

HADRIAN and ANTINOUS

by: Anthony Scott

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ACT ONE

SCENE I – *HADRIAN's bedroom at dawn, VIBIA and HADRIAN wake.*

VIBIA: Stay you awhile, the day still is early.
Venus sleeps, along with your empire.

HADRIAN: Tis true, the day is young,
Though not as young as my thoughts.
I sense the day is yet to reveal its nature,
And we wait to learn of its intention.

VIBIA: What caused this quarrel?
Who planted this seed in your brain?
The day is planned and will go accordingly.
A new temple will be opened, a new jewel to your crown
Nothing more, nothing less,
I pray you, relax a little.

HADRIAN: Perhaps, my wife, perhaps you do speak true.
I'll trust your word till you are proven false.
Today we will either see it's virtue,
Or watch it fall with the sun and its pulse.

VIBIA: Oh! I do speak true - you should doubt it not.

Tis true as the sun warms the fields of Greece.
The days will grow as our empire ought,
When the temple's built and all is at peace.

HADRIAN: Speak of ambition, is Greece not enough?
Is my gold too common, and life too long?
Sweet Vibia, speak, your tongue is too tough.
I hope thee can speak, and then deem me wrong.

VIBIA: Gold is of worth only when it's not won.

HADRIAN: If such was true, then it's value is gone.

Off shall I now to prepare for the feast,
My men had called for me before you woke.
I'll off, cold wife, for this talk has grown old.

(HADRIAN exits)

VIBIA: What of this, what of my valued man?
He speaks in tones I cannot understand.
Before this morn he was full with desire,
But now something seems to have ceased that fire.
Off I now, as water falls when it rains,
I'll try to decipher what's going on in his brain.

(Enter SERVINGMAN)

SERVINGMAN: Your majesty, a letter, *(Hands letter)* Arrived this morning for thee, by order of Secretary Gaius.

VIBIA: Thank thee, kind servant, I'll attend to it soon.
Leave me to myself, I'll be ready by noon.

SERVINGMAN: As thee wish, your majesty.

(Exit SERVINGMAN)

VIBIA: *(Opening letter)* Holy favor that this comes once my husband flees.

For its contents I'm sure would challenge his beliefs.
Hadrian, my love, cannot run all of Greece alone.
I help in the shadows, help to him that's unknown.
Our marriage is strong, but Hadrian may love still,
In the dark he escapes and does what he will.
Now our empire bleeds for an emperor strong,
Not a man who does his loving wife wrong.
I hired Gaius to serve as a spy for my cause,
Here he writes if Hadrian has done those flaws.

Gaius claims that Hadrian is untrue,
However, I can't trust what Gaius drew.
The other that left our bedroom that night,
Was I making sure the gate was shut tight.
I didn't want any creatures to pass,
Into his bed, for it would be their last.
But sure enough, there was no one indeed,
Still, good Gaius has done me a good deed.
I will rely on his word as we go,
Through this hard time as my Hadrian knows:
His temple will open for Greece to see,
And I need to support him in his dreams.

Now to get dressed for the opening night,
I hope it all is well, a beautiful sight.

(Exit)

SCENE II – *On the lawn outside Venus's Temple, prestigious officials gather for the opening, enter PEASANTS.*

PEASANT I: Watch how the palace grows in size
As every regal goes inside.
My eyes never saw so much wealth,
Until the emperor built it himself.

PEASANT II: You speak like those Kings enterin' those gates.
I pray you remember of your estates!

PEASANT III: It is not hard to speak with their tongue,
Act all proper and you've already begun!

YOUNG PEASANT: Yes, I could be a King like that man up there,
just give me a moment to fix myself. *(Stands more 'properly')* How
does it read?

PEASANT I: Keep working my child, you'll grow when you need.

*(Enter VIBIA and HADRIAN amongst others approaching stand
where GAIUS is about to introduce HADRIAN, ANTINOUS follows a
few people behind, dressed as a peasant.)*

GAIUS: All Greeks, here my voice, I welcome you hence.

Today our goddess of love is honor'ed.
By your emperor, Hadrian, best that he presents
The temple of the lady, as he had plann'ed.
(aside to HADRIAN) My lord, I offer thee the stand,
Come now and address your fellow man.

VIBIA: *(aside to HADRIAN)* The crowd has gathered for thy
virtuous speech.
Now allow them to hear of your thoughts.
Of your intention, I know you'll preach.
And glorify Venus, or else I'm lost.

HADRIAN: Sit down my wife, I know the cost.

(VIBIA sits, HADRIAN takes GAIUS's place and addresses the crowd.)

My fellow Greeks, who now join me today,
At the temple of the goddess of love.
And in this temple, I hope that thee pray
For peace so harmonious, soft as dove.

(Pause, ANTINOUS reveals himself.)

Though Venus loves all, she does tempt us so,
She clenches and grasps till pleasure unfolds.
We watch it inflate, until we must go.
Wherever we must, to reach a new hold.
But that is just love, we mustn't fall flat,
We mustn't fall victim, or let hearts go.
Until we are certain that the love is fat,

And will grow as fast as the children grow.
Welcome to the temple of thy goddess,
Remember, value Venus's softness.

(ANTINOUS covers himself up, GAIUS takes the stand once more.)

GAIUS: Therefore, temple of Venus, open thy doors.
Let all enter, from gods, queens, and moors.
Today we glorify the love it endures,
Enter at once, and find your soul sores.

(All but PEASANTS leave the stage, ANTINOUS stays.)

PEASANT I: The temple of love.

PEASANT II: Tis a beautiful speech, and a beauteous emperor.

ANTINOUS AS A PEASANT: I agree, friends, a work of Venus.

PEASANT III: A work of the goddess, I say. Tis true he has a love
other than the empress?

PEASANT II: Nay, that's just Venus whispering in our ears. A love
other than sweet Vibia? May it be not so.

ANTINOUS AS A PEASANT: Venus would whisper words of love,
not despair.

Such whispers are that of the hellish Hades.
Evil desire, jealousy, are his whispers, not hers.

PEASANT I: Which shall be commenting in thine ears, then?

ANTINOUS AS A PEASANT: Neither, all I hear is Hadrian.

YOUNG PEASANT: Tis foolish, thine ears are false. Hadrian hath spoken, the emperor speaks not now!

(ANTINOUS starts to follow the crowd.)

PEASANT III: The voice of a loved one can be heard whenever their lover shall choose. Hadrian has a lover here. *(See ANTINOUS has left.)* Or there, goodbye, thee lover!

ANTINOUS AS A PEASANT: Goodbye, strange peasant. Anon, adieu.

(All exit.)

SCENE III - *Inside the temple of Venus, in the Emperor's chamber. VIBIA and HADRIAN enter.*

HADRIAN: Here the emperor rests, bathes, and plans.
For the day's events, for the good of the land.
Vibia, dost thou fancy this house,
Constructed for Venus, to cast hatred out?

VIBIA: Love would coin the sweet nature of mine.
The chambers are tall, unique, and Divine.
Venus has blessed thee with her lovely eye.
I'm glad to stare through your precious mind.

HADRIAN: If thou dost, I pray thee give me some thought.

Gaius is a man whose help is distraught.
I noticed him lurking at night at our estate,
Dost thou know why he did so late?

VIBIA: I know of why not; Gaius is strange I agree.
He seems to like to live vicariously.
Think not of him, for he knows not what he does,
His nature is lost; he is lacking of love.

HADRIAN: I'll tend to your words, for they have yet to be seen
As untrue to the thief who is caught in his scheme.

VIBIA: I think this is wise, now I'll leave thee to pray.
I must consort with the many guests of the day.

(VIBIA leaves, and as the door shuts, ANTINOUS enters secretly.)

HADRIAN: Venus, I ask for thy guidance,
When consorting the man,
Who claims as my loyal,
But then invades my land.
Reveal his intention,
Offer his thoughts.
Give me his purpose,
For my mind is distraught.

Shall trust I the claims, of my virtuous wife?
She hasn't proven untame, or like a thief in th-

(ANTINOUS knocks something over, HADRIAN reacts.)

Goddess, is that you?
If yes, reveal thyself then.
Offer me truth,
And my mind thee will mend.

(ANTINOUS remains silent.)

Quiet thy are.
Make me wait for thine words.
My heart is distraught,
My thoughts are absurd.

Fair Vibia hast gone,
I'm alone on your floor.
My body, it longs,

(ANTINOUS makes more noise. HADRIAN sees him.)

Is that thee, I adore?

ANTINOUS: *(whispering)* Does match this feeling of a dreamer's
dream?
Though swore I this dream never would be felt?
Or return shall I to logical themes,
And assume from there that my thoughts will melt?
For his eyes, sparkle they like glowing moons,
Both persuasive and tempting in their light.
If music never they would need be tuned,
For their glorious sound is always bright.
His lips value more than what worth am I,
For finer than the softest silk are they.

Brave are not mine lips, for before you shy.
And though it hard, they can't scamper away.
So ask do they, your hands to whose hands meet?
For if not her, then they may to my hand greet.

HADRIAN: Speak louder, strange Goddess.
Let me know thy face. Your voice is strange,
But of your words I relate.

ANTINOUS: Do I address this man, this God, this king?
Shall I show my face in the midst of this dream?

HADRIAN: Thy voice is manly, but thy words are not.
Show me thyself, and this confusion shall rot.

ANTINOUS: I will do as thee asks, for I want thee to see,
But not if it scares and cancels the dream.

(ANTINOUS slowly walks out of the shadows.)

HADRIAN: Thou art not a goddess,
Thou art but a man.
But thy beauty is gorgeous,
And my heart it demands.

ANTINOUS: I am not like sweet Venus,
But more like her friend.
Emperor, I am of Apollo,
And for your love I now stand.

HADRIAN: Give me thy name, unless you are but a trick

That Venus has sent here to feel sick.

