

## MENANDER DYSKOLOS

### ACT I

Pan:

Imagine this is Attica – the scene  
Is Phyle – think the shrine where I’ve now been  
Is owned by the Phylasians who can be  
Rock-farmers here. This shrine’s celebrity  
Is great. The farm upon my right is where  
Lives Knemon – he’s a hermit, he can’t bear  
A single soul! He loathes crowds. Did I say  
“Crowds”? Never, though he’s lived for many a day,  
In all his life has he talked pleasantly  
To anyone; no-one, except for me, 10  
His neighbour, is he first to greet (perforce  
He hails me going past my shrine – of course,  
This irks him then, I know). Nevertheless,  
He took to wife, despite his peevishness,  
A recent widow with a baby son.  
They fought each day, and, when that day was done,  
Much of the night. A girl was born – worse yet!  
Now, once this sad existence could not get  
Worse still, and life was harsh and bitter, she  
Went back to the son that she’d borne previously. 20  
Nearby he owned a little plot of land  
Where he maintained his mother, himself and  
A loyal slave – life was a daily grind.  
The boy was now a stripling, with a mind  
Beyond his years. A man matures when he  
Has found experience. In privacy,  
But for his daughter and an aged crone  
Who served him, the old man lived quite alone,  
Wood-carrying, digging, toiling every day.  
Wife, daughter, neighbours, those folk far away 30  
In Cholargos – he hated all of them.  
The girl was spotless, such an innocent gem  
With not one wanton thought. The Nymphs who share  
My shrine she cherishes with loving care;  
She worships us and thus we treat her well.  
A father and his son around here dwell –  
The father’s rich and farms much property.  
The boy lives in the town and I, when he  
Was hunting for a friend and reached this spot,  
Cast on him a love-spell. Well, that’s the plot. 40  
Now see the details if you wish. Well, you  
Had better! For he’s coming into view,

The lover and his fellow-hunter – they  
Are wrapped up in discussion of their prey.

Chaireas:

What? Did you say you noticed a free girl  
Crowning the Nymphs nearby and in a whirl  
Emerged love-struck?

Sostratos:

Yes, in a whirl.

Chaireas:

Well, well,  
Quick work! Or did you plan to love some belle  
On leaving?

Sostratos:

Oh, you're mocking me. But I  
Feel awful.

Chaireas:

I believe you.

Sostratos:

That is why  
I brought you in on it. I thought that we  
Were friends; I thought of you especially  
As practical.

50

Chaireas:

In matters of the heart,  
I am. Say that a friend feels Cupid's dart  
For a streetwalker. I grab her in a flash  
And take her to him, knock back many a splash,  
Become an arsonist, beyond all reason.  
Don't ask first who she is – just grasp the season.  
Delay increases love most dangerously.  
Quick start – quick ending! Yet if one would be  
A free girl's husband, I'm a different man.  
Her family, funds and character I scan  
And leave my friend a log that's permanent  
To show my expertise.

60

Sostratos:

That's excellent!  
[aside] It won't please me.

Chaireas:  
Now you must from the start  
Tell me the lot.

Sostratos:  
Alright. At sparrow-fart  
I sent Pyrrhias, the man with whom I chase  
The prey –

Chaireas:  
To whom?

Sostratos:  
Her father, face-to-face,  
Or him who heads the household.

Chaireas:  
Bloody hell.  
What *are* you saying?

Sostratos:  
I was wrong. Oh well, 70  
That's not a job for slaves. But when you glow  
With love for someone it's so hard to know  
What's best. I've pondered long on this. "Come straight  
Back home," I told him, "so you can relate  
The facts to me."

Pyrrhias:  
Look out! Let me pass by!  
Out of my way, the lot of you! The guy  
Who's chasing me is mad! Yes, mad, I say!

Sostratos:  
What's this, boy?

Pyrrhias:  
Run!

Sostratos:  
What's up?

Pyrrhias:  
There's rocks and clay  
Being thrown at me. I'm knackered!

Sostratos:

Thrown? Now see,  
Where are you off to, wretch?

Pyrrhias:

[gingerly looking around] Oh well, maybe 80  
He's not still after me?

Sostratos:

I tell you, no.

Pyrrhias:

I thought he was.

Sostratos:

What do you mean?

Pyrrhias:

Let's go

From here, I beg you.

Sostratos:

Where?

Pyrrhias:

Far as we can  
From that door. He's a son of Grief, that man,  
Berserk, a lunatic, the man you sent  
Me to. Oh what a foul predicament!  
I've stubbed and broken every toe.

Sostratos:

Oh dear,  
What's he been up to?

Chaireas:

He's insane, it's clear.  
I'd rather be a corpse. Be on your guard!  
Oh God, I find to breathe is very hard.  
I'm short of breath. I knocked and asked to see  
The master of the house. Then out to me  
There came a sad old crone who pointed out  
The man who on a hill wandered about  
Among his pears, unloading lots of woe  
Upon himself.

Chaireas:

What anger!

Pyrrhias:

Is that so,  
My friend? I stepped upon his land and went  
Towards him, still a long way off but bent  
On being kind and helpful. "I am here,"  
I said, "on business that will give you cheer." 100  
"You heathen, trespass on my property,  
Would you?" he said. "What are you at?" Then he  
Took up a clod of earth and threw it smack  
Into my face.

Chaireas:

Hell!

Pyrrhias:

While I answered back,  
With closed eyes, "Blast you all to hell," he took  
A stake and beat me with it, saying, "Look,  
What business have we two? Do you not know  
The public road?" He bawled fortissimo.

Chaireas:

That farmer's nuts!

Pyrrhias:

He chased me as I flew  
From him some two miles round the hill, then, too, 110  
Down to this copse, and still he threw at me  
Clods, stones and even, in a paucity  
Of anything else, his pears. Barbarian,  
A vile old guy! Go, please.

Sostratos:

Oh, spineless man!

Pyrrhias:

You cannot see the dreadful mess we're in.  
He'll eat us up!

Chaireas:

Perhaps he might have been  
A bit upset just now. It seems to me,

Then Sostratos, we should not try to see  
Him at the moment. It's not hard to guess  
That all predicaments require finesse.

120

Pyrrhias:  
You're right.

Chaireas:  
Poor farmers are hot-headed men.  
Not just him – nearly all of them. Well, then,  
Tomorrow I'll go to him at cockcrow  
(I know the house). But now you'd better go  
Back home and wait for me. It'll be alright.

Pyrrhias:  
Let's do that.

