The tragedy atmosphere is set right from the beginning of the first act. Philo speaks to the audience. The first act introduce the story and makes the reader questions.

The work opens into Cleopatra's palace in Alexandria, Egypt, in 40 BC, where two people in the wake of Antony are complaining about how this brave fighter is abandoned to lust and vices of wine. Immediately the scene shifts to Antony and Cleopatra, they are exchanging eternal love’s promises and they refuse to listen to a messenger came from Rome. In fact, Antony takes now less care to the fate of the empire, and increasingly those of Cleopatra and pleasures that the East offers him.

This regard is in contradiction with Antony lover and great leader and that is the promise to be the reasons for the subsequent fall. People are appalled learning that now Antony has little care to the fate of Rome.

A messenger refers to Antony about the death of his wife Fulvia (killed by Octavian because Fulvia was plotting against him) and threats to which the empire is subject (the former allies of Bruto and Cassio are still plotting and also Pompey has allied with pirates against Rome). All these news bring Anthony to return to Rome, regretting that he had ever seen Cleopatra as all these misfortunes are the result of Antony’s carelessness and profligacy caused by Cleopatra.