

Examrace

Competitive Exams: William Shakespeare Antony and Cleopatra Character List

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- **Antony**-A once fierce and feared soldier who rules the Roman Empire along with Octavius Caesar and Lepidus. When the play opens, Antony has neglected his duties as a ruler in order to live in Egypt, where he carries on a highly visible love affair with Cleopatra. His loyalty is divided between the Western and Eastern worlds; he is torn between the sense of duty and the desire to seek pleasure, between reason and passion. While he feels the need to reaffirm the honor that has made him a celebrated Roman hero, he is also madly in love with Cleopatra.
- **Cleopatra**-The queen of Egypt and Antony's lover. A highly attractive woman who once seduced Julius Caesar, Cleopatra delights in the thought that she has caught Antony like a fish. In matters of love, as in all things, Cleopatra favors high drama: Her emotions are as volatile as they are theatrical, and, regardless of whether her audience is her handmaid or the emperor of Rome, she always offers a top-notch performance. Although she tends to make a spectacle of her emotions, one cannot doubt the genuine nature of her love for Antony. Shakespeare makes clear that the queen does love the general, even if her loyalty is sometimes misplaced.
- **Octavius Caesar**-The nephew and adopted son of Julius Caesar. Octavius rules the Roman Empire with Antony and Lepidus. Relations between Caesar and Antony are strained throughout the play, for the young triumvir believes that Antony squanders his time and neglects his duties while in Egypt. Ambitious and extremely pragmatic, Octavius lacks Antony's military might as a general, but his careful and stoic reasoning enables him to avoid Antony's tendency toward heroic or romantic folly. Destined to be the first Roman emperor (later renamed Caesar Augustus) , he symbolizes Western values in the play, which stand opposed to the exotic lures of Cleopatra's East.
- **Enobarbus**-Antony's most loyal supporter. Worldly and cynical, Enobarbus is friendly with the subordinates of both Pompey and Caesar, yet stays faithful to his master even after Antony makes grave political and military missteps. He abandons Antony only when the general appears to be completely finished.
- **Marcus Aemilius Lepidus**-The third member of the triumvirate and the weakest, both politically and personally. Lepidus's rather desperate attempts to keep the peace between Caesar and Antony fail when Caesar imprisons him after the defeat of Pompey.
- **Pompey**-The son of a great general who was one of Julius Caesar's partners in power. Pompey is young and popular with the Roman people, and he possesses enough military might to stand as a legitimate threat to the triumvirs. He fancies himself honorable for

refusing to allow one of his men to kill the unsuspecting Caesar, Antony, and Lepidus when they are his guests.

- Octavia-Octavius Caesar's sister. Octavia marries Antony in order to cement an alliance between the two triumvirs. She is a victim of Antony's deception, and her meekness, purity, and submission make her the paradigm of Roman womanhood, and Cleopatra's polar opposite.
- Charmian and Iras-Cleopatra's faithful attendants.
- The Soothsayer-An Egyptian fortune-teller who follows Antony to Rome and predicts that his fortune will always pale in comparison to Caesar's.
- Dolabella-One of Octavius Caesar's men. Dolabella is assigned to guard the captive Cleopatra.
- Agrippa-One of Octavius Caesar's officers. Agrippa leads the retreat from Antony's unexpectedly powerful forces.
- Camidius-A general in Antony's army. After the battle in which Antony follows Cleopatra's lead and flees, Camidius surrenders and defects to Caesar's side.
- Ventidius-A Roman soldier under Antony's command. Ventidius leads the legions to victory against the kingdom of Parthia. Although a competent fighter, he cautiously decides not to push his troops further into battle, for fear that winning too much glory would sour his relationship with Antony.
- Scarus-A brave young soldier serving under Antony. Scarus garners fantastic wounds in the battle against Caesar's army, and begs for the opportunity to win more.
- Proculeius-One of Caesar's soldiers, who proves untrustworthy.
- Diomedes-Cleopatra's servant. She employs Diomedes to bring to Antony the message that she has not committed suicide but is still alive.
- Eros-An attendant serving Antony. Eros's love for his master compels him to refuse Antony's order that Eros kill him.
- Menas-An ambitious young soldier under Pompey. During the dinner party that Pompey hosts for the triumvirate, Menas asks for permission to kill Caesar, Antony, and Lepidus, which would result in the control of the world falling into his master's hands.
- Seleucus-Cleopatra's treasurer, who betrays his master.
- Clown-An Egyptian who brings a basket of figs containing poisonous snakes to Cleopatra.
- Decretas-One of Antony's soldiers.