

***THE GOLDEN
ASSE***

BOOK II

By

**Lucius
Apuleius "Africanus"**

THE SECOND BOOK

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER

How Apuleius fortun'd to meet with his Cousin Byrrhena.

As soone as night was past, and the day began to spring, I fortun'd to awake, and rose out of my bed as halfe amazed, and very desirous to know and see some marvellous and strange things, remembring with my selfe that I was in the middle part of all Thessaly, whereas by the common report of all the World, the Sorceries and Inchauntments are most used, I oftentimes repeated with my self the tale of my companion Aristomenus touching the manner of this City, and being mooved by great desire, I view'd the whole scituation thereof, neither was there any thing which I saw there, but that I did beleewe to be the same which it was indeed, but every thing seem'd unto me to be transformed and altered into other shapes, by the wicked power of Sorcerie and Inchantment, insomuch that I thought that the stones which I found were indurate, and turned from men into that figure, and that the birds which I heard chirping, and the trees without the walls of the city, and the running waters, were changed from men into such kinde of likenesses. And further I thought that the Statues, Images and Walls could goe, and the Oxen and other brute beasts could speake and tell strange newes, and that immediately I should see and heare some Oracles from the heavens, and from the gleed of the Sun. Thus being astonied or rather dismayed and vexed with desire, knowing no certaine place whither I intended to go, I went from street to street, and at length (as I curiously gazed on every thing) I fortun'd unwares to come into the market place, whereas I espied a certaine woman, accompanied with a great many servants, towards whom I drew nigh, and view'd her garments beset with gold and pretious stone, in such sort that she seem'd to be some noble matron. And there was an old man which followed her, who as soon as he espied me, said to himself, Verily this is Lucius, and then he came and embraced me, by and by he went unto his mistresse and whispered in her eare, and came to mee againe saying, How is it Lucius that you will not salute your deere Cousin and singular friend? To whom I answered, Sir I dare not be so bold as to take acquaintance of an unknown woman. Howbeit as halfe ashamed I drew towards

her, and shee turned her selfe and sayd, Behold how he resembleth the very same grace as his mother Salvia doth, behold his countenance and stature, agreeing thereto in each poynt, behold his comely state, his fine slenderesse, his Vermilion colour, his haire yellow by nature, his gray and quicke eye, like to the Eagle, and his trim and comely gate, which do sufficiently prove him to be the naturall childe of Salvia. And moreover she sayd, O Lucius, I have nourished thee with myne owne proper hand: and why not? For I am not onely of kindred to thy mother by blood, but also by nourice, for wee both descended of the line of Plutarch, lay in one belly, sucked the same paps, and were brought up together in one house. And further there is no other difference betweene us two, but that she is married more honourably than I: I am the same Byrrhena whom you have often heard named among your friends at home: wherfore I pray you to take so much pains as to come with me to my house, and use it as your owne. At whose words I was partly abashed and sayd, God forbid Cosin that I should forsake myne Host Milo without any reasonable cause; but verily I will, as often as I have occasion to passe by thy house, come and see how you doe. And while we were talking thus together, little by little wee came to her house, and behold the gates of the same were very beautifully set with pillars quadrangle wise, on the top wherof were placed carved statues and images, but principally the Goddesse of Victory was so lively and with such excellencie portrayed and set forth, that you would have verily have thought that she had flyed, and hovered with her wings hither and thither. On the contrary part, the image of the Goddesse Diana was wrought in white marble, which was a marvellous sight to see, for shee seemed as though the winde did blow up her garments, and that she did encounter with them that came into the house. On each side of her were Dogs made of stone, that seemed to menace with their fiery eyes, their pricked eares, their bended nosethrils, their grinning teeth in such sort that you would have thought they had bayed and barked. An moreover (which was a greater marvel to behold) the excellent carver and deviser of this worke had fashioned the dogs to stand up fiercely with their former feet, and their hinder feet on the ground ready to fight. Behinde the back of the goddesse was carved a stone in manner of a Caverne, environed with mosse, herbes, leaves, sprigs, green branches and bowes, growing in and about the same, insomuch that within the stone it glistered and shone marvellously,

