

FRAGMENTS:

The Farmer

The Toady

The Harpist

The Hero

The Phantom

The Girl Possessed

The Girl From Perinthos

The Farmer

[Georgos]

Introductory Note to *The Farmer*

This play is of particular interest, as the major portion of what survives (ll. 1-87 of the Oxford Classical Text) was the first sizeable fragment of Menander's work to be discovered and published.¹ Three more tiny pieces of papyrus confirm or slightly extend our text, and there are also some short quotations from ancient authors. But the Geneva papyrus remains our major source of information. It starts in the middle of a monologue by a young man (who sounds like a Moschion), and reveals what is in many respects a standard situation of New Comedy. He has got his neighbour Myrrhine's daughter pregnant, the baby is due, he has not been able to arrange the marriage, and he is now faced with a different marriage arranged for him by his father. The dialogue which follows reinforces this information, and produces a further complication in the offer by Kleainetos (the farmer of the title) to marry the girl.

All this clearly comes early in the action of the play. There is an indication of an act division soon after the end of the dialogue: it is probably, though not certainly, the end of Act One. The confusion must have been resolved, and the desired marriage duly arranged, but we can only guess how this was done. Perhaps Kleainetos turned out to be Myrrhine's long-lost husband, and so the father of the girl? There is contrast in the play between relative riches (the Young Man and Kleainetos) and respectable poverty (Myrrhine and Gorgias--the same names and situation as, but very different characters from, those in *Old Cantankerous*), and some general moral reflections are drawn from that. But we need more information to produce any certainty about plot development. Meantime, the interest of the fragment is in its presentation of another variation on a theme and on character names.

CHARACTERS

A YOUNG MAN, possibly called MOSCHION
 MYRRHINE, his neighbour, perhaps a widow
 PHILINNA, an old woman, perhaps a nurse
 DAOS } servants to the Young Man's father
 SYROS }
 GORGIAS, Myrrhine's son
 KLEAINETOS, a farmer
The Young man's FATHER probably also appeared.

ACT ONE

SCENE: a street, possibly in Athens. There are two houses, Myrrhine's on the left, and that of the Young Man's father on the right.

The Young Man is speaking. The beginning of his speech is lost.

YOUNG MAN: . . . I went to her mother,² did all the right things, without any qualms at all. I was no villain, and no one thought I was. But with the boy³ still out at the farm, a blow fell which has finished me. I was off in Corinth on private business, and I come back in the evening to find a *different* marriage being organized for me – garlands being put on the gods, my father making the proper offerings inside.⁴ My father himself is giving away the bride – she's my half-sister, daughter of his present wife.⁵ How to struggle out of this disastrous coil I have no idea. But the position's this: I've slipped⁶ out of the house without a word, and abandoned the wedding – I couldn't do that to my darling. That would be unforgivable.

I've every intention of knocking at their door, but I've been hesitating for ages. I don't know if her brother's home from the farm now. I must be very careful. Well, I'll take myself off and work out a way to dodge that wedding. [*He goes off, left, as*

MYRRHINE and PHILINNA enter, right.]

MYRRHINE: You're sympathetic, Philinna, that's why I'm talking to you, and telling you all my problems. Well, that's where we are now.

PHILINNA: Heavens, my dear, as I listen to your story I can hardly stop myself from going to the door and calling out this deceiver and telling him what I think of him.

MYRRHINE: Please don't, Philinna. Let it be.

PHILINNA: Let it be? You can't mean it. Damn him, he's a villain. And is this scum to contract a marriage, after he's ruined our girl?

[*Enter DAOS and SYROS, left, carrying branches of green leaves.*]

MYRRHINE: Here's Daos, their servant, back from the farm with all these branches he's been cutting.⁷ Let's move over here a bit.

PHILINNA: Why should we worry about him? That'll be the day! [*They move aside.*]

40 DAOS: I don't think anyone farms a piece of land with a better idea of its religious obligations. It produces myrtle, lovely ivy, such flowers! But plant anything else, and it gives a due and proper return, no surplus, just the average. Still -- Syros, take all this stuff inside, it's all for the wedding. [*As SYROS does so, DAOS sees MYRRHINE.*]

MYRRHINE: Good morning to you.

DAOS: I didn't see you, madam. How are you? I want to give you a taste of good news or rather, God willing, of good fortune to come. I want to be the first to tell you. Well now, Kleainetos -- where your youngster's working -- when he was hoeing in his vineyard the other day, he gashed his leg. Right job he made of it, too.

MYRRHINE: Oh, dear.

50 DAOS: Not to worry. Just listen to the rest of the story. Two days later, the old chap's groin was all swollen from the wound, and he was feverish, in a real bad way.

PHILINNA: Well, for heaven's sake! Is this the 'good news' you've come to tell us?

MYRRHINE: Don't interrupt, Philinna.

