

CRY HAVOC! (ASK QUESTIONS LATER)

EPISODE 12 - HOSTAGE TO FORTUNE

Written by

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Edited with additional material

by David K. Barnes

FEATURING

Kazeem Tosin Amore as Mark Antony

Harry Roebuck as Gaius Octavius Caesar

Sarah Lambie as Octavia

Aaron-Louis Cadogan as Antyllus

Ryan Hopevere-Anderson as Sextus

Mark Thompson as Gracchus

Andy Secombe as Lepidus

Sarah Agha as Charmian

Lara Sawalha as Cleopatra

Ahmed Aljabray as Sadiki

Benjamin Garrison as Soldier 1

Alastair Christie as Soldier 2

CONTENT NOTES

- Kidnapping
- Food
- Alcohol & Alcohol Use
- Sexual References & Innuendo
- SFX: Loud vocalisations, metallic clanking & scraping, waves & wind, creaking

The sun rises over Rome. MARK leads a dozen SOLDIERS up the hill; they MARCH TOWARDS US, armour CLANKING.

MARK
(approaching)
One, two, one, two, one, two, one,
two, one, two, one, two - HALT!

The soldiers HALT, sloppily.

MARK (cont'd)
Right lads, at ease. GAIUS!

Gaius's DOOR OPENS as he EXITS.

GAIUS
It's too early for you to bellow
like a rutting- oh.

MARK
Gaius, meet our military escort.

GAIUS
Our what?

MARK
Come on lads, give him the
greeting, like we rehearsed.

SOLDIERS
(not at all in unison)
Ave, Caesar.

MARK
Again!

SOLDIERS
(more in unison)
Ave, Caesar!

MARK
That's better! Not bad, eh.

GAIUS
Yes, um... Mark. Could we, er...

They WALK A FEW STEPS TOGETHER and speak in hushed voices.

GAIUS (cont'd)
They're a rough old lot! Looks like
you rounded them up down the pub.

MARK

I did. And before you ask - no, they're not technically 'trained.' Or 'sober.' But they're all I could get for the money at short notice.

GAIUS

That's another thing: where's this money come from all of a sudden?

MARK

I'll explain later - all that matters now is we can pay off the ransom, AND we've got some muscle in case things go wrong.

GAIUS

Unless they pass out drunk.

A SOLDIER COLLAPSES drunkenly.

GAIUS (cont'd)

Like that one.

MARK

(sighs, then yells)
Alright you bunch of maggots! We've got to be at Ostia Harbour by midday so let's shape up and ship out. Any questions?

SOLDIER

Sir?

MARK

What is it?

SOLDIER

Can I go to the toilet?

MARK

No you-! Oh, go on, be quick.

SOLDIER

Thanks guv!

The soldier RUNS OFF to the loo, armour CLANKING.

MARK

Anyone else need to go? Speak now or forever hold your thingy.

All of the other soldiers DASH OFF, MUMBLING.

SOLDIERS

Yeah, me sir, I'll be quick (etc)

GAIUS

Mark, what is this plan of yours?
And how's Cleopatra involved?

MARK

Gaius, I can't tell you that now.

GAIUS

Why?

MARK

'Cos I need the toilet too. I'm
bursting.

He RUNS OFF under...

OPENING TITLES AND THEME

ANNOUNCER

"Cry Havoc (Ask Questions Later)"
Episode 12: "Hostage to Fortune"

2 **EXT. PIRATE SHIP, DECK - MORNING**

2

A beautiful morning at sea. Gentle WINDS, waves LAPPING, gulls CAW. And the TINK-TINK-TINK of a swordfight between SEXTUS and ANTYLLUS - some wild of them DUCKING, PARRYING etc

SEXTUS

There! That's it, lad! Don't get
distracted! Eyes on your opponent!

ANTYLLUS

Woah! Not so fast!

OCTAVIA opens the CREAKING HATCH and CLIMBS up on deck.

OCTAVIA

(yawns)
Morning, chaps. Hard at it?

ANTYLLUS

Hey Octavia! OH!

