

Act 1 obtained Dryden's own approval: 'I prefer the scene betwixt Antony and Ventidius in the first act to anything which I have written in this kind,' and with this approval the critics have agreed. The interview represents the triumph of an old friendship over violent animosity, a hatred really based in love and passing into it. The scene between Sebastian and Dorax, in the later play of *Don Sebastian*, is somewhat analogous; it treats of the revenge of a wronged subject, sought for years, but abandoned, when the opportunity comes, as loyalty and honour prevail. The situation in the scene between Antony and Ventidius suits Dryden's powers, and there is no necessity for fine touches, which were not his forte.

Finally let us set side by side for comparison the description of the barge on Cydnus, in the plays of Shakespeare and of Dryden.

*All for Love*, Act III 60 ff.

Antony is recalling the scene to Dolabella:—

- Ant.* To clear herself,  
For sending him no aid, she came from Egypt.  
Her galley down the silver Cydnos row'd,  
The tackling silk, the streamers wav'd with gold;  
The gentle winds were lodg'd in purple sails:  
Her nymphs, like Nereids, round her couch were plac'd,  
Where she, another sea-born Venus, lay.
- Dol.* No more; I would not hear it.
- Ant.* O, you must!  
She lay, and leant her cheek upon her hand,  
And cast a look so languishingly sweet,