to make us think
the city is calm and untroubled.

CLEOPATRA

Excellent, Charmian. I'm very glad
I brought you along.

CHARMIAN

So am I.

CLEOPATRA

There's a tension in the air, just
like last time. Right before they
killed Julius...

They MOVE AWAY from the window (STREET ATMOS quietens).

CLEOPATRA (cont'd)

Charmian, I want to know what the
people are thinking - and I mean
actually thinking. Take the
temperature, gauge the mood.

CHARMIAN

I'll inform the guard captain,
he'll know what to do.

CLEOPATRA

No. I want you to handle this
personally.

CHARMIAN

... You... you mean...?

CLEOPATRA

You've never been to Rome before
have you? Well, now's your chance
to explore.

CHARMIAN

(excited)
Really?

CLEOPATRA

I want you to go undercover. Find out what the man on the street thinks about his leaders. Who does he prefer? Who does he hate? What jokes does he tell about them? Does Mark get his cock out in front of everyone or is it just me - and so on. Anything could be useful to us.

CHARMIAN

Yes of course, absolutely! Can I dress up? Wear a disguise?

CLEOPATRA

Yes.

CHARMIAN

Can I have an accent?

CLEOPATRA

This isn't a game. One day this city will be ruled by Mark Antony or Octavius Caesar. And we have to back the right horse.

CHARMIAN

Sorry, yes. I just got excited.

Beat.

CHARMIAN (cont'd)

I have to ask, are you sure about this? You're attending the summit with the Triumvirs this afternoon. My place is by your side.

CLEOPATRA

(genuine)

Your loyalty is touching. But you have specific gifts that few can replicate. To go unnoticed, to retain information... After all, you're the only servant I have who got their job by trying to rob me.

CHARMIAN

(with a smile)

Yes...

CLEOPATRA

That day in Memphis, I'd doubled my guard.

(MORE)

CLEOPATRA (cont'd)
 And you got past them all to snatch
 at the purse on my belt, for the
 sake of a few paltry coins.

CHARMIAN
 I didn't succeed. You caught me.

CLEOPATRA
 Yes, but who else would have even
 dared? As a servant, nobody looks
 at you, nobody cares. But we know
 better don't we, Charmian?

A backhanded compliment. Charmian decides to accept it.

CHARMIAN
 Of course, my lady. And... thank
 you. For everything.

CLEOPATRA
 I prize loyalty very highly - and
 initiative higher still. Now go.
 Find out what you can. Bring me
 back something really juicy.

CHARMIAN
 Consider it done, my Queen.

She EXITS, OPENING and CLOSING THE DOOR.

CLEOPATRA
 (darkly)
 We will learn Rome's secrets... One
 way or another...

KNOCK ON THE DOOR.

CLEOPATRA (cont'd)
 Yes?

DOOR OPENS.

LEPIDUS
 Only me! Just making sure you found
 the towels alright?

CLEOPATRA
 Oh, er. Yes we did. Thank you.

LEPIDUS
 Splendid! Breakfast's on the table!

CLEOPATRA
 Ooo! Lovely.

OPENING TITLES AND THEME

ANNOUNCER

Rusty Quill Presents: "Cry Havoc
(Ask Questions Later)" Episode 5:
"Taking Sides"

2 INT. GAIUS'S OFFICE - MORNING

2

GAIUS asleep in his office; GENTLE SNORING. Peaceful. Then the DOOR is KICKED OPEN and OCTAVIA STRIDES IN.

OCTAVIA

Morning!

Gaius JOLTS AWAKE, UNSETTLING PAPERS.

GAIUS

Wuh? What? Who?... Oh, it's you.

Octavia makes straight for his desk.

OCTAVIA

Good morning to you too. Didn't you go to bed last night?

GAIUS

(stretching)

Half an hour or so; it was very refreshing. Ow! My neck.

Octavia GRABS SOME POPYRI off his desk, FLICKING THROUGH. Gaius tries to SNATCH THEM BACK but fails.

GAIUS (cont'd)

Hey! Leave those alone!

OCTAVIA

I've mislaid some audition sides and I've looked everywhere else.

GAIUS

Well they're not going to be here-!

OCTAVIA

Ah-hah! Found'em.

She BRANDISHES a PAPER.

GAIUS

What? No, that's a tax proposal.

She TURNS IT over.

OCTAVIA

Not on this side, it isn't! I'll
just be taking these...

