

## TERENCE, *ADELPHOE* 155-9

SA. Obsecro, populares, ferte misero atque innocentī auxilium,  
subvenite inopi. AE. otiose: nunciam ilico hic consiste.  
quid respectas? nil periclist: numquam dum ego adero hic te tanget.  
SA. ego istam invitis omnibus.  
AE. quamquamst scelestu' non committet hodie umquam iterum ut vapulet.

To whom is Aeschinus speaking? Editors in general follow Eugraphius (ad 156-7) and have Aeschinus address his lines to the *psaltria*.<sup>1</sup> According to this interpretation, it would be the *psaltria* who anxiously looks back (cf. *quid respectas?*, 157);<sup>2</sup> since Sannio is the only person on stage whom the girl would have reason to fear, the *leno* would have to be standing behind her, and hence must have followed the *psaltria* (and Aeschinus and Parmeno who are escorting her) on to the stage.

There are several difficulties with this interpretation. The sort of appeal which Sannio addresses to the citizenry (*obsecro, populares . . . inopi*, 155-6) is usually made for protection against an act of violence (usually assault or abduction) which is actually taking place or is threatened at the time the appeal is made;<sup>3</sup> in the present case, however, the abduction of the *psaltria* and the attendant assault on Sannio took place at some time in the past (at 88 ff. in the preceding act Demea had spoken of the kidnapping as something which had already occurred), and Sannio would now merely be seeking help in recovering the *psaltria* whom Aeschinus had previously stolen from him.<sup>4</sup> Aeschinus, the *psaltria*, and Parmeno would have to come on stage in silence, followed by the shouting Sannio; this silence is strange and contrary to the usual practice of comedy where the first person on stage tends to speak first.<sup>5</sup> More importantly, if Aeschinus and the *psaltria* are being pursued by Sannio,

<sup>1</sup> Donatus does not say to whom these lines are addressed. His explanation of *otiose* (156) as *secure* is usually taken to indicate that he felt at least 156 was addressed to the *psaltria*, but *otiose* in the sense of *secure* can also be addressed to Sannio (see W. Schulze, *Kleine Schriften*, p. 174).

<sup>2</sup> For the sense of *respecto*, 'look behind one's back', cf. Plautus *Men.* 160-1: 'ne tu . . . esses agitator probus . . . ne te uxor sequatur respectas identidem.'

<sup>3</sup> e.g. Plautus *Amph.* 376 (cf. 370), *Aul.* 406 ff. (cf. 409), *Curc.* 626 (cf. 625-6), *Men.* 999 ff. (cf. 999); on *Rud.* 615 ff. see following note. Schulze, *op. cit.*, pp. 160-89, discusses numerous instances of this sort of appeal from Latin and Greek literature; all of his examples refer to present or threatened acts, and all, with the exception of Caecilius 211 R.<sup>3</sup> (an obvious comic exaggeration), deal with acts of violence. From Schulze's brief discussion of *Adelph.* 155-7 (p. 174), it appears that he felt 156-7 were addressed to

Sannio (rather than to the *psaltria*); see, however, below, p. 86 n. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Editors cite Plautus *Rud.* 615 ff. as parallel to the present situation. In the *Rud.* passage, however, Trachalio comes from the shrine of Venus looking for help against Labrax who at the very moment is attempting to seize Palaestra and Ampelisca inside the shrine. *Rud.* 615 ff. is thus another example of seeking protection against an act of violence while it is taking place, and is not parallel to the present situation if we understand that Sannio is seeking to recover the *psaltria* who was taken from him some time earlier.

<sup>5</sup> Dziatzko-Kauer would eliminate this difficulty by having Sannio begin to shout 155-6 while he is still off stage, i.e. just as Aeschinus and the *psaltria* enter. There is, however, no other example in Roman comedy of a person who enters from off stage beginning to deliver his lines before he actually reaches the stage.

there is no reason why Aeschinus should stop now,<sup>1</sup> rather than taking the girl directly into Micio's house. Indeed, this delay allows Sannio to interfere with the girl's movements when Aeschinus does send her into the house at 167 ff. Finally, the structure of 157–8 should contrast *hic te* (157) to *ego istam* (158), but if 157 is addressed to the *psaltria* there would be no contrast since both *hic* and *ego* would refer to Sannio and *te* and *istam* would refer to the girl. Sannio should rather say something like *tangam istam* to contrast with *numquam* . . . *tanget* (157), the one element in Aeschinus' preceding statement which would differ from Sannio's parallel threat.

