

*Old Cantankerous*

GETAS: Poor old man, you have plumbed the depths of human misery. [*Suddenly*] Dance! On to your feet! We'll help you.

KNEMON: What do you want *now*, you pests?

GETAS: Just try. On to your feet, we'll help you. Oh, you *are* a clumsy clot.

KNEMON: No, please.

GETAS: Shall we take you to the party, then?

KNEMON: Oh, what shall I do?

GETAS: Dance!

KNEMON: Take me in, then. Perhaps it'll be better to put up with that.

GETAS: Now you're showing some sense. Hooray, we've won! [*Calls*] Hey, Donax! [*Servant comes out*] You too, Sikon, pick him up and take him inside. [*To KNEMON*] And you be careful. If ever we find you making a nuisance of yourself again, we won't treat you so tenderly then, I can tell you. [*Calls*] Hey, bring us garlands and a torch. [*They are brought out, and he distributes them*] Take that one. There! [*All go into the shrine except GETAS, who addresses the audience*] You've enjoyed our victory over the old man, now please applaud us, young and old. And may laughter-loving Victory, daughter of a noble line, smile upon us all our days.  
[*Exit GETAS, into shrine.*]

The Girl From Samos

[Samia

or

The Marriage Connection]

### Introductory Note to *The Girl From Samos*

The play has been variously dated between 315 B.C. and 309 B.C. None of the evidence is conclusive, but the assured handling of character, situation and dialogue suggests a date later rather than earlier in the range. This is the work of a more confident and experienced Menander than the playwright of *Old Cantankerous*. See Introduction, pp. 12-14.

## CHARACTERS

MOSCHION, a young Athenian gentleman  
DEMEAS, his adoptive father  
PARMENON, their servant  
CHRYSSIS, a Samian girl, Demeus's mistress  
NIKERATOS, Demeus's neighbour  
A COOK

## ACT ONE

SCENE: a street in Athens: There are two houses, that of Demeus on the audience's left, that of Nikeratos on the right. Between them is an altar and image of Apollo.

*The text of Acts One and Two is badly mutilated, but from what does remain, and from the rest of the play, it is possible to make reasonable deductions about the content of the missing portions. The Prologue is spoken by Moschion, the junior lead. This play has no need of a divine Prologue, because Moschion can tell us all the necessary facts. Some ten or eleven lines are missing from the start of his speech: it is likely that in them he explained that he had been adopted by Demeus; an elderly bachelor.*

MOSCHION [addressing audience]: . . . Oh, what's the point of moaning? It hurts, because I *did* do wrong. Telling the story will be painful, I reckon, but it will make more sense to you if I explain in some detail what my father's like. Right from the time when I was a very small boy, I had everything I wanted; I remember it well, but I won't dwell on it now. He was kind to me when I was too young to appreciate it. I was treated just like every other boy of good family; 'one of the crowd', as the saying goes, though I certainly wasn't born with a silver spoon in my mouth (we're all alone, so I can tell you that). I made my mark when I backed a dramatic production and gave generous contributions to charity. I had horses and hounds, too -- at father's expense. I was a dashing officer in the Brigade, sufficiently in funds to give a bit of help to a friend in need. Thanks to my father, I was a civilized human being. And I gave him a civilized return: I behaved myself.

Then -- I'll tell you all about us at one go. I've nothing else to do -- then Father fell for a girl from Samos. Well, it could happen to anyone. He tried to keep it quiet, being a bit embarrassed. But I found out, for all his precautions, and I reckoned that if he didn't establish himself as the girl's protector, he'd have trouble with younger rivals for her favours. He felt a bit awkward about doing this (probably because of me), but I persuaded him to take her into the house.

Some twenty or so lines are missing here, in which Moschion probably explained that Chrysis was now in residence in Demas's house, that she had been pregnant and under instructions from Demas to get rid of the child, that Demas and his neighbour Nikeratos were abroad on business, and that Nikeratos had a daughter, Plangon.

... Well, this girl's mother became friendly with Father's girl, and she was often in their house, and they'd visit us, too. One day, I came home from our farm, and happened to find them all here in our house, with some other ladies, to celebrate the festival of Adonis.<sup>2</sup> The proceedings, as you can imagine, were producing a good deal of fun, and I joined them as a sort of spectator. In any case, the noise they were making would be keeping me awake, for they were taking their tray 'gardens' up to the roof, and dancing, and making a real night of it, all over the place.

I hesitate to tell you the rest of the story. Perhaps I'm ashamed, where shame is no help, but I'm still ashamed. [Pause] The girl got pregnant. Now I've told you that, you know what went before, too. I didn't deny that I was responsible, but went without being asked to the girl's mother, and promised to marry her daughter as soon as my father came home. I gave my word I would. The baby was born a few days ago, and I formally acknowledged it as mine. Then, by a lucky chance Chrysis — that's the girl from Samos — had her baby too.

About twenty-five lines are missing, which must have explained that Chrysis' baby had died, and that she had taken Plangon's to nurse in its place. Moschion left the stage, probably left, to the harbour, and Chrysis entered from the house, possibly carrying the baby. Her opening lines are lost — they may have been to or about the baby — and then the text continues.

CHRYISIS: Here they come, hurrying home. I'll just wait and hear what they're talking about.

[Enter MOSCHION and PARMENON, left.]

MOSCHION: You actually saw my father with your own eyes, Parmenon?

PARMENON: How often do I have to tell you? Yes, I did.

MOSCHION: And our neighbour, too?

PARMENON: Yes, they're both back.

MOSCHION: I'm very glad.

PARMENON: Now, you've got to brace yourself, and raise the question of your marriage right away.

MOSCHION: How can I? I've lost my nerve now that the crunch has come.

PARMENON: What do you mean?

MOSCHION: It's too embarrassing to face my father.

PARMENON [his voice rising]: And the girl you seduced, and her mother? What about them? Man, you're shaking like a leaf.

CHRYISIS [coming forward]: For goodness' sake, what's all the shouting about?

PARMENON: Oh, Chrysis is here, too. [To CHRYISIS] You really want to know why I'm shouting? That's a laugh. I want the wedding now, I want this chap here to stop waiting at this door here. I want him to remember that he gave his word. Ceremonial offerings, garlands, pounding sesame for the wedding cake — that's what I want to be helping with. Don't you think I've got good reason to shout?

MOSCHION: I'll do everything that's required. No need to go on about it.

CHRYISIS: I'm sure you will.

MOSCHION: What about the baby? Do we let Chrysis here go on nursing it and saying it's her own?

