

The Rape of the Locks

POLEMON: Oh, how can I face her father? [*He hears someone coming, and dashes into his own house.*]

DORIS: Really! You'd think it was a disaster to hear a door opening. I'll go in myself, and do what I can to help. [*She goes into Polemon's house, as PATAIKOS and GLYKERA emerge from Myrthine's.*]

PATAIKOS: I'm delighted to hear you say you'll be friends again. To accept an honourable settlement when you're in a strong position—that's proof that you're a true Greek. Boy! Run in and call Polemon, quickly now.

POLEMON [*emerging from his house*]: I'm coming. I was just getting ready to celebrate Glykera's good fortune. I hear she's found her father.

PATAIKOS: Yes, she has. Now listen to me. I formally give her to you in marriage, to bear legitimate children—

POLEMON: I take her.

PATAIKOS:—and a handsome dowry with her.

POLEMON: That's very generous of you.

PATAIKOS: And in future, my friend, forget you're a soldier, and don't make any more sudden assaults.

POLEMON: Good God, no! When it's nearly been the death of me this time, am I likely to do anything like that again? I'll never criticize Glykera. Just say you forgive me, darling.

PATAIKOS: This time, anyway, your crazy action has been the start of happiness for us all.

POLEMON: Yes, true.

PATAIKOS: So you've got your forgiveness.

POLEMON: Come and help us celebrate, Pataikos.

PATAIKOS: Thank you, but I've got another wedding to arrange. I'm getting Philinos's daughter for my son. God . . .

The play is almost over, but the last few lines of the text are missing. Perhaps they contained an expression of gratitude to heaven from Pataikos.

The Shield

[Aspis]

Shield ~~not~~

Menander

Introductory Note to *The Shield*

This play has an (illusory) historical background. Kleostratos, we are told early in the text (ll. 23 ff.), has been fighting as a mercenary in Lycia (now part of South West Turkey), and those who, in Fragment 1, 'hold the citadel' are said to be in danger of assassination. Unfortunately, mercenary service, raids on Lycia and political assassination were only too common during most of Menander's lifetime, and the play cannot be dated.

Most of Acts One and Two, and the beginning of Act Three, survive. But the rest of Act Three is badly damaged, and only scrappy half-lines survive from Acts Four and Five. This makes criticism of the play difficult, for we cannot be sure precisely how Menander worked out his plot. That plot depends on an Athenian law¹ which declared that an unmarried daughter who was her deceased father's heiress, was *epikleros*, that is, that she went with the estate. Her nearest male relative had the right to marry her (and the estate), if necessary divorcing his present wife to do so. If he did not wish to marry the heiress, it was his duty to arrange her marriage with someone else, and to provide a dowry for that purpose.

This situation provides Menander with the possibilities of a lively and complicated plot. The (postponed) prologue ensures that the audience can enjoy the plot's twists and turns, in full confidence that all will eventually be well; Kleostratos is not really dead, and Smikrines will get his come-uppance. The play contains several very lively scenes. But the characters seem to lack the subtlety, and the situations some of the irony, that we have come to expect from Menander: the plotting in Act Two is sudden rather than economical; the observation of human nature is less penetrating than usual, and the play seems to lack the depth that usually lies behind Menander's comedy. Perhaps he wrote in a hurry; perhaps he had an off-day; or perhaps we are judging him on insufficient evidence.

CHARACTERS

KLEOSTRATOS, a young Athenian gentleman
 DAOS, his former tutor
 SMIKRINES, his uncle, a miser
 CHAIRESTRATOS, another uncle, younger brother of Smikrines
 CHAIREAS, a young man, stepson of Chairastratos
 A DOCTOR, who is actually a friend of Chairastratos's in disguise
 A COOK
 A WAITER
 CHANCE, a goddess

ACT ONE

SCENE: a street in Athens. There are two houses, one that of Smikrines, the other that of Chairastratos.

[Enter DAOS, left, carrying Kleostratos's shield, and accompanied by prisoners of war, and by mules carrying treasures which are the spoils of war. He apostrophizes his young master, whom he believes to be dead, and is overheard by SMIKRINES, who probably comes out of his house.]

