CASÍNA
ARGUMENT OF THE PLAY

Two slaves are bent on marrying a slave girl in the same family as themselves. One is egged on by his old master, the other by his master's son. An appeal to the lots favours the old man, but he is tricked out of his triumph. He has palmed off upon him, in place of the girl, a graceless rogue of a slave who gives the head of the household a drubbing, and his bailiff, too. Casina proves to be a freeborn Athenian and becomes the young man's wife.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

OLYMPIO, a slave, bailiff of Lysidamus.
CHALINUS, slave of Lysidamus, orderly to his son.
CLEOSTRATA, wife of Lysidamus.
PARDALISCA, her maid.
MYRRHINA, wife of Alcesimus.
LYSIDAMUS, an old gentleman of Athens.
ALCESIMUS, his friend.
A COOK.
Scene:—Athens. A street, in which are the houses of Lysidamus and Alcæsimus.

PROLOGUE

Greetings, ye worthiest of spectators, who hold good faith in the highest honour, and, Good Faith, you. If I have told the truth, give me a clear sign of it, so that I may know from the very outset that you are fair-minded toward me. (waits hopefully for applause)

Those be wise men, in my opinion, who take old wine and those who love to see old plays. Yes, liking as you do the works and words of ancient days, you should like old plays better than all others; for, really, the new comedies that are produced nowadays are much more worthless than our new coins.

We actors, having learned from popular rumour that it is the plays of Plautus you keenly desire, present an ancient comedy of his which has already been approved by you older men. To the younger, I am sure, it is unfamiliar; but it shall be our earnest endeavour to make them familiar with it. This play, when it was first presented, surpassed all others. In that era lived the garland of poets who have now departed to the common bourne. Yet absent though they be, they profit us as though present.

Now let me earnestly entreat you all to accord our company your kind attention. Away with care and thought of debts; let no man dread a dun! The games are on; a game is on (chuckling)
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for the bankers, too; all is tranquil, the forum sunk in halcyon repose. The bankers are calculating fellows—when they press a man it is no (chuckling again) game; after the games, however, they repay no man. If your ears be empty, turn your attention hither; I wish to give you the name of our comedy. Its Greek title is CLERUMENOE, in Latin, SORTIENTES. Diphilus wrote the play in Greek, and later Plautus, he of the barking\(^1\) name, gave us a fresh version of it in Latin.

An old gentleman, married, lives here; he has a son, and this son lives in that house there (pointing to Lysidamus's house), together with his father. The old gentleman has a certain slave, who is lying in sickness—no, no, heavens, no! lying in bed, to be quite precise. This slave—it was sixteen years ago, though, when just at break of day he caught sight of a baby girl being abandoned. Up he goes at once to the woman who was abandoning the child and begs her to let him have it; he prevails upon her and takes it off. He carried it straight home, gave it to his mistress, and begged her to care for it, to bring it up. She did so, brought it up with great pains, pretty much the same as if it were her own daughter.

After this foundling had arrived at such an age as to make her attractive to men, the old man here (pointing to Lysidamus's house) fell madly in love with her, and, on the other hand, so did his son. And now the pair of them, father and son, are mustering their opposing legions, each without

\(^1\) According to Paulus, dogs with broad, flapping ears were called plauti.
the other's knowledge. The father has commissioned his bailiff to ask the girl in marriage; he hopes that if the bailiff does get her, he himself will have waiting for him, unbeknown to his wife, a night watchman's berth away from home. The son, for his part, has commissioned his orderly to ask her in marriage; he knows that if the orderly should obtain her, he himself will have the object of his affections inside his own stall. The old man's spouse has discovered that her husband is engaged in a love affair, and therefore espouses her son's cause. The father, however, discovering his son to be in love with that same girl and in his way, has sent the young fellow abroad; but absent though he is, he still has the support of his canny mother. He will not return to the city today—do not expect him—during the course of this comedy. Plautus would not have it so—he broke down a bridge that lay on the youth's route.

There are some here who, I suppose, are now saying to each other: "What is all this, for the love of heaven? A slave wedding? Slaves to take wives or propose marriage? Something new, this—something that happens nowhere on earth!" But I say it does happen in Greece and at Carthage, and here in our own country in Apulia; it is the regular thing there to make more of slaves' weddings than even of citizens'. If this is not so, let someone bet me a bowl of wine and honey if he likes—provided the referee be a Carthaginian, yes, or a Greek, or an Apulian, for all I care. (pauses) Well now? No takers? I understand: no one is thirsty.

To return to that foundlingess: this girl whom the slaves are making every effort to marry will
prove to be both chaste and freeborn, the daughter of an Athenian citizen, and not a bit of immodesty will she be guilty of—I mean, of course, not in this comedy. But later, though, after the play is done, good Lord! let someone give her money, and I have a suspicion she will plunge into matrimony without waiting for witnesses. (about to go)

Enough. Fare ye well, and prosper and win the victory, through very valour, as heretofore.
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ACT I

ENTER Olympio from Lysidamus's house, followed by Chalinus.

Ol. (striding angrily back and forth, Chalinus always at his heels) Can't I be allowed to talk and think over my own affairs by myself, as I want, without you spying on me? What the devil are you following me for?

Chal. (cheerfully) Because I have made up my mind to follow you, follow you always, the same as your shadow, wherever you go. Why, by Jove, even if you want to go on to the gallows-tree, I'm resolved to follow you! So you figure it out for yourself, then, whether or not you can play your sly tricks on me and capture Casina as your wife, as you count on doing.

Ol. What business have you got with me?

Chal. (growing warm) What's that, you cheeky rascal? And what are you slinking around in the city for, you trumpery bailiff?

Ol. (coolly) Because I choose to.

Chal. (losing control of himself) Why aren't you at the farm, in your own dominion? Why don't you choose to tend to the business you're in charge of and leave city concerns alone? You've come here to make off with my bride-to-be. Back to the farm, back to your own province, and be damned to you!

Ol. (now master of the situation) I have not forgotten my duties, Chalinus; I left a manager at the farm who will attend to its affairs properly, despite my
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absence. As for me, once I get what I came here to the city for and marry that girl you dote on—(fondly) that sweet, soft little Casina that works here with you—when I’ve taken her off to the farm with me as my wife, I’ll stick like a sitting hen to that farm, (grinning maliciously) in my own dominion.

Chal. You marry her—you? Good Lord! I’d rather hang myself than let you get her!

Ol. She’s my prize, mine; you might as well fit the noose to your neck, my man.

Chal. You—dug from the dung heap! She’s your prize, is she?

Ol. So you will see.

Chal. Curse you!

Ol. (chuckling) Oh, the ways I’ll torment you—as sure as I’m alive—at my wedding!

Chal. You? What’ll you do to me?

Ol. What’ll I do to you? First of all, I’ll make you torch-bearer to this bride of mine. After that you’ll be the same worthless good-for-nothing as always; and subsequently when you come to the villa you shall be provided with just one pitcher and one path, one spring, one kettle, and—eight big casks: and unless those casks are always full, I’ll give you your fill—of welts. I’ll make you carry water till you have such a beautiful crook in your back that they can use you for a horse’s crupper. Yes, and furthermore, when it comes to your wanting a bit of food, you shall either feed on the fodder-stack, or on dirt like a worm, or, by the Lord, I’ll starve you thinner than Starvation’s self at that farm! And then at night, when you’re all fagged out and famishing, we’ll see you’re supplied with the sleeping quarters you deserve.
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_Chal._ What'll you do?

_Ol._ You shall be fastened tight in the window-frame where you can listen while I'm kissing my Casina. And when she says to me: _(in languishing accents)_ "Oh you little darling, Olympio dearie, my life, my little honey boy, joy of my soul, let me kiss and kiss those sweet eyes of yours, precious! Do, do let me love you, my day of delight, my little sparrow, my dove, my rabbit!"—when she is saying these soft things to me, then you'll wriggle, you hangdog, you, wriggle like a mouse, in the middle of the wall there. _(turning away)_ Now you needn't reckon on making any reply; I'm going inside. I'm sick of talking with you.

_Chal._ I'll follow you. By Jupiter, you shan't do anything here, anyway, that's sure, without my spying you! _[Exeunt into house._

ACT II

_ENTER Cleostrata and Pardalisca from house._

_Cleost._ _(to servants within)_ Seal up the pantries, and bring me back the ring.\(^1\) I am going over here next door to my neighbour's. If my husband wants me for anything, you are to come over here for me.

_Par._ Master said to have lunch ready for him, ma'am.

_Cleost._ _(sharply)_ Hush! Hold your tongue and go away. _[Exit Pardalisca into house._

_I will not get things ready, and not a thing shall be cooked this day, either, seeing he sets himself against me and his own son to gratify his own amorous appetite, the scandal of a man! I'll punish him, the gallant,—with hunger, thirst, _\(^1\) With which they have sealed the pantry._
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hard words, hard treatment,—oh, I'll punish him! Good gracious, won't I make him writhe with the tongue-lashing I give him! I'll see he leads the life he deserves, the old carrion, the debauchee, the sink of iniquity! I'll go over here to my neighbour's this minute and tell her how unhappy I am. (listens) Ah! her door creaked! Yes, and there she is herself coming out. Dear, dear! I've set out on my visit here at a bad time. (steps back into her doorway)

Scene 2. ENTER Myrrhina FROM her HOUSE.

