

WS 2024/25 Lat. Lektüre: Plautus, *Epidicus* Translation 2 (Karanasiou)

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

EPIDICUS

What other person in [Athens](#) will you say is more deserving of it than I?

THESPRIO

But still, Epidicus, one thing is wanting for your Prætorship.

EPIDICUS

What, pray?

THESPRIO

You shall know; two lictors¹ two osier bundles of twigs----

EPIDICUS

shaking his fist at him . Woe unto you! But how say you----? THES. What is it you ask?

EPIDICUS

Where are the arms² of Stratippoces?

THESPRIO

I' faith, they've gone over to the enemy.

EPIDICUS

What, his arms?

THESPRIO

Aye, and quickly too.

EPIDICUS

Do you say that seriously?

THESPRIO

Seriously I say it; the enemy have got them.

EPIDICUS

By my troth, a disgraceful affair.

THESPRIO

Still, before now, other persons have done the same. This affair will turn out to his honor³.

EPIDICUS

How so?

THESPRIO

Because it has been so to others before.

EPIDICUS

Mulciber, I suppose, made the arms which Stratippocles had; they flew over to the enemy⁴.

THESPRIO

Why, then, e'en let this son of Thetis lose them; the daughters of Nereus will bring him others.

EPIDICUS

Only this must be looked to, that material may be found for the armourers, if in each campaign he yields a spoil to the enemy.

THESPRIO

Have done now with these matters.

EPIDICUS

You yourself make an end of them when you please.

THESPRIO

Cease your enquiries then.

EPIDICUS

Say, where is Stratippocles himself?

THESPRIO

There is a reason, for which reason he has been afraid to come together with me.

EPIDICUS

Pray, what is it?

THESPRIO

He doesn't wish to see his father as yet.

EPIDICUS

For what reason?

THESPRIO

You shall hear; because he has purchased out of the spoil a young female captive of charming and genteel figure.

EPIDICUS

What is it I hear from you?

THESPRIO

That which I'm telling you.

EPIDICUS

Why has he purchased her?

THESPRIO

To please his fancy.

EPIDICUS

How many fancies has this man? For assuredly, before he went away from home to the army, he himself commissioned me, that a music-girl whom he was in love with should be purchased of a Procurer for him. That I have managed to accomplish for him.

THESPRIO

Whichever way the wind is at sea, Epidicus, in that direction the sail is shifted.

1. **Two lictors:** The Prætors were attended by lictors As one part of their duty was to scourge refractory slaves, Thesprio means to joke Epidicus, by telling him that he requires the lictors -- not to do him honor, but to scourge him.
2. **Where are the armns:** As Thesprio was his armour-bearer, this question cannot be considered as an impertinent one.
3. **Will turn out to his honor:** Schmieder thinks that in these words there is a covert allusion to the conduct of Terentius Varro, by whose bad management the Romans lost the battle of Cannæ, when fighting against Hannibal. The Senate, however, received him with open arms, "because he had not despaired of the state."
4. **Flew over to the enemy:** Plautus seems here to fancy that the arms made by Mulciber or Vulcan, for Achilles, were taken by Hector from Patroclus, when, in fact, they were made at the request of Thetis, for the purpose of avenging his death. He probably did not care to represent a slave and A camp-follower as being particularly correct in their knowledge of Homer.