She PUTS SOME PAPERS DOWN, FOLDS THE OTHERS, UNDER:

GAIUS

Ever since we were children, you
were always stealing my stationery.

OCTAVIA

You always had so much of it.
Nothing else made you happy. It
still doesn't. You need a hobby.

GAIUS

You're the second person to tell me
that since yesterday, and you're
both wrong. I haven't got time.

OCTAVIA

It's compulsive behaviour. It isn't
healthy. You have to relax.

GAIUS

After the summit, when Cleopatra's
given us what we need, then maybe
I'll relax. For a day. Half a day.

Beat.

GAIUS (cont'd)

An hour.

OCTAVIA

Gaius!

GAIUS

I have a lot to do! It's part of
the job.

OCTAVIA

You don't see Mark or Lepidus
killing themselves over it.

GAIUS

Exactly, that's why I have to. Last
night's reception was hardly an
unqualified success. I haven't even
seen Mark this morning.

(MORE)

GAIUS (cont'd)
 For all I know he's lying face down
 in a road somewhere and Cleopatra's
 been kidnapped by bandits.

OCTAVIA
 Well if you're right let me know
 and I'll stage a play about it.

GAIUS
 What's this new one about anyway?
 (reads)
 "The Crown Jules..."

Octavia WHIPS THE PAPER AWAY and STRIDES BACK TO THE DOOR.

OCTAVIA
 (evasive)
 Never you mind, little brother. Now
 do yourself a favour and get some
 rest before this afternoon.

GAIUS
 Oh, Octavia? Tell my secretary to
 find Mark for me would you?

OCTAVIA
 Where should he start?

GAIUS
 I don't know, tell him to use his
 initiative. Search the brothels!

OCTAVIA
 Mm, good thinking!

She EXITS.

GAIUS
 Am I the only one who knows what
 they're doing around here?

OCTAVIA (O.S.)
 (calling back)
 Get some rest!

3 **EXT. MARKET - MORNING**

3

Rome! A busy market with associated HUSTLE and BUSTLE. An
 excited Charmian surveys her surroundings.

CHARMIAN
 Ahh... Well Charmian. A new city, a
 new turf. Just like old times...

She BREATHES IN THE AIR, and COUGHS INSTANTLY.

CHARMIAN (cont'd)
Urgh... No. That air is not good.
Note to self: limit breathing...

She STROLLS along past a row of MERCHANTS SELLING WARES.

MERCHANT 1
Woollens! Knitted woollens! Look at
the stitching on those!

CHARMIAN
Yes, yes, most impressive.

MERCHANT 2
Dyes, miss? Yellow, purple, you
name it, I've got it!

CHARMIAN
I'm good, thanks all the same!

MERCHANT 2
Look out!

CHARMIAN
I said no, I don't want anyth-!

A LOUD HORSE'S NEIGH. Charmian JUMPS IN ALARM.

CHARMIAN (cont'd)
Oh, sorry!

DRIVER (O.S.)
Hyah!

A WHIPCRACK. The HORSE-DRAWN WAGON ROLLS PAST, going through
a PUDDLE that SPLASHES Charmian.

CHARMIAN
Urgh! Oh, very nice!
(yells after it)
Cheers for that, you prick!

A friendly neighbourhood pickpocket MILO appears...

MILO
You alright there, love?

CHARMIAN
Yeah, fine...

MILO

You want me to catch'em up and demand compensation?

CHARMIAN

What? No, it's alright.

DUSTING HERSELF DOWN.

MILO

First time in Rome, right?

CHARMIAN

Er, no. Why?

MILO

Be careful. These streets may look pretty but there are vultures everywhere.

CHARMIAN

Noted. Thanks. Oh and by the way?

MILO

Yeah?

CHARMIAN

Return my purse or I'll kill you.

MILO

Ah. Yeah. Fair enough.

He TOSSES her PURSE back to her.

MILO (cont'd)

Must be losing the knack. No hard feelings, yeah?

CHARMIAN

That depends. How are pickings?

MILO

They've been better. Nobody's got anything worth taking.

CHARMIAN

Times are hard, are they?

MILO

Very. You're not in the trade yourself, are you?

CHARMIAN

No. Not anymore, at least.

MILO

In that case, sister, welcome to the neighbourhood. Good luck.

He WALKS OFF SPEEDILY.

CHARMIAN

(wry)

It really is like old times. I feel at home already...

A nearby shopkeeper, MIRTA, CHUCKLES.

