

THE SATYRICON of Petronius, Illustrated, v5

Petronius Arbiter (Translated by Firebaugh)

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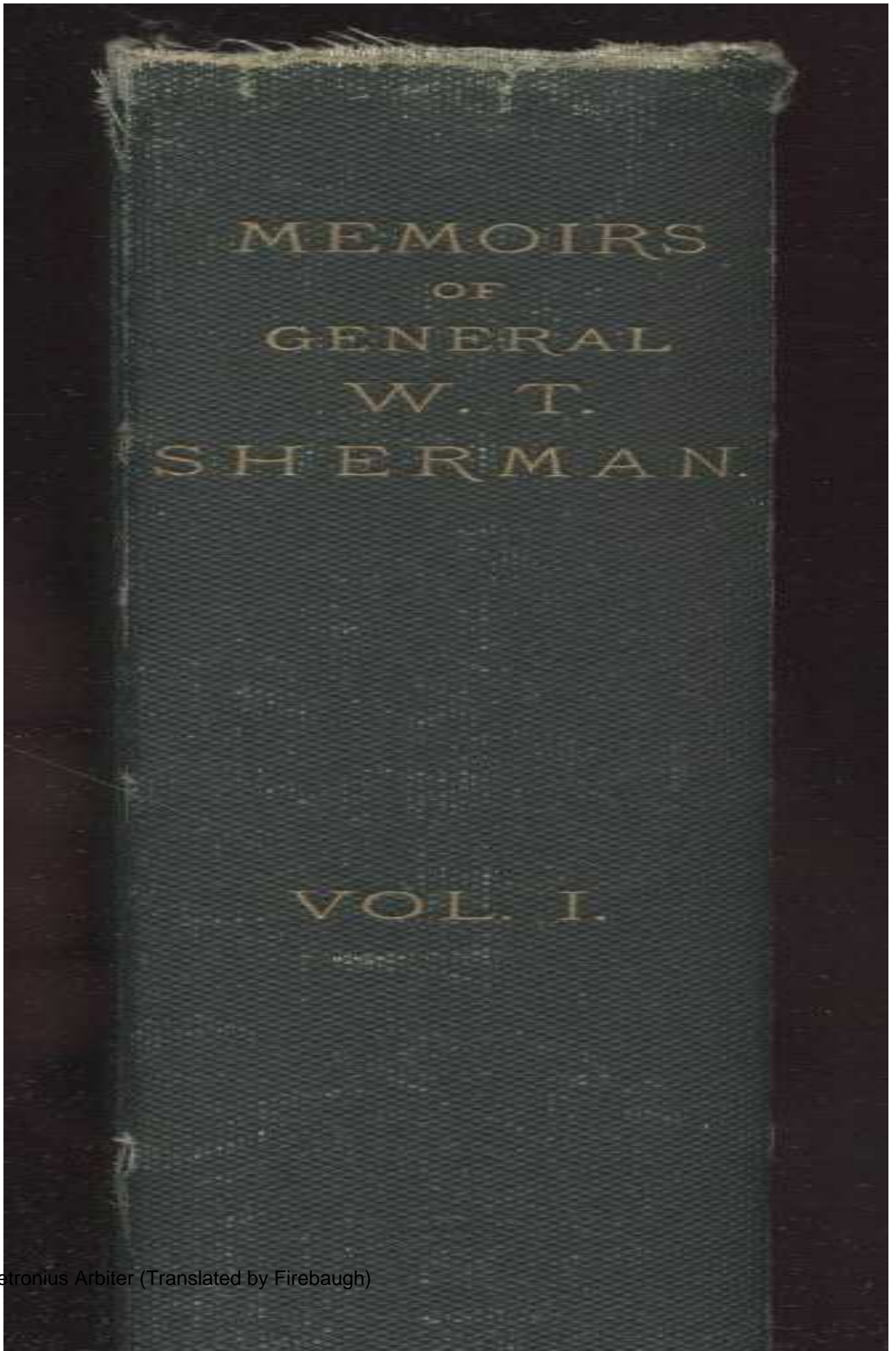
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VOLUME V.

AFFAIRS AT CROTONA

- CHAPTER THE ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH.
- CHAPTER THE ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SIXTH.
- CHAPTER THE ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SEVENTH.
- CHAPTER THE ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-EIGHT.
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- CHAPTER THE ONE HUNDRED AND FORTIETH.
- CHAPTER THE ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-FIRST.

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THE SATYRICON of Petronius, Illustrated, v5

Complete and unexpurgated translation by W. C. Firebaugh, in which are incorporated the forgeries of Nodot and Marchena, and the readings introduced into the text by De Salas.



The Witches (*page 138*)

ILLUSTRATIONS:

Chrysis

Circe

Circe and Encolpius

Circe Enraged

The Priestess' Revenge

Proselenos

Encolpius Beaten

Encolpius and Chrysis

On the Road

THE SATYRICON OF

PETRONIUS ARBITER

Volume 5.

BRACKET CODE:

(Forgeries of Nodot)

[Forgeries of Marchena]

{Additions of De Salas}

DW

VOLUME V.

AFFAIRS AT CROTONA

CHAPTER THE ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH.

For a long time affairs at Crotona ran along in this manner and Eumolpus, flushed with success so far forgot the former state of his fortunes that he even bragged to his followers that no one could hold out against any wish of his, and that any member of his suite who committed a crime in that city would, through the influence of his friends, get off unpunished. But, although I daily crammed my bloated carcass to overflowing with good things, and began more and more to believe that Fortune had turned away her face from keeping watch upon me, I frequently meditated, nevertheless, upon my present state and upon its cause. "Suppose," thought I, "some wily legacy hunter should dispatch an agent to Africa and catch us in our lie? Or even suppose the hireling servant, glutted with prosperity, should tip off his cronies or give the whole scheme away out of spite? There would be nothing for it but flight and, in a fresh state of destitution, a recalling of poverty which had been driven off. Gods and goddesses, how ill it fares with those living outside the law; they are always on the lookout for what is coming to them!" (Turning these possibilities over in my mind I left the house, in a state of black melancholy, hoping to revive my spirits in the fresh air, but scarcely had I set foot upon the public promenade when a girl, by no means homely, met me, and, calling me Polyenos, the name I had assumed since my metamorphosis, informed me that her mistress desired leave to speak with me. "You must be mistaken," I answered, in confusion, "I am only a servant and a stranger, and am by no means worthy of such an honor.")



