

Shakespeare's Cleopatra

a study in
hard

read by
Charlie



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CLAIRE LUCE



READS

Cleopatra
A STUDY
IN MOODS

Folkways Records FL 9845

ADAPTATION AND COVER DESIGN : CLAIRE LUCE
DESIGNER'S NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

"A MEMORABLE CLEOPATRA"

"Let me say at once that her (Claire Luce's) Cleopatra is in many ways the best I have seen and in all ways memorable. As Cleopatra, as a woman, the seductress, the 'serpent of old Nile', she is completely successful. She makes it seem credible that Antony should throw away half the world for her. She brings out clearly Cleopatra's confidence in her own ability to subdue any man to her will. Cleopatra the Queen she plays with dignity."

W. A. Darlington, London Daily Telegraph

SHAKESPEARE'S CLEOPATRA

A Study In Moods
Adapted for recording and
read by CLAIRE LUCE

Introduction:

"Age cannot wither, nor custom stale, her infinite variety." That is how Shakespeare describes the complex character of his Cleopatra. He also calls her "a wonderful piece of work." Surely, her 'infinite variety' of moods is an exciting challenge to an actress.

When I played her at Stratford-on Avon in England, at each performance during the season I discovered new facets to her character. And they are still a challenge!

In her first scene she is provocative and provoked - and even angry that Antony is returning to Rome upon the news of his wife Fulvia's death. Then she relents and wishes him godspeed. When a messenger arrives from Antony she is pleased and then furious at the sudden news of his marriage to Octavia. But she is determined that he will return to her--which he does. And his great passion for her exceeds his discretion when she suddenly leaves the scene of battle at Actium and sets sail for home. He follows after her--and loses the battle and the world--and when she sends word to him that she has killed herself, to appease his anger, he turns his sword upon himself and dies in her arms. Then, rather than be shown in Rome as the prize of Octavius Caesar's victory--or to live on without the love of Antony she too ends her life.

Act I Sc I

If it be love indeed, tell me how much... I'll set a bourne how far to be beloved... News from Rome!" Nay, hear them Antony! Fulvia perchance is angry; or who knows if the scarce-bearded Caesar have not sent his powerful mandate to you. "Do this, or this! Take in that kingdom or enfranchise that! Perform't it or else we damn thee!" Perchance? Nay - and most like! You must not stay here longer--your dismissal is come from Caesar, therefore hear it Antony. Where's Fulvia's process? (Caesar's I would say) Both? Call in the messengers! As I am Egypt's queen thou blushest Antony and that blood of thine is Caesar's homager; else so thy cheek pays shame when shrill-tongued Fulvia scolds. Why did he marry Fulvia, and not love her? I'll seem the fool I am not! Antony will be himself. Hear the ambassador!

Act I Sc II and iii

Saw you my lord? Was he not here? He was disposed to mirth but on the sudden a Roman thought hath struck him. See where he is, who's with him, what he does! I did not send you. If you find him sad, say I am dancing. If in mirth, report that I am sudden sick. Quick, and return. But here he comes. Ah - I am sick and sullen. Help me away dear Charmian, I shall fall--it cannot be thus long, the sides of nature will not sustain it. Pray you sir, stand farther from me! I know by that same eye there's some good news. What says the married woman? You may go? Would she had never given you leave to come. Let her not say 'tis I that keep you here. I have no power upon you. Hers you are! ...O, never was there queen so mightily betrayed! Yet, at the first I saw the treasons planted. Why should I think you can be mine, and true (though you in swearing shake the throned gods) who have been false to Fulvia? Riotous madness, to be entangled in those mouth-made vows, which break themselves in swearing! Pray you, seek no color for your going, but bid farewell and go! When you sued staying, then was the time for words--no going then. Eternity was in our lips and eyes, bliss in our brow's bent, none our parts so poor but was a race of heaven! They are so still, or thou the greatest soldier of the world art turned the greatest liar!... I would I had thy inches--thou shouldst know there were a heart in Egypt. "Fulvia's death!"... Though age from folly could not give me freedom, it does from childishness. Can Fulvia die?... O, most false love! Where be the sacred vials thou shouldst fill with sorrowful water? Now I see, I see in Fulvia's death, how mine received shall be! I prithee, turn aside and weep for her, then bid adieu to me and say the tears belong to Egypt. Good now, play one scene of excellent dissembling, and let it look like perfect honor. You can do, better yet--but this is meetly. Look prithee Charmian how this Herculean Roman does become the carriage of his chafe! Courteous lord, one word. Sir, you and I must part, but that's not it. Sir, you and I have loved, but there's not it--that you know well. Something it is I would--O, my oblivion is a very Antony, and I am all forgotten. But sir, forgive me - since my becoming kills me when they do not eye well to you. Your honor calls you hence--therefore be deaf to my unpitied folly, and all the gods go with you! Upon your sword sit laurel victory! And smooth success be strew'd before your feet!

