

Russell's Anthology of Greek Prose

Text 18: A suspicious husband (Lysias)

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a) Source:

Oratio I. 6-14.

b) Background (synopsis quoted from Russell's book):

"Lysias was the son of a Syracusan who settled in Athens and ran a prosperous shield factory. Exiled by the Thirty in 404 BC, Lysias returned after the restoration of the democracy, and practised as a speech-writer (λογογράφος) for the rest of his life. Which of the speeches in the extant *corpus* are really his has been much debated. Whoever wrote it, the speech from which this passage is taken is a precious piece of evidence about Athenian life. Euphiletus has killed his wife's lover; he pleads that his act was legitimate, in accordance with the "law of Dracon", which permitted a husband to kill his wife's lover caught *in the act*."

c) Language comment:

There is a little difficulty in line 3. The rest of the text is quite normal, as it is the description of the events inside the house. The description of the house layout (as for instance the distribution of the rooms by floors) may be something unusual, but it does not present special difficulties apart from some unusual words: it's rather an easy text in comparison with other texts from Lysias.

d) Content:

Euphiletus has killed his wife's lover and is now on trial. In his defence, he describes how he found out about the affair that his wife was having with her lover: the strange

behaviour of his wife at his unexpected arrival (it seems that he used to remain for several days away from home, working in some far field) gave him the first hints.

e) Distribution of content:

(numbers refer to the lines in the printed edition)

| | |
|--------|---|
| 1-5: | First period married. |
| 5-9: | Child born and more confidence with the wife. |
| 10-14: | She is seduced. |
| 15-25: | Distribution of the house. |
| 26-33: | Sudden arrival from the fields. |
| 33-39: | Strange behaviour of hers. |
| 39-46: | Events at the following morning. |

f) Notes for help:

1) γάρ: frequently to begin narrative in Attic oratory (and elsewhere).

1) γῆμαι: aorist infinitive γαμέω.

2) aorist middle of ἄγω in sense of 'take for oneself as wife'.

2) μὲν looking ahead to δέ in 5; accusative of time how long.

3) διεκείμην: imperfect of διάκειμαι, with adverb, in sense of 'be in such a state', 'be disposed in such a way' (cf. 24).

3) ex. of consecutive ὥστε + inf. Contrast 21, 24-5 below, ὥστε + indic.

3-4) ἐπ' ἐκείνη εἶναι...: see LSJ ἐπί + dat.I.I.g "to be in her power" (+ inf. ποιεῖν, to do ...).

3-4) ex. of indef. clause ὅ τι ἄν + subj. "whatever she wants". It could have been optative (without ἄν) as it is introduced by a verb in historic tense.

4) τε: connective: uncommon in orators, 'old-fashioned' (Denniston 497-8).

5) γίγνεται: hist. present to mark significant moment, as in 13 and 36-7 (also of permanent fact like birth, cf. Aeschines, No.43.38); from now on, observe the big amount of historic presents.

6) ἐπίστευον ... παρέδωκα: Russell on move from impf. to aor. tense. Look at careful use of tense in whole passage.

6) ἤδη: in sense 'now', 'thenceforth', 'from now on' (not 'already').

6) *παρέδωκα*: 1st person aorist *παραδίδωμι*.

7) *οικειότητα*: predicative, "familiarity", *ταύτην* attracted into its gender. cf. Plato, No.23.33- 4. WS 1239: demonstrative pronoun may agree in gender with noun predicated of it, if it is connected by copulative verb, expressed or understood, cf. Xen. Cyrop. 8.7.24 *αὕτη* (for *τοῦτο*) *ἀρίστη διδασκαλία*. But unattracted neuter is common, esp. in definitions, e.g. Pl. Rep. 432b *τοῦτ' ἔστιν ἡ δικαιοσύνη*.

10) *μοι*: ethic dat. with ref. to subject, "my mother". Note same structure as in 5: pseudo-naive repetition?

10-11) *ἥ ... ἀποθανοῦσα*: lit. "who having died" = "whose death", the so-called Lat. *ab urbe condita* construction: WS 2053 for participle and noun = verbal noun + gen. or the articular inf., e.g. Thuc.6.3 *μετὰ Συρακούσας οἰκισθείσας*, after the foundation of Syracuse, Xen. Ages. 7. 17 *ἐλύπει αὐτὸν ἡ χώρα πορθομένη* (= the ravaging of the country). cf. Goodwin GMT 8289(b) e.g. Hdt.1.34 *μετὰ δὲ Σόλωνα οἰχόμενον*, after the departure of Solon.