DAOS [*sadly*]: Oh, sir! Every day is a sad day for me now, and life's balance sheet is not at all what I hoped it would be when I set out. For I thought you'd come safely back from the war, a hero, and that you'd live the rest of your life in some style, with the title of General or Privy Counsellor. And your sister, for whose sake you enlisted,² would marry a man you approved of, when you'd come home to those who loved you. For myself, I thought there would be rest from long labour, as I grew old, in return for my services to you. Instead, you're gone, Kleostratos, snatched away by death against all expectation; and I, your tutor, have come home with this shield, which failed to save you, though you often brought it safely back from battle. For you were a brave man, bravest of the brave.

SMIKRINES: Ah, Daos, little did we think --

DAOS: It's a tragedy.

SMIKRINES: How did he die? What happened?

DAOS: For a soldier, Smikrines, finding Cause of Death is easy. It's survival that's difficult. 20

SMIKRINES: Still, tell me the story, Daos, please.

DAOS: Well, there's a river in Lycia called the Xanthos, and we'd been lucky there in a fair number of actions. The natives had been routed, and had abandoned the plain. It looks now as if continuous success is dangerous -- when you've taken a tumble, you're more careful. Confidence made us careless, and led us into a trap. Many men had actually left the protection of the camp, and were looting the villages, burning crops and selling booty. Everyone came back with his pockets full. 30

SMIKRINES: Lovely!

DAOS: My master had a collection of some six hundred gold coins,

and a fair number of silver cups, and that bunch of prisoners that you see over there. He was sending me over to Rhodes, and told me to leave it all with a friend, and come straight back to him.

SMIRINES: What happened then?

40 DAOS: I was on my way at dawn. But on that very day, the natives, quite unbeknown to our scouts, occupied a hill in front of us, and dug themselves in: they had heard from some deserters that our forces were scattered. Well, when evening came, and all those in the camp were in their tents, after returning from a countryside that offered plenty of booty, the inevitable happened – most of them were celebrating.

SMIRINES: How shocking!

50 DAOS: Yes, it was, for there was a surprise attack, I think.

Three lines are missing or mutilated. Daos must have explained that he had travelled some distance from the main camp and pitched his own.

DAOS: . . . then, round about midnight, when I was standing guard over the money and the slaves, walking up and down in front of the tent, I heard a noise – howling, running, wailing, men shouting one another's names. That told me what had happened. Fortunately, there was a little hill there, a possible strong point. We all flocked up to it, and a stream of wounded joined us – cavalry, special assault troops and regular infantry.

SMIRINES: How lucky for you that you'd been sent away!

60 DAOS: At dawn, we built a palisade, and there we stayed. And those who'd been scattered in the raids I mentioned kept trickling back to join us. After three days, we started out again, for we'd heard that the Lycians were taking their prisoners to the hill-villages.

SMIRINES: Did you find our friend among the fallen?

70 DAOS: It wasn't possible to identify the body with any certainty. They'd been lying out for four days, and their faces were all bloated.

SMIRINES: Then how can you be sure that he's dead?

80 DAOS: He was lying there with his shield. It was all buckled, and I imagine that's why none of the natives had appropriated it. Our noble captain banned all individual cremations, for he realized it would take too much time to gather every man's bones separately. So he had them all heaped together and burned, then, after a quick committal, he promptly broke camp. We slipped away to Rhodes first, then after a few days we sailed here. That's the whole story.

SMIRINES: You've got six hundred gold coins, you say?

DAOS: Yes.

SMIRINES: And silver cups, too?

DAOS: About sixteen kilograms in weight, no more. Your inheritance.

SMIRINES: You don't suppose that's why I'm so interested, do you? Heavens, no! Was all the rest taken?

90 DAOS: Most of it, except what I got my hands on first. There are some gowns and cloaks, and this group of captives here – they belong to you.

SMIRINES: They're of no interest to me. I'd rather have Kleostratos alive. 90

DAOS [*sadly*]: Yes, indeed. We'd better go in and tell the sad story to those it will affect most.