under the brim of the stone hanged apples and grapes carved finely, wherein Art envying Nature, shewed her great cunning. For they were so lively set out, that you would have thought if Summer had been come, they might have bin pulled and eaten; and while I beheld the running water, which seemed to spring and leap under the feet of the goddesse, I marked the grapes which hanged in the water, which were like in every point to the grapes of the vine, and seemed to move and stir by the violence of the streame. Moreover, amongst the branches of the stone appeared the image of Acteon: and how that Diana (which was carved within the same stone, standing in the water) because he did see her naked, did turne him into an hart, and so he was torne and slaine of his owne hounds. And while I was greatly delighted with the view of these things, Byrrhena spake to me and sayd, Cousin all things here be at your commandement. And therewithall shee willed secretly the residue to depart: who being gone she sayd, My most deare Cousin Lucius, I do sweare by the goddesse Diana, that I doe greatly tender your safety, and am as carefull for you as if you were myne owne naturall childe, beware I say, beware of the evil arts and wicked allurements of that Pamphiles who is the wife of Milo, whom you call your Host, for she is accounted the most chief and principall Magitian and Enchantresse living, who by breathing out certain words and charmes over bowes, stones and other frivolous things, can throw down all the powers of the heavens into the deep bottome of hell, and reduce all the whole world againe to the old Chaos. For as soone as she espieth any comely yong man, shee is forthwith stricken with his love, and presently setteth her whole minde and affection on him. She soweth her seed of flattery, she invades his spirit and intangleth him with continuall snares of unmeasurable love.

And then if any accord not to her filthy desire, or if they seeme loathsome in her eye, by and by in the moment of an houre she turneth them into stones, sheep or some other beast, as her selfe pleaseth, and some she presently slayeth and murthereth, of whom I would you should earnestly beware. For she burneth continually, and you by reason of your tender age and comely beauty are capable of her fire and love.

Thus with great care Byrrhena gave me in charge, but I (that always coveted and desired, after that I had heard talk of such Sorceries and Witchcrafts, to be experienced in the same) little esteemed to beware of Pamphiles, but willingly determined to bestow my money in learning of that art, and now wholly to become a Witch. And so I waxed joyful, and wringing my selfe out of her company, as out of linkes or chaines, I bade her farewell, and departed toward the house of myne host Milo, by the way reasoning thus with my selfe: O Lucius now take heed, be vigilant, have a good care, for now thou hast time and place to satisfie thy desire, now shake off thy childishnesse and shew thy selfe a man, but especially temper thy selfe from the love of thyne hostesse, and abstain from violation of the bed of Milo, but hardly attempt to winne the maiden Fotis, for she is beautifull, wanton and pleasant in talke. And soone when thou goest to sleepe, and when shee bringeth you gently into thy chamber, and tenderly layeth thee downe in thy bed, and lovingly covereth thee, and kisseth thee sweetly, and departeth unwillingly, and casteth her eyes oftentimes backe, and stands still, then hast thou a good occasion ministred to thee to prove and try the mind of Fotis. Thus while I reasoned to myselfe I came to Milos doore, persevering still in my purpose, but I found neither Milo nor his wife at home.

THE NINTH CHAPTER

How Apuleius fell in love with Fotis.

When I was within the house I found my deare and sweet love Fotis mincing of meat and making pottage for her master and mistresse, the Cupboord was all set with wines, and I thought I smelled the savor of some dainty meats: she had about her middle a white and clean apron, and shee was girded about her body under the paps with a swathell of red silke, and she stirred the pot and turned the meat with her fair and white hands, in such sort that with stirring and turning the same, her loynes and hips did likewise move and shake, which was in my mind a comely sight to see.