CHRYISIS: Why ever not?

MOSCHION: Father will be furious.

CHRYISIS: He'll cool down again. For he's in love too, my dear, desperately in love, just as much as you. And that brings even the angriest man to terms pretty fast. And I'd put up with anything, myself, before I'd let a wet-nurse bring up Baby here in some slum.

Some twenty-three lines are missing, during which Chrysis and Parmenon dearly went into the house, leaving Moschion soliloquizing on stage. Only fragments of the end of his speech remain.

MOSCHION: . . . most miserable man in the world. I'd better hang myself right away. A man conducting his own case needs to win favour.<sup>3</sup> I haven't enough experience of cases like this. I'll go and practise in some quiet place. This is a tricky case I've got on my hands. [He goes off, right.]

[Enter DEMEAS and NIKERATOS, left, with luggage and servants.]

DEMEAS: You must notice the change of scene already, the difference between here and that horrible place.

NIKERATOS: Oh, yes. Black Sea, thick old men, fish by the boat-load, a life to make you sick: the city of Byzantium, everything gall and wormwood. God! But here is pure benefit for the poor.

DEMEAS: Dear Athens! I wish you all the blessings you deserve, so that we who love our city may be prosperous and happy. [To

*servants*] Inside with the luggage, boys. You there, why are you standing goggling at me like a paralytic? [*The servants take the luggage inside.*]

NIKERATOS: What I found most extraordinary about that place, Demas, was that sometimes you couldn't see the sun for weeks on end. It looked as if a thick fog was hiding it.

110 DEMAS: Well, there was nothing very marvellous to see there, so the natives get only the bare minimum of light.

NIKERATOS: How right you are.

DEMAS: Well, let's leave that for others to worry about. Apropos of the business we were discussing, what do you mean to do?

NIKERATOS: You mean your son's marriage?

DEMAS: Yes, of course.

NIKERATOS: I haven't changed my mind. Let's name a day and get on with it. And good luck to it.

DEMAS: That's your considered opinion?

NIKERATOS: It certainly is.

DEMAS: Mine, too. And I got there first!

NIKERATOS: Call for me as soon as you come out.

DEMAS: There are a few points . . .

*About fourteen lines are missing from the end of the act. Demas and Nikeratos obviously went into their respective houses, and one of them must have indicated the arrival of a band of revellers.*

[FIRST CHORAL INTERLUDE]

ACT TWO

[*Enter MOSCHION, right, and DEMAS, from his house. Neither sees the other.*]

*The beginning of Moschion's speech is mutilated, but the general sense is clear.*

MOSCHION: Well, I haven't done any of the rehearsing I intended. 120

When I got outside the city on my own, I started imagining the wedding service, planning the guest-list for the reception, seeing myself escorting the ladies to the ritual bath, cutting and handing round the wedding-cake, humming the wedding-hymn—behaving like an utter fool. When I'd had enough—help! Here's my father. He must have heard what I was saying. Glad to see you, Father.

DEMAS: Glad to see you, son.

MOSCHION: You look a bit—er—grim.

DEMAS: I do. I thought I had a mistress, but I seem to have acquired 130 a wife.

MOSCHION: A wife? What do you mean? I don't understand.

DEMAS: I seem to have become—quite without my knowledge and consent—the father of a son. Well, she can take him and get out of the house—to the Devil, for all I care.

MOSCHION: Oh, no!

DEMAS: Why not? Do you expect me to bring up a bastard in my house, to humour someone else? That's not my line at all.

MOSCHION: For Heaven's sake! What's legitimacy or illegitimacy?

We're all human, aren't we?

DEMAS: You must be joking.

MOSCHION: By God I'm not, I'm perfectly serious. I don't think 140 birth means anything. If you look at the thing properly, a good man's legitimate, a bad man's both a bastard and a slave.

*Some twenty lines are missing or mutilated, but it is clear that in the course of them Moschion persuaded his father to keep the child, and Demas raised the question of his son's marriage, and found him willing.*

MOSCHION: I'm longing to get married . . . and I want to be obedient, Father, not just to seem so.

DEMAS: Good boy! . . . If our neighbours here agree, you shall marry her at once. 150

MOSCHION: I hope you'll ask no questions, but accept that I'm serious, and help me?

DEMBAS: Accept that you're serious? Ask no questions? I understand, Moschion. Now I'll run over to my neighbour here, and tell him to start getting ready for the wedding. All that you want from our household will be waiting for you.

MOSCHION: I'll go in now, sprinkle myself with holy water, pour a libation, put incense on the fire — and then I'll fetch the girl.

DEMBAS: No, not yet, until I'm sure we have her father's consent.

MOSCHION: He won't say no. But it wouldn't be the thing for me to go in with you, and get in the way of the preparations. [*He goes off, left.*]

DEMBAS: Coincidence must really be a divinity. She looks after many of the things we cannot see. I had no idea that Moschion had fallen in love!

*About twenty-seven lines are missing, and the next twenty-five are badly damaged. But enough survives to make it clear that Nikeratos came out of his house, and Dembas persuaded him that the wedding should take place that day.*

DEMBAS: Parmenon! Hey, Parmenon! [*Enter PARMENON from the house*] Go and get garlands, an animal for sacrifice, sesame seeds for the cake. Buy up the market, and come back here.

PARMENON: You leave it to me, sir.

DEMBAS: And hurry up. Do it now. And bring a cook, too.

PARMENON: A cook too. After I've bought the rest?

DEMBAS: Yes.

PARMENON: I'll get some money and be off at the double. [*He goes into the house.*]

DEMBAS: You not on your way to market yet, Nikeratos?

NIKERATOS: I must just go in and tell my wife to get the house ready.

Then I'll be right on Parmenon's heels. [*He goes into his own house.*]  
 PARMENON [*reappearing with basket, and talking back over his shoulder*]: I haven't a clue what it's all about, except these are my orders, and I'm off to market now.

DEMBAS: Nikeratos will have a job persuading his wife, and we mustn't waste time on explanations. [*Seeing PARMENON*] You still here? Run, man, run!

*About ten lines are missing from the end of the Act, during which Parmenon obviously left for the market, right, Dembas went into his house, and the Chorus entered.*

[SECOND CHORAL INTERLUDE]

ACT THREE

[*Enter DEMBAS, from his house.*]

DEMBAS: In the midst of a fair voyage, a storm can suddenly appear from nowhere. Such a storm has often shattered and capsized those who a moment ago were running nicely before the wind. That's what's happened to me now. Five minutes ago, I was organizing the wedding, attending to the religious obligations, with everything going according to plan. [*He moves down stage and addresses audience*] I'm coming down-stage to you, now, as the victim of a knock-out blow. It's incredible! Tell me if I'm sane or mad. Am I getting the facts all wrong and bringing disaster on myself?

