

MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT I

"Comedy Tonight" PROLOGUS, PROTEANS, COMPANY
"Love, I Hear" HERO
"Free" PSEUDOLUS, HERO
"The House of Marcus Lycus" LYCUS, PSEUDOLUS, COURTESANS
"Lovely" HERO, PHILIA
"Pretty Little Picture" PSEUDOLUS, HERO, PHILIA
"Everybody Ought to Have a Maid" SENEX, PSEUDOLUS,
HYSTERIUM, LYCUS
"I'm Calm" HYSTERIUM
"Impossible" SENEX, HERO
"Bring Me My Bride" MILES, PSEUDOLUS,
COURTESANS, PROTEANS

ACT II

"That Dirty Old Man" DOMINA
"That'll Show Him" PHILIA
"Lovely" PSEUDOLUS, HYSTERIUM
"Funeral Sequence and Dance" PSEUDOLUS, MILES, COURTESANS,
PROTEANS
"Comedy Tonight" COMPANY

ACT I

Time: Two hundred years before the
Christian era, a day in spring.

Place: A street in Rome in front of the houses
of FERRONIUS, SENEX, and LYCUS.

AUTHORS' NOTE

This is a scenario for vaudevillians. There are many details omitted from the script. They are part of any comedian's bag of tricks: the double take, the mad walk, the sighs, the smirks, the stammerings. All these and more are intended to be supplied by the actor and you, the reader.

PROLOGUS enters through traveler, salutes audience, addresses them.

PROLOGUS: Playgoers, I bid you welcome. The theatre is a temple, and we are here to worship the gods of comedy and tragedy. Tonight, I am pleased to announce a comedy. We shall employ every device we know in our desire to divert you.

(During this scene, there are musical interludes during which PROLOGUS and the PROTEANS do various bits of pantomime and general clowning, using a prop leg. PRO-

LOCUS gestures to orchestra, sings)

Something familiar,

Something peculiar,

Something for everyone — a comedy tonight!

Something appealing,

Something appalling,

Something for everyone — a comedy tonight!

Nothing with kings,

Nothing with crowns,

Bring on the lovers, liars and clowns!

Old situations,

New complications,

Nothing portentous or polite:

Tragedy tomorrow,

Comedy tonight!

(During the following, he brings on the three PROTEANS)

Something familiar,
Something peculiar,
Something for everyone — a comedy tonight!
Something appealing,
Something appalling,
Something for everyone — a comedy tonight!

PROTEANS:

Tragedy tomorrow —

PROLOGUS:

Comedy tonight!
Something convulsive,
Something repulsive,
Something for everyone —

ALL:

A comedy tonight!

PROLOGUS:

Something esthetic,

PROTEANS:

Something frenetic,

PROLOGUS:

Something for everyone —

ALL:

A comedy tonight!

PROTEANS:

Nothing with gods,
Nothing with fate.

PROLOGUS:

Weighty affairs will just have to wait.

PROTEANS:

Nothing that's formal,

PROLOGUS:

Nothing that's normal,

ALL:

No recitations to recite!

Open up the curtain —

(The traveler parts halfway, then closes as if by accident, causing confusion. After a moment, it reopens completely, revealing a street in Rome. Stage center stands the house of SENEX; on either side, the houses of LYCUS and ERRONIUS. SENEX's house is hidden behind another curtain)

PROLOGUS:

Comedy tonight!

(Speaks)

It all takes place on a street in Rome, around and about these three houses.

(Indicates ERRONIUS's house)

First, the house of Erronius, a befuddled old man abroad now in search of his children, stolen in infancy by pirates.
(Sings)

Something for everyone — a comedy tonight!

(The PROTEANS appear in the upper window of the house and pantomime)

Something erratic,

Something dramatic,

Something for everyone — a comedy tonight!

Frenzy and frolic,

Strictly symbolic,

Something for everyone — a comedy tonight!

(Speaks, indicating LYCUS's house)

Second, the house of Lycus, a buyer and seller of the flesh of beautiful women. That's for those of you who have absolutely no interest in pirates.

(Sings)

Something for everyone — a comedy tonight!

(PROTEANS dance in front of the house; one of them disappears into the floor. PROLOGUS reacts, then continues, speaking)
Raise the curtain!

(Inner curtain drops into floor)

And finally, the house of Senex, who lives here with his wife and son. Also in this house lives Pseudolus, slave to the son. Pseudolus is probably my favorite character in the piece. A role of enormous variety and nuance, and played by an actor of such . . . let me put it this way . . . I play the part.

(Sings)

Anything you ask for — comedy tonight!

(PROTEANS re-enter)

And these are the Proteans, only three, yet they do the work of thirty. They are difficult to recognize in the many parts they play. Watch them closely.

(PROTEANS appear in and out of SENEX's house in assorted costumes as PROLOGUS comments)

A proud Roman. A patrician Roman. A pretty Roman. A Roman slave. A Roman soldier.

(PROTEAN appears with crude wooden ladder)

A Roman ladder.

(PROTEAN enters, juggling)

Tremendous skill!

(He juggles badly. PROTEAN enters)

Incredible versatility!

(He fumbles in changing wigs. PROTEAN enters with gong)

And, above all, dignity!

(He strikes gong, his skirt falls)

And now, the entire company!

(The company enters from SENEX's house and forms a line)

ALL (Sing):

Something familiar,

Something peculiar,

Something for everybody — comedy tonight!

STAGE RIGHT:

Something that's gaudy,

STAGE LEFT:

Something that's bawdy,

PROLOGUS:

Something for everybawdy —

ALL:

Comedy tonight!

MILES:

Nothing that's grim,

DOMINA:

Nothing that's Greek!

PROLOGUS (Leading GYMNASIA center):

She plays Medea later this week.

ALL:

Stunning surprises,

Cunning disguises,

Hundreds of actors out of sight!

ERRONIUS:

Pantaloons and tunics!

SENEX:

Courtesans and eunuchs!

DOMINA:

Funerals and chases!

LYCUS:

Baritones and basses!

PHILIA:

Panderers!

HERO:
Philanderers!

HYSTERIUM:
Cupidity!

MILES:
Timidity!

LYCUS:
Mistakes!

ERRONIUS:
Fakes!

PHILIA:
Rhymes!

DOMINA:
Mimes!

PROLOGUS:
Tumblers!

Grumblers!

Fumblers!

Bumblers!

ALL:
No royal curse,
No Trojan horse,
And a happy ending, of course!
Goodness and badness,
Man in his madness,
This time it all turns out all right!
Tragedy tomorrow!
Comedy tonight!
One — two — three!

(All exit, except PROLOGUS)

PROLOGUS (Addresses the heavens): Oh, Thespis, we place ourselves in your hands.

(To audience)

The play begins.

(Exits)

(Music up. PHILIA appears at window of LYCUS's house and HERO appears on balcony of SENEX's house. SENEX enters from his house)

SENEX (Calls): Slaves!

(PHILIA exits, as PROTEANS enter from SENEX's house, dressed as SLAVES, assume slavish attitudes)

We are about to start our journey. My robe!

(PROTEANS place robe on him)

My wreath.

(PROTEANS place wreath on his head)

DOMINA (Appearing in doorway of SENEX's house): Senex!

SENEX (Frowns): My wife.

DOMINA: Slaves! Stop cringing and fetch the baggage!

PROTEANS (Exiting into SENEX's house): Yes, yes, yes.

DOMINA: Senex, you are master of the house and no help at all. Where is Pseudolus? Where is Hysterium? Summon them!

(SENEX is about to speak, DOMINA calls out)

Pseudolus! Hysterium!

(HYSTERIUM enters from SENEX's house. During the following, SENEX drifts toward LYCUS's house)

HYSTERIUM: Ah, madam, you called?

DOMINA: Yes, Hysterium.

HYSTERIUM: And I answered. Ever your humble.

(Kisses hem of her cape)

DOMINA: Have you prepared my potions?

HYSTERIUM (*Holds up small bag*): Yes, madam. In addition to your usual potions, I have included one for tantrums and one for queasiness.

DOMINA: Thank you, Hysterium, slave of slaves.

HYSTERIUM: I live to grovel.

(*Kisses her hem.* DOMINA calls to HERO on balcony of SENEX's house)

DOMINA: Hero, come kiss your mother goodbye.

HERO: Yes, mother.

(*Exits into SENEX's house.* SLAVES re-enter, carrying baggage)

DOMINA: Slaves, take that baggage and go before us, you clumsies!

PROTEANS (*As they scurry off*): Yes, yes, clumsies, yes.

DOMINA: Senex! Come away from that house of shame!

SENEX (*Crossing to her*): I was just standing there saying, "Shame, shame, shame!"

DOMINA: Hysterium!

HYSTERIUM: Yes, madam?

DOMINA: Where is Pseudolus?

HYSTERIUM: Where is he indeed! I have not seen him since he dressed Hero this morning.

DOMINA: Tell him that while we are gone, he is to watch over Hero. He is to keep him cheerful, well-fed, and far from the opposite sex.

SENEX: My dear, the boy has to learn sometime.

DOMINA: And when that time comes, you shall tell him . . .

SENEX: Yes, dear.

DOMINA: . . . what little you know. Now, go and fetch the gift we bring my mother.

SENEX: Yes, dear.

(*Exits into his house, as HERO enters from it*)

HERO: Good morning, father.

DOMINA: Ah, Hero. Your father and I are off to visit my mother in the country. What a joy it would be were you to accompany us. But, alas, the sight of anyone in good health fills my mother with rage.

(*SENEX re-enters carrying a bust of DOMINA*)

Ah, there I am. Do you think it will please my mother?

HYSTERIUM: Oh, yes, madam. The craftsmanship is superb.

DOMINA: And the resemblance?

HYSTERIUM: Frightening.

DOMINA: The time of farewell is at hand. Hysterium, slave-in-chief, here are my husband's final instructions.

(*SENEX opens his mouth to speak, she continues*)

In his absence, his entire household is in your spotless care. Your word shall be absolute, your authority unquestioned.

SENEX: And furthermore —

DOMINA: We are on our way!

SENEX (*Mutters*): We are on our way.

DOMINA: Farewell, beloved son. Farewell, thoughtful Hysterium. Senex, come along! And carry my bust with pride.

(*Exits. A beat, and then her voice is heard*)

Senex!

SENEX: Yes, dear.

(*To audience*)

A lesson for you all. Never fall in love during a total eclipse!

(*Exits*)

HYSTERIUM (*To audience*): Well, to work, to work! Now that I am completely in charge, I am going to be a very busy slave.

(*Sees HERO, who has drifted toward LYCUS's house*)

Here! Come away from there. You must never know what goes on in that house.

HERO: But I do know.

HYSTERIUM: You do?

(*HERO nods*)

Isn't it amazing? Well, I can't stand here talking.

(*Goes to SENEX's house, picks something from a column, stamps it out, grimaces, enters house, calling*)

Pseudolus!

(*HERO watches him go, then turns to audience*)

HERO (*Sings*):

Now that we're alone,

May I tell you

I've been feeling very strange?

Either something's in the air

Or else a change

Is happening in me.

I think I know the cause,

I hope I know the cause.

From everything I've heard,

There's only one cause it can be . . .

Love, I hear,

Makes you sigh a lot.

Also, love, I hear,

Leaves you weak.

Love, I hear,

Makes you blush

And turns you ashen.

You try to speak with passion

And squeak,

I hear.

Love, they say,

Makes you pine away,

But you pine away

With an idiotic grin.

I pine, I blush,

I squeak, I squawk.

Today I woke

Too weak to walk.

What's love, I hear,

I feel . . . I fear . . .

I'm in.

(*Sighs*)

See what I mean?

Da-da-da-da-da-da . . .

(*I hum a lot, too.*)

I'm dazed, I'm pale,

I'm sick, I'm sore;

I've never felt so well before!

What's love, I hear,

I feel . . . I fear . . .

I know I am . . .

I'm sure . . . I mean . . .

I think . . . I trust . . .

I pray . . . I must . . .

Be in!

Forgive me if I shout . . .

Forgive me if I crow . . .

I've only just found out

And, well . . .

I thought you ought to know.

(PROTEANS enter dressed as CITIZENS, holding PSEUDOLUS by the arms. They utter obviously fake chatter)

HERO: Pseudolus!

FIRST CITIZEN (*Salutes*): Citizen! This is your slave? He was parading as a citizen.

PSEUDOLUS: Believe me, master, I was not parading. This is parading.

(*Demonstrates*)

I was walking.

(*Starts to walk off. CITIZEN stops him*)

SECOND CITIZEN: Come back here!

THIRD CITIZEN (*To HERO*): He invited us to game with him, and, in a matter of moments, he had taken all our money.

FIRST CITIZEN: He was using weighted dice!

HERO (*To PSEUDOLUS*): Return the money.

SECOND CITIZEN: He took nine minae.

PSEUDOLUS: Nine?! I took seven!

HERO: Give them nine.

PSEUDOLUS (*Handing coins to CITIZEN*): One, two, three, four . . . I am being cheated out of the money I won fairly.

HERO: Pseudolus!

PSEUDOLUS (*Giving CITIZENS coins*): Seven, eight.

FIRST CITIZEN: What happened to five and six?
(HERO glares at PSEUDOLUS)

PSEUDOLUS: I'm coming to them. Nine, five, six!
(*Hands them three more coins*)

SECOND CITIZEN: Come, fellow citizens!

(*CITIZENS exit, chattering*)

PSEUDOLUS (*Sheepishly*): I should be whipped . . . gently. But I only did it for money. I thought if I could raise enough you'd let me buy my freedom from you.

HERO: Oh, Pseudolus, not again!

PSEUDOLUS: It's all I think about. I hate being a slave.

HERO: Better a slave than a slave to love.

PSEUDOLUS: That's easy for you to . . . Love? You? Tell me, master, who is she? Anyone I know?

HERO: Sometimes you can see her through that window.

