

CRY HAVOC! (ASK QUESTIONS LATER)

EPISODE 10 - THE PIRATE KING

Written by

Tom Crowley

Edited with additional material

by David K. Barnes

Recording Script (Version 4.0)

CAST

Ryan Hopevere-Anderson as Sextus
Sarah Lambie as Octavia
Aaron-Louis Cadogan as Antyllus
Harry Roebuck as Gaius Octavius Caesar
Kazeem Tosin Amore as Mark Antony
Beth Eyre as Fulvia
Lara Sawalha as Cleopatra
Andy Secombe as Lepidus
Ellie Dickens as Atia
Sarah Agha as Charmian
Mark Nicholson as Gracchus
Ahmed Aljabry as Egyptian Messenger
Ryan Hopevere-Anderson as Roman Messenger 1

CONTENT NOTES

- Kidnapping
- Threats of death
- Alcohol & Alcohol Use
- Food
- Sexual References & Innuendo
- Arguments
- SFX: waves & wind, creaking, loud vocalisations, glass and crockery smashing, eating & drinking, misophonia

Inside the hold of the pirate ship at sea. Waves CRASH outside, the hull CREAKS.

A heavy wooden DOOR is FLUNG open. There's a SCUFFLE.

GRACCHUS
Get in there you two!

OCTAVIA and ANTYLLUS are THROWN to the FLOOR. They CRY OUT.

OCTAVIA
What are you going to do with us?

GRACCHUS
I'll leave that to the Captain's judgement.
(chuckles darkly)

He EXITS, SLAMMING and LOCKING the DOOR behind him.

ANTYLLUS
OK, please tell me none of this is real! Like, it's something you've come up with, and you're testing it on me! That's it isn't it! Yeah?

OCTAVIA
(shaken, brave face)
Immersive theatre? Not a bad idea. If we ever get out of this alive I'll give it some thought.

ANTYLLUS
So... it's real then.

OCTAVIA
Yes, Antyllus. It's really real.

ANTYLLUS
We really met Sextus Pompey? The terror of the tides? The man who picks his teeth with the finger bones of his slaughtered enemies?

OCTAVIA
Yeah. That's him.

ANTYLLUS
And now we're trapped on his ship! Adrift at sea! Probably miles from anyone who could help us!

OCTAVIA
This pep talk isn't helping.

ANTYLLUS
Sorry. Yeah. Sorry. ... Octavia?

OCTAVIA
Yes?

ANTYLLUS
Are they going to kill us?

Doomy beat.

OCTAVIA
(brave face)
Let's look on the bright side. They haven't killed us yet. We must be worth more to them alive. So, assuming that my brother and your father can keep a cool head... we should be absolutely fine.

2 **INT. GAIUS'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON**

2

SMASH as MARK turns a table over, THINGS CLATTER everywhere.

MARK
I'M GOING TO KILL EVERY LAST ONE OF
THOSE BARNACLE-SHAGGING BASTARDS!

GAIUS
Mark! You've got to calm down!

MARK
Calm down?! They've taken my SON!

Another SMASH.

LEPIDUS
Well they've taken Gaius's sister,
and you don't see him smashing up
the place- URK!!

Mark GRABS Lepidus by the scruff of the toga.

MARK
(menacing)
I'm sorry, were you telling me how
to process my feelings?

LEPIDUS
 (strangulated)
 No, not at all! Carry on smashing!

Mark LETS GO; Lepidus gets his BREATH BACK.

MARK
 We'll get after them. We'll send an
 army! Slaughter his entire crew!

GAIUS
 We can't! We haven't got an army!

MARK
 Then I'll go by myself! I'll paddle
 out there and slit their scurvy-
 bloated throats!

GAIUS
 The only way this could be worse is
 if one of us gets sliced to ribbons
 on a suicidal solo rescue mission!

MARK
 So what do we do then?!

GAIUS
 I...

Beat.

GAIUS (cont'd)
 (exasperated, defeated)
 ... I don't know...

Beat. Another SMASH as a CABINET is knocked down.

GAIUS (cont'd)
 Lepidus!

