The Brothers Menaechmus OR The Twin Menaechmi by Plautus “I am your mistress scene”

**2 MEN , 1 WOMAN**

Menaechmus – MEN-ECK-MUSS

Messenio – MESS-EN-E-O

Erotium – E-ROT-E-UM Phrygian-FREE-GEE-UN (a mentioned place)

Epidamnus – EPI-DAM-US (a mentioned place) Agathocles-AG-THOUGH-CLEESE (a mentioned place)

MOSCHUS – MOSS-CUSS (mentioned character) Phintia-FIN-TEA-UH (mentioned character)

SYRACUSE – SEAR-UH-CUES (a mentioned place) Liparo-LIP-ARE-OH (mentioned character)

Riera-REE-AIR-UH (mentioned character) Hiero-HE-AIR-OH (mentioned character)

(EROTlUM appears, in a romantic mood, singing)

EROTIUM. Open my doors, let my welcome be wide,

Then hurry and scurry-get ready inside.

See that the incense is burning, the couches have covers.

Alluring decor is exciting for lovers.

Lovers love loveliness, we don't complain; their loss is our gain.

But the cook says someone was out here-*[looks]* I see!

It's that man of great worth-who's worth so much to me.

I ought to greet him richly-as he well deserves to be.

Now I'll go near, and let him know I'm here.

*[To MENAECHMUS]* My darling-darling, it's a mite amazing

to see you standing out-of-doors by open doors.

You know full well how very much my house is YOURS.

All you ordered we're supplied with,

all your wishes arecomplied with.

So why stay here, why delay here? Come inside with ... me.

Since dinner's ready, come and dine,

As soon as suits you, come ... recline.

*[To say the very least, MENAECHMUS II is stunned. After a slight pause, he regains his powers of speech)*

MENAECHMUS II. *[to MESSENIO]* Who's this woman talking to?

EROTIUM. To you.

MENAECHMUS II. To me? What have we-?

EROTIUM. By Pollux, you're the only one of all my lovers Venus wants me to arouse to greatness. You deserve it, too.

For, by Castor, thanks to all your gifts, I've flourished like a flower.

MENAECHMUS II. *[aside to MESSENIO]* She is surely very mad or very drunk, Messenio. Speaking to a total stranger like

myself so ... sociably.

MESSENIO. Didn't I predict all this? Why, these are only falling leaves. -Wait three days and I predict the trees

themselves will drop on you. Wanton women are this way, whenever they can sniff some silver. Anyway, I'll speak to

her. *[To EROTIUM]* Hey, woman there.

EROTlUM. *[with hauteur].* Yes, can I help you?

MESSENIO. Tell me where you know this man from.

EROTIUM. Where? Where he knows me for years. Epidamnus.

MESSENIO. Epidamnus, where he's never set a foot, never been until today?

EROTIUM. *[laughing]* Aha-you're making jokes with me. Dear Menaechmus, come inside, you'll see that things ...

will pick up right.

MENAECHMUS II. *[to MESSENIO]* Pollux, look, the creature called me by my rightful name as well. How I wonder what

it's all about.

MESSENIO. The perfume from your purse. That's the answer.

MENAECHMUS II. And, by Pollux, you did warn me rightfully. *[Gives purse back to MESSENIO)* Take it then. I'll find out if

she loves my person or my purse.

EROTIUM. Let's go in, let's dine.

MENAECHMUS II. *[declining]* That's very nice of you. Thanks just the same.

EROTIUM. Why on earth did you command a dinner just a while ago?

MENAECHMUS II. I commanded dinner?

EROTlUM. Yes. For you, and for your parasite.

MENAECHMUS II. What the devil parasite? *[Aside]*This woman's certainly insane.

EROTIUM. Your old sponge, Peniculus.

MENAECHMUS II. A sponge-to clean your shoes, perhaps?

EROTIUM. No, of course-the one that came along with you a while ago. When you brought the dress you'd stolen from

your wife to give to me.