(*Points to LYCUS'S house*)

PSEUDOLUS: Through that win —

(*Horried*)

A courtesan in the house of Lycus? Your parents would be outraged if they could hear you.

HERO: I don't care!

PSEUDOLUS: Do you know how many minae a girl like that would cost?

HERO: And worth every drachma! Oh, Pseudolus, I would give anything for her.

PSEUDOLUS: You would? You really love this girl?

(HERO sighs)

I like the way you said that. Now, you cannot afford to buy this girl, but in spite of that, suppose someone, someone with tremendous cunning and guile, could arrange for her to be yours.

HERO: Yes?

PSEUDOLUS: If that someone could arrange it, what would you give me?

HERO: Everything!

PSEUDOLUS: Everything? What do you own? Twenty minae, a collection of sea shells and me.

HERO: Right.

PSEUDOLUS: You don't have to give me the twenty minae, or the sea shells. If I get you that girl, just give me me.

HERO: Give you you?

PSEUDOLUS: My freedom.

HERO: Pseudolus! People do not go about freeing slaves.

PSEUDOLUS: Be the first! Start a fashion!

HERO (*A pause, then*): Get me that girl!

PSEUDOLUS: And if I can?

HERO: You are free!

PSEUDOLUS: I am what?

HERO: Free!

PSEUDOLUS: Free!

(*Sings*)

Oh, what a word!

Oh, what a word!

(*Speaks*)

Say it again!

HERO: Free!

PSEUDOLUS (*Sings*):

I've often thought,

I've often dreamed

How it would be . . .

And yet I never thought I'd be . . .

(*Speaks*)

Once more.

HERO: Free!

PSEUDOLUS (*Sings*):

But when you come to think of such things . . .

A man should have the rights that all others . . .

Can you imagine

What it will be like when I am . . .

Can you see me?

Can you see me as a Roman with my head unbowed?

(Sing it good and loud . . .)

HERO:

Free!

PSEUDOLUS:

Like a Roman, having rights

And like a Roman, proud!

Can you see me?

HERO:

I can see you!

PSEUDOLUS:

Can you see me as a voter fighting graft and vice?

(Sing it soft and nice . . .)

HERO:

Free.

PSEUDOLUS:

Why, I'll be so conscientious that I may vote twice!

Can you see me?

Can you see me?

When I'm free to be whatever I want to be,

Think what wonders I'll accomplish then!

When the master that I serve is me and just me,

Can you see me being equal with my countrymen?
Can you see me being Pseudolus the Citizen?
Can you see me being . . . ?
Give it to me once again!

HERO:

Free!

PSEUDOLUS:

That's it!

HERO:

Free!

PSEUDOLUS:

Yes!

HERO:

Fr . . .

PSEUDOLUS (*Claps his hand over HERO's mouth*):

Now, not so fast!

I didn't think . . .

The way I am,

I have a roof,

Three meals a day,

And I don't have to pay a thing . . .

I'm just a slave and everything's free.

If I were free,

Then nothing would be free,

And if I'm beaten now and then,

What does it matter?

HERO (*Softly, seductively*):

Free.

PSEUDOLUS (*Brightening*):

Can you see me?

Can you see me as a poet writing poetry?

All my verse will be . . .

HERO:

Free!

PSEUDOLUS:

A museum will have me pickled for posterity!
Can you see me?

HERO (*With a grimace*):

I can see you!

PSEUDOLUS:

Can you see me as a lover, one of great renown,
Women falling down?

HERO:

Free?

PSEUDOLUS: No,

But I'll buy the house of Lycus for my house in town.

Can you see me?

Can't you see me?

Be you anything from king to baker of cakes,

You're a vegetable unless you're free!

It's a little word, but oh, the difference it makes:

It's the necessary essence of democracy,

It's the thing that every slave should have the right to be,

And I soon will have the right to buy a slave for me!

Can you see him?

Well, I'll free him!

When a Pseudolus can move, the universe shakes,

But I'll never move until I'm free!

Such a little word, but oh, the difference it makes:

I'll be Pseudolus the founder of a family,

I'll be Pseudolus the pillar of society,

I'll be Pseudolus the man, if I can only be . . .

HERO:

Free!

PSEUDOLUS:

Sing it!

HERO:

Free!

PSEUDOLUS:

Spell it!

HERO:

F-r-double . . .

PSEUDOLUS:

No, the long way . . .

HERO:

F-R-E-E —

BOTH:

FREE!!!

(LYCUS enters from his house, calls into it)

LYCUS: What a day! What a day! Come out here!

(PROTEAN, dressed as EUNUCH, enters from house, holding fan)

What do you think you are doing, eunuch? I have told you a thousand times not to fan the girls while they're still wet! You'll never learn. You'll be a eunuch all your life!

(EUNUCH exits into house. LYCUS turns to audience)

What a day! I have to go to the Senate this morning. I'm blackmailing one of the Senators.

(Starts off, as PSEUDOLUS whispers to HERO)

PSEUDOLUS: Quick! Your money bag!

(HERO hands him money bag)

Good morning, Lycus.

(Jingles money bag behind LYCUS's back. LYCUS stops)

LYCUS: I know that sound, and I love it.

(Turns to PSEUDOLUS)

Is that money?

PSEUDOLUS: What do you think?

LYCUS: How did you come to all this?

PSEUDOLUS: An unexpected legacy. My uncle Simo, the noted Carthaginian elephant breeder, came to an untimely end. He was crushed to death on the last day of the mating season. This morning I bought my freedom.

LYCUS: Congratulations!

PSEUDOLUS: With this much left over for one gross indulgence.

LYCUS: Good.

PSEUDOLUS: Lycus, I am now in the market for a lifetime companion. Tell me, have you anything lying about in there, anything to satisfy an Olympian appetite?

LYCUS: Pseudolus, friend and citizen, I have traveled the world in search of beauty, and I can say with modesty that I have the finest assortment in Rome.

PSEUDOLUS: Show me.

(LYCUS claps his hands)

LYCUS: Eunuchs! A buyer!

(EUNUCHS enter from LYCUS's house, drape banner over door. PSEUDOLUS sits on stool. LYCUS sings)

There is merchandise for every need

At the house of Marcus Lycus.

All the merchandise is guaranteed

At the house of Marcus Lycus.

For a sense of sensuality

Or an opulence thereof,

Patronize the house of Marcus Lycus,
Merchant of love.

For your most assured approval and your more than possible purchase, here are the fruits of my search. Behold . . . Tintinabula.

(TINTINABULA enters from behind banner, poses)

Out of the East, with the face of an idol . . . the arms of a willow tree . . . and the pelvis of a camel.

(She dances. PSEUDOLUS looks at HERO, who shakes his head no)

PSEUDOLUS (To LYCUS): Don't you have anyone in there a bit less . . . noisy?

LYCUS: I have. May I present Panacea.
(PANACEA enters)

To make her available to you, I outbid the King of Nubia. Panacea, with a face that holds a thousand promises, and a body that stands behind each promise.

(PANACEA dances. HERO shakes his head no. PSEUDOLUS looks PANACEA over, yawns)
You are disturbed?

PSEUDOLUS: The proportions. Don't misunderstand me.
(Spreading his hands before her bosom)

I love the breadth. It's the length. She may be the right length, but is it right for me? You see what I mean.

(Stands with her, back-to-back)

Isn't she a bit too short?

LYCUS: Definitely not.

PSEUDOLUS (Wiggles, then): Too tall?

LYCUS: No. Like that you look perfect together.

PSEUDOLUS: Yes, but how often will we find ourselves in this position?

(Turns to face her)

Perhaps if we . . .

LYCUS: No need to compromise. Consider the Geminae.
(GEMINAE enter)

A matched pair.

(They dance)

Either one a divinely assembled woman, together an infinite number of mathematical possibilities. They are flawless.

(HERO shakes his head no)

PSEUDOLUS: I quite agree. But I am a man of limited means and I don't suppose you'd break up a set.

LYCUS: I couldn't. You understand.

PSEUDOLUS: Completely.

LYCUS: Fortunately, we still have . . . Vibrata.
(VIBRATA enters)

Exotic as a desert bloom . . . wondrous as a flamingo . . . lithe as a tigress . . . for the man whose interest is wild life . . .

(VIBRATA sings, dances. HERO shakes his head no. PSEUDOLUS goes to VIBRATA)

PSEUDOLUS: Lycus, all that I can see is a sight to behold, but I keep feeling there is something wrong. Perhaps a cleft palate, a hammer toe . . .

LYCUS: Wait. I know exactly what you want. May I present . . . Gymnasia.

(GYMNASIA enters, does bump. PSEUDOLUS falls off stool. HERO shakes his head no, but PSEUDOLUS is completely captivated)

Gymnasia, a giant stage on which a thousand dramas can be played.

(PSEUDOLUS circles her, stops behind her, gestures to LYCUS)

PSEUDOLUS: Lycus, could I see you back here a moment?

(LYCUS disappears behind GYMNASIA. He and PSEUDOLUS gesture. PSEUDOLUS steps into the clear)
Two hundred minae?! For what?!

LYCUS: Figure it out for yourself.

PSEUDOLUS: Yes, it is a fair price by the pound. But what disturbs me, frankly, is the upkeep. Perhaps you would have more success selling her to some fraternal organization. A group dedicated to good works. But on the other hand . . .

(Puts his head on her bosom)

HERO: Pseudolus!

PSEUDOLUS: Yes, darling?

HERO (Pulls him aside): Do you want your freedom?

PSEUDOLUS (Looks back at GYMNASIA): More than ever.
(To LYCUS)

May I see the next girl?

LYCUS: That is the entire lot. Surely there is one among these to satisfy you.

PSEUDOLUS: As yet I have not seen exactly what I had in mind.

LYCUS (Claps hands): Courtesans! Out of the sun and into the house. I shall return in time to lead you in midday prayers.

(COURTESANS and EUNUCHS exit. PHILIA's head appears in upper window of LYCUS's house)

HERO (Whispers to PSEUDOLUS): Pseudolus, there she is!

PSEUDOLUS (To LYCUS): Oh, you fox! "That is the entire lot." Did I not just spy a golden head and a pair of sky blue eyes? A body clad in flowing white?

LYCUS: Oh, that one. A recent arrival from Crete. A virgin.

PSEUDOLUS (Nudging HERO): A virgin.

HERO: A virgin!

PSEUDOLUS (To LYCUS): Well??

LYCUS: Only yesterday she was sold.

HERO: Sold!

(Draws his dagger melodramatically. PSEUDOLUS wrests it from him)

PSEUDOLUS: Behave yourself!

(Begins casually cleaning his nails with dagger)

She was sold?

LYCUS: To the great captain, Miles Gloriosus, who comes this day to claim her. She cost five hundred minae.

PSEUDOLUS (Amazed): Five hundred!

LYCUS: A great sum, to be sure. But being a man of conquest, his heart was set on a virgin.

PSEUDOLUS: You say she just arrived from Crete?

LYCUS: Yes.

PSEUDOLUS: Mmm. I hope the great captain is kind to her. She deserves a bit of affection before . . .

(Sighs, then to HERO)

Tragic, is it not?

(HERO moans)

LYCUS: What is tragic?

PSEUDOLUS: The news from Crete.

LYCUS: What news?

PSEUDOLUS: Why should I darken your day? Farewell, Lycus.

LYCUS (Grabs him): What is the news?

PSEUDOLUS: What news?

LYCUS: The news from Crete.

PSEUDOLUS: I heard it. Tragic.

LYCUS: Pseudolus!

(*Shakes him*)

PSEUDOLUS: You force me to tell you! Crete is ravaged by a great plague. People are dying by the thousands.

LYCUS: But this girl is healthy. She goes smiling through the day.

PSEUDOLUS: She doesn't! I thought you knew. When they start to smile, the end is near.

LYCUS: No!

PSEUDOLUS: Yes. I am told it is lovely now in Crete. Everyone lying there, smiling.

LYCUS: Is it contagious?

PSEUDOLUS: Did you ever see a plague that wasn't?

LYCUS: My other girls!

PSEUDOLUS: You had best get her out of there.

HERO: Yes!

LYCUS: And then?

PSEUDOLUS: I could look after her until the captain comes.

HERO: He could!

LYCUS: But would you not be . . . ?

PSEUDOLUS: I have already had the plague. I would tell you about it but . . .

(*Pantomimes disgust*)

LYCUS: I do hope she lives until the captain gets here.
(*Exits into his house*)

HERO (*Elated*): Pseudolus, I am to be with her!

PSEUDOLUS: Until the captain arrives.

HERO (*Sadly*): Yes.

PSEUDOLUS: Wait!

(*Thinks a moment*)

HERO: Yes?

PSEUDOLUS: A brilliant idea!

HERO: Yes?

PSEUDOLUS: That's what we have to find. A brilliant idea.

HERO: You must find one.

LYCUS (*Speaking into his house as he backs out of it*): Come, come, my dear. This way. Don't touch that pillar. Here is someone I want you to meet.

(*PHILIA enters from house, carrying a bag*)

Philia, this is Pseudolus. You are to stay with him until the captain comes. It will not be long.

(*Aside to PSEUDOLUS*)

Pseudolus! Thank you, Pseudolus. If none in the house were to your liking, there will soon be new arrivals. You shall have first choice, because, Pseudolus, you are a friend.

(*Bows*)

PSEUDOLUS (*Returning the bow*): And you, Lycus, are a gentleman and a procurer.

(*LYCUS exits. HERO and PHILIA stand staring at each other. PSEUDOLUS looks at them, then turns to audience*)

There they are. Together. And I must keep them that way, together, if I am to be free. What to do? What to do?

(*To himself*)

I need help. I'll go to the harbor. There I may find a way out! I am off! The captain!

(HERO and PHILIA turn to him, alarmed)

Watch for him. He may arrive this way . . .

(PHILIA turns from HERO, looks off)

. . . or he may arrive this way.