SHING! A SWIPE and a STUMBLE!

SEXTUS

I said don't get distracted! And keep those elbows loose, you're seizing up!

ANTYLLUS

I'm doing it, I'm doing it! I reckon I've got the hang of this!

In about three moves, TINK-TINK-TINK, Sextus DISARMS Antyllus, whose SWORD CLATTERS to the deck.

SEXTUS

Better luck next time.

ANTYLLUS

Ahh! How did you do that!?

SEXTUS

Keep practicing, eh, lad?

ANTYLLUS

(tut, sighs)

Okay...

Antyllus PICKS UP his sword and practices some moves - SWISH, SWISH - in the background while Sextus WALKS over to Octavia.

SEXTUS

Octavia, what's with the frown?

OCTAVIA

Besides being a captive on a pirate ship? ... Actually, it's Mia.

SEXTUS

Oh yeah?

OCTAVIA

Last night, under the stars, we got talking. And er... You know, we were alone, just the two of us...

SEXTUS

A romantic ambience...

OCTAVIA

I thought so, but... she never made eye contact. Kept looking away. It was like there was something she wasn't telling me...

SEXTUS

Want me to find out for you?

OCTAVIA

Honestly, I think you're wrong
about the whole thing.

SEXTUS

You want to bet?

(calls)

Gracchus! Still keeping an eye on
our new guest?

GRACCHUS (O.S.)

Yes Captain! I think she's just
caught herself some breakfast.

OCTAVIA

Catching breakfast?

SLOSH! CHARMIAN HAULS herself out of the SEA and onto the
deck. GASPING. DRIPPING water everywhere.

OCTAVIA (cont'd)

... Mia!

CHARMIAN

(panting)

Oh! Morning Octavia!

SEXTUS

How's the water?

CHARMIAN

Cold! Very cold!

Octavia taken by the sight of her, all wet and stuff.

OCTAVIA

Ye-es. So I can see.

CHARMIAN

Eh?

OCTAVIA

(flustered)

Nothing, sorry, er, gosh, um-

SEXTUS

(interjecting)

If I'm not mistaken, that's fresh
sea bass! Should taste great with
some butter and a white wine sauce.

CHARMIAN
Octavia?

OCTAVIA
Yes?

CHARMIAN
Want some?

OCTAVIA
Sorry, what?

CHARMIAN
The sea bass. You said it was your
favourite. Last night.

OCTAVIA
(awkward)
Oh! Er. I've eaten actually. Sorry.

CHARMIAN
(disappointed)
Oh. Well. Never mind then.

FOOTSTEPS as she CLIMBS DOWN BELOW DECKS, CLOSES the HATCH.

SEXTUS
Urgh. Now that was just sad.

OCTAVIA
What was?

SEXTUS
That gleam in her eye when she said
it was your favourite - and the way
it died when you shot her down...

OCTAVIA
I didn't know what she was planning
did I! She's... very confusing.

SEXTUS
(serious edge)
At this rate you'll have plenty of
time to figure her out. We've heard
nothing from your Roman pals.

OCTAVIA
Nothing at all?

A couple of FOOTSTEPS as she looks out over sea.

OCTAVIA (cont'd)
What's Gaius up to?

SEXTUS

Weighing up the pros and cons, if I know his kind.

OCTAVIA

Pros and cons? Of saving me? I'm his sister, for Jove's sake! He should have saved me already!

SEXTUS

But he hasn't, has he?

(beat)

Better drink in the view of that coastline while you can. It could be the last time you ever see it.

3 **EXT. OSTIA, DOCKSIDE - MORNING**

3

A HERD of HOOFBEATS as Mark and his band of SOLDIERS ride.

MARK

Woah, there! Steady, men!

NEIGHS and HOOFBEATS CLATTERING TO A STOP. We're at the docks at Ostia. LAPPING OF WAVES, SEAGULLS.

MARK (cont'd)

Gaius, how we doing for time?

GAIUS

Sundial says a couple of hours.

MARK

Right. When the pirates turn up, you leave the talking to me, OK?

GAIUS

Keep it professional. We don't want them to do anything... rash.