10) *πάντων τῶν κακῶν*: genitives after *αἰτία* in 11.

10 ff.) *ἐπειδὴ δέ...*: no main clause, with anacoluthon after the parentheses as beginning of sentence is "forgotten". But NB textual problem: some editors delete *ἥ* in 10, so that *γεγένηται* becomes main verb: this removes the anacoluthon. Other solutions include lacuna after *γεγένηται* or deleting *γάρ* in 16. But the anacoluthon is effective: sense of spontaneity, emotion, at key moment.

11) *αυτῇ*: it means the mother.

11) *ἀποθανοῦσα*: nom. fem. aor. pple. *ἀποθνήσκω*.

12) *ἀκολουθήσασα*: nom. fem. aor. pple. *ἀκολουθέω*, 'follow'.

12) *ὀφθεῖσα*: nom. fem. aor. pple. pass. *ὀράω*.

12) *τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*: i.e. the adulterer, cf. 28. Slightly dismissive tone?

13) emphatic historic present for key action.

13) *διαφθείρεται*: with the meaning of "be corrupted".

13) *τὴν θεραπαινὰν τήν*: repetition of article before participle: sense is 'watching the servant, the one who would (customarily) go to the market place', not 'watching the servant as she went to the market place' (and note that this is her first mention).

14) *ἀπόλεσεν*: 3rd sing. aor. act. indic. *ἀπόλλυμι*.

14) *αὐτήν*: who does this refer to - the maid or the wife? Translation will depend on interpretation: Todd has 'seduced' (i.e. the wife), Carey 'corrupted' (with bribes), i.e.

the servant

15) *διηγῆσασθαι*: aor. inf. *διηγέομαι*, 'narrate', 'describe in detail' (cf. narratological term 'diegetic'). Explanation here gives tone of naivety?

16) *οἰκίδιον*: diminutive (cf. *5 παιδίον*).

16) *μοι*: possessive dative.

16) *διπλοῦν* = "of two floors".

16) *τοῖς κάτω*: dative after *ἴσα*, 'equal to'.

17) *κατά*: in sense 'with respect to'.

17-18) contrast phrasing in 5 for birth of son: why different? Focus now more on *our* response: *ἡμῖν* at end more emphatic than *μοι* in 5. Note also aorist here, present in 5.

18) purpose clause with negative *μή*.

19) Goodwin 497 for forms from *λόω*, not *λούω*.

19) ex. of the more vivid subjunctive after past tense (cf. 22-3,29,31).

Goodwin GMT 318 - in some authors, esp. Thuc., commoner than opt. Sometimes opt. and subj. are paired, e.g. Thuc.6.96 (in order that ...) *εἴησαν ... καὶ ... παραγίγνωνται*. Note here inset indefinite clause (*ὁπότε* + opt., "whenever the baby needed to be washed") in past sequence, repeated action in the past.

19) *κατά*: plus genitive - 'down'.

19) *καταβαίνουσα*: pple. after *κινδυνεύη*, with sense run risk of doing something.

20) *διητώμην*: imperfect middle of *διαιτάω*, 'lead a certain course of life'.

21) *συνειθισμένον*: perf. pass. *συνεθίζω*, 'accustom'; used impersonally - 'it had become the custom'

21) *ἀπῆει*: 3 sing. impf. *ἄπειμι* (ibo).

22) *καθευδήσουσα*: fut.partcp. of intention.

22) Observe how in the subordinate introduced by *ἵνα* the two verbs *διδῶ* and *βοᾷ* are in subjunctive, we would have expected them into the optative, as the verb of the main sentence is in secondary tense, something similar to that on lines 3-4; you will find this a lot in this narrative text.

22) *ὡς*: + acc., prep. = "to" with personal objects: Goodwin 1220 in list of "improper" prepositions like *μέχρι*, *μεταξύ*, *ἔνεκα*, *πλήν*.

22-3) *διδῶ ... βοᾷ*: subjs. after purpose *ἵνα* (cf. note on 18 ff.); note change of subject.

24) *διεκείμην*: this time with the meaning "be in such a disposition".

24) *ὑπόπτουσα*: aorist *ὑποπτέω* 'suspect'.

