

CRY HAVOC! (ASK QUESTIONS LATER)

EPISODE 13 - THE PRODVCERS

Written by

Sarah Shachat and David K. Barnes

Featuring

Harry Roebuck as Gaius Octavius Caesar  
Sarah Lambie as Octavia  
Benjamin Garrison as Quintus  
Aaron-Louis Cadogan as Antyllus  
Sarah Agha as Charmian  
Kazeem Tosin Amore as Mark Antony  
Andy Secombe as Lepidus  
Tom Crowley as Macis  
Karim Kronfli as Tavern Keeper  
Ryan Hopevere-Anderson as Sextus  
Mark Thompson as Gracchus  
Helen Gould as Woman 1  
Ian Hayles as Man 1  
Cathy Rinella as Woman 2  
Ryan Hopevere Anderson as Man 2

Content Notes:

- Alcohol & Alcohol Use
- Family Conflict
- SFX: Loud vocalisations, metallic clanking & scraping, crowds

QUINTUS bent over a desk in the cramped storeroom he uses as an office. SCRATCHING of a QUILL on PARCHMENT.

QUINTUS  
(sighs, mutters)  
Carry the five... minus three  
sesterces for painting the sets,  
and another two for the ushers...

OCTAVIA  
(off)  
Hey, Quintus!

The door SLAMS open as OCTAVIA enters, KNOCKING OVER a massive box of props which CLATTER everywhere very NOISILY.

OCTAVIA  
... Sorry.

QUINTUS  
I'd make a smart remark about  
acting like you own the place,  
except of course - you do!

OCTAVIA  
You need more space.

QUINTUS  
Which I'll have once you've gone -  
so, what can I do for you?

A CHAIR SCRAPES across stone as Octavia excitedly SITS.

OCTAVIA  
Oh come on! Have you read it yet!  
The new play!

QUINTUS  
New play?

OCTAVIA  
The one I wrote as an actual  
prisoner on a pirate ship!

QUINTUS  
More a polish than a new play...

OCTAVIA  
Reworked from the ground up, from  
shocking and vivid first hand  
experience, dripping with insight!

QUINTUS  
Yes, nobody's disput-

OCTAVIA  
A never before seen glimpse of life  
among the pirates! With jokes and  
drama and songs!

QUINTUS  
I like the songs-

OCTAVIA  
But best of all it puts the boot  
right into my snivelling toad of a  
brother for taking so long to  
rescue me in the first place!

QUINTUS  
Ah.

OCTAVIA  
Fulvia told me he sat around all  
night doing nothing, and if it  
weren't for Cleopatra I wouldn't be  
here at all! And then he declares  
it as a victory for the Roman  
State! Ha! He won't look so heroic  
once we stick this before the  
public!

She JABS the play with her finger on 'this'.

QUINTUS  
Mm. About that.

OCTAVIA  
... Don't you like the play? It  
can't be that awful, can it?

QUINTUS  
Oh no, it's very good. Better than  
the old one, in every respect.

OCTAVIA  
Then why are you looking at me like  
Hannibal just broke through the  
Alps?

QUINTUS  
(very carefully)  
Because... we've decided to make  
some... changes, to the play's  
more, er, topical elements.

OCTAVIA  
 What?! I don't believe it - who's  
we?!

QUINTUS  
 Myself and our... new patron.

OCTAVIA  
 What new patron?!

The door OPENS again - GAIUS ENTERS.

GAIUS  
 Ah, there you are freedman.

QUINTUS  
 (fawning)  
 Good morning, Caesar!

GAIUS  
 I've had some more ideas for the  
 second act. Oh, Octavia! Good  
 effort on the new script. But I  
 think we'll take it from here!

OPENING TITLES AND THEME TUNE

ANNOUNCER  
 "Cry Havoc (Ask Questions Later)"  
 Episode 13: "The Producers"

2 **EXT. THEATRE OF POMPEY, COURTYARD - AFTERNOON**

2

Off, HAMMERS and SAWING and WINCHES HOISTING THINGS as the  
 Palatine Players CONSTRUCT A FAKE SHIP SET.

