

**BEAUMONT FRANCIS, FLETCHER
JOHN**

**THE FALSE ONE:
A TRAGEDY**

Francis Beaumont

The False One: A Tragedy

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Francis Beaumont, John Fletcher

The False One: A Tragedy

Edited by Arnold Glover

Persons Represented in the Play

Julius Cæsar, *Emperour of Rome.*
Ptolomy, *King of Ægypt.*
Achoreus, *an honest Counsellor, Priest of Isis.*
Photinus, *a Politician, minion to Ptolomy.*
Achillas, *Captain of the Guard to Ptolomy.*
Septimius, *a revolted Roman Villain.*
Labienus, *a Roman Souldier, and Nuncio.*
Apollodorus, *Guardian to Cleopatra.*

Antonie,
Dolabella,

}

Cæsar's Captains.

Sceva, *a free Speaker, also Captain to Cæsar.*
Guard.
Three lame Souldiers.
Servants.

WOMEN

Cleopatra, *Queen of Ægypt. Cæsar's Mistris.*
Arsino, *Cleopatra's Sister.*
Eros, *Cleopatra's waiting Woman.*

The Scene Ægypt.

The principal Actors were,
John Lowin.
John Underwood.
Robert Benfield.
Richard Sharpe.
Joseph Taylor.
Nicholas Toolie.
John Rice.
George Birch.

Actus Primus. Scena Prima

Enter Achilles, and Achoreus

[*Ach.*] I love the King, nor do dispute his power,
(For that is not confin'd, nor to be censur'd
By me, that am his Subject) yet allow me
The liberty of a Man, that still would be
A friend to Justice, to demand the motives
That did induce young *Ptolomy*, or *Photinus*,
(To whose directions he gives up himself,
And I hope wisely) to commit his Sister,
The Princess *Cleopatra* (if I said
The Queen) *Achillas* 'twere (I hope) no treason,
She being by her Fathers Testament
(Whose memory I bow to) left Co-heir
In all he stood possest of.

Achil. 'Tis confest
(My good *Achoreus*) that in these Eastern Kingdoms
Women are not exempted from the Sceptre,
But claim a priviledge, equal to the Male;
But how much such divisions have ta'en from
The Majesty of *Egypt*, and what factions
Have sprung from those partitions, to the ruine
Of the poor Subject, (doubtful which to follow,)
We have too many, and too sad examples,
Therefore the wise *Photinus*, to prevent
The Murthers, and the Massacres, that attend
On disunited Government, and to shew
The King without a Partner, in full splendour,
Thought it convenient the fair *Cleopatra*,
(An attribute not frequent to the Climate)
Should be committed in safe Custody,
In which she is attended like her Birth,
Until her Beauty, or her royal Dowre,
Hath found her out a Husband.

Ach. How this may
Stand with the rules of policy, I know not;
Most sure I am, it holds no correspondence
With the Rites of *Ægypt*, or the Laws of Nature;
But grant that *Cleopatra* can sit down
With this disgrace (though insupportable)
Can you imagine, that *Romes* glorious Senate

(To whose charge, by the will of the dead King
This government was deliver'd) or great *Pompey*,
(That is appointed *Cleopatra's* Guardian
As well as *Ptolomies*) will e're approve
Of this rash counsel, their consent not sought for,
That should authorize it?

Achil. The Civil war
In which the *Roman* Empire is embarqu'd
On a rough Sea of danger, does exact
Their whole care to preserve themselves, and gives them
No vacant time to think of what we do,
Which hardly can concern them.

Ach. What's your opinion
Of the success? I have heard, in multitudes
Of Souldiers, and all glorious pomp of war,
Pompey is much superiour.