Myrr. (to maids within) Come, girls, come over next door here with me. (irritably, as no one appears) Now, now, you! Is anybody listening to what I say? [ENTER MAIDS HURRIEDLY INTO DOORWAY] I shall be here (pointing to Clestrata's house) if my husband or anyone asks for me. For when I'm at home alone I get so drowsy my work drops out of my hands. Didn't I tell you to bring me my distaff?

[EXEUNT MAIDS.

Cleost. (stepping up) Good morning, Myrrhina.

Myrr. Oh! Good morning. (scanning her face) But do tell me, what makes you so doleful?

Cleost. (with a sigh) It's the normal state of all women who are unhappily married; indoors and out there's always enough to trouble them. Why, I was just going over to your house.

Myrr. Well, well, and I over there to yours. But what is it makes you feel troubled now? For anything that troubles you hurts me, too.

Cleost. (embracing her) Ah yes, I do believe it does! For there's not a neighbour I love more than you—and with good reason—or one I can take more comfort in.

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Myrr. And I do love you; yes, and I'm so anxious to know what the matter is.

Cleost. It's perfectly outrageous the way I'm flouted at home!

Myrr. My, my! What's that? Do say that again, please, for really I haven't got it clear in my head what you're complaining about.

Cleost. My husband—it's perfectly outrageous the way he has been flouting me, and as for getting my rights, I have no chance!

Myrr. (smiling) That's strange, if you're telling the truth, for generally the men can't get their rights from the women.

Cleost. But look, I have a little maid of my own, one I brought up at my own expense, and here he is trying to marry her, against my will, to his bailiff—the fact being that he is in love with her himself.

Myrr. (nervous) Hush, hush, for mercy's sake!

Cleost. Oh, I can say what I please here now; we're alone.

Myrr. (looking about) So we are. (severely) Where did you get this maid? For a modest wife oughtn't to have any private property unbeknown to her husband, and a wife that does hasn't come by it properly—without robbing him or wrongdoing him, one or the other. In my opinion all that's yours is your husband's.

Cleost. (offended) There you are, speaking against your friend in every word you say!

Myrr. Do please keep still, silly, and listen to me! Now please don't set yourself against your husband—let him have his love affairs, let him do what suits him, so long as you lack for nothing at home.

Cleost. Really, are you in your senses? Why, there you are, speaking against your own interests!
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Myrr. (sagely) Stupid! There's one thing you should always beware of your husband's saying to you.
Cleost. What?
Myrr. "Woman, leave my house."¹
Cleost. (looking down the street) Sh-h! Keep still!
Myrr. What's the matter?
Cleost. (pointing) There!
Myrr. Who is it you see?
Cleost. Look! My husband's coming! Go inside, hurry!
(bustling her off) Now, now, there's a dear!
Myrr. (stopping in her doorway) Yes, yes, I'm going.
Cleost. (hurriedly) Later on when we're both more at leisure I want a talk with you. For the present, good-bye!
Myrr. Good-bye.

[EXIT Myrrhina; Cleostrata withdraws into her doorway.

Scene 3. ENTER Lysidamus, very blithe.

Lys. Ah, yes, yes, there's nothing in the world like love, no bloom like its bloom; not a thing can you mention that has more flavour and more savour. Upon my soul, it's most surprising that cooks, with all their use of spices, don't use this one spice that excels them all. Why, when you spice a dish with love it'll tickle every palate, I do believe. Not a thing can be either salt or sweet without a dash of love: it will turn gall, bitter though it be, to honey—an old curmudgeon to a (self-consciously) pleasing and polished gentleman. It is more from my own case than from hearsay I draw this conclusion. Now that I'm in love with Casina, how I have bloomed out! I'm more natty than nattiness itself. I keep all the perfumers on

¹ The first step in divorce.
the jump; wherever there's a nice scent to be had, I get scented, so as to please her. (preening himself) And it seems to me I do please her. (pauses) But my wife does torment me by—living! (glancing toward his house) I see her, standing there with a sour look. Well, I must greet this bad bargain of mine with some smooth talk. (hurries up to Cleostrata and embraces her fondly) And how goes it with my dear and my delight?

Cleost. (snappishly, as she tries to free herself) Get away, and keep your arm away!

Lys. (playfully) Oh, now, now, Juno mine, it's not nice for you to be so cross with your Jove! Whither away now?

Cleost. Let me go! (escapes)

Lys. Wait!

Cleost. I won't wait!

Lys. Gad, then, I'll follow you! (catches her again)

Cleost. For mercy's sake, is the man sane?

Lys. (leering) Sane I am, in loving you.

Cleost. I don't want your love.

Lys. You can't help having it. (kisses her despite her struggles)

Cleost. You'll be the death of me!

Lys. (in low tone) Would you were telling the truth!

Cleost. (overhearing) I believe you in that! (escapes again)

Lys. (plaintively) Do give me one look, my sweet!

Cleost. (stopping) Your sweet? Yes, in the way you are mine! (sniffing) Where does this smell of perfumery come from, my dear sir?

Lys. (aside) Oh, my Lord! Caught in the act! Dear, dear! I must hurry and wipe it off my head with my cloak. (tries to do so furtively) Oh, good Mercury¹ curse you, perfumer, for giving me the stuff!

¹ The god of trade.
CASINA

Cleost. Oh-h-h, you good-for-nothing, you hoary headed gnat! It's all I can do to keep from telling you some home truths! A creature of your time of life promenading the streets all perfumed, you useless thing!

Lys. (hastily) I swear I was only accompanying a friend, a certain friend of mine, while he bought some perfumery.

Cleost. (with mock admiration) What a ready romancer he is! (sagely) Are you ashamed of nothing?

Lys. (humbly) Of everything you wish.

Cleost. What vile resort have you been lolling in?

Lys. I in a vile resort—I?

Cleost. (meaningly) I know more than you think I do.

Lys. (worried) What's that? What do you know?

Cleost. That of all old men on earth there's none more useless than your useless self. Where are you coming from, good-for-nothing? Where have you been? Where have you been wallowing? Where have you been drinking? Good gracious! you're drunk! Look there—the wrinkles in that cloak of yours!

Lys. Heaven confound me—(aside) and you, too—if I've put a drop of wine in my mouth to-day!

Cleost. Never mind, go on, do as you please—drink, eat, consume your substance!

Lys. (gaining courage) Oh, I say, my dear, that's enough now! Get yourself in hand! You're rattling on too far. Save some of your speech-making for your quarrel with me to-morrow. (pauses) But see here; have you got your temper enough under control now to do what your husband wants, instead of opposing him?

Cleost. (sicily) In regard to what?

Lys. You ask? In regard to the maid, Casina. Is she
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to be married to our bailiff—a worthy servant!—yes, and live where she'll be well off for wood, warm water, food, clothes, and where she can bring up her youngsters, instead of your giving her to that worthless slave, that good-for-nothing rascal of an orderly that hasn't saved up as much as a lead shilling?

Cleost. Goodness me, sir, it is odd you should forget your place at your time of life!

Lys. Eh? How's that?

Cleost. Well, if you acted rightly or reasonably, you would let me take care of the maids myself—they are my proper care.

Lys. But, dash it! how can you want to give her to that shield-porter fellow?

Cleost. Why, because both of us ought to assist our son, our only son.

Lys. Well, no matter if he is our only son, he's no more my only son than I am his only father. It's more fitting he should yield to my wishes than I to his.

Cleost. Oho, my dear sir! You are looking for something bad!

Lys. (aside) She smells a rat, I see that. (aloud, nervously) I?

Cleost. You. Now, why are you stammering? Why are you so awfully anxious for this match?

Lys. (guilelessly) Why, so that a worthy servant may get the girl, rather than a rascally one.

Cleost. What if I prevail upon the bailiff and persuade him to oblige me by giving her up to the orderly?

Lys. But what if I prevail upon the orderly to give her up to the bailiff? Yes, and I believe I can.

Cleost. Very well. Do you wish me to call Chalinus out here for you? You plead with him, while I plead with the bailiff.
CASINA

Lys. By all means.
Cleost. (turning towards the door) He will be here directly. Now we shall see which of us has the smoother tongue. [exit.

Lys. (making sure she is gone; then, feelingly) The powers above confound the woman! I hope I may say it now. Here I am in the torments of love, hang it! while here she is seeming to make a point of opposing me! She’s got wind of my plot already; that’s why she makes a point of helping the orderly all the more.

Scene 4. ENTER Chalinus, unseen, into the doorway.

May all the powers of heaven confound him!

Chal. (loudly) You (languidly) called me, so your wife said.