ANTINOUS: Hadrian, my lord, thou wilt know me so well.
My name is Antinous, and I am under your spell.

HADRIAN: Wherefore art thou a man?
Dost thou not know of the ways,
Of nature's demands,
How each person shall lay?

ANTINOUS: True it is, true it shall be.
But love isn't so plain to see.
Life will only go on,
If men and women belong.
But for some love is more,
Then the natural core.
I look upon only men,
To females my heart is untrue,
Like if the sun was as cold,
As the air in a tomb.

HADRIAN: You speak of a tomb, I buried inside,
With nothing but Hades void of a lie.
Let Apollo in, and the dark must hide.
For tis the dark thine beauty may defy.
Which let you in, Apollo or Venus,
I may never know, but am grateful so.
The creation of true Antinous,
Proves that I was buried, of that I know.
When I had asked wherefore art thou a man,
I had been blind to blessings of their love.

To reject Apollo's beautiful plan,
Is to ignore Cupid's obvious shove.
Teach me their words, sweet Antinous please.
For such a love I shall fall to my knees.

ANTINOUS: Apollo speaks and Cupid cries
Tears of joy when I look in thine eyes.
But of thou loves, how canst thee decide?
Vibia and I both long for thy ties.

HADRIAN: Vibia is sweet, and she is loyal to Greece.
But of her desires, they are far beyond thee.
Wealth is her spouse, and not that who speaks.
Hadrian needs more than the power she seeks.
Yet she is unaware of this important need.

ANTINOUS: Thy power is strong, and of it thou shall have pride.
But Hadrian, nothing shall be more vital to life,
Than the strive for truth beyond wealthy demands,
And its simple expression by the holding of hands.

(ANTINOUS offers his hand, HADRIAN accepts.)

HADRIAN: Thy touch is cosmic; thy hands are velvet.

ANTINOUS: If thou speaks true, then a mirror divides us.

HADRIAN: What brought thee to the temple?
Which God is your escort?

ANTINOUS: Thee, my Lord, after thee spoke on the steps.

HADRIAN: If I am a God, then are thee Zeus himself?
Shall I bow for thy ruling beauty and divine creation?

ANTINOUS: Emperor, speak less, for thou are more than I,
In beauty, knowledge, power, and pride.

HADRIAN: Tis false, Antinous, tis false, my King.
All the hills of Greece, next to thee, mean nothing.
I would fight wars for thee, for thou I would sing,
And if I had to, for thee I'd give up anything.

ANTINOUS: Speak not of your crown, I don't deserve to compare
With thy empire, and your words, my heart, they scare.
Dost thou love me but now? Not tonight nor the next?
If that be true, I'll leave unperplexed.

*(ANTINOUS tries to release their touch, HADRIAN resists and
reaches for his other hand.)*

HADRIAN: I vow to thee, thou wilt be on my mind,
From this day till the next, to the end of time.
Before I had not ever felt so alive,
But right now I could thrive just at this sight.

ANTINOUS: Canst thou be true, when not an hour past,
Thou spoke on the steps as my heart collapsed?
I promised myself ne'er to speak of obsession,
But here thou has caught me in a desperate occasion.

HADRIAN: Dost thou feel the same as I?

I fear thou doesn't, so if thou does, speak quick.

ANTINOUS: Of course, Hadrian.
My heart for thine is the same as thou for mine.
Did such a sentence just fall from my tongue?
Bless the goddess Venus, thy temple is magic.

HADRIAN: A magic temple indeed, a temple built for thee.

ANTINOUS: Thou words are sweet. And with time will prove
sweeter.

HADRIAN: Sweeter in time, sweeter with thee.
We mustn't forget the first time love is sweet.
Beauty in time, beauty with thee.
What canst I do to protect this meet?

ANTINOUS: Speak not so grand, for thy body's enough.
To make me believe, to make me give up.

HADRIAN: Shall we move in; shall our lips meet?
Will that protect this momentous sweet?

ANTINOUS: How canst I reject the lips of velvet,
Soft as silk and warm as milk?

HADRIAN: If thou wilt allow, I'll collide our lips.
And we'll be given a heavenly gift.
Temptation and more drive my soul to thee.
Allow me to steal what I lovingly seek.

(They kiss.)

ANTINOUS: Conquering lord, thou has conquered new land.
More so than when thou was holding my hand.
Now let us bathe, for my body grows hot.

HADRIAN: There's a pool ov'r here, we'll keep from it not.

(They walk to the pool and step in.)

ANTINOUS: My lord,

HADRIAN: My love,

ANTINOUS: What of thy empress?
She'll hate that I'm here, will she not?

HADRIAN: My wife is absent,
And has been for years.
Her heart is in money,
Coins fall out her ears.
I'll pay her the lot,
And make you my wing.
For you watch as Greece bows,
As I make it like dream.

ANTINOUS: And what of her then?
Wilt she want not revenge?
Is thy money enough,
To make her amends?

HADRIAN: I hope it is true, for my heart is with you.
Thou wants not my wealth, but the aspects of me.

ANTINOUS: Tis true, your voice, eyes, body, and mind.
Mean more to me than million gold twines.
Money will leave, but love stays behind,
And when the rest is gone, it's all one shall find.

HADRIAN: Approach me now, as thy body is warm.
A dozen some years with wealth has done me much harm.
Love is as foreign as the origin of man,
To a person who doesn't trust Zeus' hand.

ANTINOUS: Thou gives a request, and I have a demand.
I'll approach thee then, offering love as I can.

(ANTINOUS walks in the pool toward HADRIAN.)

HADRIAN: Water will move as forces it thee,
It will alter if it means thee gets close to me.
It guides itself to glide past thy thighs,
As thee walk towards mine, there's a fire inside.

(A knocking at the chamber door interrupts.)

ANTINOUS: Who knocks so wrong?
Tis not the time to be strong.

HADRIAN: If only time would not move on.
Dost thou want to be found? Shall the pillars be shelter?

ANTINOUS: Allow me to breathe, and I'll go underwater.

(Knock again.)

HADRIAN: I'll ask of their purpose and be quick in my course.
Go underwater, Venus give you lungs like horse.

What dost thou request?

(ANTINOUS goes underwater, GAIUS opens the door.)

GAIUS: If I disrupt, I apologize.
Vibia wonders when thou wilt arrive.
The friends of your office wait for thine presence,
Before they shall leave, to leave thee with presents.

HADRIAN: I'll be there soon as I end time with Venus,
She speaks to me in the strangest of interests.
If that be all, know I'll be in your wake,
I'll greet them all soon, but now leave me to pray.

GAIUS: Very well, then. Enjoy her counsel.

(GAIUS shuts the door, ANTINOUS emerges.)

ANTINOUS: Is that the man who you caught late at night?
Surveying your land, like a man new to sight?

HADRIAN: Tis him, t'was he who lurked by my home.
Don't worry of him, his mind is of mold.
Leave to them must I now, but Antinous, know-

It wasn't till now that I felt worthy of gold.

ANTINOUS: Leave must thee now; I understand but will frown.
I pray to see thee again, now as both lover and friend.
Kiss me again, my lip hungers for thine,
Seal with a kiss for our love is Divine.

HADRIAN: T'will not be long, this won't be like our last.
But still without thee, it will like a fast.

(They kiss, HADRIAN hurries to leave.)

ANTINOUS: Venus, in her temple, hath given me.
What I only dreamt wouldn't be a dream.
Before today I never thought I'd be,
In the midst of a loving mystery.
What will become of my glorious love?
Heavens, wilt he frown the next time we meet?
Is Hadrian's word, though bright like a dove,
Only so bright when he sees this as sweet?
Fortune now awaits, I pray it as clean,
As Hadrian when he confessed his heart.
I thank thee Venus, for giving me this dream,
Revealing what a man Hadrian art.
But if I dream, and not yet be awake,
I pray this dream won't decide my fate.

SCENE V – *Somewhere elsewhere in the temple. VIBIA and GAIUS enter.*

VIBIA: What man has become of my Hadrian?

He seeks not of trust like he hath before.
 He saw thee at home, outside our door.
 He trusts thee not, he warned this onto me:
 "If thou dost," Spake he, and then continued quick:
 "I pray thee give me some thought." And then went on:
 "Gaius is a man whose help is distraught."
 Gaius, speak to this, what shall we do?
 He knows that thou art watching,
 He warned me his truth.
 Speak, Gaius, speak!

GAIUS: I wilt open my mouth,
 Though I have no offers to give.
 Beside of the man,
 I watched go in with him.
 He entered quick, after thee had left.
 Through the crack in door from thine exiting wake.
 I waited a few, hoping to catch them off-guard,
 But once I had knocked, the man had already gone.
 Believe me, sweet Vibia, there's a man in the midst,
 Whose arrival is not in a time of bliss.
 He's changing thy man, he's challenging thee.
 He's causing havoc, who he is wish I knew.
 Plan us to this, before much too late,
 Keep thy eye out my sweet,
 He'll be returning some date.
 As Gaius speaks true, that is my offering.
 Do what you please, and then order to me.

VIBIA: This man that thou speak,
 Did you catch a glance at his face?

GAIUS: Yea, a sweet young suitor, looking on the look for a mate.

VIBIA: Hadrian has never requested a man,
 Why dost thou believe what thee can?

GAIUS: After investigating the space,
 I saw a look in thy husband's face.
 A silenced happiness, muted surprise.
 Since his wedding night, I have not seen that disguise.
 Think what thou wilt, but so must I.
 I hope he doesn't push thee aside.