SMIRINES: I'll want a word with you, Daos, when you've time. [DAOS and the attendants go into Chairestratos's house.] And now, I think I'd better go inside too, to work out the most considerate way of dealing with the family. [*He goes into his own house.*]

[*Enter, right, the goddess CHANCE.*]

CHANCE: Well now, if something unpleasant had really happened to these people, I couldn't be the next to appear, for I'm a goddess. But in fact they're mistaken, quite led astray, as anyone who pays attention to me will soon discover. 100

A few lines are missing here, but it becomes clear that Kleostratos had a friend, a fellow-soldier, who shared his tent.

When the natives attacked the camp, and the 'stand-to' was sounding continuously, everyone rushed out to the rescue with any arms that lay to hand. And that's how Kleostratos's tent-mate came to rush out with the shield you've just seen. He fell immediately. And with the shield lying there among the corpses, and the young man's body decomposing, Daos here made a mistake. Kleostratos fought in the defence with borrowed arms, and was taken prisoner. He's alive, and he'll come back safely, quite soon now. 110

Well, you've been properly briefed now on that. The old chap who was asking all the questions just now, is Kleostratos's uncle on his father's side, and a real villain, biggest twister in the world. He takes no account of the claims of relatives or friends, never gives a thought to the wickedness of his life. He wants everything for himself. That's his one idea. He lives alone, with an old crone as his housekeeper. Where the servant went in next door [*pointing*], that's the house of Money-grubber's younger brother. He's the young man's uncle too, but he's a good man as well as a rich one. 120

He's married, with one daughter. When the young man went abroad, he left his sister in this uncle's care, and the two girls have been brought up together.

He's a good man, as I said, and when he realized that Kleostratos was likely to be away for a considerable time, and that they had little money of their own, he was going to arrange the girl's marriage to his stepson (that's his wife's son by a former marriage), and he was going to provide a substantial dowry. The wedding was to be today, but what has happened now will upset everything. Our villain, who heard just now about the six hundred gold pieces, and got a look at the foreign slaves, pack-mules and girls, will want to have the heiress himself; and his age gives him a prior claim. But he won't succeed! He'll cause a great deal of trouble, and show the whole world what he's really like – and then he'll be back where he started.

Oh, I haven't told you my name. I'm the Controller and Director of this whole story. I'm called Chance. [*She goes off, right.*]

SMIRINES [*Emerging from his house*]: To make sure no one can say that I'm feathering my nest, I didn't check the amount of gold he's brought, nor the number of silver cups, didn't count anything, just stood aside and let them take it in here [*pointing to his brother's house*]. They're always casting aspersions on me. Well, the accuracy of the count is guaranteed as long as those transporting the goods are slaves.⁴ In any case, I imagine that they will be willing to abide by law and justice. If they don't, they won't get away with it! This wedding they're arranging – I'm going to give them notice to call it off. Perhaps it's pointless even to mention it, no one thinks of weddings when news like this has just arrived. Still, I'll just knock at the door and call Daos out. He's the only one likely to pay any attention to me.

[*As he approaches Chairestratos's house, DAOS emerges from it, talking back over his shoulder.*]

DAOS: You have every excuse for behaving like this. But in the circumstances, you must try and bear what has happened like reasonable human beings.

SMIRINES: Ah, Daos, it's you I've come to see.

DAOS: Me?

SMIRINES: Yes, certainly. I wish Kleostratos were still alive; he would have been the right man to deal with the treasure, and be the lawful heir of all my property after my death.

DAOS: I wish it too. So?

SMIRINES: Well, I'm the eldest of the family. I'm always being

insulted, and seeing my brother put me down. But I put up with it.

DAOS [*drily*]: Very sensible of you.

SMIRINES: Well, but look! He's not even reasonable. He treats me like a family servant, or a bastard, arranging this marriage, giving the girl to God knows who; no consultation, never a word to me, though I'm her uncle as much as he is.

DAOS: Yes?

SMIRINES: I see all that, and it makes me cross. He's not treating me as a member of the family. Well, I'll do the same. I'll leave no property of mine for them to get their hands on. I'll take the advice of some of my friends, and marry the girl myself. That's more or less, I think, Daos, what the law prescribes. So you should have been thinking, too, how to do this properly. After all, you're involved.⁵

DAOS: Smirines, I think the old saying 'know yourself' enshrines a profound truth. Let me stand by it. Anything that concerns an honest servant, you can refer to me and question me about.