(HERO turns, looks off)

No, no. You watch this way.

(Turns PHILIA around)

And you watch that way.

(Turns HERO around. HERO and PHILIA now face each other)

Much better.

(Starts to exit, stops, addresses audience)

Don't worry. Nothing will happen. He's a virgin, too.

(Runs off)

PHILIA: My name is Philia.

HERO: Yes.

PHILIA: I do not know your name, but you have beautiful legs.

HERO: My name is Hero and . . . uh . . . you have beautiful legs . . . I imagine.

PHILIA: I would show them to you, but they are sold.

HERO: I know.

PHILIA: Along with the rest of me. I cost five hundred minae. Is that a lot of money?

HERO: Oh, yes.

PHILIA: More than three hundred?

HERO: Nearly twice as much.

PHILIA: Those are the two numbers that mix me up, three

and five. I hope that captain doesn't expect me to do a lot of adding.

HERO: You can't add?

PHILIA: We are taught beauty and grace, and no more. I cannot add, or spell, or anything. I have but one talent.

(Sings)

I'm lovely,

All I am is lovely,

Lovely is the one thing I can do.

Winsome,

What I am is winsome,

Radiant as in some

Dream come true.

Oh,

Isn't it a shame?

I can neither sew

Nor cook nor read nor write my name.

But I'm happy

Merely being lovely,

For it's one thing I can give to you.

HERO: Philia . . .

PHILIA: Yes?

HERO: Say my name.

PHILIA: Just say your name?

HERO: Yes.

PHILIA: Very well.

(A blank look)

I have forgotten it.

HERO (Disappointed): It's Hero.

PHILIA: Forgive me, Hero. I have no memory for names.

HERO: You don't need one. You don't need anything.
(Sings)

You're lovely,
Absolutely lovely,
Who'd believe the loveliness of you?
Winsome,
Sweet and warm and winsome,
Radiant as in some
Dream come true.

PHILIA:
True!

HERO:
Now
Venus would seem tame,
Helen and her thou-
Sand ships would have to die of shame.

BOTH:
And I'm happy,
Happy that you're (I'm) lovely,
For there's one thing loveliness can do:
It's a gift for me to share with you!
(They kiss)

HERO: Do you know? I've never been kissed before.

PHILIA: That's the very first thing they teach us.

HERO: Philia . . . I love you.

PHILIA: And I love you.
(They embrace, as HYSTERIUM enters from SENEX'S house,
muttering)

HYSTERIUM: Pseudolus! Where is that — ?
(Sees HERO and PHILIA)

Oh, no! No, no, no, no!

HERO (Frightened): Hysterium — this is Philia.

HYSTERIUM: Never mind who she is, who is she? Where is she from?

HERO (Haltingly): She is from the house of Lycus.

HYSTERIUM: A courtesan!

PHILIA: I am a virgin.

HYSTERIUM (Disbelievingly, with a fake smile): Of course. Hero, this will never do. Never, never. Bid farewell to this young lady so that she can go about her . . . uh . . . business.

HERO: But Pseudolus said . . .

HYSTERIUM: Pseudolus! I might have known!
(PSEUDOLUS runs on)

PSEUDOLUS (Spots HYSTERIUM, then to HERO): Hero! Master!

HYSTERIUM: Pseudolus!
(PSEUDOLUS reacts, polishes pillar of house)
Pseudolus!

PSEUDOLUS: Yes, Hysterium?

HYSTERIUM: Pseudolus!

PSEUDOLUS: Pronounced perfectly! You know, a lot of people say Pseudolus, and I hate it.

(Aside to HERO)

Show the girl our garden.

(HERO and PHILIA exit behind SENEX'S house)

HYSTERIUM: How dare you! Arranging an assignation between an innocent boy and a you-know-what!

PSEUDOLUS (Stopping him): Hysterium, there is something you should know about that you-know-what.

HYSTERIUM: What?

PSEUDOLUS: That girl, about whom you think the worst, is my daughter.

HYSTERIUM: Your what?

PSEUDOLUS: My daughter. You've heard me speak of her.

HYSTERIUM: Never!

PSEUDOLUS: Well, I don't like to talk about her.
(*Polishes pillar*)

HYSTERIUM: That girl is not your daughter.

PSEUDOLUS: My sister?

HYSTERIUM: I shall go tell his parents.

PSEUDOLUS: Wait! Hysterium, the truth. She has been sold to a captain who comes any moment now to claim her.

HYSTERIUM: Oh. I go tell his parents!

PSEUDOLUS: I go with you!

HYSTERIUM: You don't want to be there when I tell them about you!

PSEUDOLUS: No, I want *you* to be there when I tell them about *you*!

HYSTERIUM: Tell them *what* about me? I have nothing to fear. I am a pillar of virtue. I go.

(*Starts to leave, PSEUDOLUS stops him*)

PSEUDOLUS: I think it might be of interest to the family that their slave-in-chief, their pillar of virtue, has secreted within the confines of his cubicle Rome's most extensive and diversified collection of erotic pottery.

(*HYSTERIUM freezes in horror*)

HYSTERIUM: Pseudolus!

(*Calls out*)

Hero!

PSEUDOLUS: Tell me, where did you ever get that fruit bowl with the frieze of . . . ?

(*Indicates an erotic pose or two*)

HYSTERIUM: Pseudolus!

(*HERO and PHILIA enter*)

Hero, as you know, your mother and father placed me in charge of your innocence. However, I have decided to allow you to remain with the girl until the arrival of her captain.

HERO: Oh, Philia!

(*Embraces her*)

HYSTERIUM: Here! Stop doing that!

(*Separates them*)

You could hurt each other!

(*Exiting into SENEX's house*)

Ohhhhh!

PSEUDOLUS: Master, I said we needed a brilliant idea.

HERO: Yes?

PSEUDOLUS: I have been to the harbor, and I have found one. Come along!

PHILIA: Are we going somewhere?

PSEUDOLUS: *You* are. You have your belongings.

(*To HERO*)

Let us fetch yours.

HERO: Where are we to go?

PSEUDOLUS: Away.

HERO: *Where* away?

PSEUDOLUS: *Far* away!

HERO: But my family . . .

PHILIA: My captain . . .

PSEUDOLUS: There is only room for two of you.

HERO: Where?

PSEUDOLUS (*Sings*):

In the Tiber there sits a boat,

Gently dipping its bow,

Trim and tidy and built to float.

Pretty little picture?

Now . . .

Put a boy on the starboard side,

Leaning out at the rail.

Next to him put a blushing bride,

Slim and slender and starry-eyed.

Down below put a tiny bed.

The sun gets pale,

The sea gets red,

And off they sail

On the first high tide,

The boat and the bed and the boy and the bride!

It's a pretty little picture, oh, my!

Pretty little picture, how true!

Pretty little picture which I,

Pseudolitelus, give to you!

Feel the roll of the playful waves!

See the sails as they swell!

Hear the whips on the galley slaves!

Pretty little picture?

Well . . .

Let it carry your cares away,

Out of sight, out of mind,

Past the buoy and through the bay —

Soon there's nothing but sea and spray.

Night descends and the moon's aglow.

Your arms entwined,

You steal below,

And far behind

At the edge of day,

The bong of the bell of the buoy in the bay,

And the boat and the boy and the bride are away!

It's a pretty little picture to share

As the little boat sails to sea.

Take a little trip free as air,

Have a little freedom on me!

HERO *and* PHILIA:

No worries,

No bothers,

No captains,

No fathers!

PSEUDOLUS:

In the ocean an island waits,

Smooth and sandy and pink,

Filled with lemons and nuts and dates.

Pretty little picture?

Think:

In a cottage of cypress trees,

Sea-shells dotting the door,

Boy and bride live a life of ease,

Doing nothing but what they please.

And every night when the stars appear,

There's nothing more

To see or hear,

There's just the shore

Where the lovers lie,

The sand and the sea and the stars and the sky,

And the sound of a soft little satisfied sigh . . .

(HERO *and* PHILIA *sigh*)

ALL:

All your petty little problems will cease,

And your little blessings will flow,

And your little family increase.
Pretty little picture?

PSEUDOLUS:

No, no!

Pretty little masterpiece!

ALL:

Pretty little picture!

PSEUDOLUS: Come! We go!

HERO: Yes!

PHILIA: Wait! I cannot go.

PSEUDOLUS: Why can you not?!

PHILIA: As long as the captain has a contract I must go with him. That is the way of a courtesan.

HERO: Oh, Venus, why did you bring us together, only to part us?

PHILIA: Be brave, Hero.

HERO: For us there will never be happiness.

PHILIA: We will have to learn to be happy without it.

PSEUDOLUS (*To audience*): Have you been listening? Do you believe this? And not a word about me or my freedom.

(*Firmly*)

She *must* go with him!

PHILIA: This waiting out here is torture. Why doesn't he come and take me?

PSEUDOLUS: In good time you will be taken. But not on the street. Inside.

PHILIA: You will tell me when he comes?

PSEUDOLUS: I shall have him knock. On the door. Three times.

PHILIA: That's two and one more?

PSEUDOLUS: Correct. Three times. Now, in, in, in,
(*PHILIA exits into SENEX's house*)

HERO (*Despondently*): Pseudolus, what is going to happen?

PSEUDOLUS (*Confidently*): She will go with you.

(*HYSTERIUM enters from SENEX's house*)

HYSTERIUM: Hero, I am off to market. While you are alone with the girl, remember who you are.

(*HERO exits into SENEX's house*)

I have yet to begin my daily chores.

PSEUDOLUS: Hysterium, before you go. Just one more favor.

HYSTERIUM: What is it?

PSEUDOLUS: May I borrow your book of potions?

HYSTERIUM: Oh, no, no, no! That stays right here . . .

(*Pats his back pocket*)

Where it belongs.

(*Calls off*)

You there, bird seller! What do you have in the way of a plump peahen?

(*As he exits, PSEUDOLUS deftly lifts potion book from HYSTERIUM's back pocket, addresses audience*)

PSEUDOLUS: His book of potions! And my pass to freedom! What I need is his sleeping potion. With a drop or two of that, the breath stops short, the eyes slam shut, the body hangs limp. I shall mix a few drops in a beaker of wine and give it to the girl to drink. I show Lycus that she has died of the plague and tell Hero to dispose of the body. Then they to the boat, I to the hills . . .

(*Points to audience*)

and you to your homes.

(*Looks through pages, then to audience*)

I just remembered something frightening. I cannot read!
(Calls)

Hero! Come out here.

(HERO enters from SENEX's house)

Call these pages off to me.

HERO: Not now?!

PSEUDOLUS: Yes, now! Read!

HERO (*Reading as he turns pages*): "Fever Potion" . . . "Head-ache Potion" . . . "Passion Potion" . . . "Sleeping Po-tion" . . .

PSEUDOLUS: That's it! The formula. What do we need? The ingredients?

HERO: "The eye of an eel."

PSEUDOLUS: That we have.

HERO: "The heart of a snail."

PSEUDOLUS: That we have.

HERO: "A cup of mare's sweat."

PSEUDOLUS: Mare's sweat? That we have not.

HERO: Why are you preparing this?

PSEUDOLUS: I intend to give it to the girl. Asleep, she will go with you.

HERO: She will?

PSEUDOLUS (*Worried*): Mare's sweat . . .

HERO: Where will you find it?

PSEUDOLUS: Leave that to me. *You* go to the harbor! Give the boatman your twenty minae and tell him that you sail with him this day! *I* shall prepare the potion!

HERO: This is exciting!

PSEUDOLUS: Isn't it! Go!

(HERO exits)

Mare's sweat! Where am I going to find mare's sweat on a balmy day like this?

(PSEUDOLUS exits, as SENEX enters with DOMINA's bust, calling)

SENEX: Pseudolus! Pseudolus! . . . He could have taken this to the stonemason for me.

(To audience)

I dropped it, and now the nose has to be re-sharpened. Hysterium will take it for me.

(Goes to his house, kicks door three times. A pause, then

PHILIA enters from house, arms outstretched)

PHILIA: Take me!

(SENEX looks around)

Take me!

SENEX: What did you say?

PHILIA: Take me!

SENEX: One moment.

(Puts statue on stoop, starts for PHILIA, returns to statue, and turns its face away from PHILIA)

PHILIA: Here on the street if you like! My body is yours. Say it. Say it!

SENEX (*Looks around, then quickly*): Your body is mine.

PHILIA: Then take me!

(Throws herself at him)

Is this not what you want?

SENEX: It does cross my mind now and then.

PHILIA: You must know one thing.

SENEX: What is that?

PHILIA: Though you have my body, you shall never have my heart.

SENEX: Well, you can't have everything.

(*Looks heavenward*)

A thousand thanks, whichever one of you did this.

(*She seizes him. They hold their embrace as PSEUDOLUS enters, carrying a vial. Not seeing SENEX and PHILIA, he addresses audience*)

PSEUDOLUS: Would you believe it? There was a mare sweating not two streets from here.

(*Holds up vial, turns, sees embrace. SENEX's face is hidden from him. PSEUDOLUS turns to audience*)

Gets to look more like his father every day!

PHILIA (*Still in SENEX's arms*): Pseudolus, he is here.

PSEUDOLUS: No!

(*SENEX looks from PHILIA to PSEUDOLUS, then back to PHILIA*)

SENEX: Remember where we stopped.

(*Slips out from under her, goes to PSEUDOLUS*)

PSEUDOLUS: Sir, you're back.

SENEX (*Holding his spine*): She almost broke it.

PSEUDOLUS: You've returned!

SENEX: Yes!

PSEUDOLUS: Unexpectedly!

SENEX: Apparently! Who is she?

PHILIA: I shall wait your bidding.

SENEX: Yes, dear.

PHILIA: Ever your servant.

(*Bows, exits into SENEX's house*)

SENEX (*Sighs*): Ever my servant.

PSEUDOLUS (*Quickly*): Yes, sir. Your servant. Your new maid. We needed someone to help.