60 DAOS: So he needed someone to look after him. The servants -- and he has no one else -- are all foreigners, and they consigned him to the devil. But your son, treating him like his own father, did what was necessary. He put ointment on his leg, rubbed him down, washed him, brought him food and cheered him up. The farmer looked to be in a pretty bad way, but your son's treatment got him on his feet again.

PHILINNA: The dear boy!

70 DAOS: Oh, yes, well done that man. As Kleainetos recovered at home and was able to relax, away from his mattock and his troubles -- for the old chap has a pretty hard life -- he asked about the boy's position (though perhaps he had some idea of it already). Anyhow, the boy confided in him, and told him about his sister, and how you weren't well off.⁸ The old man sympathized, as people do, and thought he must on all counts repay his debt for your son's attention. He's old and lonely, and he showed sense, for he plans to marry your daughter. That's the sun and substance of the whole story. They'll be here any minute, and he'll take her off to the farm. You can all stop your struggle with poverty -- which is a stubborn, cantankerous beast, especially in the city. One should either be rich, I think, or live where there's no one to witness one's misfortune. Country solitude's the answer to this

problem. Well, that was the good news I wanted to bring you. Goodbye.

MYRRHINE [*faintly*]: Goodbye. [*DAOS goes into the house.*]

PHILINNA: What's wrong, my dear? Why are you walking about wringing your hands?

MYRRHINE: Oh, Philinna, I don't know what to do.

PHILINNA: What about?

MYRRHINE: Her baby's due, my dear, any minute now!

Only scraps remain of the rest of the scene (nine more lines). It is fairly clear that Myrrhine and Philinna go into Myrrhine's house, and that there is a Choral Interlude. The remains of the next act are even more scrappy, but indicate a conversation between Gorgias and Philinna, and the cries that signify the birth of a baby within. Apart from the following fragments, which cannot confidently be assigned to any particular part of the play, that is all we have.

FRAGMENT 1

(?) KLEAINETOS: It's easy to treat a poor man with contempt, Gorgias, even if his cause is absolutely just. For he's thought to be speaking with one motive only -- gain. Anyone with a shabby coat is promptly dubbed 'twister' -- even if he's the injured party.

FRAGMENT 2

(?) KLEAINETOS or DAOS: The man, whoever he is, who's done damage to your poverty, is heading for trouble. Because what he's damaged is something that could one day be his own. Even if he's very rich, high-living is not soundly based. Fortune's stream can dry up very quickly.

FRAGMENT 3

(?) KLEAINETOS: The best man, Gorgias, is the one who can best bear injury without losing his control. This quick temper and excessive bitterness is simply a general indication of a poor spirit.

FRAGMENT 4

(?) ANOTHER YOUNG MAN: Are you out of your mind? It's ridiculous! You've fallen in love with a respectable girl, and you don't

The Farmer

speak for her. And for no good reason you ignore a marriage that's being arranged for you.

FRAGMENT 5

(?)KLEAINETOS: I'm a countryman, I'm not claiming otherwise, and I've absolutely no experience of city life. But the years have brought me a little extra wisdom.

Two more fragments exist, and a statement in Quinilian (11, 3, 91) which implies that in this play a young man quoted a woman's words, and did so in a quavering, effeminate voice. The rest is (so far) silence.

The Toady¹
[Kolax]

Introductory Note to *The Toady*

What remains of this play, which was perhaps written in the last decade of the fourth century B.C., comes mainly from a papyrus which contains only selections from it (perhaps intended for recitation at a dinner party). We cannot therefore always be certain that lines as written were originally consecutive.

The plot clearly concerns the rivalry of Phcidias and Bias for the favours of the same girl, who is a *hetaira*, a prostitute. Terence used this play for his *Eunuch*,² but not necessarily as its main source, so we cannot assume coincidence of plot. The machinations of the *kolax* of the title must have been central to the plot, which perhaps ended with the young man and the soldier agreeing to share the girl's favours. From the papyrus, and from the quotations in ancient authors, the cast list overleaf can be constructed.

CHARACTERS

PHEIDIAS, a young man
 DAOs, a servant
 BIAS, a soldier
 GNATHON, a hanger-on
 STROUTIAS, perhaps another hanger-on, or Gnathon disguised
 A PIMP
 A COOK
 SOSIAS, the Cook's assistant
 A SERVANT GIRL
The last two characters may not have spoken.

ACT ONE

SCENE: quite uncertain. Perhaps the houses of Pheidias and/or Bias and the pimp.

Of the first thirteen lines, only the second half of each line survives. But the passage looks like the opening monologue of the play, and it may have been spoken by Pheidias. After an initial (and conventional) piece of moralizing ('You never can tell in this life'), there are references to fathers and sons, to administrators (perhaps trustees) and provision for a son, to unhappiness, to action required, and to the provision of a dinner for fellow-members of a club. The next extract shows a conversation between Pheidias and (possibly) Gnathon. The text is damaged, but some approximate sense emerges from it.

