

WS 2024/25 Lat. Lektüre: Plautus, *Epidicus* Translation 1 / 22.20.24 (Karanasiou)

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Pl.+Epid.+1>

*Enter THESPRIO, followed by EPIDICUS.*<sup>1</sup>

**EPIDICUS**

*pulling THESPRIO by the cloak . Harkye! young man.*

**THESPRIO**

Who pulls me by the cloak, when thus in haste?

**EPIDICUS**

An intimate.

**THESPRIO**

I confess it; for with your annoyance you are too intimate.

**EPIDICUS**

But do look back, Thesprio!

**THESPRIO**

*looking round .* What? Is it Epidicus that I see?

**EPIDICUS**

Why surely you've the use of your eyes.

**THESPRIO**

Greetings to you.

**EPIDICUS**

May the Gods grant what you desire. I'm glad that you've got here safe.

**THESPRIO**

What besides?

**EPIDICUS**

According to the usage, a dinner shall be given you<sup>2</sup>.

**THESPRIO**

I agree.

**EPIDICUS**

What to do?

**THESPRIO**

That I'll accept it, if you offer it.

**EPIDICUS**

How are you? Fare you as you could wish?

**THESPRIO**

The proof's before you.

**EPIDICUS**

I understand. *Eyeing him from top to toe.* Marvellous! You seem quite plump and hearty.

**THESPRIO**

*pointing to his left hand* . Thanks to this.

**EPIDICUS**

Which, indeed, you ought to have parted with<sup>3</sup> long ago.

**THESPRIO**

I'm less of a pilferer now than formerly.

**EPIDICUS**

How so?

**THESPRIO**

I rob above-board<sup>4</sup>.

**EPIDICUS**

May the immortal Gods confound you, with what huge strides you do walk! for when I caught sight of you at the harbour, I began to run at a rapid pace; I was hardly able to overtake you just now.

**THESPRIO**

You are a town wit.

**EPIDICUS**

I know that you, on the other hand, are a military gentleman.

**THESPRIO**

Speak out as boldly as you please.

**EPIDICUS**

How say you? Have you been well all along?

**THESPRIO**

In a varied way.

**EPIDICUS**

Those who are well in a varied way<sup>5</sup>, a race of men of the goat kind or of the panther kind, don't please me.

**THESPRIO**

What do you wish me to tell you but that which is fact?

**EPIDICUS**

To answer to these things fairly; how's our master's son? Is he well?

**THESPRIO**

Stout as a boxer and an athlete.

**EPIDICUS**

You've brought me joyous tidings on your arrival. But where is he?

**THESPRIO**

I came here together with him.

**EPIDICUS**

Where is he then? Unless, perchance, you've brought him in your wallet, or, perhaps, in your knapsack.

**THESPRIO**

May the Gods confound you!

**EPIDICUS**

I want to make enquiries of you. Lend me your attention; attention shall be lent you in return.

**THESPRIO**

You say what's law<sup>6</sup>.

**EPIDICUS**

It becomes me to do so.

**THESPRIO**

But why now are you acting the Prætor over us?

1. Translator's subtitle **The Fortunate Discovery**: Plautus calls this Play by the name of Epidicus, from the slave, who is the principal actor in it. It will be seen that a fortunate discovery really does take place in the Fifth Act, where Periphanes not only finds his long-lost daughter, but Stratippocles is prevented from unknowingly being guilty of incest. That Plautus thought very highly of this Play, is evident from what is said in the Bacchides, l. 215, where Chrysalus is introduced as saying that he "loves the Epidicus as well as his own self."
2. **A dinner shall be given you**: The "cœna viatica," or "welcome entertainment," has been mentioned in the Notes to the Bacchides, Act I., So. 2.
3. **To have parted with**: The thieves of antiquity are said to have used the left hand for the purposes of their nefarious calling. The cutting off of the hand was a common punishment.
4. **I rob above-board**: It has been suggested that this is an imitation of a passage in Aristophanes, Act II., Sc. 3, where Blepsidemus says, "οὐκεκλοφάς ἄλλ' ἤρπακας." "You have not pilfered, but plundered." The thought, however, is quite natural, without resorting to a previous author for it.
5. **In a varied way**: He puns upon the different meanings of the word "varie;" and alludes to the chequered or striped state of the slave's back after whipping. By "varie," Thesprio simply means, "sometimes well, and sometimes ill."