Act I Sc v and Act II Sc v

Charmian! Give me to drink mandragora--that I might sleep out this great gap of time my Antony is away! Thou eunuch Mardian!--Hah--I take no pleasure in aught an eunuch has! 'Tis well for thee that being unseminar'd thy freer thoughts may not fly forth of Egypt! O, Charmian, where thinkst thou he is now? Sits he? Or stands he? Or does he walk? Or is he on his horse? (O happy horse, to bear the weight of Antony! Do bravely horse:

for wot's thou whom thou movest? The demi-Atlas of this earth! The arm and burget of men! He's speaking now-or murmuring 'Where's my serpent of old Nile?' (for so he calls me.) Now I feed myself with most delicious poison! Charmian, metst thou my posts? Who's born that day when I forget to send to Antony shall die a beggar! Did I Charmian, ever love Caesar so?...hah... 'the valiant Caesar'... my salad days, when I was green in judgement-cold in blood, to say as I said then! Get me ink and paper. He shall have every day a several greeting--or I'll unpeople Egypt!... Ah, give me some music! Music, moody food of us that trade in love...ah-let it alone...lets to billiards come-ah-Give me mine angle, we'll to the river! There, my music playing far off, I will betray tawny-finned fishes. My bended hook shall pierce their slimy jaws - and as I draw them up, I'll think them every one an Antony and say "Ah ha! Thou art caught!" ... That time, o times - I laughed him out of patience and that night I laughed him into patience. And next morn ere the ninth hour I drunk him to his bed-then put my tires and mantles on him, whilst I wore his sword Philippan...

Messinger? O! from Italy!... Ram thou thy fruitful tidings in mine ears that long time have been barren! ... Antonius dead?... If thou say so villain, thou killst thy mistress-but well and free, if thou so yield him, there is gold-and here my bluest veins to kiss-a hand that kings have lipped and trembled kissing! But sirrah mark, we used to say the dead are 'well'-bring it to that, the gold I give thee will I melt and pour down thy ill-uttering throat!... Go to! But there's no goodness in thy face! I have a mind to strike thee ere thou speakst-yet, if thou say Antony lives, is well, or friends with Caesar, or not captive to him-I'll set thee in a shower of gold-and hail rich pearls upon thee! He is well? Well said!... "But yet?"... I do not like 'but yet'! It does allay the good precedence -- fie upon 'but yet'!... 'But yet' is as a gaoler to bring forth some monstrous malefactor. Prithee friend, out the pack of matter to mine ear, the good and bad together! He's friends with Caesar, in state of health thou sayst and thou sayst free... what say you?... Married?... I am pale Charmian!... The most infectious pestilence upon thee! Hence, horrible villain, or I'll spurn thine eyes like balls before me! I'll unhair thy head! Thou shalt be whipped with wire and stew'd in brine-smarting in lingering pickle! Melt Egypt into Nile and kindly creatures turn all to serpents! Say 'tis not so! A province I will give thee and make thy fortunes proud!.. Rogue! Thou hast lived too long! ... Ah, some innocents scape not the thunderbolt. Call the slave again! Though I am mad, I will not bite him! Call! These hands do lack nobility, that they strike a meaner than myself, since I myself have given myself the cause...