Lys. (swallowing his wrath) Yes, I asked to have you called.

Chal. (gruffly) What do you want? Speak out.

Lys. (trying to be pleasant) In the first place, I want to see less of a scowl on your face while you talk with me; it’s absurd for you to be sulky with one who’s your superior in point of power. (pauses; then heartily) For a long time now I have regarded you as an honest, worthy fellow.

Chal. (derisively) I see. Well, that being so, why don’t you set me free?

Lys. Well, that’s what I want. But my desire to do so doesn’t signify, if you don’t help by what you do yourself.

Chal. All I should like to know is what you’d like.

Lys. Listen here; I will speak out. I promised to marry Casina to our bailiff.

Chal. Yes, but your wife and son promised her to me.
CASINA

Lys. I know. But which do you prefer now—to stay single and be set free, or to marry and pass your life in slavery, you and your children, too? This is your choice: take either alternative you like.

Chal. If I were free, I should have to live at my own costs; as it is, I live at yours. About Casina my mind's made up—I won't yield her to a single soul on earth.

Lys. (angrily) In with you and call my wife out here in front of the house at once. Quick! And bring an urn of water out here with you, and the lots.¹

Chal. That suits me well enough.

Lys. By the Lord, I'll soon spoil that shot of yours one way or another! I tell you what, if I can't carry my point by persuasion, I'll leave it to the lots, anyhow. There's where I'll get square with you and your partisans.

Chal. (airily) Only the lot will fall to me.

Lys. (grimly) Yes, by gad!—the lot of death by torture dire.

Chal. I'm the man she'll marry, plot as you like in any way you want.

Lys. Leave my sight, will you!

Chal. (grinning) I seem to be an eyesore to you. Oh well, that won't kill me. [EXIT INTO HOUSE.

Lys. If I'm not a miserable man? Oh, isn't everything against me? What I'm afraid of now is that my wife has prevailed on Olympio not to marry Casina. If she has, here's a poor old fellow done for! If she hasn't succeeded, there's still a ray of hope for me in the lots. But if the lot oozes

¹ The settlement of disputes by drawing lots from an urn of water was common.

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away, I'll take my sword for a pillow and lay me down upon it. (*the door opens*) Look, though! There comes Olympio! Good, good!

Scene 5. **ENTER Olympio INTO DOORWAY.**

**O.l.** (to Cleostrata within) By heaven, ma'am, you can just as soon shut me up in a hot oven and bake me brown as a biscuit as get me to give in to what you want.

**Lys.** (aside) Saved! I and my hopes are saved, from what I hear!

**O.l.** What are you trying to scare me for, ma'am, with your talk about my freedom? Like it or not, you and your son too, despite you, for all the pair of you can do, I can get freed for a farthing.

**Lys.** (as Olympio closes the door) What's all this? Whom are you wrangling with, Olympio?

**O.l.** The same lady you're always at it with.

**Lys.** With my wife?

**O.l.** (snorting) Wife, eh? Wife, is it? You lead a regular huntsman's life—pass your days and nights with a dog.

**Lys.** What has she been at? What's she been saying to you?

**O.l.** She's been begging and beseeching me not to marry Casina.

**Lys.** And you?

**O.l.** Why, I said I wouldn't give her up to Jupiter himself, not if he begged me to.

**Lys.** Heaven preserve you for me!

**O.l.** Now she's all in a ferment, just swelling with rage at me.

**Lys.** By gad, I wish she had burst in the middle!

**O.l.** By gad, she has, I fancy, if you're good for anything. But, by gad, sir, I'm sick of your love affair;
your wife hates me, your son hates me, your whole household hates me!

Lys. Well, what of that? So long as Jupiter alone here (tapping his chest consequentially) is propitious to you, don’t you care a straw about those petty deities.

Ol. That’s all rubbish. As if you didn’t know how suddenly those human Jupiters die off. Answer me this: if your Jupiter of a self should die, and your kingdom falls to those lesser deities, who’ll save my back or head or shanks for me?

Lys. (reassuringly) You’d be better off than you imagine, if we gain our point and I get Casina.

Ol. Good Lord, but I don’t think you can—with your wife dead set against my having her!

Lys. But here’s what I’m going to do: I’ll throw the lots into the urn and draw for you and Chalinus. I see things have come to the point where we must use our swords in earnest and fight it out.

Ol. What if the lots settle it the way you don’t want?

Lys. (courageously) No ominous remarks! I trust to Heaven; we’ll put our hopes in Heaven.

Ol. (disgusted) I wouldn’t give a stiver for talk like that. Why, every living soul trusts to Heaven, but just the same I’ve seen plenty of your trust-to-Heaven folks fooled times enough.

Lys. (listening) Sh-h! Keep still a minute!

Ol. What do you want?

Lys. (pointing to door) Look! There’s Chalinus coming out with the urn and lots. Now we’ll close with them and fight it out.

ENTER Chalinus WITH URN AND LOTS: Cleostrata stops in doorway.

Cleost. Chalinus, tell me what my husband wants of me.
CASINA

Chal.  To see you blazing on your bier out beyond the city gate—that’s what he wants, by gad.

Cleost.  Goodness me, I do believe he does!

Chal.  Well, I don’t believe it—I know it for certain.

Lys.  (to Olympio, dryly) I own more professional men than I thought; this one here is my private clairvoyant. (pauses, then with a martial air) Well? Up with our standards and charge? Follow me! (leads the way to the other pair) What are you two doing?

Chal.  Everything you ordered is here—wife, lots, urn, yes, and I myself.

Ol.  It’s you yourself that makes one more than I want here.

Chal.  Gad yes, it does seem that way to you. I’m a thorn in the flesh to you now, digging into your dear little heart. You’re sweating for fear already, you whipping-post.

Lys.  Silence, Chalinus!

Chal.  Get your arms about that fellow. (pointing to Olympio)

Ol.  No, sir! About that fellow, that’s learned to like it.

Lys.  (to Chalinus) Set the urn here; give me the lots. (taking them) Attention, both of you. (to Cleostrata, pleadingly) However, my dear, I did think I could prevail upon you to let me marry Casina; and I think so now, too.

Cleost.  Let you marry her?

Lys.  Yes, let me—oh-h-h! I didn’t mean to say that! I . . . meant “me” when I . . . said “him” . . . and . . . you see . . . in my . . . anxiety for myself—(in distress) oh, good Lord! the absurd way I’ve been jabbering all this time!

Cleost.  (dryly) Goodness me, yes, and are still, too.
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Lys. Let him—good Lord, no, let me—(*stopping to collect himself*) ah, at last I've managed to get back to the right road!

Cleost. Mercy on us! You get off it rather often.

Lys. Oh, that's quite usual, when you're awfully eager for something. But we both—Olympio and I—recognizing your rights, appeal to you.

Cleost. What do you mean?

Lys. Why, this, honey dear: do oblige our bailiff here in regard to your Casina.

Cleost. Goodness me, sir, I'll neither oblige him nor agree to his being obliged.

Lys. Well then, I favour passing out lots to the two of them at once.

Cleost. (*curtly*) Who hinders you?

Lys. (*trying to seem unconcerned*) That is the best and fairest method in my unbiased judgment. And then if the result satisfies us, we'll rejoice; if it doesn't, we'll put up with it patiently. (*to Olympio*) Here is a lot for you. (*Olympio takes it*) See what is written on it.

Ol. (*looking*) The number one.

Chal. It's not fair that he should have his lot first!

Lys. (*selecting another for Chalinus*) You kindly take this one.

Chal. Give it here. (*grabs it*) Hold on! I've just thought of something. (*to Cleostrata, excitedly*) See that there's no other lot under the water there.

Lys. You scoundrel! Do you take me for yourself?

Cleost. (*to Chalinus, having examined the urn*) There isn't. Come now, calm yourself.

Chal. (*preparing to drop his lot into the urn*) Heaven be with me and bring me luck—

Ol. A good sound hiding is what you'll get, by gad, I'm thinking; I know your pious ways. Hold on,
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though! That lot of yours isn’t made of poplar or fir, is it?

Chal. What’s that to you?

Ol. Why, just this—I’m afraid of its floating on top or the water. (examines Chalinus’s lot)

Lys. That’s it! Look out! (standing by the urn) Now then, both of you throw your lots in here. (they do so) There we are! Wife, see that everything’s fair.

Ol. (nervous) Don’t trust a wife!

Lys. (watching Cleostrata narrowly as she approaches the urn) Keep your courage up.

Ol. Oh Lord! I do believe she’ll lay a spell on the lots, once she touches ’em.

Lys. Be quiet!

Ol. I am. (Cleostrata stirs the lots about) I hope to Heaven——

Chal. That you’ll be carrying a chain and yoke, yes!

Ol. —that the drawing will give me the luck——

Chal. To hang by your heels, yes, by gad!

Ol. No, to make you blow the eyes out of your head through your nose! (trembles with anxiety as he stares at the urn)

Chal. What are you scared of? You ought to have it all ready now—that noose of yours.