VIBIA: Push thee aside, canst thou picture the thought?
 Imagine a Greece where Vibia's gone!
 One mustn't, no, if she's gone, Greece is ought,
 To be destroyed, for it would be so wrong.
 This vile creature has Hadrian hexed!
 Hadrian is now lost under his spell.
 But aside where thou art, aside the sex,
 What do they expect to gain from this hell?
 Good Gaius, keep watch, keep eye on this crime,
 I'll join for this empire cannot fail.
 And once he is caught will be the prime time.
 To watch old Hadrian's power prevail.
 Gaius, best thee believe that of my word,
 I end words of creatures strange and absurd.

GAIUS: I pray thee speaks truth,
 I pray Hadrian's new love will drop to the call,
 Of fear that his suitor's wife and secretary install.

VIBIA: Good Gaius, thank I thee for this,
Thank you for finding the man in the midst.
We'll be on the hunt, like those bird of prey,
Waiting for th' moment our victim shall pay.

(Exit all.)

ACT TWO

SCENE I - *Enter LUCIUS and PEASANTS in a marketplace in Greece.*

LUCIUS: The day grows warm, but I sense it will end cold.
For the night is contagious and the day grows old.
I pray to Apollo every dusk,
To return soon, and disregard the cost.
My life has seen several things go wrong,
Robbed, was broken, desperateness prolonged,
Need I some type of monetary hope,
To help me return, to help me cope.

PEASANT I: Was not I who stole from the gent ov'r there.
Was not I, I pray. Was not-

PEASANT II: Dost thou swear?

PEASANT III: If he swears, why dost thou care?

PEASANT II: Know not I, I'm not too bright.

PEASANT I: Tis true, and not a very pretty sight.

PEASANT III: It was not thee, or me, or she, perhaps they're more peasants around.

YOUNG PEASANT: It was me! I swear, I stole from the gent ov'r there.

PEASANT I: Quiet young one, there's darkness in th' air.

(Enter GAIUS in the background.)

LUCIUS: I hope, I pray at his alter all days,
I sit, I plan where I place my hands.
I need work that's worthy, need work that pays,
And for it I'll help some unholy stands.
"Give me work!" I would aim, but be defied,
"Give me time," I would ask, as it went wrong.
"But thee smirk" They would claim, as if I lied.
"And you rhyme" They would bask, as doubts are long.
Now Lucius waits, and prays, and still waits.
Lucius plans, and he tries, as he can.
Yet nothing has come, so he loses his faiths,
To Gods who take and never help this man.
Give me some hope, oh Apollo I beg,
Help me to cope, so I rise from the dead.

GAIUS: *(aside)* Spoken so true,
And my job's transferr'ed.
Kill not I Antinous,
But this man who now begs.

LUCIUS: I sense there's a darkness headed towards me,
But already in darkness, I cannot see.
Tis not possible to get out easily,
So jump as I will, and hope I land well.

GAIUS: *(approaching LUCIUS)* If thou wishes to jump,
I'll provide thee the spring.

And the pay for my duties,
Will outjump the sting.

LUCIUS: (*addressing GAIUS*) Strange man, what's thy quest?
What brings you to me?
I was begging to Apollo,
About to fall to my knees.

GAIUS: Perhaps he has spoken,
Perhaps he speaks through pleads.
I wish to help thee,
But first thou shall help me.

LUCIUS: What of thy request?
Wherefore art thou choose Lucius?
I'll do as I'm told,
If the pay is ambitious.

GAIUS: Ambitious indeed,
Whatever thou shall need.
I can have done,
I know someone.

LUCIUS: But what of the task?
Good man, thus be a sign,
That something's not right here,
Art thou but divine?

GAIUS: Money, I say, the devil's currency,
May have moral setbacks for your future, true.
But there'll be no future, obviously.

Without it. Faith you can always renew.
Good Lucius, 'tis not wrong to survive.
Nor 'tis wrong to wish to pursue more wealth.
And with this offer, thou wilt realize,
What I speak, and how to benefit health.
Trust me, thou have a life of honor.
Trust me, and I'll assure thee life like Kings,
Lucius, know that it is no bother,
For I have connections, and golden rings.
Each ring I bear now will be your own,
Imagine paying back each of thy loans.

LUCIUS: Tempt me more with the words like a snake,
Yet not tell me of what you want me to partake?
Sir, I know not thee intention, thou reasons, or name.
How canst I trust what thee now say?

GAIUS: My name is Gaius, thou shall know me well.
I intend to show the truth in an affair from hell.
Emperor Hadrian, though honorable, he
Has lost his honor for plucking from the other tree.
Another he courts, besides his beautiful empress,
Another he courts, despite the love she doth possess.
Another one he courts, if I end all confusion,
Another man he courts, like a fool of delusion.

LUCIUS: Speak thou not true, Hadrian doth lie
Only with his wife, thy words I defy.

GAIUS: Thou may doubt now, but wait, my lord, wait.
And I will show his affair- I will prove at his gate.

LUCIUS: What's your intent? What can I do?
Even if thou are right, even if this is true.
Lucius lives in the shadow of him,
No one cares what input I give.

GAIUS: Tis true, perhaps, as we speak at least,
But if thee pretend once to bend at the knees.
For the emperor, and prove to his lover untrue,
Thee could explain thou point and then be worshipped too.

LUCIUS: Pretend my lover is him?
Art thou mad as a moor?
Who steals from a bank,
Without first closing the door?

GAIUS: To steal from that bank, is what thee can do.
I promise lord, I will cover too.
Like I said before, pretend and thy wealth awaits.
In these rings I wear, and future affordable states.

LUCIUS: Thou art evil, to mock me in my time of need.
To pretend I'm in love and "bend at my knees",
For a man of whom may just want to be free.
With the man he loves, the Gods all despise thee.

GAIUS: Speak not of guilt, unless thou declines.
Thou but poor, you may not be unkind.
Accept my offer, or leave it there.
There are plenty of other peasants who would dare.

LUCIUS: Why dost thou need to reveal his love?
Did the empress send thee a note on a dove?
Why art thou torturing the poor in the streets?
What is thy reason, tell me, or leave.

GAIUS: The empress deserves more than to be lost,
To a man with no prestige, of whom her man flocks.
I love her too much to see her just rot,
With all the beauty within her, with her beauty ignored.

LUCIUS: Dost thou love her, my lord?
Thou speak so strong,
Until she is mentioned,
Then thou can be wrong.

GAIUS: Enough of my intent,
Dost thee accept or not?
Dost thee accept my offer,
Or allow it to rot?

LUCIUS: I'll take the deal, not because it is right,
But because without funds, life is everlasting night.

GAIUS: Good man, you are wise.
Far beyond thine years.
Listen carefully then,
Attend to thine ears.
Tonight, at an hour till morn,
I will show thee the place,
Of the emperor's affair
To Greece's disgrace.

There will you see,
 The man of the midst,
 In all of his grossness,
 And I pray by moon's kiss,
 Night will reveal his face,
 And thee wilt look in his eyes.
 Then tell me who he is.
 And of whom we despise.

LUCIUS: How dost thou know I'll recall,
 A name for the man?
 What if I've never met him?
 Then where dost thou stand?

GAIUS: Thou speak with the peasants
 Who lurk around town.
 Thou knows of their secrets,
 Thou knows of their frowns.
 The man was with them,
 The day of Venus that passed,
 When we opened the temple,
 When all the God's danced.
 He is the man; the peasants know of he.
 Describe his face, and what else thou sees.
 Then report to me, and we will know of the man,
 We'll know who to target, and we'll know where we stand.

LUCIUS: Fine, I will do as thy asks.
 I will meet at the emperor's estate.
 At an hour till morn,
 Not a second too late.

GAIUS: Good man, thou art wise,
 I will see thee tonight.
 Speak not of the plans,
 Stay in disguise.

(GAIUS exits.)

LUCIUS: What will be next, once we know of his name?
 Will this man banish him? Or will his blood stain
 The blade I keep close to protect my life.
 Whatever will come, I pray to end my strife.

(LUCIUS exits.)

PEASANT I: Antinous, they know, Antinous
 His life will end as the man of the midst.

PEASANT II: Not if I can help him, no not I.
 I will lie, and to protect his life, deny.

PEASANT III: As will I, I won't speak of his name.
 Not for a thousand crown jewels,
 Not make my life sane.

(PEASANTS leave.)

SCENE III - *VIBIA and HADRIAN enter their bedroom chamber.*

VIBIA: How was thou prayer to the goddess Venus?
 How was thy time in the emperor's room?

Once I had left, left to greet those regents,
The most careful thoughts of Hadrian loomed.

HADRIAN: I prayed the duration of your absence,
And I listened for the call of a dove.
To remind me all of true love passions,
To remind me of the beauty of love.

VIBIA: And then didst thou hear that pure white bird sing?
Did Venus speak of the beauty inside?
Or do I now find me lost to something?
Never once has thou spoke of that so bright.

HADRIAN: She spoke, but in ways thou have none to fear.

VIBIA: Very well, then, sweet Hadrian, my dear.

HADRIAN: Dost thou doubt my words?

VIBIA: I do but I don't. I want to believe thee, but-

HADRIAN: But?

VIBIA: I saw a man enter soon after I left.
He stayed so long, why was he kept?
In the temple of love-

HADRIAN: Dost thou speak of Gaius, my secretary and friend?

VIBIA: No, of another, a man in the midst.

HADRIAN: A man in the midst? How dost thou speak?
A man did not enter after thee.

VIBIA: Tis true, I must have seen something false.
I'm sorry to worry and raise thy pulse.

HADRIAN: Dost thou remember how they looked?
This man in midst?

VIBIA: Young, beautiful.

HADRIAN: (*whisper*) Antinous,

VIBIA: What? Speak'st thou a name?

HADRIAN: What? I speak not, I all but cough.

VIBIA: Antinous, who? Antinous, who?!

HADRIAN: Nothing, my sweet, sweet empress.

(*HADRIAN moves toward VIBIA, she rejects and turns away.*)

VIBIA: Tis true, the lies! Tis true, tis true!