Achil. I could give you
A Catalogue of all the several Nations
From whence he drew his powers: but that were tedious.
They have rich arms, are ten to one in number,
Which makes them think the day already won;
And *Pompey* being master of the Sea,
Such plenty of all delicates are brought in,
As if the place on which they are entrench'd,
Were not a Camp of Souldiers, but *Rome*,
In which *Lucullus* and *Apicius* joyn'd,
To make a publique Feast: they at *Dirachium*
Fought with success; but knew not to make use of
Fortunes fair offer: so much I have heard
Cæsar himself confess.

Ach. Where are they now?

Achil. In *Thessalie*, near the *Pharsalian* plains
Where *Cæsar* with a handfull of his Men
Hems in the greater number: his whole troops
Exceed not twenty thousand, but old Souldiers
Flesh'd in the spoils of *Germany* and *France*,
Inur'd to his Command, and only know
To fight and overcome; And though that *Famine*
Raigns in his Camp, compelling them to tast
Bread made of roots, forbid the use of man,
(Which they with scorn threw into *Pompeys* Camp
As in derision of his Delicates)
Or corn not yet half ripe, and that a Banquet:
They still besiege him, being ambitious only

To come to blows, and let their swords determine
Who hath the better Cause.

Enter Septi[m]ius

Ach. May Victory
Attend on't, where it is.

Achil. We every hour
Expect to hear the issue.

Sep. Save my good Lords;
By *Isis* and *Osiris*, whom you worship;
And the four hundred gods and goddesses
Ador'd in *Rome*, I am your honours servant.

Ach. Truth needs, *Septimius*, no oaths.

Achil. You are cruel,
If you deny him swearing, you take from him
Three full parts of his language.

Sep. Your Honour's bitter,
Confound me, where I love I cannot say it,
But I must swear't: yet such is my ill fortune,
Nor vows, nor protestations win belief,
I think, and (I can find no other reason)
Because I am a *Roman*.

Ach. No *Septimius*,
To be a *Roman* were an honour to you,
Did not your manners, and your life take from it,
And cry aloud, that from *Rome* you bring nothing
But *Roman* Vices, which you would plant here,
But no seed of her vertues.

Sep. With your reverence
I am too old to learn.

Ach. Any thing honest,
That I believe, without an oath.

Sep. I fear
Your Lordship has slept ill to night, and that
Invites this sad discourse: 'twill make you old
Before your time:—O these vertuous Morals,
And old religious principles, that fool us!

I have brought you a new Song, will make you laugh,
Though you were at your prayers.

A/c/h. What is the subject?
Be free *Septimius*.

Sep. 'Tis a Catalogue
Of all the Gamesters of the Court and City,
Which Lord lyes with that Lady, and what Gallant
Sports with that Merchants wife; and does relate
Who sells her honour for a Diamond,
Who, for a tissew robe: whose husband's jealous,
And who so kind, that, to share with his wife,
Will make the match himself:
Harmless conceits,
Though fools say they are dangerous: I sang it
The last night at my Lord *Photinus* table.

Ach. How? as a Fidler?

Sep. No Sir, as a Guest,
A welcom guest too: and it was approv'd of
By a dozen of his friends, though they were touch'd in't:
For look you, 'tis a kind of merriment,
When we have laid by foolish modesty
(As not a man of fashion will wear it)
To talk what we have done; at least to hear it;
If meerily set down, it fires the blood,
And heightens Crest-faln appetite.

Ach. New doctrine!

Achil. Was't of your own composing?

Sep. No, I bought it
Of a skulking Scribler for two Ptolomies:
But the hints were mine own; the wretch was fearfull:
But I have damn'd my self, should it be question'd,
That I will own it.

Ach. And be punished for it:
Take heed: for you may so long exercise
Your scurrilous wit against authority,
The Kingdoms Counsels; and make profane Jests,
(Which to you (being an atheist) is nothing)
Against Religion, that your great maintainers
(Unless they would be thought Co-partners with you)
Will leave you to the Law: and then, *Septimius*,
Remember there are whips.