Chrysis

CHAPTER THE ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY–SIXTH.

(“You yourself,” she replied, “are the one to whom I was sent but,) because you are well aware of your good looks, you are proud and sell your favors instead of giving them. What else can those wavy well-combed locks mean or that face, rouged and covered with cosmetics, or that languishing, wanton expression in your eyes? Why that gait, so precise that not a footstep deviates from its place, unless you wish to show off your figure in order to sell your favors? Look at me, I know nothing about omens and I don't study the heavens like the astrologers, but I can read men's intentions in their faces and I know what a flirt is after when I see him out for a stroll; so if you'll sell us what I want there's a buyer ready, but if you will do the graceful thing and lend, let us be under obligations to you for the favor. And as for your confession that you are only a common servant, by that you only fan the passion of the lady who burns for you, for some women will only kindle for canaille and cannot work up an appetite unless they see some slave or runner with his clothing girded up: a gladiator arouses one, or a mule-driver all covered with dust, or some actor posturing in some exhibition on the stage. My mistress belongs to this class, she jumps the fourteen rows from the stage to the gallery and looks for a lover among the gallery gods at the back.” Puffed up with this delightful chatter. “Come now, confess, won't you,” I queried, “is this lady who loves me yourself?” The waiting maid smiled broadly at this blunt speech. “Don't have such a high opinion of yourself,” said she, “I've never given in to any servant yet; the gods forbid that I should ever throw my arms around a gallows-bird. Let the married women see to that and kiss the marks of the scourge if they like: I'll sit upon nothing below a knight, even if I am only a servant.” I could not help marveling, for my part, at such discordant passions, and I thought it nothing short of a miracle that this servant should possess the hauteur of the mistress and the mistress the low tastes of the wench!

Each one will find what suits his taste, one thing is not for all,

One gathers roses as his share, another thorns enthrall.

After a little more teasing, I requested the maid to conduct her mistress to a clump of plane trees. Pleased with this plan, the girl picked up the skirt of her garment and turned into a laurel grove that bordered the path. After a short delay she brought her mistress from her hiding-place and conducted her to my side; a woman more perfect than any statue. There are no words with which to describe her form and anything I could say would fall far short. Her hair, naturally wavy, flowed completely over her shoulders; her forehead was low and the roots of her hair were brushed back from it; her eyebrows, running from the very springs of her cheeks, almost met at the boundary line between a pair of eyes brighter than stars shining in a moonless night; her nose was slightly aquiline and her mouth was such an one as Praxiteles dreamed Diana had. Her chin, her neck, her hands, the gleaming whiteness of her feet under a slender band of gold; she turned Parian marble dull! Then, for the first time, Doris' tried lover thought lightly of Doris!

Oh Jove, what's come to pass that thou, thine armor cast away

Art mute in heaven; and but an idle tale?

At such a time the horns should sprout, the raging bull hold sway,

Or they white hair beneath swan's down conceal

Here's Dana's self! But touch that lovely form

Thy limbs will melt beneath thy passions' storm!



CHAPTER THE ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY–SEVENTH.

She was delighted and so be witchingly did she smile that I seemed to see the full moon showing her face from behind a cloud. Then, punctuating her words with her fingers, “Dear boy, if you are not too critical to enjoy a woman of wealth who has but this year known her first man, I offer you a sister,” said she. “You have a brother already, I know, for I didn't disdain to ask, but what is to prevent your adopting a sister, too? I will come in on the same footing only deem my kisses worthy of recognition and caress me at your own pleasure!” “Rather let me implore you by your beauty,” I replied. “Do not scorn to admit an alien among your worshipers: If you permit me to kneel before your shrine you will find me a true votary and, that you may not think I approach this temple of love without a gift, I make you a present of my brother!” “What,” she exclaimed, “would you really sacrifice the only one without whom you. could not live'? The one upon whose kisses your happiness depends. Him whom you love as I would have you love me?” Such sweetness permeated her voice as she said this, so entrancing was the sound upon the listening air that you would have believed the Sirens' harmonies were floating in the breeze. I was struck with wonder and dazzled by I know not what light that shone upon me, brighter than, the whole heaven, but I made bold to inquire the name of my divinity. “Why, didn't my maid tell you that I am called Circe?” she replied. “But I am not the sun–child nor has my mother ever stayed the revolving world in its course at her pleasure; but if the Fates bring us two together I will owe heaven a favor. I don't know what it is, but some god's silent purpose is beneath this. Circe loves not Polyaeos without some reason; a great torch is always flaming when these names meet! Take me in your arms then, if you will; there's no prying stranger to fear, and your 'brother' is far away from this spot!” So saying, Circe clasped me in arms that were softer than down and drew me to the ground which was covered with colored flowers.

With flowers like these did Mother Earth great Ida's summit strew

When Jupiter, his heart aflame, enjoyed his lawful love;

There glowed the rose, the flowering rush, the violet's deep blue,

From out green meadows snow–white lilies laughed. Then from above,

This setting summoned Venus to the green and tender sod,

Bright day smiled kindly on the secret amour of the God.

Side by side upon the grassy plot we lay, exchanging a thousand kisses, the prelude to more poignant pleasure, (but alas! My sudden loss of vigor disappointed Circe!)



Circe and Eucolpius

CHAPTER THE ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-EIGHT.

(Infuriated at this affront,) “What's the matter,” demanded she; “do my kisses offend you? Is my breath fetid from fasting? Is there any evil smelling perspiration in my armpits? Or, if it's nothing of this kind, are you afraid of Giton?” Under her eyes, I flushed hotly and, if I had any virility left, I lost it then; my whole body seemed to be inert. “My queen,” I cried, “do not mock me in my humiliation. I am bewitched!” (Circe's anger was far from being appeased by such a trivial excuse; turning her eyes contemptuously away from me, she looked at her maid,) “Tell me, Chrysis, and tell me truly, is there anything repulsive about me? Anything sluttish? Have I some natural blemish that disfigures my beauty? Don't deceive your mistress! I don't know what's the matter with us, but there must be something!” Then she snatched a mirror from the silent maid and after scrutinizing all the looks and smiles which pass between lovers, she shook out her wrinkled earth-stained robe and flounced off into the temple of Venus (nearby.) And here was I, like a convicted criminal who had seen some horrible nightmare, asking myself whether the pleasure out of which I had been cheated was a reality or only a dream.