Gaius and Quintus WALKING across the sandy courtyard.

GAIUS  
 I feel the ship's deck needs a  
 trapdoor, don't you?

QUINTUS  
 A trapdoor?

GAIUS  
 So that I - or rather, you playing  
 the role of Gaius Octavius Caesar-

He CHUCKLES and Quintus CHUCKLES ingratiatingly.

GAIUS (cont'd)  
 - can leap out and surprise the  
 pirates during the rescue scene.

QUINTUS  
 Ooo I like that.

GAIUS  
 And then I, by which I mean you,  
 can grab a rope and swing across  
 with a sword between my teeth-

OCTAVIA  
 WHAT ARE YOU TALKING AB-!

A furious Octavia STORMS OVER; Gaius holds up a finger.

GAIUS  
 Ah ah ah - with a sword between my  
 teeth, and I kick Sextus Pompey  
 straight over the side and into the  
 mouth of a passing shark.

QUINTUS  
 A shark?

GAIUS  
 Can we do that?

OCTAVIA  
 Gaius!

QUINTUS  
 (diplomatically)  
 Hard to train a shark. They never  
 learn their cues.

GAIUS  
 Dangerous too I should think.

QUINTUS  
 Often.

GAIUS  
 Still you must have a few actors  
 you don't mind getting rid of.

OCTAVIA  
 GAIUS!!

GAIUS  
 Yes...? That's a very unhealthy  
 shade of red you've gone there.

OCTAVIA

What in Minerva's name are you doing? This is MY play - you can't just swan in here and take over!

GAIUS

As a Triumvir I absolutely can.

OCTAVIA

You're pulling rank on me?!

GAIUS

Look, it's still your play. I've adjusted the beginning, and the middle, and a bit of the ending, that's all. It is critical that the people understand the truth of what happened during the Pompey affair.

OCTAVIA

The truth?!

GAIUS

Yes, that Rome is strong and will always triumph over its enemies!

A much more serious tone.

GAIUS (cont'd)

Because disturbing rumours have reached my ears that Sextus Pompey and his cutthroat band are more popular with the public than we are. And when I say 'the public' I mean those soldiers camped all over the city, upon whose goodwill our security depends. So. What we all need is a thumping good yarn with a patriotic flavour - right, Quintus?

QUINTUS

Yes Caesar.

GAIUS

And that is not what you wrote, Octavia. You made us look weak.

OCTAVIA

(gritted teeth)

I wrote from experience.

GAIUS  
 (confident brio again)  
 Well as your new producer I will  
 see to it personally that this play  
 is a thrilling success, and exactly  
 the story that Rome needs to see!

OCTAVIA  
 (sputtering)  
 But - wha - what do you know about  
 running a production?

GAIUS  
 Please, I run a Republic. That's  
much harder. Quintus, let's talk  
 extras. My cousin has a parrot -  
 you can teach it lines, can't you?

QUINTUS  
 Very difficult.

Gaius JANGLES a COIN PURSE.

QUINTUS (cont'd)  
 But consider it done, thank you.

He TAKES the purse.

GAIUS  
 I do so love being a patron of the  
 arts.

OCTAVIA  
 (simmering fury)  
 Gaius. Get out of my play. Get out  
 of my company. Get out of my life.

GAIUS  
 Oh, stop being such a, a-

He SNAPS HIS FINGERS at Quintus.

QUINTUS  
 Drama queen?

GAIUS  
 That's it.

OCTAVIA  
 WHAT?!

QUINTUS  
 His words not mine.

GAIUS  
Till later, Octavia. See you at  
rehearsal! Come along, Quintus.

He WALKS AWAY.

OCTAVIA  
(furious)  
Quintus...

QUINTUS  
I'm sorry I'm sorry, but what could  
I do?!

OCTAVIA  
Said no!

QUINTUS  
And get thrown off the Tarpeian  
Rock - no thank you!

GAIUS  
(off)  
Quintus!

QUINTUS  
(calls back)  
As Caesar commands!  
(to Octavia)  
... It won't be so bad! Maybe?

OCTAVIA  
Oh - go jump in a shark!