Sep. For whore's I grant you,
When they are out of date, till then are safe too,
Or all the Gallants of the Court are Eunuchs,
And for mine own defence I'll only add this,
I'll be admitted for a wanton tale
To some most private Cabinets, when your Priest-hood
(Though laden with the mysteries of your goddess)
Shall wait without unnoted: so I leave you
To your pious thoughts. [*Exit.*]

Achil. 'Tis a strange impudence,
This fellow does put on.

Ach. The wonder great,
He is accepted of.

Achil. Vices, for him,
Make as free way as vertues doe for others.
'Tis the times fault: yet Great ones still have grace'd
To make them sport, or rub them o're with flattery,
Observers of all kinds.

Enter Photinus, and Septimius

Ach. No more of him,
He is not worth our thoughts: a Fugitive
From *Pompeys* army: and now in a danger
When he should use his service.

Achil. See how he hangs
On great *Photinus* Ear.

Sep. Hell, and the furies,
And all the plagues of darkness light upon me:
You are my god on earth: and let me have
Your favour here, fall what can fall hereafter.

Pho. Thou art believ'd: dost thou want mony?

Sep. No Sir.

Pho. Or hast thou any suite? these ever follow
Thy vehement protestations.

Sep. You much wrong me;
How can I want, when your beams shine upon me,

Unless employment to express my zeal
To do your greatness service? do but think
A deed so dark, the Sun would blush to look on,
For which Man-kind would curse me, and arm all
The powers above, and those below against me:
Command me, I will on.

Pho. When I have use,
I'll put you to the test.

Sep. May it be speedy,
And something worth my danger: you are cold,
And know not your own powers: this brow was fashion'd
To wear a Kingly wreath, and your grave judgment,
Given to dispose of monarchies, not to govern
A child's affairs, the people's eye's upon you,
The Soldier courts you: will you wear a garment
Of sordid loyalty when 'tis out of fashion?

Pho. When *Pompey* was thy General, *Septimius*,
Thou saidst as much to him.

Sep. All my love to him,
To *Cæsar*, *Rome*, and the whole world is lost
In the Ocean of your Bounties: I have no friend,
Project, design, or Countrey, but your favour,
Which I'll preserve at any rate.

Pho. No more;
When I call on you, fall not off: perhaps
Sooner than you expect, I may employ you,
So leave me for a while.

Sep. Ever your Creature. [*Exit.*]

Pho. Good day *Achoreus*; my best friend *Achillas*,
Hath fame deliver'd yet no certain rumour
Of the great *Roman Action*?

Achil. That we are
To enquire, and learn of you Sir: whose grave care
For *Egypt's* happiness, and great *Ptolomies* good,
Hath eyes and ears in all parts.

Enter Ptolomy, Labienus, Guard

Pho. I'll not boast,

What my Intelligence costs me: but 'ere long
You shall know more. The King, with him a *Roman*.

Ach. The scarlet livery of unfortunate war
Dy'd deeply on his face.

Achil. 'Tis *Labienus*
Cæsars Lieutenant in the wars of *Gaul*,
And fortunate in all his undertakings:
But since these Civil jars he turn'd to *Pompey*,
And though he followed the better Cause
Not with the like success.

Pho. Such as are wise
Leave falling buildings, flye to those that rise;
But more of that hereafter.

Lab. In a word, Sir,
These gaping wounds, not taken as a slave,
Speak *Pompey's* loss: to tell you of the Battail,
How many thousand several bloody shapes
Death wore that day in triumph: how we bore
The shock of *Cæsars* charge: or with what fury
His Souldiers came on as if they had been
So many *Cæsars*, and like him ambitious
To tread upon the liberty of *Rome*:
How Fathers kill'd their Sons, or Sons their Fathers,
Or how the *Roman* Piles on either side
Drew *Roman* blood, which spent, the Prince of weapons,
(The sword) succeeded, which in Civil wars
Appoints the Tent on which wing'd victory
Shall make a certain Stand; then, how the Plains
Flow'd o're with blood, and what a cloud of vulturs
And other birds of prey, hung o're both armies,
Attending when their ready Servitors,
(The Souldiers, from whom the angry gods
Had took all sense of reason, and of pity)
Would serve in their own carkasses for a feast,
How *Cæsar* with his Javelin force'd them on
That made the least stop, when their angry hands
Were lifted up against some known friends face;
Then coming to the body of the army
He shews the sacred *Senate*, and forbids them
To wast their force upon the Common Souldier,
Whom willingly, if e're he did know pity,
He would have spar'd.