LEPIDUS
 Sorry. I thought I'd join in.

OPENING TITLES AND THEME

ANNOUNCER
 "Cry Havoc (Ask Questions Later)"
 Episode 10: "The Pirate King"

3 INT. PIRATE SHIP HOLD - AFTERNOON

3

SHIP atmos, CREAKING hull, LAPPING waves. Antyllus and Octavia sit quietly, trying to control their fear.

ANTYLLUS

... How long have we been in here?

OCTAVIA

Must be an hour or so... Bored already, eh?

ANTYLLUS

I wish.

OCTAVIA

It would be nice to have something to think about other than our own mortality... Hey, hold on a moment!

ANTYLLUS

What is it?

Octavia RUSTLES around in her ROBES and finds... some sheets of PARCHMENT!

OCTAVIA

Some pages of my new play! I hid them under my stola when the pirates took us away.

ANTYLLUS

What for?

OCTAVIA

You never know when inspiration will strike next!

ANTYLLUS

You're going to write, at a time like this?

OCTAVIA

It's the perfect time! My play was so inauthentic - and now here I am, kidnapped by actual pirates!

ANTYLLUS

They might get angry if they find out you're writing about them!

OCTAVIA

Oh let them get angry! I am a
writer and I must write. My voice
will be heard!

The DOOR is swiftly UNLOCKED and OPENED.

GRACCHUS

What's all that noise!

OCTAVIA

(terrified)

Nothing! Nothing at all!

ANTYLLUS

It won't happen again!

GRACCHUS

Good. The Captain wants to see you.

OCTAVIA

Does he? In that case, tell him
we'll be along in a moment.

SEXTUS WALKS in, coolly.

SEXTUS

Actually, you can tell me yourself.

ANTYLLUS

Shit.

OCTAVIA

Oh, er, Captain Pompey, um-

SEXTUS

On this ship, you stand when the
Captain enters the room.

Octavia and Antyllus SCRAMBLE TO THEIR FEET.

ANTYLLUS

Yes sir, right away, didn't mean to
provoke offence-

SEXTUS

Shut up.

ANTYLLUS

Yep.

Sextus takes some casually intimidating STEPS towards them.

SEXTUS

So, how are you finding your accommodation?

OCTAVIA

Locked in a tiny storeroom with some barrels of fish? Luxury.

SEXTUS

Glad to hear it. Only...

He draws his sword, 'SHING!'

SEXTUS (cont'd)

Do remember that sarcasm is the lowest form of wit.

OCTAVIA

Ah.

SEXTUS

Out here, the only rule is 'respect the Captain'. And there's only one penalty for breaking it.

WHOOSH as his sword goes through the air. Octavia GULPS.

OCTAVIA

I... didn't mean to be rude.

SEXTUS

Grand. Behave yourselves, relax, enjoy the cruise - and nobody gets upset. Or filleted.

SEXTUS SHEATHES his sword.

ANTYLLUS

What's going to happen to us?

SEXTUS

All in good time.

OCTAVIA

No, why not tell us now?

SEXTUS

Because I don't have to. Don't tell me you've forgotten the rule already. There's only one.

OCTAVIA
(slight tremor)
Now, now, look, we're co-operating,
aren't we, Antyllus?

ANTYLLUS
Yep, totally, yep.

OCTAVIA
We'd just like to know a little
more about our intended...
(fear)
... fate.

SEXTUS
I'm not here to answer your
questions. You're here to answer
mine. Is Caesar in Rome? Yes or no?

OCTAVIA
I... shan't tell you.

ANTYLLUS
Yes he is!

OCTAVIA
Antyllus!

SEXTUS
Clever lad. And how about your dad?

ANTYLLUS
(getting braver)
My father? Yes, he's there too!
And - and once he realises I've
been captured, he won't stop until
he's rained down bloody vengeance
upon each and every one of you!

SEXTUS
If he does, I'll just kill you.

ANTYLLUS
... Oh. Yes.

SEXTUS
Let's hope he sits back and does
what I tell him, eh? And that goes
for you two as well.

He casually WALKS back to the door.