Sostratos:  
Well, it gives him much delight  
To find this loophole. It was clear that he,  
Right from the start, was loath to go with me  
And did not think much of my plan to wed.  
And as for you, well, may you be struck dead  
By all the gods, rogue!

130

Pyrrhias:  
What wrong did I do?

Sostratos:  
Damaged his land and pilfered something, too.

Pyrrhias:  
Pilfered?

Sostratos:  
So someone lashed at you although  
You did no wrong?

Pyrrhias:  
Indeed! I told you so.  
He's here! [to Knemon] I'm off, sir.[to Sostratos] Go on, why don't *you*  
Talk to him?

Sostratos:  
No, I can't – my words won't do  
In any argument. Of such a guy

As that what can one say? He's not, say I,  
Benevolent, by God! What doggedness!  
I'll move a little from the door, I guess.  
That's better. Why, he walks alone and yells.  
He's hardly sane, it seems to me. Hell's bells,  
I'm scared of him, and that's the truth.

140

[Enter Knemon]

Knemon: [to audience]

Perseus

Was such a lucky man, and for a deuce  
Of reason – he had wings so that he met  
No walkers on the earth, and, better yet,  
He owned an instrument with which he could  
Turn into stone those who annoyed him. Would  
I had one now! For nothing would you see  
More often than stone statues. But, stone me,  
Life's not worth living now. People today  
Tread on my land and *talk!* There is no way  
I'd waste my time upon this road. Look, I  
Don't work this portion of my land. And why?  
Those strangers! I've abandoned it. Now, though,  
They follow me up to the hill-tops. Oh,  
The teeming crowds! Good God! Here is one more  
Of them – he's standing right before my door.

150

Sostratos:

Is he about to hit me?

Knemon:[to audience]

Privacy

A man can find nowhere, even if he  
Wishes to hang himself!

160

Sostratos:

What have I done

To anger him?[to Knemon] I'm waiting for someone,  
Dear sir – it's been arranged.

Knemon:

Didn't I say so?

Do you folk think this is a portico  
Or Leos' shrine? You want to meet a man?  
Arrange to meet him here – a splendid plan.

Construct a bench right here, if that's your will,  
Or else a council chamber – better still.  
I've had enough! These ills, it seems to me,  
Are caused by insolence.

Sostratos:

This quandary

Needs more than simple effort – enterprise

Is clearly needed here, as I surmise.

Shall I fetch Getas, father's slave? By all

The gods, I shall. He's such a fireball,

Experienced in many things. You'll see,

He'll shake out his ill temper totally.

In this predicament I think delay

Is wrong. A lot may happen in one day.

Someone's unlatched his door.

170

[Enter girl]

Girl:

Oh, worse and worse!

What shall I do? I'm so distressed. My nurse

Has dropped the bucket in the well while she

Was hauling it.

180

Sostratos:

Oh, dear Dioscuri,

Oh, Father Zeus, Oh, Healer Phoebus, what

Magnetic beauty!

Girl:

“Make the water hot,”

Dad said when he came in.

Sostratos:

I'm trembling!

Look, people!

Girl:

Oh, a fatal wallop

She'll get if he finds out. It will not do

To prattle now. Oh, dearest Nymphs, it's you

Who must supply our water. If there were

Folk holding sacrifices, I'd demur

To interfere –

190



Sostratos:

Well, give the jar to me –  
I'll fill and bring it back immediately.

Girl:

Yes. Please. Be quick.

Sostratos:

A country girl, although  
There's some sophistication in her. Oh,  
You honoured gods, who'll save me now?

Girl:

Who's rapping  
At the door? My dad? I'll get a strapping  
If he finds me outside.

[Daos, Gorgias' slave, emerges from their house. He speaks first to Gorgias' mother inside the house. He hasn't yet seen Sostratos.]

Daos:

In drudgery  
I've slaved for you for an eternity  
Here in the house. My master's working, though,  
Alone upon the farm. Well, I must go  
To him – oh, damn you, Poverty. Why make  
A landing here and stay, without a break,  
So long a time? 200

Sostratos: [giving the girl the jar]  
Here, take it.

Girl:

Bring it here.

Daos:

Now what does *he* want?

Sostratos:

Fare you well, my dear.  
Tend to your father.

[Exit girl]

Lordy, I'm in hell!  
Stop moaning, Sostratos. All will be well.

Daos: [overhearing]  
*What* will be?

Sostratos: [still not seeing Daos]  
Now don't panic. As you planned,  
Fetch Geta. Tell him all that's now at hand,  
And clearly.

Daos:  
Now, what's this chicanery?  
What's going on does not seem right to me. 210  
A young man helping out a girl? Well, well,  
That's wrong. The gods now blast you all to hell,  
Knemon, for all you've done wrong! A naïve  
Young girl, without a guardian, you leave  
Inside alone. This man has probably  
Got wind of this and rushed here, thinking he  
Has had a stroke of luck. I must relay  
This to her brother, and without delay,  
That we can keep her safe. I have to do  
This now - Pan-worshippers are now in view, 220  
Quire drunk. They're coming here. Alright, to mess  
With them would not be tactful now, I guess.

[Exit]

[Chorus]

## ACT II

[Enter Gorgias and Daos]

Gorgias:  
You think this matter's trivial and slight?

Daos:  
Huh?

Gorgias:  
God, you should have seen the fellow right  
Away accosting her and instantly  
Informed him that no-one should ever see  
Him doing that again. Instead you stood  
Aside as though some other person should

Deal with it. Look, you cannot disappear  
And leave a sister's bond-ties, Daos. We're  
Responsible for her. Her father may  
Not wish to fraternize with us. But, hey,  
Let us not imitate his peevishness.  
If she is prey to shame, to me no less  
The shame redounds. Outsiders never know  
Who is to blame – just what occurred. And so  
Let's knock. 230

Daos:  
                    The old man, sir, fills me with fear.  
As soon as he observes me coming here,  
He'll string me up.

Gorgias:  
                    Indeed his quarrelling  
Is quite a nuisance. How can someone bring  
Him to reform? The law is on his side  
Against persuasion. 240

Daos:  
                    Wait! I've just espied  
Him coming back, just as I said. So we  
Have not come here in vain.

Gorgias:  
                    Oh, is that he  
In that smart cloak? The one you mean?

Daos  
                                    Oh, yes.  
A rogue by his expression, I would guess.

[Enter Sostratos, unaware of these two]

Well, Getas wasn't in, I found. My mother  
Was just about to praise some god or other  
With sacrifice – each day she goes throughout  
The district doing this. Well, she's sent out  
Getas to hire a cook. I've said goodbye  
To sacrifice – and once more here am I.  
I think I'll stop these trips and furthermore  
Speak for myself. I'll knock, then, at the door  
To curb more thought. 250

Gorgias:

Young fellow, would you mind  
Hearing some good advice?