One or two lines are missing, and the next five lines are damaged. Daos seems to be explaining the limits of his knowledge and helpfulness.

... any seals, contracts he made when abroad – all that I can tell you. If so instructed, I can explain them one by one, giving place, occasion, witness. But property, and marriage to an heiress, and family, and differences of relationship – heavens, Smirines, don't ever involve Daos in that. You're free men, you deal with that yourselves.

SMIRINES: For heaven's sake! Do you think I'm doing anything wrong?

DAOS: I come from Phrygia. Many things that you Athenians approve of seem shocking to me – and vice versa. Why ask for my opinion? Yours is naturally better than mine.

SMIRINES: What in effect you're saying is, 'Don't involve me'. I see. I'd better go down town and see if I can find one of them [*nodding towards Chairestratos's house*] – if there's no one at home?

DAOS: No, no one. [*SMIRINES goes off, right.*] Really, Chance, what a master you're giving me, after the one I had. What harm have I done you?

[*Enter COOK, from Chairestratos's house, with assistants.*]

COOK: Every time I get a job, either somebody dies and I have to shuffle off without my wages, or one of the daughters produces a

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baby that no one knew about, and suddenly the party's over and I have to be off. Fine luck I have!

220 DAOS: Oh, go away.

COOK: What do you think I'm doing? Here, boy, take the knives, smartly now. After ten days without work, I landed this three-drach job, and this time I thought I'd got the money. Now a corpse arrives from Lycia and steals the lot. [To boy] You useless object! A tragedy like this happens to a family, you see women crying and beating their breasts – and still you leave with an empty flask.⁶ Just remember the chance you had. No Spark you, it's a Sea-Green Incorruptible I've got, an honest assistant. I'll see you get no dinner. The waiter [looks round] – perhaps he's waiting for the funeral tea. [He goes off, right.]

230 WAITER [entering from Chairestratos's house]: If I don't get my wages, I'll be cut up as much as you are.

DAOS: Go on!

Four or five lines are missing or damaged. The waiter seems to be asking Daos about his return from Lycia.

DAOS: Absolutely!

240 WAITER: Then be damned to you, if that's what you did. You're mad. You had your hands on all that gold and slaves, and you brought it all back 'for Master'? Why didn't you run away? Where'd you come from?

DAOS: From Phrygia.

WAITER: Then you're no good, you're a queer. Only Thracians are real men. Getans – God, what heroes! That's why the gaols are full of us.

DAOS: Take yourself off, away from our door. [WAITER goes off, right.] There's another lot coming here, I see, all pretty drunk. Well, [addressing them as he goes into the house] you're very sensible. You never know, with luck. Enjoy yourselves while you can.

FIRST CHORAL INTERLUDE

ACT TWO

[Enter SMIKRINES and CHAIRESTRATOS, right, with CHAIRBAS, who remains in the background until the others leave the stage.]

SMIKRINES: Well, what do you say to that, Chairestratos?

250 CHAIRESTRATOS: My good brother, first of all I've got to make arrangements for the funeral.

SMIKRINES: That's as good as done. Afterwards, don't promise the girl to anyone. That's not your business, it's mine. I'm older than you, and you've got a wife and daughter. I must now get the same.

CHAIRESTRATOS: Have you no sense of decency, Smikrines?

SMIKRINES: What do you mean?

CHAIRESTRATOS: A man of your age, proposing to marry a young girl.

SMIKRINES: My age?

CHAIRESTRATOS: I think you're very old.

SMIKRINES: Am I the only man to marry later in life?

260 CHAIRESTRATOS: For heaven's sake, Smikrines, show some human feeling. Chaireas here, who's engaged to marry the girl, has grown up with her. Listen! You'll not be the loser. All the property that Kleostratos left, take it, every bit of it. It'll be legally yours, a gift from us. But let the girl find a husband of her own age. I'll provide a substantial dowry from my own pocket.

SMIKRINES: God in heaven! Do you think you're talking to Simple Simon? You suggest I take the property and let him have the girl – so that, if she has a child, I can be brought to court on a charge of keeping the child's property?

CHAIRESTRATOS: You think we'd do that? Forget it!