The minute I went in, full of enthusiasm to get the wedding organized, I gave the servants a straightforward account of everything, told them to make all the necessary preparations — clean, bake, arrange the ritual basket. Things were going quite well, but the speed at which things were happening naturally produced a certain amount of confusion. The baby had been dumped out of the way on a couch, and it was howling. The women servants were all shouting at once — 'Flour, please! Water, please! Oil, please! Charcoal, here!' I was passing some of these, lending a hand, and I happened to go into the pantry. I was inspecting and selecting more supplies, and didn't come out immediately. Well, while I was in there, a woman came downstairs into the room next to the pantry — it's where the weaving's done, in fact, and you have to go through it to go upstairs or into the pantry. This woman was Moschion's old nurse, getting on now. She was once my slave, but I set her free. She saw the baby crying and no one taking a bit of notice of it. She didn't know I was inside, but thought she could speak safely, so she went up to the baby, with all the usual baby-talk like 'Who's a little love, then?' and 'Precious treasure! Where's Mummy?' She cuddled it, and walked it up and down, and when it stopped crying, she murmured to herself, 'Dear me, it seems only yesterday that I was cuddling and nursing Moschion, just like this, and now that his son here has been born . . .'

*Four or five lines are lost or damaged.*

255 . . . Then a servant-girl came running in, and the Nurse said, 'Give the baby his bath. What do you all think you're doing? His father's wedding-day, and you're neglecting the little one.' The girl immediately hissed 'Don't shout. Master's at home.' 'No! Where is he?' 'In the pantry!' And then, raising her voice, 'Mistress is asking for you, Nurse' and, quietly, 'Quick! He hasn't heard a word. We're in luck!' The Nurse said, 'My tongue will be the death of me', and off she went, I don't know where.

260 I came walking out quite calmly just as I did here a moment ago, as if I hadn't heard or understood a word. In the outer room I saw my Samian, all by herself, with the baby in her arms, breast-feeding it. So *she's* obviously the baby's mother. But the father, whether it's mine or — Ladies and Gentlemen, I can't bring myself to say it or even to think it. I'm simply telling you what I heard. I'm not angry — not yet. I know the boy, of course I do, and he's always been a good boy, and behaved very properly to me. But then again, when I remember that the woman was once Moschion's nurse, and that she didn't know I could hear what she was saying; and when I look at Chrysis, who adores the baby and has insisted on keeping it against my wishes — well, I'm absolutely fit to be tied.

265 Oh, good! Here's Parmenon back from the market. I must let him take his party into the house.

[Enter PARMENON, right, with provisions and COOK.]

270 PARMENON: For God's sake, Cook! I can't imagine why you bother to carry knives around with you. You're quite capable of slicing through everything with your tongue.

COOK [loftily]: You don't understand. You're not a professional.

PARMENON: No?

275 COOK: Not in my view, I assure you. I'm only asking about the number of covers you mean to set, the number of ladies coming, the time of the meal, whether I need an extra waiter, if your dinner-service is big enough, if the kitchen's under cover, if everything I need is available —

280 PARMENON: In case you haven't noticed, mate, you're making a very fine mince-meat of me, a real professional job.

COOK: Go and boil your head.

285 PARMENON: The same to you, and make a tight job of it. Inside, all of you!

[COOK and entourage go into Demeas's house.]

DEMEAS: Parmenon!

PARMENON: Someone want me?

DEMEAS: Yes, I do.

PARMENON: Oh, hello, sir.

DEMEAS: Deliver your basket, and come back here.

PARMENON: Sure. [Swaggers into house.]

DEMEAS: I'm sure that no business like this would get past him. He's got a finger in every pie. Ah, there's the door, he's coming out.

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[Enter PARMENON from the house, speaking back over his shoulder.]  
PARMENON: Chrysis, see that the cook gets everything he wants, and for God's sake keep the old crone away from the wine-bottles!

[To DEMEAS] At your service, sir!

DEMEAS [grinily]: My service, indeed. Over here, you, away from the door. A bit farther.

PARMENON: There!

DEMEAS: Now you listen to me, Parmenon. I don't want to beat you, I really don't. I have my reasons.

PARMENON: Beat me? Whatever for?

DEMEAS: You're part of a conspiracy to keep something from me, so I've discovered.

PARMENON: Me? I swear by angels and archangels and all the hosts of heaven —

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DEMEAS: Stop! No swearing. I'm not guessing. I know.

PARMENON: God strike me down —

DEMEAS: Look me straight in the face, man.

PARMENON: There. I'm looking.

DEMEAS: The baby — whose is it?

PARMENON: Well —

DEMEAS: Whose baby is it? I want an answer.

PARMENON: Chrysis'.

DEMEAS: And who's the father?

PARMENON: You are, according to her.

DEMEAS: That's done it. You're trying to cheat me.

PARMENON: Me, sir?

DEMEAS: I tell you, I know the whole story, every last detail. I've found out that it's Moschion's child, that you're in the plot, and that Chrysis is nursing it now for his sake.

PARMENON: Who says?

DEMEAS: Everyone. Answer me — is this true?

PARMENON: Yes, sir, it's true, but we didn't want it to get out —

DEMEAS [outraged]: Not get out? [Shouts] Bring me a horsewhip, someone, to deal with this snake-in-the-grass.

PARMENON: Oh, please, NO.

DEMEAS: I'll brand you, so help me.

PARMENON: Brand me?

DEMEAS: This very minute.

PARMENON: I've had it. [*He runs off, right.*]

DEMEAS: Hey, where are you going? I've a rod in pickle for you. Grab him, someone! [*Raising hands to heaven*] O citadel of Cecrops' land, O vault of heaven on high, O — why the noisy imprecation, Demeeas? Why all the shouting, you fool? Control yourself, stiffen the upper lip.

It's not *Moschion* who's done you wrong. [*To audience*] That may seem a remarkable statement, Ladies and Gentlemen, but it's true. For if he'd done this from malice aforethought, or in the grip of the passion of love, or from dislike of me, he'd still be brazening it out and marshalling his forces against me. As it is, he's cleared himself completely, in my judgement, by his enthusiastic agreement to this marriage, when it was proposed to him. It wasn't love, as I thought then, that prompted his enthusiasm, but a desire to get away somehow from the house, and from that Helen of mine. She's the one to blame for what's happened. She caught him, I imagine, when he'd had a spot too much to drink, when he wasn't quite in control of himself. Yes, that's obviously what happened. Strong wine and young blood can work a lot of mischief, when a man finds at his side someone who has used these things to set a trap for him. I *cannot* believe that a boy who's always been well-behaved and considerate to others could treat me like this: not if he's ten times adopted and not my natural son. It's not his origins I care about, it's his character. But that — creature — she's a trollop. She's poison. She'll have to go.