HADRIAN: How dost thou speak?

VIBIA: Greece knows about him too.

HADRIAN: Know of who? Vibia, thou art mad.

VIBIA: Mad thou say, mad am I?
My husband that has our marriage defied.
Venus be with me, make him pure!
Fill me strength to be his cure.

HADRIAN: My cure, thou art mad, art thou not?
Speak thou of a love that thou has never fought.
I love thee, but I love Antinous too.
I don't know how, but both loves are true.

VIBIA: Thou art a man! Thou art a ruler!
How canst thou love another so similar?
Thou art a God! Thou art a husband!
Mine for life, a strong, unbreakable vow.
Take that and what's left? A hollow term of a word,
A broken promise to Venus?
Of whom you built a temple for us.
Thou art a man! Thou art a ruler!
Thee canst love someone so similar.

HADRIAN: Speak thou too strong,
Thou art a woman! Thou art a queen!
Thou art never so mean to decide a thing.
Dost thou want to be limited by thy sex?
Dost thou not want to be limitless like every man?
Speak thou now of terms so degrading,
Of thyself and thy sexuality.

VIBIA: I will fall for thee,
Thou art my emperor, husband, and conqueror.
And I thee servant, thee wife, thee conquered.

Dost thou not want that?

HADRIAN: Nah, my wife. I not want to dominate thee.
I want thee to be my equal, not my conqueror or conquered.
But thou art mad, and think thou must be my slave.
Antinous speaks not so degradingly.

VIBIA: I know not how to approach this,
Not yet, at the very least.
Give me time, give me time.
I'll think of how shall to thee please.

(VIBIA goes to leave.)

HADRIAN: I won't wait for thee while Antinous breathe,
For he knows love is not a game of please.

VIBIA: The more thou speaks, the more I think.
The more I think, the more hearts sink.

(VIBIA exit.)

HADRIAN: Pray I to thee, Apollo above,
Give me the strength to once again love.
Not just Antinous, but Vibia too.
I wish not to hurt her, but she cannot lose.
Pray I to thee, protect Antinous please,
From her immoral efforts, and her endless greed.

(HADRIAN exit.)

SCENE IV - *Enter PEASANTS into a Greek street. ANTINOUS hides in the shadows.*

PEASANT I: Soon he shall come, for I know of his path,
As he gets through the day.

PEASANT II: Canst thou be sure of that?

PEASANTS III: What if his plans change?

YOUNG PEASANT: Silence, here comes the man.

(Enter LUCIUS.)

LUCIUS: Worried am I, I am worried that I,
Will fail my task, losing right to the rings.
What comes when I know, what seen by the eye,
Could Gaius say: "Kill him."? Oh, my fate stings.
Whoever this man, whichever lover.
I pray thee understands what is at stake.
My reasons for such a dark endeavor,
To save my life, so their life might I take.
Pray to Apollo, Lucius will now.
That Gaius will ask for just this man's name,
Then give Lucius rings, so he need not vow.
To end the life of an innocent dame.
Apollo, please, I am begging thou this,
Don't give torture to Lucius, but bliss.

PEASANT I: He speaks so divine; his quarrel is rough.

PEASANT II: Still not I will admit to any name.

PEASANT III: Neither will I, my limits are the same.

YOUNG PEASANT: Here comes he now, act but tame.

LUCIUS: Greetings, fellow citizens of Greece.
What a glorious day of which we all speak.
But I see only four, usually I see more.
Is one of thou missing from which I implore?

PEASANT I: Tis true, one is missing.
The fifth of our gang.
However, you say implore,
What dost thou desire?

LUCIUS: Which is missing, tis sad they are gone.
What is their name? Of what family belong?

PEASANT II: We know not of names,
We are but peasants that roam.
Through the streets in Greece.

PEASANT III: For it is our home.

LUCIUS: Surely address they in some sort of way,
How dost thou call the one missing today?

PEASANT I: The fifth of our gang, like I had said before.

PEASANT II: Why dost thou question, why dost thou implore?

PEASANT III: The fifth is no matter, no matter in thus,

YOUNG PEASANT: Thou all art silly, his name is Antinous!

LUCIUS: Antinous, oh, Antinous so.

I will allow this answer to go.

PEASANT I: (*aside to YOUNG PEASANT.*) Thou must stay silent,
this man is vile.

PEASANT II: Tis too late, Antinous fate is beguiled.

PEASANT III: Leave must we hence, before we say more.

ALL PEASANTS: Thee has what thou wanted, yet we know not
what for.

(*All PEASANTS leave.*)

LUCIUS: Antinous, Antinous, that name,
Will be my salvation, my darkness tamed.
Here comes a man, on from the side,
He walks straight this way, one Gaius with pride.

(*Enter GAIUS.*)

GAIUS: Before I saw thee as a coward,
But now I know thou are not.
For the peasants are all but bothered,
And I think a name thou has got.

LUCIUS: Tis true, tis true,
I have heard the name.
But what will come next?
What will now change?

GAIUS: Thee shall do as I say,
Or the rings I shall break.
What is this name?
That the peasants proclaim?

LUCIUS: Antinous, Antinous, that name.

GAIUS: Good, tis good news. Now from here we refrain.

(*GAIUS guides LUCIUS offstage. ANTINOUS reveals himself.*)

ANTINOUS: Antinous, Antinous, away!
How I wish I could rip the name from this
Body to which Hadrian's love is prey,
But keep his love for it is that of bliss.
Apollo guide me to where thou words save,
From Cupid's arrow and Venus's tug.
I can't escape this, of this stress I cave,
As my fate longs for a Hades death hug.
Must I now to the palace of my love,
To reveal what has happened here just now.
And I will hope answers Hadrian shove,
To protect our lovely and targeted vow.
Now I to him, to hope for assurance.
Apollo please now, gift thy endurance.

SCENE V - *Enter GAIUS and VIBIA, outside the emperor's palace.*

GAIUS: Vibia, empress, thou look so pale.
What, has Hades caught thee in his spell?

VIBIA: Perhaps he has, perhaps I've died.
My life has fallen to the street side.
I longed to be my husband's one love,
But love is lost, and my heart is shoved.
He loves another, thou were right and true.
And though I love him, he still cannot choose
His wife of years, who helped build this land.
Who helped him get to the place he stands.
Look thee to me, and what dost thou see?
But a sad, defeated wench, who suddenly pleads?
My heart is a cut that Hadrian sealed,
But now has been cut again, and weakness revealed.
Antinous, that name, Antinous, that word,
Makes all I've worked for seem so absurd.
Did Hadrian love me, did Hadrian care?
About the things I thought that we shared?

GAIUS: I pray that thee not give up,
The war is not won.
A battle lost, but only begun.
Antinous, I know, and he will know I,
For that man will be killed. I fight on your side.
Hired have I a man to end it all, as your loyal steed.
For you, you shall call this pain that I help recede.

For I love thee, more than Greece ever can,
More than Venus love's love, more than Hadrian his man.
Is this the time to speak such strange news,
I'm sorry, my empress, I'll leave thee to choose.
How long your heart will take to mourn.
Just know I'm here for thee,
For thee alone, and not Hadrian.

VIBIA: Speak thou true, does thee love as thy claims?

GAIUS: I speak as true as the sun at noon reigns.

VIBIA: Give my thy hand, I need but one to hold,

(Takes his hand.)

You are the only one I have told.
Of my weaknesses, of yet you don't run.
Hadrian dismisses me, and to Apollo I'm shunned.
Speak of me in the way that thou love,
And my heart will be better, and pure as a dove.

GAIUS: A challenge I accept, gladly for thee.
For his love no longer can make thee spin.
I'll try describe what is shown, what I see.
In thou eyes, lips, ivory teeth, perfect skin.
Cupid reaches far and opens my eyes,
When thou speaks my name, darkness becomes light.
Like sunrise, my heart delivers the sky,
Showing thee in bright colors, we blind out night.
And once we are free, once we are fearless,

I remind my mind this isn't a dream.
But instead the glory of my empress.
In our skies which thou conquers and redeems.
Vibia, dreams are delivered through thee.
Dreams that I, your messenger, love to see.

VIBIA: Dost thou speak no wrong?
Dost thou mean what thou says?

GAIUS: Every word, my empress.
And in thy presence, honor'ed.

VIBIA: Words can't describe the love I bear thee,
Now that I know of thine's feelings for me.
Hadrian speaks not of thy nature.
Yet still I love him, yet still I torture.

GAIUS: I know that thou does.
Why else would thee mind?
Hadrian leaving thee for one he finds divine?
Love is selfish, without love we are free.
But when stuck in it, life can be scary.

VIBIA: Would it be wrong to offer my lips,
To a man so honored by my presence?

GAIUS: You ask the wrong man,
For I am that man.
Wrong, I think not.
But quite out of hand.

VIBIA: Love is just that,
Nothing about it makes sense.
Hadrian loves a man,
And they can't bear children.
But yet he loves,
As I may now.
Kiss me, Gaius.
You've welcomed me now.

(They kiss.)

GAIUS: I have just sipped from the fountain of youth,
Not the moral lie, but the eternal truth.
You offered to me immortality,
And through our love, we will always breathe.

VIBIA: Take thee now, before it grows late.
To the Temple of Venus, Greek love's great estate.
Then we return, to talk of Antinous,
For he shall die, and you shall help this.

(Exit all.)

SCENE VI - *ANTINOUS and HADRIAN are seen in the emperor's bedroom.*

ANTINOUS: The peasants speak strange, they warn of dark times,
Ahead of us both, ahead of this shrine.
Someone watches, perhaps two or three,
Waiting to end me, to strike at their please.

HADRIAN: No one will end thee, I'll banish them hence,
If one shows signs of evil unrest.
My Vibia ran from the palace just as thou came,
She knows of thee now, now she feels ashamed.