Ol. (weakly) It’s all over with you!

Lys. Attention! both of you.

Ol. I’m saying nothing.

Lys. Now then, Cleostrata, to keep you from claiming that I cheated in this matter, or suspecting me, I leave it to you—you do the drawing yourself.

Ol. (to Lysidamus, frantically) Oh, you’re killing me!

Chal. (grinning) He’ll make money by that.

Cleost. (to Lysidamus, tartly) Much obliged.
CASINA

Chal. (to Olympio, mockingly) I hope to heaven—your lot slips out of the urn.

Ol. So? Being a slippery one yourself, you long to have imitators everywhere, eh? Oh, if that lot of yours would only melt away in the drawing, like the one in that old story of Hercules's descendants!

Chal. You'll melt, yourself, you'll be so warmed up with a whip shortly.

Lys. Olympio, kindly attend to business.

Ol. If this man of letters (pointing to the brand on Chalinus's forehead) would only let me.

Lys. (in a flutter, as Cleostrata prepares to draw) Heaven be with me and bring me luck!

Ol. Yes, yes, and me!

Chal. No.

Ol. Oh Lord, yes, yes!

Chal. Oh Lord, no, no! Me!

Cleost. (to Olympio) He (indicating Chalinus) is going to win, and you are going to suffer, sir.

Lys. (to Olympio) Smash that fellow's jaw this minute! (Olympio hesitates) Come, come! Do you hear me?

(to Chalinus) Don't raise your hand.

Ol. (now valorous) Shall I punch or slap, sir?

Lys. Suit yourself.

Ol. (punching Chalinus, then jumping away) Take that!

Cleost. (angry) What do you mean by touching that man?

Ol. Well, I was obeying my Jupiter.

Cleost. (to Chalinus) You strike him back on the face the same way. (Chalinus does so with enthusiasm)

Ol. Oh-h-h! He's pounding me to death, Jupiter!

Lys. (pulling Chalinus away) What do you mean by touching this man?

1 The crafty Cresophon's lot was made of terracotta, his brother's of sun-baked earth which dissolved.
CASINA

Chal. Well, I was obeying my Juno here.

Lys. (bitterly) We must submit—my wife being the head of the household—and I alive!

Cleost. Chalinus should have just as much right to talk as that fellow.

Oth. What did he spoil my omen for?

Lys. (dangerously) Chalinus, I advise you to look out for trouble.

Chal. Nice time to warn me, after my jaw's been hammered!

Lys. Come, wife! Now then, draw! (to servants) Attention, you two! (aside) I'm so nervous I don't know where I am! Oh, dear, dear, I've got a splenetic heart, I do believe; it's jumping up and down all this time, working so hard that it thumps my chest!

Cleost. (her hand in the urn) I've got one.

Lys. (tremulously) Pull it out!

Chal. (to the breathless Olympio) Dead already, are you?

Oth. (as Clestrata draws) Let's see it! (Clestrata holds it up) It's mine, it's mine!

Chal. (sourly) It's the devil, that's what it is!

Cleost. (apparently resigned) You have lost, Chalinus.

Lys. (dancing about in ecstasy) The gods are with us, Olympio! Splendid!

Oth. (grinning at Chalinus) It all comes of the pious ways of me and my forbears.

Lys. Go inside, wife, and get things ready for the wedding.

Cleost. (meditative) To be sure.

Lys. (impatient) Do you realize that it's a long way to the country, to the farmhouse where he's to take her?

Cleost. I do.

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CASINA

Lys. Go inside, and no matter if this does annoy you, see that you look after things just the same.

Cleost. (still meditative) Very well. [EXIT.

Lys. (to Olympio) Let's go inside ourselves, too, and urge them to hurry up.

Ol. I'm not delaying you, am I?

Lys. (in low tone) You see, I don't care for any more talk in (glancing at Chalinus) this fellow's presence.

[EXEUNT Lysidamus and Olympio smiling cheerfully upon the gloomy Chalinus.

Scene 7.

Chal. If I were to hang myself now, it would be labour lost, and, besides the labour, I should be put to the expense of buying a rope and be gratifying my enemies. And what's the use, when I am (with an amorous sigh) dead already? Ah yes, the lots were against me, after all; Casina will marry the bailiff. But what grates on me now isn't so much the bailiff's winning as the old man's having been so awfully eager for me to lose her and for that chap to marry her. What a stew and flurry he was in, the poor fool! How he capered about after the bailiff won! (listening) Hm-m! I'll step back here; (withdraws) I hear the door opening. Those kind, affectionate friends of mine are coming out. I'll stay in ambush here and ambush them.

Scene 8. ENTER Olympio and Lysidamus.

Ol. Only let him come to the farm! I'll send the fine fellow back to town to you, under a yoke like a charcoal peddler.

Lys. And so you should.

Ol. I'll see it's so, I'll take care of that.
CASINA

Lys. If Chalinus was about, I intended to send him with you to (tittering) buy provisions, so as to give our troubled rival still another throe.

Chal. (flattening himself against the house) I'll back up against the wall, and imitate a crab. I must lie low and overhear what they're saying. Why, one's racking me, and the other's wringing me! (glaring at Olympio) See him strut about, all in white,¹ the whipping post, the club case! My suicide is postponed; it's him I'll send ahead to Hades first, that's settled.

Ol. Ah, but haven't I shown myself an obliging fellow! Here I've helped you to what you long for most! You'll soon be with your ladylove, and your wife none the wiser.

Lys. (with a nervous glance toward the door) Sh-h! (wriggling in ecstasy) Lord love me, it's all I can do to keep my lips away from you and not give you a good kiss for it, you darling!

Chal. (aside) Eh? "A good kiss?" What's all this? "Your darling?" How's that? (as Lysidamus prances up to Olympio, manifesting a strong desire to embrace him) My word! I do believe he wants to dig the bailiff's inwards out!

Ol. You love me a little now, do you?

Lys. A little? Oh heavens! more than my own self! Will you let me hug you?

Chal. (aside) What? Hug him?

Ol. (modestly) Yes.

Lys. (embracing him rapturously) Oh, it's like lapping honey, getting my lips on you!

Ol. (pushing him away) Avast there, my gallant! Get off my back!

Chal. (aside) That's it! That's why he made the fellow

¹ The bridegroom's dress.
his bailiff! Yes, and in my own case, one time
when I went to see him home, he was all for
making me his major-domo at his door sill.

_Ol._ Ah, how I’ve stood by you to-day, how I’ve
delighted you!

_Lys._ Ah, and the friend I’ll be to you, all my life—
more than to my own self!

_Chal._ (aside) Good Lord! I bet those two will be
making hot love to each other before long; the
old man here always did take to bearded faces,
for a fact.

_Lys._ Ah, won’t I kiss and kiss Casina to-day! Ah,
won’t I have a good time of it, unbeknown to my
wife!

_Chal._ (aside) Ohoho! Now I’m on the right road at
last, by Jove! He dotes on Casina himself! I’ve
got our gentlemen!

_Lys._ Oh Lord! I’m just aching to hug her this
moment, to kiss her this moment!

_Ol._ Let me take her home first. What’s your hurry,
curse it?

_Lys._ I’m in love.

_Ol._ Well, I don’t see how it can be done to-day.

_Lys._ It can be—that is, if you think you can be freed
to-morrow.

_Chal._ (aside) Well, well, I must stick my ears further
into this. Now for a neat job catching two wild
boars in one brake. (gets closer)

_Lys._ (complacently) There’s a place waiting for me at
my good friend’s and neighbour’s here. (indicating
house of Alcesimus) I’ve told him all about my
little affair, and he said he’d provide me with a
place.

_Ol._ How about his wife? Where will she be?

_Lys._ I’m a man of resources! My wife will invite her
CASINA

over to the wedding so as to keep her company, and help her, and spend the night with her. I told her to do that, and my wife said she would. Myrrhina will stop at our house, and I'll guarantee her husband won't be home. You'll take your wife off to the farm; and that farm (chuckling) will be (pointing to Alcesimus's house) here, so long as Casina and I are celebrating the marriage. Then before daylight to-morrow you're to take her off to the farm. Rather clever, eh?

Ol. You're a deep one, sir!

Chal. (aside) Just you go ahead and lay your schemes. By gad, you'll pay for being such a smart pair.

Lys. D'ye know what you're to do now!

Ol. Tell me.

Lys. Take this purse (giving it to him) and go buy some provisions. Quick! But something nice, mind—soft little dainties to match her soft little self.

Ol. All right.

Lys. Get some little sepias, and limpets, and little cuttles, and grainings.

Chal. (aside) Well, but make 'em grainings of wheat, if you're wise.

Lys. And some soles.

Chal. (aside) I say, why not make them wooden soles, to beat your face with, you rank old sinner?

Ol. Want some little dogfish?

Lys. What for, when my wife's at home? She's "little dogfish" enough for us—why, she's always barking.

Ol. Once I'm on the spot I can look over the fishmonger's stock and decide what to buy.