Ptol. The reason *Labienus*?

Lab. Full well he knows, that in their blood he was
To pass to Empire, and that through their bowels
He must invade the Laws of *Rome*, and give
A period to the liberty of the world.
Then fell the *Lepidi*, and the bold *Corvini*,
The fam'd *Torquati*, *Scipio's*, and *Marcelli*,
(Names next to *Pompeys*, most renown'd on Earth)
The Nobles, and the Commons lay together,
And Pontique, Punique, and *Assyrian* blood
Made up one crimson Lake: which *Pompey* seeing,
And that his, and the fate of *Rome* had left him
Standing upon the Rampier of his Camp,
Though scorning all that could fall on himself,
He pities them whose fortunes are embarqu'd
In his unlucky quarrel; cries aloud too
That they should sound retreat, and save themselves:
That he desir'd not, so much noble blood
Should be lost in his service, or attend
On his misfortunes: and then, taking horse
With some few of his friends, he came to *Lesbos*,
And with *Cornelia*, his Wife, and Sons,
He's touch'd upon your shore: the King of *Parthia*,
(Famous in his defeature of the *Crassi*)
Offer'd him his protection, but *Pompey*
Relying on his Benefits, and your Faith,
Hath chosen *Ægypt* for his Sanctuary,
Till he may recollect his scattered powers,
And try a second day: now *Ptolomy*,
Though he appear not like that glorious thing
That three times rode in triumph, and gave laws
To conquer'd Nations, and made Crowns his gift
(As this of yours, your noble Father took
From his victorious hand, and you still wear it
At his devotion) to do you more honour
In his declin'd estate, as the straightst Pine
In a full grove of his yet flourishing friends,
He flyes to you for succour, and expects
The entertainment of your Fathers friend,
And Guardian to your self.

Ptol. To say I grieve his fortune
As much as if the Crown I wear (his gift)
Were ravish'd from me, is a holy truth,
Our Gods can witness for me: yet, being young,
And not a free disposer of my self;
Let not a few hours, borrowed for advice,
Beget suspicion of unthankfulness,
(Which next to Hell I hate) pray you retire,
And take a little rest, and let his wounds

Be with that care attended, as they were
Carv'd on my flesh: good *Labienus*, think
The little respite, I desire shall be
Wholly employ'd to find the readiest way
To doe great *Pompey* service.

Lab. May the gods
(As you intend) protect you. [*Exit.*

Ptol. Sit: sit all,
It is my pleasure: your advice, and freely.

Ach. A short deliberation in this,
May serve to give you counsel: to be honest,
Religious and thankfull, in themselves
Are forcible motives, and can need no flourish
Or gloss in the perswader; your kept faith,
(Though *Pompey* never rise to th' height he's fallen from)
Cæsar himself will love; and my opinion
Is (still committing it to graver censure)
You pay the debt you owe him, with the hazard
Of all you can call yours.

Ptol. What's yours, (*Photinus*?)

Pho. *Achoreus* (great *Ptolomy*) hath counsell'd
Like a Religious, and honest man,
Worthy the honour that he justly holds
In being Priest to *Isis*: But alas,
What in a man, sequester'd from the world,
Or in a private person, is prefer'd,
No policy allows of in a King,
To be or just, or thankfull, makes Kings guilty,
And faith (though prais'd) is punish'd that supports
Such as good Fate forsakes: joyn with the gods,
Observe the man they favour, leave the wretched,
The Stars are not more distant from the Earth
Than profit is from honesty; all the power,
Prerogative, and greatness of a Prince
Is lost, if he descend once but to steer
His course, as what's right, guides him: let him leave
The Scepter, that strives only to be good,
Since Kingdomes are maintain'd by force and blood.