MIRTA

You're a tough one, aren't you!

CHARMIAN

Eh? Oh, hello.

MIRTA

I saw you handling yourself! How come you didn't turn him in?

CHARMIAN

He was only trying to survive. I didn't take it personally.

MIRTA

Funny girl. Mind you, these days I prefer that kind of scum to the soldiers. At least pickpockets don't wave swords about!

CHARMIAN

Don't like the soldiers much, eh?

MIRTA

Not when they're skint and bored, no. Sorry if you know any.

CHARMIAN

Don't worry, I'm no fan of them either. This your shop?

MIRTA

Yeah. Fancy a look inside?

CHARMIAN

Don't mind if I do.

4 INT. SHOP - CONTINUOUS

4

An untidy but well stocked shop. Charmian ENTERS, FOLLOWED by Mirta. STREET ATMOS floating in.

CHARMIAN

What do you sell here?

MIRTA

Everything. Dyes, fabrics, the odd bit of furniture. It's like my dear old Pa always said: "Mirta, my girl; people will always need soft furnishings."

Mirta begins placing several SMALL POTS on a SHELF.

CHARMIAN

Good advice. So, these soldiers, are they giving people any trouble?

MIRTA

All the time. Could you pass me that pot, the ochre?

CHARMIAN

Sure. Let me help you with those.

Charmian helps Mirta put out the POTS onto shelves.

CHARMIAN (cont'd)

Angry about pay, aren't they? The army? I can't remember whose fault they said it was...

MIRTA

Don't ask me. Ask those bozos up on Palatine Hill. Three of them now, gods help us. If I was in charge, I'd give 'em a bloody good hiding.

Soldier DRUSUS LUMBERS INTO the shop. His compatriot RUFUS stays at the doorway.

DRUSUS

Hallo, good woman!

RUFUS

Morning, all!

MIRTA

Oh, look. We were just talking about your lot, weren't we?

CHARMIAN

Oh, er, yes.

MIRTA

And what brings two hulking great soldiers plodding into my shop?

RUFUS

We're the neighbourhood watch. Routine patrol.

DRUSUS

Have you seen any suspicious activity we should know about?

MIRTA

Like what?

RUFUS

Shoplifters. Litterbugs.

DRUSUS

Anyone who needs duffing up, basically.

MIRTA

No I haven't. Now hop it, you two!

DRUSUS

(disappointed)

Aw, come on, missus. We're just looking for something to do!

RUFUS

And if you've any spare coins-?

Mirta starts HUSTLING the soldiers OUT.

MIRTA

Now come on, get out!
Treading mud all over my
floor with those dirty great
plates of yours...!

DRUSUS / RUFUS

Ow! Please! Stop it! Ow!
(etc)

As they EXIT, QUINTUS squeezes his way in.

QUINTUS

I say, could you help me, I'm-

MIRTA (O.S.)

In a moment sir!

An annoyed Quintus is left alone in the shop with Charmian.

QUINTUS

But I'm in a hurry!... Typical. You there. Hello?

CHARMIAN

Me?

QUINTUS

Yes, you! I need things to put in Caesar's villa, pronto.

CHARMIAN

(alert to a new lead)

Really? Caesar himself?

QUINTUS

Yes I want whatever you've got. Luxurious but inexpensive.

CHARMIAN

Oh, but I don't actually-

QUINTUS

Time is money, honey. In a rush!

CHARMIAN

Oh - er - certainly, yes.

QUINTUS

Give me runners, beads, that roll of white curtain, and, oh, some of those golden ropes with tassles on. You think you can manage that?

CHARMIAN

Absolutely.

Charmian RUMMAGES, BRINGING EACH ITEM to the COUNTER in turn.

CHARMIAN (cont'd)

You know Octavius Caesar do you?

QUINTUS

What? Well, not personally, no - but I do know his sister Octavia. A demanding madam she is too. Heart's in the right place though. Hurry up with that stuff.

CHARMIAN

Of course. And this is for Caesar, you said?

QUINTUS

For the play, dear. The play. We want it to look authentic don't we?

CHARMIAN

Do we?

QUINTUS

You do know who I am?

CHARMIAN

Why, have you forgotten?

QUINTUS

(spluttering)

Wha - I - Quintus Metellus! Of the Palatine Players! Star of the stage! And don't let those curtains drag on the floor! They'll snag!

CHARMIAN

Oop, sorry.

Charmian DEPOSITS the ROLL OF CURTAIN on the counter.