Sostratos:

You're very kind –  
I'll listen. Go ahead.

Gorgias:

It seems to me  
To all mankind there is a boundary –  
Winners and losers both -, a climax. They  
Who prosper will continue in this way 260  
While they commit no sin. But if they're led  
By their own riches to do wrong, instead  
Their fortune switches to decline maybe.  
Now if the poor, despite their poverty,  
Keep clear of evil, then they bear their fate  
With honour and will gain a credit rate  
In time and then they may expect a rise  
In assets. What's my point? It's this - be wise –  
If rich, don't think your riches will endure,  
But don't look down on poor folk; show that you're 270  
Deserving of lasting prosperity.

Sostratos:

You think I'm acting inappropriately  
In some way?

Gorgias:

You've decided, I deduce,  
Upon a foul act, thinking to seduce  
An innocent girl or maybe looking for  
A chance to do a deed which fifty score  
Deaths should be punishment.

Sostratos:

Good god!

Gorgias:

Well, see,  
Your leisure should not cause us injury  
(For we've none). A poor man, I'll have you know,  
Who has been harmed is quite the bitterest foe. 280  
At first he's just pathetic – later on  
He takes the suffering he's undergone

As an insult and not just an injury.

Sostratos:

Let me say *something*, please, young man.

Daos: [ignoring this]

Wowee!

You've earned such accolades, sir!

Sostratos:

And you, too,

You blatherer, just listen! I tell you,  
I saw a girl inside the house and fell  
In love. You call this 'crime'? Alright, then, tell  
The world that I'm a criminal. What more  
Is there to say? I'm going through that door,  
Not to her – no, it's her father I would see.  
I'm freeborn, with sufficient currency,  
Prepared to wed her dowryless. I'll add  
An oath to love her always. Look, my lad,  
If I've come here to transgress or to plan  
Intrigue behind your backs, then may this Pan  
And all the Nymphs together render me  
Quite senseless at this house. Now, honestly,  
If you suppose that I am such a man,  
I'm angry.

290

Gorgias:

If I spoke more strongly than

300

I should, don't let it grieve you. You have shown  
Things in a different light, and now I own  
You've won me over. I'm that girl's half-brother –  
I'm no outsider – we have the same mother.

Sostratos:

Then you can help me!

Gorgias:

Help you? How?

Sostratos:

I see

That you're a gent –

Gorgias:

Well, I would rather be

An honest speaker, not send you away  
With empty pretexts. So, then, let me say  
Her father is unique. There's never been  
A man like him – no age has ever seen  
His like. 310

Sostratos:  
The peevish guy? I know the man,  
I think!

Gorgias:  
A terror! There are none who can  
Match him in peevishness. His property  
Is worth two talents and in privacy  
He farms it – there's no help, no hired hand  
From nearby, neighbour, slave. He farms this land  
Alone. His greatest pleasure is to see  
Nobody. There he labours constantly  
Beside his daughter, and to her he'll chat  
And none else – he won't easily do that 320  
To any other. He won't give, it's said,  
The girl away till he may have her wed  
To one of similar temperament.

Sostratos:  
Oh yes?  
Well, that means never.

Gorgias:  
Do not bring distress  
Upon yourself, my friend, for it will be  
Of no avail. Let us, his family  
(That's Fortune's gift!), shoulder this heavy weight.

Sostratos:  
Have you not been in love, young man?

Gorgias:  
My fate  
Forbids it, friend.

Sostratos;  
How's that? What's in the way?

Gorgias:  
With all the woes we deal with day-by-day, 330

We have no time for leisure.

Sostratos:

Now I see  
That's true – you talk of it so gullibly.  
You tell me, "Stop this!" But it does not lie  
Within my power – the god decides, not I.

Gorgias:

Then you don't harm us, merely undergo  
A pointless pain.

Sostratos:

If I acquire her, no!

Gorgias:

You won't. Come with me to him and you'll hear  
That from his lips. The valley is quite near  
In which he farms.

Sostratos:

Oh yes?

Gorgias:

With him I'll bring  
His daughter's marriage up. It is a thing  
I'd like to see myself. At this he'll flay  
Each suitor and vituperate the way  
In which he lives his life. He won't even agree  
To look at you, thanks to the luxury  
In which *you* live.

340

Sostratos:

Is he there now?

Gorgias:

On no,  
But soon he'll take his usual route...

Sostratos:

And so,  
My friend, he'll have her with him, do you say?

Gorgias:

Perhaps, perhaps not.

Sostratos:

Let's be on our way.

I'm ready.

Gorgias:

Oh, you're joking!

Sostratos:

Please help me!

Gorgias:

How?

Sostratos:

How? Let's walk on to the property  
You mentioned.

350

Daos:

What? You'll wear a cloak and stand  
By us while we are working on the land?

Sostratos;

Why not?

Daos:

Because he'll pelt you straightaway  
With clods and call you 'lazy devil'. Hey,  
You'll have to dig with us. Then, should he see  
You doing that, perhaps he will agree  
To hear out even you, thinking you live  
As a poor farmer.

Sostratos:

All the hints you give  
I'll follow. Lead on.

Gorgias:

Why do you compel  
Yourself to undergo such toil?

Sostratos:

Ah well,  
I'd like us to complete as much today  
As we can do and force him in this way  
To slip a disc, then he'll not cause us woe  
Round here.

360



Sostratos:  
A mattock, please.

Daos:  
Take mine and go.  
Meanwhile I'll build a fence. That labour, too,  
Is needed.

Sostratos:  
Give it to me. Thanks to you,  
My life is saved!

Daos: [to Gorgias]  
I'm off, sir. Follow me.

Sostratos:  
This is my fortune – I must presently  
Die fighting or still see the light of day  
By winning her.

Gorgias:  
If you mean what you say, 370  
Good luck to you!

Sostratos:  
Oh, blessed deities!  
You think you've put me off with all your pleas,  
But now I'm twice as eager. For if she  
Was not brought up within a coterie  
Of women, knows no evil, ignorant  
Of fears trumped up for her by nurse or aunt,  
Lives nobly with a rural father who  
Is vice's natural foe, I ask of you:  
How could she not bring me great happiness?  
I swear this thing weighs half a ton, no less. 380  
It's going to kill me first. I must not show  
I'm weak once I've begun this labour, though.

