

PSEUDOLUS

By Plautus

Once the play starts Calidorus and Pseudolus enter the stage, Calidorus is visibly upset. After Pseudolus pushes his master's son to tell him what is wrong, Calidorus shows him a letter he received. Pseudolus first mocks the poor handwriting it is written in then reads the letter, which says that Calidorus' lover Phoenicium, a prostitute, has been sold and the man who is supposed to come with the last of the money to pay for her and pick her up for her new master is coming very soon. Calidorus obviously wants to save her but he has no money of his own and his father won't lend him any to help save her. He turns to Pseudolus, who is his father's chief slave, for help. Pseudolus doesn't have the money they require to buy her, but thinks he can improvise a plan to get it and to save Phoenicium. At this time, Calidorus tells Pseudolus to be quiet, saying he hears the pimp Ballio, Phoenicium's master, leaving his house. Ballio enters the stage addressing his slaves, telling them that they aren't worth their keep and that they don't know how to behave. He claims beating them hurts him more than it hurts them and that they will steal anything if given the chance.

Ballio begins organizing his slaves and making preparations for his own birthday celebration, and says he will be off to the market to strike a deal with the fishmonger. After he organizes his slaves and assigns them all specific tasks for the day, he calls his prostitutes out of the house. He orders them to make themselves the most desirable companions for the day, and to earn him supplies based on their status with men in different markets—specifically, grain, meat, oil, and lard. Ballio promises swift and decisive punishment if his demands are not met.

Calidorus and Pseudolus have been watching Ballio throughout this entire speech from a hidden corner, making comments about his corruption and tyranny, and generally loathing his entire existence. Calidorus is deeply concerned about the future of Phoenicium and asks Pseudolus what he should do in order to keep Ballio from putting her on the streets. Pseudolus tells Calidorus not to worry about it, and that he will take care of it by delivering Ballio "a nice fat packet of trouble." This uncertain prospect is torturous to Calidorus, who claims that it's only natural that a lover must behave like a fool.

Ballio departs from his house to go to the market, with one of his slaves leading. Pseudolus calls out to him from their hiding place, and asks him to come and talk. Ballio is dismissive of Pseudolus, and tries to avoid him several times. Pseudolus finally successfully intercepts him, but Ballio still refuses to truly listen. He hints that there must be a promise of money in order for him to open his ears to Pseudolus and Calidorus' pleas.

Having appealed to his business side to pull him into conversation, Pseudolus and Calidorus try to play nice, apologizing for the fact that Calidorus does not have the money to buy his love's freedom. Ballio insists that Calidorus could have found a way to get the money and says that he must care more for duty than for love. Pseudolus begs him to give them more time to find the money when Ballio informs them that Phoenicium has already been sold for 2000 drachmae to the Macedonian officer, Polymachaeroplages. Pseudolus and Calidorus then call Ballio all the dirty names and curses they can think of. Untouched by their words, Ballio says that if Calidorus can bring him the money before the officer pays the final amount owed, 500 drachmae, the deal with the officer will be off and Calidorus can take his love. Ballio then goes to town for his birthday preparations and Pseudolus beseeches Calidorus to find a sharp-witted friend to assist in taking Phoenicium from Ballio.

Uncertain as to how to get the girl, Pseudolus hatches a plan to obtain the 2000 drachmae by stealing it from Simo, the father of Calidorus. Pseudolus sees Simo coming with his neighbor Callipho, and hides and listens to their conversation. The two are discussing Simo's son, Calidorus, and the rumor that he wants to buy his true love's freedom. Simo doesn't think that it is proper for his son to be in love with a prostitute and doesn't want to believe the rumor. Callipho is trying to convince Simo to at least listen to his son to see if what they are hearing is true and to take pity on him because he is a man in love just like he was when he was young. Pseudolus decides to appear and greets them.

