The Brothers Menaechmus OR The Twin Menaechmi by Plautus “You aren’t my slave so you’re free scene”

**3 MEN**

Menaechmus ! – (MEN-ECK-MUSS)

Menaechmus II

Messenio – MESS-EN-E-O

Moschus – MOSS-CUSS (Not in scene, but mentioned)

MESSENIO. Well, I've really made my mark-on every face I've faced today. Pollux, Master, didn't I come just in time to

bring you aid!

MENAECHMUS. Whoever you are, young man, I hope the gods will always bring you blessings. If it hadn't been for you,

I'd not have lived to see the sunset.

MESSENIO. If that's true, by Pollux, then do right by me and free me, Master.

MENAECHMUS. Free you? I?

MESSENIO. Of course. Because I saved you, Master.

MENAECHMUS. Listen here, you're wand'ring from the truth.

MESSENIO. I wander?

MENAECHMUS. Yes, I swear by Father Jove, I am not your master.

MESSENIO. *[stunned].* Why proclaim such things?

MENAECHMUS. But it's no lie. Never did a slave of mine serve me as well as you just did.

MESSENIO. If you're so insistent and deny I'm yours, then I'll go free.

MENAECHMUS. Hercules, as far as I'm concerned, be free. Go where you'd like.

MESSENIO. Am I really authorized?

MENAECHMUS. If I've authority for you.

MESSENIO. *[dialogue with himself]* 'Greetings, patron.'- 'Ah, Messenio, the fact that you're now free makes me very

glad.'-'Well, I believe that's true.' *[To MENAECHMUS]* But, patron dear, you can have authority no less than when I was a

slave. I'll be glad to live with you, and when you go, go home with you.

MENAECHMUS. *[doesn’t want some strange person in his house]* Not at all, no thank you.

MESSENIO. *[jubilant]* Now I'll get our baggage at the inn. And, of course, the purse with all our money's sealed up in

the trunk with our travel cash. I'll bring it to you.

MENAECHMUS. *[eyes lighting up at this]* Yes! Go quickly, quickly!

M£SSENIO. I’ll return it just exactly as you gave it to me. Wait right here. *[MESSENIO dashes off toward the harbor)*

MENAECHMUS. *[soliloquizing]* What unworldly wonders have occurred today in wondrous ways: People claim I'm not

the man I am and keep me from their houses. Then this fellow said he was my slave-and that I set him free!

Then he says he'll go and bring a wallet full of money to me. If he does, I'll tell him he can go quite freely where he'd

Iike. That's so when he's sane again he won't demand the money back. *[Musing more]* Father-in-law and doctor said

I was insane. How very strange. All this business seems to me like nothing other than a dream. Now I'll go and see this

harlot, though she's in a huff with me. Maybe I'll convince her to return the dress, which I'll take home.

*[He enters EROTlUM'S house. Enter MENAECHMUS II and MESSENIO)*

MENAECHMUS II. *[angry with MESSENIO]* Effrontery in front of me! You dare to claim we've seen each other

since I gave you orders that we'd meet back here?

M£SSENIO. But didn't I just snatch and rescue you from those four men who carried you aloft right before this house?

You called on all the gods and men for aid. I came running, snatched you from them, though with fists they fought me

back. For this service, since I saved your life, you made a free man of me. *[Ruefully]* Now just when I said I'd get the

cash and baggage, you sped up and ran ahead to meet me, and deny you've done the things you've done.

MENAECHMUS II. Free? I said you could go free?

MESSENIO. For sure.

MENAECHMUS II. Now look, for super-sure I would rather make myself a slave than ever set you free.

MENAECHMUS I*. (is pushed by EROTIUM out of her house)* If you would like to swear by your two eyes,

go right ahead, but still you'll never prove that 1 absconded with your dress and bracelet-*[door slams]* hussy!

MESSENIO. [suddenly seeing double]. By the gods, what do I see?

MENAECHMUS II. What do you see?

MESSENIO. Why-your reflection!

MENAECHMUS II. What?

MESSENIO. Your very image just as like yourself as it could be.

MENAECHMUS II. Pollux-he's not unlike me ... I notice ...similarities.

MENAECHMUS I. *[to MESSENIO]* Hey, young man, hello! You saved my life-whoever you may be.

MESSENIO. You, young man, if you don't mind, would you please tell me your name?

MENAECHMUS L Nothing you could ask would be too much since you have helped me so. My name is Menaechmus.

MENAECHMUS II. Ob, by Pollux, so is mine as well!

MENAECHMUS L Syracuse-Sicilian

MENAECHMUS II. That's my city, that's my country too!

MENAECHMUS L What is this I hear?

MENAECHMUS II. Just what is true.

MESSENIO. *[to MENAECHMUS II]* I know you-you're my master! *[To audience]* I belong to this man though I thought that

I belonged to that man. *[To MENAECHMUS I, the wrong man]* Please excuse me, sir, if I unknowingly spoke foolishly.

For a moment I imagined he was you-and gave him trouble.

MENAECHMUS II. Madness, nothing but! *[To MESSENIO]* Don't you recall that we were both together, both of us got off

the ship today?

MESSENIO. *[thinking, realizing]* That's right. You're very right. You're my master. *[To MENAECHMUS I]* Find another

slave, farewell*. [To MENAECHMUS II]* And you, hello! *[Pointing to MENAECHMUS II]* Him, I say, this man's Menaechmus.

MENAECHMUS L So am I!

MENAECHMUS II. What joke is this? You're Menaechmus?

MENAECHMUS I. That I say I am. My father's name was Moschus.

MENAECHMUS II. You're the son of my own father?

MENAECHMUS I. No, the son of my own father. I'm not anxious to appropriate your father or to steal him from you.

MESSENIO. Gods in heaven, grant me now that hope unhoped for I suspect. For, unless my mind has failed me, these

two men are both twin brothers. Each man claims the selfsame fatherland and father for his own. I'll call Master over.

0 Menaechmus

MENAECHMUS I and II. *[together.* Yes?

MESSENIO. Not both of you. Which of you two travelled with me on the ship?

MENAECHMUS I. It wasn't me.

MENAECHMUS II. Me it was.

MESSENIO. Then you I want. Step over here *[motioning].*

MENAECHMUS II [following MESSENIO to a corner]. I've stepped. What's up?

MESSENIO. That man there is either one great faker or your lost twin brother. Never have I seen two men more similar

than you two men: Water isn't more like water, milk's not more alike to milk than that man is like to you. And what's

more he named your father and your fatherland. It's best to go and question him still further.

MENAECHMUS II. Hercules, you do advise me well. I'm very grateful to you. Please work on, by Hercules. I'll make you

free if you discover that man is my brother.

MESSENIO. Ob, I hope so.

MENAECHMUS II. And I hope so too