

carried them for the purpose of defending themselves. Whether they acted right or wrong, let them account for their own conduct. My cause, which is in no way affected by this act, you ought not to have blended with it; or you ought to have explained whether we intended to attack you openly or secretly. If openly, why did we not all carry swords, and not those only who had beaten your spy? If privately, what was our plan? Were four to remain when the banquet broke up, and I, your guest, had departed, in order to fall on you in your sleep? How would they have escaped detection as being strangers and belonging to me; and above all, being liable to suspicion, on account of their having been in a quarrel a little before? And how were they to have escaped after having killed you? Was your house so weakly defended as that it could be stormed by the aid of four swords?

"Drop, then, that fable of last night, and recur to what really grieves you,—what kindles your envy. Say—why, Demetrius, is mention made anywhere of your mounting the throne? Why do you appear to some more worthy to succeed to your father's dignity than I? Why do you disturb with doubt and anxiety my hopes, which would be certain if you were not in being? These are the thoughts of Perseus, though he does not express them; these make him my enemy, these my accuser; these, my father, fill your house, these fill your kingdom with accusations and suspicions. But as I ought not now to hope for the crown, or perhaps even to think of a competition for it, being, as I am, the younger brother, and it being your will that I should yield to the elder, so neither ought I at any former time, or at the present, to act in such a manner as to appear undeserving of having you for my father, and of all the other blessings of my life. That would be the consequence of vicious conduct in me, not of moderation, and of yielding to him to whom the laws, divine and human, order me to give place. I am upbraided in regard to the Romans; and what ought to be deemed an honour is turned into a crime. It was not at my request that I was either delivered a hostage to the Romans, or sent ambassador to Rome. Being commissioned by you, I did not refuse to go. On both occasions I conducted myself in such a manner as to be no disgrace to you, to your kingdom, or to the Macedonian nation. You, therefore, father, have been the cause of my friendship with the Romans. As long as peace shall subsist between you and them, so long will I also continue in friendship with