Octavia STORMS OFF.

3 INT. THEATRE OF POMPEY, COSTUME CUPBOARD - AFTERNOON

3

A small, intimate room packed with props, costumes, fabric  
etc. Octavia and CHARMIAN having a private chat.

CHARMIAN  
For the record, I do not think you  
should set fire to the Temple of  
Jupiter.

OCTAVIA  
All I'm saying Charmian is if there  
was another crisis in the city he'd  
have to deal with that instead!

CHARMIAN

His crisis is the city. Are you going to set fire to all of Rome?

OCTAVIA

Don't tempt me with a good time...

Charmian LAUGHS. They KISS.

CHARMIAN

This play really matters to you, doesn't it?

OCTAVIA

If it's my play! Not his play! It's bad enough having my words mucked around with - but making it part of his propaganda campaign? No!

CHARMIAN

Then we'll have to stop him, won't we?

OCTAVIA

Thanks for the 'we.' But how?

CHARMIAN

Well, ever since I arrived here I've been finding out what makes you Romans tick. For... professional reasons.

OCTAVIA

(clears throat)  
Skipping lightly over that...

CHARMIAN

Gaius is hard working, persistent, and unpopular, so he can take a lot of punishment. Which means we ask ourselves: what could make him so miserable that he'd leave the theatre and never return? Hmm?

OCTAVIA

(cottoning on)  
What... or who?

The DOOR SNAPS OPEN as ANTYLLUS ENTERS and Octavia and Charmian JUMP APART in an instant.

OCTAVIA

Aaaah!

CHARMIAN

Aaaah!

ANTYLLUS

Oh! Sorry. What are you both doing  
in the costume cupboard?

OCTAVIA

Nothing!

CHARMIAN

Nothing!

CHARMIAN (cont'd)

That is, how would you like to help  
us get Caesar off this production?

ANTYLLUS

Can I? The guy's got me playing my  
dad, and I have to fall in the  
ocean twelve times, so...

CHARMIAN

Great! Then before our rehearsal  
tomorrow, there's one important  
thing you have to do...

4 **EXT. THEATRE OF POMPEY, COURTYARD - NEXT MORNING**

4

Gaius WALKS UP to the make-shift set and the GAGGLE OF  
ACTORS in front of it, recognizing Quintus.

GAIUS

Ah, Quintus! Good morning.

QUINTUS

(bowing)  
My lord Caesar is too kind.

GAIUS

(beat)  
Righto. How's it coming along? All  
ready for our first rehearsal?

QUINTUS

Ah, yes, well, you see-

GAIUS

I must say, I'm looking forward to  
getting this play up on its feet.

MARK

Then it's just as well I turned up!

MARK STRIDES up to them.

GAIUS

Mark? Why are you here?

MARK

Well, Antyllus told me all about  
this patriotic play you're doing.  
Even showed me the script!

GAIUS

(nervous)

Oh. Er, he did?

MARK

Yeah, and it's not bad! But it  
needs a, er, whatdoyacallit?

QUINTUS

A director.

MARK

That's it! So I put myself forward!

GAIUS

You? Director? But I thought he was  
the director?

MARK

Once he saw how keen I was, he was  
happy to step aside. Weren't ya?

QUINTUS

(no)

Yyyyep.

GAIUS

But you don't even like theatre!

MARK

Yeah, because it's boring! But  
thanks to me it won't be, eh?

He CLAPS Quintus hard on the back.

QUINTUS

(dry)

No sir.

MARK

I've had some ideas for the story  
that should really make it sizzle.  
How much will it run us to add some  
more arms to the giant sea monster?

QUINTUS

Well, sir -

GAIUS  
What giant sea monster?

OCTAVIA  
Oh, that's a new addition.

A smug Octavia JOINS THEM, holding PARCHMENT.

GAIUS  
Octavia? How many new additions are there? What have you changed?

OCTAVIA  
The beginning, and the middle, and a bit of the ending, that's all.

MARK  
The story of how Mark Antony went toe to toe with the pirate king - that should put bums on seats!

OCTAVIA  
Oh absolutely. Bums on seats!