ANTINOUS: Am I safe then, Hadrian?
Wilt she not have me killed?
She loves thee, who couldn't,
And we all know her will.

HADRIAN: If she tries she will die at my hand, I do swear.

ANTINOUS: I thought thee loved her, since when does thou not
care?

HADRIAN: She doesn't know that I love just to love,
Not to dominate, push, or shove.
She wants me to conquer her soul at her wish,
I want to share in love full of bliss.
Thee wilt deliver such a love I long for,
She never has, and I can't settle anymore.
Antinous, my love is now only for thee.
I hope thou believes, I hope that thou sees.

ANTINOUS: If thou dost love me, then thou shall protect me,
I feel not safe here, with rumors of death invading ears.

HADRIAN: I fear this too love, for the world is dark.
Evil plots are in the midst, and we just stall.
But our love can conquer, our love can spark,
Joy in each other, we'll survive the fall.

When we rise our hearts, we rise above hate.
We rise above evil and its heartbreak.
Although some believe we can't control fate,
We control what we do before it takes.
So escape us hence, escape far away.
Escape the world that rejected our vow.
We can't leave forever, but just a day.
Can make the difference, so here leave us now.
Tomorrow we will move the hate we take,
And throw it where only rattlesnakes shake.

ANTINOUS: Thank thee Hadrian, thine love is divine.
For tis the best creation of our time.
Tomorrow night, escape us then,
To end our suffrage, and make amends.

(They kiss.)

HADRIAN: Thine lips taste of the sweetest delight in Greece,
I know Egypt will be honored to meet
Such a glorious sight as the one I now see,
And I know that it will be more than of Greece.

ANTINOUS: Thou love is mirror- I'll express my love.
Your lips, if a song, would sound like a dove.
Singing sweet lullabies to all that listen,
And I love that they sound so clear to me.

HADRIAN: Grateful am I that I'm graced with thy thoughts,
Written by some emperor of love.

ANTINOUS: Thou lovely fool, that emperor's thee.
My thoughts are thine creation, for thee revived me.
Before we met I was lost in the world,
Searching for a love to share.
When I learned of thine's obsession,
I grew obsessed once I knew thee cared.

HADRIAN: And Antinous, I believe thee revived me.
Love was lost in a heart so gone.
Greece can steal that if one's love is wrong.
But thee invoked me to love thy faith,
And I let it in, my soul to take.

ANTINOUS: And thou took mine, as I took thine.
We swapped our property, in a way so divine.
That now it morphs us into one mind.

HADRIAN: One mind, tis true, one mind divine.
Art thou in mine, and I in thine.

ANTINOUS: Leave I now, before the wench returns.
To try to make amends, as thou pain returns.

HADRIAN: Twill not return, for our love is one.
As heart to heart, and lung to lung.
Now leave thee hence, as my heart feels the string.
Pulled between our souls, which meet in between.
Goodnight my love, eternal devotion I send,
With thee on thy way, till we meet again.

(They kiss.)

ANTINOUS: Till we meet again, I can't wait till then.
Goodnight my lord, my love, and friend.

(ANTINOUS leaves HADRIAN.)

ANTINOUS: *(walking home)* And yet despite the coming day,
With our escape, I still pray.
That all will be so divine,
For some warnings cannot leave my mind.
Will something come of this trip so far,
That something being something so bizarre?
I fear my life, and Hadrian's sake.
I pray Apollo, my life not yet to take.
But perhaps I fear thanks to our love,
And our string attached now being tugged.

(Exit.)

ACT THREE

SCENE I - *Enter CHORUS.*

CHORUS: Antinous and Hadrian combined,
Two hearts toward each other have revived.
Now Gaius and Vibia have refined,
And wonder how her marriage has survived.
Gaius plans a dark and troubled future,
While Hadrian learns Vibia's untrue.
Wilt Vibia be doctor to suture,
Or to Greece wilt Gaius must say adieu?
And Antinous wishes to escape,
While Lucius questions inner strength,
Hadrian shall escape to old Egypt's cape.
And from their all shall plan their future lengths.
Darkness is brewing, as fate is stewing.
And of what's to come, Greece will be booing.

(Exit.)

SCENE II - *Enter LUCIUS in a marketplace.*

LUCIUS: Days grow shorter as my mind grows colder.
Thanks to my job now in killing Hadrian's suitor.

(Enter PEASANTS, LUCIUS retires into the shadows.)

PEASANT I: Told thou I not to speak a word,
Long ago, but thou has spoken.

YOUNG PEASANT: I said it before, I shall say it again.
I'm sorry to Antinous.

PEASANT II: Thine apologies cannot not mend.

PEASANT III: Escape he now from Greece's grasp,
With Hadrian, to Egypt, they shall set sail fast.

PEASANT I: Of said trip thou shall not speak again.
We all heard it from Antinous already.

PEASANT II: Need not thou remind, for others' ears may attend.
Knowledge shared before not on thee now depend.

YOUNG PEASANT: Speak not I this fact,
T'was not me for a first.
But indeed was our friend,
Who reprised that verse.

PEASANT I: No more speaking, but much more leaving.
I feel ears now attending, my instinct's for fleeting.

(PEASANTS leave; LUCIUS returns from the shadows.)

LUCIUS: To Egypt doth now the Emperor run?
With Antinous company, not wife?
Lucius plans would to Gaius be shunned,
If he not leaves to take the suitors life.
Must then I exist just amongst his halls.
To find out when this journey will take place.
And once I know, I will then make the call,

For when I shall join them to make my case.
Gaius will learn of the Emperor's date,
And Vibia will know the trip's true cost.
Hadrian's deciding his lover's fate,
Not understanding, the Emperor lost.
Antinous life will end at blade,
And his tragic story then start to fade.

But Lucius still remains the victim,
As every tear falls in hope this will end,
Years and years of so much valued wisdom,
Greece has forgotten, so Lucius mends.
Can I ignore the moral destruction?
Can I combat the pain that will follow?
Antinous bleeds for my production,
Yet I still plead to avoid this sorrow.
Apollo, what dost think thou now of me?
Thou man who had wished for thy sun to shine,
Now clinging to darkness, tis not murky?
Of such a plan, ironically divine?
Desert me not, for this plan is to miss,
Anything that is worse, I pray, dismiss.

(Enter GAIUS.)

GAIUS: I heard thou words from streets away,
Silence, my man, speak quiet to pray.

LUCIUS: Didst thou hear the peasants just now?
Their words spoke of an escape somehow.

GAIUS: Yes, tonight Hadrian embarks on his tour,
Of the Egyptian nation, the origin of moors.

(Enter ANTINOUS in the shadows.)

LUCIUS: With Antinous to join,
His suitor of choice.

GAIUS: Not his wife, of course,
He no longer hears her voice.

LUCIUS: Know of that I,
Of it I defy.

GAIUS: Defy it, not I.
For now, her wandering eye.

LUCIUS: Speak more plainly,
What dost thou know?

GAIUS: For each day that dies,
My Vibia's passion grows.

LUCIUS: Spoke not you wrong?
'My Vibia' thou did say,

GAIUS: Tis true, and no,
It was no mistake.

LUCIUS: Vibia looks now to thee,
Not Hadrian, her man?

GAIUS: Hadrian is not her man,
But the man of Antinous.

LUCIUS: Thought did I you resisted such thought,
That Hadrian was man to Antinous.
But now thou art more loyal to Vibia,
Then ever before, then was I oblivious.

GAIUS: Glad am I to see gears turn,
But remember our deal, and these rings you earn.
Antinous must die, Egypt will be the grave,
You will go there, Antinous slayed.
As Vibia and I remain in the shade,
Of Greece's glamour, at home we remain.

LUCIUS: I'll do as I must, for the reward I trust
Will end my strife and save my life.
Antinous blood must be the cost,
For peace in mind, now get us lost.
This place is home to the ears of all,
Speak us in private and make more call.

(LUCIUS and GAIUS leave. ANTINOUS emerges.)

ANTINOUS: More plans to destroy, more plans, oh more plans!
My life is at stake, and Hadrian's wife-
She not loyal, doth not deserve his hand.
And his friend Gaius, deserve not his life!
Am I wrong, since I act as the suitor,
Despite our love being the only truth?

No, for my love has fought this strange disputer,
Since their twisted marriage, since budding youth.
Apollo, what's thine plan, of what's thine point?
Thine sun's warmth is now cold; I blow thee out.
My heart will warm of what thou should appoint.
Until thee take my life from this sad doubt.
If Hades grant me strength, Apollo not,
Then of beautiful God, my faith now rots.

Venture I now to my love's embrace,
I hope to find comfort with glimpse of his face.

(Exit.)

SCENE III - *Emperor's bedroom, HADRIAN rests.*

HADRIAN: Tonight to escape, Egypt doth await.
For Antinous soon, for him it bows.
Of their beauties, Antinous I state,
Is as glorious as my Greece allows.
Sleep will we on fine Egyptian cotton,
And every night will be lively and bright.
Now no more words be of something rotten,
We will be alive despite our Greek fright.
I pray Apollo watch over our trip,
And make it so we no longer have to hide.
Let us on finest Egyptian wine then sip,
Wash not this vacation out with the tide.
Egypt, prepare, for soon I shall invade,
Not with Greek troops, but with a great parade.

(Enter ANTINOUS.)

ANTINOUS: My lord, my love, do beware of Egypt!
Evil will soon follow us to its shores.
I just heard news from thy twisted Bishop,
That all and I are victims he implores.

HADRIAN: What words dost thou speak, what news has thou heard?
What man doth caused thee to grow so worried?
Tell me, Antinous, as thee offered,
Thy heart to my watch, I see thou art hurried.

ANTINOUS: Gaius, of whom loves thy wife Empress,
Hast hired a man to take from me breath.
Gaius, Vibia's new lover address,
Is coming for our love, such an unrest.