Simo asks Pseudolus about getting the money out of him by performing a "crafty and underhand trick." Pseudolus admits to wanting to get the money from him. Simo refuses to give Pseudolus the 2000 drachmae. Pseudolus retorts, "You'll give it to me. I'm only telling you, so that you can be on your guard." Pseudolus also promises that he will wage war on Ballio and get the girl from him on that very day. He asks Simo to give him money so that he can give it to Ballio should he succeed in winning the girl from the pimp. At long last Simo agrees to the bet: the treadmill for Pseudolus if he fails to get the girl by day's end and 2,000 drachmae from Simo if he succeeds. Callipho promises Pseudolus that if he gets the girl and if Simo does not give him the money, he will himself because he does not want to see his plan fail.

Pseudolus sees a Macedonian soldier approaching and figures that this is his chance. The two talk about how Harpax, the Macedonian soldier, has been ordered to meet with Ballio himself to give him the money. Pseudolus tricks Harpax into thinking he is Syrus, a slave of Ballio, and tries to get the 500 drachmae from Harpax by telling him that his master Ballio is working on a court case and can't meet with him at this time. Pseudolus says he can receive the money on his behalf. Harpax refuses to give the money up to anyone but Ballio. Harpax says he will leave with the money and come back at a different time. He leaves Pseudolus with a sealed letter from his master, the Macedonian general. Harpax tells Pseudolus he is staying in town in an old tavern and asks Pseudolus to send for him when Ballio is ready to meet. Harpax leaves and Calidorus arrives with his friend Charinus.

Right away Pseudolus and Charinus begin talking. Pseudolus is describing how he has pulled the wool over the Macedonian soldier's eyes, and boasts that the girl Calidorus loves will be in his arms today. The only problem is that Pseudolus requires a few things: a clever young man, a soldier's cloak, sword, and hat, and 500 drachmae. Charinus offers him the 500. Charinus and Calidorus say they know of just the clever slave who can help them. They then depart to go and collect the things that Pseudolus requires.

As they depart a slave boy creeps out of Ballio's house and speaks to the audience. He says that he needs to find money to give Ballio, his boss, a present before the day is over or he will be tortured. Since he is poor and has no money, he does not know what to do. Meanwhile, Ballio returns to his house with a cook. The two are arguing about how much the cook charges people for his services. Ballio is quite angry that he has to pay two drachmae instead of one to be able to have a cook for his birthday celebration. The cook is insulted and asks why he hired him. Ballio replies that he had to, because he was the only cook left. The cook immediately starts to make his own case, explaining in great detail why he is the best cook and that he doesn't even stand up for less than two drachmae. Ballio remains unconvinced and waits to see for himself what the cook can really do when the time for dinner comes.

Charinus and Calidorus have gotten the clever boy Pseudolus is in need of: Simia, another clever slave. Pseudolus and Simia discuss plans for getting Phoenicium from Ballio. Pseudolus is a bit anxious about Simia succeeding in duping Ballio. Simia is confident to the point of arrogance and is annoyed by Pseudolus' anxieties. Pseudolus takes Simia to meet Ballio and the scene switches between their interaction and Pseudolus' commentary as he watches the events unfold. The plan threatens to come unraveled when Ballio asks Simia the name of his master (which Simia does not know). Simia turns the question around by demanding that Ballio inspect the letter's seal and tell him the name of the sender so that he knows that Ballio is who he claims to be. Ballio consents and gives the name, Polymachaeroplages. Ballio breaks the seal and reads the letter. Simia hands over the money gotten by Pseudolus from Charinus. Ballio and Simia go inside to retrieve Phoenicium. Pseudolus frets as he waits for them to come out. Eventually they do. As they exit the house, Simia consoles Phoenicium, who thinks she is being led to the Macedonian general, Polymachaeroplages, by telling her that he is in fact taking her to her boyfriend Calidorus. Pseudolus is triumphant.

Ballio is also triumphant, boasting to Simo that they have won the bet because he has finally and successfully sold Phoenicium to the Macedonian general and placed her safely in the hands of his soldier Harpax. As the two discuss the matter the real Harpax arrives. The two think that he is an impersonator hired by Pseudolus.