As when, in the sleep-bringing night
 Dreams sport with the wandering eyes,
 And earth, spaded up, yields to light
 Her gold that by day she denies,
 The stealthy hand snatches the spoils;
 The face with cold sweat is suffused
 And Fear grips him tight in her toils
 Lest robbers the secret have used
 And shake out the gold from his breast.
 But, when they depart from his brain,
 These enchantments by which he's obsessed,
 And Truth comes again with her train
 Restoring perspective and pain,
 The phantasm lives to the last,
 The mind dwells with shades of the past.

(The misfortune seemed to me a dream, but I imagined that I must surely be under a spell of enchantment and, for a long time, I was so devoid of strength that I could not get to my feet. But finally my mental depression began to abate, little by little my strength came back to me, and I returned home: arrived there, I feigned illness and threw myself upon my couch. A little late: Giton, who had heard of my indisposition, entered the room in some concern. As I wished to relieve his mind I informed him that I had merely sought my pallet to take a rest, telling him much other gossip but not a word about my mishap as I stood in great fear of his jealousy and, to lull any suspicion which he might entertain, I drew him to my side and endeavoured to give him some proofs of my love but all my panting and sweating were in vain. He jumped up in a rage and accused my lack of virility and change of heart, declaring that he had for a long time suspected that I had been expending my vigor and breath elsewhere. “No! No! Darling,” I replied, “my love for you has always been the same, but reason prevails now over love and wantonness.”) “And for the Socratic continence of your love, I thank you in his name,” (he replied sarcastically,) “Alcibiades was never more spotless when he left his master's bed!”

CHAPTER THE ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY–NINTH.

“Believe me, 'brother,' when I tell you that I do not know whether I am a man or not,” (I vainly protested;) “I do not feel like one, if I am! Dead and buried lies that part in which I was once an Achilles!” (Giton, seeing that I was completely enervated, and) fearing that it might give cause for scandal if he were caught in this quiet place with me, tore himself away and fled into an inner part of the house. (He had just gone when) Chrysis entered the room and handed me her mistress's tablets, in which were written the following words:

CIRCE TO POLYAENOS—GREETING.

Were I a wanton, I should complain of my disappointment, but as it is I am beholden to your impotence, for by it I dallied the longer in the shadow of pleasure. Still, I would like to know how you are and whether you got home upon your own legs, for the doctors say that one cannot walk without nerves! Young man, I advise you to beware of paralysis for I never in my life saw a patient in such great danger; you're as good as dead, I'm sure! What if the same numbness should attack your hands and knees? You would have to send for the funeral trumpeters! Still, even if I have been affronted, I will not begrudge a prescription to one as sick as you! Ask Giton if you would like to recover. I am sure you will get back your strength if you will sleep without your “brother” for three nights. So far as I am concerned, I am not in the least alarmed about finding someone to whom I shall be as pleasing as I was to you; my mirror and my reputation do not lie.

Farewell (if you can).

“Such things will happen,” said Chrysis, when she saw that I had read through the entire inditement, “and especially in this city, where the women can lure the moon from the sky! But we'll find a cure for your trouble. Just return a diplomatic answer to my mistress and restore her self–esteem by frank courtesy for, truth to tell, she has never been herself from the minute she received that affront.” I gladly followed the maid's advice and wrote upon the tablets as follows:

CHAPTER THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTIETH.

POLYAENOS TO CIRCE—GREETING.

Dear lady, I confess that I have often given cause for offense, for I am only a man, and a young one, too, but I never committed a deadly crime until today! You have my confession of guilt, I deserve any punishment you may see fit to prescribe. I betrayed a trust, I murdered a man, I violated a temple: demand my punishment for these crimes. Should it be your pleasure to slay me I will come to you with my sword; if you are content with a flogging I will run naked to my mistress; only bear in mind that it was not myself but my tools that failed me. I was a soldier, and ready, but I had no arms. What threw me into such disorder I do not know, perhaps my imagination outran my lagging body, by aspiring to too much it is likely that I spent my pleasure in delay; I cannot imagine what the trouble was. You bid me beware of paralysis; as if a disease which prevented my enjoying you could grow worse! But my apology amounts briefly to this; if you will grant me an opportunity of repairing my fault, I will give you satisfaction.

Farewell

After dismissing Chrysis with these fair promises, I paid careful attention to my body which had so evilly served me and, omitting the bath, I annointed myself, in moderation, with unguents and placed myself upon a more strengthening diet such as onions and snail's heads without condiments, and I also drank more sparingly of wine; then, taking a short walk before settling down to sleep, I went to bed without Giton. So anxious was I to please her that I feared the outcome if my "brother" lay tickling my side.

CHAPTER THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY–FIRST.

Finding myself vigorous in mind and body when I arose next morning, I went down to the same clump of plane trees, though I dreaded the spot as one of evil omen, and commenced to wait for Chrysis to lead me on my way. I took a short stroll and had just seated myself where I had sat the day before, when she came under the trees, leading a little old woman by the hand. “Well, Mr. Squeamish,” she chirped, when she had greeted me, “have you recovered your appetite?” In the meantime, the old hag:

A wine–soaked crone with twitching lips
brought out a twisted hank of different colored yarns and put it about my neck; she then kneaded dust and spittle and, dipping her middle finger into the mixture, she crossed my forehead with it, in spite of my protests.

As long as life remains, there's hope;
Thou rustic God, oh hear our prayer,
Great Priapus, I thee invoke,
Temper our arms to dare!

When she had made an end of this incantation she ordered me to spit three times, and three times to drop stones into my bosom, each stone she wrapped up in purple after she had muttered charms over it; then, directing her hands to my privates, she commenced to try out my virility. Quicker than thought the nerves responded to the summons, filling the crone's hand with an enormous erection! Skipping for joy, “Look, Chrysis, look,” she cried out, “see what a hare I've started, for someone else to course!” (This done, the old lady handed me over to Chrysis, who was greatly delighted at the recovery of her mistress's treasure; she hastily conducted me straight to the latter, introducing me into a lovely nook that nature had furnished with everything which could delight the eye.)