SEXTUS (cont'd)
 After all: the sea air, the gentle
 sway of the waves - what more could
 you ask for? Oh, and Antyllus?

ANTYLLUS
 Yes?

SEXTUS
 (close)
 Boo.

ANTYLLUS
 (jumps in fright)
 Augh!

Sextus leaves, CHUCKLING, and SLAMS the door.

ANTYLLUS (cont'd)
 I thought we were done for.

OCTAVIA
 You never know, we might still be.

ANTYLLUS
 Aren't you scared?

OCTAVIA
 Yep, terrified. Now help me.

She DROPS to the floor, SCURRYING around.

ANTYLLUS
 Why? What are you looking for?

OCTAVIA
 Something I can use for a pen! I've
 never felt so inspired!

Antyllus SIGHS DESPAIRINGLY.

4 **INT. GAIUS'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON**

4

Gaius and Lepidus discuss plans while Mark PACES FURIOUSLY.

GAIUS
 Lepidus, I appreciate you trying,
 but your plan is not feasible.

LEPIDUS
 I'm only throwing out ideas.

GAIUS
A squadron of trained birds?

LEPIDUS
We train some crows to fly over the pirates, and catch them all in a great big net! They'd never see that coming, I assure you!

GAIUS
Because it's impossible - Mark, look, why don't you sit down?

Mark POURS a cup of wine under:

MARK
How can I? My son's on that ship! They'll eat him alive.

GLUGS it down.

GAIUS
Drinking won't get him back.

Mark THROWS his cup at the wall; SMASH.

MARK
I'm suffering. Alright?

GAIUS
So am I.

MARK
You don't look it.

GAIUS
I am trying to keep control.

MARK
Why bother?! What good can it do?

LEPIDUS
And why are we wasting time when we could be out there doing something constructive! With some crows!

Gaius brings his FIST DOWN on the desk.

GAIUS
For the last time, you can't train crows to attack pirates, or untie ropes, or carry hostages to safety!

LEPIDUS

How can you say that before we've even tried?!

Under the above, the DOOR OPENS and FULVIA enters.

FULVIA

(accusatory)

Well, I see it's all going swimmingly as usual.

LEPIDUS

Ah, Fulvia!

MARK

(taken aback)

Darling. What are you doing here?

FULVIA

Oh, Lepidus was thoughtful enough to send someone over to tell me that my son had been kidnapped.

MARK

(seething)

Well thank you, Lepidus.

LEPIDUS

(oblivious)

No problem at all, honestly.

MARK

Yes, I'm sorry I didn't tell you myself, love, it's just we've been busy here, working out a plan.

FULVIA

Involving trained parrots, I heard?

LEPIDUS

No no, crows, my dear! They'll get the job done. Parrots are all talk.

MARK

Look if Gaius would let me, I'd row out there and take care of the bastards myself!

FULVIA

Awww, Mark...

Fulvia wraps her arms around him, KISSES him.

FULVIA (cont'd)
You're so strong, and brave... and stupid.

MARK
Mm, I- what?

FULVIA
Jove only knows we haven't the resources to go on the offensive, not until you pay those troops.

GAIUS
Thank you!

FULVIA
And if you try and fail with what little you've got, you'll look even more pathetic than you already do.

GAIUS
Well, hang on.

MARK
We'll look more pathetic if we sit around doing piss all.

FULVIA
And the opposite of piss all is letting the enemy know that you'll do anything to get their prisoners back and that they've got you over a barrel. Not a great plan.

MARK
But it's our SON!

FULVIA
I KNOW. And later we're going to have a good long talk about how you allowed a band of pirates to come into the city and kidnap him! But the most important thing for now is that you all keep your heads, and devise a sensible solution!

LEPIDUS
(smugly)
Well that's what one of us has been trying to do all along...!

FULVIA
Do we know where they've taken the hostages?

GAIUS
Our lookouts believe they're on the
pirate vessel. With Sextus Pompey.

FULVIA
They could be halfway to Sicily by
now!

GAIUS
No, the ship's dropped anchor a few
miles off the coast. I assume they
intend to ransom the hostages.

FULVIA
Have you sent a delegation to
negotiate terms?