MARK  
And I got rid of all that rolling hills pastoral crap at the start.

GAIUS  
But the majesty of the *patria* is what makes it patriotic! And epic!

MARK  
Nah mate, 'epic' is fighting a giant sea monster.

GAIUS  
What about the pirates?

MARK  
The sea monster is a pirate, mate! Huge twist in the second act!

LEPIDUS  
(From the ship)  
Are we starting yet?

MARK  
(Calling back)  
In a moment!

GAIUS  
What's Lepidus doing here?!

MARK

He's playing the monster. Thought it'd be funny.

GAIUS

But this isn't what we needed!

MARK

I'm the director, mate. I say what we need around here.

He leans in with a hint of menace.

MARK

Which means 'Mark Antony' doesn't fall into the sea twelve times, you get me?

GAIUS

Well, that was just a-a-an idea we were tossing around.

OCTAVIA

Yes, and Mark tossed it out.

GAIUS

But look here, you may be the director, but I'm the, the...

He SNAPS his fingers looking for the word.

QUINTUS

Producer.

GAIUS

That's the one - so it's really my decision.

MARK

Director trumps producer, I'd say.

OCTAVIA

Wwwwell... Art is a collaborative effort. And since you two have so much experience working together to govern the Republic, which is *much harder* than putting on a play, I'm sure this show will run smoothly.

MARK

Well said! A joint effort! Gaius?

GAIUS  
 (hates it)  
 A joint effort. What fun.

Charmian (muffled, wearing a mask) has come up behind our team and COUGHS to get their attention.

CHARMIAN  
 Excuse me gentlemen?

MARK  
 (jumps)  
 Aaargh! What's that?

QUINTUS  
 It's an actor.

MARK  
 Why's it got no face?

QUINTUS  
 It's a mask. They all wear them.

MARK  
 Oh! Fair play. Thought my days were numbered then. What do you want?

CHARMIAN  
 Could I borrow the lady Octavia for a moment, sir?

MARK  
 Well be quick, we need to crack on.  
 (calls to actors)  
 You lot, set up for act two!

QUINTUS  
 We haven't actually done act one.

MARK  
 Act one is cut. Let's get moving!

He CLAPS his hands as the assembled ACTORS and CREATIVES MURMUR and SHUFFLE, setting up the next scene, while...

5 **EXT. THEATRE OF POMPEY, COURTYARD, CORNER - CONTINUOUS**

5

Octavia and Charmian WALK AWAY to a quiet corner, their sandals CRUNCHING on the sand.

OCTAVIA

(Hushed but psyched)  
 Charmian! Did you see Gaius? He  
 looked crushed! You're wonderful!

CHARMIAN

That's sweet, darling, but we've a  
 long way to go yet.

OCTAVIA

It'll work, I can feel it! They'll  
 be at each other's throats in no  
 time at all, Gaius will storm off  
 in a huff, and Mark will get bored  
 with the logistics and give up!

CHARMIAN

You might need to 'push things  
 along' here and there...

OCTAVIA

Don't worry, I'm leaving nothing to  
 chance. And when they're both gone,  
 we can put on the play *our* way.

CHARMIAN

Your way. Just... try not to get  
 carried away, is all.

Quintus comes from behind them.

QUINTUS

That's like asking the tide not to  
 roll in.

OCTAVIA

Quintus! You sneaky son of a-

QUINTUS

I thought I could smell a plot.

OCTAVIA

It's for a good cause! It'll get us  
 a play with artistic merit!

QUINTUS

Whereas if your plan goes wrong,  
 it'll net us two very powerful  
 enemies. So: Be. Careful.

CHARMIAN

You're not going to stop us?

QUINTUS

(scoffs)

As if I could. But remember, at the end of the day, all I want is a happy cast, a happy audience, and to go home to my nice warm bed - alive and breathing.

OCTAVIA

You will. I promise.

QUINTUS

Then best get to our places, before the General orders us to march on Gaul... This could be a long day.