QUINTUS

Finally! I'm not shopping here again. How much do I owe you?

CHARMIAN

Uh, I'm not sure.

QUINTUS

What do you mean you're not sure?

CHARMIAN

Well as I tried to say-

QUINTUS

Look, I want to be patient, because I know what it's like - but you find me very busy and very late and very up to here with how the week has gone so far, so if you don't hurry up and sell me some curtains I think I'm going to lose my mind.

CHARMIAN

... Um...

QUINTUS

(calls)

MIRTA!

Mirta HURRIEDLY re-enters the shop.

MIRTA
Ooop, yes, what is it love?

QUINTUS
Your new shopgirl won't sell me
anything and I'm getting upset.

MIRTA
But she isn't my shopgirl!

QUINTUS
Then who are you?!

CHARMIAN
I'm just trying to help. Really!

DRUSUS and RUFUS BURST IN again.

DRUSUS
Hello, 'ello, 'ello, is something
going on here after all?

MIRTA
Oh for goodness sake! We don't need
any soldiers!

RUFUS
We'll be the judge of that, madam!

DRUSUS
In fact, if I'm not mistaken, I saw
this girl in the street having a
friendly chat with a known
pickpocket not too long ago!

QUINTUS
Oh my word, is she a criminal?
(gasps, to Charmian)
You were trying to steal my money!

CHARMIAN
No!

MIRTA
Stop it, all of you! Look dear, I'd
run along now if I were you!

CHARMIAN
Believe me, I'm going!

She MOVES AWAY, SNAGGING the length of curtain.

QUINTUS
Watch out for that curtain!

CHARMIAN
Woah!

Charmian SLIPS and KNOCKS INTO a wooden shelf. All the POTS SMASH to the floor, SPLASHING DYE everywhere. Devastation.

MIRTA
No no no, my pots! My curtains!

CHARMIAN
Oh Set, I'm so sorry!

MIRTA
What have you done, they're ruined!

CHARMIAN
I didn't mean to!

DRUSUS
That's it! You're coming with us!

RUFUS
You're under arrest!

CHARMIAN
No, please, look, I can explain!

RUFUS
Can you?

CHARMIAN
... Er... Now that I think of it,
no. Excuse me!

She RUNS PAST THEM and OUT OF THE SHOP.

RUFUS
Oi! Wait!

DRUSUS
Come back!

DRUSUS (cont'd)
Don't worry madam, we'll get her!

RUFUS
(calling)
You won't escape! We're the
neighbourhood watch!

DRAMATIC STING OF MUSIC!

5 **EXT. ROMAN STREETS / ALLEYWAY - MORNING**

5

PANTING, Charmian is SPRINTING down streets, PUSHING THROUGH CROWDS. SURPRISED YELLS and ANGRY SHOUTS from the PEOPLE.

CHARMIAN

Out of the way! Move! Sorry! Coming through! Very important! Move it!

From behind her, the yells of Drusus and Rufus in pursuit.

RUFUS (O.S.)

Somebody stop that girl!

DRUSUS (O.S.)

She's a thief and a hooligan!

CHARMIAN

Urghhh! The things I do for Egypt!
... There's got to be some way I
can give them the slip...

She SPRINTS ON and past us. (Musical interlude?)

6 **EXT. THEATRE OF POMPEY - MORNING**

6

A less frantic area. A long line of ACTORS are queuing up outside the theatre. BORED GRUMBLING, VOCAL EXERCISES, ETC.

BASSILLA

What's taking them so long? It's not right leaving us out here.

MASCIS

We're actors; they treat us however they want. Still, auditions are normally quicker than this.

A DOOR OPENS, Octavia STEPS OUT.

BASSILLA

Here look, it's Octavia.

OCTAVIA

(calls)

Hey everyone! I'm sorry about the wait. Our director isn't normally late, but once he turns up... Oh!

Quintus JOGS UP to them, OUT OF BREATH.

QUINTUS

Oc... Octavia... I'm... So sorry...

OCTAVIA

Quintus! What happened? Where's the set dressing?

QUINTUS

I cou... couldn't get it... There was this... shopgirl and...

OCTAVIA

Oh tell me later, get in.

(calls)

OK everyone, auditions for The Crown Jules are now under way! Come in one at a time!

RELIEVED MUTTERING from the actors.

MASCIS

Finally! That's me up then.

BASSILLA

Good luck! Knock 'em dead!