- 24) *ῥῆμην*: 1st sing. impf. *οἶμαι* (contracted Attic form of *οἶομαι*): consecutive clause with indicative (highlights more forcefully the irony of his (retrospectively acknowledged) blindness to her faults).
- 25) *ἐαυτοῦ* = *ἐμμαντοῦ*, Goodwin 995. cf. *έός* in Homer of first person.
- 25) acc. and infin. after vb. of thinking.
- 26) *προιόντος*: genitive absolute; pple. *πρόειμι*.
- 26-7) *μέν ... δέ*: here no strong sense of contrast, more structuring (cf. 35: in both cases his own action is in the *μέν* clause).
- 27) *ἐξ ἀγροῦ*: idiomatic omission of article, WS 1141, e.g. of words forming a class by themselves (e.g. sun, heaven, death) and some nouns used as specific titles, e.g. in Athens *ἄστν, πόλις, ἀκρόπολις, ἀγορά*; also *γῆ* and *θάλασσα* as earth opposed to sea.
- 28) *ἐπίτηδες* = "on purpose".
- 29) the same as on line 22: the verb after *ἵνα* could have been in the optative.
- 29) *ποιῆ*: subj. in purpose clause (cf. on 19); note (more continuous) present here, aor. in 31 (where more instantaneous). Note also derogatory *ἄνθρωπος*, cf. 12.
- 30) *ἐπυθόμην*: aorist *πυθάνομαι*.
- 30) *ἀπιέναι, δοῦναι*: pres. and aor. infinitives from *ἄπειμι* and *δίδωμι* (why change of tense? cf. pres. *ἀπιέναι* in 33).
- 31) purpose clause, aor. subj.
- 32) *ὡς ἄν*: "as if"; understand verb (*ἐποίει*), "as she would have done ..."
- 32) *ἐορακῦῖα*: nom. fem. perf. pple. *ὁράω*.
- 32-3) *διὰ χρόνον*: 'after some time'.
- 33) note imperfect tenses - 'when I started to get angry and was ordering her' (but she resists).
- 34) *ἵνα σύ γε...*: ellipse of main clause, understood from previous *ἀπιέναι*: dialogue feature (cf. Plato dialogue, stichomythia in drama). Purpose clause, pres. subjunctive (in direct speech).
- 34) *πειρᾶς*: here it means "try to seduce".
- 35) *εἰλκες*: impf. *έλκω*. The same meaning of sexual harassment.
- 36) *προστίθησι*: here it means "to close".
- 36) *ἀναστᾶσα*: nom. fem. (strong) aor. pple. *ἀνίστημι* (intransitive).
- 37-8) *οὐδέν ... οὐδέ* = "and not" (after preceding neg.). Contrast emphasising "not even" as in 44-5 *οὐδ' οὕτως*, "not even so".

38-9) repetition of phrase from 26-7.

39) *πρός*: plus acc., 'towards' (temporal).

39) note short clauses.

40) *ἀνέφξεν*: aor. indic. *ἀνοίγνυμι*.

40) *τί ... ψοφοῖεν*: ex. of ind. qu. + opt. in past sequence. (*ψοφέω*, 'make a noise')

Note narrative delay: noise first mentioned as he questions her about it.

40) *ἔφασκε*: remember that this verb can be used only with infinitive, never with *ὅτι*.

41) *ἀποσβεσθῆναι*: aor. pass. infin. *ἀποσβέννυμι*.

41) *τὸν παρὰ τῷ παιδίῳ*: delayed until after verb: recreating her groping for an explanation? or emphasis to stress her concern for the child?

41) *εἶτα*: Dover, EGPS 76 colloquial (significantly within reported dialogue).

42) note force of middle.

42) don't confuse the two verbs *ἄπτω*= "tie, bind" and *ἄπτω*= "light, set fire"; they are different verbs, not one verb with different meanings.

42) asyndeton.

42) acc. and infin. after vb. of thinking.

43) *ἐψιμυθιῶσθαι*: the augment in the infinitive indicates that it is a perfect (augment instead of reduplication because of double consonant at the beginning).

43) *τὸ πρόσωπον ἐψιμυθιῶσθαι*: acc. of respect: "with white make-up on her face."

Note also perf.inf. form: 'was made up white'.

44) *τεθνεῶτος*: gen. masc. contracted pple. from *τέθνηκα*: concessive force; second perfect active without kappa.

44-45) as the first negative is *οὐδέ*, the main one, and the second is secondary, they reinforce each other, they don't cancel each other.