MARK

If they've laid a finger on my boy...

GAIUS

Yes, well, let's hope Pompey wants a quick and easy end to this as much as we do. Then we can get Octavia and Antyllus and go home.

Beat.

GAIUS (cont'd)
 (belated)
 Shit, and Lepidus. Him too.

MARK
 What if we refused to take him?

GAIUS
 Mark!

MARK
 Just thinking out loud.

4 INT. PIRATE SHIP, HOLD - MORNING

4

LEPIDUS is inside his cage.

LEPIDUS
 (anxious muttering)
 Can't sleep. Won't sleep. Those
 devils could come at any time!

Octavia KNOCKS on the cage.

LEPIDUS (cont'd)
 Augh! Don't eat me!

OCTAVIA
 Lepidus? You okay?

LEPIDUS
 Octavia! It's you! They won't tell
 me anything, I don't know what
 they've planned! They could make me
 walk the plank, or run me through,
 or torture me or goodness knows
 what else! It's agony not knowing!

OCTAVIA
 Yes, that is a worry. But the honey
 pancakes were nice, weren't they.

LEPIDUS
 Oh, wonderful with the Appian red!
 But goodness, I'm so frightened!

OCTAVIA
 I'm a bit nervous myself...

LEPIDUS
 They'll save us, won't they? Mark
 and Gaius?

Beat.

OCTAVIA
I'd like to believe that... I'm
sure a life on the high seas has a
lot to offer, but... never seeing
home again? My friends. My Mum.

LEPIDUS
(sympathetic)
Oh, my dear...

Pause. Octavia SWALLOWS and puts on a brave face.

OCTAVIA
And, well, I mean, Rome would be
denied any more of my plays. The
poor wretches, never knowing what
they might have had.

LEPIDUS
(chuckles)
Yes... Tragedy has many forms.

OCTAVIA
Do they have theatres in barbarian
pirate camps?

LEPIDUS
Do you know, I'm not sure.

A CALL from the DECK.

GRACCHUS (O.S.)
Ship ahoy! Ship ahoy!

OCTAVIA
A ship?... They've come! Lepidus,
they've come! We're saved!

Octavia SCRAMBLES AWAY.

LEPIDUS
Octavia? Octavia, don't leave me!
Oh my giddy aunt! Oh crumbs!

5 **EXT. PIRATE SHIP, DECK - MORNING**

5

Lots of activity! SHOUTS, ropes THROWN, and gangplanks
CLANKING as a large ship pulls up alongside, under...

SEXTUS

(calling)

That's right, lads! Easy does it!
Let her come alongside!

CHARMIAN

(agitated)

Captain Pompey! Sir!

SEXTUS

Not now, Mia!

Octavia hurriedly EMERGES from the hold.

OCTAVIA

At last! They took their sweet...
wait! That's not a Roman ship!

CHARMIAN

No, but I do know whose it is!

SEXTUS

Everybody knows Cleopatra's ship
when they see it.

CHARMIAN

But she can't see me!!

OCTAVIA

Mia, what's the matter?

CHARMIAN

Captain, you have to trust me - the
Queen cannot see me here! Please!

SEXTUS

(distracted)

What? Fine, whatever, none of my
business. Grab an old cloak, you'll
be one of the crew. Here, take an
eyepatch.

CHARMIAN

You won't give me away?

OCTAVIA

Mia! What's got into you-?

SEXTUS

Could you take this somewhere else?
I'm kind of busy right now.

(MORE)

SEXTUS (cont'd)
 (calls to crew)
 Hold fast, men! Let's hear what
 these Egyptians have to say for
 themselves!

Cleo's servant SADIKI addresses them from the other ship.

SADIKI (O.S.)
 I have a message for Captain Sextus
 Pompey! Her exalted divinity,
 Empress of the Nile, Queen of
 Kings-

SEXTUS
 Does she dance too?

HEARTY LAUGHS all round from the pirates.

SADIKI (O.S.)
 ... wishes to speak with you about
 the release of your hostages.