Now, Demeeas, be a man. Forget how you've missed her, stop loving her, cover up what's happened as far as you can for your son's sake, and throw the fair Samian out on her ear. The hell with her. You've got an excuse — she kept the child. No need to give any other reason. Bite on the bullet, stiff upper lip, honour of the family!

[*Enter COOK from house.*]

COOK: Is he here, by the front door? [*Shouts*] Hey, Parmenon! Damn the fellow, he's run out on me, didn't lift a finger to help me.

DEMEAS [*Pushing into house*]: Out of the way! Back, you!

COOK: Well! What's up? A maniac with a grey beard ran into the house. What on earth's the matter? Oh, well, it's nothing to do with me. I tell you, he's loopy, he must be. Well, he was shouting his head off. A fine thing if he shatters all my crockery that's been set out. Oh, there's the door. Damn and blast Parmenon for

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bringing me here. I'll just step a bit out of the way. [*He moves away as DEMEAS pushes CHRYSIS with the baby out of the house.*]

DEMEAS: Are you deaf? Get out!

CHRYSIS: But — where to?

DEMEAS: To hell. This minute.

CHRYSIS: Poor me.

DEMEAS: Yes, poor you. Very affecting, your tears. I'll stop your game, I assure you. 370

CHRYSIS: What game?

DEMEAS [*remembering he wants to keep the scandal secret*]: Never mind.

You've got the child and the old crone. Now go to hell.

CHRYSIS: Is it because I kept the baby?

DEMEAS: Yes, and because . . .

CHRYSIS: Because what?

DEMEAS: Just because of that.

COOK [*aside*]: Oh, that's what the trouble is. Now I see.

DEMEAS: You didn't know how to behave properly when you were well off.

CHRYSIS: I don't understand.

DEMEAS: You came here to me, Chrysis, in a cotton frock — do you understand *that*? — a simple cotton frock.

CHRYSIS: Well?

DEMEAS: I was everything to you then, when you were poor.

CHRYSIS: Aren't you now?

DEMEAS: Don't speak to me. You have all your belongings. I'll give you some servants too. Now, get out!

COOK [*aside*]: Here's a fine frenzy. I'd better go over. [*Approaches*]

Look here, sir —

DEMEAS: Why are *you* shoving your ear in?

COOK: No need to bite my nose off.

DEMEAS [*ignoring him*]: Another girl will be happy with what I have to offer, Chrysis — yes, and give thanks to heaven for it.

COOK: What *does* he mean?

DEMEAS: You've got a son, you have all you want.

COOK [*aside*]: Not biting yet. [*To DEMEAS*] Still, sir —

DEMEAS: I'll smash your head in, fellow, if you say a word to me.

COOK: With some justice, too. There, I'm off inside now. [*He goes into house.*]

DEMEAS [*to CHRYSIS*]: A fine figure *you* make! Once you're on the town, you'll very quickly find your true value. Other girls, Chrysis, not at all in your style, run off to dinner parties for a pound or two, and swallow strong drink until they die: or they

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starve, if they're not prepared to do this and do it smartly. You'll learn the hard way, like everyone else. And you'll realize what a stupid mistake you've made. [CHRYSIS moves towards him] Stay where you are! [He goes into the house.]

CHRYSIS: What shall I do? What's to become of me?

[Enter NIKERATOS, right, with a sheep.]

400 NIKERATOS: This sheep, once it's sacrificed, will satisfy the ritual demands of all the inhabitants of heaven. It's got blood, an adequate gall-bladder, super bones and an enlarged spleen — all the things that the Olympians want. I'll chop up the skin, and send it to my friends as a tasty bit: it's all that'll be left for me. [Sees CHRYSIS] Heavens! What's this? Chrysis in tears in front of the house? Yes, it is. Whatever's the matter?

CHRYSIS: Your fine friend has thrown me out, that's all.

NIKERATOS: Heavens! Demneas?

CHRYSIS: Yes.

NIKERATOS: But why?

CHRYSIS: Because of the baby.

410 NIKERATOS: Yes, I did hear from my womenfolk that you'd kept a child and were nursing it. Sheer lunacy! But Demneas is an easy-going chap. He wasn't angry at first, was he? Only later on? Quite recently?

CHRYSIS: Yes. He'd told me to get the house ready for the wedding, and then, when I was up to my eyes in it, he burst in like a maniac, and he's locked me out of the house.

420 NIKERATOS: He's out of his mind. The Black Sea isn't a healthy place. You come along and see my wife. Cheer up. It'll be all right. He'll come to his senses when he thinks over what he's doing. [He escorts CHRYSIS into his house.]

THIRD CHORAL INTERLUDE

ACT FOUR

[Enter NIKERATOS, from his house, speaking back over his shoulder.]

NIKERATOS: You'll be the death of me with your nagging. Woman. I'm on my way now to tackle him. [Shuts the door] I'd have given a good deal — by God I would — for this not to have happened. Right in the middle of the wedding preparations, something very unlucky has happened. A woman, thrown out of house and home, has crossed our threshold with a child in her arms; there have been tears, and the women are all upset and disorganized. Demneas really is a clor. By God, I'll see that he pays for it.

[Enter MOSCHION, left, not seeing NIKERATOS.]

MOSCHION: Will the sun never set? All I can say is, Night has forgotten her job. Will it be always afternoon? I'll go and have a bath — my third. There's nothing else to do.

NIKERATOS: Glad to see you, Moschion.

430 MOSCHION [eagerly]: Are we starting the wedding now? Parmenon told me when I ran into him in the market just now. Can I fetch your daughter now?

NIKERATOS: You don't know what's been going on here!

MOSCHION: No, what?

NIKERATOS: You may well ask. Something very unpleasant indeed.

MOSCHION: Heavens, what is it? I've heard nothing.

NIKERATOS: My dear boy, your father has just thrown Chrysis out of the house.

MOSCHION: You can't mean it.

NIKERATOS: True, I assure you.

MOSCHION: But what for?

NIKERATOS: Because of the baby.

MOSCHION: Then where is she now?

NIKERATOS: In our house.