Lys. Right you are; off with you. Don't try to economize—get plenty, plenty. Well, I must see my neighbour again and make sure he manages his part of it.
CASINA

Ol. Shall I go now?
Lys. Yes. [Exeunt, Olympio to forum, Lysidamus into
Alcesimus's house.

Chal. (elated) I couldn't be hired—for three freedoms—
not to give those two a precious bad time of it
to-day and not to go to mistress this minute with
the whole story. I've got my enemies caught,
captured in the act, red-handed. Only let mistress
do her duty now, and the case is ours on every
count. I'll forecast those fine fellows handsomely.
The omens are for us this day! The losers win!
I'll go in now so as to try my hand on a mess
another cook has seasoned, and season it another
way; and I'll see to it that the mess is not ready
for the man it was ready for, but that a mess not
ready for him is in readiness. [Exit.

ACT III

ENTER Lysidamus and Alcesimus from the latter's
house.

Lys. Now I shall learn whether you represent a friend
or a foe, Alcesimus; now you'll show a sample of
yourself, now is the time of test. As for lecturing
me for being in love—cut that short. "With
your hoary head," "at such an age"—cut that
short, too. "A married man!" Yes, and cut that
short.

A1c. (with amused contempt) A man more lovesick than
you I never saw!

Lys. Be sure the house is empty.

A1c. Yes, good Lord, yes! it's settled that I am to
send all the men and maidservants over to your
place.
CASINA

Lys. (delightedly) Oh, you extraordinary, extraordinary man! But see that you follow what the blackbird sings in its stave: see that they come "with food, or no matter what," as if they were marching to Sutrium.¹

Alc. I'll remember.

Lys. (seizing his hand rapturously) There now, that's it! Never was ordinance better ordered than you! Look out for things; I'm going to the forum myself. I'll be back soon.

Alc. A pleasant walk to you.

Lys. (smiling fatuously) See that your house gets a tongue.

Alc. Why so?

Lys. I want it full of welcome, and nothing else, when I arrive.

Alc. (disgusted) Ugh-h! You ought to be kept under, man; you're altogether too buoyant.

Lys. What's the use of my being in love, if I'm not clever and canty? (about to go) But don't make me look for you, mind.

Alc. I shall be at home all the time. [exeunt.

Scene 2. ENTER Cleostrata FROM THE HOUSE.

(A couple of hours have elapsed.)

Cleost. Good gracious! This was the reason my husband was so insistent I should invite my neighbour over directly—so that there might be an empty house for them to take Casina to. Well now, I won't invite her, indeed I won't, and let those vile creatures have a place to do as they like in, the old wethers! [ENTER Alcesimus INTO HIS DOORWAY] Ah,

¹ A hurried march to Sutrium had been an event in a war with the Gauls.
CASINA

but there he is coming out—that pillar of the senate, that bulwark of the state, that neighbour of mine, who furnishes my husband with a place to disport himself in! Good heavens, that creature would be dear at the price of a peck of salt!

*Alc.* Strange my wife hasn’t been invited over next door here already; she’s been all dressed up and expecting the invitation for a long time. *(aside, on seeing Cleostrata)* Here we are, though! Coming to invite her, I suppose. *(aloud)* Good day to you, Cleostrata.

*Cleost.* And to you, Alcesimus. Where is your wife?

*Alc.* Inside, awaiting your invitation. Your husband, you know, begged me to send her over to help you. Shall I call her?

*Cleost.* *(lightly)* Oh, don’t disturb her; I don’t want her, if she’s busy.

*Alc.* *(hurriedly)* She isn’t.

*Cleost.* Never mind. I don’t want to bother her; I’ll come and see her later.

*Alc.* *(innocently)* Aren’t you arranging for a wedding over at your place?

*Cleost.* Yes, and I am getting things ready.

*Alc.* Well then, don’t you need an assistant?

*Cleost.* I have plenty at home. I’ll wait until the wedding is over, and then come and see her. *(turning to go)* Well, good-bye, and give my regards to your wife.

[Exit into the doorway out of sight of Alcesimus.]

*Alc.* *(blankly)* What shall I do now? *(pauses)* A nice position I’m in, hang it! thanks to that worthless, toothless old goat that drew me into it. I promise the services of my wife as a sort of plate-licker in general! A nice fellow he is, saying his wife was going to invite her over; and now she
CASINA

says she doesn’t want her! (pauses; then, excitedly) Yes, by gad! It’s a wonder if my fair neighbour here hasn’t got wind of the scheme already! (meditatively) But then, on the other hand, when I think it over, if it was anything like that, she’d have had things to say to me. I’ll go in and haul the ship back to her berth. [EXIT INTO HOUSE.

ENTER Cleostrata FROM DOORWAY.

Cleost. There! he’s finely fooled! What a flutter the poor old wretches are in! Now if that useless, played-out old husband of mine would only come along, so that I may fool him in his turn after making a fool of this other one! Oh, I just yearn to get the two of them quarrelling. (looking down the street) But there he comes marching up! To look at that solemn face you’d think he was a decent man. (retires into doorway)

Scene 3. ENTER Lysidamus, IREFUL.

Lys. It’s perfectly asinine—that’s what I call it—for any man in love to set out for the forum the day his sweetheart is all in trim for him! And that’s what I did, ass that I am! I’ve wasted the day acting as counsellor for a relative of mine. He lost his case, and, by Jove, I’m glad of it, I certainly am,—to keep him from calling on me to-day for counsel to no purpose. I tell you what, in my opinion, a man that calls counsellors ought to question them first and inquire whether or not his counsellor has got his mind with him; if he says he hasn’t, then he ought to send him home un-minded. (starts, on seeing Cleostrata) But there’s my wife in front of the house! Oh dear me! I’m afraid she’s not deaf and that she’s heard all this.

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Cleost. (aside) Indeed I did hear, and a high price you shall pay for it!

Lys. (aside) I’ll step up to her. (aloud) What are you about, light of my life?

Cleost. Indeed, sir, it was you I was looking for.

Lys. Well, are things ready? Well, have you brought your neighbour over here to help you?

Cleost. I invited her over as you told me. But your crony here (pointing to house of Alcesimus), your particular friend here, has given his wife a blowing up of some sort; he said he could not send her over at my invitation.

Lys. (disturbed) That’s your greatest fault: you aren’t smooth-tongued enough.

Cleost. It is not a wife’s business, but a strumpet’s, my dear, to be smooth-tongued and wheedle other people’s husbands. Go yourself and invite her; as for me, I must see to what needs to be done inside, my dear.

Lys. Do hurry up, then.

Cleost. All right. (aside) Oh, I’ll give him a scare now! It’s a very miserable man I’ll make our lover this day!

[Exit.

Scene 4. ENTER Alcesimus FROM HIS HOUSE.

Alc. I’ll step out and see if our gallant has got back from the forum yet—making fools of me and my wife, the old spectre! Ah! there he is, in front of the house. (to Lysidamus, angrily) By Jove! sir, I was just this moment going to look you up.

Lys. (angrily) And I you, by Jove! See here, you farthingsworth of a man! What was it I left to you? What was it I begged you to do?

Alc. Well, what?

Lys. A nice way to empty your house for me! A nice
CASINA

way to take your wife over to my place! So you’ve put an end to me and my opportunity, have you?

_Alc._ Be hanged to you! You told me yourself that your wife was going to invite my wife over, you know you did.

_Lys._ Well, she says she did invite her over and you said you wouldn’t let her go.

_Alc._ But she herself told me of her own accord that she didn’t want her assistance.

_Lys._ But she herself commissioned me to invite her over.

_Alc._ But I don’t give a curse for that.

_Lys._ But you’re killing me!

_Alc._ But... that’s a blessing. But... I’ll keep you waiting a long while yet. But... I just yearn—

_Lys._ But—

_Alc._ —to make some trouble for you.

_Lys._ But... I’ll do the same for you, and gladly. You shan’t out-but me this day, never!

_Alc._ But... once and for all, by gad,—you be damned!

_Lys._ Well now, are you going to send your wife over to my house?

_Alc._ Take her, and go to the devil with her, and with your own, and with that girl of yours, too! (calming down) Off with you, and leave that to me. I’ll tell my wife to go through the garden at once and join your wife.

_Lys._ (wringing his hand) Now you’re a real friend to me! [EXIT _Alesimus_ INTO HIS HOUSE.] I wonder what omen crossed me when I got into this amour, or what offence I’ve ever given Venus to have all these things happening to delay me when I’m so in love? (an uproar within his house) Eh? Eh? What’s that hubbub in our house, for heaven’s sake?

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CASINA

ENTER Pardalisca from the house, apparently in a panic.

Par. I'm lost! I'm lost! I'm dead, dead, absolutely dead! My heart's stopped beating for fear! Oh dear me, I'm all of a tremble! I don't know where to find help, shelter, safety; I don't know where to look for aid! Such amazing doings as I did see in there just now, perfectly amazing! Such strange, unheard of boldness! (calling at door) For heaven's sake, ma'am, look out for yourself, keep away from her, or she'll do you some injury in her fit of fury! Snatch the sword away from her! She's beside herself!