[Enter Sikon]

Sikon:  
This sheep's no normal beauty. Purgatory  
Now take her! If I lift her up, then she  
Bites off a shoot, wolfs down leaves, pulls away.

But if she's lowered to the ground, she'll stay  
Right there. Now here's a paradox for you –  
Here's me, a cook, now put in such a stew  
By hauling her along the road. Look there –  
We happily have reached the altar where  
We'll make our sacrifice. Hail, Pan, to you!  
Getas, my boy, so far behind?

390

[Enter Getas]

Getas:

Too true!

Damn broads have fastened such a load on me  
To bear – four donkeys'-worth!

Sikon:

It's clear to see

A great crowd's coming. What a lot you bear!  
So many cushions!

Getas:

What now?

Sikon:

Rest them there.

Getas:

If of Paianian Pan she dreams, soon we  
Shall trot off *there* to sacrifice, you'll see.

Sikon:

Who's had a dream?

Getas:

Don't bug me, sir.

Sikon:

Still, tell

Me who has had this dream.

Getas:

My mistress.

Sikon:

Hell.

400

What was it?

Getas:  
Ah, you'll kill me. Well, OK,  
She saw Pan –

Sikon:  
This one?

Getas:  
This one, yes.

Sikon:  
Well, say  
What he was doing.

Getas:  
He had Sostratos –

Sikon:  
A fine young man he is.

Getas:  
- son of our boss,  
In chains.

Sikon:  
God!

Getas:  
Telling him to dig the land  
Next door, he gave to him a jerkin and  
A mattock.

Sikon:  
Strange!

Getas:  
And that's the reason we  
Are sacrificing here – that we may see  
A better end to such a frightful thing.

Sikon:  
I see. Well, pick them up again and bring  
Them all inside. Let's put some couches there  
And make all shipshape. For we must beware  
There are no snags when they arrive. So let

Us find a happy outcome. Oh, you wet  
Blanket, knock off that frowning face. Look, I  
Will feed you properly today.

Getas:

That's why  
I've always praised you and your skill. However,  
Despite that, I will never trust you – never!

[Chorus]

### ACT III

Knemon:

Old woman, close the door and see you then  
Let no-one in till I am back again.  
By then the light will be completely gone,  
I should expect.

420

[Enter Pan-worshippers]

Sostratos' mother:

Be quick with you, Plangon.  
The rites should now be over.

Knemon:

Oh good Lord,  
What's all this devilry? A heaving horde!  
To hell with them!

Sostratos' mother:

Play Pan's hymn, Parthenis.  
One shouldn't silently approach him – this  
Is what they say.

Getas:

Well, well, good Lord, you've come,  
Safely arrived at last! The tedium!  
Such a long wait!

Sostratos' mother:

Is all in readiness  
For us?

Getas:

Yes. Well, the sheep at least, I guess.

430

All of this waiting nearly killed her.

Sostratos' mother:

Oh,

Poor thing! She can't wait for *you*! In you go.  
The baskets! Water! Cakes! Prepare the lot.  
[to the last attendant. Or perhaps Knemon]  
What are you staring at, you idiot?

Knemon:

You filthy scum! To hell with you! They stop  
Me doing any work. I can't just pop  
Outside and leave an empty house. They're just  
All pests, these Nymphs – and right next door. I must,  
I think, pull down my house and build anew  
Far, far away. Those devils, how they do 440  
Make sacrifice. Not for the deities  
Do they bring beds and wine-jars here: no, these  
Are for themselves. Their piety means cake  
And incense – from the fire the god can take  
All that! But the gall-bladder and tail-bone  
They offer to the gods, for they alone  
A man can't eat. They scoff the rest. Now see,  
Old woman, get the door immediately.  
I think we'd better work indoors today.

[Enter Getas]

Getas:

The stewing-pot has slipped your mind, you say? 450  
You're in a drunken stupor. What shall we  
Do now? We must disturb, apparently,  
Our next-door neighbours. Servant! God, I swear  
No poorer serving-girls dwell anywhere  
On earth. Huh! Servants! Nothing do they know  
But how to screw – fine servants! – and to throw  
Suspicion off if they are caught. Hey, boy,  
What's wrong here? Servants! No-one's in. Ahoy,  
Someone is dashing to the door, I see.

Knemon:

Why are you hanging round my door? Tell me, 460  
You wretch!

Getas:

Don't bite my head off!

Knemon:  
I will so,  
And eat you up alive.

Getas:  
By heaven, no!

Knemon:  
Was any contract signed between us two.  
You villain?

Getas:  
No, but I have come to you  
Not to collect old debts and I will not  
Serve you a summons – no, a stewing-pot  
Is what I'd like to borrow.

Knemon:  
Really?

Getas:  
Yes.

Knemon:  
Do you believe, you piece of godlessnsss,  
I sacrifice cows and behave like you?

Getas:[aside]  
You'd not stretch to a snail [aloud] Well, sir, adieu. 470  
The women bade me knock and ask. I've done  
That very thing. It seems you don't have one.  
I'll go and tell them. Honoured gods, a grey-  
Haired viper!

[Exit Getas]

Knemon:  
What a load of beasts are they!  
Man-eaters! They come knocking at my door  
As if I were a friend. Let me once more  
Catch someone at it and if you don't see  
Me show him up in this locality,  
Treat me as dirt. The fellow doesn't know  
How lucky he is that I let him go, 480  
Whoever he may be.

[Exit]

[Enter Sikon]

Sikon: [to Getas]

Oh, go to Hell!

Alright, so did he give you shit? Oh, well,

It's your shit-eating attitude maybe.

There are some who lack the ability

To make such a request. But I have hit

Upon a knack – there's a technique to it.

I help so many in this town – I harry

My neighbours constantly, then off I carry

Their pots and pans. To borrow you must lay

Some flattery on a person. Let us say

490

An old man comes to the door. Immediately

I call him 'Dad' or 'Father'. Should it be

A crone, then 'Mother'. If she's forty-odd

Then 'Ma'am'. A young slave's 'Good chap'. Oh, good God,

Be hanged, you lot! The ignorance! You say

Claptrap like "Boy!" and "Servant!". But my way

Is "Come on, dad, I want you".

[Knocks on Knemon's door]

[Knemon appears]

Knemon:

You once more?

Sikon:

What's this?

Knemon:

It seems you're coming to my door

Purely to needle me. Did you not hear

Me tell you not to? Crone, the strap!

Sikon:

Oh dear!

500

Let go!

Knemon:

Let go?

Sikon:

Yes. God!

[Sikon breaks free and flees]

Knemon:

Come back!