Ballio and Simo ridicule and poke fun at Harpax in the hopes that he will admit that he is an imposter sent by Pseudolus to steal Phoenicium from Ballio. Ballio begins to mock him and asks how much this Harpax has spent on clothing to impersonate a soldier, claiming that his hat and shoes are rented. Ballio asks him how much Pseudolus has paid him. Harpax, of course, denies even knowing a Pseudolus and tells Ballio he delivered the letter with the seal to Ballio's servant earlier that day. Simo begins to realize that Pseudolus has been there first and has already tricked Harpax. He asks Harpax what the servant he gave the letter to looked like. As Harpax describes the slave, Ballio and Simo realize that Pseudolus has tricked them. Harpax and Simo then demand the money that is owed to them from Ballio. Ballio heads to the Forum to pay Harpax back and tells Simo he will pay him tomorrow. Simo admits that he has lost the bet he made with Pseudolus and goes to get the money from his house.

Pseudolus celebrates his victory, returning to the home of his master drunk. He is so drunk that he constantly belches in Simo's face. Eventually Simo hands him the money, asking if Pseudolus will cut the debt down any. Pseudolus refuses. Pseudolus then tells Simo to follow him. Simo believes that Pseudolus is attempting to embarrass him and tries to refuse; but Pseudolus insists. Pseudolus then reveals that he plans to go drinking with Simo and has no intent of embarrassing him. The play ends when Simo asks if Pseudolus would like to invite the audience. Pseudolus declines because he believes they wouldn't invite him, but does invite them to applaud.

ANDRIA

By Terrence

Simo tells his freedman Sosia that the nuptials that he is preparing for Pamphilus are a sham. When Sosia enquires as to the purpose of the sham, Simo tells him of Pamphilus' shameful secret attachment to Glycerium, the sister of a harlot. While Chremes had previously been so impressed by Pamphilus' moderate and upright behaviour he offered his daughter unprompted; following the uncovering of the affair between Pamphilus and Glycerium at Chrysis' funeral he has withdrawn his offer. Simo is outraged that Pamphilus does not feel abashed by his private admonition of Pamphilus' behaviour and is continuing with the appearance of the nuptials so that he will be seen as publicly defying his father. He also hopes he might draw out the roguish plotting of Pamphilus' slave Davus.

Davus, hiding in the background, overhears Simo's plan. Having made himself known he is told by Simo to ensure the planned nuptials go to plan, as any hint that Davus' scheming had caused the wedding's cancellation will result in Davus' incarceration. After Simo's departure Davus vows to undermine Simo's plan. He also reveals that in order to curry favour with Simo, Glycerium has concocted a story that she is a free-born citizen of Athens who was shipwrecked as a child on Andros and thus is not of base birth. Davus heaps scorn on this idea.

Glycerium is soon to give birth. Mysis leaves her mistress' house to make some preparations for this when she overhears Pamphilus bemoaning the fact that his marriage to Philumena is still going ahead. Mysis reveals herself to him. Pamphilus earnestly repeats that he will not desert Glycerium. Mysis leaves to find a midwife.

Charinus and Byrrhia talk, Byrrhia confirms the rumour that Pamphilus is still proceeding with the marriage to Philumena. Charinus declares his love of Philumena and as he is unsure why Pamphilus is going ahead with the match he vows to go and beg him at least to delay. Byrrhia warns him not to as it might appear to Pamphilus that Charinus is effect telling him that he will cuckold him at the first opportunity.

Charinus catches up with Pamphilus and begs him to break-off or delay the wedding. Pamphilus tells him that he would love nothing better than acquiesce to this request and is endeavouring to bring about its termination. Charinus is relieved by this. He dismisses Byrrhia for his poor counsel. Davus approaches them and they surmise from his happy disposition that Davus is unaware of their fated heartbreak. Davus tells them that in fact the planned nuptials are a ruse and that he has checked Chremes' house and there is no sign of preparations. Charinus leaves happy that he will have his beloved Philumena.

Davus counsels Pamphilus to accept Simo's wish to marry. This will cause the match to be publicly ended by Chremes. As a disclosed libertine Simo will be willing to let him marry Glycerium rather than no one at all. Pamphilus agrees but asks Davus to ensure his father does not discover that he has agreed to bring up Glycerium's child.

Simo enters to set his trap. Byrrhia enters and hides himself as he is under orders to watch Pamphilus' movements in regard to Philumena. Simo tells Pamphilus he must marry today. Pamphilus surprises him by agreeing. Byrrhia believes that Pamphilus is betraying his master.