GNATHON: Cheer up, Pheidias!

PHEIDIAS: Cheer up? 'Cheer up' when I'm so worried about this girl 20
of mine? Don't be silly. [Prays] O Lady Athena, save me . . .

Material missing.

PHEIDIAS: What do you mean, you miserable man?

GNATHON: I mean that heaven favours rogues. We who behave 30
properly never get any proper reward. Like the poor corporal,
sometimes shouldering pack, helmet, a pair of spears, a sheepskin
— as heavy a load as the poor old donkey carries . . . and then
suddenly, Bias.

PHEIDIAS: . . . I'm ruined.

GNATHON: He's touched down from somewhere after betraying a 40
city or a Persian Governor or an army camp. Well, obviously.

PHEIDIAS: How so?

GNATHON: No honest man ever got rich quick. He scrapes
and saves for himself, but the other type lays a trap for the
long-time saver, and scoops the lot.

PHEIDIAS: Life is unfair.

GNATHON: I swear to God, if the boy hadn't been walking behind 50
me with the bottles of Thasian wine (so raising the suspicion of
drunkenness), I'd have been keeping pace with him in the market-
square and shouting at him, 'Hey, man, last year you were a
beggar and a living skeleton, and now you're rich. Tell me, what

trade have you been practising? At least tell me this – where'd you get this gear? Changing sides, are you? Why are you teaching us evil ways? Why are you flaunting yourself as a rich rogue?

The next twenty lines are fragmentary or missing. Daos is indicated as one of the speakers, and the pimp is mentioned. The next extract provides a conversation between a servant (perhaps Daos) and his young master (almost certainly Pheidias).

90 DAOS: I tell you, sir, he's the one man responsible for this whole business of yours coming to grief. I tell you again: any cities that you've seen in ruins have fallen only through this factor, which I've just now discovered through him. All princes who ever were, every great leader, governor, garrison-commander, founding-father or general – I mean of course those who have been utterly ruined – nowadays come to grief because of one thing only – the toadies. And their misery is caused by them.

PHIDIAS: Strong words. But I haven't the least idea what you're talking about.

DAOS: It would be bad judgement on anyone's part to assume the goodwill of anyone who is plotting against you.

PHIDIAS: And if he has no power?

100 DAOS: *Anyone* can injure a strong man if he's off guard. If Astyanax³ himself were lying flat on his back, you could break his nose with a gallic-crusher:⁴ but the hired professional, coming expressly to attack him, wouldn't have an easy job if he was expected.

There follow eight or nine badly damaged lines.

[*He knocks on the door.*] DOOR! [To PHIDIAS] Either he or you will be utterly destroyed. You've convinced him, and as you seem to be doing nothing that you actually are doing, you've got him off his guard, out of the action and out of the house. You can arrange the rest just as you want.

The next extract shows part of a speech by the Pimp.

120 PIMP: He's clearly a braggart.⁵ They're hungry wretches, with calluses in their hands, but nothing else; and my neighbour's one of them. Still, if he gets wind of this, he'll arrive with sixty friends, the same number Odysseus took to Troy, and he'll be bawling threats, 'You'll be sorry, scum, if you've sold my girl to someone with more money.' Am I likely to sell her? Certainly not, whatever his threats. She's worth ten to me, bringing in three hundred drachms a day from the foreigner. But I'm afraid they'll kidnap her in

the street, when they get the chance, and I'll have to go to law and a lot of trouble – witnesses, the lot – to get her back.

Two fragments are worth quoting:

FRAGMENT 1

The speaker is a cook, preparing dinner for a club which met each month to celebrate Aphrodite Pandemos (the goddess of Love who was 'worshipped by the whole people'), a patron of political unity.

COOK: A toast! [To his assistant] And you, follow me and serve the offal. Keep your eye on the job. A toast! Over here, Sosias. A toast! That's right. Let us pray to the gods in heaven, to all the powers in heaven – here, take the tongue on this plate – to grant us safety, health, every blessing, general enjoyment of all the good things here. Amen.

FRAGMENT 2

BIAS: Once when I was in Cappadocia, Strouthias, after dinner I three times drained a golden goblet which held four pints – and it was full every time.

STROUTHIAS: You've drunk more than King Alexander.

BIAS: No less, I swear it.

STROUTHIAS: A mighty feat.

A few more short fragments survive in quotation, but they add little to our knowledge of the play.

The Harpist¹

[Kitharistes]

Introductory Note to *The Harpist*

Some forty-five more or less complete lines, plus another fifty or so which preserve useful words and phrases, survive from this play, in addition to the nine short fragments cited by ancient authors. The quotations show that the play had a character called Phantias, who appears to be rich and unhappy, and one called Laches, who is probably someone's father. The papyrus confirms the existence of Phantias, and reveals that he is the harpist of the title.