Shorn of its top, the swaying pine here casts a
summer shade
And quivering cypress, and the stately plane
And berry–laden laurel. A brook's wimpling waters strayed
Lashed into foam, but dancing on again
And rolling pebbles in their chattering flow.
'Twas Love's own nook,
As forest nightingale and urban Procne undertook
To bear true witness; hovering, the gleaming grass above
And tender violets; wooing with song, their stolen love.

Fanning herself with a branch of flowering myrtle, she lay, stretched out with her marble neck resting upon a golden cushion. When she caught sight of me she blushed faintly; she recalled yesterday's affront, I suppose. At her invitation, I sat down by her side, as soon as the others had gone; whereupon she put the branch of myrtle over my face and emboldened, as if a wall had been raised between us, “Well, Mr. Paralytic,” she teased, “have you brought all of yourself along today?” “Why ask me,” I replied, “why not try me instead?” and throwing myself bodily into her arms, I revelled in her kisses with no witchcraft to stop me.



Circe Enraged

CHAPTER THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY–SECOND.

The loveliness of her form drew, me to her and summoned me to love. Our lips were pressed together in a torrent of smacking kisses, our groping hands had discovered every trick of excitation, and our bodies, clasped in a mutual embrace, had fused our souls into one, (and then, in the very midst of these ravishing preliminaries my nerves again played me false and I was unable to last until the instant of supreme bliss.) Lashed to fury by these inexcusable affronts, the lady at last ran to avenge herself and, calling her house servants, she gave orders for me to be hoisted upon their shoulders and flogged; then, still unsatisfied with the drastic punishment she had inflicted upon me, she called all the spinning women and scrubbing wenches in the house and ordered them to spit upon me. I covered my face with my hands but I uttered no complaint as I well knew what I deserved and, overwhelmed with blows and spittle, I was driven from the house. Proselenos was kicked out too, Chrysis was beaten, and all the slaves grumbled among themselves and wondered what had upset their mistress's good humor. I took heart after having given some thought to my misfortunes and, artfully concealing the marks of the blows for fear that Eumolpus would make merry over my mishaps or, worse yet, that Giton might be saddened by my disgrace, I did the only thing I could do to save my self–respect, I pretended that I was sick and went to bed. There, I turned the full fury of my resentment against that recreant which had been the sole cause of all the evil accidents which had befallen me.

Three times I grasped the two–edged blade
The recreant to cut away;
Three times by Fear my hand was stayed
And palsied Terror said me nay
That which I might have done before
'Twas now impossible to do;
For, cold with Fear, the wretch withdrew
Into a thousand–wrinkled mare,
And shrank in shame before my gaze
Nor would his head uncover more.
But though the scamp in terror skulked,
With words I flayed him as he sulked.

Raising myself upon my elbow I rebuked the shirker in some such terms as these: “What have you to say for yourself, you disgrace to gods and men,” I demanded, “for your name must never be mentioned among refined people. Did I deserve to be lifted up to heaven and then dragged down to hell by you? Was it right for you to slander my flourishing and vigorous years and land me in the shadows and lassitude of decrepit old age? Give me some sign, however faint, I beg of you, that you have returned to life!” I vented my anger in words such as these.

His eyes were fixed, and with averted look
He stood, less moved by any word of mine
Than weeping willows bending o'er a brook
Or drooping poppies as at noon they pine.

When I had made an end of this invective, so out of keeping with good taste, I began to do penance for my soliloquy and blushed furtively because I had so far forgotten my modesty as to invoke in words that part of my body which men of dignity do not even recognize. Then, rubbing my forehead for a long time, “Why have I committed an indiscretion in relieving my resentment by natural abuse,” I mused, “what does it amount to? Are we not accustomed to swear at every member of the human body, the belly, throat, or even the head when it aches, as it often does? Did not Ulysses wrangle with his own heart? Do not the tragedians 'Damn their eyes' just as if they could hear?”

“Gouty patients swear at their feet, rheumatics at their hands, blear–eyed people at their eyes, and do not those who often stub their toes blame their feet for all their pain?”

“Why will our Catos with their frowning brows

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Condemn a work of fresh simplicity?
A cheerful kindness my pure speech endows;
What people do, I write, to my capacity.
For who knows not the pleasures Venus gives?
Who will not in a warm bed tease his members?
Great Epicurus taught a truth that lives;
Love and enjoy life! All the rest is embers.
“Nothing can be more insincere than the silly prejudices of mankind, and nothing sillier than the morality of bigotry,”

CHAPTER THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY–THIRD.

I called Giton when I had finished my meditation: “Tell me, little brother,” I demanded, “tell me, on your honor: Did Ascyrtos stay awake until he had exacted his will of you, the night he stole you away from me? Or was he content to spend the night like a chaste widow?” Wiping his eyes the lad, in carefully chosen words took oath that Ascyrtos had used no force against him. (The truth of the matter is, that I was so distraught with my own misfortunes that I knew not what I was saying. “Why recall past memories which can only cause pain,” said I to myself. I then directed all my energies towards the recovery of my lost manhood. To achieve this I was ready even to devote myself to the gods; accordingly, I went out to invoke the aid of Priapus.) {Putting as good a face upon the matter as I could} I knelt upon the threshold of his shrine and invoked the God in the following verses:

“Of Bacchus and the nymphs, companion boon,
 Whom fair Dione set o'er forests wide
 As God: whom Lesbos and green Thasos own
 For deity, whom Lydians, far and wide
 Adore through all the seasons of the year;
 Whose temple in his own Hypaepa placed,
 Thou Dryad's joy and Bacchus', hear my prayer!
 To thee I come, by no dark blood disgraced,
 No shrine, in wicked lust have I profaned;
 When I was poor and worn with want, I sinned
 Not by intent, a pauper's sin's not banned
 As of another! Unto thee I pray
 Lift thou the load from off my tortured mind,
 Forgive a light offense! When fortune smiles
 I'll not thy glory shun and leave behind
 Thy worship! Unto thee, a goat that feels
 His primest vigor, father of the flocks
 Shall come! And suckling pigs, the tender young
 Of some fine grunting sow! New wine, in crocks
 Shall foam! Thy grateful praises shall be sung
 By youths who thrice shall dance around thy shrine
 Happy, in youth and full of this year's wine!”