Come hither sir! Though it be honest, it is never good to bring bad news. Give to a gracious message an host of tongues, but let ill tidings tell themselves, when they be felt.

Is he married? ... I cannot hate thee worser than I do, if thou again say yes...ah...the gods confound thee. Dost thou hold there still? ... I would thou didst lie, so half my Egypty were submerged and made a cistern for scale'd snakes!... Go-get thee hence. Hadst thou Narcissus in thy face, to me thou wouldst appear most ugly...He is married?...

He is-married? Get thee hence. The merchandise which thou hast brought from Rome are all too dear for me! Lie they upon thy hand and be undone by 'em!... In praising Antony, I have dispraised Caesar. I am paid for't now... O, Iras, Charmian--lead me from hence. I faint.

'Tis no matter! Go to the fellow! Bid him report the feature of Octavia! Her years--her inclinations--let him not leave out the color of her hair! Bring me word quickly!

Let him forever go!... Let him not...

Though he be painted one way a Gorgon, the other way's a Mars.

Bring me word how tall she is!

Pity me Charmian--but do not speak to me.

Act III Sc iii

Ah--come hither sir.

Didst thou behold Octavia? Is she as tall as me? Didst hear her speak? Is she shrill-tongued or low? (ha-he cannot like her long) Dull of tongue and dwarfish!... What majesty is in her gait? Remember, if ere thou lookst on majesty! Ha-there's nothing in her yet! Guess at her age I prithee. A widow? Charmian, hark!... Bearest thou her face in mind-is't long-or round? 'Round'--hm-for the most part too they are foolish that are so. Her hair, what color? Brown?...haha...there's gold for thee! Thou must not take my former sharpness ill. I will employ thee back again! I find thee most fit for business. Go make thee ready. Our letters are prepared.

He's very knowing Charmian, I do perceive it. I repent me much that so I harried him. Why, methinks by him, this creature's no such thing! The man hath seen some majesty-and should know... I have one thing more to ask him yet good Charmian--'tis no matter. Thou shalt bring him to me, where I will write... All may be well enough!

SIDE II

Act III Sc vii

I will be even with thee Enobarbus, doubt it not!... Thou hast forespoke my being in these wars--and sayst it is not fit! If not denounced against us, why should he not be there in person? Sink Rome! And their tongues rot that speak against us! A charge we bear in the war-and, as the president of my kingdom, will appear there for a man. Speak not against it. I will not stay behind!... We'll fight by sea! I have sixty sails-Caesar none better!

Act III Sc xi

What shall we do Enobarbus? Is Antony or we in fault for this? O, Juno!... O Antony-my lord, my lord. Forgive my fearful sails! I little thought you would have followed...pardon...pardon!

A messenger from Caesar? What? No more ceremony? See my women, against the blown rose may they stop their nose that knelt unto the bud! Caesar's will? None but friends-speak boldly. He

is a god and knows what is most right. Mine honor was not yielded but conquered merely. Most kind messenger, say to great Caesar this. In deputation I kiss his conquering hand. Tell him I am prompt to lay my crown at his feet and there to kneel. Tell him, from his all-obeying breath, I hear the doom of Egypt!... Whip him? O my lord! Antony, hast come to this?... Not know me yet?... "Coldhearted?" Ah, Antony-if I be so, from my cold heart let heaven engender hail and poison it in the source and the first stone drop in my neck! As it determines, so dissolve my life! The next Caesarion smite, till by degrees the memory of my womb, together with my brave Egyptians all, by the discandying of this pelleted storm lie graveless, till the flies and gnats of Nile have buried them for prey!... It is my birthday!... I had thought to have held it poor-but since my lord is Antony again, I will be Cleopatra! Call all his noble captains to my lord!

Act IV Sc iv

Oh... sleep a little!... Nay, I'll help you-"put thine iron on"--ohh-oh--Thus it must be! Thus!... haha.. Is not this buckled well?... Adieu-love-adieu... (drums fade) He goes forth gallantly! That he and Caesar might determine this great war in single fight! Then Antony... but now...