Simo collars Davus and voices his suspicions of Pamphilus' volte face. Davus parries these queries and the accusation that Davus is somehow plotting against him. Davus says that any unhappiness Simo might have detected was due to Simo's mean expense on the celebrations.

Simo and Davus overhear Mysis and Lesbia, who in the course of their conversation reveal that Pamphilus has made a pledge to support Glycerium's child. Simo believes that this is a ruse concocted by his son to anger Chremes and thereby end his wedding to Philumena.

Glycerium gives birth to a son.

Simo accuses Davus of advising his master in this deception, Davus sees his chance and denies this. With a view to avoiding suspicion to his true plans Davus tells Simo this is a plan by Glycerium to keep the attentions of his son and the next move of Glycerium's servants will be to place the new-born son on Simo's doorstep so as to prevent the wedding.

Simo meets Chremes in the street. Chremes asks why there is a rumour about town that their children will still be wed. Simo implores Chremes to reagree to the match. He reveals that, as Davus has said, Glycerium is faking a birth in order to get back together with Pamphilus. Believing Simo appraisal of the situation Chremes agrees. Simo meets Davus and thanks him for helping with his plans. He 'reveals' the nuptials had been a sham and says if they now go ahead it is wholly due to Davus' good advice. Davus privately berates himself. Pamphilus searches for Davus seeking to imprison or kill him for putting him in an intractable situation. Davus implores him to let him redeem himself and promises to come up with something to stop the wedding, but no plan comes to mind.

Charinus on hearing that the wedding will proceed believes that his friend has betrayed him taking Philumena only because he had revealed his love of the girl. He comes on Davus and Pamphilus and accuses his friend. Pamphilus says that it was not his doing but down to the plotting of Davus. Facing a two-time wrath Davus doubles his promise that, somehow, he will extricate Pamphilus from the union. Mysis enters telling Pamphilus that Glycerium needs his presence. Davus tells Charinus that he has a plan but there may not be enough time to pull it off, but he should go and wait in his house.

Davus bids Mysis to stay a moment, and returns with the child. He tells her to place it on the doorstep of Simo's household. Davus retires into the background as Chremes comes onto the scene, and then reappears after Chremes has seen what Mysis was doing. Chremes hides himself not realising that Davus knows he is present. Davus berates a confused Mysis for her actions, saying that it would be terrible if Chremes had come on the scene and not him. Chremes reveals himself and says the wedding is off.

Crito arrives in Athens, and on learning of Chrysis' death berates his ill fortune because, as Glycerium is in reality an orphan, he is Chrysis' closest relative and will need to take a case to law to claim her estate ahead of Glycerium who will no doubt be defended by some gallant protector.

Chremes berates Simo for enticing him into giving permission for the wedding again. Simo mollifies his rage saying what he saw was a ruse orchestrated by Glycerium and that Davus had even warned him beforehand that this would be attempted in order to break the wedding off. They then spy Davus exiting Glycerium's house. They ask him why he was there. Davus replies that he was attending Pamphilus and that there is news that claims Glycerium is an Athenian citizen. Not believing him Simo has Davus arrested. Pamphilus arrives and Simo berates him for breaking his word. Pamphilus responds that he will indeed break his word but that his father ought to listen to Crito's story before he scolds him. Crito tells all present that Glycerium is the niece of an Athenian nobleman shipwrecked on Andros while searching for his brother. Chremes reveals that he was that brother and, approving of the match, gives a dowry of ten talents.

PHAEDRA

By Seneca

Hippolytus, son of King Theseus of Athens, leaves his palace at dawn to go boar-hunting. He prays to the virgin goddess Diana for success in the hunt.

His step-mother Phaedra, wife of Theseus and daughter of King Minos of Crete, soon appears in front of the palace lamenting her fate. Her husband has been gone for years after journeying to capture Persephone from the underworld. Phaedra has been left alone to care for the palace, and she finds herself pining for the forests and the hunt. Wondering what is causing her desire for the forest glades, she reflects on her mother, Pasiphaë, daughter of Helios, who was cursed to fall in love with a bull and give birth to a monster, the Minotaur. Phaedra wonders if she is as doomed as her mother was.

