



# Miles Gloriosus

*Plautus*

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## Miles Gloriosus Plautus

*Miles Gloriosus* or "Braggart Warrior" is one of the best-known and liveliest Roman comedies. It shows Plautus at his ablest in ingenious plot construction, vivid characterization, fast-moving action, and humorous dialogue.

This edition of the Latin text is fully and very helpfully annotated. The substantial introduction considers the antecedents of Plautus's drama in Greek New Comedy and in Italic farce, his mixture of Greek and Roman both in language and in the life portrayed, and his stagecraft, language, and meter.

## Miles Gloriosus Details

Date : Published March 25th 1997 by Harvard University Press (first published -206)

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Author : Plautus

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## From Reader Review Miles Gloriosus for online ebook

### alex says

had to read it for my latin classes too and i did not enjoy the story, i didn't even finish it

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### Josef Del Processo says

Faceva furore due millenni or sono, il buon Plauto, con il suo linguaggio scurrile e le sue oscenità. Oggi riempirebbe gli stadi e le piazze, come cambia (poco) il mondo!

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### Giovanna says

Eh, that's why I don't read much these days...

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### Mar says

Hello? What was this? Non-sense. I'm a total lover of classic theater but this one was boring to death. Meh. DNF.

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### Gastón says

Muy graciosa y particular comedia de enredos. Me llama la atención cómo Plauto tiene la capacidad de cagarse de risa incluso de sí mismo en muchísimos personajes. Esta obrita, aparte de divertida, tiene una estructuración impecable. Dentro de los límites de la verosimilitud se mueve en esa delgada línea que siempre plantean las comedias y sale con maestría. Aplausos para él.

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### David Sarkies says

#### Some people think they are more than they really are

20 October 2014

I must say that I found this play to be quite confusing, namely because of the names. There are five characters whose names each begin with the letter P, and since three of them are quite long, it ended up leaving me quite baffled. I have finally, after reading through the Wikipedia entry, have managed to actually work out what is going on. No doubt it would have come out much better if I had seen it performed (which is unlikely), but that does not make reading the play any less difficult.

To prove my point, here are the names:

Pyrgopolynices – a soldier

Palaestrio – the soldier's slave  
Periplectomenus – an old man of Ephesus  
Pleusicles – a young man from Athens  
Philocomasium – an Athenian girl.

Anyway, I will try to outline the play without using the names so as not to send myself nuts (as if life doesn't do that anyway). So, Pyrgopolynices is a soldier, who is also the title character of the play (Miles Gloriosus means 'the braggart warrior'), and he lives up to that name. As a soldier he is pretty mediocre, but he doesn't let that get him down because he incessantly big notes himself. The scene where he enters demonstrates that as he has one slave that follows him around singing his praises, and another group of slaves carrying a huge shield (which he has probably never held). The story is not so much about him, but about the Athenian woman that he abducted. Her boyfriend, Palaestro, after learning of her abduction, goes to tell his master, but is also captured and sold to the soldier. Upon hearing of this, Pleusicles, Palaestro's master, comes to Ephesus to try to free the two slaves.

The rest of the play has the main characters trying to concoct ways of getting the soldier to release the slaves, and it ends with him being ambushed in his kitchen and beaten up, but the reason behind that is because he was tricked into falling in love with a married woman. As such, as can be expected with many of these comedies, they all end up having happy endings.

Now that I have basically worked out what is going on, I am sure this play would have many of us in stitches if we were to see it performed live. The characters, especially that of the soldier, seem to go overboard in that farcical sense. However, as I have also suggested, once you manage to actually work out the names (because they themselves seem to be pretty ridiculous) the rest of the play seems to fall into place.

I guess Plautus is poking fun at the attitude of many of the soldiers in his day, especially those who never seem to rise beyond the rank of private (or the Ancient Roman equivalent). Glory in battle was a big thing in the ancient world (and even in the modern world, which is why so many people ran off to get slaughtered in World War I), however just because you performed well in battle did not necessarily mean that you could move up the ranks. It is not uncommon for the generals to receive the praise for the accomplishments of the soldiers, and that is still true today, with the corporate bosses receiving praise for the accomplishments of the corporation, when these bosses would have no idea how to actually do the job of many of the employees (and in fact, in many companies, skill at your job does not necessarily mean that you get the rewards, however the managers who simply sit down and direct people, are the ones that receive the kudos).

There also seems to be Plautus' dislike of slavery, which is interesting considering that slavery was an accepted part of life in Platus' days. However, we note that in the plays that I have read, the slaves became slaves due to no fault of their own (they were captured in war). However, the problem facing Platus' society was that a bulk of the slave force came from wars, and the entire economy was based upon slavery, which meant that if the slaves were released (or enemies weren't enslaved after a battle) then the economy would collapse. Much like the CEOs mentioned above, many of the wealthy in Roman society simply did not know how to do that tasks that the slaves would perform.

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## Maru says

easy and entertaining

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## Fie Sejr Ravn Jensen says

A bit long, but I really got into the plot at the end lol.

### **Atae | ???? says**

Applaudissements!

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### **Giovanna says**

How to literally kill your average rating: read books for uni.

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### **Ivy-Mabel Fling says**

Although this is really ancient, it is very funny and is useful to anyone studying Molière. I am sure he read Plautus in bed every night!

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### **Mike says**

My first encounter with Plautus was a mixed bag. I found the characters to be too talkative, with far too much exposition. I appreciate this play's influence on later comedy, but that might be its greatest drawback: everything felt stale, from the trickery to the "clever slave" trope. Of course, one might argue that such devices in Western comedy began here, but it's just as likely that they existed long before Plautus. I found enough here to enjoy (witty lines and clever interweaving of subplots) to have faith that I might like some of Plautus' other works.

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### **Daniel says**

I am so incredibly impressed with the Roman comedies. Whether Plautus or Menander, these authors knew what was funny. And in looking back on it, we learn that what is truly funny, stands the test of time. Good humor is based on the human condition, and that hasn't changed much over the centuries.

Translator, Erich Segal, does a fantastic job of keeping the meaning and style and rhythm of the lines, as well as the alliteration.

It can be a difficult trap, reading verse, but when one makes the effort to ignore the rhyme and focus on content, the results are well worth the read.

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### **Kapuss says**

Juro por Júpiter y por Marte que no tomaré represalias contra nadie por haber sido vapuleado hoy. Creo que me lo merecía. Y si salgo de aquí con los huevos en su sitio, os consideraré indulgentes con mi delito.

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## **Belle F says**

Had to read this for a Latin Linguistics course, did not enjoy the story or the language, though it did portray the evolution of Latin quite well, and supported the class in an adequate way.

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