HADRIAN: Gaius loves Vibia? Can it be true?
To think I knew someone, to think I knew.

ANTINOUS: Vibia is unfaithful, as Gaius untrue.

HADRIAN: He will be banished; she will be shrewed.

ANTINOUS: What has thou said? Speak once again.

HADRIAN: Not any Greek can touch thee, except Hadrian.
I will order my guards to send Gaius away.

ANTINOUS: And of that man, whom was ordered take my life?

HADRIAN: Dost thou know his name?

ANTINOUS: No, not I, not I.

HADRIAN: Will we investigate in Egypt.
For now, I wilt order my guards to protect thee.

ANTINOUS: What wilt thou do with that Empress Vibia?

HADRIAN: Lock her in some room, until she is shrewed.
She can either leave me to have thee,
Or stay with me, and run our country.

ANTINOUS: Do what thou must, as long as love is with me.

HADRIAN: I couldn't do anything else then what thou did speak.

ANTINOUS: Must then I go, to investigate for a name.
In the shadows of town, as a man cursed with fame.

HADRIAN: Be careful my love, and tonight we will sail.
Egypt awaits, and our love will prevail.

ANTINOUS: One last kiss wilt I offer to thee till then,
For in my horror, thine lips will defend.

(They kiss, ANTINOUS leaves.)

HADRIAN: Vibia's heart has grown equally cold,
To the former love we long ago shared.
Gaius's hands have been proven too bold,

He threatens my love, hunt him down he dares.
 To guards will I now to enforce new rules.
 Vibia locked away, Gaius banished.
 They will teach a lesson to these two fools.
 My trust and respect in both has vanished.
 While this is done, my love and I will run,
 Through Egyptian fields of barley and wheat.
 And in the brightness of Apollo sun,
 We will thrive, on me he will find a seat.
 Egypt, I swear, thou art closer to Gods.
 With that, and this, my love's in good odds.

(Exit.)

SCENE IV - *A secluded room. Enter VIBIA in the arms of two GUARDS.*

GUARD I: By order of Hadrian, thou art to stay in this room.
 Leave not unguided, or else meet your doom.

GUARD II: Feed thee will we, sleep here thee may.
 But reflect mostly on why he's making thee stay.

GUARD I: The door will be shut once we leave.
 No one will enter, I have the only key.

GUARD II: For thine affair with the secretary of Hadrian,
 Thou art now locked in this chamber, and he banished.

VIBIA: Banished? Banished from Greece or from work?

GUARD I: Both, Empress, for his betrayal of our lord.

VIBIA: I must see him, before he must go.

GUARD II: He has already left, of that all I know.

VIBIA: Tis torture, tis torture, leave me alone.

(GUARDS exit.)

VIBIA: My husband, my husband, love of my life.
 Treat me not horribly in this dark night.
 My husband, my husband, I am thy wife!
 Thy love, thy passion, tis no longer right.
 Lock me in here, banish Gaius from Greece?
 This is not an Emperor's way to lead.
 While thy love Antinous falls to his knees,
 To please thee. Fall I Apollo to plead.
 Save Gaius, and of Antinous kill.
 Murder the creature, let Hadrian see.
 How canst I offer deliberate will?
 Write shall I to Gaius who is yet free?
 Paper, come hither thee now. Ink, thee too,
 Show to my Gaius what I wish he'd do.

(Begin writing.)

Gaius, my love, my faithful companion. Wherever thou art, read this alone. Hadrian and Antinous leave tonight for Egypt. Tonight in Egypt, happiness post-poned.

Lucius I know is meant to bear the blade,
 But only Gaius has shown self-control.
 False men run from the worthiest missions,
 Real men can conduct these things alone.

(Continue writing.)

Antinous has cast a spell on Hadrian, and Lucius may fall victim too.
 That is why I am writing thee to end his life, because Lucius may not
 that do.

Gaius, be man, Lucius may not be.
 I know thou art, for tis loyal to me.

(Continue writing.)

I love thee, Gaius. With all of my heart. If thou dost too, take away
 the part of Hadrian keeping Greece from glory, and then we may
 rewrite thine story.

Greece will thank thee, my Gaius, oh, she will.
 If she doth not, I will offer thee my fill.
 I'll gift to thee all my lands and jewels,
 If thou kills Antinous, my rival, fool.
 Guard! I cry: Guard! Enter thy room.
 Listen to my voice, I sing a tune.

(Enter GUARD I.)

I have the last payment for Gaius's service,
 Lodged in this envelope to give to him.

Tis illegal to leave his earnings here,
 Just due to his banishment.
 Offer his money fast,
 Or fear I we will feel his wrath.

GUARD I: Send will I then, this payment to Gaius.
 As ordered by my lowly Empress.

VIBIA: Open not it thee, the numbers only he can see.
 Send it hence, then leave it be.
 My emperor and lord would want it as such,
 Respectful and honest, I would want as much.

GUARD I: Quick will I hence, don't worry, I will.
 Send him this paper, so he gets his fill.

VIBIA: Tis all then, hurry, you have little time.

GUARD I: Tis true, my lady, thank thee, goodbye.

(GUARD exits.)

VIBIA: Chase out what will come, chase out what comes out,
 Let in what will last, let in what lets in.
 Hadrian wilt not be of whom I shout.
 But Gaius I know will take this and win.
 Hadrian now past, his days with me through,
 For he's no longer the man I married.
 Gaius knows though, yes, Gaius always knew.
 Exactly what it was, it too he carried.
 Blind to it was I, till he caught off guard,

Vibia lost in arrays of weakness.
And then he showed that he bore the same card,
Of my late husband, he stole the Empress.
My heart belongs in the hands of that man,
I pray he kills the man of Hadrian.

SCENE V - *Enter HADRIAN and ANTINOUS, LUCIUS (in secret),
and others, all boarding the boat to Egypt.*

HADRIAN: Tonight we set sail to reach the ancient land of Egypt.
There will be not talk of Greek politics on the trip!

ANTINOUS: Thank thee all for welcoming me into the group, I
value each of thee!

ASSISTANT: Emperor, how long will the voyage last?

HADRIAN: As long as it needs to, my friend.

ASSISTANT: I see, my lord. I see, I see.
I must come closer, for there's something to ask thee.

HADRIAN: Then do so, and let the ship sail!

(People disperse.)

ASSISTANT: *(Approach HADRIAN and ANTINOUS.)* My lord, I ask
for something that may not be public quite yet, but surely will be
soon.

HADRIAN: Ask away, my friend. What is on thy mind?

ASSISTANT: Where is thy secretary, Gaius? Rumors amongst the
crew suggest he was banished. Speak truth to me now, please.

HADRIAN: Tis true, Gaius is banished from Greece.

ASSISTANT: What, but why? We art he banished?

HADRIAN: For having relations with my Empress.
Fret it not, my friend, for Greece is still strong.
She loves not me, and I have moved along.

ASSISTANT: But surely, Emperor, she deserves no one,
If she won't have thee, the great Hadrian.

ANTINOUS: Love works in strange ways,
If we could control who we loved, there'd be no trouble here.
But we cannot, and the therefore trouble is always near.

ASSISTANT: Who speaks up now, Hadrian, who is this?

HADRIAN: The love of my life, sweet Antinous.

ASSISTANT: Love makes much sense,
His beauty is clear.
Is this why Vibia is not coming near?

HADRIAN: She's staying back for I wanted her to.
For political reasons, now that's enough, adieu.

(HADRIAN dismisses the ASSISTANT, they leave.)

ANTINOUS: Speak not of truth for Gaius fate?
Or Vibia's punishment locked at the gate?

HADRIAN: My love, tis not the time or the place
To make Gaius's friends hate.
They will learn when they do,
About Vibia and truth.

ANTINOUS: Very well, very well. I'll trust that is right.
And then I'll sleep very well tonight.

(LUCIUS emerges, unseen by all.)

LUCIUS: Remain in this joy, while thee can, while thee may.
For I must end it all eventually so.
That I can, oh sweet Apollo I pray.
Allow Hades take over my troubled soul.
I need those rings for my life to go on.
If I fail, well, I might as well be dead.
Gaius is evil, he's truly a con.
Making me want to jump on for his head.
Antinous, beware. Soon thou wilt die.
Hadrian beware, for soon I wilt kill.
Apollo, Venus my fortune defies,
Now Hades has and will support my will.
Attach must I now, like a jealous ghost.
And I hope it's not hard to fool my host.

(LUCIUS secretly boards the ship.)

LUCIUS: Silence, silence, let it speak ever loud.
Here comes Hadrian, his footsteps are keys.
Cast not I questions, illustrated sound.
To some piano that criticizes my dreams.
Apollo, Apollo, what is thy plan?
Antinous is innocent, sweet, tame.
Why must I kill to remain a man?
Taking life from such glorious name.
Antinous, Antinous, go back.
Save thyself, revive, and look not sad.
Get out of this night drenched in murder's black.
Reimagine life before it went mad.
Don't look me in the eye when I kill,
Or wilt thou kill I, and all of my will.

HADRIAN: All aboard, I say, all aboard at last!
Egypt is waiting and we will reach it fast.
Sleep well my friends, for tomorrow will be
More beautiful than anyone ever dreamed!

ASSISTANT: Canst we now to our bedrooms sleep?
Canst we let the ocean rock us to dream?

HADRIAN: Yea thou may, as I will do the same.
Goodnight thou all, Apollo be with thee.
Tomorrow will you all feel such fame,
Seeing place that we are bound to see!

ASSISTANT: Thank thee my lord, thank this glorious night.

ANTINOUS: Goodnight, all. Till tomorrow, goodnight.

(ANTINOUS and HADRIAN board, followed by the rest.)

