PLAUTUS

IV
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WITH AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY

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IN FIVE VOLUMES

IV

THE LITTLE CARTHAGINIAN
PSEUDOLUS
THE ROPE

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THE GREEK ORIGINALS AND DATES OF THE PLAYS IN THE FOURTH VOLUME

In the Prologue\(^1\) of the *Poenulus* we are told that the Greek name of the comedy was *Kαρχηδόνιος*, but who its author was—perhaps Menander—or who the author of the play which was combined with the *Kαρχηδόνιος* to make the *Poenulus* is quite uncertain. The time of the presentation of the *Poenulus* at Rome is also uncertain: Hueffner\(^2\) believes that the capture of Sparta\(^3\) was a purely Plautine reference to the war with Nabis in 195 B.C. and that the *Poenulus* appeared in 194 or 193 B.C.

The date, however, of the Roman presentation of the *Pseudolus* is definitely established by the didascalia as 191 B.C. Geographical and military allusions in the play make the year 309 B.C. or 308 B.C.\(^4\) a probable time for the production of its Greek original. But whether the Greek play was written by Menander, Philemon, or someone else is doubtful.

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\(^1\) *Poen.* Prol. 53.
\(^2\) Hueffner, *De Plauti Comœdiarum Exemplis Atticis*, 34–35.
\(^3\) *Poen.* 663–665.
\(^4\) Cf. Hueffner, 11–16
THE GREEK ORIGINALS

The *Rudens* was adapted from a play of unknown title by Diphilus.\(^1\) Warfare in Sicily made it unlikely that Labrax would have been tempted to try business there\(^2\) either before the island came under the control of Agathocles, or after the death of Agathocles. Gripus' ambition, also, to found a *regnum magnum*,\(^3\) like the successors of Alexander the Great, seems to Hueffner\(^4\) additional evidence that the original of the *Rudens* was presented between 303 and 290 b.c. The *Rudens* itself appears to have been first staged between 200 and 190 b.c.

\(^{1}\) *Rud.* Prol. 32.  
\(^{2}\) *Rud.* Prol. 54–56; cf. 541.  
\(^{3}\) *Rud.* 935.  
\(^{4}\) Hueffner, 67.
SOME ANNOTATED EDITIONS OF PLAYS
IN THE FOURTH VOLUME

Pseudolus, Lorenz; Berlin, Weidmann, 1876.
Pseudolus, Morris; Boston, Allyn and Bacon, 1890.
Rudens, Marx; Leipzig, Hirzel, 1928.
POENULUS

OR

THE LITTLE CARTHAGINIAN
ARGUMENT OF THE PLAY

A seven-year-old boy was kidnapped from Carthage. An old woman-hater purchased this boy, adopted him, and made him his heir. Later two of the boy’s relatives, girls, were stolen, and their nurse with them. Lycus buys them and torments the young lover. But the lover’s bailiff with a bag of gold is fubbed off upon the pimp, so implicating him in theft. Hanno the Carthaginian arrives, finds the lover to be his nephew, and recognizes his long-lost daughters.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Agorastocles, a young gentleman of Calydon.
Milphio, his slave.
Adelphasium, girls bought by Lycus.
Anterastilis.
Lycus, a pimp.
Antamonides, a soldier.
Counsellors, acquaintances of Agorastoicles.
Collybiscus, bailiff of Agorastoicles.
Syncerastus, slave of Lycus.
Hanno, a gentleman of Carthage.
Giddenis, nurse of Adelphasium and Anterastilis.
A Slave Boy, belonging to Hanno.
POENULUS

Better to bore one man inside than stay here and bore all of you.¹

[exit.

ACT V

ENTER Hanno, FOLLOWED AT A DISTANCE BY CARthagINIAN SLAVES CARRYING HIS BAGGAGE.

Ian. Yth² alonim ualonuth sicorathi symacom syth chy mlachthi in ythmun ysthylm ych-ibarcu mysehi li pho caneth yth bynuthi uad edin byn ui bymarob syllohom alonim ubymysyrthohom byth limmoth ynocho thuulech-antidamas chon ys sidobrim chi fel yth chyl is chon chen liful yth binim ys dybur ch-innocho-tru agorastocles yth emanethi hy chirs aelichot sithi nasot bynu yid ch-illuch ily lubulim lasibithim bodi aly ther aynnynu yslym min cho-th iusim

Ythalonimualoniuthsicorathiisthymhimiymacomsyth combaepumamitalmetlotiambeat iulecantheconaalonimbalumbar dechor bats . . . . hunesobinesubicsillimbalim esseantidamossanalemuedubertefet donobun.hunceilthumcommucroluful

¹ Vv. 923-929: Ye immortal gods! What a row, what a catastrophe, this pimp has coming to him to-day! But here I am, delaying myself. No time for dawdling, with the business we've got afoot. For we've got to deal discreetly with this new disclosure, and yet do our best with that home-born scheme as well. If I delay, the man that gives me a thrashing would only give me my deserts. I'll go in now: I'll wait at home till master comes from the forum.
² It has seemed best to leave the Punic passages, the full meaning of which is in dispute, as they stand in the text rather than attempt to render them in some such language as Hebrew.
POENULUS

altanimauosduberithemhuarcharistolem
sittesedanecnasotersahelicot
alemusdubernurmucopsuistiti
aoccaaneclicitorbodesiuussilimlimmicolus

(devoutly) Ye gods and goddesses who cherish this city, I reverently entreat you that, having come here, the object of my coming may be happily attained, and may ye permit me, I implore you, here to find my daughters and my brother's son.\(^1\)

(after a pause) Well, this is where Antidamas was a family friend of mine in former days. And now they tell me he has paid his debt to nature. I'm informed that his son, Agorastocles, is here, however: and it's to him this token of our family friendship goes. (glancing at a tessera he carries) According to directions his home must be hereabouts. (as Agorastocles' door opens) I'll inquire of these people just coming out.