The words that survive from lines 1 to 28 indicate that one of the speakers is a woman and the other a man, and that the conversation was probably about rape and marriage. When the text becomes relatively intelligible, the interlocutors are two men, one probably Moschion (he is named in l. 54), a name which usually indicates a young and somewhat irresponsible man. He is almost certainly the son of Laches, who in turn is probably the character who enters at l. 53.

CHARACTERS (so far known)

PHANIAS, a harpist
 LACHES, an old man
 MOSCHION, his son
 ANOTHER YOUNG MAN
 A WOMAN, perhaps the girl's nurse or mother

SCENE: a street in Athens with (probably) two houses, one belonging to Phantias and the other to Laches.

FIRST MAN (*perhaps the girl's father*): . . . you are jealous, you have brought your daughter here, and you consider that she alone has riches, while you yourself have none.²

SECOND MAN (?PHANIAS): I reckon that everything belongs to her alone, and my wife to me. She was a free-born woman, from a Greek city, and all this [*indicating his luggage*] I acquired by good luck. I don't need to go to a pimp for a woman. 40

FIRST MAN: Then what's bothering you? Didn't you bring the woman and her property here?³

SECOND MAN: I don't know where on earth she is.

FIRST MAN: She's not with you?

SECOND MAN: Not yet, and it's been a long time now. I think of everything – an accident at sea, pirates . . .

FIRST MAN: Don't talk like that.

SECOND MAN: I don't know. I'm depressed, and full of fears.

FIRST MAN: You have reason to be upset.

SECOND MAN: So come down town with me, and let me tell you the rest of the story. Then you can give me your advice. 50

FIRST MAN: All right.

SECOND MAN [*calling to servants*]: One of you take this luggage in at once, out of the way. [*They go off, right.*]

LACHES [*entering left*]: And what might this be about? It's not a bit like him. Moschion sends a message, asking me to come into town, when previously, if I happened to come here, he'd run away to the farm, and if I went there, he'd turn right round and come back here and get drunk. Well, fair enough: no father at hand to chivy him. Not that I lost my temper – I was one of those myself, able to let money run through the fingers. My wife's not to blame – not for this, at least: he gets it from me. But he's certainly doing no good. Well, best go in. If he's not here, I'll go straight down to the square. I'll find him there, I imagine, where the gilded youth congregate.⁴ 60
 [*He goes into his house, as MOSCHION enters, right.*]

The Harpist

MOSCHION: I wonder if my father's arrived, or if I'll have to go out to see him. My business can't be delayed, absolutely not.

Only the beginnings of the next twenty-two lines survive. They show that Laches emerges from the house, and that he and Moschion converse. There is talk of marriage, and of a free-born woman, but no connected sense emerges. The text resumes.

MOSCHION: Listen to the rest of the story.⁵ I visited Ephesus, and fell in love. In honour of Artemis of Ephesus, there was a procession of girls carrying offerings. I saw a girl there, daughter of a man called Phantias, from Euonymon.⁶

LACHES: Oh? Are there Euonymonians in Ephesus too?

MOSCHION: No, no. He was there to collect debts.

LACHES: Then is it the daughter of Phantias the Harpist you're so keen to marry? The man who's now our neighbour?

Here the papyrus ends. It is worth adding two of the quoted fragments, which appear to be connected. Speaker and context are unknown.

FRAGMENTS 1 AND 2

I used to imagine, Phantias, that rich men, who have no need to borrow money, never spent their nights moaning, tossing and turning, and saying 'I'm ruined', but slept sweetly and gently, unlike the poor. But now I see that you people who are known as 'well to do' have troubles just like ours.

There's surely some family connection between trouble and life. If life's luxurious, trouble's there too: if life brings fame, it brings trouble too: and when life's poor, trouble grows old along with it.

The Hero

[Heros]

Introductory Note to *The Hero*

For this play, we have a verse synopsis, a cast list, some fifty lines of the opening scene, another fifty badly damaged lines from later in the play, and some quoted fragments. The eponymous Hero (perhaps a family 'guardian spirit') does not appear in the surviving lines, but almost certainly spoke a postponed prologue, after the conversation between two servants which opens the play.

Synopsis

An unmarried girl had twins (as a result of rape), a boy and a girl, and she gave them to a foster-parent to rear. Then, later, she married the man who had raped her. The foster-father, not realizing the connection, pledged the twins to this man. A servant in the house fell in love with the girl, thinking she was a servant too. A neighbour had raped her, and the servant was willing to take the blame for that. Her mother, who did not know the true story, was furious. When all became clear, the old man recognized and found his children, and the man who raped her, willingly married the girl.

