

Plut. Alex. 48-49

Text Übersetzung:

(Übersetzung Bernadotte Perrin)

[48] Now, Philotas, the son of Parmenio, had a high position among the Macedonians; for he was held to be valiant and able to endure hardship, and, after Alexander himself, no one was so fond of giving and so fond of his comrades. At any rate, we are told that when one of his intimates asked him for some money, he ordered his steward to give it him, and when the steward said he had none to give, ‘What meanest thou?’ cried Philotas, ‘hast thou not even plate or clothing?’ [2] However, he displayed a pride of spirit, an abundance of wealth, and a care of the person and mode of life which were too offensive for a private man, and at this time particularly his imitation of majesty and loftiness was not successful at all, but clumsy, spurious, and devoid of grace, so that he incurred suspicion and envy, and even Parmenio once said to him: ‘My son, pray be less of a personage.’ [3] Moreover, for a very long time accusations against him had been brought to Alexander himself. For when Darius had been defeated in Cilicia and the wealth of Damascus was taken, among the many prisoners brought into the camp there was found a young woman, born in Pydna, and comely to look upon; her name was Antigone. [4] This woman Philotas got; and as a young man will often talk freely in vaunting and martial strain to his mistress and in his cups, he used to tell her that the greatest achievements were performed by himself and his father, and would call Alexander a stripling who through their efforts enjoyed the title of ruler. [5] These words the woman would report to one of her acquaintances, and he, as was natural, to somebody else, until the story came round to Craterus, who took the girl and brought her secretly to Alexander. He, on hearing her story, ordered her to continue her meetings with Philotas and to come and report to him whatever she learned from her lover.

[49] Now, Philotas was ignorant of the plot thus laid against him, and in his frequent interviews with Antigone would utter many angry and boastful speeches and many improper words against the king. [2] But Alexander, although strong testimony against Philotas came to his ears, endured in silence and restrained himself either because he had confidence in Parmenio's good will towards him, or because he feared the reputation and power of father and son. Meanwhile, however, a Macedonian named Limnus, from Chalaestra, conspired against Alexander's life, and invited Nicomachus, one of the young men, whose lover he was, to take part with him in the undertaking. [3] Nicomachus would not accept the invitation, but told his brother Cebalinus of the attempt, and he, going to Philotas, ordered him to conduct them into the presence of Alexander, on the ground that there were matters of great importance about which they must see him. But Philotas, for whatever reason (and the reason is not known), would not conduct them in, alleging that the king was engaged on other matters of more importance. And he refused their request twice. [4] They now became suspicious of Philotas and applied to someone else, by whom they were brought before Alexander. In the first place they told him about the plot of Limnus, and then threw out veiled insinuations against Philotas, on the ground that he had neglected their petitions on two occasions. This greatly incensed Alexander; and when he found that Limnus had defended himself against arrest and had therefore been killed by the man sent to fetch him, he was still more disturbed in mind, thinking that the proof of the plot had escaped him. [5] And since he felt bitter towards Philotas he drew to himself those who had long hated the man, and they now said openly that the king took things too easily when he supposed that Limnus, a man of Chalaestra, had set his hand to a deed of so great daring on his own account; nay, they said, he was only an assistant, or rather an

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instrument sent forth by a higher power, and enquiry into the plot should be made in those quarters where there was most interest in having it concealed. [6] After the king had once given ear to such speeches and suspicions, the enemies of Philotas brought up countless accusations against him. Consequently he was arrested and put to the question, the companions of the king standing by at the torture, while Alexander himself listened behind a stretch of tapestry. Here, as we are told, on hearing Philotas beset Hephaestion with abject and pitiful cries and supplications, he said: ‘So faint-hearted as thou art, Philotas, and so unmanly, couldst thou have set hand to so great an undertaking?’ [7] After Philotas had been put to death, Alexander sent at once into Media and dispatched Parmenio also, a man whose achievements with Philip had been many, and who was the only one of Alexander’s older friends, or the principal one, to urge his crossing into Asia, and who, of the three sons that were his, had seen two killed on the expedition before this, and was now put to death along with the third. [8] These actions made Alexander an object of fear to many of his friends, and particularly to Antipater, who sent secretly to the Aetolians and entered into an alliance with them. For the Aetolians also were in fear of Alexander, because they had destroyed the city of the Oeniadae, and because Alexander, on learning of it, had said that it would not be the sons of the Oeneadae, but he himself who would punish the Aetolians.