ENTER Agorastocles AND Milphio, NOT SEEING HIM.

cene 2.

(to Milphio) You say Syncerastus told you they were both freeborn girls, Milphio, stolen from Carthage?

Iil. I do, and if you want to show some spirit, you'll lose no time in claiming them as freeborn. Why, it's a shame to stand by and see your own fellow-countrywomen kept as slaves when at home they were free.

Ian. (aside, excitedly) Ye immortal gods, be with us! How my ears do devour those blessed words! Their

\(^1\) V. 954: Daughters who were stolen from me, and my brother's son.
POENULUS

words are made of chalk, of chalk, the way they've whitened all this blackitude of care for me!

Ag. (dubious) If I had witnesses for it, I'd do as you tell me.

Mil. Witnesses? What the deuce! Why don't you up and at him like a man? Fortune'll favour you somehow.

Ag. It's much easier making a good start than a good finish.

Mil. (seeing Hanno and his escort) But what bird is that arriving here in the tunics? Was his cloak nabbed at the baths, I wonder?

Ag. (surprised) Upon my soul, a Carthaginian, from his looks!

Mil. A gug is what he is! Gad, and such time-worn old fellows he has for slaves!

Ag. How do you know?

Mil. (pointing to Hanno's escort, bent beneath their load) See those chaps behind him, under the luggage? Yes, and I take it they have no fingers on their hands.

Ag. How's that?

Mil. Well, here they are with ring-arrayed ears.

Han. (aside) I'll step up and speak to them in Punic. If they answer, I'll continue talking Punic; if not, then I'll change to the language that suits them.

Mil. (to Agorastocles) I say, you. Remember any Punic, do you?

Ag. Lord, no, not a word! Why, how could I, will you tell me, being only six when I disappeared from Carthage?

Han. (aside) Ye immortal gods! Ah, many, many a free-born boy has disappeared like that from Carthage!

Mil. (to Agorastocles) I say, you.

Ag. What do you want?

Mil. Want me to speak to him in Punic?
POENULUS

Ag. You know it?
Mil. I? There's not a Punicker Punic living.
Ag. Step up and speak to him, find out what he wants,
what he's come for, who he is, his origin, his city
spare no questions.
Mil. (approaching Hanno) Avo! (losing courage) Where
are you people from, what town?
Han. Anno byn mythymballe udradait annech.
Ag. (to Milphio) What does he say?
Mil. (summoning his powers) Hanno, he says he is, of
Carthage, son of a Carthaginian named Mythymbal-
is.
Han. (to Agorastocles) Avo!
Mil. (sure of that one word, to Agorastocles) Good-day, he
says.
Han. Donni.
Mil. (to Agorastocles) A donation—he wants to give
you something or other. Hear him promise?
Ag. Return him his good-day in Punic for me.
Mil. (to Hanno) Avo donnı—says he (indicating Agoras-
tocles) to you for himself.
Han. Me har bocca.
Mil. Better you than me.
Ag. What does he say?
Mil. Declares his back jaw hurts. Takes us for doctors,
maybe.
Ag. In that case, say we are not; I mustn't let a stran-
ger be misled.
Mil. (at a loss, to Hanno) Listening, are you?
Han. Rufeyn nyccho issam.
Ag. (to Milphio) Yes, I insist on his getting every-
thing right. Ask if he has need of anything.
Mil. (to Hanno, in an undertone) Hey, you without a belt!
What have you folks come to this city for, or
what are you after?
POENULUS

Ian.  *Muphursa.*

 lãg.  What does he say?


 lãg.  Why has he come?

Ilil.  *(valiantly)*  Don’t you hear? Mice from Africa—states he wants to give ’em to the aediles for the circus parade.

Ian.  *Lech lachanna nilimniichto.*

 lãg.  What does he say now?

Ilil.  Latchets, channels and nuts—that’s what he says he has brought: now he asks your aid in selling them.

 lãg.  A merchant, apparently.

Ian.  *Assam.*

 lãlil.  Yes, fat.

Ian.  *Palu mirgadetha.*

 lãg.  What’s he saying now, Milphio?

Ilil.  Paraphernalia for digging, given him for sale, he says—probably for harvesting, unless you have something else in mind.¹

 lãg.  What is that to me?

Ilil.  He wants you informed, so that you won’t fancy he has filched anything on the sly.

Ian.  *(angrily)*  *Mufonnim siccoratim!*

Ilil.  *(to Agorastocles)*  Oho! Just you mind you don’t do what he’s seeking.

 lãg.  What does he say, or what is he seeking? Explain.

Ilil.  For you to crate him, stone him and kill him.

Ian.  *Gunebbal samem lyryla!*

 lãg.  Translate, what’s that? What does he say?

Ilil.  Gad! I really don’t understand it at all now.

Ian.  Well, so that you may understand it, I shall now speak Latin for the future. A good-for-nothing rascal of a slave you must be, by gad, to make fun of a gentleman and a stranger here.

¹  V. 1020: So as to dig a garden and gather in grain.