

The Trouble with Throuples in Plautus's *Stichus* - Fade Manley

Stichus: amicam ego habeo Stephanium hinc
ex proxumo,
tui fratris ancillam: eo condicam symbolam
ad cenam ad eius conseruom Sangarinum
Syrum.
eadem est amica ambobus, riuales sumus. (ll.
431-4)

Stichus: haec facetia est, amare inter se
riualis duos,
uno cantharo potare, unum scortum ducere.
hoc memorabile est: ego tu sum, tu es ego,
unianimi sumus,
unam amicam amamus ambo, mecum ubi est,
etcum est tamen;
tecum ubi autem est, mecum ibi autem est:
neuter <ne>utri inuidet. (ll. 729-33)

Stephanium: nimioque sibi mulier meretrix
repperit odium ocus
sua immunditia quam in perpetuom ut placeat
munditia sua. (ll. 776-7)

Sangarinus: hoc conuiuium est
pro opibus nsotris satis commodule nucibus,
fabulis, ficulis,
olea, enthryptillo, lupillo comminuto,
crustulo.

Stichus: satiust seruo homini modeste
[melius] facere suptum quam ampliter.
suom quemque decet: quibus diuitiae domi
sunt, scaphiis, cantharis,
batiocis bibunt, at nos nostro Samiolo poterio:
(ll. 689-94)

Sangarinus: meus oculus, da mi sauium, dum
illic bibit.

Stichus: prostibiles<t> tandem? stantem
stanti sauium
dare amicum amicae? eugae eugae, sic furi
datur! (ll. 765-6)

"I have Stephanium as my girlfriend, from here next door, your brother's slave girl; to her I'll fix a contribution for a dinner at her fellow-slave's place, the Syrian Sangarinus. Both of us have the same girlfriend, we're rivals."

"This is an amusing thing, that two rivals love each other, drink from one single cup, and hire one single prostitute. This is remarkable: I am you, you are me, we're in full accord, we both love one single prostitute, and when she's with me, she's with you all the same; but when she's with you, she's there with me. Neither of us is jealous of the other."

"A prostitute finds reproach much more quickly through absence of neatness than that she should be liked for good through presence of neatness."

"This banquet is good enough for our means, with nuts, little beans, little figs, olives, little cakes, tiny lupine seeds, and pastries."

"For a slave it's better to spend money in moderation rather than in excess. What each man's station allows him suits him best. Those who have wealth at home, drink from good beakers, tankards, and goblets, but we, from our little Samian cups."

"Meanwhile, apple of my eye, give me a kiss while he's drinking."

"Is she a street whore then? Should a standing boyfriend give a kiss to a standing girlfriend? Goodness, goodness, that's how it's given to a thief!"

(All translations from De Melo)

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