SEXTUS
 Does she now? Well it's been a
 while since we had royalty here, eh
 boys? Bring her aboard!

JEERS from the PIRATES as Cleopatra crosses the GANGPLANK,
 flanked by a retinue of BODYGUARDS.

SEXTUS (cont'd)
 Well well well. Cleopatra herself.

CLEOPATRA
 Sextus Pompey. I trust you don't
 mind my guards? I am not in the
 habit of putting my life in the
 hands of scoundrels.

SEXTUS
 Life's more fun if you do. Now, are
 you here for the hostages - or did
 you just come for a glimpse of my
 famously good arse?

The pirate crew all LAUGH.

CLEOPATRA
 It is the safety of the hostages
 that concerns me, and that alone.

SEXTUS

Pity, I've been working out this morning. Come, we'll negotiate in my quarters.

The SWISH of CLEOPATRA shrugging off her ROBE.

CLEOPATRA

You, pirate. The short one with the eyepatch.

CHARMIAN

(deep voice)

Uh, um, yes, your Majesty?

CLEOPATRA

Take my robe. It's too hot.

CHARMIAN

(deep voice)

As you like.

SEXTUS

This way, your highness.

Sextus, Cleopatra and two guards WALK AWAY.

CHARMIAN

(exhales)

That was close...

OCTAVIA

Mia, what is going on? Why do you need to hide from Cleopatra?

CHARMIAN

It's... complicated.

OCTAVIA

I wonder why she's here? And where the heck is my brother?

6 **INT. SEXTUS'S QUARTERS - MORNING**

6

Outside atmos drifts in faintly. Sextus PULLS OUT A CHAIR.

SEXTUS

Please, sit, your majesty.

CLEOPATRA

Thank you.

She SITS.

SEXTUS

I must insist that our negotiations
take place in private.

CLEOPATRA

Understandable. Ahmose, you and
your men stay outside. I'll call
you if he tries anything.

EGYPTIAN GUARD

Yes, my Queen.

SEXTUS

Gracchus? Keep an eye on her lot
outside. And set sail for Ostia.

GRACCHUS

Captain.

SEXTUS

In the meantime, we're not to be
disturbed under any circumstances.

GRACCHUS

Aye sir.

Gracchus and the guards WALK OUT. DOOR SHUT FIRMLY.

SEXTUS

Well.

CLEOPATRA

Well.

SEXTUS

... You think they're going for it?

CLEOPATRA

I think they bought it hook, line
and sinker.

Sextus LAUGHS, and GRABS a BOTTLE GROG.

SEXTUS

Drink?

CLEOPATRA

Please.

Sextus UNCORKS it and POURS TWO CUPS under...

CLEOPATRA (cont'd)
 You played your part brilliantly.
 Thanks to your handiwork, and my
 own impeccable timing, the Romans
 are being co-operative at last.

SEXTUS
 Got them eating out of your hands?

CLEOPATRA
 Hardly that, but it's progress.
 I've even made some in-roads with
 Mark Antony. Though mini-Caesar
 remains a stuck-up little prick.

SEXTUS
 You shock me.

CLEOPATRA
 Still the main thing is I'm finally
 getting somewhere. And all it took
 was a bit of kidnapping. Cheers.

They TOAST - CLINK.

CLEOPATRA (cont'd)
 Hostages alright?

She drinks under:

SEXTUS
 Yeah, lovely bunch. And speaking of
 Mark, his son's nothing like him. A
 real stand-up fella.

CLEOPATRA
 Antyllus?

SEXTUS
 Good heart, strong spirit.

CLEOPATRA
 Yes, and his father's having
 kittens. You deserve a bonus...

The JINGLING THUD of a heavy BAG OF COINS hitting the table.

SEXTUS
 Very nice. I thank you.

CLEOPATRA
 Officially, I'm here on the Romans'
 behalf to negotiate a lower ransom.
 (MORE)

CLEOPATRA (cont'd)
They're offering thirty percent,
but they'll stretch to forty-five.

SEXTUS
Mm, acceptable. I guess one can put
a price on family after all.

