

Forewarned is forearmed." And so he let Archias back into the room where they were drinking. Now, friends, no more delay: let us pray to the gods and go forth to fight.' So we said our prayers, and did our best to give one another courage.

After Charon had persuaded Archias and Philip to go back home, and while he was still making us ready for action, a letter arrived from Athens from Archias the hierophant to our Archias, who was a friend of his, reporting the return and intentions of the exiles, the house to which they had repaired, and the names of their accomplices. Archias was now far gone in drink, and excited by the prospect of feminine company. So he took the letter, but when the messenger told him it was about serious business, he replied 'Serious business tomorrow,' and put it under his cushion. Then he called for a cup, ordered it to be filled up, and kept sending Phyllidas out to the door to see if the ladies were coming.

[31] These pleasant expectations kept them at their drinking till we arrived on the scene. We pushed past the servants and penetrated to the dining-room. There we stood for a moment by the door, taking in with our eyes everyone present. The garlands and the disguise tricked them. There was silence. Melon was the first to rush in, hand on sword-hilt. Cabirichus, the archon-by-lot, seized his arm as he passed, and shouted: 'Phyllidas,

isn't this Melon?' But Melon evaded him and drew his sword, and, as Archias struggled to his feet, he ran at him and struck until the man was dead. Charon wounded Philip in the neck, and then, when he tried to defend himself with the drinking-cups that were at hand, Lysitheus threw him off his couch on to the ground and finished him off. We tried to calm Cabirichus, begging him not to help the tyrants but to help in the liberation of his country, since he was personally bound and consecrated to its service. But, in his drunken condition, he was anything but amenable to reason in a good cause. He got to his feet in a high state of excitement and confusion, and brandished the spear which our archons always carry. I seized it by the shaft, raised it above my head, and shouted to him to let go and save himself, or else be struck down. Theopompus thereupon appeared on his right, and struck him with his sword. 'Lie there', he cried, 'with those whose toady you were! Never wear your garland in a free Thebes! Never sacrifice again to the gods in whose name you called down so many curses on your country in her enemy's cause!' After Cabirichus had fallen, Theocritus, who was close at hand, snatched the sacred spear out of the blood and gore. A few of the servants put up a bit of resistance, and these we killed. Those who caused no trouble we locked up in the dining-room, not wanting them to slip out and carry the news of what had happened until we knew whether our colleagues had been successful.

[32] What had happened to them was this. Pelopidas' party had gone quietly to Leontiadas' outer door, and knocked. They told the servant who answered the door that they had come from Athens with a letter for Leontiadas from Callistratus. The man gave their message and was told to open the door. He removed the bar, and opened the door a little. Then they all rushed in, threw the man to the floor, and dashed through the hall to the bedroom. Leontiadas guessed the truth at once. He drew his dagger and made ready to defend himself. Unjust and despotic as he was, he was a brave man, and strong of arm. But instead of thinking to overturn the lamp and fight his opponents in the dark, he stayed where they could see him. As the door opened, he struck Cephisodorus in the side and engaged the second man, who was Pelopidas, and shouted for the servants to come to his