Sikon:

Oh, may

Poseidon send you –

Knemon:

Still gabbing away?

Sikon:

I came to cadge a skillet, sir, from you.

Knemon:

I do not have a skillet, man, nor do

I have a cleaver, salt, no vinegar –

Nothing! I told my neighbours to keep far  
Away from me.

Sikon:

You've not told me, though!

Knemon:

Well,

I'm telling you now.

Sikon:

Worse luck! Could you not tell

Me where one could get one?

Knemon:

Did I not say?

Will you still babble on at me?

Sikon:

Good day.

510

Knemon:

I'll have 'Good day' from nobody.

Sikon:



Alright,

Bad day, then.

Knemon:

Oh the insufferable plight

I'm in.

[Exit Knemon]

Sikon:

He's ploughed me nicely! Some finesse  
Is vital to a plea. Oh well, I guess  
I'll try another door. But if they cuff  
So readily round here, it could be tough.  
Should I instead roast all this meat, then? Aye,  
I will. I've got a casserole. Goodbye  
To Phyle! I will use what's here.

[Exit]

[Enter Sostratos]

Sostratos:

If you

Are short of troubles, hunt in Phyle, do. 520

I'm in such pain – hips, back, neck, all of me

In short. I tore into it instantly,

A young buck. Yes, the mattock I would swing

Up high, just like a labourer, and bring

It crashing down deep in the earth. I'd pound

Away – but not for long. Then I'd glance round

To see when the old man would come to me,

Bringing the girl. I then felt – furtively

At first – my hips, and then, as time went by –

Hour after hour of toil – I felt that I 530

Was bending backward. I was quietly

Stiffening up. And no-one came, and I was so

Burned by the sun, and Gorgias saw me go

Just slightly up, and then down, like those beams

That draw your water. "Well, it hardly seems

He'll come, now, lad," he said. Immediately.

I said, "What, then, shall we do now?: Should we

Wait till tomorrow and call it a day?"

To spell our digging, Daos came our way.

This was our first assault. Now here am I,

Though by the gods I cannot tell you why: 540

The task itself has brought me to this spot.

[Enter Getas]

Getas:  
What's up now, damn you? Do you think I've got  
Full sixty hands? I've made the charcoal glow  
For you. I fetch and carry to and fro,  
Wash, cut the entrails up, knead cakes. It's I  
Who carry round the pots, right here, close by  
Pan's statue, and get blinded by the smoke.  
It seems to me that you have brought a moke  
To serve the feast.

Sostratos:  
Boy! Getas!

Getas:  
Who wants me?

Sostratos:  
I do.

Getas:  
Well, who are you?

Sostratos:  
Man, can't you see? 550

Getas:  
Ah, master, yes.

Sostratos:  
What are you doing here?

Getas:  
The sacrifice is finished now and we're  
Preparing lunch.

Sostratos:  
Is Mother here?

Getas:  
Oh, she  
Has long been here.

Sostratos:

And Father, too?

Getas:

Well, we

Expect his presence. Come in.

Sostratos:

Once I've run

A little errand. Well, these rites, in one

Respect, have been auspicious – I'll invite

This lad and his attendant, leaving right

This minute. For if in our sacrifice

They have a share, they're likely to be twice 560

As useful in our wedding plans.

Getas:

Stop there!

You're bringing folks to lunch? Well, I don't care

If you invite three thousand. For long now

I've known that I'll not taste a morsel. How

Could I? Round them all up. Look, here have I

Prepared a sheep so pleasing to the eye.

But oh, these wenches – charming tough they be –

Will they give me the tiniest moiety?

No, not a grain of bitter salt!

Sostratos:

Ah well,

Today all will be good, boy, I foretell. 570

I always praise you, Pan, whenever I pass

Your shrine, and I'll be generous.

[Enter Simche, Knemon's slave]

Simiche:

Alas!

Alas! Alas!

Getas:

Oh, go to hell. I spot

The old man's crone who's just come outside.

Simiche:

What

Will happen to me? I had hoped to fish  
The bucket from the well – it was my wish  
For Knemon to be out of sight. Some hope!  
I tied the mattock to a piece of rope  
So rotten that it broke immediately.

Getas:  
That's good.

Simiche:  
And now I've dropped into the well  
Mattock *and* bucket.

Getas:  
Women, I can tell  
You what to do – jump in yourself!

Simiche:  
As it  
Transpired, my master wished to shift some shit 580  
That littered all the yard. He ran about  
Forever, seeking it with many a shout –  
He's rattling the latch!

[Enter Knemon]

Getas:  
Quick, run away,  
Poor thing. He'll kill you, ancient one. No, stay,  
Stand up to him.

Knemon:  
Right, where's the felon now?

Simiche:  
I dropped it in by accident somehow,  
Master.

Knemon:  
Get in!

Simiche:  
What will you do?

Knemon:  
Let *you*

Down on that very rope.

Simiche:

Oh dear me, no!

Knemon:

Yes, best use for it, if it's really so  
Rotten and frayed.

590

Simiche:

To Daos I must shout

Next door.

Knemon:

Oh will you? You have cleared me out!  
You know that. Quick, get in! This loneliness  
Is killing me like no-one else. I guess  
I'll jump into the well. What more is there  
To do?

Getas:

A hook and rope, then, we'll prepare  
For you.

Knemon:

Goddamn you, sir, if ever you  
Say anything to me.

Getas:

And rightly, too.

He's leapt back in again. Poor devil, he  
Leads such a dreadful life. He perfectly  
Depicts an Attic farmer, waging war  
On rocks that carry thyme and sage, and for  
His toil reaps aches and pains, but gets no gain.  
But here's my master coming back again  
With all his guests. They're peons from nearby.  
How did he get to know these folks and why  
Does he now bring them here?

600

[Enter Sostratos, Gorgias and Daos]

Sostratos:

I won't allow

You to refuse.

Gorgias:

Thank you, but no.

Sostratos:

Come now,  
Who ever spurns a lunch explicitly  
After an offering's solemnity  
Made by a friend? You know well that I've been  
A long-time pal, even before we'd seen  
Each other. Daos, take these tools inside,  
Then come yourself.

610

Gorgias:

What? I could not abide  
Leaving my mother home alone. Please see  
To all her needs. I'll be back presently.

[Exeunt]

[Chorus]

#### ACT IV

[Enter Simiche]

Simiche:

Help! Help! Oh dear! Oh dear!

[Enter Sikon]

Sikon:

Lord Heracles!  
Do give us your consent, you deities,  
To finish our libations. Go to Hell!  
Insulting us! And clouting us as well!  
Oh what a weird household!