These things when I saw I was halfe amazed, and stood musing with my selfe, and my courage came then upon mee, which before was scant. And I spake unto Fotis merrily and sayd, O Fotis how trimmely you can stirre the pot, and how finely, with shaking your buttockes, you can make pottage. The shee beeing likewise merrily disposed, made answer, Depart I say, Miser from me, depart from my fire, for if the flame thereof doe never so little blaze forth, it will burne thee extreemely and none can extinguish the heat thereof but I alone, who in stirring the pot and making the bed can so finely shake my selfe. When she had sayd these words shee cast her eyes upon me and laughed, but I did not depart from thence until such time as I had viewed her in every point. But what should I speak of others, when as I doe accustome abroad to marke the face and haire of every dame, and afterwards delight my selfe therewith privately at home, and thereby judge the residue of their shape, because the face is the principall part of all the body, and is first open to our eyes. And whatsoever flourishing and gorgeous apparell doth work and set forth in the corporal parts of a woman, the same doth the naturall and comely beauty set out in the face. Moreover there be divers, that to the intent to shew their grace and feature, wil cast off their partlets, collars, habiliments, fronts, cornets and krippins, and doe more delight to shew the fairnesse of their skinne, than to deck themselves up in gold and pretious stones. But because it is a crime unto me to say so, and to give no example thereof, know ye, that if you spoyle and cut the haire of any woman or deprive her of the colour of her face, though shee were never so excellent in beauty,

though shee were throwne downe from heaven, sprung of the Seas, nourished of the flouds, though shee were Venus her selfe, though shee were waited upon by all the Court of Cupid, though were girded with her beautifull skarfe of Love, and though shee smelled of perfumes and musks, yet if shee appeared bald, shee could in no wise please, no not her owne Vulcanus.

O how well doth a faire colour and a shining face agree with glittering hair! Behold, it encountreth with the beams of the Sunne, and pleaseth the eye marvellously. Sometimes the beauty of the haire resembleth the colour of gold and honey, sometimes the blew plumes and azured feathers about the neckes of Doves, especially when it is either anointed with the gumme of Arabia, or trimmely tuft out with the teeth of a fine combe, which if it be tyed up in the pole of the necke, it seemeth to the lover that beholdeth the same, as a glasse that yeeldeth forth a more pleasant and gracious comeliness than if it should be sparsed abroad on the shoulders of the woman, or hang down scattering behind. Finally there is such a dignity in the haire, that whatsoever shee be, though she be never to bravely attyred with gold, silks, pretious stones, and other rich and gorgeous ornaments, yet if her hair be not curiously set forth shee cannot seeme faire. But in my Fotis, her garments unbrast and unlaste increased her beauty, her haire hanged about her shoulders, and was dispersed abroad upon her partlet, and in every part of her necke, howbeit the greater part was trussed upon her pole with a lace. Then I unable to sustain the broiling heat that I was in, ran upon her and kissed the place where she had thus laid her haire. Whereat she turned her face, and cast her rolling eyes upon me, saying, O Scholler, thou hast tasted now both hony and gall, take heed that thy pleasure do not turn unto repentance. Tush (quoth I) my sweet heart, I am contented for such another kiss to be broiled here upon this fire, wherewithall I embraced and kissed her more often, and shee embraced and kissed me likewise, and moreover her breath smelled like Cinnamon, and the liquor of her tongue was like unto sweet Nectar, wherewith when my mind was greatly delighted I sayd, Behold Fotis I am yours, and shall presently dye unlesse you take pittie upon me. Which when I had said she eftsoone kissed me, and bid me be of good courage, and I will (quoth shee) satisfie your whole desire, and it shall be no longer delayed than until night, when as assure your selfe I will come and lie with you; wherfore go

your wayes and prepare your selfe, for I intend valiantly and
courageously to encounter with you this night. Thus when we had
lovingly talked and reasoned together, we departed for that time.

THE TENTH CHAPTER

How Byrrhena sent victuals unto Apuleius, and how hee talked with Milo of Diophanes, and how he lay with Fotis.