CHARACTERS

GETAS, a servant of Pheidias
 DAOS, a servant of Laches
 A MESSENGER, who speaks the Prologue
 MYRRHINE, the twins' mother
 LACHES, the twins' father
 PHEIDIAS, a neighbour
 SOPHRONE, a Nurse
 SANCARIOS, a servant
 GORGIAS, the male twin

ACT ONE

SCENE: a district of Attica, called Ptelea. There are two houses, one belonging to Laches, the other to Pheidias.

[Enter GETAS and DAOS, from their respective houses.]

GETAS: Daos, you look to me as if you've committed some frightful crime, and are expecting any minute to be shackled and sent to the tread-mill. You're obviously in trouble – why else do you keep beating your head? Why do you stop and tear your hair? Why the groans?

DAOS: Oh, God.

GETAS: I knew it, you poor sod. Look, if you've got a few coppers put together, shouldn't you hand them over to me for a while, until¹ you get yourself sorted out? I'm your friend, and I feel for you.

DAOS: That's silly talk. I'm in trouble, Getas, real trouble.

GETAS: (Line missing.)

DAOS: Don't damn a man, please, when he's in love.

GETAS: In love? You?

DAOS: In love. Me.

GETAS: Your master's giving you more than double rations. A bad thing, Daos. Your diet's probably too rich.

DAOS: It's my *heart* that's affected, Getas, when I look at a young girl in our house, an innocent girl, a servant like myself.

GETAS: A servant, is she?

DAOS: Yes. Well, in a way. A shepherd called Tibeios, who'd been a slave when he was young, used to live here at Ptelea. He had these twins, he said – Plangon, the girl I love –

GETAS: Yes, I'm with you.

DAOS: – and the boy, Gorgias.

GETAS: Is that the boy who works with your folks now as a shepherd?

DAOS: That's him. Their father Tibeios, when he was getting on a bit, borrowed money from my master to help feed them, then borrowed some more when food was scarce, and then he starved to death.

GETAS: Perhaps when your master wouldn't give him a third loan?

The Hero

DAOS: Maybe so. Well, after he died, Gorgias borrowed a little more, and gave the old man a decent funeral. Then he came here to us, bringing his sister with him, and he's staying until he works off the debt.

GETAS: And what about Plangon?

DAOS: She works with my mistress, spins, serves at table. She's quite young – Getas, you're laughing at me!

GETAS: No, no, of course I'm not.

DAOS: She's really ladylike, Getas, behaves very nicely.

GETAS: So what about you? What are you doing to help yourself?

DAOS: I've tried nothing sneaky – wouldn't dream of it – but I've spoken to Master, and he's promised to let her live with me when he's had a word with her brother.

GETAS: You're sitting pretty.

DAOS: Not so pretty. Master's been out of the country for three months – some private business in Lemnos. We're still hoping.² If only he'd come safely home.

GETAS: You're a good chap. I hope his journey abroad has been profitable.

There follows some talk of sacrifice and wood-carrying (perhaps for the sacrifice), and an indication of a choral interlude.

CHORAL INTERLUDE

The rest of the play is very fragmentary, but the fragments seem to indicate a scene or scenes at the beginning of the fourth or fifth acts. Laches and Myrrhine converse about Plangon's marriage.

LACHES: You poor woman.

MYRRHINE: *What?*

LACHES: Well, obviously, madam – [*aside*] Oh, devil take it.

MYRRHINE: You're mad. What a suggestion!

LACHES: What I shall do, what I've long made up my mind to do – she's sweating, she's quite confused – I tell you, Myrrhine, I was beautifully taken in by a bleating shepherd . . .

Myrrhine and someone else (? Sophrone, or ? Laches) converse about rape.

MYRRHINE: Sad's my fate, my sufferings are unique, and impossible to exaggerate.

(?) LACHES: . . . Did someone once rape you?

MYRRHINE: Yes, indeed.

(?) LACHES: Have you any idea who it was?

The Hero

Laches and Myrrhine finally discover that they are the twins' parents.

LACHES: Tell me first, was this eighteen years ago?

MYRRHINE: I'm not the only one to whom such things happen. But yes, if you like.

LACHES: Things are getting clearer. How has your rapist never been identified? How come he deserted you? Exactly when . . . ?

There are also a few short fragments quoted from the play by later authors, but they are not very illuminating.

The Phantom
[Phasma]

Introductory Note to *The Phantom*

We know, from Donatus,¹ the situation but not the development of the plot of this play. The 'phantom' of the title was the illegitimate daughter (the result of rape) of a young man's step-mother. She had established the girl in the house next door, and organized a shrine at a hole in the party-wall, so that she could talk to her daughter while making offerings. The young man saw the girl at the shrine, and thought she was a phantom. But when he discovered that she was real, he fell in love with her, and eventually married her. How this dénouement was achieved is not clear. There were obviously two families, two young men and two girls (one of them the 'phantom') involved in the action. The 'phantom's' parentage must have been discovered in order to permit the marriage, but details of the plot development can only be speculative.