SENEX: A new maid. She seems very loyal.

PSEUDOLUS: And very efficient and very courteous and very thoughtful.

SENEX: Maids like me. I'm neat. I like maids. *They're neat. Something no household should be without.*

(*Sings, PSEUDOLUS all the while encouraging him*)

Everybody ought to have a maid.

Everybody ought to have a working girl,

Everybody ought to have a lurking girl

To putter around the house.

Everybody ought to have a maid.

Everybody ought to have a menial,

Consistently congenial

And quieter than a mouse.

Oh! Oh! Wouldn't she be delicious,

Tidying up the dishes,

Neat as a pin?

Oh! Oh! Wouldn't she be delightful,

Sweeping out, sleeping in?

Everybody ought to have a maid!

Someone whom you hire when you're short of help

To offer you the sort of help

You never get from a spouse!

Fluttering up the stairway,

Shuttering up the windows,

Cluttering up the bedroom,

Buttering up the master,

Puttering all around

The house!

(PSEUDOLUS *pantomimes a maid*)

Oh! Oh! Wouldn't she be delicious,
Tidying up the dishes,
Neat as a pin?

Oh! Oh! Wouldn't she be delightful,
Sweeping out, sleeping in?

Everybody ought to have a maid!
Someone who, when fetching you your slipper, will
Be winsome as a whippoorwill
And graceful as a grouse!
Skittering down the hallway,
Fluttering through the parlor,
Tittering in the pantry,
Littering up the bedroom,
Twittering all around
The house!

(HYSTERIUM *enters, reacts at the sight of SENEX. PSEUDOLUS whispers to him*)

HYSTERIUM: A maid?

PSEUDOLUS: A maid.

SENEX: A maid.

ALL: A maid!

Everybody ought to have a maid.
Everybody ought to have a serving girl,
A loyal and unswerving girl
Who's quieter than a mouse.

Oh! Oh!

Think of her at the dustbin,
'Specially when she's just been
Traipsing about.

Oh! Oh!

Wouldn't she be delightful?

HYSTERIUM:

Living in . . .

SENEX:

Giving out!

ALL:

Everybody ought to have a maid,
Daintily collecting bits of paper 'n' strings,
Appealing in her apron strings,
Beguiling in her blouse!

HYSTERIUM:

Pattering through the attic,

SENEX:

Chattering in the cellar,

PSEUDOLUS:

Clattering in the kitchen,

SENEX:

Flattering in the bedroom,

ALL:

Puttering all around the house,
The house,
The house!

(LYCUS *enters. HYSTERIUM whispers to him*)

LYCUS: A maid?

HYSTERIUM: A maid.

PSEUDOLUS: A maid.

SENEX: A maid!

ALL:

Everybody ought to have a maid,
Someone who's efficient and reliable,

Obedient and pliable
And quieter than a mouse.

Oh! Oh! Wouldn't she be so nimble,
Fiddling with her thimble,
Mending a gown?

Oh! Oh! Wouldn't she be delightful?

LYCUS:

Cleaning up . . .

SENEX:

Leaning down!

ALL:

Everybody ought to have a maid!
Someone who'll be busy as a bumblebee
And, even if you grumble, be
As graceful as a grouse!

LYCUS:

Wriggling in the anteroom,

HYSTERIUM:

Jiggling in the living-room,

PSEUDOLUS:

Giggling in the dining-room,

SENEX:

Wiggling in the other rooms,

ALL:

Puttering all around

The house!

The house!

The house!

(LYCUS exits into his house)

SENEX: I know how busy both of you are. Therefore, it is for
me to instruct her in the niceties of housework.
(Starting for his house)

We shall start in my room.

HYSTERIUM: Sir!

PSEUDOLUS: Sir, your son is in there!

SENEX: Oh!

(Thinks a moment, then.)

Before my friend and neighbor, Erronius, went abroad in
search of his children stolen in infancy by pirates, he
asked me to look into his house from time to time.

(Goes to ERRONIUS'S house, takes key from ledge and opens
door)

This seems as good a time as any. I shall have a chat with
the girl in here. Send her to me.

PSEUDOLUS: Sir.

SENEX: Yes?

PSEUDOLUS: Only my great devotion to you allows me to
speak so frankly.

(Unseen by SENEX, PSEUDOLUS sprinkles contents of vial
on him)

You trudged along the road quite some way, and I fear
that the great physical exertion . . .
(Sniffs)

SENEX (Sniffing): Is that me?!

PSEUDOLUS: Yes, sir.

SENEX: My heavens, I smell like an overheated horse! I shall
have to bathe.

PSEUDOLUS: At least!

(SENEX exits into ERRONIUS'S house)

HYSTERIUM: Why did I ever let her in the house? I should
never have listened to you!

PSEUDOLUS: Everything is going to be fine, pussycat.
(Hands him potion book)

HYSTERIUM: Oh, you! You just see that she gets out of that house.

PSEUDOLUS (*Picking up statue*): And you just see that he stays in that house. Keep calm!
(*Exits into SENEX'S house*)

HYSTERIUM: Calm? Calm? Mustn't be excited. Calm. Calm.
(*Sings excitedly*)

I'm calm, I'm calm,
I'm perfectly calm,
I'm utterly under control.
I haven't a worry —
Where others would hurry,
I stroll.

(*He runs frantically around the stage*)

I'm calm, I'm cool,
A gibbering fool
Is something I never become!
When thunder is rumbling
And others are crumbling,
I hum.

(*He tries to hum; it becomes a stifled scream*)

I must think calm, comforting things:
Butterfly wings,
Emerald rings.
Or a murmuring brook,
Murmuring, murmuring, murmuring . . .
Look:

(*Steadying his hands, seemingly calm*)

I'm calm, I'm calm,
I haven't a qualm,
I'm utterly under control.
Let nothing confuse me
Or faze me —
(*Yawns*)
Excuse me —

I'm calm,
Oh, so calm,
Oh, so . . .

SENEX (*Calls from inside ERRONIUS'S house*): Hysterium!
(*HYSTERIUM runs into SENEX'S house. PROTEANS, dressed as SAILORS, enter with bags, drop them, as ERRONIUS enters behind them*)

ERRONIUS: Bring up the baggage. Fetch the rest from the harbor.

(*SAILORS exit*)
Ah, home at last! After years of searching for my long lost children.

(*HYSTERIUM enters from SENEX'S house, carrying plucked chicken, reacts in horror*)

How good it is to see this street once more. These tired old eyes fill with tears at the sight of the little they see.

(*Bumps into HYSTERIUM*)

Pardon me, young woman, I was just . . . that is . . . I mean to say . . . Ah, lovely baby.

(*Pats chicken*)

About the age of my children when they were stolen by pirates.

(*Going to his house*)

Well, at least I have the comfort of my lonely house.

(*HYSTERIUM rushes to door of ERRONIUS'S house*)

HYSTERIUM: Sir!

ERRONIUS: And who are you?

HYSTERIUM: Hysterium, sir, servant to Senex.

ERRONIUS (*To pillar*): Yes, of course. I should have known you anywhere.

(*SENEX is heard singing from inside house a bit of "Everybody Ought to Have a Maid"*)

What was that?

HYSTERIUM: I didn't hear anything.

(SENEX sings a bit more)

I didn't hear that either.

ERRONIUS: You did not hear that eerie sound?

HYSTERIUM: Eerie?

ERRONIUS: Eerie, as if haunted.

HYSTERIUM (*To himself*): Eerie, as if haunted?

(*To ERRONIUS*)

Sir, what I am about to tell you is eerie . . . Your house is . . . is haunted.

ERRONIUS: Haunted?

HYSTERIUM: As haunted as the day is long!

(PSEUDOLUS enters, stirring the potion, listens)

ERRONIUS: Impossible! My house haunted, you say? Strange.

HYSTERIUM: But true. Perhaps you ought to stay with relatives . . . distant relatives.

ERRONIUS: Yes! No! Fetch me a soothsayer.

HYSTERIUM: A soothsayer?

ERRONIUS: Yes, I must have him search my house immediately.

(PSEUDOLUS puts cloth over his head, runs to ERRONIUS, chants ghoulishly)

PSEUDOLUS: You are in need of a soothsayer?

ERRONIUS: How did you know?

PSEUDOLUS: I'd be a fine soothsayer if I didn't!

ERRONIUS: There is a spirit in my . . .

PSEUDOLUS: Silence! I am about to say the sooth! Wait!

(*Chants incoherently*)

I see it. I see everything.

(HYSTERIUM steps behind ERRONIUS, pantomimes distance)

You have been abroad.

ERRONIUS: Yes, yes.

PSEUDOLUS: For . . .

(Looks at HYSTERIUM, who flashes his ten fingers twice)

. . . twenty years!

(ERRONIUS nods vigorously. HYSTERIUM shades his eyes

with one hand)

You have been searching . . . for . . .

(HYSTERIUM cradles his arms, rocks them)

A child!

(HYSTERIUM holds up two fingers)

Two children!

ERRONIUS: Yes, yes!

(HYSTERIUM flexes his muscles)

PSEUDOLUS: A fine, big boy.

ERRONIUS: Yes.

PSEUDOLUS: And . . .

(HYSTERIUM places hand on his hip, pantomimes a girl)

A strange, little boy.

(HYSTERIUM shakes his head no)

A girl! A girl! A boy and a girl!

ERRONIUS: Yes! Can you find them for me?

PSEUDOLUS: Certainly. I can find them for you.

ERRONIUS (*Takes ring from his finger, gives it to PSEUDOLUS*):

Each wears a ring on which is engraven a gaggle of geese.

PSEUDOLUS: A gaggle of what?

ERRONIUS: A gaggle of geese. Look!

(*Points to ring*)

There are only two others like it in the world. And my children wear them.

PSEUDOLUS: How many geese in a gaggle?

ERRONIUS: At least seven.

PSEUDOLUS: Seven? Then before I say the sooth again you must walk seven times around the seven hills of Rome.

ERRONIUS: Seven times?

HYSTERIUM: Slowly.

ERRONIUS: Seven times around the seven hills?

(SAILORS enter with more baggage)

Take it all back to the harbor!

(Proudly)

My house is haunted.

(SAILORS exit with baggage. SENEX is heard singing again. PSEUDOLUS joins in, eerily)

And the spirit?

PSEUDOLUS: It shall be gone by the time you have done my bidding.

ERRONIUS: Thank you.

PSEUDOLUS: To the hills!

ERRONIUS: To the hills!

(Starts for the foothills, PSEUDOLUS and HYSTERIUM stop him, head him toward the wings)

HYSTERIUM: This is the way, sir!

ERRONIUS: Thank you, young woman!

(Exits)

PSEUDOLUS (Calls): Sir, you forgot your gaggle!

(Puts ring on his own finger. SENEX enters from ERRONIUS'S house)

SENEX: Hysterium!

HYSTERIUM (Jumping): Sir!

SENEX: Prepare my bath!

HYSTERIUM: Yes, sir!
(Runs into ERRONIUS'S house)

SENEX: Ah, Pseudolus, that little maid. Do you know what her first words were to me? She said "Take me."

PSEUDOLUS (Picking up poison bowl): And you shall, sir.

SENEX: . . . I'll try.

PSEUDOLUS (Exiting into SENEX'S house): Yes, sir.

SENEX (Starting into ERRONIUS'S house): Remember, Hysterium. Not too hot and not too cold.
(HERO runs on, calling)

HERO: Philia! Philia!

SENEX (Stops in doorway, turns): Son!

HERO: Father! Where's mother?

SENEX (Frightened, turns): Where?!
(Realizes)

Oh, I — I have returned without her. Pressing business.

(PHILIA appears on balcony of SENEX'S house. Aside to HERO)

Lovely new maid.

HERO: New maid?

SENEX: Pseudolus told me about it.

HERO: Oh.

SENEX (To PHILIA): Presently, my dear.

(PHILIA exits into house, waving. SENEX turns to audience, sings)

Why did he look at her that way?

HERO (*Sings, to audience*):

Why did he look at her that way?

BOTH:

Must be my imagination . . .

SENEX:

She's a lovely blooming flower,
He's just a sprout — impossible!

HERO:

She's a lovely blooming flower,
He's all worn out — impossible!

SENEX:

Just a fledgling in the nest . . .

HERO:

Just a man who needs a rest . . .

SENEX:

He's a beamish boy at best . . .

HERO:

Poor old fellow . . .

SENEX:

He's a child and love's a test
He's too young to pass — impassable!

HERO:

He has asthma, gout, a wife,
Lumbago and gas — irascible!

SENEX:

Romping in the nursery . . .

HERO:

He looks tired . . .

SENEX (*To HERO, warmly*):

Son, sit on your father's knee.

HERO (*To SENEX, warmly*):

Father, you can lean on me.

BOTH (*To audience*):

Him?

Impossible!

HERO:

But why did she wave at him that way?

SENEX:

Why did she wave at him that way?

BOTH:

Could there be an explanation?

HERO:

Women often want a father,
She may want mine — it's possible!

SENEX:

He's a handsome lad of twenty,
I'm thirty-nine — it's possible!

HERO:

Older men know so much more . . .

SENEX:

In a way, I'm forty-four . . .

HERO:

Next to him, I'll seem a bore . . .

SENEX:

All right, fifty!

HERO:

Then again, he *is* my father,

I ought to trust — impossible!

SENEX:

Then again, with love at my age,
Sometimes it's just — impossible!

HERO:

With a girl, I'm ill-at-ease . . .

SENEX:

I don't feel well . . .

HERO (*To SENEX, helplessly*):

Sir, about those birds and bees . . .

SENEX (*To HERO, helplessly*):

Son, a glass of water, please . . .

BOTH (*To audience*):

The situation's fraught,
Fraughtier than I thought,
With horrible,
Impossible
Possibilities!

SENEX (*Calling to his house*): Pseudolus!
(*To HERO*)

Son, it grieves me to see a boy your age moping about the house.