Ach. Oh wicked!

Ptol. Peace: goe on.

Pho. Proud *Pompey* shews how much he scorns your youth,

In thinking that you cannot keep your own
From such as are or'e come. If you are tired
With being a King, let not a stranger take
What nearer pledges challenge: resign rather
The government of *Egypt* and of *Nile*
To *Cleopatra*, that has title to them,
At least defend them from the Roman *gripe*,
What was not *Pompeys*, while the wars endured,
The Conquerour will not challenge; by all the world
Forsaken and despis'd, your gentle Guardian
His hopes and fortunes desperate, makes choice of
What Nation he shall fall with: and pursu'd
By their pale ghosts, slain in this Civil war,
He flyes not *Cæsar* only, but the Senate,
Of which, the greater part have cloi'd the hunger
Of sharp *Pharsalian* fowl, he flies the Nations
That he drew to his Quarrel, whose Estates
Are sunk in his: and in no place receiv'd,
Hath found out *Egypt*, by him yet not ruin'd:
And *Ptolomy*, things consider'd, justly may
Complain of *Pompey*: wherefore should he stain
Our *Egypt*, with the spots of civil war?
Or make the peaceable, or quiet *Nile*
Doubted of *Cæsar*? wherefore should he draw
His loss, and overthrow upon our heads?
Or choose this place to suffer in? already
We have offended *Cæsar*, in our wishes,
And no way left us to redeem his favour
But by the head of *Pompey*.

Ach. Great *Osiris*,
Defend thy *Ægypt* from such cruelty,
And barbarous ingratitude!

Pho. Holy trifles,
And not to have place in designs of State;
This sword, which Fate commands me to unsheath,
I would not draw on *Pompey*, if not vanquish'd.
I grant it rather should have pass'd through *Cæsar*,
But we must follow where his fortune leads us;
All provident Princes measure their intents
According to their power, and so dispose them:
And thinkst thou (*Ptolomy*) that thou canst prop
His Ruines, under whom sad *Rome* now suffers?
Or 'tempt the Conquerours force when 'tis confirm'd?
Shall we, that in the Battail sate as Neuters
Serve him that's overcome? No, no, he's lost.
And though 'tis noble to a sinking friend
To lend a helping hand, while there is hope

He may recover, thy part not engag'd
Though one most dear, when all his hopes are dead,
To drown him, set thy foot upon his head.

Ach. Most execrable Counsel.

Pho. To be follow'd,
'Tis for the Kingdoms safety.

Ptol. We give up
Our absolute power to thee: dispose of it
As reason shall direct thee.

Pho. Good *Achillas*,
Seek out *Septimius*: do you but sooth him,
He is already wrought: leave the dispatch
To me of *Labienu*s: 'tis determin'd
Already how you shall proceed: nor Fate
Shall alter it, since now the dye is cast,
But that this hour to *Pompey* is his last. [*Exit.*]

SCENA II

Enter Apollodorus, Eros, Arsino

Apol. Is the Queen stirring, *Eros*?

Eros. Yes, for in truth
She touch'd no bed to night.

Apol. I am sorry for it,
And wish it were in me, with my hazard,
To give her ease.

Ars. Sir, she accepts your will,
And does acknowledge she hath found you noble,
So far, as if restraint of liberty
Could give admission to a thought of mirth,
She is your debtor for it.