MENAECHMUS II. Are you sane? I gave a dress I'd stolen from my wife to you? *[To MESSENIO]* Like some kind of horse

this woman's fast asleep still standing up.

EROTIUM. Do you get some pleasure making fun of me, denying things, things completely true?

MENAECHMU5 II. What do you claim I've done that I deny?

EROTIUM. Robbed your wife and gave the dress to me.

MENAECHMUS II. That I'll deny again! Never have I had or do I have a wife, and never have I ever set a single foot inside

that door, since I was born. I had dinner on my ship, then disembarked and met you.

EROTIUM. Oooh! Pity me-what shall I do? What ship is this?

MENAECHMUS II. A wooden one, much repaired, re-sailed, re-beamed, re-hammered and re-nailed and such. Never did

a navy have so numerous a nail supply.

EROTIUM. Please, my sweet, let's stop the jokes and go inside together ... mmmm?

MENAECHMUS II. Woman, you want someone else. I mean... I'm sure you don't want me.

EROTIUM. Don't I know you well, Menaechmus, know your father's name was Moschus?

You were born, or so they say, in Syracuse, in Sicily, where Agathocles was king, and then in turn, King Phintia,"

Thirdly, King Liparo, after whom King Riera got the crown. Now it's still King Hiero.

MENAECHMUS II. *[to MESSENIO]* Say, that's not inaccurate.

MESSENIO. By Jove, if she's not from Syracuse, how does she know the facts so well?

MENAECHMUS II. *[getting excited]* Hercules, I shouldn't keep refusing her.

MESSENIO. Oh, don't you dare! Go inside that door and you're a goner, sir.

MENAECHMUS II. Now you shut up! Things are going well. Whatever she suggests-I'll just agree.

Why not get a little ... hospitality*?*

*[to EROTlUM]* Dear lady, please, I was impolite a while ago. I was a bit afraid that *[indicating MESSENIO]* He might go and

tell my wife ...about the dress .... about the dinner. Now, when you would like, we'll go inside.

EROTIUM. But where's the parasite?

MENAECHMUS II. I don't give a damn. Why should we wait for him? Now if he comes, don't let him inside at all.

EROTIUM. By Castor, I'll be happy not to. Yet *[playfully]* there's something I would like from you.

MENAECHMUS II. Your wish is my command.

EROTIUM. Bring the dress you gave me to the Phrygian embroiderer. Have him redesign it, add some other frills I'd like

him to.

MENAECHMUS II. Hercules, a good idea. Because of all the decoration, when my wife observes you in the street, she

won't know what you're wearing.

EROTIUM. Therefore take it with you when you leave.

MENAECHMUS II. Of course, of course, of course.

EROTIUM. Let's go m.

MENAECHMUS II. I'll follow you*. [Indicates MESSENlO]* I want a little chat with him. *[Exit EROTIUM)*

Hey, Messenio, come here!

MESSENIO. What's up?

MENAECHMUS II. Just hop to my command.

MESSENIO. Can I help?

MENAECHMUS II. You can. *[Apologetically]* I know you'll criticize.

MESSENIO. Then all the worse.

MENAECHMUS II. Booty's in my hands. A fine beginning. You continue, fast. Take these fellows *[indicating sailors]* back

to our lodging tavern, quicker than a wink, then be sure you come to pick me up before the sun goes down.

MESSENIO. *[protesting]* Master, you don't know about these sluts

MENAECHMUS II. Be quiet! Just obey. If I do a stupid thing, then I'll be hurting, not yourself. Here's a woman stupid and

unwitting, from what I've just seen. Here's some booty we can keep.

MESSENIO. I'm lost. *[Looks]* Oh, has he gone? He's lost! Now a mighty pirate ship is rowing off a shipwrecked skiff.

I'm the fool as , well. I tried to argue down the man who owns me. But he bought me only as a sounding board, not to

sound off. Follow me, you men *[to the sailors],* so I can come on time-as I've been ordered. [They exit)