SMIKRINES: Think? I know! You send Daos to me. I want a full inventory of the goods he brought.

CHAIRESTRATOS: What's the point of that? What on earth should I have done . . .⁸

Three lines are missing here. Smikrines probably persisted in his attitude, and went into his house.

CHAIRESTRATOS [to CHAIRBAS]: I always intended that you should marry her, and that Kleostratos should marry my daughter, and

I'd leave my property between you. I hope I may depart this life soon, before I see what I never thought to see. *[He goes into his house.]*

CHAIREAS *[sighing]*: Oh, well. First of all, Kleostratos, it's perhaps proper to express my pity and sorrow for your sad fate: and then for my own. Not one of your family has suffered as I have. I didn't choose to fall in love with your sister, best-beloved of friends; I did nothing rash, or out of place, or wrong; I asked for her hand in proper form, from the uncle you made her guardian and from my mother who is looking after her. I thought I was a happy man, I really thought I'd reached the boundary of bliss. And now I can't even see her again. The law gives her to another, and judges my claim null and void.

DAOS *[entering from Chairestratos's house and speaking back over his shoulder]*: Chairestratos, this isn't right. Get up! You can't just lie there in despair. Chaireas, come and comfort him, don't let him give way. The future of us all may depend on him. No, open the door, Chairestratos, and make an appearance. Don't let your friends down. It's not like you to behave like this. *[Chairestratos is helped out to a seat.]*

CHAIRESTRATOS: I'm in a bad way, Daos, my boy. All this has made me very depressed. I swear I'm not in my right mind, I'm practically demented. My precious brother is driving me distracted by his scandalous behaviour. He's going to marry the girl himself.

DAOS: Did you say *marry*? Can he?

CHAIRESTRATOS: So says our fine gentleman, even though I'm offering him all that the boy sent home.

DAOS: The devil!

CHAIRESTRATOS: Devil indeed. I'll end my life, by God I will, if I see it happen.

DAOS: So how's the devil to be out-manoeuvred? It won't be easy, not easy at all. But perhaps it can be done.

CHAIRESTRATOS: Perhaps. It's certainly worth the effort.

DAOS: I tell you, if a man once starts . . .

The next five lines are missing or mutilated, but in them Daos apparently began to suggest a plan to outwit Smikrines.

. . . Give him the hope of getting more than you offered – that'll bring him down full-tilt, all excited and all on the wrong tack.⁹ You'll see! And then you'll easily deal with him. He only sees and thinks about what he wants. He'll be a poor judge of reality.

CHAIRESTRATOS: So what do you suggest? I'm ready to do anything you like.

DAOS: You must put on a great tragic act. What you said just now must seem to be true – that you've fallen into a depression because of what's happened to young Kleostratos and to his promised bride, and because you see Chaireas, whom you've always thought of as your son, sunk in gloom. So you've fallen into one of these sudden afflictions. Grief is a very common cause of illness, and I'm well aware that you've got a bitter, melancholic side to you. Then we'll send for a doctor, who'll display his learning and diagnose your trouble as pleurisy, or phrenitis, or one of these quick-killing diseases.

CHAIRESTRATOS: And then?

DAOS: Then you're suddenly dead. We shout, 'Chairestratos is gone', and weep and wail outside the door. You're locked up inside. Then a dummy, wrapped up to look like your corpse, will lie in state –

CHAIRESTRATOS *[to Chaireas]*: Do you understand what he's getting at?

CHAIREAS: Heavens, no.

CHAIRESTRATOS: Me neither.

DAOS: Then your daughter becomes an heiress, just like the girl whose case is at issue. But there'll be this difference: your daughter will have a larger fortune than your niece. And old Greedy-for-Gain stands in the same relationship to both girls –

CHAIRESTRATOS: Now I get it!

DAOS: You're thick if you don't. He'll promptly be delighted to give your niece, before any number of witnesses, to the first man who asks for her hand, and he'll take your daughter –

CHAIRESTRATOS *[grimly]*: He'll live to regret the idea.

DAOS: He'll organize the whole house, go his rounds with the keys, fix seals on doors, in a perfect daze of a dream of wealth.

CHAIRESTRATOS: And what about my 'corpse'?

DAOS: There it will lie, and we'll all sit round it and make sure he doesn't come too close.