6 **EXT. THEATRE OF POMPEY, COURTYARD - REHEARSAL 1**

6

A MUSIC CUE leads us into a rehearsal of a scene. Our ACTORS are on the PIRATE SHIP SET. A SWORD IS UNSHEATHED as MASCIS steps forward as Sextus.

MASCIS

Aha! General Antony, your attempt has failed! At last, I, Sextus Pompey, scourge of the wine-dark sea, have you at my mercy!

ANTYLLUS

(as Mark)

I pity you, Pompey, for turning your back on the glory of Rome!

A BANGING OF CHAINS upon a door.

MASCIS

What is that sound? Is this some vile magic of yours, Cleopatra?

CHARMIAN

(as Cleopatra)

No, but now you'll see why Egypt shall be forever loyal to Rome!

The door BURSTS OPEN revealing Quintus as Gaius.

QUINTUS

Quake in fear, pirate scum! I am Gaius Octavius Caesar and you will die by my blade!

CHARMIAN  
Our hero!

ANTYLLUS  
Our hero!

QUINTUS  
Have at you! Aha!

MASCIS  
Oho!

MARK  
Stop! Stop stop stop stop stop!

GAIUS  
What's the matter? You stopped it  
at the best bit.

MARK  
Best bit? When I'm standing there  
like a eunuch at the orgy?

GAIUS  
Well what do you want to do about  
it?

OCTAVIA  
Gentlemen, may I suggest... a  
rewrite?

7 **EXT. THEATRE OF POMPEY, COURTYARD - REHEARSAL 2**

7

QUICK MUSIC CUE - we've reset for another go. A SWORD IS  
UNSHEATHED as Mascis steps forward.

MASCIS  
Aha! Gaius Octavius Caesar, your  
attempt has failed! At last I have  
you at my mercy!

QUINTUS  
(as Gaius)  
I pity you, Pompey, for turning  
your back on the glory of Rome!

A BANGING OF CHAINS upon a door.

MASCIS  
What is that sound? Is this some  
vile magic of yours, Cleopatra?

CHARMIAN  
No, but now-

The door BURSTS OPEN revealing Antyllus as Mark Antony.

ANTYLLUS

Stand back, pirate scum! I am Mark  
Antony and you will die by my  
blade!

CHARMIAN

Our hero!

QUINTUS

Our hero!

MASCIS

General Antony, have you been  
working out?

ANTYLLUS

Yes. And I've also had lots of sex.

GAIUS

Stop!

The actors all sigh and relax as:

MARK

He's just telling it like it is.  
Great work, son!

ANTYLLUS

Thanks Dad.

GAIUS

Mark if you're not going to take  
this seriously-!

MARK

You're the one snivelling about a  
few changes in the script!

OCTAVIA

May I suggest another rewrite?

8 **EXT. THEATRE OF POMPEY, COURTYARD - REHEARSAL 3**

8

QUICK MUSIC CUE. A SWORD IS UNSHEATHED. The performances are  
starting to get more wooden.

MASCIS

Aha! Gaius Octavius Caesar, your  
attempt has failed!

QUINTUS

(as Gaius)

I pity you, Pompey, for turning  
your back on the glory of Rome!

A BANGING OF CHAINS upon a door.

MASCIS

What is that sound? Is this some  
vile magic of yours... er...  
General Mark Antony?

ANTYLLUS

Er... nope.

The door BURSTS OPEN revealing Charmian as Cleopatra.

CHARMIAN

I am Queen Cleopatra, and I'm here  
to save the day!

MARK

Stop! Rewrite!

GAIUS

Stop! Rewrite!

9 **EXT. THEATRE OF POMPEY, COURTYARD - REHEARSAL 4**

9

QUICK MUSIC CUE - we've reset. A SWORD IS UNSHEATHED.

ANTYLLUS

Aha! Sextus Pompey, your attempt  
has failed! At last, I General  
Antony, have you at my mercy!

MASCIS

I pity you, Mark Antony, for  
being... Roman. I guess.

The door BURSTS OPEN revealing Quintus as Gaius.

QUINTUS

(starts dramatic)

Quake in fear, you... scum...! No,  
sorry, what am I doing again?

MARK

Stop! Rewrite!