(PSEUDOLUS enters, stirring potion)

Pseudolus, I want you to take Hero to the baths.

HERO: Sir!

PSEUDOLUS: Very good, sir. Allow me to finish a brew master Hero asked me to prepare.

(*To HERO*)

Master, I shall meet you in front of the baths of Aqua Salina. You know where it is? Next to the harbor. And I shall have a surprise for you.

HERO: Oh, yes. Yes, of course. Farewell, father. Farewell, Pseudolus.

(*Exits*)

SENEX: Well, he to his bath and I to mine.

(HYSTERIUM enters from ERRONIUS'S house, wiping hands on tunic)

HYSTERIUM: Just the way you like it, sir.

SENEX: One thing more, Hysterium.

HYSTERIUM: Yes, sir?

SENEX: I shall need a complete change of garb. Let me see . . . my tunic with the tassels!

HYSTERIUM: Sir, it needs taking in.

SENEX: Well, take it in and bring it out!

(*Exits into ERRONIUS'S house. HYSTERIUM exits into SENEX'S house singing a bit of "I'm Calm."*) LYCUS enters from his house)

LYCUS: Pseudolus! The girl! I want to know the worst. How is she?

PSEUDOLUS: She is very low.

LYCUS: Still smiling?

PSEUDOLUS: Laughing!

(LYCUS reacts in horror)

There is one hope! I have prepared a plague potion. If it is not too late, we may yet save her life.

LYCUS: Give it to her!

PSEUDOLUS: Yes!

(PSEUDOLUS starts for SENEX'S house as fanfare is heard and PROTEAN, dressed as SOLDIER, enters, carrying spear)

SOLDIER: Ho, there!

(*They turn, stare at him with horror*)

I seek the house of Marcus Lycus.

LYCUS (*Stammering superbly*): Who heeks the souse of Mycus Leccus?

PSEUDOLUS (*A hand on LYCUS'S shoulder*): Hold, sir.

LYCUS: But he . . . who . . .

PSEUDOLUS: You're not holding.

(*To SOLDIER, enunciating grotesquely*)

Who is he who seeks the house of Marcus Lycus?

SOLDIER: A foot soldier of Captain Miles Gloriosus!
(*Executes an elaborate salute. Fanfare*)

PSEUDOLUS: Smartly done!

SOLDIER: My captain has dispatched me to inform you that he is but half a league away. Prepare to greet him!
(*Salutes, exits. Fanfare*)

PSEUDOLUS: Half a league!

LYCUS: We have only moments!

PSEUDOLUS: I'll give her the potion!

LYCUS: Yes!

PSEUDOLUS: Yes!

(*Starts for SENEX'S house*)

LYCUS: Wait!

PSEUDOLUS (*Returns to LYCUS*): What?

LYCUS: Don't leave me!

PSEUDOLUS: Why not?

LYCUS: He's coming!

PSEUDOLUS: I know he's coming!

LYCUS (*Takes bowl from him*): You speak to him. I'll give her the potion!

PSEUDOLUS: Wait! You can't give her the potion!

LYCUS: Why not?

PSEUDOLUS: You'll catch the plague!

LYCUS (*Hands him bowl quickly*): Oh, I don't want the plague!

PSEUDOLUS: I've got to give her the potion!

LYCUS: Yes!

PSEUDOLUS: Yes!

(*Starts for SENEX'S house*)

LYCUS: Wait!

PSEUDOLUS: What?

(*Returns to LYCUS*)

LYCUS: She is in the house of Senex!

PSEUDOLUS: What will we do? . . . Does he know which house is your house?

LYCUS: No!

PSEUDOLUS (*Points to SENEX'S house*): This is your house!

LYCUS: Will he believe it?

PSEUDOLUS: Get the girls!

LYCUS: Good!

PSEUDOLUS: I'll give her the potion!

LYCUS: And I'll get the girls!

PSEUDOLUS: Good!

LYCUS: Yes!

PSEUDOLUS: Yes!

(Starts for SENEX'S house)

LYCUS: Wait!

PSEUDOLUS (Returns to LYCUS): *What is it?!!*

LYCUS: I forgot.

PSEUDOLUS: Lycus, we must not lose our heads!

LYCUS: Yes! No!

PSEUDOLUS (Screams): We must remain serene!
(Fanfare is heard)

LYCUS: Pseudolus, you must speak to the captain! I have no talent for bravery.

PSEUDOLUS: You grant me permission to represent you?

LYCUS: Complete!

PSEUDOLUS: All right. Collect the courtesans and bring them out. Then you are to wait in your house.

LYCUS: Pseudolus, I am eternally grateful. I am your friend until death!

PSEUDOLUS: Go!

LYCUS: Yes!

PSEUDOLUS: Yes!

(Starts for SENEX'S house)

LYCUS: Wait!

PSEUDOLUS (Stops, yells): No!

(A fanfare, and two PROTEANS, dressed as SOLDIERS, enter, come to a smart halt. LYCUS ducks into his house. PSEUDOLUS puts down potion bowl)

SECOND SOLDIER: Ho, there!

THIRD SOLDIER: We seek the house of Marcus Lycus!

PSEUDOLUS: Who seeks the mouse of Larkus Heekus?

THIRD SOLDIER: Foot soldiers of Captain Miles Gloriosus.

SECOND SOLDIER: He is but a quarter of a league away and bids you honor this.

(Hands PSEUDOLUS parchment)

PSEUDOLUS (Studies parchment): Oh, yes, of course.

SECOND SOLDIER: You know what this is?

PSEUDOLUS: Of course I know what this is. This is writing.

THIRD SOLDIER: It is your contract with the captain.

PSEUDOLUS: And a pretty piece of work. What is this word here?

(Points to spot on parchment)

THIRD SOLDIER: That is "Lycus."

PSEUDOLUS: Oh, yes. Then you realize whom you are speaking to.

SECOND SOLDIER: Yes, sir.

THIRD SOLDIER: And do you see what it says there?

(Points to another spot)

PSEUDOLUS: It says . . . words. And I intend to stand behind those words, or my name is not Marcus Lycus!

(HYSTERIUM enters)

HYSTERIUM: Pseudolus!

PSEUDOLUS (Without missing a beat): Or my name is not Pseudolus Marcus Lycus! A moment. I must have a word with my eunuch.

(Taking HYSTERIUM aside)

Come here, eunuch!

HYSTERIUM: How dare you call me that?

PSEUDOLUS: You know it's not true, and I know it's not true, so what do we care what they think?

HYSTERIUM: Those soldiers, have they come for the girl? I'll go right in and get her.

PSEUDOLUS: They have not come for the girl. They have come for me.

HYSTERIUM: What?

PSEUDOLUS: Hysterium, I have never told you this, but years ago I deserted from the army.

HYSTERIUM: No!

PSEUDOLUS: Sh! I was very young. I wanted to be an archer. Instead, they made me a slinger. Then, one day, at the height of battle, I lost my head. I arched when I should have slung. I had to flee.

HYSTERIUM: And now they have found you. Oh, Pseudolus!

PSEUDOLUS: Sh! They are looking for Pseudolus. I told them I am Lycus.

HYSTERIUM: And Lycus you are! Rely on me!

PSEUDOLUS: I must.

(*Picks up potion bowl*)

Hysterium, more bad news!

HYSTERIUM: I hope it's good.

PSEUDOLUS: It's terrible! The girl refuses to go with her captain. That is why I have prepared your sleeping potion. You are to give her a drop or two in a beaker of wine, and upon hearing me say "Present the bride," carry her out in your arms!

HYSTERIUM: Trust me, Pseu—
(*Catches himself, then loudly*)

Trust me, Lycus!

(*Takes bowl from PSEUDOLUS, speaking for SOLDIERS' benefit*)

I go, Lycus. Farewell, Lycus!
(*Exits into SENEX'S house*)

PSEUDOLUS (*To SOLDIERS*): Bid your captain come! His bride awaits him!

(*SOLDIERS execute fancy salute, run off. PSEUDOLUS calls out*)

Lycus! The girls! Quickly!

LYCUS (*Opening his door*): Yes!

(*Calls into house*)

Eunuchs! The girls! Quickly!

(*To PSEUDOLUS*)

We shall pose them informally!

PSEUDOLUS: Give the place a friendly look.

(*EUNUCHS herd COURTESANS out of house*)

EUNUCH: Hurry, there! Hurry! Hurry!

CYMNASIA: Don't you lower your voice to me!

LYCUS: You are to do exactly as Pseudolus bids. He will resent me.

PSEUDOLUS (*Points to SENEX'S house*): All you girls over here!

Now, you eunuchs . . .

(*Indicates manly pose he wants them to assume. EUNUCHS squeal with delight*)

Lycus, do we really need these eunuchs?

LYCUS (*To EUNUCHS*): Into the house.

EUNUCHS (*Chirping*): Into the house! Into the house!

(*EUNUCHS exit into LYCUS'S house. PSEUDOLUS arranges COURTESANS*)

PSEUDOLUS (*To PANACEA*): You there.

(*To TINTINABULA and VIBRATA*)

You there.

(*To GEMINAE*)

You there.

(*To GYMNASIA*)

You there . . . Oh, there's so much of you there!

(*Leans on her bosom, as ERRONIUS enters*)

ERRONIUS (*To audience*): First time around!

(*All watch as he crosses stage, exits*)

PSEUDOLUS (*To COURTESANS*): Now, may I have your attention? You are about to meet a great captain. Remember who you are and what you stand for. Now, will you all please strike . . . vocational attitudes?

(*COURTESANS strike poses*)

Perfect! I would like a mosaic of this scene. An entire wall made up of . . .

(*Fanfare is heard*)

LYCUS: The captain! Pseudolus, again my heartfelt . . .

PSEUDOLUS: In! In!

(*LYCUS exits into his house. A second fanfare is heard*)

MILES (*Offstage*): Stand aside, everyone! I take large steps!

(*Enters with SOLDIERS, counting off, music under*)

SOLDIERS:

One, two, one, two . . .

MILES:

We not only fought but we won, too!

SOLDIERS:

One, two, one, two . . .

Left, right, left, right . . .

MILES:

There's none of the enemy left, right?

SOLDIERS:

Right! Left! . . . uh . . . Ri — uh — left!
(*Utter confusion*)

MILES: Halt!

PSEUDOLUS (*Saluting*): Hail, Miles Gloriosus.

MILES: You are?

PSEUDOLUS: Marcus Lycus, sir. I am dazzled by your presence.

MILES: Everyone is.

PSEUDOLUS (*Indicating SENEX's house*): Welcome to my house, great captain. Your bride awaits you.

MILES: My bride!

(*Sings*)

My bride! My bride!

I've come to claim my bride,

Come tenderly to crush her against my side!

Let haste be made,

I cannot be delayed!

There are lands to conquer,

Cities to loot,

And peoples to degrade!

SOLDIERS:

Look at those arms!

Look at that chest!

Look at them!

MILES:

Not to mention the rest!

Even I am impressed.

My bride! My bride!
Come bring to me my bride!
My lust for her no longer can be denied!
Convey the news,
I have no time to lose!
There are towns to plunder,
Temples to burn
And women to abuse!

SOLDIERS:

Look at that foot!
Look at that heel!
Mark the magnificent muscles of steel!

MILES:

I am my ideal!
I, Miles Gloriosus,
I, slaughterer of thousands,
I, oppressor of the meek,
Subduer of the weak,
Degradar of the Greek,
Destroyer of the Turk,
Must hurry back to work!

MILES:

COURTESANS: SOLDIERS:
I, Miles Gloriosus, Him, Miles Glorio- A man among
sus, men!
I, paragon of vir- Him, paragon of With sword
tues, virtues, and with pen!

MILES:

I, in war the most admired,
In wit the most inspired,
In love the most desired,
In dress the best displayed,
I am a parade!

ALL:
Himm!
Himm!
Himm!

SOLDIERS:

Look at those eyes,
Cunning and keen!
Look at the size of those thighs,
Like a mighty machine!

PSEUDOLUS:

Those are the mightiest thighs that I ever have seen!
I mean . . .

MILES:

My bride! My bride!
Inform my lucky bride:
The fabled arms of Miles are open wide!
Make haste! Make haste!
I have no time to waste!
There are shrines I should be sacking,
Ribs I should be cracking,
Eyes to gouge and booty to divide!
Bring me my bride!

SOLDIERS:

Bring him his bride!

ALL:

Bring him his bride!
(PSEUDOLUS goes to SENEX'S house)

PSEUDOLUS: Present the bride!

(*Fanfare*)

Pay homage all! Here, in one being is Juno, Diana and
Venus.

(*All kneel*)

Present the bride!

(*Fanfare*. PSEUDOLUS bows. HYSTERIUM enters. To MILES)

A short delay, sir!

(*Pulls HYSTERIUM aside*)

What happened?

HYSTERIUM: I'll tell you what happened! Nothing! She won't drink!

PSEUDOLUS: What?

HYSTERIUM: She says on Crete her religion forbids it.

PSEUDOLUS: He had to fall in love with a religious Cretan! I'll get her to drink! Captain, forgive the girl. She primps and preens. She wants to be worthy of so great a warrior.

(*Exits into SENEX'S house with HYSTERIUM*)

MILES: Understandable. I am a legend in my own time.

(*Laughs. SOLDIERS join in*)

Men! Close ranks! Stand tall!

(*PSEUDOLUS enters from SENEX'S house*)

Lycus!

(*LYCUS peeks out of upper window of his house, listens*)
Where is my bride?

PSEUDOLUS: Did she not come through this door?

MILES: No! What are you saying, man?

PSEUDOLUS: The virgin has escaped!

MILES: Oh, no! The beautiful bride I bargained for!

PSEUDOLUS: Vanished!

MILES: This is monstrous!

PSEUDOLUS: It certainly is. But look at it this way. Since I cannot deliver her to you, you do not have to pay me the five hundred minae.