Mascis goes inside, DOOR CLOSES.

BASSILLA (cont'd)

He's got more chance of becoming a Vestal Virgin...

RUNNING FOOTSTEPS as a FRANTIC and PANTING Charmian appears from the opposite direction Quintus appeared from.

CHARMIAN

(frantic)

Hi! Excuse me hey sorry, I need somewhere to hide, right away, is there anywhere you could suggest?

BASSILLA

Sorry what?

CHARMIAN

To hide, I need to hide, like now, so if there's anywhere I could-

DRUSUS (O.S.)

Where'd she go? Has she got away?

RUFUS (O.S.)

I think she's around this corner!

CHARMIAN

Crap! Out of the way!

She YANKS THE DOOR OPEN and RACES INSIDE. SURPRISED / ANGRY
ACTOR REACTION from the queue.

BASSILLA
(annoyed)
Hey! You can't jump the queue! ...
Some people! Think they own the
theatre!

7 INT. THEATRE OF POMPEY - MORNING

7

Octavia and an exhausted Quintus sit in the front row, as
Mascis prepares on stage. It's a big space, mostly empty.

OCTAVIA
Our first audition of the day...
Quintus, are you up for this?

QUINTUS
(getting breath back)
Yes, just... just go...

OCTAVIA
(calls)
Alright sweetie, you've got your
audition side?

Mascis RAISES the PAPER and projects from the stage.

MASCIS
Yes!

OCTAVIA
Let's hear it, then.

MASCIS
(clears throat)
"Memo to self: consider reinstating
tariff on unmarried women and
orphans to pay for upkeep of
cavalry horses. Previous levy: two
thousand asses paid annually.
Adjusting for inflation-"

OCTAVIA
Stop stop! That's not the scene!

MASCIS
It's what's written here.

OCTAVIA
 (the penny drops)
 Ohhhh yeah, sorry. Your part's on
 the other side, darling.

Mascis FLIPS the PAPER OVER.

MASCIS
 Oh yes. There we are.

OCTAVIA
 Once more, from the top!

MASCIS
 (clears throat again)
 ... "I-"

Suddenly Charmian BARRELS on STAGE, PANTING.

MASCIS (cont'd)
 What the-?

Charmian COLLIDES with Mascis, KNOCKING HIM DOWN with a
 YELL.

CHARMIAN
 (to Mascis)
 Oh Set! Sorry sorry! Are you OK
 down there? Let me help you up.

OCTAVIA
 And who in Hades might you be? What
 are you doing here?

CHARMIAN
 I'm... I'm...

QUINTUS
 Wait!... That's the shopgirl!

OCTAVIA
 What shopgirl?

QUINTUS
 The one from earlier! She tried to
 steal my money and then she
 demolished half the shop!

CHARMIAN
 It was an accident, I swear!

QUINTUS
 She ought to be in prison!

OCTAVIA
Really?
(to Charmian)
What is your name?

CHARMIAN
My name?

OCTAVIA
I assume you have one.

CHARMIAN
Er... er... Mia.

OCTAVIA
Mia. Fine. You're here to audition?

CHARMIAN
Audition?

QUINTUS
That little maniac can't audition!
Sling her out, now!

OCTAVIA
No, no, give her a chance. She
looks interesting. And she can
certainly make an entrance.

QUINTUS
If you'd forgotten, we're doing an
audition already!

MASCIS
Yeah!

OCTAVIA
Oh we know what he can do, he's
done the last five shows. Go home,
sweetie, we'll let you know!

MASCIS
Well, really!

Mascis STORMS OFF stage.

CHARMIAN
(calls after him)
Er - sorry! Really sorry!

OCTAVIA
OK, Mia was it? Let's hear you.

CHARMIAN
Hear me...?

OCTAVIA
Yeah, take a side. There on the
stage. The pages.

CHARMIAN
Oh, yes...

She PICKS UP A PAGE.

CHARMIAN (cont'd)
What do I do with it?

OCTAVIA
You read it.

CHARMIAN
I... don't know how.

OCTAVIA
You can't read?

CHARMIAN
No.

OCTAVIA
Can't read Latin or...?

CHARMIAN
I can't read. Anything.

QUINTUS
Urgh. Thank you. Next!

CHARMIAN
What do you mean?

QUINTUS
Get off the stage, madam! Get out
of the building! Leave us in peace!

CHARMIAN
But I can't go out there! I...

Beat.

QUINTUS
Yes?