While I was engaged in this diplomatic effort in behalf of the affected member, a hideous crone with disheveled hair, and clad in black garments which were in great disorder, entered the shrine and, laying hands upon me, led me {thoroughly frightened,} out into the portico.



The Priestess' Revenge

CHAPTER THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY–FOURTH.

“What witches” (she cried,) “have devoured your manhood? What filth did you tread upon at some crossroads, in the dark? Not even by the boy could you do your duty but, weak and effeminate, you are worn out like a cart–horse at a hill, you have lost both labor and sweat! Not content with getting yourself into trouble, you have stirred up the wrath of the gods against me {and I will make you smart for it.}” She then led me, unresisting, back into the priestess's room, pushed me down upon the bed, snatched a cane that hung upon the door, and gave me another thrashing: I remained silent and, had the cane not splintered at the first stroke, thereby diminishing the force of the blow, she might easily have broken my arms or my head. I groaned dismally, and especially when she manipulated my member and, shedding a flood of tears, I covered my head with my right arm and huddled down upon the pillow. Nor did she weep less bitterly:

The sailor, naked from his foundered barque,
Some shipwrecked mariner seeks out to hear his woe;
When hail beats down a farmer's crop, his cark
Seeks consolation from another, too.
Death levels caste and sufferers unites,
And weeping parents are as one in grief;
We also will beseech the starry heights,
United prayers climb best, is the belief.

She seated herself upon the other side of the bed and in quavering tones commenced to accuse the delays of old age. At last the priestess came in. “Why,” she cried, “what has brought you into my cell as if you were visiting a newly made grave? And on a feast–day, too, when even mourners ought to smile!” “OEnothea,” the old hag replied, “this young man here was born under an unlucky star: he can't dispose of his goods to either boy or girl. Such an unfortunate fellow you never saw. He has no tool at all, only a piece of leather soaked in water! I wish you would tell me what you think of a man who could get up from Circe's bed without having tasted pleasure!” On hearing these words, OEnothea sat down between us and, after shaking her head for a while, “I'm the only one that knows how to cure that disease,” said she, “and for fear you think I'm talking to hear myself talk, I'll just have the young fellow sleep with me for a night, and if I don't make it as hard as horn!

All that you see in the world must give heed to my mandates;
Blossoming earth, when I will it, must languish, a desert.'
Riches pour forth, when I will it, from crags and grim boulders
Waters will spurt that will rival the Nile at its flooding
Seas calm their billows before me, gales silence their howlings,
Hearing my step! And the rivers sink into their channels;
Dragons, Hyrcanian tigers stand fast at my bidding!
Why should I tell you of small things? The image of Luna
Drawn by my spells must descend, and Apollo, atremble
Backs up his horses and turns from his course at my order!
Such is the power of my word! By the rites of a virgin
Quenched is the raging of bulls; and the sun's daughter Circe
Changed and transfigured the crew of the wily Ulysses.
Proteus changes his form when his good pleasure dictates,
I, who am skilled in these arts, can the shrubs of Mount Ida
Plant in the ocean; turn rivers to flow up the mountains!”



CHAPTER THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FOUR. *Proselenos*

CHAPTER THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY–FIFTH.

At this declaration, which was so awe–inspiring, I shuddered in terror, and commenced to scrutinize the crone more narrowly. “Come now,” said OEnothea, “obey my orders,” and, carefully wiping her hands, she bent over the cot and kissed me, once, twice! On the middle of the altar OEnothea placed an old table, upon which she heaped live coals, then with melted pitch she repaired a goblet which had become cracked through age. Next she replaced, in the smoke–stained wall, a peg which had come out when she took down the wooden goblet. Then, having donned a mantle, in the shape of a piece of square–cut cloth, she set a huge kettle upon the hearth and at the same time speared with a fork a cloth hanging upon the meathooks, and lifted it down. It contained some beans which had been laid away for future use, and a very small and stale piece of pig's cheek, scored with a thousand slashes. When she had untied the string which fastened the cloth, she poured some of the beans upon the table and ordered me to shell them quickly and carefully. I obey her mandate and with careful fingers separate the beans from the filthy pods which contain them; but she, accusing my clumsiness, hastily snatched them and, skillfully tearing off the pods with her teeth, spat them upon the ground, where they looked like dead flies. I wondered, then, at the ingenuity of poverty and its expedients for emergency. (So ardent a follower of this virtue did the priestess seem that it was reflected in everything around her. Her dwelling, in particular, was a very shrine of poverty.)

No Indian ivory set in gold gleamed here,
 No trodden marble glistened here; no earth
 Mocked for its gifts; but Ceres' festive grove:
 With willow wickerwork 'twas set around,
 New cups of clay by revolutions shaped
 Of lowly wheel. For honey soft, a bowl;
 Platters of green bark wickerwork, a jar
 Stained by the lifeblood of the God of Wine;
 The walls around with chaff and spattered clay
 Were covered. Flanging from protruding nails
 Were slender stalks of the green rush; and then
 Suspended from the smoky beam, the stores
 Of this poor cottage. Service berries soft,
 Entwined in fragrant wreaths hung down,
 Dried savory and raisins by the bunch.
 An hostess here like she on Attic soil,
 Of Hecate's pure worship worthy she!
 Whose fame Kallimachos so grandly sang
 'Twill live forever through the speaking years.

CHAPTER THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY–SIXTH.

In the meantime, (having shelled the beans,) she took a mouthful of the meat and with the fork was replacing the pig's cheek, which was coeval with herself, upon the meat–hook, when the rotten stool, which she was using to augment her height, broke down under the old lady's weight and let her fall upon the hearth. The neck of the pot was broken, putting out the fire, which was just getting a good start, her elbow was burned by a flaming brand, and her whole face was covered by the ashes raised by her fall. I jumped up in dismay and, not without laughing, helped the old lady to her feet. She hastily scurried out into the neighborhood to replenish the fire, for fear anything should delay the sacrifice. I was on my way to the door of the cell when lo! and behold! three sacred geese which were accustomed, I suppose, to demand their feed from the old woman at midday, made a rush at me and, surrounding me, made me nervous with their abominable rabid cackling. One tore at my tunic, another undid the lacings of my sandals and tugged at them, but one in particular, the ringleader and moving spirit of this savage attack, did not hesitate to worry at my leg with his serrated bill. Unable to see the joke, I twisted off one of the legs of the little table and, thus armed, began to belabor the pugnacious brute. Nor did I rest content with a light blow, I avenged myself by the death of the goose.