ACT FOUR

SCENE I - *Enter CHORUS*

CHORUS: Days are longer on the Egyptian shores,
 Antinous and Hadrian escaped.
 Yet fate still conquers, and Gaius implores
 Lucius to destroy their future shaped.
 Vibia, though locked, has taken the vow,
 Loyal to Gaius, of whom she now cries,
 To take a life, for Lucius she doubts,
 Can do the deed for his good heart defies.
 Antinous knows not of his coming fate,
 Neither does Hadrian, their love the same.
 When Lucius jumped on their sail so late,
 He sealed the future, the wild beast tame.
 But before Egypt, we first reaccess,
 See Gaius reacts to Vibia's test.

(Exit.)

SCENE II - *Enter GUARD I to GAIUS's holding chamber.*

GUARD I: Speak doth I quick, I bring news for thee.
 The Empress has writ something thou must see.
 But once thou reads, after the message is clear,
 Thou shalt leave, and my guidance, here.

GAIUS: Is this but allowed? The lover of she,
 Not Hadrian, the man who falls to his knees,
 Can read what she writ, is that not too free?

Guard, dost the Emperor know of what thee give to me?

GUARD I: Hadrian set sail to Egypt last night,
 Now must I serve his Empress divine.
 All of what occurred in this recent fight,
 Means nothing for me to complete my line.
 Inside this, she spoke, is payment late due,
 For thou services to her loving spouse.
 Open not it I, of that tempt she shooed,
 For thine money is matter to thine house.
 From my hand to thee, this transfer I now,
 I hope fortune depends not on this trade.
 Strange Gaius, I leave it with thee I vow.
 On to my next mission, doth now I fade.
 But if the notice proves not so moral,
 I'll find thee, we'll have deadliest quarrel.

(GUARD hands envelope to GAIUS.)

GAIUS: Of virtue are thee, to pity on me.
 Don't worry my knight, this transfer is bright.
 Services will see the trade of money.
 And not of a fight, this not bring on night.
 Private, art true, tis respectful to do,
 With affairs of trade, so see that thou fade.
 With worries be few, hear my guard, adieu.
 You'll be not afraid, nor of word betrayed.
 To Hadrian respect, evil defect.
 And Gaius so bleak, like a dirty creek.
 Good that thee inspect, good that thee reject.
 Such a man so weak, but Vibia speak.

So give others company, leave me here.
And thou art not of gluttony, thou art feared.

GUARD I: Tis torture to stay, I leave thee at once.

(GUARD leaves.)

GAIUS: To bark like dog claiming I aren't a man.
Foolish guard, leaving me to this quiet.
Now what ask my love, to kill Hadrian?
Am I too hopeful, with vile diet?
Envelope, envelope, open too fast,
And wilt evil release? Or something like mad?
Tomorrow wilt innocence be the past,
After just a night, make Emperor sad.
Envelope, envelope, open too slow,
And wilt meaning die? Or something like death?
Tomorrow wilt innocence live like doe,
After attempt to end, wilt it have breath?
Envelope, envelope, offer me truth.
Give me such faith that it restores my youth.

(Open envelope, take out letter from VIBIA.)

GAIUS: Payment, indeed, payment, tis true.
To hear words of love, my hope renews.

(Reads letter aloud)

“Gaius, my love, my faithful companion. Wherever thou art, read this alone. Hadrian and Antinous leave tonight for Egypt. Tonight in

Egypt, happiness post-poned. Antinous has cast a spell on Hadrian, and Lucius may fall victim too. That is why I am writing thee to end his life, because Lucius may not that do. I love thee, Gaius. With all of my heart. If thou dost too, take away the part of Hadrian keeping Greece from glory, and then we may rewrite thine story.”

My love, Vibia doubts of Lucius.
And asks me to Egypt once I am gone.
Vibia, wilt I, for thou love Gaius,
And I love thee, so we can't be wrong.
Venture wilt I to land to my south,
Great Egypt, where my future begins.
To secure this love in the Nile's mouth,
If Lucius cannot, I wilt to win.
Antinous, death approaches thee quick,
Make thy life light until fate settles in.
For soon my knife to thy body will stick.
Thou dreams will die, and thine breath soon grow thin.
Vibia, tis not far from thine revenge,
And for my love, every fate shall avenge.

Guard, tis now time to enter again,
Welcome thyself inside, the envelope is read.

(GUARD returns.)

GUARD: Are the numbers right, are you paid what thee deserve?

GAIUS: Oh yes, my guard nothing of it absurd.

GUARD: Good, now time for thine exit from Greece, until orders change, until problems cease.

GAIUS: Lead the way out the city limits. As long as Hadrian rules, won't I revisit.

GUARD: Tis not the creed, but thou can keep leave.

GAIUS: I know it is not, but I from here I shall stay.

GUARD: If that's what thou wishes, now to move on, on our way.

(Both exit.)

SCENE III - *HADRIAN and ANTINOUS walk down the shore of the Nile.*

HADRIAN: Speak not of the traitor, and not of the wench.
For Egypt is beautiful, and our trouble prevent.

ANTINOUS: Silence on them, my mind is at ease.
Open my eyes to accept the light breeze.

HADRIAN: When I did see thee first, I thought I was mad.

ANTINOUS: When was this? And mad, for what reason?

HADRIAN: When I spoke at the opening of Venus's temple,
Thou was there, in but beggar's cloths.
Yet still beautiful, I forgot my speech,
And made up the rest on the spot.

ANTINOUS: Ha, remember that I. I memorized thine words.
At first I thought I dreamt them, such thought absurd.
Recite will I now, so thee know what thee spoke,
And how on my heart your words evoke:

“Though Venus loves all, she does tempt us so,
She clenches and grasps till pleasure unfolds.
We watch it inflate, until we must go.
Wherever we must, to reach a new hold.”

I stared at thy face, frozen in awe.
My brain couldn't process what I thought or saw.

HADRIAN: So those were my words, Venus spoke through me.

ANTINOUS: Yes, she did, and for all to see.

HADRIAN: You ran from it hence, after you put me in trance.
Why did thou leave momentarily?

ANTINOUS: I left because my body was warm,
I couldn't believe it, so away did I storm.

HADRIAN: But then thou did return after Vibia left,
Leaving my heart at the door, of which thou did get.

ANTINOUS: And when thou looked to me,
My heart took its place.
Cupid guided our two hearts on tour,
Thine heart to my chest, my heart to thine core.

HADRIAN: I heard what thou spoke once inside the chamber,
Recite it will I, for its warmer than amber-

ANTINOUS: Nay thee! Leave my words to the air.
Sprinkled like dust, without knowledge or care.

HADRIAN: But thy words intoxicate me, thy words are full!

ANTINOUS: Fine, as long as no one hears such bull.

HADRIAN: Believe I it went, though much better said:

“Does match this feeling of a dreamer’s dream?”

Then paused, doth thee, with my heart beating.

“Though swore I this dream never would be felt?”

As my passion inside began sprinting.

“Or return shall I to logical themes,”

I cried inside ‘Please, remain in thy dream!’

“And assume from there that my thoughts will melt?”

And my heart grew warm as a card player’s tell.

ANTINOUS: Terrible phrase, terrible call.
See not I why my words made thee fall.

HADRIAN: Thou spoke words that were strong,
And of them we belong.
In poetry’s grasp, our love forever will last.

ANTINOUS: Our love also lasts in each time we kiss.
For millenniums of passion remain trapped in the midst.

HADRIAN: Trap it then I, here by the Nile.
To remind all that despite it that they are but vile.

(They kiss.)

ANTINOUS: Now Egypt grows jealous to know of our passion,
While nothing they own can compare to its fashion.

HADRIAN: Though Egypt does not compare to our trust,
She does have something that can meet halfway.
Egypt does not share such powerful lust,
But she doth have beauteous things, I pray.
Look out, my love, to the edges of river,
So green, divine, with beautiful creatures.
My hope in life with thee it delivers,
With all its divine and exquisite features.
Beyond our love, beyond loving green hope,
I see dried up sand, where enemies thrive.
The river runs thin; we sail to elope.
While the surrounding land is not alive.
Let them remain, in their droughted dry plains,
And we will stay where of true love maintains.

ANTINOUS: Speak thou forever, my heart will melt.
And melt, and melt, till the liquid becomes mist.
And soon that mist with clouds of dust will rain, flooding again,
And then solidify just to melt once more.

HADRIAN: Rain on me, please.
Rain, Antinous, pour,
What I melt in thee,
For thy rain, I implore.

ANTINOUS: Like I have a choice!
Your voice is enough,
To make me rain,
To make me give up.

HADRIAN: Then I will give up,
As thou has for me.
And we will thrive,
And Apollo will sing.

ANTINOUS: Apollo will cry, praising thy beauty.
While I sigh as I study thy physique.
I grin as I am bestowed such duty,
For loving thee, I need the best technique.
To prove I am worth, to prove I am just,
I must not be paralyzed at thy stare.
Instead, must I focus on burning lust.
Believe in you, my love, now will I dare.
Thou won't hurt me, as if thou ever could.
As long as I'm happy, thou is all content.
And dreams are thriving, as they always should.

Thy passion explodes more than their hate prevents.
My love, grasp my body as thou may want.
I'll do the same to you, as my savant.

HADRIAN: If thou speak truth, allow me reply,
For studying thyself my heart complies.
Give me life, and I'll give mine.
No one will take what is so divine.

ANTINOUS: Escape us now to a place can we?
And true passion will we succumb to see.

HADRIAN: I'll go with thee, for I want thee too.
And of these green shores we can say adieu.

ANTINOUS: Return let us then,
To our bed in the hall.
Where the Greeks all sleep,
And on Venus we'll call.

HADRIAN: Call will we fast,
To feel Venus's grace.
Graze our heads,
And affirm our estate.

(HADRIAN begins leaving.)

ANTINOUS: *(aside)* Tonight will Antinous return,
To get hold of these plants
Decorated with flowers
To Make Hadrian dance.