Lys. (aside) Why, what's wrong,—with her bouncing out here half dead with fright? (aloud) Pardalisca!

Par. (with a start) Oh-h-h! (tragically, with a sly grin at the audience) Whence comes that sound my ears do receive?

Lys. (peevishly) Look this way, will you?

Par. Oh, my dear master——

Lys. What ails you? What are you frightened about?

Par. I'm killed!

Lys. What? Killed?

Par. Killed! And you're killed, too!

Lys. Eh? I'm killed? How so?

Par. (pityingly) Alas for you!

Lys. No, no, make it alas for yourself.

Par. (tottering toward him) Hold me, oh do, or I'll drop!

Lys. (propping her up gingerly) Whatever it is, out with it, quick!

Par. (f ee b ly) Put your arm around my... waist... fan me, oh do... with your cloak!
CASINA

Lys. (aside, as he fans her) I'm worried about the meaning of this—unless she has overcome herself somewhere with too strong a sniff of the flower of Bacchus.

Par. Hold my ... ears, sir, oh do!

Lys. (indignantly pushing her away) Get to the deuce away from me! Be damned to you—waist, ears, head, and all! Now if you don't hurry up and tell me what the matter is, I'll take this stick this moment and knock your brains out, you serpent—making a fool of me all this while, you slut!

Par. (protestingly) My dear master—

Lys. (hotly) What do you want, my dear maid?

Par. You're too hard on me.

Lys. (lifting his cane significantly) You're saying that too soon. But out with it, whatever it is. Make it short. What was the disturbance inside?

Par. You'll learn, sir. Listen. It was awful, atrocious—when we were inside there just now—to see how your maidservant began to cut up, without any regard at all for Attic manners.

Lys. What's all this?

Par. (swooping toward him) I'm so scared I can't use my tongue properly.

Lys. (lifting his cane again) Can I learn from you what the matter is?

Par. I'll tell you. Your maidservant that you want to marry to your bailiff, well, inside she—

Lys. What inside? What is it?

Par. She's following the wicked manners of wicked women and threatening her own husband. It's his life——

Lys. (alarmed) Well, what, what?

Par. Ah-h!

Lys. What is it?
CASINA

Par. —it's his life she wants to take, so she says. There she is, a sword——

Lys. Whew!

Par. —a sword——

Lys. What about this sword?

Par. —in her hand!

Lys. Lord preserve us! What has she got that for?

Par. She's chasing everyone through the house there, and won't let a soul come near her; they're hiding under chests and couches afraid to breathe a word.

Lys. (aside) Death and damnation! (aloud) What the deuce has got into her all of a sudden this way?

Par. She's gone crazy.

Lys. (aside) If I'm not the cursedest wretch alive!

Par. But oh, sir, if you only knew what she said this day——

Lys. That's what I'm anxious to know. What did she say?

Par. Listen, sir. She swore by all the powers above she would murder the man she spent this night with.

Lys. (jumping) Murder me?

Par. (guilelessly) It doesn't concern you at all, does it, sir?

Lys. (aside) Oh, dash it!

Par. What have you got to do with her, sir?

Lys. I made a mistake—the bailiff, I meant to say.

Par. (aside) You're leaving the highway for the by-path deliberately.

Lys. She's not threatening me, is she?

Par. You are the very one she's wild at, sir, you especially.

Lys. (very anxious) What for?
CASINA

Par. Seeing you want to marry her to Olympio, she vows she won't let you or herself or her husband live through the night. I was sent out here to tell you this, so that you may be on your guard against her.

Lys. Oh, merciful heavens! This is awful!

Par. (aside) Serves you right!

Lys. (aside) Of all unlucky old lovers living, or that ever lived!

Par. (to audience) How finely I'm fooling him! Why, this story of mine has been a lie from first to last. Mistress and her next door neighbour here hatched this trick, and I was sent out to play it on him.

Lys. I say, Pardalisca!

Par. What is it, sir?

Lys. There's—(hesitates)

Par. What?

Lys. There's something I want to ask of you.

Par. You're delaying me, sir?

Lys. Well, you're distressing me. But has Casina still got the (shaking) sword?

Par. Indeed she has—two of them.

Lys. Why two?

Par. She says she'll murder you with one and the bailiff with the other this very day.

Lys. (trying to seem nonchalant) I'm the most murdered man alive! The best thing I can do, I fancy, is to put on a breastplate. How about my wife? Didn't she go up and take them away?

Par. Not a soul dares get near her, sir.

Lys. She should try persuasion.
CASINA

Par. So she does; but Casina swears she simply won’t put them down without knowing she’s not to be given to the bailiff.

Lys. (with great firmness) Well, willy nilly, just because she objects, she shall marry him to-day. For why shouldn’t I carry out my plan and have her marry me? (hastily) That is, our bailiff, I meant to say.

Par. (guileless again) You make mistakes pretty often, sir.

Lys. (scanning her face sharply) I’m so scared I can’t talk properly. But for heaven’s sake tell my wife I beg her to induce the girl to put down the sword and let me go back inside.

Par. Yes, sir.

Lys. And you beg her, too.

Par. And I’ll beg her, too.

Lys. Yes, but beg her in that coaxing way of yours. (Pardalisca moves toward the door) But listen to this, will you? If you succeed, I’ll give you some sandals and . . . a gold ring for your finger and lots of nice things.

Par. I’ll do what I can, sir.

Lys. See that you persuade her.

Par. I’ll go this moment—unless you contrive to hinder me, sir.

Lys. Go along and see to it. [Exit Pardalisca.] (looking down the street) Ah! there comes my aide-de-camp at last with the provisions. Quite a train he leads!

ENTER Olympio, Citrio, and his assistants with edibles.

Ol. (to Citrio) See here, thief, march your briars (pointing to assistants) well under your banners.

Cit. Briars, indeed? How so?
CASINA

Ol. Because the moment they touch a thing they cling to it; the moment you go to pull it away, there you are—torn to tatters. Whatever place they go to, wherever they are, they do double damage to the head of the house.

Cit. (in protest) Oh, I say!

Ol. (aside, seeing Lysidamus) Oho! Now to clothe myself in a grand, patrician style, and so go to meet my master. (arranges his clothes and steps jauntily up to Lysidamus)

Lys. Ah, my noble fellow!

Ol. I confess it.

Lys. What's the news?

Ol. You are in love; I am hungry and thirsty.

Lys. (with a glance at the viands) You have come handsomely provided for.

Ol. (eyeing the food fondly) Ah-h, to-day —— (moves toward house)

Lys. Now, now, wait a moment, even though you are so superior.

Ol. Faugh! faugh! Your talk offends my nostrils.

Lys. What ails you?

Ol. (pointing to provisions) This. Still standing there? My word! C'est trop d'ennui que tu me causes. (moves on toward house)

Lys. I will cause you de grandes douleurs, I'm thinking, unless you stand still. (seizes him)

Ol. (releasing himself) Mon Dieu! Get away from me, can't you,—unless you want to set me spewing! (moves on again)

Lys. Wait.

Ol. (halting) Well? (looking Lysidamus over contemptuously) Who is this fellow?

Lys. The master of the house.
CASINA

O. What master?
L. The one you are the slave of.
O. A slave? I?
L. Yes, and mine.
O. Am I not a free man? (dangerously) Remember, remember! (moves toward house again)
L. Wait! Stop! (clutches him)
O. Let me be. (shakes him off)
L. (humbly) I am your slave.
O. (somewhat mollified) Very good.
L. My dear, dear Olympio, my father, my patron, I pray you!
O. There! You really show sense.
L. I am yours, indeed I am.
O. What use have I for such a worthless slave?
L. Well? Well? How soon will you make a new man of me?
O. If dinner were only cooked!
L. (pointing to Citrio and his assistants) Have these fellows go in, then.
O. (eagerly, to cooks) Quick! Hurry inside, you, and hurry things up. Quick! I shall be in shortly: see you get me up a dinner that is positively drunk. A dainty, elegant one, mind! None of your flat Roman fare for me. (to Citrio) Still standing there? You kindly be off! I stay here myself. [Exeunt cooks into house.] (to Lysidamus) Nothing else to delay us, is there?
L. (timidly, pointing to the house) She says Casina has a sword in there to butcher us both with.
O. (sceptically) I see. Let her keep on having it. Mere nonsense! Nice articles those women are—I know them! Come on, you just go home with me.
CASINA

Lys. But good heavens! I'm afraid of trouble! Just you go; you reconnoitre and see what is happening inside.

Ol. (backing away) I think as much of my life as you do of yours. (boldly) However, (pushing Lysidamus ahead of him) just you go.

Lys. (boldly) If you say the word,—well now, go it is—(pushing Olympio ahead) with you.

[Exeunt into house, each endeavouring to be hindmost.

ACT IV

(An hour has elapsed)

Enter Pardalisca, hilarious.