'Twas thus, I ween, the birds of Stymphalus
 To heaven fled, by Herakles impelled;
 The Harpies, too, whose reeking pinions held
 That poison which the feast of Phineus
 Contaminated. All the air above
 With their unwonted lamentations shook,
 The heavens in uproar and confusion move
 {The Stars, in dread, their orbits then forsook!}

By this time the two remaining geese had picked up the beans which had been scattered all over the floor and bereft, I suppose, of their leader, had gone back into the temple; and I, well content with my revenge and my booty, threw the dead goose behind the cot and bathed the trifling wound in my leg with vinegar: then, fearing a scolding, I made up my mind to run away and, collecting together all my belongings, started to leave the house. I had not yet stepped over the threshold of the cell, however, when I caught sight of OEnothea returning with an earthen vessel full of live coals. Thereupon I retraced my steps and, throwing off my garments, I took my stand just inside the door, as if I were awaiting her return. She banked her fire with broken reeds, piled some pieces of wood on top, and began to excuse her delay on the ground that her friend would not permit her to leave until after the customary three drinks had been taken. “But what were you up to in my absence?” she demanded. “Where are the beans?” Thinking that I had done a thing worthy of all praise, I informed her of the battle in all its details and, that she might not be downcast any longer, I produced the dead goose in payment for her loss. When the old lady laid eyes upon that, she raised such a clamor that you would have thought that the geese had invaded the room again. Confounded and thunderstruck at the novelty of my crime, I asked her why she was so angry and why she pitied the goose rather than myself.

CHAPTER THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY SEVENTH.

But, beating her palms together, “You villain, are you so brazen that you can speak?” she shrieked. “Don't you know what a serious crime you've committed? You have slaughtered the delight of Priapus, a goose, the very darling of married women! And for fear you think that nothing serious has happened, if the magistrates find this out you'll go to the cross! Until this day my dwelling has been inviolate and you have polluted it with blood! You have conducted yourself in such a manner that any enemy I have can turn me out of the priesthood!”

She spoke, and from her trembling head she tore the snow-white hair,
 And scratched her cheeks: her eyes shed floods of tears.
 As when a torrent headlong rushes down the valleys drear,
 Its icy fetters gone when Sprint appears,
 And strikes the frozen shackles from rejuvenated earth
 So down her face the tears in torrents swept
 And wracking sobs convulsed her as she wept.

“Please don't make such a fuss,” I said, “I'll give you an ostrich in place of your goose!” While she sat upon the cot and, to my stupefaction, bewailed the death of the goose, Proselenos came in with the materials for the sacrifice. Seeing the dead goose and inquiring the cause of her grief, she herself commenced to weep more violently still and to commiserate me, as if I had slain my own father, instead of a public goose. Growing tired of this nonsense at last, “See here,” said I, “could I not purchase immunity for a price, even though I had assaulted you? Even though I had murdered a man? Look here! I'm laying down two gold pieces, you can buy both gods and geese with them!” “Forgive me, young man,” said OEnothea, when she caught sight of the gold, “I am anxious upon your account; that is a proof of love, not of malignity. Let us take such precautions that not a soul will find this out. As for you, pray to the gods to forgive your sacrilege!”

The rich man can sail in a favoring gale
 And snap out his course at his pleasure;
 A Dance espouse, no Acrisius will rail,
 His credence by hers he will measure;
 Write verse, or declaim; snap the finger of scorn
 At the world, yet still win all his cases,
 The rabble will drink in his words with concern
 When a Cato austere it displaces.
 At law, his “not proven,” or “proved,” he can have
 With Servius or Labeo vieing;
 With gold at command anything he may crave
 Is his without asking or sighing.
 The universe bows at his slightest behest,
 For Jove is a prisoner in his treasure chest.

In the meantime, she scurried around and put a jar of wine under my hands and, when my fingers had all been spread out evenly, she purified them with leeks and parsley. Then, muttering incantations, she threw hazel-nuts into the wine and drew her conclusions as they sank or floated; but she did not hoodwink me, for those with empty shells, no kernel and full of air, would of course float, while those that were heavy and full of sound kernel would sink to the bottom. {She then turned her attention to the goose,} and, cutting open the breast, she drew out a very fat liver from which she foretold my future. Then, for fear any trace of the crime should remain, she cut the whole goose up, stuck the pieces upon spits, and served up a very delectable dinner for me, whom, but a moment before, she had herself condemned to death, in her own words! Meanwhile, cups of unmixed wine went merrily around (and the crones greedily devoured the goose which they had but so lately lamented. When the last morsel had disappeared, OEnothea, half-drunk by this time, looked at me and said, “We must now go through with the mysteries, so that you may get back your virility.”)



Eucolpius Beaten

CHAPTER THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY–EIGHTH.

(As she said this OEnothea brought) out a leathern dildo which, when she had smeared it with oil, ground pepper, and pounded nettle seed, she commenced to force, little by little, up my anus. The merciless old virago then anointed the insides of my thighs with the same decoction; finally mixing nasturtium juice with elixir of southern wood, she gave my genitals a bath and, picking up a bunch of green nettles, she commenced to strike me gently all over my belly below the navel. {The nettles stung me horribly and I suddenly took to my heels, with the old hags in full pursuit.} Although they were befuddled with wine and lust they followed the right road and chased me through several wards, screaming “Stop thief.” I made good my escape, however, although every toe was bleeding as the result of my headlong flight. (I got home as quickly as I could and, worn out with fatigue, I sought my couch, but I could not snatch a wink of sleep for the evil adventures which had befallen me kept running through my brain and, brooding upon them, I came to the conclusion that no one could be so abjectly unfortunate. “Has Fortune, always inimical to me, stood in need of the pangs of love, that she might torture me more cruelly still,” I cried out; “unhappy wretch that I am! Fortune and Love have joined forces to bring about my ruin. Cruel Eros himself had never dealt leniently with me, loved or lover I am put to the torture! Take the case of Chrysis: she loves me desperately, never leaves off teasing me, she who despised me as a servant, because, when she was acting as her mistress's go-between, I was dressed in the garments of a slave: she, I say) that same Chrysis, who looked with contempt upon your former lowly lot, is now bent upon following it up even at the peril of her life; (she swore that she would never leave my side on the day when she told me of the violence of her passion: but Circe owns me, heart and soul, all others I despise. Who could be lovelier than she?) What loveliness had Ariadne or Leda to compare with hers? What had Helen to compare with her, what has Venus? If Paris himself had seen her with her dancing eyes, when he acted as umpire for the quarreling goddesses, he would have given up Helen and the goddesses for her! If I could only steal a kiss, if only I might put my arms around that divine, that heavenly bosom, perhaps the virility would come back to this body and the parts, flaccid from witchcraft would, I believe, come into their own. Contempt cannot tire me out: what if I was flogged; I will forget it! What if I was thrown out! I will treat it as a joke! Only let me be restored to her good graces!