Act IV Sc xii and xiii and xv

O!... Help me my women!... Why is my lord enraged against his love?... O! He is more mad than Telamon for his shield! To the monument!... Mardian-go tell him I have slain myself! Say the last I spoke was 'Antony'-and word it, prithee, piteously! Hence Mardian! And bring me how he takes my death!... To the monument... Oh, Charmian, I will never go from hence. No, I will not. All strange and terrible events are welcome but comforts we despise-our size of sorrow, proportioned to our cause, must be as great as that which makes it! O- Antony!... Ah, I had a prophesying fear of what hath come to pass... How now? Is he dead?... His death's upon him but not dead!... Bring him hither!... O sun burn the great sphere thou movest in! Darkling stand the varying shore of the world!... O Antony! Antony! Antony... Welcome--welcome--die where thou hast lived! Quickened with kissing!...

O noblest of men, wouldst die? Hast thou no care of me? Shall I abide in this dull world, which in thy absence is no better than a sty?

O see, my women-the crown of the earth doth melt!... my lord?... Oh!... withered is the garland of the war--the soldier's pole is fall'n. Young boys and girls are level now with men! The odds is gone--and there is nothing left remarkable beneath the visiting moon...

No more but e'en a woman, and commanded by such poor passion as the maid the milks and does the meanest chores...

It were for me to throw my sceptre at the injurious gods, to tell them that this world did equal theirs, till they had stolen our jewel!... All's but naught! Patience is sottish-and impatience does become a dog that's mad! Then is it sin, to rush into the

secret house of death, ere death dare come to us?... Ah women look... our lamp is spent... its out... We'll bury him! And then, what's brave-what's noble-let us do it after the 'high Roman fashion' and make death proud to take us! Come! Away! This, case of that huge spirit now is cold. Come-we have no friend but resolution, and the briefest end.

Act V Sc ii

Antony did tell me of you Proculeius, bade me trust you-but I do not greatly care to be deceived, that have no use for trusting. If your master, Octavius Caesar, would have a queen his beggar, you must tell him that majesty, to keep decorum, must no less beg than a kingdom...

Pray you, tell him I am his fortune's vassal and I send him the greatness he has got. I hourly learn a doctrine of obedience and would gladly look him in the face... He'll lead me then in triumph?--

OH! Where art thou death? Come hither come! Come, come, and take a queen worth many babes and beggars. Sir, I will eat no meat-I'll not drink sir! If idle talk will once be necessary, I'll not sleep neither! This mortal house I'll ruin! Do Caesar what he can!

Shall they hoist me up and show me to the shouting varletry of censuring Rome? Rather a ditch in Egypt be gentle grave unto me! Rather on Nilus mud lay me stark naked and let the water flies blow me into abhorring. Rather make my country's high Pyramides my gibbet and hang me up in chains!

Say I would die!...

Now Iras, what thinkst thou? Thou an Egyptian puppet shalt be shown in Rome as well as I! Mechanic slaves with greasy aprons, rules and hammers shall uplift us to the view! In their thick breaths, rank of gross diet shall we be enclouded and forced to drink their vapor! Saucy lictors will catch at us like strumpets and scald rhymers ballad us out o' tune; the quick comedians extemporally will stage us, and present our 'Alexandrian revels' Antony shall be brought drunken forth and I shall see some squeaking Cleopatra boy my greatness in the posture of a whore!... I dreamed there was an emperor Antony!... O such another sleep, that I might see but such another man! His legs bestrid the ocean-his rear'd arm crested the world; his voice was propertied as all the tuned spheres, and that to friends - but when he meant to quail and shake the orb he was as rattling thunder! For his bounty, there was no winter in't-an autumn t'was--that grew the more by reaping! Was there such a man as this I dreamed of?... If there be, or ever were one such, 'tis past the size of dreaming...

Hark thee Charmian-I have spoke already and it is provided-the way to fool their preparation and to conquer their most absurd intents. Let the rural fellow come in!... He brings me liberty!... Ah, hast thou the pretty worm of Nilus there, that kills and pains not?... Will it eat me?... Go get thee hence-Farewell!

What poor an instrument may do a noble deed!

Show me my women like a queen-go fetch my best
attires.
I am again for Cydnus, to meet Marc Antony!...