GAIUS
Not yet. I didn't want us to look
too eager, did I?

FULVIA
Well it's about time somebody went.

MARK
Right!

Mark strides to the door-

FULVIA
Not you!

MARK
Why not me?

FULVIA
Because you're furious! You're in
no state to negotiate! It requires
tact and finesse.

MARK
So what, you mean Gaius?

FULVIA
No, he's needed here! I was
actually talking about me!

MARK
You?!

FULVIA
I've dealt with tougher men than
Sextus Pompey. I've even married
them once or twice.

MARK

No, you're not going! I can't hand my whole family over to pirates!

GAIUS

So who do we send?

LEPIDUS

I say, has anyone laid claim to this custard, or...?

MARK

Lepidus!

GAIUS

Lepidus?

MARK

You'd like to be useful, wouldn't you?

LEPIDUS

I was only asking about the custard, really.

FULVIA

You can't seriously mean Lepidus!

GAIUS

No, it makes sense. He's the only one of us who isn't related to the hostages. So he can be objective. Levelheaded.

FULVIA

Well I suppose, but-!

MARK

Lepidus, get over to that ship and negotiate the terms of release.

LEPIDUS

Oh yes, absolutely! Happy to help! ... Only, um, how would I go about doing that, exactly?

MARK

Well personally I'd say step one would be GET ON A BLOODY BOAT.

LEPIDUS

Ooo yes, righto! Wish me luck!

Lepidus QUICKLY EXITS, SHUTTING the DOOR behind him.

5 INT. PIRATE SHIP HOLD - AFTERNOON

5

WAVES, hull CREAKS. Octavia is SCRIBBLING with a tiny nub of charcoal.

OCTAVIA

"If those stuffed togas in Rome... want their friends back... they'll have to... fight for them!" Got anymore charcoal?

ANTYLLUS

Here. What happens next?

OCTAVIA

The dread pirate Sextus runs his sword straight through one of his men, to show he means business!

ANTYLLUS

That didn't happen.

OCTAVIA

Haven't you heard of dramatic licence?

ANTYLLUS

No. Guess I've got a lot to learn. Was I good enough to be in your play? My audition, I mean?

OCTAVIA

Er, well. Maybe. Chorus, perhaps.

ANTYLLUS

I'd like to be involved. Be nice to feel like I belong somewhere.

SUDDENLY, the door is UNLOCKED and SWINGS OPEN! SEXTUS enters.

SEXTUS

Well if you ask me nicely, I might let you be in my crew. Have you ever killed a man before?

ANTYLLUS

I-I-I-I-I-

SEXTUS

Ah, thought not.

OCTAVIA

You were spying on us! Listening at the door!

SEXTUS

What do you take me for? Honestly! I pay this guy to spy on you and listen at the door.

GRACCHUS

Hallo.

SEXTUS

And what do we have here...?

Sextus GRABS the PAGES from Octavia.

OCTAVIA

No! You can't read that!

SEXTUS

"Pompey's Pirates - A Plunderous Plague." Very exciting. I'll enjoy reading this, I suspect.

OCTAVIA

But it's not finished!

SEXTUS

It is now. Oh, and for your information, we've spotted a small Roman vessel coming this way.

ANTYLLUS

They could be a rescue party!

SEXTUS

Then my men will carve them into little pieces before they ever set eyes upon you two.

OCTAVIA

You don't have to enjoy this so much!

SEXTUS

Don't I?

Swaggering bravado replaced by a steely, simmering anger.

SEXTUS (cont'd)

Perhaps you've forgotten who I am? Sextus, son of Pompey; my late father.

(MORE)

SEXTUS (cont'd)
 Betrayed by your great uncle Julius
 and driven out of Rome after a
 lifetime of serving his country. I
 saw my dad murdered. I saw my
 brother killed in his name. So I'm
 sorry if I have a somewhat
 'negative attitude' toward Rome and
 anyone who stands for it - but I'd
 happily see those hypocrites burn.

OCTAVIA
 (swallows, holds nerve)
 You used to be a Roman too.

SEXTUS
 Yeah. Then I saw sense.

ANTYLLUS
 I...