620

Simiche:

My master's at  
The bottom of the well.

Sikon:

What? How did that  
Occur?

Simiche:

How? Well, he went off to fish out  
The mattock and the bucket. While about  
This business, at the top he slipped and fell.

Sikon:  
That crabby old man?

Simiche:  
Yes, that's him.

Sikon:  
Ah well,  
Justice is served, by God. It's up to you,  
My dear old woman, now.

Simiche:  
What should I do?

Sikon:  
Well, take a mortar, rock or some such thing  
And then from up above the well just fling  
It down on him. 630

Simiche:  
Oh, go down, please, good sir.

Sikon:  
Poseidon! Like the fable's gardener,  
Fighting the dog! No way!

Simiche:  
Oh Gorgias,  
Where *are* you?

[Enter Gorgia]

Gorgias:  
Where am I? What's up, old lass?

Simiche:  
What's up? I told you – Master's in the well.

Gorgias:  
Hey, Sostratos, come out.

Simiche:

Lead on pell-mell!

[Exeunt Simiche and Gorgias]

Sikon:

By Dionysus, gods exist. You'll not  
Lend me for a sacrifice a stewing-pot,  
You crook. No, you are greedy. Down you go  
Into the well and drink its contents so 640  
No-one may share the water. Rightfully  
The Nymphs have wreaked revenge on him for me.  
Nobody harms a cook and gets away  
Scot-free. Our art's a sacred one, I'd say.  
Do what you like to *waiters*! What? Has he  
Passed on? A girl is crying piteously,  
"Oh dearest Daddy!" Oh, he lives? The sight!  
Can you imagine it? Well, serves him right.  
Aquivering and ashivering! How fine  
To see that, by Apollo (here's his shrine). 650  
Pour your libations, ladies. Do your bit.  
Pray that the rescuers will bungle it  
And leave the wretch a cripple. Then he'll be  
The quietest man in the vicinity  
To all the sacrificers and to Pan.  
It's crucial for me, too, should any man  
Wish to employ me.

Sostratos:

By Asclepius,  
Demeter and the gods who govern us,  
I've never, gentlemen – no, never - found  
One choose a better time for getting drowned – 660  
Well, almost! Paradise! Gorgias, you see,  
Jumped in the well. His daughter, though, and I  
Did nothing. Well, what *could* we do? She'd cry  
And tear her hair and beat her breast a lot.  
I, nanny-like, stood like an idiot!  
I begged her to desist – I asked and asked,  
While in that classic masterpiece I basked.  
About the injured man down there I had  
No care – but dragging him? Well, that was bad, 670  
Most arduous. I was close to manslaughter.  
You see, the rope, while gazing at his daughter,  
I dropped – about three times. Gorgias, though –  
He was no ordinary Atlas, so  
He held on, managing to pull him clear



At last. When he emerged, I came out here.  
I barely stopped myself – I nearly went  
To kiss the girl, such was my ravishment.  
I am prepared – the latch is rattling.

[Enter Gorgias and Knemon]

What a strange sight!

Gorgias:

Do you want anything,

680

Knemon? Tell me.

Knemon:

I'm sick. What need I say?

Gorgias:

Cheer up.

Knemon:

I have. No longer from this day

Shall I harass you.

Gorgias:

See how isolation

Can cause distress. Just now you gained salvation

Just by a whisker. At your age you should

Live under someone's care.

Knemon:

I don't feel good,

I know. But call your mother, Gorgias..

Gorgias:

Yes,

At once. Catastrophes alone, I guess,

Can educate us.

Knemon:

Darling daughter, can

You help me to stand up?

Sostratos:

The lucky man!

690

Knemon:

Why stand there, wretch? I chose this peevishness,  
 You cannot change me – therefore acquiesce.  
 Perhaps I made one error, thinking I  
 Was self-sufficient and that to get by  
 I needed no-one. Ah, but now I see  
 Death can be swift and happen suddenly.  
 My view was flawed. Alas, how far I'd gone  
 Quite off the rails, for I had thought upon  
 The lives of men and their preoccupation  
 With gain. I never dreamed consideration 700  
 Of man for man existed, and that stayed  
 My judgment. There was just one man who made  
 Me change my mind – that's Gorgias, because  
 He did a truly noble deed. I was  
 The man who wouldn't let him come this way,  
 Who never helped him, never said "Good-day"  
 Or spoke a friendly word to him. And yet  
 He saved my life. Another'd say, I'll bet  
 (And justly), "You'll not let me come, therefore  
 I won't. You've been no help to me. No more 710  
 Shall I be, then, to you." What is it, lad?  
 If I should die now (and I'm feeling bad,  
 So well I may) or if I live, you'll be  
 My own adopted son. My property  
 Treat as your own. I'll make you guardian  
 Of my own daughter. Find for her a man.  
 For if I should recover, even then  
 I'd not be fit to do that. Of all men  
 There is not one will ever satisfy me.  
 If I should live, I pray you, let me be 720  
 To live just as I choose. Take on the rest  
 And manage my estate. Thank God you're blessed  
 With sense. It's natural that you should care  
 For your own sister. Equal out the share  
 Of all my goods – give half to her that she  
 May offer an endowment, half to me  
 And Mother. Daughter, lay me down. I hold  
 That one should tell no more than needs be told.  
 But know this, child – for there's a thing or two  
 Of me and my ways I would tell to you - 730  
 If everyone behaved like me, there'd be  
 No law-courts, prisons, no hostility.  
 We would be satisfied for there'd be ample  
 For all. [to the audience] And yet, perhaps, you'd rather sample  
 The modern world. Well, do so. You'll be freed  
 Of this cantankerous mean old man.

Gorgias:

Indeed

All that I do accept. If you agree,  
However, you and I must hastily  
Find for your child a husband.

Knemon:

I've voiced, boy,

My thoughts on this. For god's sake, don't annoy  
Me now.

740

Gorgias:

There's someone wants a tête-à-tête  
With you -

Knemon:

God, no!

Gorgias:

- to see if you will let  
Him have your daughter's hand.

Knemon:

I do not care

About that.

Gorgias:

But he helped to save you.

Knemon:

Where

Is he?

Gorgias:

Right there.

Knemon:

Come here, you. [to Gorgias]. Oh, he's tanned.  
Is he a farmer?

Gorgias:

Yes, he is, sir, and  
He's not soft, sauntering the day away.

Knemon:

A match, then. Wheel me in.

Gorgieas:

Just as you say.

[to Simiche or, perhaps, Myrrhine]

See to his needs.

[Exit Knemon].

