



The Rope and Other Plays

Plautus

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Brilliantly adapting Greek New Comedy for Roman audiences, the sublime comedies of Plautus (c. 254-184 BC) are the earliest surviving complete works of Latin literature. The four plays collected here reveal a playwright in his prime, exploring classic themes and developing standard characters that were to influence the comedies of Shakespeare, Molière and many others. In *The Ghost*, a dissolute son who has squandered his father's money is thrown into disarray when he returns from abroad, a theme that is explored further in the comedy of errors *A Three-Dollar Day*. In *The Rope*—regarded by many as the best of Plautus' plays—the shipwreck of a pimp and his slaves leads to the touching reunion of a father and his daughter, while *Amphitryo*, Plautus's only excursion into divine mythology, offers a cheerful account of how Jupiter became father to Hercules.

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