

William Shakespeare's

Antony and Cleopatra

LEVEL 4



Antony and His Lover



Mark Antony spends too much time with his lover, Cleopatra.

- Preview:**
1. Read the name of the story.
 2. Look at the picture.
 3. Read the sentence under the picture.
 4. Read the first three paragraphs of the story.
 5. Then answer the following question.

You learned from your preview that Cleopatra lives in

- a. Italy.
- b. Egypt.
- c. England.
- d. Rome.

Turn to the Comprehension Check on page 10 for the right answer.

Now read the story.

Read to find out what the messengers report from Rome.

Antony Returns to Rome

Caesar was angry. "Where is Antony?" he shouted to Lepidus. "Why isn't he here in Rome, looking after business? But, no! The condition of the country gets worse. Yet, Antony gives no attention to the business of running this kingdom. Instead, he is using Egypt as his playground and Cleopatra as his playmate. All the lovers do is fish, drink, and party. Meanwhile, Rome is in trouble."

Conditions in Rome really were getting worse. A new, young leader, Pompey, and an enemy of the Triumvirate, was growing more popular by the day. "The time has come!" said Caesar. "The triumvirs, Antony, Lepidus, and me, must show ourselves in battle."

Not known to Caesar, Antony had already left Egypt. Cleopatra was heartsick without him, and the messages between the two flew back and forth. "Please, Charmian," she begged, "give me some mandragora to drink so I may sleep away the time that Antony is gone."

"You think of him too much," Charmian told Cleopatra.

"Oh, Charmian. Where do you think he is now? Does he stand or does he sit? Or does he walk? Or is he on his horse? Oh, happy horse to bear the weight of Antony on its back."

Just then Alexas arrived. Alexas served the Queen, and was now serving as messenger. "Greetings to the ruler of Egypt!" he said. "I bring you a message from Antony."

"How goes it with my brave Antony?" asked Cleopatra.

"He sends this pearl to you, a gift from the oyster. He has kissed it many times," said Alexas. "See how the pearl shines with beautiful colors? The oyster has done its work."

"Bring me ink and paper, Charmian, and I shall write a

message for Antony. With ink and paper, I shall send a message to him every day. If I must, I will unpeople Egypt."

Meanwhile, in Sicily, Pompey was feeling very smart. His ships ruled the seas. He was popular among the people and had friends in high places. Antony, he thought, was still on the playground of Egypt, wasting himself with his playmate, Queen Cleopatra. Pompey smiled. *This once great leader is in love, Pompey thought to himself, and it has made him lazy. He spends so much time drinking, that his mind has become fuzzy. A fuzzy mind will keep him from making wise plans. One day soon, Rome will be mine!*

Just then a messenger arrived to see Pompey. "Greetings, great leader," he said. "Antony is returning to Rome."

Suddenly Pompey didn't feel so sure of himself. He remembered that Antony was a man of power in battle. At the same time, he was pleased that Antony's fear of *him* might be the reason he was leaving Egypt.

Mark Antony finally arrived in Rome to meet with young Caesar and old Lepidus. Caesar was cross, but Lepidus longed for the old days when the three friends worked together in battle. The men had not met since Antony went away to Egypt. Meanwhile, each problem between them had grown bigger.

Caesar was good and ready to complain to Antony. "Before your wife, Fulvia, died, she and your brother went to war against me."

Antony answered, "Well, I didn't start that war. Remember, I'm not your enemy. An attack on Caesar is an attack on the Triumvirate, and that means an attack on me too! Maybe she thought if she started a war, I would return home."

But Caesar no longer trusted

Antony. He went on to complain about another problem. "We sent many messages to Egypt and you wouldn't receive all of them."

"Messages, messages!" Antony snapped. "Is there nothing else for me in this life?"

Enobarbus, Antony's close friend, watched the triumvirs argue back and forth. He noticed that problems were growing and dividing the men. This was a cause for worry. "You will have time to argue when Pompey is out of the way," said Enobarbus.

"Speak no more," Antony said crossly.

Enobarbus was taken back by Antony's way of speaking. "I shall be silent as a stone," he whispered.

Then Maecenas who was Caesar's friend, warned the group. "If you are to win against the popular Pompey, *now* is the time for you to work together. You must all get along if you are to continue ruling Rome."

Friends of the rulers saw something was needed to unite the fighting triumvirs. Finally, Agrippa, another friend of Caesar's, had an idea. "Now that Fulvia is dead, that leaves you, Antony, without a wife," he said. "Octavius Caesar has a lovely sister, Octavia. If you take her as your wife, this will tie the triumvirs together."

There was a long silence. Caesar was thinking and wondering what Antony would say to this idea.

Suddenly, Antony broke the silence. "If this will help our cause, I will take Octavia as my wife."

Caesar let out a sigh. He now knew he could trust Antony. "I give you my sister," Caesar said with joy. "No brother ever loved a sister so dearly. Let her live to join our kingdoms and our hearts."

Antony Marries

VOCABULARY CHECK

married patient possibly rise settle whine

I. Sentences to Finish

Fill in the blank in each sentence with the correct key word from the box above.

- The little girl will _____ if she doesn't get her way.
- I'm running late; I can't _____ get to the station on time.
- After Phyllis and Rob got _____, they went on their honeymoon.
- Food prices seem to _____ a little more every year.
- Jimmy's not a _____ man. He hates to wait on long lines.
- George and Harry could not _____ on which game to play.

II. Crossword Puzzle

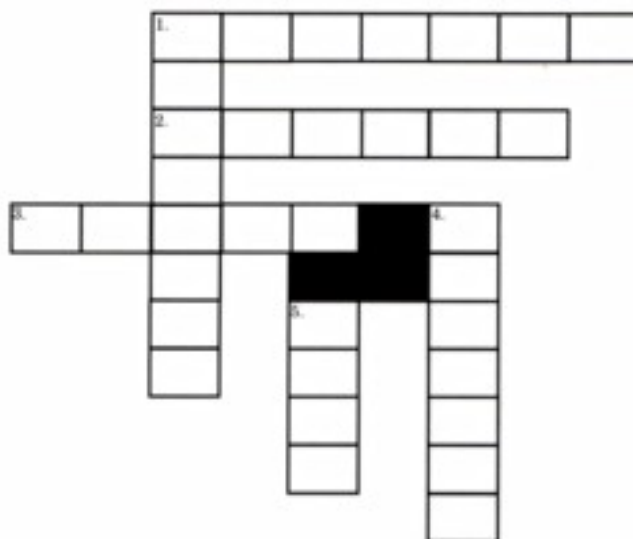
Use the words from the box above to fill in the puzzle. Use the meanings below to help you choose the right answer.

Across

- willing to put up with waiting, pain, or trouble
- decide; agree upon
- to complain in a childish way

Down

- by any means
- had taken as a husband or wife
- become greater; increase



Check your answers with the Key on page 69.

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