When noone was come, Byrrhena sent to me a fat Pigge, five hennes, and a flagon of old wine. Then I called Fotis and sayd, Behold how Bacchus the egger and stirrer of Venery, doth offer him self of his owne accord, let us therefore drink up this wine, that we may prepare our selves and get us courage against soone, for Venus wanteth no other provision than this, that the Lamp may be all the night replenished with oyle, and the cups with wine. The residue of the day I passed away at the Bains and in banquetting, and towards evening I went to supper, for I was bid by Milo, and so I sate downe at the table, out of Pamphiles sight as much as I could, being mindfull of the commandement of Byrrhena, and sometimes I would cast myne eyes upon her as upon the furies of hell, but I eftsoones turning my face behinde me, and beholding my Fotis ministring at the table, was again refreshed and made merry. And behold when Pamphiles did see the candle standing on the table, she said, Verily wee shall have much raine to morrow. Which when her husband did heare, he demanded of her by what reason she knew it? Mary (quoth shee) the light on the table sheweth the same. Then Milo laughed and said, Verily we nourish a Sybel prophesier, which by the view of a candle doth divine of Celestiall things, and of the Sunne it selfe. Then I mused in my minde and said unto Milo, Of truth it is a good experience and proof of divination. Neither is it any marvell, for although this light is but a small light, and made by the hands of men, yet hath it a remembrance of that great and heavenly light, as of his parent, and doth shew unto us what will happen in the Skies above. For I knew at Corinth a certain man of Assyria, who would give answers in every part of the City, and for the gaine of money would tell every man his fortune, to some he would tel the dayes of their marriages, to others he would tell when they should build, that their edifices should continue. To others, when they should best goe about their affaires. To others, when they should goe by sea or land: to me, purposing to take my journey hither, he declared many things strange and variable. For sometimes hee sayd that I should win glory enough: sometimes he sayd I should write a great Historie: sometimes againe hee sayd that I

should devise an incredible tale: and sometimes that I should make Bookes. Whereat Milo laughed againe, and enquired of me, of what stature this man of Assyria was, and what he was named. In faith (quoth I) he is a tall man and somewhat blacke, and hee is called Diophanes. Then sayd Milo, the same is he and no other, who semblably hath declared many things here unto us, whereby hee got and obtained great substance and Treasure.

But the poore miser fell at length into the hands of unpittifull and cruell fortune: For beeing on a day amongst a great assembly of people, to tell the simple sort their fortune, a certaine Cobler came unto him, and desired him to tel when it should be best for him to take his voyage, the which hee promised to do: the Cobler opened his purse and told a hundred pence to him for his paines. Whereupon came a certaine young gentleman and took Diophanes by the Garment. Then he turning himselfe, embraced and kissed him, and desired the Gentleman, who was one of his acquaintance, to sit downe by him: and Diophanes being astonied with this sudden change, forgot what he was doing, and sayd, O deare friend you are heartily welcome, I pray you when arrived you into these parts? Then answered he, I will tell you soone, but brother I pray you tell mee of your comming from the isle of Euboea, and how you sped by the way? Whereunto Diophanes this notable Assyrian (not yet come unto his minde, but halfe amased) soone answered and sayd, I would to god that all our enemies and evil willers might fall into the like dangerous peregrination and trouble. For the ship where we were in, after it was by the waves of the seas and by the great tempests tossed hither and thither, in great peril, and after that the mast and stern brake likewise in pieces, could in no wise be brought to shore, but sunk into the water, and so we did swim, and hardly escaped to land. And after that, whatsoever was given unto us in recompense of our losses, either by the pittie of strangers, or by the benevolence of our friends, was taken away from us by theeves, whose violence when my brother Arisuatus did assay to resist, hee was cruelly murdered by them before my face. These things when he had sadly declared, the Cobler tooke up his money againe which he had told out to pay for the telling of his fortune, and ran away. The Diophanes comming to himselfe perceived what he had done, and we all that stood by laughed greatly. But that (quoth Milo) which Diophanes did tell unto you Lucius, that you should be