Apol. Did you tell her
Of the sports I have prepar'd to entertain her?
She was us'd to take delight, with her fair hand,
To angle in the *Nile*, where the glad fish
(As if they knew who 'twas sought to deceive 'em)
Contended to be taken: other times
To strike the Stag, who wounded by her arrows,
Forgot his tears in death, and kneeling thanks her
To his last gasp, then prouder of his Fate,
Than if with Garlands Crown'd, he had been chosen
To fall a Sacrifice before the altar
Of the Virgin Huntress: the King, nor great *Photinus*
Forbid her any pleasure; and the Circuit
In which she is confin'd, gladly affords
Variety of pastimes, which I would
Encrease with my best service.

Eros. O, but the thought
That she that was born free, and to dispense
Restraint, or liberty to others, should be
At the devotion of her Brother, whom
She only knows her equal, makes this place
In which she lives (though stor'd with all delights)
A loathsome dungeon to her.

Apol. Yet, (howe're
She shall interpret it) I'll not be wanting

To do my best to serve her: I have prepar'd
Choise Musick near her Cabinet, and compos'd
Some few lines, (set unto a solemn time)
In the praise of imprisonment. Begin Boy.

The SONG

Look out bright eyes, and bless the air:
Even in shadows you are fair.
Shut-up-beauty is like fire,
That breaks out clearer still and higher.
Though your body be confin'd,
And soft Love a prisoner bound,
Yet the beauty of your mind
Neither check, nor chain hath found.
Look out nobly then, and dare
Even the Fetters that you wear.

Enter Cleopatra

Cleo. But that we are assur'd this tastes of duty,
And love in you, my *Guardian*, and desire
In you, my *Sister*, and the rest, to please us,
We should receive this, as a sawcy rudeness
Offer'd our private thoughts. But your intents
Are to delight us: alas, you wash an *Ethiop*:
Can *Cleopatra*, while she does remember
Whose Daughter she is, and whose Sister? (O
I suffer in the name) and that (in Justice)
There is no place in *Ægypt*, where I stand,
But that the tributary Earth is proud
To kiss the foot of her, that is her Queen,
Can she, I say, that is all this, e're relish
Of comfort, or delight, while base *Photinus*,
Bond-man *Achillas*, and all other monsters
That reign o're *Ptolomy*, make that a Court,
Where they reside, and this, where I, a Prison?
But there's a *Rome*, a *Senate*, and a *Cæsar*,
(Though the great *Pompey* lean to *Ptolomy*)
May think of *Cleopatra*.

Ap. *Pompey*, Madam?

Cleo. What of him? speak: if ill, *Apollodorus*,
It is my happiness: and for thy news

Receive a favour (*Kings* have kneel'd in vain for)
And kiss my hand.

Ap. He's lost.

Cleo. Speak it again!

Ap. His army routed: he fled and pursu'd
By the all-conquering Cæsar.

Cleo. Whither bends he?

Ap. To *Egypt*.

Cleo. Ha! in person?

Ap. 'Tis receiv'd
For an undoubted truth.

Cleo. I live again,
And if assurance of my love, and beauty
Deceive me not, I now shall find a Judge
To do me right: but how to free my self,
And get access? the *Guards* are strong upon me,
This door I must pass through. *Apollodorus*,
Thou often hast profess'd (to do me service,)
Thy life was not thine own.

Ap. I am not alter'd;
And let your excellency propound a means,
In which I may but give the least assistance,
That may restore you, to that you were born to,
(Though it call on the anger of the King,
Or, (what's more deadly) all his Minion
Photinus can do to me) I, unmov'd,
Offer my throat to serve you: ever provided,
It bear some probable shew to be effected.
To lose my self upon no ground, were madness,
Not loyal duty.

Cleo. Stand off: to thee alone,
I will discover what I dare not trust
My Sister with, *Cæsar* is amorous,
And taken more with the title of a Queen,
Than feature or proportion, he lov'd *Eunoe*,
A *Moor*, deformed too, I have heard, that brought
No other object to inflame his blood,
But that her Husband was a King, on both
He did bestow rich presents; shall I then,

That with a princely birth, bring beauty with me,
That know to prize my self at mine own rate,
Despair his favour? art thou mine?

