

Pseudolus, Miles

Rome of a rascal! (HE is about to send his sword into PSEUDOLUS, who whirls around. The sword jabs SOLDIER in the rear. SOLDIER jumps away, rubbing sore spot. MILES advances on PSEUDOLUS.) You . . .

START

PSEUDOLUS. Sir! (MILES stalks him.) The girl must be near at hand. If you kill me you deprive yourself of seeing a face so fair, a heart so pure, a body so undulating . . . (MILES lowers his sword. PSEUDOLUS, sensing success, presses on.) She is magnificence personified! If you had been born a woman, you would have been she!

MILES. As magnificent as that?

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

MILES. You are?

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

MILES. You shall look for her!

PSEUDOLUS. Me? With this bad leg? (Limps horribly.)

MILES. With that bad leg!

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

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

HYSTERIUM. No!

MILES. No?!

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

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

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

MILES. Be brief.

SIDE ←

PSEUDOLUS. Yes, sir. Come here, eunuch. (Pulls HYSTERIUM aside.) Hysterium, this is what you must do. Hide the girl, up on the roof.

HYSTERIUM. Why?

PSEUDOLUS. Why not? Go.

(HYSTERIUM exits into SENEX'S house.)

PSEUDOLUS. My eunuch is making sure the house is fit to receive so illustrious a visitor.

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

ERRONIUS. The second time around! (Exits.)

MILES. Lycus!

PSEUDOLUS. Yes, sir! (Calls.) Ready?

HYSTERIUM. (From inside SENEX'S house.) Ready!

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

(COURTESANS exit into SENEX'S house.)

MILES. You have but one hour. Men, you are to hound his every step. (Exits into SENEX'S house. PSEUDOLUS circles stage, followed by SOLDIERS, THEY exit. SENEX appears in window of ERRONIUS' house.)

SENEX. Hysterium!

(HYSTERIUM re-enters.)

HYSTERIUM. Yes, sir!

SENEX. Tell the little maid I am almost ready.

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