MILES: I paid you the five hundred minae!

(*PSEUDOLUS reacts*)

Through my agents. Has the money escaped as well?

PSEUDOLUS: There has been a little mistake.

(*Laughs weakly*)

I was only joking. Lycus will pay you.

(*LYCUS groans, disappears from window*)

MILES: What?

PSEUDOLUS: I was helping out a friend. Allow me, great captain.

(*He goes to LYCUS'S house, pulls LYCUS out*)

Come out here!

(*To MILES*)

Here is your man!

(*To LYCUS*)

Tell him! Tell him who I am!

(*HYSTERIUM enters*)

LYCUS: Everyone knows who you are, Lycus.

HYSTERIUM: Of course. He is Marcus Lycus.

PSEUDOLUS: No! No! He is Lycus. This is his house!

LYCUS (*To MILES*): Look within, sir. You will find none here but hooded men. We are a holy order. An ancient brotherhood of lepers.

(*MILES backs away*)

Unclean! Unclean! And bless you, Lycus!

(*He backs offstage*)

MILES: What now, Lycus?

PSEUDOLUS: What?

MILES: I shall tell you what! With axe and pike, my soldiers shall raze this house to the ground!

HYSTERIUM (*Fainting*): Our beautiful house!

MILES: And you, you shall receive the maximum punishment — death!

(*COURTESANS scream*)

PSEUDOLUS: Please, sir, please! May I be allowed a word?

MILES: A word?

PSEUDOLUS: One word.

MILES: It had better be a good one.

PSEUDOLUS: Oh, it is, sir!

MILES: What is it?

PSEUDOLUS (*To audience*): Intermission!
(*Curtain*)



Zero Mostel as Pseudolus

ACT II



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Erronius (Buster Keaton)

The scene is the same as Act I, but now PROLOGUS is played by SENEX rather than by PSEUDOLUS. As characters enter, they assume the positions in which we last saw them at the end of Act I.

PROLOGUS: Welcome again, playgoers. You are about to witness the second half of our play.

(Signals orchestra, which plays under following)

Permit me to remind you where we were when last you saw us. The virgin . . .

(PHILIA enters)

. . . was waiting . . . that's what they do best . . . waiting here in the house for her captain to claim her. She has refused to drink the potion on religious grounds.

(PHILIA exits into SENEX's house)

Lycus . . .

(LYCUS enters)

. . . skulks about the city, searching for Philia.

(LYCUS exits)

Hero . . .

(HERO enters)

. . . is at the baths where he sits and soaks.

(HERO exits)

His mother . . .

(DOMINA enters, exits)

... is on the way to the country to visit *her* mother. A hundred and four years old, and not one organ in working condition. The courtesans ...

(COURTESANS enter)

... Miles Gloriosus and his mighty warriors ...

(MILES, SOLDIERS enter)

... Hysterium and Pseudolus are here.

(HYSTERIUM, PSEUDOLUS enter)

And I, Senex, await the maid in my neighbor's house, hopefully about to sow my last oat, if memory serves. Let the play continue!

(Exits into ERRONIUS'S house)

PSEUDOLUS (To MILES): Sir! I ...

MILES (To SOLDIERS): Gag him!

(SOLDIER grabs PSEUDOLUS from behind, clamps hand over his mouth)

And now I rid Rome of a rascal!

(He pulls his sword back, and as he is about to send it into

PSEUDOLUS at belly level, PSEUDOLUS whirls around, and the sword jabs SOLDIER in the rear. SOLDIER releases PSEUDOLUS, jumps away rubbing sore spot. MILES advances on

PSEUDOLUS)

You ...

PSEUDOLUS: Sir!

(MILES stalks him, as PSEUDOLUS speaks glibly)

The girl must be near at hand. If you kill me you deprive yourself of seeing a face so fair, a heart so pure, a body so undulating ...

(MILES lowers his sword. PSEUDOLUS, sensing success, presses on)

She is magnificence personified! If you had been born a woman, you would have been she!

MILES: As magnificent as that?

PSEUDOLUS: Yes, sir. Spare me! I am sure she can be found.

MILES: You arc?

PSEUDOLUS: Yes, sir. I shall give you a list of ten or twenty places you might look for her.

MILES: You shall look for her!

PSEUDOLUS: Me? With this bad leg?

(Limps horribly. MILES grabs him)

MILES: With that bad leg!

PSEUDOLUS: Yes, it will do it good. And where may I deliver the girl? I mean, where will you be?

MILES (Points to SENEX'S house): Waiting here in your house.

HYSTERIUM: No!

MILES: No?!

HYSTERIUM: I meant "yes," it just came out "no."

MILES (To PSEUDOLUS): And to assure your return ... Men! You are to go with him.

PSEUDOLUS: Sir, before I go, a word with my eunuch.

MILES: Be brief.

PSEUDOLUS: Yes, sir. Come here, eunuch.

(Pulls HYSTERIUM aside)

Hysterium, this is what you must do. Hide the girl, up on the roof.

HYSTERIUM: Why?

(They are both stumped, then PSEUDOLUS has the answer ...)

PSEUDOLUS: Why not? Go.

MILES (To SOLDIERS): He is not to stray from your sight.

(HYSTERIUM exits into SENEX'S house)

PSEUDOLUS (*To MILES*): My eunuch is making sure the house is fit to receive so illustrious a visitor.

MILES: I have been put off enough for one day!
(*Turns to enter house, stops, as ERRONIUS enters*)

ERRONIUS: The second time around!
(*Exits, all watch him*)

MILES: Lycus!

PSEUDOLUS: Yes, sir!
(*Calls*)

Ready?

HYSTERIUM (*From inside SENEX's house*): Ready!

PSEUDOLUS: All is ready, sir. There is food and drink within. And the girls will sing and dance for you.

(*COURTESANS exit into SENEX's house*)

MILES: You have but one hour. Men, you are to hound his every step.

(*Exits into SENEX's house. PSEUDOLUS circles stage, followed by SOLDIERS, they exit. SENEX appears in window of ERRONIUS's house*)

SENEX: Hysterium!
(*HYSTERIUM re-enters*)

HYSTERIUM: Yes, sir!

SENEX: Tell the little maid I am almost ready.

HYSTERIUM: Sir, I must say this to you. Abandon this mad adventure! Think of your wife on the way to the country!

SENEX: *That*, Hysterium, is the country's problem.

HYSTERIUM: Yes, sir.

SENEX: Hysterium, one thing more. You know that potion

you prepare that so fills one with passion, one can almost perform miracles?

HYSTERIUM: Yes, sir. We have some left over from your last anniversary.

SENEX: Bring it to me now, slave-in-chief.
(*Exits into house*)

HYSTERIUM: Slave-in-chief! I wonder how many slaves-in-chief have a master in the tub, a house full of courtesans, and a virgin on the roof.

(*Exits into SENEX's house, as PSEUDOLUS enters, closely followed by SOLDIERS. He does several intricate maneuvers which the SOLDIERS carefully follow. The maneuvers become more elaborate. PANACEA enters from SENEX's house, and SOLDIERS follow her off*)

PSEUDOLUS (*To audience*): Just one hour. Pretending she was dead was the perfect plan. If only Philia had taken one sip . . . It still is the perfect plan, if I can only find a body. A body.

(*An inspiration*)
Gusto! Gusto, the bodysnatcher! He owes me a favor!
(*He runs off, not seeing DOMINA, who enters, addresses audience*)

DOMINA: Since sending my husband back to Rome, I have been haunted by the premonition that he is up to something low.

(*Calls*)

Hysterium!

HYSTERIUM (*Entering from SENEX's house with cup*): Coming master . . . mistress! You're home!

DOMINA: And parched with thirst, ever-thoughtful Hysterium.
(*Reaches for cup, he pulls it away*)

HYSTERIUM: No! It's a potion!

DOMINA: What sort of potion?

HYSTERIUM: To make you thirsty. And you're already thirsty, so you don't need it.

(Puts cup near ERRONIUS's house)

DOMINA: Thirst is the lesser of my problems. Hysterium, on the best of intuition, I believe my husband is fouling the nest.

HYSTERIUM *(Looking nervously at ERRONIUS's house)*: No! Never!

DOMINA: Never? Old friend and confidant, you are talking to a woman who faces facts.

(Sings)

For over thirty years,
I've cried myself to sleep,
Assailed by doubts and fears
So great the gods themselves would weep!
The moment I am gone,
I wonder where he'll go.
In all your simple honesty,
You can't begin to know . . .
Ohhhh . . .

(Wailing tenderly)

I want him,
I need him,
Where is he?

(Furiously)

That dirty old man is here somewhere,
Cavorting with someone young and fair,
Disporting in every shameless whim,
Just wait till I get my hands on him!

(Tenderly)

I'll hold him,

Enfold him,
Where is he?

(Furiously)

That dirty old man, where can he be?
Profaning our vows for all to see,
Complaining how he's misunderstood,
Abusing me (if he only would!)

Oh, love,

Sweet love,

Why hide?

You vermin, you worm, you villain!

Come face,

Embrace

Your bride!

Wherever he is, I know he's still an

Angel,

My angel!

Where is he,

That dirty old man divine?

I love him,

I love him,

That lecherous, lewd, lascivious,

Loathsome, lying, lazy,

Dirty old man of mine!

MILES *(From inside SENEX's house)*: Why?

DOMINA: Ah, I hear him now!

MILES: Why must I always be surrounded by fawning admirers?

DOMINA: That is not my husband's voice. Tell me, who is in my house?

HYSTERIUM: I think it's a captain.

DOMINA: A captain?

HYSTERIUM: Yes . . . he thinks that . . . your house . . . is the . . . I hope you do not object to my offering him your hospitality.

DOMINA: Object? When I, myself, am the daughter of a Roman general? Hysterium, I must meet him.

HYSTERIUM: You wouldn't like him. He's very vulgar.

DOMINA: All soldiers are, in a grand sort of way.
(MILES *appears in doorway*)

MILES: . . . interminable!

(*Shouts at HYSTERIUM*)
Bring more food and drink, eunuch!

HYSTERIUM (To DOMINA): You see?

DOMINA: Captain, I was just coming inside to give you a proper welcome.

(HYSTERIUM *winces*)

MILES (*Thinking she is one of IXCUS's girls*): You are of this house?

DOMINA: For years and years. You know, Captain, my father was General Magnus.

(MILES *reacts*)

On the last anniversary of his death, I entertained over two hundred officers.

MILES: Two hundred? By yourself?

DOMINA: Of course not. Hysterium here was a big help.

(HYSTERIUM *smiles proudly, then reacts painfully*)

But now my business takes me to the Forum, but I shall return. And for the length of your stay I shall bend over backwards to please you.

MILES (*Horried*): That will not be necessary!
(*Exits into SENEX's house*)

DOMINA: I do wish I could chat on with him, but I must find out why my husband was so anxious to return to Rome. Hysterium, when next we meet I shall be in some form of disguise. If you recognize me, not a word.

(*Waving to MILES, who appears in door of house*)
Until later, Captain.

(MILES *moans, exits into house. DOMINA starts off, as*

PSEUDOLUS *enters, sees her, starts polishing pillar*)

Ah, Pseudolus, busy as ever.

PSEUDOLUS: Yes, madam.

(*She exits. PSEUDOLUS rushes to HYSTERIUM*)

She's back!

HYSTERIUM: Yes!

PSEUDOLUS: What has happened?

HYSTERIUM: What *hasn't* happened?

PSEUDOLUS: All right, what *hasn't* happened? She hasn't found out anything, has she?

HYSTERIUM: No!

PSEUDOLUS: Good!

HYSTERIUM: But she will, and she'll kill me!

PSEUDOLUS: No, she won't!

HYSTERIUM: No, she won't. I'll kill myself! I can do it painlessly. If she does it, it will hurt. I must do it. I have besmirched the honor of my family. My father will turn in his grave.

PSEUDOLUS: Your father is alive.

HYSTERIUM: This will kill him!

PSEUDOLUS: Are you finished? Now, listen to this. I have really shocking news.

HYSTERIUM: What?

PSEUDOLUS: You know Gusto, the bodysnatcher?
(HYSTERIUM nods)

He died this morning.

HYSTERIUM: No! I saw him only yesterday. When is he to be buried?

PSEUDOLUS: They don't know. Someone snatched the body.

HYSTERIUM: Isn't that a sha — ?

(Does a take)

Why are we crying over a dead bodysnatcher?!

PSEUDOLUS: Because he could have helped us. He could have lent us a body.

(Puts his hand on HYSTERIUM'S shoulder)

HYSTERIUM: A body?

PSEUDOLUS: A body.

(A gleam comes into his eye, starts running his hand over HYSTERIUM'S shoulder and chest)

A body. Hysterium, would you like everything to be the way it was when you woke up this morning?

HYSTERIUM: In a minute!

PSEUDOLUS: That's all it will take. Come!

(Pulls HYSTERIUM to LYCUS'S house)

HYSTERIUM: In here?

PSEUDOLUS: In here!

HYSTERIUM: Where did you get the money?

(PSEUDOLUS pulls HYSTERIUM into LYCUS'S house. SENEX enters from ERRONIUS'S house, inhales deeply)

SENEX: Mmmmmmm.

(To audience)

Something smells divine, and it's me. I just took the most luxurious bath. The oil, the essences. Oh, spectators, I would love to pass among you so that each and every one might get a good whiff.

(Calls)

Philia!

(To himself)

Mustn't shout. I have to save every bit of energy.

(Gently)

Philia.

(PHILIA appears on roof of SENEX'S house)

PHILIA: Yes, master? Master?

SENEX (Looks around for her, then sees her on roof): Ah, my dear. No need to dust up there. Come to me.

PHILIA: I am yours.

SENEX: Yes, my dear. But not on the roof. Join me in this house.

PHILIA: Yes, sir.