CHARACTERS

A DIVINE PROLOGUE

PHEIDIAS, a young man

(?) HIS TUTOR

A COOK

SYROS, a servant

ANOTHER YOUNG MAN

The two girls may or may not have appeared.

ACT ONE

SCENE: a street in a city, with two houses, one belonging to Pheidias's father, the other where the girls live.

DIVINE PROLOGUE [quoting]: . . . 'to bring to a conclusion . . . consider yourself a bridegroom . . . the girl's mother . . . in some other way to her brother . . . and for heaven's sake don't give them any grounds for suspecting you.' That's what he's doing. What else could anyone do? . . . she's not a phantom, but a real, live girl, established in the house of the bride. She was born before her mother came here . . . her mother put her out to be fostered, and she's here in the house next door, being fostered, and guarded when the husband's at home. At other times, when he's out at the farm and there's less need for supervision, then she can leave the house. What a vision . . . [To audience] Perhaps you still want a clearer account of this. The mother has made a hole in the wall, and created an opening . . . to see everything . . . covered it with garlands, so that no one coming up can see what it is . . .

Some lines are missing from the text, and it resumes with a conversation between Pheidias and (possibly) his ex-Tutor.

TUTOR: What's the price of wheat in the market today?

PHEIDIAS: I have no interest in that.

TUTOR: No. But, if I may say so, if it is expensive, you might be interested on my account, for I'm a poor man. Take a look at yourself, Pheidias. Accept that you're a human being, and an imperfect one at that, and don't set your heart on things beyond your reach. You say you don't sleep well: will anyone looking at your life-style see any good reason for that? You walk around as you like, go in immediately if your legs get tired; you bathe luxuriously, then eat what you like. Your whole life is a sleep! In short, you've nothing to worry you, and your sickness is what you've described. A more vulgar expression occurs to me, young sir: excuse me, but as the saying goes, you've not a corner left to ease yourself in, for all the good things around you. I'm telling you!

PHEIDIAS: You be damned!

The Phantom

TUTOR: It's the truth, I tell you. That's what's wrong with you.

PHIDIAS: And yet I've no control over myself, and I'm *very* unhappy.

TUTOR: It's weak and silly –

PHIDIAS: All right! You've worked it all out. What's your advice to me?

TUTOR: My advice is this, Phcidias: if you were really ill, you would have to look for a real cure for your illness. But you're not. So invent an imaginary disease and the imaginary cure for it, and imagine it is doing you some good. Let the women circle round you, wash you and purify you. Get yourself sprinkled with water from three springs, into which you've put salt and lentils.

The next fragment consists of some twenty mutilated lines, from which all that can be deduced is that a servant called Syros is addressed twice, that there is mention of marriage and a sister, and there is something to do with a cook. A passage in longer metre follows, with two speakers.

A: That's finished me.

B: . . . this chap's no Clever-Dick. They quite rightly suspected immediately . . . he met . . . then he rushed on her again . . .

A: I am unlucky in love.

B: You're one of those, young sir, who offer him a locked-up girl for food.² If the fit comes on him, perhaps he'll bite off the girl's nose.

A: God forbid!

B: Yes, indeed. Or her lip, while he's doing a bit of kissing. And perhaps this is all for the best. For you'll stop loving her if you see her then.

A: Are you pulling my leg?

B: Who, me? Of course not.

A: I'll go in and see my sister, and get the whole story sorted out. I think she's rather depressed by the projected marriage.

Parts of fifteen more lines survive, in which there is a conversation about rape, about a future conversation involving a woman, and about Brauron (where there was a famous shrine of Artemis). But neither the speakers nor the place of the fragments in the play can be determined.

The Girl Possessed [Theophrastus]

Introductory Note to *The Girl Possessed*

The 'possession' of the title is by a deity and not by a man – the girl is, or claims to be, in a frenzy inspired by a god. The eight fragments of the play which we know from quotation have now been supplemented by thirty lines (half of them badly damaged) from a papyrus. These lines clearly belong to the central scene of the play, the scene selected to illustrate it by the maker of the Mytilene mosaic (see Introduction, note 5). They are perhaps further supplemented by another twenty-seven half lines, which may stem from this scene. From the mosaic and the fragments, we can deduce that included in the characters were those listed overleaf. The details of the plot are still obscure, but the central issue of the girl possessed by Cybele, and of whether that possession is real or assumed, is clear.

CHARACTERS

PARMENON, a servant
 LYSIAS, a young man
 KLEINIAS, another young man
 A GIRL
 KRATON, an old man, perhaps the girl's father

ACT

SCENE: *unknown.*

PARMENON [*reporting a conversation*]: 'My gifts' – are you listening – 'they took my gifts from me,' says the girl. And he said, 'But what did you get, you gold-digging harlot? The man who gave you the gifts – how do you know him? What about the young man? Why are you walking about outside with a wreath on your head? Are you mad? Then why don't you keep your madness behind closed doors?'