CLEOPATRA
But seeing their faces all scared
and confused - that was priceless.

They both LAUGH.

SEXTUS
Well, you get what you want, and I
get paid - a good day's work and
it's not even lunchtime!

CLEOPATRA
Mind you, they'll be expecting us
to haggle for at least an hour.

SEXTUS
(suggestive)
So. How should an intelligent and
devastatingly attractive pair of
delinquents like us pass the time?

CLEOPATRA
(smiling)
Oh... go on then. Besides, I have
heard a lot about your famously
good ass. Leaving this ship without
seeing it would be like going to
Egypt without viewing the pyramids.

7 **EXT. OSTIA, DOCKSIDE - AN HOUR LATER**

7

A dozen soldiers standing around. BORED FIDGETING, SIGHS,
the odd COUGH. Off, a crowd of CURIOUS SPECTATORS has
gathered.

GAIUS
Another hour, and no sign of them.

MARK
Give it time...

GAIUS
We've attracted a crowd. Probably
wondering why we're standing around
like a pack of idiots. Whatever
your plan is, it'd better work-

SOLDIER

Sir! Ships on the horizon!

A kerfuffle of CLANKING METAL as everyone cranes to see.

MARK

Yes, yes, I see them!

GAIUS

Ships? Plural?

MARK

All part of the plan, Gaius.

He addresses his men.

MARK (cont'd)

Listen up, men! We may not have served together long - about a couple of hours as it happens - but that only reaffirms the fact that this, here, today, will be the greatest moment this company has ever seen. These pirates may beguile some feeble-minded plebians, but they are nothing but scum and outlaws! We will stand firm, we will get back those hostages, and we will do whatever it takes to protect our people and the glory of Rome!

Pause.

SOLDIER

And then we get paid?

MARK

And then you get paid.

Soldiers CHEER.

GAIUS

Mark, that other ship... It's Cleopatra's! You knew about this?

MARK

Yep. She went on ahead to broker the deal. Fearless, I'll admit it. Marching straight into the lion's den like that. Takes guts...

GAIUS

(dubious)

Well, let's hope for our sake she's managed to stay on his good side. Anything could happen over there...

8 INT. SEXTUS'S QUARTERS - MORNING

8

A happily exhausted and post-coital Cleopatra and Sextus.

CLEOPATRA

(exhales)

Well... That was fun...!

SEXTUS

(knackered)

Aye. I don't think I can stand up.

CLEOPATRA

You know Sextus, we're both natural leaders, we both know the game... Why don't we seize Rome? Why haven't we done that yet?

SEXTUS

Rule it together? It is tempting.

CLEOPATRA

Right?

SEXTUS

Awkward, though. Y'know. After your brother killed my father.

CLEOPATRA

Oh yes, I'd forgotten about that. If it helps, I killed my brother?

SEXTUS

Still, you can imagine, announcing it to the rest of the family...

CLEOPATRA

No, absolutely. Rats.

SEXTUS

Shame.

KNOCK at the DOOR.

ANTYLLUS (O.S.)

Captain Pompey sir?

SEXTUS

Oh, uh, wait a sec!

They HURRIEDLY PAT THEMSELVES DOWN, REARRANGE CLOTHING, etc

SEXTUS

[hurried ad-libbed
preparing]

CLEOPATRA

[hurried ad-libbed
preparing]

CLEOPATRA (cont'd)

Okay go for it.

SEXTUS

Come in!

DOOR OPENS, Antyllus entering.

SEXTUS (cont'd)

(clears throat)

And not a penny less!

CLEOPATRA

By the Nile, you drive a hard
bargain, Captain!

ANTYLLUS

Sorry to interrupt!

SEXTUS

Antyllus! You'll be pleased to hear
that the ransom's been agreed and
you'll be heading home as soon as
we're docked.

ANTYLLUS

(disappointed)

Oh. I see... Just, it's been kind
of terrific here, is all...

SEXTUS

Oh, don't pout, Antyllus! All good
things and so on.

ANTYLLUS

S'pose.

SEXTUS

Although, now I think of it, before
you go... there is a matter you
might be able to help us with?