Sostratos:

Your sister, then, to me

You must betroth.

Gorgias:

Your father, though, must be

750

The one to arbitrate.

Sostratos:

He won't oppose

My will.

Gorgias:

Then I'll betroth her, I suppose,

To you. Gods be my witness, to your care

I give you her as wife. That's right and fair.

In this affair you've proved to be

Not tight-lipped – no, you've shown sincerity,

Prepared to take up any kind of work

To gain the girl. You never tried to shirk,

Though loving luxury, to take in hand

A mattock and to toil upon the land

760

Quite willingly. A man who is genteel

Like you shows best when he's inclined to deal

With poor folk as his peers. Men such as he

Will tolerate with equanimity

A change in fortune. Of your staunch virtue

You've given proof enough. Just see that you

Remain yourself.

Sostratos:

I'll keep on bettering

Myself. Yet it's perhaps a vulgar thing

To praise oneself. My father's here – on cue!

Gorgias:

Kallipides? Is her father to you?

770

Sostratos:  
Indeed yes.

Gorgias:  
Wealthy man!

Sostratos:  
Deservedly.  
He's unmatched as a farmer.

[Enter Kallipides]

Kallipides:  
Seems to me  
I've missed the meal. The sheep has long ago  
Been eaten. They're back at the homestead.

Gorgias:  
O,  
He sure looks ravenous. Are we to spill  
The beans now?

Sostratos:  
Let him eat first. Then he will  
Be more amenable.

Kallipides: [noticing Sostratos for the first time]  
O Sostratos,  
What's this? Is luncheon finished?

Sostratos:  
Yes. No loss  
To you, though – we have saved your share. Go through.

Kallipides:  
I'm on my way.

Gorgias: [to Sostratos]  
Go in yourself, so you  
May chat alone with him. 780

Sostratos:  
Is it your plan  
To wait yourself inside the house?

Gorgias:

Yes, man.

O do not plan to go outside at all.

Sostratos:

I'll wait a little, then on you I'll call.

[Exeunt]

[Chorus]

## ACT V

[Enter Sostratos and Kallipides]

Sostratos:

All of my hopes and wishes, dad, indeed  
You haven't met.

Kallipides:

What? Have I not agreed?

I want – it's vital, son – for you to wed  
The girl you love.

Sostratos:

That's not enough.

Kallipides:

I've said

What needs be said, by God. Stability  
Is added to a bridegroom's lot if he  
Is young and loves the maid.

790

Sostratos:

So I can wed

The young man's sister – that is what you said? –  
Thinking him worthy. How can you say that  
I may not offer, as a tit-for-tat,  
Him my own sister?

Kallipides:

Rotten plan! I've no

Desire to acquire, all at one go,  
Two paupers-in-law. One is quite enough.

Sostratos:

Your theme is lucre – that’s unstable stuff.  
If you *know* it will stay with you forever,  
Then keep a constant guard on it and never  
Share it with anyone. But since you’re not  
The master of it all and what you’ve got  
Is leased by fortune, why begrudge a share  
With others, dad? Fortune may turn elsewhere  
And give it to someone who is unfit.  
So while, I say, you have control of it,  
Be generous, help everyone and act  
As nobly as you can. Such deeds, in fact,  
Are timeless. Should you stumble, there will come  
A recompense in kind. You’ll find a chum  
Who’s visible and trustworthy is worth  
Far more than riches buried in the earth.

800  
810

Kallipides:  
You know the situation, son. The cash  
That I’ve put by me I will never stash  
To be interred with me. How could I? No,  
It’s yours. You’ve proved your man a true friend, so  
You’d clinch this friendship? Well, then go ahead.  
Good luck to you. No sermons need be said.  
Provide, donate, share. I’ve been wholly swayed.

Sostratos:  
You’re happy?

Kallipides:  
Totally. Don’t be dismayed.

820

Sostratos:  
Then I’ll call Gorgias.

[Enter Gorgias]

Gorgias:  
My friend, I heard  
All that right from the start – yes, every word –  
As I came out of doors. I will concede  
That you’re a true friend, Sostratos; indeed  
I like you very much. But I’ll not try  
To take on what’s too big for me. Hell, I  
Would be unable even if I had  
The urge to do so.

Sostratos:

I don't get you, lad.

Gorgias:

You have my sister as your wife, and yet  
To take yours – thanks, but...

Sostratos:

But?

Gorgias:

I would not get 830  
A pampered life at other folks' expense,  
But only at my own.

Sostratos:

That makes no sense.  
Do you not think you're worthy, Gorgias,  
Of marrying her?

Gorgias:

I'm worthy of the lass,  
I think, but not of such a quantity  
When I have got so little.

Kallipides:

Gracious me,  
Your pride unhinges you.

Gorgias:

How's that?

Kallipides:

Although 840  
You're poor, you wish to act well off. Forgo  
This stance. You have seen *me* by logic swayed.  
Well, now you have convinced me. I have made  
A double error. He who's both brain-dead  
And poor can't hope for refuge.

Sostratos:

Ah, well said.  
All that remains for us now is to plight  
Our troths. I give my daughter that you might  
Spawn lawful children, lad, and happily  
I'll add three talents.



Gorgias:  
                                    And there'll come from me  
A talent for the other girl.

Kallipides:  
                                    That so?  
Don't name too high a price.

Gorgias:  
                                    I've got it, though.

Kallipides:  
It's thanks to you the farm is flourishing.  
Your mother and your sister you must bring  
To join our womenfolk. 850

Gorgias:  
                                    I will. Quite right.

Sostratos:  
Let's have a party there this very night.  
Tomorrow they'll be wed. Bring the old man,  
Too, Gorgias, For probably he can  
Find better service there.

Gorgias:  
                                    He'll not agree.

Sostratos:  
Persuade him.

Gorgias:  
                                    If I can.

Sostratos:  
                                    Now, father, *we*  
Should have a great booze-up. The ladies, too,  
Should make a night of it.

Kallipides:  
                                    I think that you  
Have got it wrong way round. For I belie  
The girls will do the drinking, which will leave  
The night work for *us*. I will go prepare  
The house. 860

Sostratos:

Yes. Do. Wise men should not despair  
Of any project. You'll take any prize  
With care and work. Right here before your eyes  
Is an example – no-one could foresee  
I'd gain this girl.

Gorgias:

Come on, now, snappily.

Sostratos:

Mother, receive this woman. Is Knemon  
Not here yet?

Gorgias:

Well, he wished to be alone  
So begged me to bring Simiche.

Sostratos:

He's so

Intractable.

Gorgias:

He is.