happy and have a prosperous journey, was only true. Thus Milo reasoned with me. But I was not a little sorry that I had trained him into such a vaine of talke, that I lost a good part of the night, and the sweete pleasure thereof: but at length I boldly said to Milo, Let Diophanes fare well with his evil fortune, and get againe that which he lost by sea and land, for I verily do yet feel the wearinesse of my travell, whereof I pray you pardon mee, and give me licence to depart to bed: wherewithall I rose up and went unto my chamber, where I found all things finely prepared and the childrens bed (because they should not heare what we did in the night) was removed far off without the chamber doore. The table was all covered with those meats that were left at supper, the cups were filled halfe full with water, to temper and delay the wines, the flagon stood ready prepared, and there lacked nothing that was necessary for the preparation of Venus. And when I was entring into the bed, behold my Fotis (who had brought her mistresse to bed) came in and gave me roses and floures which she had in her apron, and some she threw about the bed, and kissed mee sweetly, and tied a garland about my head, and bespred the chamber with the residue. Which when shee had done, shee tooke a cup of wine and delaid it with hot water, and profered it me to drinke; and before I had drunk it all off she pulled it from my mouth, and then gave it me againe, and in this manner we emptied the pot twice or thrice together. Thus when I had well replenished my self with wine, and was now ready unto Venery not onely in minde but also in body, I removed my cloathes, and shewing to Fotis my great impatiencie I said, O my sweet heart take pittie upon me and helpe me, for as you see I am now prepared unto the battell, which you your selfe did appoint: for after that I felt the first Arrow of cruell Cupid within my breast, I bent my bow very strong, and now feare, (because it is bended so hard) lest my string should breake: but that thou mayst the better please me, undresse thy haire and come and embrace me lovingly: whereupon shee made no long delay, but set aside all the meat and wine, and then she unapparelled her selfe, and unattired her haire, presenting her amiable body unto me in manner of faire Venus, when shee goeth under the waves of the sea. Now (quoth shee) is come the houre of justing, now is come the time of warre, wherefore shew thy selfe like unto a man, for I will not retyre, I will not fly the field, see then thou bee valiant, see thou be couragious, since there is no time appointed when our skirmish shall cease. In

saying these words shee came to me to bed, and embraced me sweetly, and so wee passed all the night in pastime and pleasure, and never slept until it was day: but we would eftsoones refresh our wearinesse, and provoke our pleasure, and renew our venery by drinking of wine. In which sort we pleasantly passed away many other nights following.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER

How Apuleius supped with Byrrhena, and what a strange tale Bellephoron told at the table.

It fortuned on a day, that Byrrhena desired me earnestly to suppe with her; and shee would in no wise take any excusation. Whereupon I went to Fotis, to aske counsell of her as of some Divine, who although she was unwilling that I should depart one foot from her company, yet at length shee gave me license to bee absent for a while, saying, Beware that you tarry not long at supper there, for there is a rabblement of common Barrettors and disturbers of the publique peace, that rove about in the streets and murther all such as they may take, neither can law nor justice redress them in any case. And they will the sooner set upon you, by reason of your comelinesse and audacity, in that you are not afeared at any time to walke in the streets.

Then I answered and sayd, Have no care of me Fotis, for I esteeme the pleasure which I have with thee, above the dainty meats that I eat abroad, and therefore I will returne againe quickly. Neverthelesse I minde not to come without company, for I have here my sword, wherby I hope to defend my selfe.

And so in this sort I went to supper, and behold I found in Byrrhena's house a great company of strangers, and the chiefe and principall of the city: the beds made of Citron and Ivory, were richly adorned and spread with cloath of gold, the Cups were garnished pretiously, and there were divers other things of sundry fashion, but of like estimation and price: here stood a glasse gorgeously wrought, there stood another of Christall finely painted. There stood a cup of glittering silver, and there stood another of shining gold, and here was another of amber artificially carved and made with pretious stones. Finally, there was all things that might be desired: the Servitors waited orderly at the table in rich apparell, the pages arrayed in silke robes, did fill great gemmes and pearles made in the forme of cups, with excellent wine. Then one brought in Candles and Torches, and when we were set down and placed in order, we began to talke, to laugh, and to be merry. And Byrrhena spake unto mee and sayd, I pray you Cousine how like you our countrey? Verily I think there is no other City which hath the like Temples,