(SENEX exits into ERRONIUS'S house. As PHILIA disappears from roof, MILES appears on balcony of SENEX'S house)

MILES: Oh, where is he? If he does not bring me my bride he shall see me at the height of my wrath.

(Looks down, gets dizzy, emits a tiny scream, and staggers back into house. PHILIA enters from SENEX'S house, as HERO runs on)

HERO runs on

HERO: Philia!

PHILIA: In time to say farewell.

HERO: Did not Pseudolus give you a beaker of wine?

PHILIA: My religion forbids the drinking of wine.

HERO: Oh, no!

PHILIA: Oh, yes.

HERO: Oh, Philia.

PHILIA: The captain. I must go to him.

HERO: I hate him.

PHILIA: So do I. And I have a way to make him suffer.
(Sings)

Let the captain wed me and woo me,
I shall play my part!

Let him make his mad passion to me,
You will have my heart!

He can have the body he paid for,
Nothing but the body he paid for!
When he has the body he paid for,
Our revenge will start!

When I kiss him,
I'll be kissing you,
So I'll kiss him morning and night,
That'll show him!

When I hold him,
I'll be holding you,
So I'll hold him ten times as tight,
That'll show him, too!

I shall coo and tenderly stroke his hair.
Wish that you were there —
You'd enjoy it!

When it's evening
And we're in our tent for two,
I'll sit on his knee,
Get to know him
Intimately,
That'll show him

How much I really love you!

(PSEUDOLUS enters from LYCUS'S house)

HERO: Pseudolus!

PSEUDOLUS: What has happened? Why are you not on the
...?

HERO: Her captain has come!

PSEUDOLUS: Where is he?

PHILIA (Points to ERRONIUS'S house): In there.

PSEUDOLUS: In there . . . ?

(Realizes she is referring to SENEX)

No, no, he was in there. He had to go to the Senate for
an unexpected ovation.

HERO: Really?

PSEUDOLUS (Shaking his head no): Of course.

PHILIA: Does he still want me to wait on the roof?

PSEUDOLUS: Yes.

MILES (From inside SENEX'S house): Leave me alone!

PSEUDOLUS: No! Wait — uh — in the garden!

PHILIA: In the garden?

PSEUDOLUS: Yes. Behind that large clump of myrrh!

PHILIA: You will tell me when he comes?

PSEUDOLUS: Don't we always?

PHILIA: Oh, Hero, if only you could come buy me from the
captain.

PSEUDOLUS: If Hero has the captain's contract, you will go
with him?

(PHILIA nods yes)

It shall be arranged. Into the garden.

(HERO and PHILIA exit into garden. PSEUDOLUS hums "Free" as he pushes bench center stage. He calls)

Come out here! Come on out!

(HYSTERIUM enters from LYCUS's house in virginal gown and wig)

HYSTERIUM: You didn't tell me I'd have to be a girl!

PSEUDOLUS: A dead girl! The captain will see you, go on his way, and all will be well.

HYSTERIUM: No! It won't do!

(He starts back into house. PSEUDOLUS stops him)

PSEUDOLUS: Please, Hysterium. We must convince the captain.

HYSTERIUM: That I am a beautiful dead girl?

PSEUDOLUS: Yes.

HYSTERIUM: He'll never believe it.

PSEUDOLUS: He will. You're delicious.

HYSTERIUM: What if he tries to kiss me?

PSEUDOLUS: He won't kiss you.

HYSTERIUM: How can he help it — if I'm so delicious?

PSEUDOLUS: Hysterium, please — just lie on the bench.

HYSTERIUM: He'll never believe I'm a girl. Look at me. Just look at me.

PSEUDOLUS: I can't take my eyes off you.

(Sings)

You're lovely,

Absolutely lovely,

Who'd believe the loveliness of you?

HYSTERIUM: No!

PSEUDOLUS: Come back!
(Sings)

Perfect,
Sweet and warm and winsome,
Radiant as in some dream come true.
Now

Venus will seem tame,
Helen and her thousand ships
Will have to die of shame!

(HYSTERIUM is becoming convinced; PSEUDOLUS presses his advantage)

You're so lovely,
Frighteningly lovely,
That the world will never seem the same!
(Gently forces HYSTERIUM to lie back on the bench, folds his arms. Speaks)

Now, lie there, close your eyes, and think dead thoughts.
Good!

(Starts into SENEX's house, stops, with disgust, as HYSTERIUM sits up and sings)

HYSTERIUM:

I'm lovely,

Absolutely lovely,

Who'd believe the loveliness of me?

Perfect,

Sweet and warm and winsome,

Radiant as in some dream come true.

(PSEUDOLUS forces him down on bench)

Now . . .

(Speaks)

Shouldn't I have jewelry?

PSEUDOLUS: Jewelry?

(*Thinks for a moment, takes ERRONIUS'S ring from his finger, slips it on HYSTERIUM*)

HYSTERIUM: Flowers.

PSEUDOLUS: What?

HYSTERIUM: I should have flowers.

(*PSEUDOLUS gives flower to HYSTERIUM. Sings*)
I'm so lovely,

PSEUDOLUS:

Literally lovely —

BOTH:

That the world will never seem the same —

PSEUDOLUS:

You look lovely —

BOTH:

That the world will never seem the same!

(*PSEUDOLUS gets him down on bench once more, covers his face with the veil, and folds his arms*)

PSEUDOLUS: Fold the arms!

HYSTERIUM (*Sitting up*): Any coins he puts in my eyes, I keep!
(*PSEUDOLUS pushes HYSTERIUM down*)

FIRST SOLDIER (*Offstage*): Ho, there!

(*SOLDIERS run on in pursuit of PANACEA, who exits into SENEX'S house. PSEUDOLUS stops SOLDIERS*)

PSEUDOLUS: I have been looking everywhere for you. Here is your captain's bride. Dead!

(*SOLDIERS crowd around HYSTERIUM*)
Give her air!

(*They jump back*)

You had best break the sad news to your captain.

(*SOLDIERS are reluctant. FIRST SOLDIER is pushed for-*

ward by others. He enters SENEX'S house fearfully. PSEUDOLUS looks at HYSTERIUM, then to SOLDIERS)

A virgin. A lot of good it did her.

(*MILES enters with FIRST SOLDIER*)

MILES: Oh, grievous day. Men, support me!

(*SOLDIERS hold him*)

How? How did she die?

PSEUDOLUS: Well, she just sort of rolled over and . . .

MILES: Spare me! I cannot control my tears. I must cry.

PSEUDOLUS: Go ahead, you'll feel better. Now that you have seen her, sir, I suggest you depart and torture yourself no longer. If you'll give me the contract, I — I shall dispose of the body.

MILES: Ghoul! I will not leave without the comfort of a proper funeral service!

(*HYSTERIUM shakes his head no. PSEUDOLUS blocks MILES'S view*)

PSEUDOLUS: Sir, do you have time for that? I mean, isn't there a war somewhere you should be — ?

MILES: Silence! I insist on conducting a funeral.

PSEUDOLUS: Yes, sir.

MILES: We need mourners.

PSEUDOLUS: We have them.

(*To SOLDIERS*)

Hold him firmly.

(*SOLDIERS hold MILES. PSEUDOLUS exits into SENEX'S house*)

MILES: The poor girl. To have died so young, without ever having experienced . . . me.

(*PSEUDOLUS re-enters*)

PSEUDOLUS: Sir, they will be here presently. While we wait, would you like something to eat?

MILES: No, thank you.

(*Wails, then blubbers*)

Oh, her bridal bower becomes a burial bier of bitter bereavement.

PSEUDOLUS: Very good. Can you say, "Titus, the tailor, told ten tall tales to Titania, the titmouse?"

MILES: Do not try to cheer me. I am inconsolable!

(*COURTESANS enter from SENEX'S house, with a bit of black on their near-nakedness*)

PSEUDOLUS: Gather around, handmaidens of sorrow.

MILES (*Sings*):

Sound the flute,

Blow the horn,

Pluck the lute,

Forward . . . mourn!

(*SOLDIERS and COURTESANS wail so effectively that even HYSTERIUM is affected*)

PSEUDOLUS (*Tragically, over the body*):

All Crete was at her feet,

All Thrace was in her thrall.

All Sparta loved her sweetness and Gaul . . .

And Spain . . .

MILES:

And Greece . . .

PSEUDOLUS:

And Egypt . . .

MILES:

And Syria . . .

PSEUDOLUS:

And Mesopotamia . . .

MOURNERS:

All Crete was at her feet,

All Thrace was in her thrall.

Oh, why should such a blossom fall?

(*COURTESANS pound on bench, frightening HYSTERIUM, who falls to the floor. He scrambles back on bench, lies there, his arms unfolded*)

MILES:

Speak the spells,

Chant the charms,

Toll the bells —

PSEUDOLUS (*To HYSTERIUM*):

Fold the arms!

(*HYSTERIUM slowly folds his arms*)

Sir, on behalf of the body, I want to thank you for a lovely funeral. I don't know about you, but I've suffered enough. If you will just give me the contract, I shall take the body and . . .

MILES (*Paying him no attention*):

Strew the soil,

Strum the lyre,

Spread the oil,

Build the pyre!

PSEUDOLUS: A pyre? What kind of pyre?

MILES: A pyre of fire!

PSEUDOLUS: Oh, a fire pyre!

MILES: She must be burned!

PSEUDOLUS: Burned? Sir . . .

MILES: I want her ashes!

PSEUDOLUS: Captain, I implore you. It is not for us to destroy such loveliness. The Gods are awaiting her. They would not be happy if we sent up a charred virgin!

MILES: I cannot afford to offend the Gods.

PSEUDOLUS: Who can?

MILES (*Sings*):

All Crete was at her feet,
But I shall weep no more.

I'll find my consolation as before
Among the simple pleasures of war!
(*Speaks*)

Bring me the contract.

(*SOLDIER hands him contract*)

I give her to the Gods.

(*Puts contract on HYSTERIUM*)

Take her then and lay her to rest. And I shall go my
melancholy way. Men.

(*Starts to go, stops*)

Wait. A farewell kiss.

PSEUDOLUS: Of course.

(*Kisses MILES on the cheek*)

MILES: Not you!

(*Pushes him aside, bends over HYSTERIUM*)

PSEUDOLUS: Sir! You mustn't!

MILES: Why not?

PSEUDOLUS: It could make you very sick. The truth is, she
died of an illness contracted on Crete.

MILES: What illness?

PSEUDOLUS: The plague!

(*There is general pandemonium. COURTESANS scream
"The plague, the plague!" and run about wildly, exiting in
all directions*)

MILES: Silence!

PSEUDOLUS: The plague! The plague! Run for your lives!
(*To audience*)

Don't just sit there! Run!

(*MILES grabs PSEUDOLUS*)

MILES: There is no plague!

PSEUDOLUS: What?

MILES: I have returned this day from Crete, and there is no
plague.

PSEUDOLUS: Then what was everyone yelling about?

(*LYCUS enters, hides behind pillar*)

MILES (*Leans over HYSTERIUM*): This girl is alive!

HYSTERIUM (*Jumps up*): And she's going to stay that way!
(*Runs off*)

MILES: Stop! After her, men!

(*SOLDIERS run off*)

PSEUDOLUS: I'll get her!

(*Runs off in opposite direction*)

MILES: Wait!

(*Chases PSEUDOLUS*)

LYCUS: Now *all* the courtesans have escaped. Eunuchs! I
stand to lose a fortune in flesh!

(*EUNUCH enters from LYCUS's house*)

Find the girls! Bring them back!

(*EUNUCH exits, chattering. LYCUS exits. HYSTERIUM re-
enters, hiding face with leafy branch*)

HYSTERIUM: I've got to get out of these clothes! I'm calm,
I'm calm.

(*SENEX enters from ERRONIUS's house, spots HYSTERIUM,
goes to him*)

SENEX: Ah, there you are, my little dove!

(Cooing)

You don't have to be afraid of me.

(Leads HYSTERIUM to bench, seats him on his lap)

My slave has prepared a little feast. I want you to serve it to me in there.

(Points to ERRONIUS'S house)

Do you understand? Go, then.

(HYSTERIUM exits into SENEX'S house. SENEX exits into

ERRONIUS'S house, singing "Everybody Ought to Have a

Maid." HYSTERIUM pokes his head out of door and ducks

back into house as he sees EUNUCH enter with VIBRATA.

EUNUCH pushes her into LYCUS'S house, exits, chattering.

HYSTERIUM starts out of house once more as PSEUDOLUS

runs on, kicks him from behind)

HYSTERIUM: Pseudolus!

PSEUDOLUS: I ought to give you worse than that! What did you do with the contract?

HYSTERIUM: I gave it to a soldier. He wants to meet me later tonight.

PSEUDOLUS: Well, get it. I need it.

MILES (Offstage): He dies!

PSEUDOLUS: Look out!

(PSEUDOLUS and HYSTERIUM run off in opposite directions. MILES runs on, runs off after HYSTERIUM, shouting)

MILES: This way, men! I have found her!

(SOLDIER enters and runs off. DOMINA enters, disguised as virgin, removes veil from her face, addresses audience)

DOMINA: If it's a pretty face he wants . . .

(PSEUDOLUS enters behind her, gives her a swift kick. She screams. He exits, LYCUS enters)

How dare you!

(She slaps LYCUS)

SOLDIER (Offstage): Here she is! Men, the virgin!

(SOLDIER runs on, chases DOMINA and LYCUS off. EUNUCH

enters with PANACEA and TINTINABULA, pushes them into

LYCUS'S house. He exits, chattering. MILES enters, as DOM-

INA re-enters)

MILES: My virgin!

DOMINA: Sir, I am not anybody's virgin!

MILES: You made that more than clear when last we met!

(He runs off. HYSTERIUM runs on, behind DOMINA)

HYSTERIUM: The cause of it all!

(Kicks DOMINA in the rear, she screams, he hides behind pillar, as LYCUS runs on)

DOMINA: You, again!