ANTYLLUS

Really? Me?

SEXTUS

You wouldn't mind, your Majesty?

CLEOPATRA

No, sure. Er, I mean-
 (serious voice)
 - as long as there's no funny
 business, Captain.

SEXTUS

You see, Antyllus, I'm happy to let
 you all go, but I'm the terror of
 the tides. I've got a reputation to
 maintain. That's a pirate's bread
 and butter, you know.

ANTYLLUS

Absolutely. Branding is important.

SEXTUS

Exactly. So, how would you like to
 help me with some brand management?

9 **EXT. OSTIA, DOCKSIDE - MIDDAY**

9

It is now noon and the ships have docked. Mark, Gaius and
 their dozen soldiers stand by as the GANGPLANK is lowered
 (with a CREAK and BANG).

MARK

Alright, men. Look lively and don't
 let your guard down for a second...

GAIUS

There's Cleopatra. She doesn't look
 too worried... She's even smiling.

Cleopatra DESCENDS THE GANGPLANK towards them.

CLEOPATRA

Afternoon, gentlemen. Nice to get
 outside for a while.

GAIUS

Your highness.

MARK

I see you're unharmed.

CLEOPATRA

Bless your heart, you noticed. I bear good news: Pompey accepted your terms, we settled at forty percent of the original ransom, and the gold has been transferred to his ship from my personal supply.

GAIUS

Wait, you paid off the ransom for us? What's going on here?

MARK

She's getting something in return, Gaius. Just wind your neck in.

GAIUS

What's she getting from us-?

Sextus shouts from his ship's deck.

SEXTUS (O.S.)

Ahoy! Mark Antony!

MARK

Sextus Pompey. So, we meet again.

SEXTUS (O.S.)

And you've aged terribly!

MARK

We're not interested in personal comments - you primped-up little...
(can't think of a clever
insult)
... twat! Where are the hostages?

Hesitant CREAKS as Lepidus and Octavia DESCEND the gangplank.

LEPIDUS

Oh dear, oh my...

OCTAVIA

Mind your step, Lepidus, careful on the plank. That's it, down we go...

GAIUS

Octavia! Are you alright, did they hurt you at all-?

OCTAVIA

You took your bloody time! How could you leave me on a pirate ship for a whole night?!

MARK

What about you, Lepidus? You OK?

LEPIDUS

Oh Mark, it was terrible! I feared for my very life! Oh, wait a mo.
(shouts back at the ship)
Excuse me! Captain!

SEXTUS (O.S.)

Yes?

LEPIDUS

Do you have any of that lovely soft cheese left?

SEXTUS (O.S.)

No, you scoffed the lot!

LEPIDUS

Oh, cruel and barbaric ignominy!

MARK

Sod this old buffer and his cheese! Pompey, where's my son!?

SEXTUS (O.S.)

Why, he's right here!

ANTYLLUS (O.S.)

Hello father! I'm safe and well!

MARK

(relief)

Oh, thank Jupiter for that! Now get your arse down here, on the double!

ANTYLLUS (O.S.)

Yes sir.

SEXTUS (O.S.)

Not so fast!

Up on deck, Sextus draws his SWORD, 'SHING!' Everybody on the dockside GASPS in horror.

GAIUS

Antyllus! Look out!

ANTYLLUS (O.S.)

Urk! He's got me!

GASPS and CONCERNED MURMURS from the SOLDIERS and CROWD.

MARK

No! Pompey you coward!

SEXTUS (O.S.)

You can have the fellow back - when you pay up the other fifty percent of the ransom!

MARK

Rargh! You sea scum! Let me at him!

Mark moves to race up the gangplank.

CLEOPATRA

No Mark, don't! He'll kill the boy!
(shouts to Sextus)
This isn't what we agreed, pirate!

SEXTUS (O.S.)

You know us buccaneers! We're so unreliable! Eh, Antyllus?

ANTYLLUS (O.S.)

You vile and duplicitous wretch!

MARK

That's it son, show him who's boss!

SEXTUS (O.S.)