Ap. I am.

Cleo. I have found out a way shall bring me to him,
Spight of *Photinus* watches; if I prosper,
(As I am confident I shall) expect
Things greater than thy wishes; though I purchase
His grace with loss of my virginity,
It skills not, if it bring home Majesty. [*Exeunt.*

Actus Secundus. Scena Prima

Enter Septimius, with a head, Achilles, Guard

Sep. 'Tis here, 'tis done, behold you fearfull viewers,
Shake, and behold the model of the world here,
The pride, and strength, look, look again, 'tis finish'd;
That, that whole Armies, nay whole nations,
Many and mighty Kings, have been struck blind at,
And fled before, wing'd with their fears and terrours,
That steel war waited on, and fortune courted,
That high plum'd honour built up for her own;
Behold that mightiness, behold that fierceness,
Behold that child of war, with all his glories;
By this poor hand made breathless, here (my *Achillas*)
Egypt, and *Cæsar*, owe me for this service,
And all the conquer'd Nations.

Ach. Peace *Septimius*,
Thy words sound more ungratefull than thy actions,
Though sometimes safety seek an instrument
Of thy unworthy nature, thou (loud boaster)
Think not she is bound to love him too, that's barbarous.
Why did not I, if this be meritorious,
And binds the King unto me, and his bounties,
Strike this rude stroke? I'le tell thee (thou poor *Roman*)
It was a sacred head, I durst not heave at,
Not heave a thought.

Sep. It was.

Ach. I'le tell thee truely,
And if thou ever yet heard'st tell of honour,
I'le make thee blush: It was thy General's;
That mans that fed thee once, that mans that bred thee,
The air thou breath'dst was his; the fire that warm'd thee,
From his care kindled ever, nay, I'le show thee,
(Because I'le make thee sensible of the business,
And why a noble man durst not touch at it)
There was no piece of Earth, thou putst thy foot on
But was his conquest; and he gave thee motion.
He triumph'd three times, who durst touch his person?
The very walls of *Rome* bow'd to his presence,
Dear to the Gods he was, to them that fear'd him
A fair and noble Enemy. Didst thou hate him?

And for thy love to *Cæsar*, sought his ruine?
Arm'd in the red *Pharsalian* fields, *Septimius*,
Where killing was in grace, and wounds were glorious,
Where Kings were fair competitours for honour,
Thou shouldst have come up to him, there have fought him,
There, Sword to Sword.

Sep. I kill'd him on commandment,
If Kings commands be fair, when you all fainted,
When none of you durst look—

Ach. On deeds so barbarous,
What hast thou got?

Sep. The Kings love, and his bounty,
The honour of the service, which though you rail at,
Or a thousand envious souls fling their foams on me,
Will dignifie the cause, and make me glorious:
And I shall live.

Ach. A miserable villain,
What reputation, and reward belongs to it
Thus (with the head) I seize on, and make mine;
And be not impudent to ask me why, Sirrah,
Nor bold to stay, read in mine eyes the reason:
The shame and obloquy I leave thine own,
Inherit those rewards, they are fitter for thee,
Your oyl's spent, and your snuff stinks: go out basely.

[Exit

Sep. The King will yet consider.

Enter Ptolomy, Achoreus, Photinus

Achil. Here he comes Sir.

Ach. Yet if it be undone: hear me great Sir,
If this inhumane stroak be yet unstrucken,
If that adored head be not yet sever'd
From the most noble Body, weigh the miseries,
The desolations that this great Eclipse works,
You are young, be provident: fix not your Empire
Upon the Tomb of him will shake all *Egypt*,
Whose warlike groans will raise ten thousand Spirits,

(Great as himself) in every hand a thunder;
Destructions darting from their looks, and sorrows
That easy womens eyes shall never empty.

Pho. You have done well; and 'tis done, see *Achillas*,
And in his hand the head.