GAIUS

Stop! Rewrite!

10 **EXT. THEATRE OF POMPEY, COURTYARD - REHEARSAL 5**

10

QUICK MUSIC CUE - we've reset. A SWORD IS UNSHEATHED. Very  
wooden performances, trying to get through it quickly.

MASCIS

Aha. General Antony AND Gaius  
Octavius Caesar, your attempt has  
failed. I have you at my mercy.



OCTAVIA (cont'd)  
The set is the problem.

SHWING!

OCTAVIA (cont'd)  
The sky is the problem.

SHWING! SHWING! SHWING! under SFX of frantic RUNNING AROUND.

12 **EXT. THEATRE OF POMPEY, COURTYARD - NIGHT**

12

It's night. CRICKETS. TIRED ACTORS sighing on set.

MARK  
OK, once more, and make it good.

A SWORD is CLUMSILY UNSHEATHED.

MASCIS  
(so tired)  
At last, I, Sextus-

DROPS SWORD with a CLATTER. He doesn't care anymore.

MASCIS (cont'd)  
- Sextus Pompey, have you at my  
mercy.

QUINTUS  
I pity you. Rome. Rome Rome Rome.

Some SLOW, half-hearted BANGING on the door.

CHARMIAN  
Now you'll see why Egypt and so on.

ANTYLLUS plods on.

ANTYLLUS  
Aha, you shall die first hack hack  
chop chop you can fall down dead,  
Lepidus.

LEPIDUS  
(still enthusiastic)  
Lovely! But should I fall to the  
left or to the right?

MARK  
Left.

GAIUS  
Right.

General GROANS from everyone on stage.

QUINTUS

(so over it)

OK, let's take a break! Our patrons  
have another decision to make...!

SHUFFLING and MUTTERING as the actors leave the stage.

MARK

Look Gaius, the sun went down an  
hour ago-

GAIUS

If a job's worth doing it's worth  
doing properly!

A serene Octavia SAUNTERS over.

OCTAVIA

Well chaps. How are we doing?

MARK

We're not.

GAIUS

We've tried this scene every way we  
can and it's still not working.

OCTAVIA

It's a tricky one, yeah...

MARK

And if we can't get it right-

GAIUS

-then it's hardly worth doing the  
play. What do you think?

OCTAVIA

I'd say that... art is tough. It's  
a constant, gruelling voyage of  
discovery.

GAIUS

(sadly)

So it seems...

OCTAVIA

You've got to find the heart of the  
story, and then keep it beating  
once you've attacked it from every  
angle. That takes time, and  
passion, and patience.

MARK  
 (sadly)  
 Yeah.

OCTAVIA  
 So what I'd suggest, if I may be so bold, is that if the two of you were to take a step back, and leave this to the experts, then, well...

Beat.

MARK  
 Octavia's right... Find the heart of the story. And the heart of the story is-

MARK  
 Killing pirates!

GAIUS  
 Killing pirates!

OCTAVIA  
 What?

GAIUS  
 We've been overthinking this.

MARK  
 Totally overthinking it.

GAIUS  
 Let's cut the scene, cut the rescue-

MARK  
 And get to the action: the two of us beating the crap out of pirates!

GAIUS  
 Yes!

OCTAVIA  
 What's happening?

GAIUS  
 We just took a step back!

MARK  
 So glad we got that sorted.

OCTAVIA  
 No, no no no-!

MARK  
 (calls)  
 Quintus! Get 'em on stage! Once  
 more from the top!

The actors TRUDGE back onto the set, MUTTERING.

OCTAVIA  
 This isn't quite what I meant-

GAIUS  
 (ignores)  
 Thanks for the help Octavia!

MARK  
 We couldn't have done it without  
 you!

OCTAVIA  
 (weak)  
 ... No problem.

13 INT. WINE BAR - NEAR THEATRE - NIGHT

13

It's a few days later: opening night. We're in a ROWDY WINE BAR. A CLANK as Octavia puts down yet another DRINK, and slumps against the bar.

OCTAVIA  
 (Pure misery)  
 Barkeep! Hit me again. More wine!