Stubborn to the last, eh, Mark? In that case, say goodbye to your son!

ANTYLLUS (O.S.)

Not so fast! HAH!

A SCUFFLE and Antyllus SLIPS FREE of Sextus. GASPS from the EVERYONE at the dockside.

GAIUS

Gods, what is he doing?

SEXTUS (O.S.)

My sword!

ANTYLLUS (O.S.)

Ha! Not so tough now, are you?

MARK

What? Am I seeing things, or did my son just take a sword off Sextus Pompey!?

OCTAVIA

Yes he did. Compelling, isn't it?

SEXTUS (O.S.)

It's lucky I carry a spare!

SHING!

SEXTUS (O.S.) (cont'd)

Come to your death!

ANTYLLUS (O.S.)

Have at you, dog!

TING! TING! TING! A thrilling SWORDFIGHT ERUPTS on the deck. GASPS and OOS from the dockside crowd.

LEPIDUS

My goodness, this is so exciting!

GAIUS

I can't bear to watch.

MARK

Jove's sake, that's my son up there! And he's incredible!
(yells)

THAT'S IT, SON! I BELIEVE IN YOU!

10 **EXT. PIRATE SHIP, DECK - CONTINUOUS**

10

We shift focus to the deck where the FIGHTING continues as Sextus and Antyllus follow their choreography.

SEXTUS

Lunge! Parry! And... riposte! Now get up right in my grill.

SHING, the two swords GRINDING against each other.

ANTYLLUS

(gritted teeth)
Do you think it's working?

SEXTUS

(gritted teeth)

Yeah, they've loving it! Octavia wrote a damn good scene and we'e giving a damn good performance! Now... break!

They PUSH AWAY FROM EACH OTHER.

SEXTUS (cont'd)

Quick, quick, it's your line!

ANTYLLUS

Oh uh...

(loudly)

Get back to your barnacles, Pompey! And if any pirate wants to attack Rome, you tell them they'll have to go through Antyllus first! HAH!

TINK-TINK-TINK, he DISARMS Sextus, whose SWORD CLATTERS to the deck. Off, CROWD CHEERS from the dockside.

SEXTUS

Ooof! Nicely done, boy. Remember this moment next time you're doubting yourself.

ANTYLLUS

I will Sextus, I will!

SEXTUS

Now get down that gangplank, you silly twit!

ANTYLLUS

Oh yeah.

(yells)

I'm coming, dad!

11 **EXT. OSTIA, DOCKSIDE - CONTINUOUS**

11

EXCITED CROWD / SOLDIER APPLAUSE and MURMURING as Antyllus runs down the GANGPLANK.

MARK

Antyllus! Antyllus! Come here boy!

THUMP as Antyllus runs into Mark's open arms; they hug!

ANTYLLUS

It's good to be home!

MARK

Ha ha! I'm so proud! You were amazing up there! And where'd you learn such technique?

ANTYLLUS

Oh, I just picked it up, I guess.

GAIUS

Antyllus, you're a hero! You're going to be famous!

MARK

You'll be the most feared soldier in the Roman army!

OCTAVIA

No he won't, Mark.

MARK

What? Why?

OCTAVIA

Because the theatre needs him more than you do. Antyllus, you're in - welcome to the Palatine Players!

ANTYLLUS

Thanks Octavia! You hear that, Dad - I'm going to be an actor!

MARK

An actor?!... But... no...!

CLEOPATRA

Oh relax. Soldiers, actors, they're all the same. Masking insecurities through silly costumes.

MARK

Oh thanks VERY much.

SEXTUS (O.S.)

Very touching! But you lot haven't heard the last of Sextus Pompey! Oh, unless anyone else fancies coming along? The more the merrier!

MARK

Dream on, Pompey! No citizen of Rome would turn their back on their homeland and throw in with criminal scum like you!

OCTAVIA
 Absolutely. After all, it's only a
 life of fighting, boozing, lots of
 gold, and rampant fornication.

SOLDIER
 Is it?

OCTAVIA
 Yep.

Pause. The soldiers EXCITEDLY RACE up the gangplank.