Sostratos:

Well, let him go.

870

Let us be off.

Gorgias:

It makes me shy to be  
In women's presence.

Sostratos:

Tosh! They're family,  
Remember? Off you go.

[Exeunt to shrine]

[Enter Simiche]

Simiche:

I'm going, too,  
By Artemis. I'm sorry, then, that you  
Just lie there all alone. When they would take

You to the shrine. you said “No!” You will make  
Your troubles worse! May all be well!

[Exit to shrine]

[Enter Getas]

Getas:

I’ll see

How Knemon is.

[A piper pipes]

Why pipe, you misery,  
At me? I have no leisure for you yet.  
I’m sent to see the patient. Silence!

Simiche:

Let

880

Somebody else sit with him – for I  
Would speak to mistress, chat and say goodbye  
Before she leaves.

Getas:

Good thinking. Off you go.

I’ll look in on the patient for you.

[Exit Simiche]

Oh,

I’ve long been wanting this. But how? Hey, cook,  
Hey, Sikon, come out here and listen. Look,  
What sport is here!

Sikon:

You calling me?

Getas:

I am.

Would you exact your vengeance for the jam - ?

Sikon:

I? Jammed? Well, bugger you, you’re talking crap.

Getas:

The peevish rogue’s alone, taking a nap.

890

Sikon:  
How is he?

Getas:  
Not quite critical.

Sikon:  
Could he  
Stand up and clout us?

Getas:  
No. It seems to me  
He cannot stand alone.

Sikon:  
A charming thought!  
I'll ask him for something. He'll be distraught.

Getas:  
Here's an idea! We'll drag him out and dump  
Him on the ground and then we'll go and thump  
Upon his door and ask for things and drive  
Him up the wall. Fun, yes?

Sikon:  
Ah yes, but I've  
A fear of Gorgias, 'cos he will pound  
Us if he grabs us.

Getas:  
There is such a sound  
Of chattering in there, and drinking, too,  
That nobody will notice. Through and through  
He must be civilized. We're kin now – he  
Is now a member of our family.  
The man's behaviour will be hard to bear  
If he keeps on like this.

900

Sikon:  
That's true.

Getas:  
Take care  
To be protected when you bring him here.  
Go on.

Sikon:

Please wait a bit. You will not clear  
Off and desert me? And, for heaven's sake,  
Don't make a noise.

Getas:

For *earth's* sake, do I make  
A noise? No! Move him to the right.

910

Sikon:

O.K.

Getas:

Our moment has arrived. Well then, just lay  
Him here. Boy! Hey there! Gallant boys! Yoo hoo!

Knemon:

Oh, I'm a dead man!

Getas:

Gallant boys!

Knemon:

I say

Again – I am a dead man!

Getas:

Who's this? Hey,  
Do you belong to this house?

Knemon:

Obviously.

What do you want?

Getas:

I want you to lend me  
Some stewing-pans and basins.

Knemon:

Which of you  
Will place me upright?

Getas:

You've got one, it's true.  
Twelve tables, seven stands! To those in there

920

Pass my request, boys. I've no time to spare.

Knemon:  
I haven't any.

Getas:  
No?

Knemon:  
Repeatedly  
You've heard me say so.

Getas:  
Well, I'm off.

Knemon:  
Dear me,  
The misery! However did I get  
Out here? Who is to blame that I've been set  
Before my door?

Sikon:  
Be off, then! Ladies! Men!  
Boy! Boys! Hey, porter!

Knemon:  
Are you crazy, then?

You'll smash my door to pieces!

Sikon:  
Would you care  
To loan to us nine rugs, then?

Knemon:  
And from where?? 930

Sikon:  
A hundred-foot-long drape of foreign knot?

Knemon:  
Oh for a strap! Old woman! Bugger it,  
Where *is* the crone?

Sikon:  
Well, should I make my plea

At someone else's door?

Knemnon:

Leave! Simiche!

Old woman! May the gods blast you to Hell

For all this grief. [as Sikon retreats and Getas darts forward] And what do *you* want?

Getas:

Well,

A big bronze wine-bowl.

Knemon:

Who will help me stand?

Sikon:

You *have* a curtain, dad.

Knemon:

I don't.

Getas:

What? And

No wine-bowl either?

Knemon:

I'll kill Simiche.

Sikon:

Sit still, and not one single sound. You flee 940

From crowds, hate women, and you would not let

Us take you to the sacrifice. Well, set

Yourself to bear all this. There's no-one by

To help you. Gnash your teeth right here, while I

Tell you of all the other things. Well, when

The ladies of your party came here, then

Your wife and child at the initial meeting

Were warmly hugged and hands were clasped in greeting.

They acted sweetly. I, not far away,

Was making plans to host a small soirée 950

For all the men here. Do you hear? Don't sleep.

Getas:

No!

Knemon:

God!

Sikon:

What? Don't you want to be here? Keep  
Your mind on what's to come. Now all around  
The place was fairly humming. On the ground  
I fixed a straw couch, laid the tables, too –  
It was my rightful task. You hear me, you?  
I *am* a cook, remember.

Getas: [aside, referring to Sikon]  
Queer!

Sikon:

One man  
Now poured by hand into a dimpled can  
A hoary, ancient vintage, which he merged  
With naiad springs and in a circle urged 960  
A pledge to all the men; the distaff side  
Was pledged by someone else – just like the tide  
That irrigates the sand! A youthful maid  
Who'd drunk too much, turning her bloom to shade,  
Began to dance, with rhythm quivering,  
Demurely, hesitant and trembling,  
A second girl joined hands with her, then she  
Joined in the dance.

Getas: [to Knemon]  
Such a calamity  
You've suffered – dance now, we will help you stand.

Knemon:  
You bastards, what is it you now demand? 970

Getas:  
Just try it. We will help you. Clumsy!

Knemon:  
No,  
By God!

Getas:  
Well, let us take you in now.

Knemon:  
Oh,  
What shall I do?



Getas:

Dance.

Knemon:

Take me in. I guess

It's best to face the music in there.

Getas:

Yes.

You're showing sense now. We have won! Hurray!

Donax, Sikon and Syrus, come, away

With him. [to Knemon] And *you* – watch out! If we should see

You causing trouble in the future, we

Will treat you less than gently, trust me, man.

A torch and garlands, someone!

Sikon:

Here, you can

980

Take this.

Getas:

Well, you've enjoyed our victory

With this curmudgeon? Then, please, generously,

Lads, youths and men, give us your accolade

In kind applause. May Victory, that maid

Of noble line, who revels in her laughter,

Attend us with her favour ever after.