SEXTUS
 What? What is it?

ANTYLLUS
 I'm sorry those things happened to
 you. Is all.

SEXTUS
 Thank you, Antyllus. For that, I'll
 kill you last.

ANTYLLUS
 (terrified)
 Right.

Sextus WALKS AWAY.

SEXTUS
 I'll let you know how it pans out.
 It might get a wee bit bloody. Oh,
 and Octavia?

OCTAVIA
 Yes?

SEXTUS
 Thanks for the play!

Sextus SLAMS the door shut behind him.

6 INT. LEPIDUS'S ATRIUM - AFTERNOON

6

GENTLE SUMMER WIND in the gardens outside. CLEOPATRA frantically SCRIBBLES with pen on parchment.

CLEOPATRA

As if the gods weren't testing me enough with these Roman blockheads, they send drought to Memphis in my absence...

The TEARING of PARCHMENT; she hands the message over.

CLEOPATRA (cont'd)

You, get this to Alexandria. And if I hear any more grumbling from the officials, then our army has my permission to maim whoever it chooses for the duration of the crisis. Understand?

EGYPTIAN MESSENGER

Yes my Queen. I shall fly to Egypt with the winds of Shu at my back, letting no-

CLEOPATRA

Hey hey, less chat. More flying.

EGYPTIAN MESSENGER

Yes my Queen!

The MESSENGER RUNS to the DOOR and EXITS.

CLEOPATRA

(sighs)

Can't a country rule itself for a day or two?

FOOTSTEPS as CHARMIAN ENTERS HURRIEDLY.

CHARMIAN

My lady! Urgent news!

CLEOPATRA

Wait.

RUMMAGING in a fruit basket.

CLEOPATRA (cont'd)

You can say what you like about Lepidus, but he's smart enough to keep a ready supply of fresh figs.

She BITES into the juicy FIG.

CLEOPATRA (cont'd)
 (eating)
 OK, Charmian. Report.

CHARMIAN
 Sextus Pompey has grown bolder.
 Significantly bolder.

CLEOPATRA
 I'm not surprised. He's certainly
 captured the public's imagination.
 Extremely good ass, if I recall.
 Have you ever seen it?

CHARMIAN
 No ma'am.

CLEOPATRA
 Extremely good.

Another LOUD BITE.

CHARMIAN
 Well he's made his move. His men
 infiltrated the city and took
 hostages back to his ship!

CLEOPATRA
 Who was taken?

CHARMIAN
 Mark Antony's son, Antyllus, and...

Struggling to get the words out.

CHARMIAN (cont'd)
 ... Octavia, the sister of Caesar.
 From the theatre.

CLEOPATRA
 Ah. Now that is wonderful news.

CHARMIAN
 (slips out)
 But how can it be?

CLEOPATRA
 You disagree with your Queen? No
 figs for you.

CHARMIAN

No no, I just... wonder what we stand to gain from this news.

CLEOPATRA

This is just the leverage we need to kick the Romans off their lofty plinths. There's no way they'll be able to stage a rescue themselves; they'll be absolutely flailing!

Amusing for Cleopatra; not for Charmian.

CHARMIAN

That's certainly true.

CLEOPATRA

So, once they're really desperate, I'll swoop in and remind them that I just happen to have the finest seaborne fighting force known to the civilised world at my command, and see if that encourages a little more... flexibility.

CHARMIAN

And then we'll face Pompey and rescue the hostages?

CLEOPATRA

Unless he's already killed them.

CHARMIAN

... Yes.

CLEOPATRA

The trouble with pirates is they have no self-control.

EATS ANOTHER FIG.

CLEOPATRA (cont'd)

Mmmm! These figs!

CHARMIAN

So for now we take... no action?

CLEOPATRA

No, we'll let them stew a bit. Have they begun negotiations yet?

CHARMIAN

Lepidus has just set out to do so.

CLEOPATRA

Lepidus?! Well, if anyone can get a hostage killed, it's him. That'll be all, Charmian. Why, you look a little faint.

CHARMIAN

A... mild sickness, nothing more.