Baynes, and other commodities which we have here. Further we have abundance of household stuffe, we have pleasure, we have ease, and when the Roman merchants arrive in this City they are gently and quietly entertained, and all that dwell within this province (when they purpose to solace and repose themselves) do come to this city. Whereunto I answered, Verily (quoth I) you tell truth, for I can finde no place in all the world which I like better than this, but I greatly feare the blind inevitable trenches of witches, for they say that the dead bodies are digged out of their graves, and the bones of them that are burnt be stollen away, and the toes and fingers of such as are slaine are cut off, and afflict and torment such as live. And the old Witches as soone as they heare of the death of any person, do forthwith goe and uncover the hearse and spoyle the corpse, to work their enchantments. Then another sitting at the table spake and sayd, In faith you say true, neither yet do they spare or favor the living. For I know one not farre hence that was cruelly handled by them, who being not contented with cutting off his nose, did likewise cut off his eares, whereat all the people laughed heartily, and looked at one that sate at the boords end, who being amased at their gazing, and somewhat angry withall, would have risen from the table, had not Byrrhena spake unto him and sayd, I pray thee friend Bellerophon sit still and according to thy accustomed curtesie declare unto us the losse of thy nose and eares, to the end that my cousin Lucius may be delighted with the pleasantnes of the tale. To whom he answered, Madam in the office of your bounty shall prevaile herein, but the insolencie of some is not to be supported. This hee spake very angerly: But Byrrhena was earnest upon him, and assured him hee should have no wrong at any mans hand. Whereby he was inforced to declare the same, and so lapping up the end of the Table cloath and carpet together, hee leaned with his elbow thereon, and held out three forefingers of his right hand in manner of an orator, and sayd, When I was a young man I went unto a certaine city called Milet, to see the games and triumphs there named Olympia, and being desirous to come into this famous province, after that I had travelled over all Thessaly, I fortun'd in an evil hour to come to the City Larissa, where while I went up and down to view the streets to seeke some reliefe for my poore estate (for I had spent all my money) I espied an old man standing on a stone in the middest of the market place, crying with a loud voice and saying, that if any man would watch a dead corps

that night hee should be reasonably rewarded for this paines. Which when I heard, I sayd to one who passed by, What is here to doe? Do dead men use to run away in this Countrey? Then answered he, Hold your peace, for you are but a Babe and a stranger here, and not without cause you are ignorant how you are in Thessaly, where the women Witches bite off by morsels the flesh and faces of dead men, and thereby work their sorceries and inchantments. Then quoth I, In good fellowship tell me the order of this custody and how it is. Marry (quoth he) first you must watch all the night, with your eyes bent continually upon the Corps, never looking off, nor moving aside. For these Witches do turn themselves into sundry kindes of beasts, whereby they deceive the eyes of all men, sometimes they are transformed into birds, sometimes into Dogs and Mice, and sometimes into flies. Moreover they will charme the keepers of the corps asleepe, neither can it be declared what meanes and shifts these wicked women do use, to bring their purpose to passe: and the reward for such dangerous watching is no more than foure or sixe shillings. But hearken further (for I had well nigh forgotten) if the keeper of the dead body doe not render on the morning following, the corps whole and sound as he received the same, he shall be punished in this sort: That is, if the corps be diminished or spoyled in any part of his face, hands or toes, the same shall be diminished and spoyled in the keeper. Which when I heard him I tooke a good heart, and went unto the Crier and bid him cease, for I would take the matter in hand, and so I demanded what I should have. Marry (quoth he) a thousand pence, but beware I say you young man, that you do wel defend the dead corps from the wicked witches, for hee was the son of one of the chiefest of the city. Tush (sayd I) you speak you cannot tell what, behold I am a man made all of iron, and have never desire to sleepe, and am more quicke of sight than Lynx or Argus. I had scarce spoken these words, when he tooke me by the hand and brought mee to a certaine house, the gate whereof was closed fast, so that I went through the wicket, then he brought me into a chamber somewhat darke, and shewed me a Matron cloathed in mourning vesture, and weeping in lamentable wise. And he spake unto her and said, Behold here is one that will enterprise to watch the corpses of your husband this night. Which when she heard she turned her blubbered face covered with haire unto me saying, I pray you good man take good heed, and see well to your office. Have no care (quoth I) so you will give mee any thing above that