Par. Oh, I don't believe they ever have games at Nemea, or at Olympia, either, or anywhere, as lively as the games they're playing inside here on our old man and our bailiff Olympio. Everyone is bustling about all over the house; the old man is clamouring in the kitchen, urging on the cooks—"Why don't you begin to do something? Why don't you give us our meal, if you have any to give? Hurry up! Dinner ought to have been cooked by this time!" As for the bailiff, he is parading around with a garland and white clothes on, all spick and span. And the two ladies—they're in a bedroom dressing out the orderly to be our bailiff's wife in place of Casina. But oh! the lovely way they do pretend—just as if they had no idea what is going to happen! And then the cooks, too, are doing their part, and, my! the lovely way they work to keep the old man from dining! They upset the pots, pour water on the fire—do anything the
CASINA

ladies ask. As for them, they are bent on driving the old man out of the house without his dinner, so that they can swell their own stomachs all by themselves. I know them, the gluttonesses. They can consume a whole cargo of food. (listening) But the door's opening!

Scene 2. ENTER Lysidamus INTO DOORWAY.

Lys. (with forced composure, to Cleostrata within) It would be well, my dear, for you ladies to dine, just the same, when dinner is ready; I shall dine at the farm. I wish to escort the bride and groom to the farm, knowing as I do what unprincipled rogues there are about, so that no one shall abduct her. Enjoy yourselves. But do hurry up and send the pair of them out at once, so that we may manage to arrive before dark. I shall be here to-morrow. To-morrow, my dear, I shall have my share of the entertainment.

Par. (aside) Just as I said,—the ladies are driving the old man out without his dinner.

Lys. (seeing her) What are you doing here?

Par. Going where mistress sent me, sir.

Lys. (suspicious) Really?

Par. Truly.

Lys. What are you spying here for?

Par. Indeed, I am not spying at all.

Lys. (pointing to door) Begone! Here you are loitering, and everyone else bustling about inside.

Par. I am going, sir. (moves slowly toward door)

Lys. Well then, kindly begone, you consummate slut! [EXIT Pardalisca.] (looking after her) Gone now, has she? Now I can say what I like. A man in love may be famishing and yet want no food at all,
CASINA

by Jove! (as the door opens) But ah! there he comes with garland and torch—my ally, comrade, and fellow-bridegroom of a bailiff!

Scene 3.  

ENTER Olympio.

Ol. (to the musician on the stage) Come, flutist, while they bring out the bride, make the whole street here ring with a sweet nuptial song for me. (singing as the musician plays the wedding song) Hymen hymeneal, Hymen O!

Lys. How are you, my saviour?

Ol. (sour) Hungry, by gad! and there's no safety in it, either!

Lys. But as for me, I'm in love.

Ol. But I don't give a hang for that, by gad! Love is food for you; as for me, my insides have been rumbling with emptiness this long time.

Lys. Now what makes those dawdlers dally so long in there? It almost seems intentional—the more I hurry, the less headway we make.

Ol. What if I strike up the wedding song again, and see if that will bring them out sooner?

Lys. Just the thing! And I'll join in, it being our mutual wedding.

Lys. & Ol. (lustily) Hymen hymeneal, Hymen O!

Lys. (after louder repetitions of the strain) Oh Lord, this is awful! I can sing the hymeneal song till I burst, and still have no chance to burst myself the way I long to.

Ol. My word! If you were a horse, you'd be untamable, you surely would.

Lys. For what reason?

Ol. You're so precious hard to hold.

Lys. You never tested me, did you?

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CASINA

Ol. God forbid! (listening) But the door creaked! Out they come!

Lys. By Jove, the gods are with me!

ENTER Pardalisca, MAIDS, AND Chalinus, CLOTHED AND VEILED AS A BRIDE, INTO THE DOORWAY. Cleostrata

Scene 4. AND Myrrhina STAND BACK OF THEM.

Chal. (aside) He's had a distant sniff of Casinus¹ already.

Par. (as she and the maids support Chalinus) Gently now, raise your feet above the threshold,² my new bride; begin this journey safely, so as to stand above your husband always, and get the upper hand of him, and master him and be the mistress, and make your word and your authority final. Let him clothe you, and you strip him. Night and day you are to deceive him; remember that, I beg you.

Ol. (to Lysidamus, angrily) By gad, she'll pay dear for it the minute she misbehaves the least bit.

Lys. Hush!

Ol. I won't.

Lys. What ails you?

Ol. The vile creature is giving the vile girl vile advice!

Lys. (trying to calm him) You'll unsettle everything I've got settled. This is what they are after, what they want,—to undo all we've done.

Par. Come, Olympio, since you wish it, receive your wife here from us.

Ol. (approaching) Give her to me, then, if you ever intend to do so. (takes Chalinus from the maids)

Lys. (to Pardalisca and the other maids) You may go inside.

¹ A masculine Casina.
² It was a bad omen for the bride to touch the threshold.
CASINA

Par. (to Olympio) Now do, do be gentle with this
innocent, ingenuous maiden.
I will be.

Ol. Good-bye!

Par. (to the women) You may go now.

Ol. (to the women, who still linger) You may go.

Par. Well, good-bye. [EXEUNT WOMEN.

Lys. (nervously) Has my wife left yet?
She’s in the house; never fear.

Lys. (dancing excitedly around the bride) Hurrah! Now
I am a free man at last, by gad! Oh, my little
sweetheart, my little honey, my little flower of
spring!

Ol. Hey, you! You’ll look out for trouble, if you’ve
got any sense. This girl is mine.

I know, but the first fruits are mine.

Lys. You hold this torch.

Ol. (rejecting it) Oh, no! I’ll hold this one. (siding
up to the bride delightedly) Venus, mighty Venus,
what a treasure thou gavest me when thou gavest
me possession of this maiden!

Ol. (putting his arm about the bride’s waist) Oh, your
tender, tender little body, my dear little wife!

Lys. (jumping) What the deuce!
What is it?

Ol. (hopping around on one leg) She came down on my
foot like an elephant!

Lys. You kindly shut up. Her breast is softer than a
cloud.

Ol. (approaching the bride again) My word! What a
pretty little bust—(a quick motion on the bride’s
part: he staggers back) Ouch! Oh Lord!

Lys. What is it?

Ol. (breathless) She hit me in . . . the chest . . . it wasn’t
an . . . elbow . . . it was a . . . battering ram!
CASINA

Lys. Man alive, why do you handle her so roughly, then? Now as for me, I give her a gentle caress (illust rates) and she doesn’t care.

Ol. (attempting to do likewise and reeling as the bride’s arm swings) Woof!

Lys. What’s the matter?

Ol. For heaven’s sake! What a powerful . . . little thing she is! She nearly . . . laid me down on my back . . . with her elbow!

Lys. (chuckling) A hint she wants to lie down herself.

Ol. Why don’t we go, then?

Lys. (to the bride fondly, as he leads her to Alcesimus’s house) Step along prettily, my pretty dear.

[Exeunt.

ACT V

(Half an hour has elapsed.)

Enter Cleostrata, Myrrhina, and Pardalisca.

Myrr. After our nice, enjoyable entertainment inside, here we are out on the street to watch the wedding games. Oh dear, I never laughed so much in all my life! And I don’t believe I shall ever laugh more in time to come.

Par. (tittering) I should like to know what Chalinus is doing—the bridegroom and his new husband!

Myrr. There never was a playwright invented a cleverer plot than this masterpiece of ours.

Cleost. Oh, if he would only come along with his face fairly battered, the old wretch! There’s not a worse one alive! Not even his obliging host, in my opinion. Pardalisca, I want you to be on guard here now, so as to make fun of the man that comes out.

Par. So I will, gladly. That’s my way.
CASINA

**Myrr.** (stationing Pardalisca in her doorway) You watch everything from here; tell us what they do inside. *(peeps in)*

**Par.** Get behind me, there's a dear lady.

**Myrr.** *(drawing back)* And then you needn't be afraid to speak your mind freely.

**Par.** Hush! Your door creaked! *(the three women rush into Cleostrata's doorway)*

**Enter Olympio, much dishevelled, from the house.**

**Ol.** Where to run, or to bury myself, or how to hide my infamy, I don't know! Oh, the disgrace master and I have covered ourselves with, by this marriage of ours! The shame of it! And the fright I'm in! And the way folks will laugh at the pair of us! *(pauses)* But this is something new for me, ass that I am—I'm ashamed, and I never was ashamed before. *(to audience)* Attention, now, while I give you an account of myself; it is worth your while to lend your ears. Oh, it's comical to hear of, and to tell of—the mess I made of things in there! When I led this bride of mine inside I took her straight off to a chamber. But it was dark as a dungeon. "Make yourself comfortable on the couch," says I, before the old man had come. I get her placed, put cushions back of her, soothe her, say soft things to her, so as to get ahead of the old man. I begin to slow down at once, since • • • I keep looking around for fear the old man • • • First, to make her feel
affectionate, I ask her for a nice long kiss. She pushed my arm away; not a bit of a nice long kiss would she let me give her. Now I get more urgent; now I'm more eager to have my Casina ● ● ● I long to make the old man take second place; I bolt the door so that he won't rush in and surprise me.