At rest on my pallet, night's silence had scarce settled down
 To soothe me, and eyes heavy-laden with slumber to lull
 When torturing Amor laid hold of me, seizing my hair
 And dragging me, wounding me, ordered a vigil till dawn.
 'Oh heart of stone, how coast thou lie here alone?' said the God,
 'Thou joy of a thousand sweet mistresses, how, oh my slave?'
 In disarrayed nightrobe I leap to bare feet and essay
 To follow all paths; but a road can discover by none.
 One moment I hasten; the next it is torture to move,
 It irks me again to turn back, shame forbids me to halt
 And stand in the midst of the road. Lo! the voices of men,
 The roar of the streets, and the songs of the birds, and the bark
 Of vigilant watch-dogs are hushed! Alone, I of all
 Society dread both my slumber and couch, and obey
 Great Lord of the Passions, thy mandate which on me was laid.”

CHAPTER THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY–NINTH.

(Such thoughts as these, of lovely Circe's charms so wrought upon my mind that) I disordered my bed by embracing the image, as it were, of my mistress, (but my efforts were all wasted.) This obstinate (affliction finally wore out my patience, and I cursed the hostile deity by whom I was bewitched. I soon recovered my composure, however, and, deriving some consolation from thinking of the heroes of old, who had been persecuted by the anger of the gods, I broke out in these lines:)

Hostile gods and implacable fate not me alone pursue;
 Herakles once suffered the weight of heaven's displeasure too
 Driven from the Inachian coast: Laomedon of old
 Sated two of the heavenly host: in Pelias, behold
 Juno's power to avenge an affront; and Telephus took arms
 Knowing not he must bear the brunt; Ulysses feared the storms
 Angry Neptune decreed as his due. Now, me to overwhelm
 Outraged Priapus ever pursues on land and Nereus' realm.

(Tortured by these cares I spent the whole night in anxiety, and at dawn, Giton, who had found out that I had slept at home, entered the room and bitterly accused me of leading a licentious life; he said that the whole household was greatly concerned at what I had been doing, that I was so rarely present to attend to my duties, and that the intrigue in which I was engaged would very likely bring about my ruin. I gathered from this that he had been well informed as to my affairs, and that someone had been to the house inquiring for me. Thereupon,) I began to ply Giton with questions as to whether anyone had made inquiry for me; “Not today,” he replied, “but yesterday a woman came in at the door, not bad looking, either, and after talking to me for quite a while, and wearing me out with her far–fetched conversation, finally ended by saying that you deserved punishment, and that you would receive the scourging of a slave if the injured party pressed his complaint.” (This news afflicted me so bitterly that I levelled fresh recriminations against Fortune, and) I had not yet finished grumbling when Chrysis came in and, throwing herself upon me, embraced me passionately. “I have you,” she cried, “just as I hoped I would; you are my heart's desire, my joy, you can never put out this flame of mine unless you quench it in my blood!” (I was greatly embarrassed by this wantonness of Chrysis and had recourse to flattery in order that I might rid myself of her, as I feared that her passionate outcries would reach the ears of Eumolpus who, in the arrogance of success, had put on the manner of the master. So on this account, I did everything I could think of to calm Chrysis. I feigned love, whispered compliments, in short, so skillfully did I dissimulate that she believed I was Love's own captive. I showed her what pressing peril overhung us should she be caught in that room with me, as Eumolpus was only too ready to punish the slightest offense. On hearing this, she left me hurriedly, and all the more quickly, as she caught sight of Giton, who had only left me a little before she had come in, on his way to my room. She was scarcely gone when) one of the newly engaged servants rushed in and informed me that the master was furiously angry with me because of my two days' absence from duty; I would do well, therefore, to prepare some plausible excuse, as it was not likely that his angry passion would be placated until someone had been flogged. (Seeing that I was so vexed and disheartened, Giton said not a word about the woman, contenting himself with speaking of Eumolpus, and advising me that it would be better to joke with him than to treat the matter seriously. I followed this lead and appeared before the old fellow, with so merry a countenance that, instead of showing severity, he received me with good humor and rallied me upon the success of my love affairs, praising the elegance of my figure which made me such a favorite with the ladies. “I know very well,” he went on, “that a lovely woman is dying for love of you, Encolpius, and this may come in handy for us, so play your part and I'll play mine, too!”)



Eucolpius and Chrysis

CHAPTER THE ONE HUNDRED AND FORTIETH.