SOLDIERS
 Pick me! Pick me! I'm coming! (etc)

MARK
 Oi! Where are you lot going!?

SCRAPING of the withdrawn gangplank.

SEXTUS (O.S.)
 Sorry, Mark! I'll take good care of
 them! Until next time! One for all
 and all for me!

MARK
 That cheeky bastard!

GAIUS
 Oh, leave it Mark! We got the
 hostages back and nobody died.

LEPIDUS
 Believe me, I'm grateful! I don't
 even know how you paid the ransom!

MARK
 Yeah, about that, Lepidus, er...
 Bit of news. I sold your house.

LEPIDUS
 Beg pardon?

MARK
 Sold your house mate.

LEPIDUS
 You... sold my house?... To who?!

CLEOPATRA
 To me. And it's absolutely
 gorgeous. Thank you, Lepidus.

GAIUS

That's what you got for bailing us out? A leg up on the property ladder?

CLEOPATRA

For an absolute bargain. Motivated seller, you see.

LEPIDUS

Right. Er... Gaius?

GAIUS

Yes?

LEPIDUS

Could I crash at yours for a while?

GAIUS

(sighs)

Fine. Octavia? Do we have some spare sheets for- Octavia? Where's that sister of mine got to...?

12 **EXT. DOCKSIDE, FURTHER ALONG - MIDDAY**

12

We are further down the harbour now, a quiet spot with nobody around. The background sounds of SHIP WORK and the SEA.

OCTAVIA

Come on, where are you? Don't tell me she stayed with the pirates...

SLOSH! Charmian surfaces in the WATER, GASPING.

OCTAVIA (cont'd)

Mia! There you are!

CHARMIAN

Hey! Help me up!

Octavia gives Charmian a hand CLAMBERING UP onto the dock.

CHARMIAN (cont'd)

Thanks. By Osiris, I didn't know I could hold my breath so long.

OCTAVIA

You made it, then!

CHARMIAN

Yeah, swam away from the ship when everyone was distracted.

OCTAVIA

Couldn't you have come down the gangplank with the rest of us?

CHARMIAN

No! No, uh, I mean... think about it. Nobody had paid a ransom for me, had they? And who would have?

OCTAVIA

I don't know... Cleopatra, maybe?

Pause.

OCTAVIA (cont'd)

Why did you have to hide from her? Mia, what aren't you telling me?

Beat.

CHARMIAN

Okay... Um... I... really like it here. The only thing is... well, it's like this. Turns out I love theatre. The costumes, the art of it, pretending to be someone else.

OCTAVIA

Yes, and you're fantastic.

CHARMIAN

Probably because I'm so used to it. The pretending. In my life. And I don't want to do that. Not with you.

OCTAVIA

What do you mean?

CHARMIAN

My name's not Mia, it's Charmian. And... and I work for Cleopatra.

Beat.

CHARMIAN (cont'd)

I'm her spy. That's why I'm here. That's the only reason she allows me to perform in the theatre, so that I can be close to you. Mixing with the ruling class of Rome.

OCTAVIA

Oh. I see.

CHARMIAN

But I don't want to spy on you, and I don't want to lie to you. Some days I feel like I have to lie to everyone I meet, a different lie for every person depending on what they need to believe. And it's so hard to keep juggling all those stories and still remember who you really are, inside. And if I could be truthful to just one person, then... I'd want that person to be you.

Pause. Octavia smiles.

OCTAVIA

OK. I'd like that. I'd like to be that person very much.

Octavia comes CLOSE to Charmian.

CHARMIAN

What? Really?

OCTAVIA

Yeah.

CHARMIAN

Even though I'm working for Egypt? Against Rome?

OCTAVIA

Pfft, well. We're above those kinds of politics, aren't we?

CHARMIAN

Even though I'm living a double life? Even though I'm feeding information about your brother, your city and your government back to a foreign power?

OCTAVIA
Yes, well...

They are now NOSE-TO-NOSE.

OCTAVIA (cont'd)
(soft)
Nobody's perfect.

THEY KISS.

END OF EPISODE