Ptol. Stay come no nearer,
Me thinks I feel the very earth shake under me,
I do remember him, he was my guardian,
Appointed by the Senate to preserve me:
What a full Majesty sits in his face yet?

Pho. The King is troubled: be not frightened Sir,
Be not abus'd with fears; his death was necessary,
If you consider, Sir, most necessary,
Not to be miss'd: and humbly thank great *Isis*,
He came so opportunely to your hands;
Pity must now give place to rules of safety.
Is not victorious *Cæsar* new arriv'd,
And enter'd *Alexandria*, with his friends,
His *Navy* riding by to wait his charges?
Did he not beat this *Pompey*, and pursu'd him?
Was not this great man, his great enemy?
This Godlike vertuous man, as people held him,
But what fool dare be friend to flying vertue?

Enter Cæsar, Anthony, Dolabella, Sceva

I hear their Trumpets, 'tis too late to stagger,
Give me the head, and be you confident:
Hail Conquerour, and head of all the world,
Now this head's off.

Cæsar. Ha?

Pho. Do not shun me, *Cæsar*,
From kingly *Ptolomy* I bring this present,
The Crown, and sweat of thy *Pharsalian* labour:
The goal and mark of high ambitious honour.
Before thy victory had no name, *Cæsar*,
Thy travel and thy loss of blood, no recompence,
Thou dreamst of being worthy, and of war;
And all thy furious conflicts were but slumbers,
Here they take life: here they inherit honour,
Grow fixt, and shoot up everlasting triumphs:
Take it, and look upon thy humble servant,

With noble eyes look on the Princely *Ptolomy*,
That offers with this head (most mighty *Cæsar*)
What thou would'st once have given for it, all *Egypt*.

Ach. Nor do not question it (most royal Conquerour)
Nor dis-esteem the benefit that meets thee,
Because 'tis easily got, it comes the safer:
Yet let me tell thee (most imperious *Cæsar*)
Though he oppos'd no strength of Swords to win this,
Nor labour'd through no showres of darts, and lances:
Yet here he found a fort, that faced him strongly,
An inward war: he was his Grand-sires Guest;
Friend to his Father, and when he was expell'd
And beaten from this Kingdom by strong hand,
And had none left him, to restore his honour,
No hope to find a friend, in such a misery;
Then in stept *Pompey*; took his feeble fortune:
Strengthen'd, and cherish'd it, and set it right again,
This was a love to *Cæsar*.

Sceva. Give me, hate, Gods.

Pho. This *Cæsar* may account a little wicked,
But yet remember, if thine own hands, Conquerour,
Had fallen upon him, what it had been then?
If thine own sword had touch'd his throat, what that way!
He was thy Son in Law, there to be tainted,
Had been most terrible: let the worst be render'd,
We have deserv'd for keeping thy hands innocent.

Cæsar. Oh *Sceva*, *Sceva*, see that head: see Captains,
The head of godlike *Pompey*.

Sceva. He was basely ruin'd,
But let the Gods be griev'd that suffer'd it,
And be you *Cæsar*—

Cæsar. Oh thou Conquerour,
Thou glory of the world once, now the pity:
Thou awe of Nations, wherefore didst thou fall thus?
What poor fate follow'd thee, and pluckt thee on
To trust thy sacred life to an *Egyptian*;
The life and light of *Rome*, to a blind stranger,
That honorable war ne'r taught a nobleness,
Nor worthy circumstance shew'd what a man was,
That never heard thy name sung, but in banquets;
And loose lascivious pleasures? to a Boy,
That had no faith to comprehend thy greatness,
No study of thy life to know thy goodness;

And leave thy Nation, nay, thy noble friend,
Leave him (distrusted) that in tears falls with thee?
(In soft relenting tears) hear me (great *Pompey*)
(If thy great spirit can hear) I must task thee:
Thou hast most unnobly rob'd me of my victory,
My love, and mercy.

Ant. O how brave these tears shew!

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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