

SURPASSING CLEOPATRA

She was certainly provocative with those gloomy blue eyes and that voice which Plutarch said was like an instrument of many strings.

I am the only man of respectable position to have rebuffed Cleopatra.

Oh my, she was humiliated and angry with me!

Her exquisite eyes went very wide and she said: "Perhaps you prefer the vagabond boys of Judaea, Herod".

I only laughed at her, which made her even more angry.

When Cleopatra appeared before Caesar for the first time, pouting and sad, Caesar became her compliant slave.

And Antony too was conquered by Cleopatra when she floated up the Nile to greet him in a golden boat dressed sublimely like Venus.

There was probably not a drop of Egyptian blood in Cleopatra. She was a Macedonian, a distant descendant of Alexander's dynasty in sunny Egypt. She learned Egyptian ways for political purposes.

I do not think that Cleopatra would have done as well with the high-principled Spartans. The Spartans demanded manly heroic values and they kept their splendid women in their place. In comparison, Caesar and Antony both died virtually in the arms of Cleopatra.

When Antony visited Judaea for the first time I found him a lovely young lady with lifting breasts and soft lips like fruits of desire, and I included every worldly extravagance that Antony could possibly want. For this, the Romans elevated me from a wealthy merchant to a King. One must learn to exploit these self-indulgent Roman appetites.