CHARMIAN
I... I cannot read... but... if I
tell you a story, can I stay here?

OCTAVIA

Yes.

QUINTUS

What?

OCTAVIA

Why not? It could be fun. Let her.
Talent comes in all forms.

QUINTUS

But... fine!
(sulks)
This had better be a good story.

OCTAVIA

Well, Mia. Away you go.

Octavia and Quintus SETTLE IN. Charmian alone on the stage.

CHARMIAN

... Yes. Right. Um... right.

Beat.

CHARMIAN (cont'd)

I shall tell you a tale of... of a
powerful goddess.

OCTAVIA

Female protagonist. Very nice.

We can throw whatever non-diegetic sound and music we want
at this story. Make a big thing of it.

CHARMIAN

This is a story from my country.
One day, the sun god, Ra, became
angry at mankind. He sent his
daughter Sekhmet to scour the world
and bury every living thing deep
beneath the vast ocean. At first,
Ra was pleased at what he had
unleashed, for Sekhmet raged and
burned her way across the earth,
and slew his enemies. But soon the
sky and the very stars themselves
were dismayed by Sekhmet's thirst
for blood. They begged Ra the sun
god to stop her. But Sekhmet had
become too powerful. The more blood
she drank the more she thirsted -
and the more she thirsted, the more
she drank.

(MORE)

CHARMIAN (cont'd)

Knowing this, the Sun and the Sky
and the Stars drew together and
devised a plan. They turned a vast
quantity of beer blood-red with
ochre, and proffered the brew to
Sekhmet. Sekhmet could not resist
the tempting liquid. Greedily, she
drank the draught, and another, and
another. The beer soon made her
drowsy, and she fell fast asleep.
As she slept, her claws retracted,
and her fangs drew back, and her
blood-stained lips became plump and
soft. The land began to heal. And
so did she. And when she next
awoke, she had become Hathor the
Benevolent, and became known
throughout the world only for her
unsurpassed beauty and grace.

An awkward beat. (Any SOUND DESIGN ends.)

CHARMIAN (cont'd)

That's it. Um. Yeah.

Beat.

OCTAVIA

(impressed)

Wow. That was good. Quintus?

QUINTUS

(wants to criticise)

... Welllllll-

OCTAVIA

Mia, how'd you like to be in my
play?

Really? CHARMIAN

Really? QUINTUS

OCTAVIA

Yes, why not!

QUINTUS

We don't know if she can act!

OCTAVIA

She has serious stage presence. I'm
sure she can act.

QUINTUS

What about lines, how is she going to learn them?

OCTAVIA

Well... I'll help her! Next?

QUINTUS

But... but... she's on the run from the army, she's a criminal!

OCTAVIA

You could say that about nearly anyone in our company. Come on Quintus! She'd be great as the slave who gets mistaken for Caesar!

QUINTUS

That's the best role!!

CHARMIAN

Er, excuse me?

OCTAVIA

Yes?

QUINTUS

Yes?

CHARMIAN

I'll come clean. I only ducked in here to hide from the soldiers, and they're probably gone by now, so maybe I should go and we forget this ever happened?

QUINTUS

Yes!

OCTAVIA

No! No no - you're an actor!

CHARMIAN

I'm not, I've never done it. And I have, er, duties. Elsewhere.

QUINTUS

There, you see Octavia? She doesn't want to do it! Let her run free.

CHARMIAN

Wait, Octavia?

OCTAVIA

Yes?

CHARMIAN

You're the sister of...

QUINTUS

Gaius Octavius, triumvir of Rome.
Who is very tough on crime.

OCTAVIA

No he isn't, he's a pussycat.

QUINTUS

Yes and we're the mice.

OCTAVIA

Shut up. Yes, Mia, I confess, my brother is one of the most important men in Rome, as weird as that still feels to say. But I am lots of fun, even if my brother isn't. And this play is not going to support the status quo. I've a lot of issues with... well, let's just say Gaius would love to shut me up, and he isn't going to.

CHARMIAN

I see... Intriguing...

OCTAVIA

Basically, if you'd like to be in this play, we'd love to have you. What do you say?

CHARMIAN

I say... yes! Thank you.

QUINTUS

(withering)

Oh, good.

OCTAVIA

Amazing! Rehearsal starts this afternoon. We'll see you then! Welcome to the Palatine Players!

CHARMIAN

Thank you, Octavia. I think this could be very educational...

END OF EPISODE