(He was still speaking, when in came a) matron of the most exclusive social set, Philumene by name, who had often, when young, extorted many a legacy by means of her charms, but an old woman now, the flower of her beauty faded, she threw her son and daughter in the way of childless old men and through this substitution she contrived to continue her established policy. She came to Eumolpus, both to commend her children to his practical judgment and to entrust herself and her hopes to his good nature, he being the only one in all the world who could daily instruct young children in healthy precepts. In short, she left her children in Eumolpus' house in order that they might hear the words that dropped from his lips, as this was the only legacy she could leave to them. Nor did she do otherwise than as she had promised, but left in his bed chamber a very beautiful daughter and her brother, a lad, and pretended that she herself was compelled to go out to a temple to offer up her vows. Eumolpus, who was so continent that even I was a boy in his eyes, lost no time in inviting the damsel to sacrifice to the Aversa Venus; but, as he had told everyone that he was gouty and that his back was weak, and as he stood in danger of upsetting the whole farce if he did not carefully live up to the pretence, he therefore, that the imposture might be kept up, prevailed upon the young lady to seat herself upon that goodness which had been commended to her, and ordered Corax to crawl under the bed upon which he himself was lying and after bracing himself by putting his hands upon the floor, to hoist his master up and down with his own back. Corax carried out the order in full and skillfully seconded the wriggling of the girl with a corresponding seesaw. Then, when the crisis was about due, Eumolpus, in a ringing voice, called out to Corax to increase the cadence. And thus the old lecher, suspended between his servant and his mistress, enjoyed himself just as if he were in a swing. Time and again Eumolpus repeated this performance, to the accompaniment of ringing laughter in which he himself joined. At last, fearing I might lose an opportunity through lack of application, I also made advances to the brother who was enjoying the gymnastics of his sister through the keyhole, to see if he would prove amenable to assault. Nor did this well trained lad reject my advances; but alas! I discovered that the God was still my enemy. (However, I was not so blue over this failure as I had been over those before, and my virility returned a little later and, suddenly finding myself in better fettle I cried out,) "Great are the gods who have made me whole again! In his loving kindness, Mercury, who conducts and reconducts the souls, has restored to me that which a hostile hand had cut away. Look! You will find that I am more graciously endowed than was Protestilaus or any other of the heroes of old!" So saying, I lifted up my tunic and showed Eumolpus that I was whole. At first he was startled, then, that he might believe his own eyes, he handled this pledge of the good will of the gods with both hands. (Our good humor was revived by this blessing and we laughed at the diplomacy of Philumene and at the skill with which her children plied their calling, little likely to profit them much with us, however, as it was only in hopes of coming into a legacy that she had abandoned the boy and girl to us. Meditating upon this unscrupulous method of getting around childless old men, I began to take thought of the present state of our own affairs and made use of the occasion to warn Eumolpus that he might be bitten in biting the biters. "Everything that we do," I said, "should be dictated by Prudence.) Socrates, {whose judgment was riper than that} of the gods or of men used to boast that he had never looked into a tavern nor believed the evidence of his own eyes in any crowded assembly which was disorderly: so nothing is more in keeping than always conversing with wisdom.

Live coals are more readily held in men's mouths than a secret!

Whatever you talk of at home will fly forth in an instant,

Become a swift rumor and beat at the walls of your city.

Nor is it enough that your confidence thus has been broken,

As rumor but grows in the telling and strives to embellish.

The covetous servant who feared to make public his knowledge

A hole in the ground dug, and therein did whisper his secret

That told of a king's hidden ears: this the earth straightway echoed,

And rustling reeds added that Midas was king in the story.

Every word of this is true," I insisted, "and no one deserves to get into trouble more quickly than he who

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covets the goods of others! How could cheats and swindlers live unless they threw purses or little bags clinking with money into the crowd for bait? Just as dumb brutes are enticed by food, human beings are not to be caught unless they have something in the way of hope at which to nibble! (That was the reason that the Crotonians gave us such a satisfactory reception, but) the ship does not arrive, from Africa, with your money and your slaves, as you promised. The patience of the fortune-hunters is worn out and they have already cut down their liberality so that, either I am mistaken, or else our usual luck is about to return to punish you!”

CHAPTER THE ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY–FIRST.

(“I have thought up a scheme,” replied Eumolpus, “which will embarrass our fortune–hunting friends sorely,” and as he said this, he drew his tablets from his wallet and read his last wishes aloud, as follows:) “All who are down for legacies under my will, my freedmen only excepted, shall come into what I bequeath them subject to this condition, that they do cut my body into pieces and devour said pieces in sight of the crowd: {nor need they be inordinately shocked} for among some peoples, the law ordaining that the dead shall be devoured by their relatives is still in force; nay, even the sick are often abused because they render their own flesh worse! I admonish my friends, by these presents, lest they refuse what I command, that they devour my carcass with as great relish as they damned my soul!” (Eumolpus had just started reading the first clauses when several of his most intimate friends entered the room and catching sight of the tablets in his hand in which was contained his last will and testament, besought him earnestly to permit them to hear the contents. He consented immediately and read the entire instrument from first to last. But when they had heard that extraordinary stipulation by which they were under the necessity of devouring his carcass, they were greatly cast down, but) his reputation for enormous wealth dulled the eyes and brains of the wretches, (and they were such cringing sycophants that they dared not complain of the outrage in his hearing. One there was, nevertheless, named) Gorgias, who was willing to comply, (provided he did not have too long to wait! To this, Eumolpus made answer:) “I have no fear that your stomach will turn, it will obey orders; if, for one hour of nausea you promise it a plethora of good things: just shut your eyes and pretend that it's not human guts you've bolted, but ten million sesterces! And beside, we will find some condiment which will disguise the taste! No flesh is palatable of itself, it must be seasoned by art and reconciled to the unwilling stomach. And, if you desire to fortify the plan by precedents, the Saguntines ate human flesh when besieged by Hannibal, and they had no legacy in prospect! In stress of famine, the inhabitants of Petelia did the same and gained nothing from the diet except that they were not hungry! When Numantia was taken by Scipio, mothers, with the half–eaten bodies of their babes in their bosoms, were found! (Therefore, since it is only the thought of eating human flesh that makes you squeamish, you must try to overcome your aversion, with all your heart, so that you may come into the immense legacies I have put you down for!” So carelessly did Eumolpus reel off these extravagances that the fortune–hunters began to lose faith in the validity of his promises and subjected our words and actions to a closer scrutiny immediately; their suspicions grew with their experience and they came to the conclusion that we were out and out grafters, and thereupon those who had been put to the greatest expense for our entertainment resolved to seize us and take it out in just revenge; but Chrysis, who was privy to all their scheming, informed me of the designs which the Crotonians had hatched; and when I heard this news, I was so terrified that I fled instantly, with Giton, and left Eumolpus to his fate. I learned, a few days later, that the Crotonians, furious because the old fox had lived so long and so sumptuously at the public expense, had put him to death in the Massilian manner. That you may comprehend what this means, know that) whenever the Massilians were ravaged by the plague, one of the poor would offer himself to be fed for a whole year upon choice food at public charge; after which, decked out with olive branches and sacred vestments, he was led out through the entire city, loaded with imprecations so that he might take to himself the evils from which the city suffered, and then thrown headlong (from the cliff.)