_Myrr._ (to Cleostrata) Come, now; you go up to him.
_Cleost._ (stepping out from the doorway) Where is your bride, for heaven's sake?

_Ol._ (half aside) Oh Lord! I'm done for! It's all out!
_Cleost._ Then you might as well make a clean breast of everything. What is going on inside? What is Casina doing? Is she duly compliant?

_Ol._ (in distress) I'm ashamed... to tell.
_Cleost._ Go on with your story as you had begun.
_Ol._ Oh Lord! I'm ashamed!
_Cleost._ Come, boldly now ● ● ● After you got on the couch—I want you to go on with the account from there ● ● ●

_Ol._ ● ● ● It's scandalous!
_Cleost._ (firmly) It will be a good lesson for those that hear you. ● ● ●

_Ol._ Oh, the shame of it!
_Cleost._ (impatient) Botheration! Why don't you go on?
_Ol._ When ● ● ● down below next ● ● ●
_Cleost._ Well?
_Ol._ Lord! Lord!
_Cleost._ Well?
_Ol._ Oh Lord!
_Cleost._ ● ● ● is it?
_Ol._ Oh, it was enormous! ● ● ● I was afraid she had...
CASINA

a sword; I began searching her * * * while I'm searching for her sword * * * to see if she has one, I got hold of a hilt. On second thoughts, though, she didn't have a sword, for that would have been cold.

Cleost. Go on.
Ol. But I'm ashamed to.
Cleost. It was not a radish, was it?
Ol. No.
Cleost. Or a cucumber?
Ol. Heavens! Certainly not! * * * No vegetable at all—at any rate, whatever it was, certainly no blight had ever touched it. It was full grown, whatever it was.

Ol. Then I call her by name: "Now, now, Casina," says I, "my own little wifey, what makes you so cruel to me, your own husband? Good heavens! I don't deserve to have you act so toward me, indeed I don't, just for trying to get you for myself." Not a word does she say, and pulls her clothes tight around the part of her body that—that makes a woman of you. When I see she's barricaded herself, I beg her not to be so awfully coy. So as to turn her toward me I want to use my arms and * * * a word does she breathe * * * I get up, to * * * her * * * and * * * her * * *

Myrr. (to Cleostrata) What a delightful raconteur * * *

A nice long kiss * * * and I get my lips punctured by a beard that's just like bristles, and the next instant, as I'm kneeling beside her, she rams both feet through my chest. I fall off the couch head
CASINA

first; up she jumps and batters my face for me. And then, without saying a word, I took to my heels and made for the door in the condition you see me, (savagely) so that the old man might have a dose from the same cup as myself.

Cleost. (grimly) Excellent! But where is that short cloak of yours?

Ol. I left it inside here.

Cleost. Well, now, were you two tripped up neatly enough?

Ol. (humble) Quite as we deserved. (starting) But the door creaked! She's not after me now, is she? (runs into Lysidamus's doorway: the rest follow)

ENTER Lysidamus IN GREAT DISTRESS, HIS CLOAK GONE AND HIS TUNIC TORN.

Lys. Oh, I'm burning with the hideous infamy of it; And I don't know what to do about it, or how to look my wife in the face—I'm so utterly done for! The whole disgraceful business is out! It's all up with me, absolutely, poor wretch that I am! * * * They have me by the throat, caught in the act * * * and how I can clear myself with my wife I don't know! * * * Oh dear, and my cloak gone! * * * a clandestine marriage! * * * I suppose * * * it's the best thing for me. * * * inside to my wife—(in agony) and let my back pay her damages! (to audience, hopefully) But is there anyone here who would
like to substitute for me?  (vainly waits for reply)
I don’t know what to do now—unless I imitate
rascally slaves and run for it. For there’s no
chance for my shoulders, once I go back home.
(thinking audience seem sceptical) Call that rubbish
if you like. But I do get beaten—Lord, I do!—
and I don’t like it, no matter if I have deserved
it. I’ll make down the street here this minute
and run for it.  (sets out past Alcesimus’s house)

ENTER Chalinus INTO DOORWAY, WITH Lysidamus’s
CANE AND CLOAK.

Scene 4.

Chal.  (calling) Hi! Stop right where you are, my
gallant!

Lys.  (aside, frightened) Oh murder! I’m called back!
I’ll keep on as if I didn’t hear.

Chal.  (roaring) Whereabouts are you—you that think to
practice Marseilles customs here?  (coyly, as Lysi-
damus stops in terror) Now if you want to fondle
me, sir, here’s a lovely chance. Come back to
the bedroom, please do.  (ferociously, swinging his
cane) It’s all up with you, by gad! Come on;
just you step this way. Now I’ll get hold of a
fair umpire (tapping his cane significantly) with you,
one not on the regular bench of judges.

Lys.  (aside) It’s all up with me! That fellow will be
depilating my middle shortly, with his club.
(turning round) I must go this way, for that way
I’m facing wreck amidships.  (makes off past his own
house. Cleostrata steps out, blocking his course)

Cleost. Good day to you, gallant.

Lys.  (aside, stopping) Oh! and here’s my wife facing
me! Wolves on one side, dogs on the other!
Omens! And the wolf omen does business with
a club! Heavens! I think I’ll change that old

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proverb now. I'll go this way; the dog omen will be the better, I hope. (pulls on a bold front, and tries to pass Cleostrata)

Myrr. (joining Cleostrata) What are you about, my twice-married sir?

Cleost. Where are you coming from in such a state, husband mine? What have you done with your cane? What has become of your cloak?

Myrr. He lost them, I dare say, while he was courting Casina.

Lys. (aside) This is deadly!

Chal. (tenderly) Shan't we go to our chamber again? I am Casina.

Lys. Go to the devil!

Chal. (sobbing) You don't... love me?

Cleost. Come, come, answer me. What has become of your cloak?

Lys. (floundering) Oh Lord, my dear, some Bacchantes—

Cleost. Bacchantes?

Lys. Oh Lord, my dear, some Bacchantes—

Myrr. That's nonsense, and he knows it. Why, goodness me, there are no Bacchante revels now.

Lys. (half aside) I forgot that, (aloud) but, just the same, some Bacchantes—

Cleost. What? Bacchantes?

Lys. (desperately) Well, if that's impossible——

Cleost. (affecting surprise) Good heavens, you're frightened.

Lys. I?

Cleost. You're lying, gracious, yes! Why, how pale you are. * * * why me * * * you ask me? * * * badly * * * to me * * * I congratulate. * * * old man * * * is Casinus * * *

1 Inter lupos et canes nulam salutem esse. "Twixt wolves and dogs no safety lies."
CASINA

Ol. * * * who's made a poor infamous man of me, as well, with his own outrageous actions.

Lys. (to Olympio in low tone) Won't you shut up?

Ol. (loudly) Indeed I won't shut up, by Jove? Why, you begged me your hardest to ask to marry Casina, all because you loved her yourself.

Lys. (blustering) I did that? I?

Ol. (sarcastically) Oh no, Hector of Troy——

Lys. (interrupting) Would have choked you off! I did those things you people say—I?

Cleost. You are still asking that? (advancing on him)

Lys. (cringing) Oh Lord! if I really did do it, I did wrong.

Cleost. (very stern) Just you go back inside here; I will refresh your memory if it fails you.

Lys. (retreating) Oh Lord! I think I'd rather take your word for all you say! (almost in tears) But do pardon your husband this time, my dear. Myrrhina, beg her to. If I ever make love to Casina after this, or as much as show a sign of it—let alone making love to her—if I ever do such a thing again, I give you leave to hang me up, my dear, and use a whip on me.

Myrr. (to Cleostrata) I really do think you ought to forgive him this time.

Cleost. Well, just as you say. (to Lysidamus) My reason, sir, for being less reluctant to rejoice you with my forgiveness, is that we may not make this long play longer.

Lys. (doubtful) You're not angry?

Cleost. No, I am not angry.

Lys. You give me your word on that?

Cleost. I do,
CASINA

Lys.  (overjoyed) Ah, there's not a living soul with a more delightful wife than this of mine!
Cleost. (to Chalinus) Come, you. Give him back his cane and cloak.
Chal. (doing so) Take 'em if you like. But by gad, I've been wronged, I've been horribly wronged; I married two men, and neither of 'em did a husband's duty by me.

EPILOGUE

Spectators, we will inform you of what is to take place inside. This Casina will prove to be the daughter of the gentleman who lives next door here (pointing to Alcesimus's house) and will marry our young master, Euthynicus. Now it is right for you to reward us duly with due applause. The man that does so shall always deceive his wife and have the mistress he desires; but the man that fails to clap us with all his might—there will be palmed off upon him, in place of his mistress, a goat scented with bilge water.

[Exeunt omnes.]