

Demosthenes 54 Against Conon (8-9)

Speech of Ariston accusing Conon of assaulting him

After a former episode of enmity that seemed to be over, some months later Conon meets Ariston on the street by chance and attacks him:

Καὶ ἡμῖν συμβαίνει ἀναστρέφουσιν ἀπὸ τοῦ Φερρεφάττιου καὶ περιπατοῦσιν πάλιν κατ' αὐτό πως τὸ Λεωκόριον εἶναι, καὶ τούτοις περιτυγχάνομεν. ὡς δ' ἀνεμείχθημεν, εἷς μὲν αὐτῶν, ἀγνώς τις, Φανοστράτῳ προσπίπτει καὶ κατεῖχεν ἐκεῖνον, Κόνων δ' οὐτοσὶ καὶ ὁ υἱὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁ Ἄνδρομένους υἱὸς ἐμοὶ προσπέσοντες τὸ μὲν πρῶτον ἐξέδυσαν, εἴθ' ὑποσκελίσαντες καὶ ράξαντες εἰς τὸν βόρβορον οὕτω διέθηκαν ἐναλλόμενοι καὶ ὑβρίζοντες, ὥστε τὸ μὲν χεῖλος διακόψαι, τοὺς δ' ὀφθαλμοὺς συγκλεῖσαι. (5)

After leaving Ariston on the floor severely wounded, Conon, encouraged by his gang, indulges in some kind of curious victory-celebration dance imitating a chicken:

οὕτω δὲ κακῶς ἔχοντα κατέλιπον, ὥστε μὴτ' ἀναστήναι μῆτε φθέγξασθαι δύνασθαι. κείμενος δ' αὐτῶν ἤκουον πολλὰ καὶ δεινὰ λεγόντων. καὶ τὰ μὲν ἄλλα καὶ βλασφημίαν ἔχει τινὰ καὶ ὀνομάζειν ὀκνήσαιμ' ἂν ἐν ὑμῖν ἔνια, ὃ δὲ τῆς ὕβρεώς ἐστι τῆς τούτου σημεῖον καὶ τεκμήριον τοῦ πᾶν τὸ πρᾶγμ' ὑπὸ τούτου γεγενῆσθαι, τοῦθ' ὑμῖν ἐρῶ· ἦδε γὰρ τοὺς ἀλεκτρυόνας μιμούμενος τοὺς νενικηκότας, οἱ δὲ κροτεῖν τοῖς ἀγκῶσιν αὐτὸν ἠξίουσαν ἀντὶ πτερυγῶν τὰς πλευράς. (10)

Fortunately, some passers-by help Ariston and take him home:

καὶ μετὰ ταυτ' ἐγὼ μὲν ἀπεκομίσθην ὑπὸ τῶν παρατυχόντων γυμνός, οὔτοι δ' ᾤχοντο θοιμάτιον λαβόντες μου. ὡς δ' ἐπὶ τὴν θύραν ἦλθον, κραυγὴ καὶ βοή τῆς μητρὸς καὶ τῶν θεραπαινίδων ἦν, καὶ μόγις ποτ' εἰς βαλανεῖον ἐνεγκόντες με καὶ περιπλύναντες ἔδειξαν τοῖς ἰατροῖς. ὡς οὖν ταυτ' ἀληθῆ λέγω, τούτων ὑμῖν τοὺς μάρτυρας παρέξομαι.

Vocabulary

ἀναστρέφω	TO COME BACK	χεῖλος, -ους	LIP
Φερρεφάττιον, -ου	A TEMPLE OF PERSEPHONE	ὀκνέω	TO HESITATE
ἀναμείγνυμι	TO MIX	ἀείδω	TO SING
ἀγνώς, -ῶτος	UNKNOWN	κροτέω	TO STRIKE
ἐκδύω	TO STRIP OFF	ἀγκών, -ῶνος	ELBOW
ὑποσκελίζω	TO TRIP	ἀποκομίζω	TO CARRY AWAY
ράττω	TO KNOCK DOWN	παρατυγχάνω	TO HAPPEN TO BE NEAR
βόρβωρος, -ου	MUD	βαλανεῖον, -ου	BATH
διατίθημι	TO TREAT	περιπλύνω	TO WASH CLEAN
ἐνάλλομαι	TO LEAP UPON		

□ Language points on the first paragraph

✧ The paragraph opens with a difficult construction of an impersonal verb that rules a dative and an infinitive, difficult because of the presence of some participles // There is also a strange combination of historic presents and past tenses.

- 2/ What other verb could have been used instead of **περιτυγχάνομεν**, with the same sense? // What is the meaning of **ὡς** here? /// Name a couple more of verbs with the same meaning as **προσπίπτω**.
- 3/ Is the article **τό** necessary here?
- 4/ What is the direct object of all the participles on this line? // What would be the usual form for **διέθηκαν** in Attic?
- 5/ Is **χειλος** direct object or subject of **διακόψαι**?

□ Language points on the second paragraph

✧ Maybe the most difficult bit is line 7, especially the expression **τὰ ἄλλα βλασφημίαν ἔχει τινά**. It refers to the content of the insults that Conon and his gang threw against Ariston when he was already lying on the floor. // The antecedent of the relative **ὃ** on line 8 is **τοῦθ'** on line 9. // **σημεῖον** rules a genitive located before it, and **τεκμήριον** rules the one located after it // **γεγενῆσθαι** has an article going with it. //

- 6/ What personal pronoun can be considered to be missing in the opening sentence? // Is **ἀναστῆναι** a strong or a weak aorist? // Why do we find **μήτε** instead of **οὔτε**?
- 7/ What is the subject of **ἔχει**? // What other preposition could have been used instead of **ἐν** keeping the same sense?
- 8/ What other verbal form could replace **ἔρω** keeping the same meaning?
- 9/ Is **αὐτόν** direct object of **κροτεῖν** or of **ἠξίουν**?

□ Language points on the third paragraph

✧ The contraction on line 11 is maybe the only difficulty in this paragraph.

- 11/ What is the syntactical function of **γυμνός**? // What other verb could have been used instead of **ᾔχοντο**? // What other word could have been used instead of **ὡς** (at the end of the line)?
- 12/ What other verb could have been used instead of **ἦν**?
- 13/ What would be the direct object (ellided here) of **ἔδειξαν**?