TAVERN KEEPER  
 I can't, we've none left. You've  
 drunk it all.

OCTAVIA  
 Urghhh.

TAVERN KEEPER  
 Isn't your new play on tonight?  
 Thought you would've been over  
 there at the theatre.

OCTAVIA  
 Ha! I'm enjoying my last hour  
 before I have to flee Rome.

TAVERN KEEPER  
 A stinker is it?

OCTAVIA  
 Oooo yeah. You have no idea.

She CLUMSILY GETS TO HER FEET.

OCTAVIA (cont'd)  
Guess I'd better face the music.

14 **EXT. THEATRE OF POMPEY - NIGHT**

14

Clumsy FOOTSTEPS in the sand as Octavia staggers over.

OCTAVIA  
(sighs)  
Should've gone off with Pompey's  
crew after all... I could have been  
a great pirate...

Unexpectedly, CLEOPATRA is standing outside.

CLEOPATRA  
No, after a whole week the shanties  
would get really old.

OCTAVIA  
Cleopatra? ... You saw the play?

CLEOPATRA  
Mmm! Left early to avoid the crush.

OCTAVIA  
More like you couldn't bear to stay  
till the end, eh?

CLEOPATRA  
Oh it ended a while ago.

From inside, a HUGE WAVE OF LAUGHTER.

OCTAVIA  
... What was that?

CLEOPATRA  
That's your audience enjoying the  
third encore.

OCTAVIA  
Encore? You mean... they actually  
liked it?

More LAUGHTER and LOTS OF THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE.

CLEOPATRA  
They loved it. They'll be quoting  
this play for weeks.

OCTAVIA  
But... but how? Why?

CLEOPATRA  
(amused)  
Oh, you artists. Always challenging  
yourselves and then running scared!

DOORS OPEN and DELIGHTED AUDIENCE MEMBERS BEGIN FLOODING  
OUT, chattering happily, quoting the odd line.

WOMAN  
*"For the glory of Rome! Prepare to  
die!!"*

MAN  
*"I came here to eat figs and kick  
ass - and I'm all out of figs."*

Some LAUGHTER in the passing crowd.

CLEOPATRA  
See how happy they are?

OCTAVIA  
But it was so... so... stupid!

CLEOPATRA  
A deconstruction of the epic form  
and a critique of Roman machismo,  
I'd say. Oh and I loved the giant  
sea monster.

Gaius and Mark DASH OUT to them.

GAIUS  
Octavia! Octavia!

MARK  
Where've you been? You missed the  
whole show!

OCTAVIA  
Well, I was-

GAIUS  
(annoyed)  
Just as well you did! They laughed  
at it, all the way through.

MARK  
We were meant to look awesome. What  
happened in there?

CLEOPATRA

You entertained your people, and showed you could poke fun at yourselves. I must grudgingly congratulate you.

MARK

Really?

CLEOPATRA

Never underestimate the power of making people smile. I say this calls for drinks, wouldn't you?

GAIUS

Not for me thanks. I need to work out where we went wrong...

CLEOPATRA

(sigh)

As you wish. Shall we, Mark?

MARK

(surprised)

Oh, er. Sure! Be happy to!  
See you later, Gaius, Octavia.

Mark and Cleopatra WALK OFF together, with the crowds.

GAIUS

Listen. Octavia.

OCTAVIA

What?

GAIUS

I owe you an apology. Theatre is really hard. You understand it, and I don't... Why were they laughing?

OCTAVIA

Probably because you can't just tell people how strong you are. You've got to back it up with actions.

Beat.

OCTAVIA (cont'd)

I was held hostage, and you did nothing.

GAIUS

The situation was difficult.

OCTAVIA  
I'm your sister.

GAIUS  
I know.

Beat.

GAIUS (cont'd)  
As I said. It was difficult. Really  
difficult.

He loves her. She understands, sadly.

OCTAVIA  
Yeah.

GAIUS  
... Hey. How about I get that drink  
for Rome's most beloved playwright?

OCTAVIA  
Referring to me, or you?

They WALK OFF together, CHUCKLING guardedly.

**END OF EPISODE.**