These various difficulties can be eliminated if we assume that Sannio enters first, pursued and assaulted by Parmeno. When Aeschinus comes on stage with the *psaltria*, he tells Parmeno to stop his attack on Sannio and to move away to where he and the girl are standing (*otiose nunciam ilico hic consiste*, 156).<sup>2</sup> Sannio continues to cower in fear, looking back at Parmeno (*quid respectas?*, 157) until Aeschinus reassures the *leno* that there is no danger that Parmeno will even touch him while he, Aeschinus, is present (*nil . . . tanget*, 157).<sup>3</sup> Sannio, freed from his fear of Parmeno, reverts to his normal bluffing self and threatens to take the *psaltria* (*ego . . . omnibus*, 158), and Aeschinus now reassures the girl that Sannio's threats are empty (*quamquamst . . . vapulet*, 159; *iterum ut vapulet* would refer not to the beating Sannio received when the *psaltria* was kidnapped, but the one Parmeno was administering to him when the two first came on stage at 155).

Sannio's appeal at 155–6 is now one for protection against a physical assault. The *leno*, the first person on stage, speaks first, in accordance with normal usage, and the odd silence of Aeschinus and the *psaltria* is eliminated. Within the context of the scene Aeschinus now has a reason for halting on stage rather than going directly into Micio's house with the *psaltria*, viz. to tell Parmeno to stop beating Sannio now that they have reached the house. There is now a meaningful contrast between *hic te* (157) and *ego istam* (158), with Parmeno (*hic*) contrasted with Sannio (*ego*) and Sannio (*te*) contrasted with the *psaltria* (*istam*); the element *tanget/tangam* is unchanged in both statements and hence unexpressed in Sannio's threat.

155 ff. are drawn from the *Synapthoescontes* of Diphilus (cf. 6 ff.). From the prologue's description of Diphilus' version of this scene, it would appear that the kidnapping of the girl actually took place on stage (cf. the present

<sup>1</sup> Presumably Sannio would have been shouting after Aeschinus all the way from his house. If Aeschinus did not stop before, there is no reason for him to stop now. Conversely, there is nothing which Aeschinus or the *psaltria* do or say to cause Sannio to start shouting now if he had not been doing so before.

<sup>2</sup> Schulze, op. cit., p. 174, seems to feel that both 156 and 157 were addressed to Sannio. If we assume that at 157 Aeschinus is speaking to Sannio, then the *hic* of 157 can only refer to Parmeno who would have been assaulting Sannio and causing his cry of 155–6. If Parmeno is assaulting Sannio at 155–6, then Aeschinus must halt the assault before he can say *nil periclist* at 157;

this he does with the words *otiose . . . consiste* (156). *Otiöse* would therefore not mean *secure* (as Donatus, ad loc., and Schulze would have it), but would be closer in sense to *placide* (cf. Plautus *M.G.* 1221, *Poen.* 545, *Truc.* 75), and should be taken together with what follows. Translate: 'Calmly now . . . now stand here.'

<sup>3</sup> With *numquam . . . tanget* (157) Aeschinus dissociates himself from the beating which had just taken place, as though Parmeno alone was responsible for the mistreatment of Sannio. The statement is a further insult to Sannio since it implies that the *leno*, although a free man, requires Aeschinus' protection from a mere slave.

tense *eripit*, 8), and it seems probable that Parmeno did the 'dirty work' in the Greek original as he does at 155 ff. In the *Adelphoe*, Sannio's house and the kidnapping must be placed off stage (the plot requires too many people to witness the kidnapping for it to take place on stage), but Terence vividly retains the effect of the on-stage violence in Diphilus' original by prolonging the kidnapping as it were, through Parmeno's continuing assault on Sannio.

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