The next ten lines are badly damaged, but enough remains to give some sort of sense. Chairestratos is being promised the chance to get his own back.

CHAIRESTRATOS: Your scheme's great, Daos, just what I need.

DAOS: Well, you couldn't get your own back on the old villain more satisfactorily.

CHAIRESTRATOS: I'll make him pay, I swear to God I will, and pay

dearly, for all the trouble he's ever caused me. It's true what they say, 'The wolf's jaws are open, but he'll go away hungry.'

DAOS: Action's what we need now. Chairreas, do you know any foreign doctor who'll see a joke?¹⁰ A bit of a quack?

CHAIRREAS: Not one.

DAOS [*crossly*]: Well, you should.

CHAIRREAS: Suppose I go and get one of my friends? I'll bring a wig and a cloak and a stick for him, and he'll do his best to talk with a foreign accent.

DAOS: Right. But be quick about it. [*CHAIRREAS goes off, right.*]

CHAIRSTRATOS: And what do I do?

DAOS: What we planned. Have a good death!

CHAIRSTRATOS: Right. Don't let anyone leave the house. Stand guard, and keep our secret.

DAOS: Who'll be in the plot?

CHAIRSTRATOS: Only my wife and the two girls. They'll have to be told, or they'll be in floods of real tears. Let the rest of the household insult me when they think I am dead.

DAOS: Right. [*To servants*] Take him in again. [*They do so.*] Our 'tragedy' is going to provide fine fun and excitement, if it once gets going, and if our 'doctor' performs with some conviction. [*He goes into the house.*]

SECOND CHORAL INTERLUDE

ACT THREE

SMIKRINES [*emerging from his house and speaking sarcastically*]: Daos has been really quick about coming to see me with the inventory of the goods. Great consideration he's shown for me! Daos is on their side. Well, fine. He's done me a favour, for he's provided me with a most welcome excuse to scrutinize the list without any feelings of altruism, but looking only to my own interests. I'm sure there's as much again that he's not declaring. I know the ways of this tricky customer.

DAOS [*emerging from Chairreas's house, and pretending not to see SMIKRINES*]: Oh, God! A really dreadful thing has happened. I'd never have believed a man could succumb so suddenly to such an illness. It's as if a violent hurricane had struck the house.

SMIKRINES: What on earth is he talking about?

Five lines are missing or seriously damaged. Daos is striking tragic attitudes and uttering tragic quotations.

DAOS: 'No man alive e'er prospers over all.'¹¹ Again, marvellously true. Dear God, this is an unexpected and grievous blow. [*He moves rapidly right.*]

SMIKRINES: Daos, you devil, where are you going at such a trot?

DAOS [*ignoring him*]: Then there's this one: 'Man's life's not Providence, but Chance.'¹² How true. 'God plants guilt-sense in mortal men, when he will blight a house to all eternity.'¹³ Aeschylus, of noble sentiments the -

SMIKRINES: 'Full of wise saws' - you miserable rubbish?

DAOS [*still ignoring him*]: 'Incredible, irrational, dire.'¹⁴

SMIKRINES: Will he never stop?

DAOS: [*Finally condescending to see SMIKRINES, but continuing in tragic vein*]: 'Is there aught in mortal suffering that's past belief?' That's what Karkinos says.¹⁵ 'For in one day can God bring happiness to misery.' Great truths, all of these, Smikrines.

SMIKRINES: What are you talking about?

DAOS: Your brother - O God, how can I tell you? - is near to death.

SMIKRINES: But he was talking to me just now! What happened?

DAOS: Bile, grief, a mental spasm, choking.

SMIKRINES: God, how awful!

DAOS: 'There is no word so dread to tell, no suffering' ¹⁶ -

SMIKRINES: You're wearing me out.

DAOS: 'For tragedy, so God ordained, should strike unseen' - one's from Euripides, the other from Chairemon, not exactly your everyday poets.

SMIKRINES: Has a doctor seen him?

DAOS: No, Chaireas has just gone to get one.

SMIKRINES: Which one?

[Enter CHAIREAS, right, with the 'DOCTOR' and his attendants.]

DAOS [pointing]: This one, apparently. [To DOCTOR] Dear sir, do hurry.