MOSCHION: What a terrible thing. Quite extraordinary.

NIKERATOS: You think so? Then . . . [They go on speaking quietly together.]

[Enter DEMNEAS, from his house, speaking back over his shoulder.]

440 DEMNEAS: If I get my hands on a stick, I'll knock tears out of you all right. Stop this nonsense! Get on and help the cook. [Sarcastically] There's really something to cry about, I must say; our house has

lost a really valuable treasure. Her behaviour makes that quite clear. [*He bows to the altar*] Grant us, Lord, successfully to effect this marriage we are about to celebrate. For [*turning to audience*] celebrate it I shall, Ladies and Gentlemen, and swallow my rage. [*Turns back to altar*] Guard me, O Lord, from self-betrayal, and constrain me to sing the marriage-hymn. [*Gloomily*] I'll not be in very good voice, in my present mood, but what of it? Who cares what happens now?<sup>5</sup>

NIKERATOS: Go on, Moschion, you tackle him first.

MOSCHION: All right. [*Moves forward*] Father, why are you behaving like this?

DEMBAS: Like what, Moschion?

MOSCHION: Need you ask? Why has Chrysis gone and left us? Tell me that.

DEMBAS [*aside*]: Someone's organizing a diplomatic approach to me. Oh, dear. [*To MOSCHION*] It's none of your business, it's mine and mine alone. Such nonsense! [*Aside*] This is dreadful. *He's* part of the plot against me too.

MOSCHION: Beg your pardon?

DEMBAS [*aside*]: He must be: otherwise, why come and speak for her? He should surely have been pleased at what's happened.

MOSCHION: What do you imagine your friends will say when they hear about this?

DEMBAS: I imagine my friends will — you leave my friends to me, Moschion.

460 MOSCHION: I'd be failing in my duty if I let you do this.

DEMBAS: You'll try to stop me?

MOSCHION: Yes, I will.

DEMBAS: This beats all! This is more scandalous than the previous scandals.

MOSCHION: It's never right to let anger rip.

NIKERATOS [*approaching*]: He's right, Dembas.

MOSCHION: Nikeratos, you go and tell Chrysis to come back here at once.

DEMBAS: Let it be, Moschion, let it be. For the third time I tell you, I know everything.

MOSCHION: Everything? What do you mean?

DEMBAS: Don't bandy words with me!

MOSCHION: But I've got to, Father.

DEMBAS: Got to? Am I not to be master in my own house?

MOSCHION: Then grant it to me as a favour.

DEMBAS: A favour? I suppose you're asking me to quit my house and

470 leave you two together? Let me get on with your wedding arrangements. You will, if you've any sense.

MOSCHION: Well, of course I will. But I want Chrysis to be one of the guests.

DEMBAS: You want Chrysis . . . ?

MOSCHION: Insist upon it — mainly for your sake.

DEMBAS [*aside*]: Now it's obvious. Now it's clear. I call heaven to witness that Someone has joined my enemies and is plotting against me. I'll burst a blood-vessel, I really will.

MOSCHION: What are you talking about?

DEMBAS: You really want me to tell you?

MOSCHION: Of course I do.

DEMBAS [*moving away*]: Come here.

MOSCHION [*following*]: Tell me.

DEMBAS: Oh, I'll tell you. The child is yours. I know, I was told by Parmenon, who's in your confidence. So stop playing games with me.

MOSCHION: But — what harm is Chrysis doing you if the child is mine?

DEMBAS: Who is to blame, then? Tell me that.

MOSCHION: But — how is she at fault?

DEMBAS: I don't believe it! Have you two no conscience?

MOSCHION: What's all the shouting about?

DEMBAS: Shouting, is it, you scum? What a question. Listen: you take the blame on yourself, right? And you dare to look me in the face and ask this? Have you turned against me completely?

MOSCHION: Me? Against you? How?

DEMBAS: How? Need you ask?

MOSCHION: But, Father, what I did isn't such a terrible crime. I'm sure thousands of men have done it before.

DEMBAS: God in Heaven, what a nerve! In the face of this audience I ask you, who is the baby's mother? Tell Nikeratos, if you don't think it's such a terrible crime!

490 MOSCHION [*aside*]: It'll certainly turn into one, if I tell him. He'll be furious when he finds out.

NIKERATOS [*suddenly joining in*]: You wicked monster! I'm beginning to have a suspicion of what's been going on. Absolutely outrageous!

MOSCHION [*misunderstanding*]: That's me done for now.

DEMBAS: Now do you see, Nikeratos?

NIKERATOS: I certainly do. [*In tragic vein*] O deed most dreadful! O

Tereus, Oedipus, Thyestes! O all the incestuous loves of legend!  
You've put them all in the shade.

MOSCHION [*bewildered*]: Me?

NIKERATOS: How could you have the effrontery, the audacity, to behave like this? Demias, now you should assume Amyntor's rage, and blind your son.<sup>6</sup>

500 DEMEAS [*to MOSCHION*]: It's your fault that he's got to know about this.

NIKERATOS: Is nothing sacred? No one inviolate? And you're the man to whom I'm to give my daughter in marriage? I'd rather touch wood and *absit omen* — I'd rather marry her to our local Lothario. And we all know how unfortunate that would be.

DEMEAS [*to MOSCHION*]: You did me great wrong, but I tried to keep it quiet.

NIKERATOS: You're a coward and a slave, Demias. If it were my bed he'd defiled, he'd certainly never again be abusing anyone else's. Nor would his partner. The trollop I'd be selling promptly next day. Simultaneously and publicly, I'd disinherite my son. There wouldn't be an empty seat in barber's shop or public gardens — the whole world would be there from first light, talking about me and saying, 'Nikeratos is a *man*, prosecuting for murder, and quite right too.'

MOSCHION: *Murder?* What murder?

NIKERATOS: Murder's what I call it, when anyone acts against authority and behaves like this.

MOSCHION: My throat's dry. I'm petrified with fright.

NIKERATOS: And to crown it all, I've welcomed to my hearth and home the girl responsible for these horrors.

DEMEAS: Throw her out, Nikeratos, do. Consider yourself wronged when I am, as a true friend should.

NIKERATOS: I'll explode with rage at the sight of her. [*To MOSCHION*] You dare look me in the face, you barbarous savage?

Out of my way! [*He rushes into his house.*]

520 MOSCHION: Father, for God's sake, listen.

DEMEAS: Not a word!

MOSCHION: Not even if nothing you suspect is true? I'm just beginning to understand what's going on.

DEMEAS: What do you mean, 'nothing'?

