



## Give me my robe, put on my crown

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**Cleopatra:**

"Give me my robe, put on my crown; I have  
Immortal longings in me."

[Antony and Cleopatra \(V, ii, 282-283\)](#)

With these words, Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt, joins her Roman lover, Mark Antony, in death. Mark Antony and Octavius Caesar oppose each other in this historical tragedy, Antony on the side of Egypt alongside its queen, Cleopatra, and Caesar as ruler of Rome. Antony struggles between his loyalty to Rome, strengthened by his marriage to Octavia, sister of Caesar, and his love for Cleopatra. He eventually succumbs to the "temptation of Egypt" and a great sea-war ensues in which Antony is defeated and follows Cleopatra into retreat.

When Cleopatra learns that Antony believes she has betrayed him and plans to kill her, she sends word to Antony that she has killed herself. Overcome with grief, Antony falls upon his sword and is taken, still alive, to Cleopatra's monument, where she has been hiding. He dies in her arms. When Caesar hears that Mark Antony is dead, he arranges for Cleopatra's surrender, assuring her that she will be treated with respect. Cleopatra learns, however, that she is to be paraded by Caesar through the streets of Rome as a war trophy, ridiculed and degraded. She chooses, instead, to die with dignity, wearing her robe and crown, rather than suffer this humiliation. She puts an asp to her breast and is poisoned by the bite. Caesar provides a dignified burial for both *Antony and Cleopatra*, side by side.

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