KLEINIAS: This is nonsense. She's not just putting it on, Lysias.

LYSIAS: We can easily apply a test. If she's really divinely possessed, she'll come rushing out here in front of the house. [*To flautist*] Play a tune of the mother of the gods, or rather, of her devotees. 'Stand here by me, at the door of the inn.'

KLEINIAS: Oh, well done, Lysias, very well done. That's what I want. A beautiful sigh!

This passage was presumably followed by the appearance of the frenzied girl. A passage of twenty-seven lines has been plausibly supposed to come from this scene. It shows a mixture of comic and lyric metres, poetic vocabulary, references to a 'Phrygian Queen', to Angdistis (an Asiatic goddess associated with Cybele) as a 'Phrygian and Cretan' goddess, and to Lydians. It would fit, but it cannot be proven. One major quoted fragment is worth translating:

FRAGMENT 1

KRATON: If some god were to come to me and say, 'Kraton, after death, you can have your life over again, and you can be whatever you like – dog, sheep, goat, human or horse. For a second life you've got to have – that's fixed by Fate. So make your choice', I think I'd say immediately, 'Make me anything at all, except a human being – they're the only living things with no justice at all in their good fortune and bad.' An exceptional horse is exceptionally well looked after: if you're a good dog, you're much more highly valued than a bad one: a noble cock has special food, and a less well-bred one is actually afraid of the better-bred one. But a human

The Girl Possessed

being can be good, of noble birth and fine breeding, and it does him no good at all in the world today. Toad-eaters – they come off best of all, then blackmailers, with slanderers a good third. Better be born a donkey than watch your inferiors living more comfortably than you.

The Girl From Perinthos¹

[Perinthia]

Introductory Note to *The Girl From Perinthos*

This play is known to us from the statement in the Prologue to Terence's *Andria*² that the plots of Menander's *Girl from Andros* and *Girl from Perinthos* were almost indistinguishable; and also from Donatus's commentary on Terence's play. The papyrus fragment comes from late in the play, where Daos, the cunning slave, has taken refuge from his master's anger on a convenient altar, and the master is trying to burn him out from its protection.³ We can construct the list of characters shown on the following page.

CHARACTERS

LACHES, an old man
 DAOS, his servant
 PYRRHIAS } servants
 SOSIAS }
 TIBEIOS } also servants, who perhaps do not speak
 GETAS }
 LACHES'S WIFE
 A MIDWIFE
 LACHES'S SON
 ANOTHER OLD MAN

(?) ACT FIVE

SCENE: a street in a city, with at least two houses.

LACHES [*to servant*]: And you come with me, and bring out the firewood . . . fire . . .

DAOS: Fire, too. Obviously. Hey, Tibeios! Getas! Is he really going to burn me up? You might let me go, Getas, and rescue your fellow-servant. It would be great if you let me go now. [*Pause*] Ignoring me, are you? Are we no longer friends? Here comes Pyrrhias – what a load he's carrying! This is the end. And behind him, Master with a lighted torch.

LACHES: Put it all round him, quickly. Now, Daos, show us your low cunning. Think up some trick and get out of my clutches! 10

DAOS: Trick? *Me?*

LACHES: You, Daos. For 'deceiving an easy-going and empty-headed master is a piece of cake'.⁴

DAOS: Oh, help!

LACHES: And if the 'crème de la crème of intelligence . . . [*DAOS winks.*]

SOSIAS: That registered, did it?

DAOS [*reproachfully*]: This is not like you, sir.

SOSIAS: The brazen rogue, the one who's just fouled himself here . . . the inheritance . . .

LACHES: Light the fire!

20

FRAGMENT 3

DAOS: There's nothing particularly splendid in a servant cheating a master who's easy-going and empty-headed, in outwitting someone who's never had any wits.

Notes

- the text published by Professor E. G. Turner in *Proceedings of the British Academy* LXXIII (1977), 315-31.
- A case can be made for either Thrasonides or Getas to speak these lines. Thrasonides would have been in charge of official spoils, Getas (like Daos in *The Shield*) in charge of his master's share. In any event, the recent arrival of that share is what has triggered the dramatic action.
- This seems to be some sort of 'test' of Krataia's affections.
- The meaning of this remains obscure.
- This and the next few lines are damaged, but the general sense is clear.
- Presumably Thrasonides (he had the sword). This may be why Krataia steadfastly refuses to have anything to do with Thrasonides. The son must later have been found to be alive (is he Kleinias?), in order to produce the dénouement.
- The text of the next seven lines is badly damaged.
- The text is damaged, and the translation is approximate.

The Double Deceiver

- E. W. Handley, *Menander and Plautus: A Study in Comparison* (London, Lewis, 1968).
- That is, she will be wasting her time. A corpse cannot hear.
- In Plautus, *The Two Bachelors*, 277 ff., the servant's story is that the man who owed the money plotted with the crew of a pirate ship in Ephesus harbour to attack the ship in which the young man was sailing, and steal the money back from him.