MOSCHION: Chrysis isn't the mother of the baby she's nursing.

She's doing me a favour by saying it's hers.

DEMEAS: *What?*

MOSCHION: It's true.

DEMEAS: Why is she doing you this 'favour'?

MOSCHION: I don't want to tell you, but if you know the truth, I'll be cleared of the more serious charge, and admit to the minor one.

DEMEAS: You'll be the death of me, if you don't get on and tell me.

MOSCHION: The baby's mother is Nikeratos's daughter. I'm the father. I was trying to keep it from you.

DEMEAS: What are you saying?

MOSCHION: The simple truth.

DEMEAS: Be careful. No trying to pull wool over my eyes.

530 MOSCHION: You can check the facts. What good would it do me to lie?

DEMEAS: No good at all. There's the door — [*NIKERATOS staggers out of his house.*]

NIKERATOS: O misery, misery me! What a sight I have seen! I'm rushing out in a frenzy, pierced to the heart with pain unlooked-for.

DEMEAS: What on earth is he going to tell us?

NIKERATOS: My daughter — my own daughter — I found her just now *breast-feeding the baby*.

DEMEAS [*To MOSCHION*]: Then your story's true.

MOSCHION: You listening, Father?

DEMEAS: You've done me no wrong, Moschion. But I've wronged you by suspecting what I did.

NIKERATOS: You're the man I want, Demias.

MOSCHION: I'm off!

DEMEAS: Don't be afraid.

MOSCHION: It's death just to look at him. [*He runs off, left.*]

DEMEAS: What on earth is wrong?

540 NIKERATOS: Breast-feeding the baby in the house — that's how I've just found my daughter.

DEMEAS: Perhaps she was just pretending.

NIKERATOS: It was no pretence. When she saw me, she fainted.

DEMEAS: Perhaps she thought —

NIKERATOS: You'll be the death of me with your perhapes.

DEMEAS [*aside*]: This is my fault.

NIKERATOS: Beg your pardon?

DEMEAS: I find your story quite incredible.

NIKERATOS: I tell you, I saw it.

DEMEAS: You're drivelling.

NIKERATOS: It's not just a fairy-tale. But I'll go back and — [*He turns back towards house.*]

DEMEAS: Just a minute, my friend. I have an idea. [*NIKERATOS goes in.*]

550

He's gone. That's torn it. This is the end. Once he finds out the truth, he'll be in a real rage, bawling his head off. He's a rough customer, insensitive, blunt as they come. To think that I - I - had such suspicions! I'm as good as a murderer, I deserve to die, I really do. [Shouts are heard from Nikeratos's house] Heavens, what a noise! This is it. He's yelling for fire, threatening to burn the baby. I'll have to watch my grandson roasting. There's the door again. The man's a whirlwind, a positive tornado.

NIKERATOS [fishing out]: Demcas, Chrysis is plotting against me, and doing the most terrible things.

DEMBAS: Oh?

NIKERATOS: She's persuaded my wife and daughter to admit nothing, and she's grabbed the baby and refuses to give it up. Don't be surprised if I kill her with my bare hands.

DEMBAS: Her? Your wife?

NIKERATOS: Yes, she's in the plot too.

DEMBAS: Don't do it, Nikeratos.

NIKERATOS: I just wanted to warn you. [He rushes back in.]

DEMBAS: He's raving mad. Gone rushing back inside again. How shall we deal with this crisis? I don't ever remember being in such a mess. Best tell him frankly what has happened. God! There's the door again.

[Enter Chrysis, running, from Nikeratos's house, carrying the baby.]

CHRYISIS: Help! What'll I do? Where can I be safe? He'll take my baby.

DEMBAS: This way, Chrysis.

CHRYISIS: Who's that?

DEMBAS: Inside my house - run! [She runs towards him, as NIKERATOS rushes out.]

NIKERATOS: Hey you! Where are you going?

DEMBAS: Lord, I'll be fighting a duel, I think, before the day's over. [He stands in Nikeratos's way] What do you want? Who are you chasing?

NIKERATOS: Out of my way, Demcas. Just let me get my hands on the baby, and the women'll talk.

DEMBAS: Never!

NIKERATOS: You'll fight me?

DEMBAS: I will. [To Chrysis] Quick! For God's sake, get inside.

NIKERATOS: Then I'll fight you.

DEMBAS: Run, Chrysis, he's stronger than I am. [She runs into Demcas's house.]

NIKERATOS: You started this. I call witnesses to that.

DEMBAS: And you're chasing a free woman, and trying to hit her.

NIKERATOS: Blackmailer!

DEMBAS: Blackmailer yourself.

NIKERATOS: Bring out my baby.

DEMBAS: That's a laugh. It's mine.

NIKERATOS: It is not.

DEMBAS: Yes, it is.

NIKERATOS [shouting]: Good people all -

DEMBAS: Go on, bawl your head off.

NIKERATOS: I'll go and murder my wife. Nothing else for it.

DEMBAS: That's just as bad. I won't let you. Hey, stop! Where are you going?

560

NIKERATOS: Don't you lay a finger on me.

DEMBAS: Control yourself.

NIKERATOS: You're doing me down, Demcas, that's quite clear.

You know all about it.

DEMBAS: Then ask your questions of me, and don't upset your wife.

NIKERATOS: Your son's hounded me, hasn't he?

DEMBAS: Rubbish. He'll still take the girl, it's not like that at all. [He takes Nikeratos's arm] Take a turn here with me.

NIKERATOS: Take a turn?

DEMBAS: Yes. Get a grip on yourself. Tell me, Nikeratos, have you never heard actors in tragedies telling how Zeus once turned into a stream of gold, flowed through a roof and seduced a girl who'd been locked up?

590

NIKERATOS: So what?

DEMBAS: Perhaps we should be prepared for anything? Think! Does any part of your roof leak?

NIKERATOS: Most of it does. But what's that got to do with it?

DEMBAS: Sometimes Zeus is in a shower of gold, sometimes a shower of rain. Do you understand? This is his doing. How quickly we've found the solution!

NIKERATOS: You're having me on.

DEMBAS: Heavens, no! Wouldn't dream of it. You're surely just as good as Danaë's father. If Zeus honoured her, then perhaps your daughter -

NIKERATOS: Oh, dear, Mischion has made a cake of me.

DEMBAS: Don't worry, he'll marry her. But what happened was divinely inspired, you can be sure of that. I can name you

600

thousands walking the streets of this city today, who are children of gods. And you think your case exceptional! To start with

[pointing] there's Chairephon' - there he is - always dining out and never paying his share. Don't you think *he's* divine?