Phaedra's aged nurse interjects that Phaedra should control the passions she feels, for love can be terribly destructive. Phaedra explains that she is gripped by an uncontrollable lust for Hippolytus, and that her passion has defeated her reason. Hippolytus, however, detests women in general and Phaedra in particular. Phaedra declares that she will commit suicide. The nurse begs Phaedra not to end her life and promises to help her in her love, saying: "Mine is the task to approach the savage youth and bend the cruel man's relentless will."

After the Chorus sings of the power of love, Phaedra goes into an emotional frenzy, and the nurse begs the goddess Diana to soften Hippolytus' heart and make him fall in love with Phaedra.

Hippolytus returns from hunting and, seeing Phaedra's nurse, asks her why she looks so sullen. The nurse replies that Hippolytus should "show [him]self less harsh", enjoy life, and seek the company of women. Hippolytus responds that life is most innocent and free when spent in the wild. Hippolytus adds that stepmothers "are no whit more merciful than beasts". He finds women wicked and points to Medea as an example. "Why make the crime of few the blame of all?" the nurse asks. She argues that love can often change stubborn dispositions. Still, Hippolytus maintains his steadfast hatred of womankind.

Phaedra appears, swoons and collapses. Hippolytus wakes her. When he asks why she is so miserable, she decides to confess her feelings. Phaedra subtly suggests that Hippolytus should take his father's place, as Theseus will likely never return from the underworld. Hippolytus agrees, offering to fill his father's shoes while awaiting his return. Phaedra then declares her love for Hippolytus. Aghast, he cries out that he is "guilty", for he has "stirred [his] stepmother to love". He then rails against what he perceives as Phaedra's terrible crime. He draws his sword to kill Phaedra, but upon realizing this is what she wants, he casts the weapon away and flees into the forest.

"Crime must be concealed by crime", the nurse decides, and plots with Phaedra to accuse Hippolytus of incestuous desire. Phaedra cries out to the citizens of Athens for help, and accuses Hippolytus of attacking her in lust. The Chorus interjects, praising Hippolytus' beauty but noting that beauty is subject to the wiles of time. The Chorus then condemns Phaedra's wicked scheme. It is then that Theseus appears, newly returned from the underworld.

The nurse informs Theseus that Phaedra has resolved to die and asks why, especially now that her husband has come back. The nurse explains that Phaedra will tell no one the cause of her grief. Theseus enters the palace and sees Phaedra clutching a sword, ready to slay herself. He asks her why she is in such a state, but she responds only with vague allusions to a "sin" she has committed.

Theseus orders the nurse to be bound in chains and tormented until she confesses her mistress' secret. Phaedra intervenes, telling her husband that she has been raped and that the "destroyer of [her] honor" is the one whom Theseus would least expect. She points to the sword Hippolytus left behind. Theseus, in a rage, summons his father Neptune to destroy Hippolytus. The Chorus asks the heavens why they do not reward the innocent and punish the guilty and evil. The Chorus asserts that the order of the world has become skewed: "wretched poverty dogs the pure, and the adulterer, strong in wickedness, reigns supreme."

A Messenger arrives to inform Theseus that Hippolytus is dead. Out of the ocean's depths, a monstrous bull appeared before Hippolytus' horse-drawn chariot. Hippolytus lost control of his terrified horses, and his limbs

became entwined in the reins. His body was dragged through the forest, and his limbs were torn asunder. Theseus breaks into tears. Although he wished death upon his son, hearing of it causes him to despair. The Chorus proclaims that the gods most readily target mortals of wealth or power, while "the low-roofed, common home ne'er feels [Jove's] mighty blasts".

Phaedra condemns Theseus for his harshness and turns to Hippolytus' mangled corpse, crying: "Whither is thy glorious beauty fled?" She reveals that she had falsely accused Hippolytus of her own crime, falls on her sword and dies. Theseus is despondent. He orders that Hippolytus be given a proper burial. Pointing to Phaedra's corpse, he declares: "As for her, let her be buried deep in earth, and heavy may the soil lie on her unholy head!"