HADRIAN: What said my love?
Heard I not thine words.

ANTINOUS: Thou wilt come to know why I spoke to the birds.

(ANTINOUS catches up, both exit.)

SCENE IV - *Enter LUCIUS, another place along the Nile.*

LUCIUS: My fate, my fortune, and future combine.
Tonight along the shores I sit beside.
Antinous sacrifice life for mine,
And I'll remain alive- my faith reside.
Canst I kill a heart so deeply in love,
Knowing I shall kill two souls with my blade?
Hadrian will suffer, like bloody dove.
After his lover, Antinous, slayed.
Lucius think now, how this wealth expense.
Amongst all who suffer from its dark debts.
If not poor, would I pass this for regents?
Or should all who do this be known as threats?
Apollo, thou left me fend for my life,
But truly though left me in a great strife.

ASSISTANT: *(in the distance)* All Greeks gather, dinner is served.
Hurry for your share, for nothing's reserved!

LUCIUS: Good, they all gather to feast one last time.
As I sit and dream of some type of meal.
What I deserve is to be starved in crime.

For every thought is only for my ideal.
Pure Antinous, make this less severe,
Give me way to prove that thee should die.
Good lover, be dark, or of it appear,
And then to myself I no longer must lie.
Thou wilt kill I, if the Heavens were fair,
If Hades had not taken my soul.
Now sink my blade into thee could I dare?
Knowing how evil and dark is my goal?
Lucius, return thy previous state.
Give up thy greed, before it's too late.

ASSISTANT: *(in the distance)* Lovely evening, is it, and everyone's
beautiful.
Specifically, Antinous, with beauty indisputable.

(Laughter in the distance.)

LUCIUS: Good heavens, mock me! Mock my quest to live.
How would I to kill Apollo's best gift?
Antinous, why must thou to all give,
Such words of grandeur, thee every soul lifts!
Lucius should die instead of the man,
Fancied by Hadrian, fancied by all.
How strange is his beauty to defy plans
Protecting me from such a downfall.
Gaius, curse thee! Curse thy name and thy price!
Lucius can't die by such suicide!
Poor life, welcome, modesty I suffice.
Instead of my own death by his homicide!
Apollo, make me poor deserting me still,

I cannot and will not make death my will.

Tonight I will save that Antinous from pain,
Saving him from their efforts that would have him slain.

(Exit.)

SCENE V - *ANTINOUS wakes up in the bedroom, HADRIAN remains asleep.*

ANTINOUS: *(Whispering)* My love, Hadrian, art thou now asleep?
What doth thou dream of, and art thee at peace?
Dost Apollo make thee dream of the deep
Green shores of the Nile? Now I release
Myself from thy bedroom, just for a bit.
And get what thou dreams of thanks to the land.
I hope in thine dreams there's a place that fits
Me to thy likings, as I would like a stand.
Give wilt I now, in real life, the best plants.
Flowers of Egypt, and put them by thee.
And then awake! Thou wilt smell them and grant,
A kiss for me, and I'll be once more free.
Antinous loves his Hadrian so,
To the shores of the Nile must he go.

(ANTINOUS leaves to go to the shore, singing softly the next line.)

Give me thy guidance, give me thine eye.
Apollo is welcome, Venus is light,
Offer me guidance, offer me time,
To make this errand sweeter than wine .

(LUCIUS appears, startling ANTINOUS.)

LUCIUS: The lover of Greece, let me now guide thee,
Thy life in danger, hurry, go back.

ANTINOUS: I know thy face, thee to kill did agree.
I trust not thee, of whom appeared from black.

LUCIUS: Antinous, turn home, I heard movement.
In the woods I heard some footsteps advance.

ANTINOUS: Oh, of comfort thy have proved truant,
Return thyself, have I confident stance!

LUCIUS: Thee knows not of danger that lurks in woods,
Egypt will haunt thee if thou remains here.

ANTINOUS: Egypt has only proven to be good,
Unlike Greece, of which only gave me fear.

(Movement in the woods, both ANTINOUS and LUCIUS look.)

LUCIUS: See not thee danger over there on rocks?

ANTINOUS: I did, strange man, what of this shock?

(GAIUS appears, charges at ANTINOUS. LUCIUS stops him halfway.)

LUCIUS: Thou art but too mad Gaius, leave him alone!

Antinous, hurry, return back to home!

(ANTINOUS tries to leave but GAIUS escapes from LUCIUS's grip. GAIUS goes over and stabs ANTINOUS.)

ANTINOUS: Ay me! What of this attack?!

(ANTINOUS falls.)

GAIUS: Die, you monster, to hell you go back!

(GAIUS gets on top of ANTINOUS, goes to stab again. LUCIUS stops him.)

LUCIUS: Leave him, oh Hades, banish thy demon!

(GAIUS pushes LUCIUS away, stabs ANTINOUS again.)

ANTINOUS: Heavens, welcome my soul-

LUCIUS: No! Gaius, your anger's much too bold!

(GAIUS gets up from ANTINOUS, goes for LUCIUS.)

GAIUS: These rings are not yours, thee failed at thy task.
If had I more time, thee too would be dying fast.

LUCIUS: Thy demon, murderer! Leave here right now,
I'll scream for the guards; of that I vow.

GAIUS: Ha! Antinous will die in minutes I swear,

But the blood will be on thee, look at what thou did dare.

(GAIUS throws blade toward LUCIUS, escapes back to the woods.)

LUCIUS: Antinous, no! Antinous, please!
(Scream) Somebody help, the lover boy bleeds!

ANTINOUS: Fetch me Hadrian, before my soul is released...

LUCIUS: *(Shout)* Hadrian! For thee Antinous pleads!
Die not so quick, keep thine eyes alert.
Or else fate will alter and on me go berserk!

ANTINOUS: My mind is slipping, tell my love this-
I love Hadrian, and will live on in our kiss...

(ANTINOUS dies, sounds in the distance are heard.)

LUCIUS: I wilt tell him, please, die not quite yet.
Oh fortune mistakes me for what murderer's get!
Hadrian wilt think I'm the one who is vile,
Who killed his love on the shores of the Nile!

HADRIAN: *(In the distance getting closer.)* Antinous?!
ANTINOUS?!

ACT FIVE

SCENE I - *LUCIUS is seen holding ANTINOUS's body, HADRIAN draws nearer.*

LUCIUS: Revenge; a land where the innocent is slain,
 There killed is the dream of forgiving all debts.
 Where the past becomes the sting of bitter chains.
 Where light of hope dies as soon as it is met.
 There meaning of hate overrules that of life,
 There cries of mercy die and there where breath take
 As if only through death can one end their strife.
 And live in peace knowing decided their fate.
 Lucius, the victim of belief his own.
 Now receives his fate, in his thoughts now lost.
 Stranded be him, who will wish now to have known.
 Now to the world turns he, but this debt much cost.
 In days of his dusk, for forgiveness he'll seek,
 But know how so he will not, and soon die weak.

(HADRIAN appears.)

HADRIAN: What of this, who are thee?
 Why are you holding onto my love?

LUCIUS: He hath been attacked,
 But feels not any pain,
 Not anymore, his soul is above.

HADRIAN: Dar'st thou speak such a fate?
 Move, thy ungrateful swine.

Who did this to my love,
 Of whom shall I hate?
 Tell me, unless thou art the unholy mind.

LUCIUS: Tis was not I, but Gaius of Greece,
 Banished from home, he found his way here.
 Then ran doth he, into the trees.
 To escape the wrath of when the lover would see...

(LUCIUS moves to give HADRIAN room by ANTINOUS.)

HADRIAN: Antinous now, Antinous please!
 The damn'ed demon cut thy youth in twain,
 Now wake thee quick, I will fall to my knees,
 Or here I will last, oh here I'll remain.
 Canst I live within enteral regret?
 Knowing that I breathe the air we once shared?
 Hadrian cries, for his nightmares are met.
 The sun rises without thee, without care.
 The sworn evil witch who stole what we had,
 And her accomplice who ran toward the trees,
 They will be tried, and be proclaimed mad,
 For everything they have taken from thee.
 Antinous now, Antinous reigns,
 Greece has thee in heart, for you it remains.

LUCIUS: Antinous spoke before he joined the angels.

HADRIAN: What did he say?

LUCIUS: Quote I before it I forget,

The words he spoke were:

“My mind is slipping, tell my love this-
I love Hadrian, and will live on in our kiss...”

HADRIAN: Live on, live on, oh Antinous must.
Live on through me, live on through all of us.

LUCIUS: I tried to save, but failed in my course.
Gaius took his life, and now we remorse.

HADRIAN: My fallen love, I bear this throne for you.
And our empire, where the sun never sets.
The witch of whom had claimed our love untrue.
Will burn in hell as long as Hades lets.
I'll roam our land till I met you once more,
Teaching our song to the children that play.
And to that man, to that devil, be sure-
He'll feel my wrath till my last dying day.
And on that day, when my life on Earth ends,
I pray Zeus lets thee allow me to him.
We'll walk through his gate; my hand I will lend.
And our love will thrive as Olympians.
Antinous, my love, all hail to thy name.
Hadrian will bow, our hearts are the same.

(Exit.)

SCENE II - *Enter CHORUS.*

Chorus: Now on this stage Antinous will reign,

As God of Greece, and as Hadrian's man.
Remember his love was simply insane,
But true as possible once it began.
Engulf his light and then give it away,
Hold not so tight to the young lover's heart.
Then if you may find yourself in dismay,
You can share his hurt and know of this art.
Hadrian's tears remain in the Nile,
Antinous' struggle, put to rest.
But still, dear lovers, do laugh and smile,
For world without love is a heavy test.
Antinous and Hadrian, love on.
Keep walking through night until you find dawn.

(Exit.)