NIKERATOS: I suppose so. There's no point in hair-splitting.

DEMEAS: Very wise, Nikeratos. Then there's Androcles<sup>8</sup> - so many years in this world, but he hops and skips his way into everything, a real busybody. His hair's black, but even if it were white, he wouldn't die, not even if someone were to cut his throat. He's diving, isn't he? But seriously, pray that this marriage turns out well. Burn your incense, make your offerings. My son will come any minute to fetch his bride.

NIKERATOS: I suppose I must accept this.

DEMEAS: Wise man!

NIKERATOS: But if I'd caught him then -

DEMEAS: Let it be. Remember your blood-pressure. Go and get things ready in the house.

NIKERATOS: All right.

DEMEAS: And I'll do the same in here.

NIKERATOS: You do that.

DEMEAS: You're a smart chap. [NIKERATOS goes in] And thank God I've discovered that my suspicions were quite unfounded. [He goes into his own house.]

FOURTH CHORAL INTERLUDE

ACT FIVE

[Enter MOSCHION, left.]

MOSCHION [addressing audience]: Just now, when I was cleared of the charge quite wrongly laid against me, I was pleased, and thought myself quite lucky. But now that I've had time to collect my wits and think over what happened, I'm furious, absolutely livid, that my father could have thought me capable of such behaviour. If it weren't for the problem about the girl, if there weren't so many obstacles - like my sworn word, my love for her, our long relationship (things that leave me no freedom of choice) - he certainly wouldn't make such a charge against me again, not to my face. No, I'd have been off from the city, out of his way, away to the Foreign Legion<sup>9</sup> to spend my life as a serving soldier there. But no such heroics now, I won't do it, for your sake, Plangon darling. It's impossible, forbidden by Love, the master of my will.

Still, that's no reason why I should ignore the insult, or take it lying down. I'd like to scare him, even if it's only an act, by saying that I'm off abroad. He'll be more careful in future not to treat me so unfairly, if he sees me taking this insult seriously. Ah, here's Parmenon, just the man I want, and just when I want him.

PARMENON [entering right, and not seeing MOSCHION]: God Almighty! What a fool I've been, beneath contempt, really. I'd done nothing wrong, but I panicked and ran away from Master. What had I done to justify that? Let's look at the case dispassionately and in detail:

Item: Young master seduced a respectable girl: Parmenon's presumably not to blame for that

Item: She got pregnant: no fault of Parmenon's.

Item: The baby was brought to our house: Moschion brought him, not I.

Item: One of our household said she was the mother: Parmenon had nothing to do with that. So why run away, you filthy-livered ass? It's ludicrous.

Item: Master threatened to brand me. Now you've got it. It makes not a scrap of difference whether that punishment is deserved or not, in either case it's not very pretty.

MOSCHION: Hey!

PARMENON: Good evening to you.

MOSCHION: Stop this nonsense, and go inside. Hurry up.

PARMENON: What for?

MOSCHION: Bring me a military cloak, and a sword.

PARMENON: A sword? For you?

MOSCHION: And do it now.

PARMENON: But what for?

MOSCHION: Go and do what I tell you, and keep quiet about it.

PARMENON: Why, what's up?

MOSCHION: If I get my hands on a whip —

PARMENON: No, no, I'm on my way.

MOSCHION: Then hurry up about it. [PARMENON goes in] Father'll come out now. Of course, he'll beg me to stay, and for some time he'll beg in vain. That's vital. Then, when I think fit, I'll let myself be persuaded. All that's needed is a bit of plausible acting — which, Heaven knows, I'm not very good at. Uh-uh. Here we go. That's the door, someone's coming out.

670 PARMENON [entering from house]: You're quite out of date, I find, on what's going on here. Your information's inaccurate and your intelligence service poor. You're getting into a tizz and driving yourself to despair, quite unnecessarily.

MOSCHION: Where's the cloak and the sword?

PARMENON: You see, your wedding's under way. [Rapidly] Wine a-mixing, incense a-burning, sacrifice ready, offerings alight with the Fire-god's flame!

MOSCHION: Parmenon, where's the cloak and the sword?

PARMENON: You're the one they're waiting for, for ages now. Why not fetch the bride right away? You're in luck, you've nothing to fear. Cheer up. [In alarm, as MOSCHION advances] What are you after? MOSCHION [slapping PARMENON's face]: Read me a lecture, would you, you outrageous oaf?

PARMENON: Oh, what are you doing, Moschion?

MOSCHION: Go inside this minute, and bring out what I told you to bring.

PARMENON: You've split my lip.

MOSCHION: Still talking back?

PARMENON: I'm going. A fine reward I've won, I must say.

MOSCHION: Get on with it.

PARMENON: They really are celebrating your wedding.

MOSCHION: The same old story still? Tell me something new. [PARMENON goes in] Now he'll come out. [Pause] Ladies and Gentlemen, suppose he doesn't beg me to stay, but loses his

temper and lets me go? That's something I left out of my calculations just now. What do I do then? Perhaps he won't do it — but suppose he does? Anything's possible in this life. A fine fool I'll look if I have to do a U-turn.

[Enter PARMENON from the house, with cloak and sword.]

PARMENON: There! Here's your cloak and sword. They're all yours.

MOSCHION: Give them here. [Casually] Anyone in the house see you?

PARMENON: No one.

MOSCHION: No one at all?

PARMENON: No.

MOSCHION: Oh, blast you!

PARMENON: On your way. You're talking twaddle.

DEMEAS [entering from house]: Where is he then? Tell me that. [Sees

MOSCHION] Good heavens! What's this?

PARMENON [To MOSCHION]: Quick march! Now!

DEMEAS: What's the fancy dress for? What's wrong? Going on your travels, Moschion? Enlighten me.

PARMENON: As you see, he's already on the road and on the march. And now I must say goodbye to the household too. I'll do that now. [He goes in.]

DEMEAS: Moschion, I love you for your anger, and I'm not surprised<sup>10</sup> that you're hurt at being unfairly accused. But consider the target for your bitter anger. I'm your father. I took you when you were a little boy, and I brought you up. If your journey through life has been a pleasant one, I'm the man who made provision for it. So, it was your duty to put up with anything I did, even if it hurt you, and to bear with me as a good son should.