which is due to be given. Wherewith shee was contented, and then she arose and brought me into a chamber whereas the corps lay covered with white sheets, and shee called seven witnesses, before whom she shewed the dead body, and every part and parcell thereof, and with weeping eyes desired them all to testifie the matter. Which done, she sayd these words of course as follow: Behold, his nose is whole, his eyes safe, his eares without scarre, his lips untouched, and his chin sound: all which was written and noted in tables, and subscribed with the hands of witnesses to confirme the same. Which done I sayd unto the matron, Madam I pray you that I may have all things here necessary. What is that? (quoth she). Marry (quoth I) a great lampe with oyle, pots of wine, and water to delay the same, and some other drinke and dainty dish that was left at supper. Then she shook her head and sayd, Away fool as thou art, thinkest thou to play the glutton here and to looke for dainty meats where so long time hath not been seene any smoke at all? Comcest thou hither to eat, where we should weepe and lament? And therewithall she turned backe, and commanded her maiden Myrrhena to deliver me a lampe with oyle, which when shee had done they closed the chamber doore and departed. Now when I was alone, I rubbed myne eyes, and armed my selfe to keep the corpses, and to the intent I would not sleepe, I began to sing, and so I passed the time until it was midnight, when as behold there crept in a Wesel into the chamber, and she came against me and put me in very great feare, insomuch that I marvelled greatly at the audacity of so little a beast. To whom I said, get thou hence thou whore and hie thee to thy fellowes, lest thou feele my fingers. Why wilt thou not goe? Then incontinently she ranne away, and when she was gon, I fell on the ground so fast asleepe, that Apollo himself could not discern which of us two was the dead corps, for I lay prostrat as one without life, and needed a keeper likewise. At length the cockes began to crow, declaring that it was day: wherewithall I awaked, and being greatly afeard ran to the dead body with the lamp in my hand, and I viewed him round about: and immediately came in the matron weeping with her Witnesses, and ran to the corps, and eftsoons kissing him, she turned his body and found no part diminished. Then she willed Philodespotus her steward to pay me my wages forthwith. Which when he had done he sayd, We thanke you gentle young man for your paines and verily for your diligence herein we will account you as one of the family. Whereunto I (being

joyous of by unhoped gaine, and ratling my money in my hand) did answer, I pray you madam esteeme me as one of your servants, and if you want my service at any time, I am at your commandement. I had not fully declared these words, when as behold all the servants of the house were assembled with weapons to drive me away, one buffeted me about the face, another about the shoulders, some strook me in the sides, some kicked me, and some tare my garments, and so I was handled amongst them and driven from the house, as the proud young man Adonis who was torn by a Bore. And when I was come into the next street, I mused with my selfe, and remembred myne unwise and unadvised words which I had spoken, whereby I considered that I had deserved much more punishment, and that I was worthily beaten for my folly. And by and by the corps came forth, which because it was the body of one of the chiefe of the city, was carried in funeral pompe round about the market place, according to the right of the countrey there. And forthwith stepped out an old man weeping and lamenting, and ranne unto the Biere and embraced it, and with deepe sighes and sobs cried out in this sort, O masters, I pray you by the faith which you professe, and by the duty which you owe unto the weale publique, take pittie and mercy upon this dead corps, who is miserably murdered, and doe vengeance on this wicked and cursed woman his wife which hath committed this fact: for it is shee and no other which hath poysoned her husband my sisters sonne, to the intent to maintaine her whoredome, and to get his heritage. In this sort the old man complained before the face of all people. Then they (astonied at these sayings, and because the thing seemed to be true) cried out, Burne her, burne her, and they sought for stones to throw at her, and willed the boys in the street to doe the same. But shee weeping in lamentable wise, did swear by all the gods, that shee was not culpable of this crime. No quoth the old man, here is one sent by the providence of God to try out the matter, even Zachlas an Egyptian, who is the most principall Prophecier in all this countrey, and who was hired of me for money to reduce the soule of this man from hell, and to revive his body for the triall hereof. And therewithall he brought forth a certaine young man cloathed in linnen rayment, having on his feet a paire of pantofiles, and his crowne shaven, who kissed his hands and knees, saying, O priest have mercy, have mercy I pray thee by the Celestiall Planets, by the Powers infernall, by the vertue of the naturall elements, by the