Give me my robe-put on my crown. I have immortal
longings in me. Now no more the juice of Egypt's
grape shall moist this lip. Now the fleeting moon
no planet is of mine...Yare, yare, good Iras, quick!
Methinks I hear Antony call. I see him rouse him-
self to praise my noble act. I hear him mock the
luck of Caesar, which the gods give men to excuse
their afterwrath!...Husband, I come! Now to that
name my courage prove my title!...Come, thou
mortal wretch, with thy sharp teeth this knot intrinsi-
cate of life at once untie! Poorvenomous fool, be
angry, and dispatch! O could thou speak, that I might
hear thee call great Caesar ass unpolicied! Ah--the
stroke of death is as a lovers pinch, which hurts and
is desired!...I am fire and air--my other elements
I give to baser life!...O Antony, where souls do
couch on flowers, we'll hand in hand and make the
ghosts gaze!...Farewell kind Charmian--Iras-long
farewell--Peace...peace...as sweet as balm--As
soft as air-as gentle...o Antony.

Miss Claire Luce started her career as a dancer
and is now finishing an autobiographical story of that
phase of her theatre life. She was a ballerina at the
age of 13 and soon after was starring in many Broadway
productions-among them the famed 'Ziegfeld Follies' and
opposite Fred Astaire in 'The Gay Divorce' in both New
York City and London. While she was still in her 'teens
she replaced the great French revue star Mistinguett at
the Casino de Paris, in Paris. Her last dancing pro-
duction was the Charles B. Cochran revue 'Follow the
Sun' in London in which she danced everything from bal-
let to tap-dancing...then began a serious acting career
in 'Of Mice and Men' (author, Pulitzer prize-winner
John Steinbeck) in New York and London. She then rose
to important heights as a Shakespearean actress, the
first American to play for an entire season at the
Shakespeare Memorial Theater at Stratford-on-Avon,
England where her interpretations of Cleopatra (Antony
and Cleopatra) Beatrice (Much Ado About Nothing) and
Viola (Twelfth Night) were acclaimed by the London
critics as "memorable performances". She will also be
remembered for her Katherine, the Shrew in the
New York City Center production of 'The Taming of the
Shrew'. She has recently completed an extensive tour
of the Universities in a one-woman show of the classics
of more than a dozen of the great roles of the theatre,
among them, Camille-Lady Macbeth-Salome-Maeterlinck's
Mary Magdalene-Mary, Queen of Scots (Schiller) and
Shaw's Saint Joan.

She has performed in scores of summer theatre
productions such as Bell, Book and Candle-The Million-
airess and Don Juan in Hell (G.B. Shaw) Anna Christie-
The Doll's House-A Streetcar Named Desire-The Heiress-
and others too numerous to mention. In fact, she was
presented with a "Show Business" award as the actress

photo by G. Mailard Kesslere, B. P.



Claire Luce

playing the most diverse roles in the theatre. She is
well-known too, to television audiences for her portray-
als in 'The Queen Bee'-'Becky Sharp'-'Peer Gynt'-Re-
flected Glory-By Candlelight and numerous others. Her
first Hollywood film was 'Up the River' in which she
co-starred with Spencer Tracy and Humphrey Bogart-and
has made several films in England. In the world of art
she has been recognized too by the critics for her oil
paintings of theatre and the ballet, having had three
successful one-man shows at the Arthur Newton Gallery
in 57th Street.

At the moment she is participating in a stage
adaptation of Virginia Woolf's 'The Waves' and is pre-
paring a television series culled from her "Diary of
An Actress".