My charges against you were unjustified, I was wrong, I made a mistake, I was out of my mind. All right. But ponder this point. At the cost of hurting others, I still looked carefully after your interests. I tried to keep my suspicion to myself, and did not publish it for the entertainment of our enemies. But now you want to make my mistake public, calling witnesses to testify to my stupidity. That's not fair, Moschion. Don't brood on the one day when I came a cropper, and ignore all the others that went before. There's a lot more I could say, but I'll let it go there. You know very well that sons get no credit for reluctant obedience. Give in gladly, that's the way to do it.

[Enter NIKERATOS from his house, talking back over his shoulder.]

NIKERATOS: Stop nagging me. Everything's been done — baths, ritual, wedding ceremony, the lot. The bridegroom, if he ever

does come, can take his bride away. [Sees the others] Heavens! What's going on here?

DEMBAS: I've no idea, I assure you.

NIKERATOS: Well, you should know. A soldier's cloak! I believe he means to be off.

DEMBAS: That's what he says.

NIKERATOS: Oh, does he? Then he's got to be stopped. He's a seducer, caught in the act, admitting his guilt. I'll arrest you on the spot, boy.

MOSCHION [drawing his sword]: Yes, arrest me, do.

NIKERATOS: You never take me seriously. Put up your sword at once.

DEMBAS: For heaven's sake, Moschion, put it up and don't aggravate him.

MOSCHION [sheathing sword]: There! Let it go. Your entreaties have succeeded, your appeals to me.

NIKERATOS: Appeals? You come here!

MOSCHION: You'll arrest me, perhaps?

DEMBAS: Stop this nonsense! Bring the bride out here.

NIKERATOS: You're sure?

DEMBAS: Quite sure. [NIKERATOS goes into his house.]

MOSCHION: If you'd done this right away, Father, you wouldn't have had to bother with your recent sermon.

NIKERATOS [returning with his daughter]: After you, dear. [Members of the two households assemble] In the face of witnesses, I give you, Moschion, this woman to be your wife, for the procreation of legitimate children. And as dowry I give her all my possessions when I die (which God forbid! May I live for ever).

MOSCHION: I take her, to have, to hold and to cherish.

DEMBAS: All that remains is to fetch the ritual water. Chrysis, send out the women, the water-carrier and the musician. And someone bring us out a torch and garlands, so that we can form a proper procession.

MOSCHION [as these things are brought out]: Here he comes.

DEMBAS: Moschion, put on your garland, and deck yourself like a bridegroom.

MOSCHION: There!

DEMBAS [to audience]: Pretty boys, young men, old men, ladies and gentlemen, all together now – please clap loudly. Dionysus loves applause, and it shows you liked our play. And may Victory, immortal patron of the finest festivals, grant her perpetual favour to this company.

[All leave, right, in procession.]

## The Arbitration [Epitrepontes]

5. Otherwise unknown. Skarphé was a town in northern Greece, near Thermopylae.
6. It was neither polite nor politic to pass without greeting the statue or shrine of a god, especially the god Pan. (See l. 433.)
7. The shrine of Leos, in the Market Place at Athens, was a popular meeting place.
8. It is 'worth about two talents', and it was possible to live (frugally) on an estate worth about three quarters of one talent (pseudo-Demosthenes, 42, 22).
9. A district on the east side of Mount Hymettus.
10. This may be her daughter (see Act Five), or a maid.
11. The text is damaged, but the general sense is clear.
12. A fable of Aesop's (122, Hausrath's edition) tells of the gardener who climbed down a well to rescue his dog, and was bitten for his pains.
13. The *aulos* was a wind-instrument, a pipe (single or double), rather like our oboe.
14. Three badly damaged lines follow, in which Sikon starts to describe the party.

#### The Girl From Samos

1. The text is uncertain, but the point seems to be that Moschion, though adopted, was treated exactly as a son of the house.
2. According to the myth, Adonis was a beautiful boy, loved by Aphrodite, the goddess of love. After his accidental death, he was allowed to spend part of the year on earth, but had to return to the Underworld for the rest. The Athenian festival was held in the spring, and consisted of mourning for death, followed by celebration of rebirth. Quick-growing seeds were planted in trays (the 'gardens'), symbolizing the renewal of life. The festival was an especial favourite of women.
3. The text is uncertain.
4. This contained barley, garland and knife, for the preliminary sacrifice.
5. The general sense of two damaged lines.
6. Amyntor was jealous of his son Phoenix's attentions to his (Amyntor's) mistress, and cursed him and sent him into exile. According to Euripides' *Phoenix*, he also blinded him.
7. A notorious hangar-on of the generation before Menander.
8. Nothing is known of him.
9. Moschion says he will go to Bactria or Caria, the two areas where a mercenary soldier of the time could most easily find employment. Bactria (on the borders of modern USSR and Afghanistan) was in

- turnmoil after Alexander's partial conquest, and Caria (now in south-west Turkey) was fighting off Persian claims to sovereignty.
10. There are a few small gaps in the text of the speech, but the general sense is clear.

#### The Arbitration

1. She was, in fact, a 'harp-girl'. Such girls were high-class courtesans, who provided music (and other amenities) for men's parties.
2. Not *vin ordinative*, but not a really expensive vintage either. Smikrines is very careful with his money.
3. Twin sons of Tyro by the god Poseidon. They were exposed, rescued and finally recognized in time to rescue their mother. Several dramatists, including Sophocles, are known to have treated the story.
4. As, for example, in Menander's own *Rape of the Locks*, in Sophocles' *Tyro* and in Euripides' *Iphigenia in Tauris*.
5. Syros was a slave of Chairestratos, but obviously allowed to live and work on his own, provided that a certain proportion of his earnings was paid to his master. Such an arrangement was not uncommon.
6. Onesimos had told Charisios about his wife's having a child. See l. 903.
7. Literally, to 'carry Athena's basket'. The girls carrying baskets in the Panathenaic procession had to be virgins.
8. A festival of Artemis, celebrated in a village in Attica.
9. The last two lines are damaged, but the general sense is clear.
10. The verse endings are missing, but the general sense is clear.
11. The quotation comes from a lost play of Euripides, which told the (very apposite) story of how Auge was raped by Heracles during a nocturnal festival, bore a child, and recognized the father later by a ring he had left with her.

#### The Rape of the Locks

1. The Greek title means 'the girl who gets her hair cropped'. But I like the neatness and allusiveness of the title suggested by G. B. Shaw to Gilbert Murray (*The Rape of the Locks*, Allen and Unwin, 1942, p. 6).
2. See note 1 on *The Arbitration*.
3. Sosias.
4. The text of this, and of the next ten lines, is doubtful.
5. This may be a reference to a recent historical occurrence. One Alexander was murdered by his troops in 314-313 B. C.