CLEOPATRA

What did I tell you: don't drink the water. Anyway - a queen's work is never done. Run along now.

CHARMIAN

At once.

Then, to herself - but close to us:

CHARMIAN (cont'd)

I've got a lot of planning to do...

7 **INT. GAIUS'S OFFICE - EVENING**

7

A strained atmosphere as night draws in. An unusual, eerie quiet. GAIUS, MARK and FULVIA awaiting news.

MARK

(unusually quiet)
The sun's going down.

GAIUS

... Hm? What?

MARK

The sun's going down. And we still haven't heard anything.

GAIUS

I'm sure it won't be much longer.

FULVIA

You sound confident.

MARK

No, he's right. You don't kidnap someone if you don't want to ransom them, do you? I mean, they won't just kill them, will they?

GAIUS

No.

Beat.

GAIUS (cont'd)
Unless they want to teach us a
lesson.

FULVIA
In what?

GAIUS
Justice? As far as they know it.

MARK
No. No, at any moment now, Lepidus
will come through that door and
give us the news. He's got to.

The DOORHANDLE RATTLES.

MARK (cont'd)
There, what did I tell you!

FULVIA
Finally!

GAIUS
Let's see what we're up against.

The DOOR FLIES OPEN and...

ATIA
Would you believe it, the cheeky
bastard's put his prices up again!

BIG SIGHS from everyone else.

GAIUS
Good evening, mother.

ATIA
The city's buzzing! All the inns
are saying they're booked up. It's
not even the busy season. Oh,
hello, Fulvia, you look nice.

FULVIA
Thank you Atia.

ATIA
Mark on the other hand....

MARK
For Jove's sake...

ATIA

It's these pirates, is what it is.
The city's thronged with country
folk, all hoping for a glimpse of
the mighty Sextus Pompey's flashing
smile and his famously good arse.

FULVIA

I have heard a lot about it.

GAIUS

Yeah, same.

ATIA

And so the merchants all jack up
their prices! Rinsing them for all
they're worth! They think people
will pay anything these days!

FULVIA

People are very gullible.

ATIA

I mean, look what I got...

FULVIA

Ah.

Atia PRODUCES a ceramic STATUE from her SACHEL.

ATIA

Three denarii he charged me for
that! Three denarii!

GAIUS

Yes mother, shocking, but we're
waiting for an important-

Ignoring him, Atia SWAGGERS OVER to Mark.

ATIA

Mark! Mark!

MARK

What, what do you want!?

ATIA

Look at this. Does this seem like
three Nereids satisfying Neptune's
carnal needs? Does it?

MARK

I really don't-

ATIA

Look at it, Mark. Does it? Does it look like that? Eh? Carnal? Does it? Does it, Mark? Does it?

MARK

I swear, old woman, if you don't get that statue out of my face, I'm going to smash it into pieces and shove them straight up your-

ATIA

You wouldn't dare.

MARK

Why not?

Atia KNEES HIM in the groin. HE DOUBLES OVER.

MARK (cont'd)

Aaaaargh!!!

ATIA

Because I'd knee you in the whatsit, like that. Sorry Fulvia.

FULVIA

No, please. Whenever you like.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK at the door.

GAIUS

Yes? Come?

A MESSENGER ENTERS.

ROMAN MESSENGER

An urgent note for you, o Caesar.

GAIUS

Give me that, quickly!

He SNATCHES the SCROLL away and UNROLLS it.

MARK

Well, come on, what is it? Is it from Lepidus?

GAIUS

... No. It's from the pirates. It's a ransom demand.

MARK

Well. At least they're still alive.

FULVIA

How much?

GAIUS

Fifty talents of gold for Octavia,
and a hundred talents for Antyllus.

MARK

What?!

FULVIA

Oh my Gods.

ATIA

(musing)

No, I don't think I'd pay that for
Octavia.

GAIUS

(exhales)

Four and a half million sesterces.
Or an elephant's weight in gold.

FULVIA

When's the deadline?

GAIUS

Midday tomorrow. Or they'll... kill
the hostages.

MARK

We'll never raise that much by
tomorrow! And where's Lepidus?