DOCTOR: I am hurrying. ¹⁷

DAOS: 'The sick are helpless, and so hard to please.' ¹⁸

[All but SMIKRINES go into Chairestratos's house.]

SMIKRINES: If they see me, they'll say I've come at once because I'm pleased, I'm sure of that. And he won't want to see me either. But it would be odd if I didn't even ask . . .

Sixteen lines or so are missing, during which the Doctor and his attendants obviously emerged from the house, to report on Chairestratos's condition to Smitrines. The next thirty lines are damaged, but enough remains to give the general sense, and to show that the Doctor, like most Greek doctors, was (in his case, pretending to be) a Dorian Greek and, like most doctors in Comedy, speaking in stage Doric, the ancient equivalent of stage Scots. Roll the 'r's and broaden the vowels.

440 DOCTOR: . . . his bile . . . because of his present weakness.

SMIKRINES: I quite understand.

DOCTOR: His brain, in my opinion, is inflamed. 'Phrenitis' we doctors call it.

SMIKRINES: I see. And the prognosis? Is there no hope at all of recovery?

DOCTOR: I mauna offer ye fause comfort. Sic' maladies are mortal.

SMIKRINES: No, no comfort, just the truth.

DOCTOR: He canna leave at a', I tell ye. He's bringin' up bile, his sight's failin', he's foamin' at the mouth, he looks set for burial.

SMIKRINES: How awful! ¹⁹

DOCTOR [to attendant]: On oor way, lad. [They move right.]

SMIKRINES: Hey, you!

DOCTOR: Me?

SMIKRINES: Yes, you. Come over here, away from the door.

DOCTOR [looking closely at SMIKRINES]: Ye'll no' be long for this world.

SMIKRINES: Rubbish! You should pray for a constitution like mine.

There are plenty of non-fatal diseases.

DOCTOR: Aye, laugh. But I ken ma ain trade, an' I think ye're no a weel man. There's a consumption on ye, ye look just like death.

[He goes off right, with attendant.]

SMIKRINES: I suppose the women are looting in there, like soldiers sacking an enemy city. Communication with the neighbours will be by the water-channels. ²⁰

[Enter DAOS, from Chairestratos's house.]

DAOS [aside]: I'll stir him up! As I was doing . . .

The rest of the act is lost, some two hundred lines of it. Daos clearly intends to tease Smitrines, and Smitrines presumably decided to marry Chairestratos's daughter instead of Kleostratos's sister - this being the object of the plot outlined at the end of Act Two. There would then be the choral interlude.

[THIRD CHORAL INTERLUDE]

ACT FOUR

Very little of this act remains, and what does is badly damaged. Smikrines seems to be agreeing to the betrothal of Kleostratos's sister to another – presumably Chairéas. They leave the stage.

[Enter KLEOSTRATOS, left²¹]

491 KLEOSTRATOS: Beloved land! I thank heaven for my return. Here I am, looking at what I longed for. And if Daos got clear, then I'd rank myself the happiest of men. I must knock at the door. [He does so.]

DAOS [inside]: Who's there?

KLEOSTRATOS: Me.

500 DAOS [inside]: Who do you want? The master of the house is recently dead.

KLEOSTRATOS: Dead? How dreadful.

DAOS [inside]: You shouldn't be disturbing a house in mourning.

KLEOSTRATOS: My poor uncle. Open the door, fellow.

DAOS [opening door]: Go away, young man. [As he recognizes him] God in heaven, it's my master.

KLEOSTRATOS: What's this story, Daos?

DAOS: Let me touch you! [They embrace, and go together into Kleostratos's house, where all will be revealed.] At some point there would be the next choral interlude.

[FOURTH CHORAL INTERLUDE]

ACT FIVE

This is even more badly damaged. The ends of some twenty-nine lines only survive, and they suggest that someone – Daos? – is relating the betrothal of the two girls to the two young men; that perhaps the Cook is summoned back to prepare the wedding-feast; and that Daos and the Cook may have conspired to punish Smikrines, as similar characters do at the end of Old Cantankerous. Certainty is impossible, but it can be safely assumed that, somehow, the Jacks got their jills, and that Smikrines got his deserts.