(Swings at LYCUS, misses, chases him off. HYSTERIUM runs to LYCUS'S house)

HYSTERIUM: I have to get out of these clothes!

(SENEX enters from ERRONIUS'S house)

SENEX: No, no, my dear. Wrong house.

(Chases HYSTERIUM around his house)

HYSTERIUM (As he comes around the first time): Leave me alone!

SENEX (Following him on the run): Ah, you're beautiful when you're angry!

(HERO appears on balcony of SENEX'S house)

HERO (Calls): Philia! Philia!

(Exits into house. HYSTERIUM re-appears from behind

SENEX'S house)

HYSTERIUM: Second time around!

(Exits into SENEX'S house. PSEUDOLUS runs on, chased by SOLDIERS. PSEUDOLUS leads them among the pillars, swings doors open, knocks two of them out and into the wings, trips THIRD SOLDIER who falls. PSEUDOLUS runs to him, takes contract from his belt. HERO appears on balcony)

HERO: All is lost!

PSEUDOLUS: All is won! The contract! — This is what you must do —

(HERO exits into house, as MILES runs on, sword drawn. PSEUDOLUS cowers)

MILES: You die!

(LYCUS runs on)

The leper!

LYCUS: Unclean! Unclean!

(MILES and PSEUDOLUS run off in opposite directions. LYCUS runs off. SENEX appears on roof of his house, coos)

SENEX: I know you're up here somewhere, my dear. Philia! Philia!

(He disappears from roof as PHILIA enters from behind SENEX'S house)

PHILIA: I thought I heard someone call my name.

(Exits into SENEX'S house. Two EUNUCHS enter carrying GEMINAE. All exit into LYCUS'S house. DOMINA enters, hides behind pillar as PSEUDOLUS, disguised as EUNUCH, enters, chattering, leading GYMNASIA, exits with her into LYCUS'S house)

DOMINA: That is where my husband is!

(Knocks on LYCUS'S door)

I know what goes on in there!

(PSEUDOLUS appears in upper window of LYCUS'S house)

PSEUDOLUS: Who doesn't?

(DOMINA goes to SENEX'S house, cautiously looks around. Unseen by her, HYSTERIUM enters from same house, looks around, then PHILIA also enters from house, looking about. They just miss seeing each other as they go in and out of house. Suddenly they see one another, scream and run behind SENEX'S house. PSEUDOLUS enters from LYCUS'S house, runs to SENEX'S house, opens door. As PHILIA runs on from behind house, he pushes her through the doorway. As HYSTERIUM passes, PSEUDOLUS kicks him and HYSTERIUM tumbles into ERRONIUS'S house. DOMINA chases after HYSTERIUM. She is followed by SENEX who catches her at ERRONIUS'S door, pushes her in)

SENEX (Triumphantly): At last!

(HERO re-appears on balcony)

PSEUDOLUS: Hero! The contract!

(Throws contract to him)

To the harbor!

HERO: What will happen to you?

PSEUDOLUS: Nothing. Here is what I will do. I shall cause a diversion. Then I shall drink a potion which will make me appear as if dead.

(HERO exits into house. SOLDIER staggers to his feet)

SOLDIER: You are under arrest!

(PSEUDOLUS blows at him, SOLDIER falls back down. DOMINA enters from ERRONIUS'S house, followed by SENEX. PSEUDOLUS ducks into SENEX'S house)

DOMINA: Dearest Senex, you saw through my disguise!

SENEX: Yes, beloved.

(She embraces him. He looks around for PHILIA)

DOMINA: Forgive me for mistrusting you. My darling, it's just that you have been a little distant these last twenty-nine years.

SENEX (*Backing off*): Yes, beloved, yes.
(*Exits, as she follows*)

DOMINA: Senex! Senex!

ERRONIUS (*Entering*): Third time around!

(*Starts for his house, as HYSTERIUM is entering from same house. Seeing ERRONIUS, he runs back in*)
The spirit!

(*Sneaks over to side of his house. HYSTERIUM peeks out of door, then tip-toes out, not seeing ERRONIUS*)
Who are you?!

(*HYSTERIUM trips and falls. ERRONIUS helps him up*)
Let me help you.

HYSTERIUM: Thank you. I am quite all right.

ERRONIUS (*Seeing ring*): Wait!

HYSTERIUM: What is it?

ERRONIUS: My dear one! My sweet one! My little one!
(*Kisses HYSTERIUM*)

HYSTERIUM: Why do older men find me so attractive?

ERRONIUS: My daughter!

HYSTERIUM: What?

ERRONIUS: You wear the ring with the gaggle of geese!

HYSTERIUM: I am not your daughter!

(*MILES and SOLDIERS run on, spot HYSTERIUM*)

MILES: There she is!

ERRONIUS: Yes!

MILES: My virgin!

HYSTERIUM: I am not a virgin!

ERRONIUS: Those filthy pirates!

HYSTERIUM: I am not your daughter! I . . . uh . . . I am an Etruscan dancer.

(*Dances a few steps as SENEX re-enters*)

SENEX: Dancing with impatience, my dear?

MILES: Who is it speaks so boldly to my virgin?

SENEX: Your what? She is my maid!

ERRONIUS: She is my daughter!

(*All tug at HYSTERIUM*)

HYSTERIUM: Please! No fighting! That hurts! Please!

(*In the tussle, without knowing it, HYSTERIUM loses his wig*)

MILES: You are not the virgin!

HYSTERIUM (*Walks into ERRONIUS's arms*): Of course not! I am this old man's baby daughter.

SENEX: Hysterium!

MILES: The eunuch!

ERRONIUS: My daughter is a eunuch?

MILES: Seize that man!

(*Points to HYSTERIUM. SOLDIERS point swords at him*)

DOMINA (*Entering*): Senex!

MILES: You, again?

SENEX: Sir, you are speaking to my wife!

MILES: You are married to that . . . that . . .

SENEX: Yes, I am married to that . . . that! And I shall thank you to release my slave and remove yourself from in front of my house!

MILES: Your house? This is the house of Lycus.

DOMINA: Lycus?

(*All babble at once*)

MILES: Quiet! I declare this area under martial law!

PSEUDOLUS (*Entering from SENEX's house, indicating HYSTERIUM*): Release that man!

MILES: Release that man!

(*Recognizes PSEUDOLUS*)

You!

PSEUDOLUS: Sir, this quivering creature is blameless. It is I, and I alone, who have caused you this grief.

MILES: Men, unseize him and seize him!

(*SOLDIERS surround PSEUDOLUS*)

And now, death by evisceration!

(*PSEUDOLUS reacts horribly*)

HYSTERIUM: Oh, Pseudolus!

PSEUDOLUS: Calm, my friend.

(*To MILES*)

Sir, I believe a doomed man is allowed a final request?

MILES: Yes.

PSEUDOLUS: Allow me to take my own life.

MILES: Sir, I have seen kings with less courage.

PSEUDOLUS: So have I. Hysterium, the potion. You know the one I mean.

HYSTERIUM: The potion?

(*Picks up cup from where he placed it earlier*)

PSEUDOLUS: Thank you, dear friend. Give the hemlock to Socrates.

HYSTERIUM (*To SOLDIERS*): Which one of you is Socrates?

PSEUDOLUS: Give me that!

(*Takes cup, raises it*)

I go to sail on uncharted seas. To the harbor, to the harbor . . .

(*PHILIA and HERO sneak out of SENEX's house, exit unseen*) . . . from which no mariner returns. Farewell.

(*Drains potion, dies noisily and elaborately. MILES leans over him*)

Kiss me!

(*He apparently has taken the wrong potion. Jumps up*)

Somebody kiss me! Anybody!

(*To HYSTERIUM*)

I could kill you . . . you darling!

MILES: Seize him!

(*SOLDIER grabs PSEUDOLUS*)

PSEUDOLUS: Thank you! I needed that!

MILES: Stop that!

(*Smacks PSEUDOLUS in back of head. LYCUS enters with*

PHILIA. HERO follows)

LYCUS: Great Miles Gloriosus! I would not reveal my true identity until I could deliver that which I had promised.

Sir, I am Lycus. Philia, go to the man who bought you.

(*PHILIA sighs, goes to SENEX. DOMINA reacts*)

SENEX: No, no.

PHILIA: Aren't you the . . . ?

SENEX (*Whispers*): Quiet! We're under martial law.

LYCUS: There is the captain! Captain, here is your virgin.

MILES: And worth the waiting for.

(*To PSEUDOLUS*)

Out of the great joy of the occasion, forgiveness. You are free.

PSEUDOLUS: Free . . . to be a slave.

(*Shrugs against pillar*)

ERRONIUS: I cannot understand it. There was the ring. The ring with the gaggle of geese.

MILES: What did you say, old man?

(*MILES extends his hand*)

ERRONIUS: The ring!

MILES: Father!

ERRONIUS: You've grown!

(*They embrace*)

PHILIA (*Showing ring on chain about her neck*): Are these many geese a gaggle?

ERRONIUS: How long have you had this?

PHILIA: I've had this since, I don't know when I've had this since.

ERRONIUS: My daughter!

MILES: My sister?!

HYSTERIUM: Pseudolus, did you hear that?

PSEUDOLUS: Silence! Stand back, everyone! My dear old man, I take it your daughter is free born?

ERRONIUS: Without a doubt!

PSEUDOLUS: Lycus, as all of us know, the penalty for selling a free-born citizen is to be trampled to death by a water buffalo in heat!

MILES: Seize him!

LYCUS: Careful, I'm a bleeder!

PSEUDOLUS (*To LYCUS*): Bring out those girls!
(*To audience*)

I told you this was to be a comedy!

(*As LYCUS brings COURTESANS out of his house*)

Hero!

HERO: Mother and father, I wish to marry.

SENEX (*Aside*): Son, if you are only as happy as your mother and I, my heart will bleed for you.

PSEUDOLUS (*Sings, to audience, indicating HERO and PHILIA*):

Lovers divided

Get coincided.

Something for everyone —

HERO and PHILIA:

A comedy tonight!

PSEUDOLUS (*Indicating SENEX and DOMINA*):

Father and mother

Get one another.

DOMINA:

Something for everyone —

SENEX:

A tragedy tonight!

MILES (*Holding the GEMINAE*):

I get the twins!

They get the best!

ERRONIUS:

I get a family . . .

HYSTERIUM:

I get a rest.

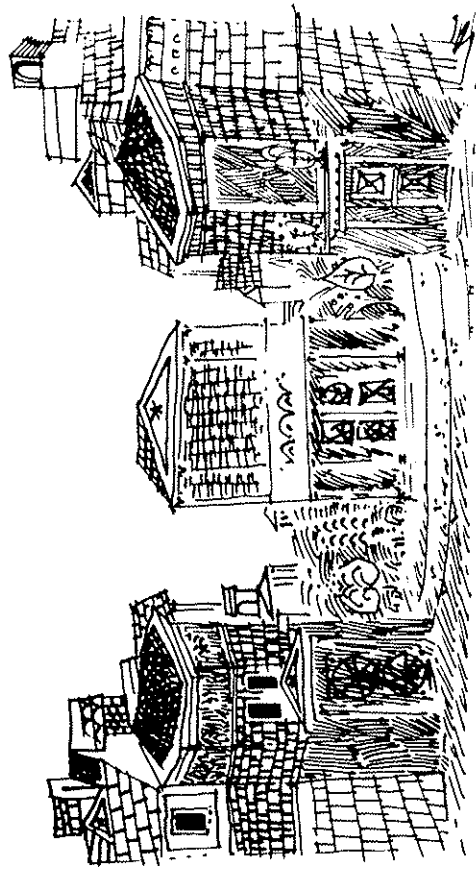
SOLDIERS (*Holding the other COURTESANS*):

We get a few girls.

LYCUS:

I'll get some new girls.

Set and Costume Designs by Tony Walton



PSEUDOLUS:

I get the thing I want to be:
Free!

ALL:

Free! Free! Free! Free! Free!

(PSEUDOLUS exits joyfully)

Nothing for kings,
Nothing for crowns,
Something for lovers, liars and clowns!
What is the moral?
Must be a moral.
Here is the moral, wrong or right:

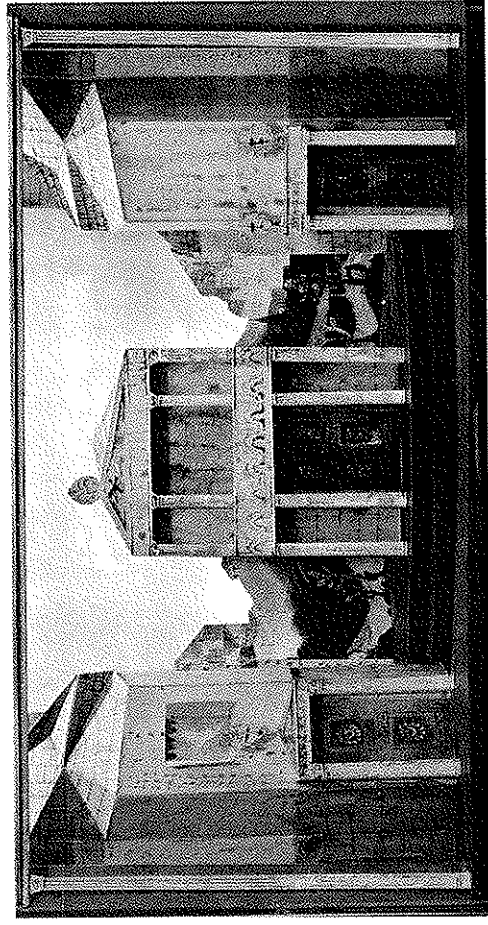
PSEUDOLUS (*Re-enters with GYMNASIA*):
Morals tomorrow!

ALL:

Comedy, comedy, comedy, comedy, comedy, comedy,
Comedy, comedy,
Tonight!

(*Curtain*)

Above, the first sketch for the set; *below*, a model of the final set



DONALD SOUTHERN