The Farmer

- The first edition was by J. Nicole (Basle and Geneva, 1897-8).
- Parts of the first four lines are missing, and this is an approximation of the sense.
- Gorgias, the girl's brother, appears to be the 'head of the family', and his consent would be necessary for her marriage.
- Part of the ritual of a Greek wedding. See *The Girl From Samos*, Act Three.
- This was quite legal in ancient Greece, provided the common parent was the father and not the mother.
- The text of the next few lines is uncertain.
- The text is damaged, but the general sense is clear.
- The text is damaged here.

Notes

The Toady

- A *kolax* was someone who made himself agreeable and useful to another man, and expected favours in return for services rendered.
- Terence, *Eunuch* 30-32.
- A famous Olympic champion all-in wrestler, of the fourth century B.C.
- The text is damaged, but the sense is clear.
- The text is very uncertain here.

The Harpist

- The *kithara* was a stringed instrument, played by plucking the strings. It differed from the harp in having its strings of equal length. The harp is, however, our nearest equivalent.
- Both text and meaning are uncertain, and the situation is far from clear.
- Note 2 applies here.
- The 'statues of Hermes' were in the market-place of ancient Athens, and seem to have been at this time the haunt of the rich and idle.
- The text is damaged, but the general sense is clear.
- A district of Attica, a suburb of Athens.

The Hero

- The next seven lines are damaged, but the general sense is clear.
- The lines that follow are damaged, and the sense can only be approximate.

The Phantom

- On Terence, *Eunuch* 9.
- Text and interpretation are uncertain.

The Girl Possessed

- The Corybantes were the frenzied followers and priests of the goddess Cybele, the great 'Mother-goddess' of Anatolia, whose worship was known in Greece by the fifth century B.C.

The Girl From Perinthos

1. Perinthos was a town on the Sea of Marmara, some seventy miles from what is now Istanbul.
2. ll. 9 ff.
3. It was sacrilegious to remove anyone from sanctuary by force, but almost any indirect means could be used to prise the suppliant loose.
4. He is quoting Daos's words preserved in Fragment 3.

Some Longer Fragments

1. This is a selection of some of the passages preserved by quotation in other ancient authors, especially Athenaeus (second century A.D.), Aulus Gellius (from the same period) and Stobaeus (fifth century A.D.). The numbering is that of the Oxford Classical Text. The passages, all ten lines or more in length, help to extend our knowledge of Menander's use of conventional themes and character-names, and also illustrate the attitudes of the authors quoting them. Their preference for 'moralizing' leads them to select passages which, divorced from their dramatic context, sometimes sound banal. Fortunately, we now have a sufficient amount of continuous text to counterbalance this impression of Menander.
2. A white wine from Chalkidike, in northern Greece.
3. A popular wine from the island of Thasos, off the coast of northern Greece. All these things are the normal provisions for a party.
4. The text and the meaning are very uncertain.
5. Or ship-owner.
6. Probably the name of the ship-owner or ship's captain, who was conveying Straton's son.
7. An adaptation of Euripides, *Trojan Women* 1, and deliberately mock-tragic.
8. A town in the 'toe' of Italy.
9. Sources give 325-324, 323 and 321 as the date. They also differ about whether it did or did not win first prize.
10. He was the spendthrift son of a general, who sold even his father's tombstone to pay for his pleasures.
11. A parasite or hanger-on, well-known from references in pre-Menandrian comedy. See *The Girl From Samos*, 603.
12. A method of reckoning time. See Aristophanes, *Women in Assembly*, 652.
13. For the sentiment, cf. *The Farmer*, 79-81.
14. The sign that the meal was over, and drinking and conversation could start.

15. More likely to be a son than a daughter. Daughters in the extant plays seldom express themselves so vigorously.
16. According to tradition, Anacharsis from Scythia (South Russia) travelled in Greece in the sixth century B.C., was a friend of Solon's and was ultimately accepted as one of the Seven Sages.

Some Fragments Doubtfully Attributed to Menander

1. Some of these passages could well be by Menander, others (in the translator's opinion) are quite certainly not. But they are all parts of New Comedy, and therefore contribute to our understanding of the context in which Menander was writing and producing. The Greek texts of the fragments are published in the Oxford Classical Text of Menander.
2. He had the legal right to do what he proposed.
3. The tone, vocabulary and metre are para-tragic. The speaker takes himself and his situation seriously.
4. Text and translation are very uncertain.
5. Where the sick would sleep and (perhaps) be healed in a dream or vision.
6. The text is damaged, but the general sense is clear.
7. Parmenon, a servant, has clearly been charged with the task of raising the necessary funds.
8. The text of the last phrase is very uncertain.