

Claudius is a *paterfamilias*. He gets up at dawn because it is the coolest time of the day to get his work done, splashes his face with cold water and eats a small breakfast of bread and water. Today is a usual day for Claudius; it includes greeting a number of his '*clientes*' waiting at his front door at first light. He likes to impress them, and look as if he is even richer than he already is, so he asks his slave, Clemens, to dress him in his finest toga - the one with the purple hem! Once he is ready Claudius gives a nod to Bregans, his humungous door guard. The nod is a sign to open the door and let his '*clientes*' enter the house.

Claudius settles himself in his '*tablinum*' (study) and prepares for the first '*cliente*' to enter: Antonius. He has seen Antonius at his '*salutatio*' (daily greeting) before many times and Claudius heaves a big sigh to himself - Antonius is never any good at carrying out the services Claudius asks of him in return for his '*sportula*' (a handout gift of money or bread). Antonius always asks the wrong people for advice for Claudius' business affairs when he has too much wine in the local '*taberna*' (inn), and Claudius doesn't hold out much hope that he will do a good job again. Antonius enters the '*tablinum*' shuffling with his head down and ready to receive the '*sportula*'. He doesn't think it is fair: Antonius isn't poor, he works hard as a trader in the port, but he doesn't have as much money as Claudius (who is a senator) and he could really do with a handout of money this week to pay for some new clay tiles on the roof his villa, especially since he spent too much money on wine in the '*taberna*' last week. He knows Claudius has a big countryside villa that he spends time in on holiday days following public festivals, so if he can afford that, he surely must have enough to spare some extra this week!

Antonius bows his head - the formal start of the '*salutatio*', the daily greeting between the '*patronus*' and his '*clientes*'. He starts to speak to Claudius, but Claudius isn't listening; he is thinking about the election he is going to run in next week as a town magistrate but he doesn't have enough votes to win at the moment. Then it suddenly dawns on Claudius. Antonius is popular at the local '*taberna*'... perhaps he can put in a good word amongst the other Roman men to vote for Claudius next week! He looks up quickly and notices that Antonius is still talking. 'Alright!' Claudius says, 'you can have the money!' Antonius stops mid-sentence - he knows he has asked for rather a lot, and is surprised at how quickly Claudius has agreed. 'You can have the lot', Claudius continues, 'but I need you to get Salvius, Haterius and Lucretius to persuade their '*familia*' to vote for me in the elections in the forum next week. Antonius grins, that will be an easy one as soon as he gets some wine down them in the '*taberna*' tomorrow! 'I'll do it!' Antonius says.

The two men clasp forearms and look at each other directly in the eyes to confirm the deal. Claudius drips some wax from the candle onto a document on his desk and prints his signet ring into it to formalise the exchange. He then opens the drawer to retrieve the coins promised to Antonius, who hastily rushes out of the house before Claudius can change his mind, and to the shop to purchase the tiles he needs for the roof of his house - if he gets a good deal he might even have some left over to spend at the '*taberna*' this afternoon! Back in Claudius' house the '*paterfamilias*' smiles to himself, knowing that winning the election next week will make him even richer than he is now... his grin widens as he looks up and shouts: 'who's next?!'