Five fragments of this play have come to us from other sources. None can be placed in the text with any certainty, and three of the quotations are of single words, and one of three words only. But one is worth quoting, from Stobaeus, Eclogues, 4, 8, 7. It is clearly occasioned by Smikrines' behaviour, and refers to political assassination, but the precise occasion and reference are beyond recovery.

Fragment 1

O thrice unhappy men, what advantage do they have over others? What a wretched life they live, who guard the forts or hold the citadell! If they suspect that everyone can approach them so easily, dagger in hand, what a price they pay!

6. Both the form of the saying, and its exact meaning, are doubtful.
7. The text of this line is uncertain.
8. The text is fragmentary, but the words that survive are significant, and the general sense is clear.
9. The text is damaged, but the general sense is clear.
10. See note 9.
11. Some line endings are damaged, but the sense is clear.
12. See *The Girl from Samos*, note 4.

The Shield

1. See A. R. W. Harrison, *The Law of Athens* (Oxford, 1968), pp. 10-12, 132f.
2. He wanted to win enough to provide for her dowry.
3. A few lines are damaged here, but the sense is clear.
4. Because they had no self-interest to serve. And as their evidence would be accepted only under torture, it was thought to be reliable.
5. Because Daos would also be inherited as part of Kleostratos's estate.
6. He has not stolen any oil. Cooks were proverbial thieves.
7. An heiress's inheritance had to be kept in trust for her children.
8. The text is damaged here.
9. An approximation of the sense, based on the words that survive.
10. The great medical schools of the ancient world were in areas where Doric, not Attic (Athenian) Greek was spoken. And doctors were old-established comic figures.
11. The opening line of Euripides' *Sthenobolia*. See Aristophanes, *Frogs* 1217.
12. From Chairemon's *Achilles, Killer of Thersites*. See *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 1970, 22f.
13. From Aeschylus's *Niohe*. See Plato, *Republic* 380a.
14. The source is unknown, but the language is tragic.
15. A fourth-century tragedian. See *Hermes* 1954, 300f.
16. The opening line of Euripides' *Orestes*.
17. There is an indication only of a brief reply here.
18. Euripides, *Orestes*, 232.
19. A short comment of this kind is clearly missing from the text.
20. The exact meaning of the allusion is lost to us. But Smitkrines' suspicious nature is clear.
21. Enough text remains to produce an approximation of the dialogue.

The Silyonion

1. Silyon was (and is) a town on the south side of the Gulf of Corinth. Until the action of the play begins, Stratophanes has thought himself to be a native of this town, and he is the Silyonian of the title.
2. See Introduction, p. 15 and E. W. Handley in *BICS* 12 (1965), 38.
3. Literally, a man who eats at someone else's table. The parasite made a living by attaching himself to a wealthy man and, in return for small services and agreeing with everything his patron said, being fed at his patron's table.
4. The Prologue is damaged, but it is clearly spoken by a god (no human character could know all these facts) and its general tenor is clear.
5. Now part of Turkey.
6. Probably Stratophanes.
7. Cf. *Old Comians* 1.46.
8. Various Greek states had agreed terms for the settlement of disputes between their nationals. Boeotia was the territory immediately north-west of Attica.
9. That is, an Athenian citizen.
10. Because of the gaps in the text, it is not clear which act's ending is indicated here. However, a numeral in the papyrus makes it clear that the next section begins with Act Four.
11. Resident foreigners in Athens clearly had to guard their tongues in the community that allowed them in.
12. The speech has links of style and content with that in Euripides, *Orestes* 866 ff. The first few lines are damaged, but the sense is clear.
13. The animal would be sacrificed, its entrails given to the god, and the rest eaten by the male members of the community.
14. 'The Eleusinian' distinguishes him from any other Athenian who might have the (relatively common) name of Bleps.
15. Any citizen had the right to arrest a kidnapper caught in the act.
16. The text is damaged from here to the end of the act, and only approximate translation is possible.
17. This was the 'family' name of one of the districts of Athens.
18. The text is damaged, but the general sense is clear.
19. The text is damaged here.

The Man She Hated

1. The latest (so far) of these was first published in 1977, and so does not appear in the Oxford Classical Text. My translation of it is based on