silences of the night, by the building of Swallows nigh unto the towne Copton, by the increase of the floud Nilus, by the secret mysteries of Memphis, and by the instruments and trumpets of the Isle Pharos, have mercy I say, and call to life this dead body, and make that his eyes which he closed and shut, may be open and see. Howbeit we meane not to strive against the law of death, neither intend we to deprive the earth of his right, but to the end this fact may be knowne, we crave but a small time and space of life. Whereat this Prophet was mooved, and took a certaine herb and layd it three times against the mouth of the dead, and he took another and laid upon his breast in like sort. Thus when hee had done hee turned himself into the East, and made certaine orisons unto the Sunne, which caused all the people to marvell greatly, and to looke for this strange miracle that should happen. Then I pressed in amongst them nigh unto the biere, and got upon a stone to see this mysterie, and behold incontinently the dead body began to receive spirit, his principall veines did moove, his life came again and he held up his head and spake in this sort: Why doe you call mee backe againe to this transitorie life, that have already tasted of the water of Lethe, and likewise been in the deadly den of Styx? Leave off, I pray, leave off, and let me lie in quiet rest. When these words were uttered by the dead corps, the Prophet drew nigh unto the Biere and sayd, I charge thee to tell before the face of all the people here the occasion of thy death: What, dost thou thinke that I cannot by my conjurations call up the dead, and by my puissance torment thy body? Then the corps moved his head again, and made reverence to the people and sayd, Verily I was poisoned by the meanes of my wicked wife, and so thereby yeelded my bed unto an adulterer. Whereat his wife taking present audacity, and reproving his sayings, with a cursed minde did deny it. The people were bent against her sundry wayes, some thought best that shee should be buried alive with her husband: but some said that there ought no credit to be given to the dead body. Which opinion was cleane taken away, by the words which the corps spoke againe and sayd, Behold I will give you some evident token, which never yet any other man knew, whereby you shall perceiue that I declare the truth: and by and by he pointed towards me that stood on the stone, and sayd, When this the good Gard of my body watched me diligently in the night, and that the wicked Witches and enchantresses came into the chamber to spoyle mee of my limbes, and to bring such their

purpose did transforme themselves into the shape of beasts: and when as they could in no wise deceive or beguile his vigilant eyes, they cast him into so dead and sound a sleepe, that by their witchcraft he seemed without spirit or life. After this they did call me by my name, and never did cease til as the cold members of my body began by little and little and little to revive. Then he being of more lively soule, howbeit buried in sleep, in that he and I were named by one name, and because he knew not that they called me, rose up first, and as one without sence or perseverance passed by the dore fast closed, unto a certain hole, whereas the Witches cut off first his nose, and then his ears, and so that was done to him which was appointed to be done to me. And that such their subtilty might not be perceived, they made him a like paire of eares and nose of wax: wherefore you may see that the poore miser for lucre of a little mony sustained losse of his members. Which when he had said I was greatly astonied, and minding to prove whether his words were true or no, put my hand to my nose, and my nose fell off, and put my hand to my ears and my ears fell off. Wherat all the people wondred greatly, and laughed me to scorne: but I beeing stricken in a cold sweat, crept between their legs for shame and escaped away. So I disfigured returned home againe, and covered the losse of myne ears with my long hair, and glewed this clout to my face to hide my shame. As soon as Bellephoron had told his tale, they which sate at the table replenished with wine, laughed heartily. And while they drank one to another, Byrrhena spake to me and said, from the first foundation of this city we have a custome to celebrate the festivall day of the god Risus, and to-morrow is the feast when as I pray you to bee present, to set out the same more honourably, and I would with all my heart that you could find or devise somewhat of your selfe, that might be in honour of so great a god. To whom I answered, verily cousin I will do as you command me, and right glad would I be, if I might invent any laughing or merry matter to please of satisfy Risus withall. Then I rose from the table and took leave of Byrrhena and departed. And when I came into the first street my torch went out, that with great pain I could scarce get home, by reason it was so dark, for ear of stumbling: and when I was well nigh come unto the dore, behold I saw three men of great stature, heaving and lifting at Milos gates to get in: and when they saw me they were nothing afeard, but assaied with more force to break down the dores whereby they gave mee occasion, and not

without cause, to thinke that they were strong theeves. Whereupon I by and by drew out my sword which I carried for that purpose under my cloak, and ran in amongst them, and wounded them in such sort that they fell downe dead before my face. Thus when I had slaine them all, I knocked sweating and breathing at the doore til Fotis let me in. And then full weary with the slaughter of those Theeves, like Hercules when he fought against the king Gerion, I went to my chamber and layd me down to sleep.

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