GAIUS

They cover that in here too.
"Thanks for the extra hostage."

MARK

Aughhhh...

GAIUS

They say if we pay for the other
two, they'll throw him in as a free
gift.

8 INT. PIRATE SHIP HOLD - EVENING

8

WAVES, hull CREAKS. A calmer sea than earlier.

OCTAVIA

(seriously annoyed)

Well. This is just brilliant.

ANTYLLUS is leaning against the door, concentrating on what he can hear outside.

ANTYLLUS
(not paying attention)
Mmm.

OCTAVIA
Just in case we were in any doubt as to whether our families had even the slightest idea what they were doing, they send Lepidus, LEPIDUS, to negotiate our release.

ANTYLLUS
Yeah.

OCTAVIA
And then the doddering old fart gets himself kidnapped as well.

ANTYLLUS
Too right.

OCTAVIA
The level of incompetence and stupidity is absolutely staggering! My Gods... No offence, Lepidus.

LEPIDUS
Oh no, none taken, my dear.

ANTYLLUS
Could you keep your voices down?

OCTAVIA
Why? What are you doing over there, anyway? Come away from the door!

ANTYLLUS
Ssssh! Hold on...

Antyllus TIPTOES over to her. They speak quietly.

OCTAVIA
What's the game?

ANTYLLUS
You're right, okay? Nobody's coming for us. Nobody knows what to do. So we'll have to escape ourselves.

OCTAVIA
Oh, Antyllus-

ANTYLLUS

Listen! I've been surveilling them.

OCTAVIA

Surveilling them...?

ANTYLLUS

Yeah! The guards move in a pattern. They check in on each other roughly every half-hour, except right after a guard change when there's no sign of anyone for at least another quarter. So if we strike then, and take out the single guard on duty, we could make a break for the deck and swim for shore!

LEPIDUS

Seems a tad reckless...

ANTYLLUS

Look, when the guard changes, you and I will hide either side of the door, Octavia shouts for the guard, and when he comes in, we'll get the drop on him! I just have to listen for the guard change. Should be any moment now...

Antyllus TIPTOES back over to the door.

ANTYLLUS (cont'd)

We all just have to stay very, very, very quiet...

POW, the DOOR is THROWN OPEN, CLONKING Antyllus on the head.

ANTYLLUS (cont'd)

Augh!

SEXTUS

Evening all. Where's Antyllus?

OCTAVIA

Behind the door.

CREAK as DOOR pulled from the wall.

SEXTUS

Oh, sorry, lad, didn't see you there.

ANTYLLUS

(dazed)

Let's... get... the drop on...

SEXTUS

Yep, very good. Now, Lepidus...

LEPIDUS

Oh, um, hello.

SEXTUS

If you ask me, these quarters don't measure up to your lofty station and fine breeding.

LEPIDUS

Well, I didn't like to say...

SEXTUS

So we've got something very special in mind for you... GUARD!

GRACCHUS

(chuckling evilly)

Yes sir. This way, you.

Gracchus GRABS LEPIDUS and DRAGS him out of the room.

LEPIDUS

(dragged away)

No! Please! I'll be good! I promise! Octaviaaaaaaa!

DOOR SLAMS behind them.

OCTAVIA

What are you going to do with him?!

Sextus's tone softens. Quite amiable.

SEXTUS

Oh, give him some dinner. He'll be fine. I just wanted to talk to you without a Triumvir listening to us.

OCTAVIA

Eh? Why?

SEXTUS

It's about this play of yours...

He BRANDISHES the SCROLLS.

SEXTUS (cont'd)
(genuine)
I really like it!

OCTAVIA
You... you do?

SEXTUS
Yeah! It's funny! And the way you
rip the piss out of those snobs on
the Palatine Hill - I mean, well
played. That's proper top shelf.

OCTAVIA
(surprised)
Oh, well! Thank you! It needs
another draft or two...

SEXTUS
Aye, but it's nearly there. I only
had one note, honestly.

OCTAVIA
Yes?

SEXTUS
It's kind of awkward, but... it's
about the way you've written my
character. You see, deep down,
well... I'm really not as nasty as
all that.

END OF EPISODE