[LUC]

WHO'S WHO IN THE THEATRE

[LUC]

LUC, Claire, actress; b. Syracuse, New York, U.S.A.; d. of Frederick Luce and his wife Maud (Hinds); s. Vermont and Rochester; m. Clifford Warren-Smith (dec.); studied dancing at the Denishawn School in New York, with Michel Fokine and Florence Colebrook Powers; made her first appearance in public in the ballet of a Russian opera, "Snow Maiden," managed by Sol Hurok; first appeared on the regular stage at the Longacre Theatre, 15 Aug., 1923, in "Little Jessie James"; appeared at the Times Square Theatre, New York, Sept., 1924, as Clair in "Dear Sir"; at the Music Box, Dec., 1924, appeared in "The Music Box Revue"; for a time a dancer with Texas Guinan's troupe; during 1925 appeared at the Casino de Paris, Paris, in revue; at Palm Beach, 1926, appeared in Ziegfeld's "Palm Beach Nights"; at the Globe, New York, June, 1926, appeared in "No Foolin'" (Ziegfeld's revue); at the New Amsterdam, Aug., 1927, in "The Ziegfeld Follies of 1927"; made her first appearance in London, at Golders Green, 26 Nov., 1928, as Bonny in "Burlesque," appearing in the same part at the Queen's, Dec., 1928; after her return to America, appeared at Atlantic City, Aug., 1929, as Nora Mason, in "Scarlet Pages," and appeared in the same part at the Morosco, New York, Sept., 1929; Booth, Dec., 1931, played Judy Gelett in "Society Girl"; Ethel Barrymore, Nov., 1932, in "Gay Divorce"; and played the same part at the Palace, London, Nov., 1933; at Daly's, May, 1934, played Nina Popinot in "Vintage Wine"; Mar., 1935, Susette in "Love and Let Love"; Gaiety, May, 1935, Maricousa in "Gay Deceivers"; Adelphi, Feb., 1936, appeared in "Follow the Sun"; Daly's, June, 1937, Nadja von Eckner in "No Sleep for the Wicked"; Music Box, New York, Nov., 1937, Curley's Wife in "Of Mice and Men," which she also played at the Gate, London, Apr., 1939, and subsequently at the Apollo, May, 1939; at the Open Air Theatre, Southwark Park, July, 1941, and at Regent's Park, Aug., 1941, played Katherine in "The Taming of the Shrew," and subsequently Princess Katherine in "King Henry V"; she then toured for E.N.S.A., for eight months, playing Katherine in "The Taming of the Shrew," Anna Christie, Nora in "A Doll's House," and Sadie Thompson in "Rain"; subsequently toured as Evra in "Blithe Spirit," for the U.S.O.; at the Stratford-on-Avon Memorial Theatre, Apr.-Sept., 1945, appeared with great success as Viola in "Twelfth Night," Beatrice in "Much Ado About Nothing," Mistress Ford in "The Merry Wives of Windsor," and Cleopatra in "Antony and Cleopatra," scoring a memorable success in the last-mentioned part; at the Westminster Theatre, Jan., 1946, played Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots, in "Golden Eagle"; "Q," May, 1946, and subsequently on tour played Becky Sharp in "Vanity Fair," and played this part at the Comedy, Oct., 1946; returned to America, and next appeared at the Booth, New York, as Tanis Talbot in "Portrait in Black"; Lyceum, Apr., 1950, Rose Raymond in "With a Silk Thread"; at Somerset, Mass., July, 1950, played Effie in "The Devil Also Dreams"; New York City Center, Apr., 1951, played Katherine in "The Taming of the Shrew"; Music Box, May, 1952, appeared as Beatrice in "Much Ado About Nothing"; toured from 1956-9 in a one-woman show called "Fashions in Love"; Theatre '58, Dallas, Jan., 1958, Lucy Greer in "And So, Farewell"; Maidman, New York, Apr., 1960, in a one-woman show called "These Are My Loves"; has made numerous summer stock appearances in "Boston '49," "An Evening of G. B. Shaw," Donna Ana in "Don Juan in Hell," Epifania in "The Millionaire," "Bell, Book and Candle," "Time of the Cuckoo," "A Streetcar Named Desire," "The Heiress," Mrs. Venable in "Suddenly, Last Summer," "Shanghai Gesture," "Tonight at 8.30," "The Fourposter," her own adaptation of "The Lady of the Camellias," Desdemona in "Othello," etc.; first appeared in films, 1930, in "Up the River," and has since appeared in several pictures; has also made numerous television appearances. Recreation: Painting (has had three one-woman exhibitions).