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MENANDER'S SAMIA: A NEW TRANSLATION

by

Seth A. Jeppesen

**Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree**

of

DEPARTMENT HONORS

in

History

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**UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY
Logan, UT**

2006

*Menander's
Samia*

A New Translation

by

Seth A. Jeppesen

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Preface

During spring 2005, while I was studying at Utah State University, Dr. Mark Damen convinced me that I should take his course on Classical Drama. Up to that point, I wasn't really interested in learning about any ancient plays – I had been sufficiently bored and traumatized by *Oedipus* and *Antigone* in high school that I felt I would never again voluntarily subject myself to “those weird Greek plays.” But of course, Dr. Damen won, and I took the class.

To my amazement, I learned that Greek Drama encapsulated much more than the austere plays that I had read earlier in my academic career. In particular, I was shocked to find that Greek comedy, in particular, was actually quite funny. Who knew that something written about two and half millennia ago could have some resonance in our modern, fast-paced society?

I quickly made the decision to begin learning Greek so that I could read these plays in their native language, and not have to rely completely on the translations of others. I also began thinking that it was a shame that these plays weren't read or performed more often. Maybe people would have a different view of Greek theater if they saw or read a comedy by Aristophanes or Menander, or even one of Euripides' or Sophocles' other tragedies, instead of trudging through the already well known *Oedipus* one more time.

One day towards the end of that semester, while discussing my thoughts with Dr. Damen, I mentioned the idea of performing one of the plays that we had studied in his class – in specific Menander's *Samia*, which hadn't been performed very often because of the problems caused by the gaps which exist in the script. Given my background in theater, I told him that I would be thrilled to help direct or act in a classical play if we produced one on campus. Of course, I didn't think much of anything would come of this conversation, until Dr. Damen suggested that I do my own translation and production of the *Samia* for my senior thesis.

Almost one year later, after many long nights of translating Greek, and after many, *many* revisions, I found myself center stage in the USU Studio Theater, introducing a staged reading of my new translation of Menander's *Samia*. On April 26, 2006, with the help of a handful of actors from the Theater Department, the cooperation of Dr. Damen and Dr. Frances Titchener from the History Department, and the indispensable help of my wife Jenae, we pulled off a great performance, which I hope opened students' eyes to a wider view of Greek drama and helped to pave the way for future interdisciplinary projects between the History and Theater Departments at Utah State University.

The following is the text of the play as it was presented that afternoon – with a few slight revisions – which represents the work I have done as a translator and as a playwright, taking the play from the original Greek into colloquial English and also filling in the gaps which exist in the original manuscripts. The play also includes brief speeches by a Choregos which fill the spaces where, in a normal Greek New Comedy, there would be choral interludes. These speeches explain some of the idiosyncrasies of Greek drama and culture and represent the research I have done on Menander and the culture of Hellenistic Athens.

This version also includes an introduction which explains a little bit more about the world of Menander and the process that I went through in translating this play. In addition to this, there are also endnotes for each of the acts and for the choral interludes which explain additional details about the text.

Seth A. Jeppesen
Logan, UT – May 2006

Introduction

It is a commonplace thing nowadays for people to get home from work or school and settle down in front of the television to watch their favorite sitcom. There are numerous ones to choose from, but most of them involve a family or tightly knit group of friends who wander their way through seemingly everyday situations, dealing with them humorously, but in the same way you might expect someone you know to deal with them. We watch these shows, laugh at them, think about them, and sometimes even incorporate phrases and lines we hear from them into our everyday speech – but what we don't realize is that in doing this we are actually participating in a tradition that is over two thousand years old. The Greek dramatic genre called New Comedy, which flourished in the 4th and 3rd centuries BCE, featured plots and characters similar to our modern-day sitcoms

Since the establishment near the end of the 6th century BCE of the annual dramatic festival in Athens, called the Dionysia, Athenians had been very involved with the dramatic productions of their day and were inclined to incorporate ideas from the plays they saw into their own lives. In a time without mass media, theater to the Greeks was the most exciting and influential form of art available, not to mention an important means of sharing ideas with large groups of people. Most of the tragedies presented at this time dealt, on the surface at least, with mythology, and as the scholars Gomme and Sandbach wrote, “the Greeks were often ready to find in what we call their ‘mythology’ parallels for contemporary behavior.”¹ But the plays were also written in such a way that they often addressed current issues facing the Attic population.

Conventions of Greek Drama

The idea of putting a play up on stage does not sound at all foreign to us, but the manner in which the Greeks presented their plays would probably seem unusual to modern audiences. To begin with, the theater in which these plays were performed was an outdoor theater, much larger than even our largest auditoriums. The Theater of Dionysus, located on the side of the Acropolis, was the venue for the plays produced at the Dionysia. This theater was large enough to accommodate up to 17,000 spectators, a venue more akin to a modern-day sports arena than to a theater.² Audience and actors sat and performed under the open sky. The plays had to be presented during the day, because there was no way to light the stage for evening performances. As result, there were also no lighting cues and no blackouts between scenes or acts.

Actors on the Greek stage also wore masks and padded costumes while performing. In modern theater much attention is paid to the facial expressions of the actors and the ideas and feelings which those expressions convey. A Greek actor in a mask literally had to have the same expression on his face throughout the entire play, a considerable challenge for the actor and for the designer of the mask, seeing that the emotions of the characters in Greek plays were usually anything but static.

There also appears to be a rule in Greek drama which limits the number of speaking actors to three. There can be more than three speaking parts in a play, but they all have to be divided up among the three actors. Occasionally, this meant that a character had to be played by

¹ A.W. Gomme and F.H. Sandbach *Menander: A Commentary* (Oxford, 1973) 598.

² Norma Miller, trans. *Menander: Plays and Fragments* (London: Penguin Books, 1987) 16.

two separate actors throughout the course of the play.³ The use of masks and costumes helped make this possible.

Tragedy and Old Comedy

During the Classical Age in Athens, there were two major forms of dramatic productions: tragedy and comedy.⁴ Tragedies were more serious pieces, often based on a myth of some sort, involving up to three speaking actors and a chorus who sang, danced, and acted out the story. Although many of the stories told in tragedies end unhappily for the main characters (hence the modern sense of our words 'tragic' and 'tragedy') a sad ending was not a requirement for tragedy. There are three tragic playwrights from the Classical Age whose work we still possess: Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. Although many other writers produced tragedies, only the works of these three have survived to the present day.

A type of comedy, which we now refer to as Old Comedy, was also being performed in Athens during the Classical Age. Greek Old Comedy was very fanciful and politically charged. The plots often revolved around the fantastic or absurd, and at times the main purpose of the plays seemed only to be to ridicule and criticize political leaders and other prominent members of the community. Aristophanes is the only author of Old Comedy whose work has survived through the Middle Ages to the present. An example of one of his plots involves Euripides and his father-in-law infiltrating a convention of women in order to find out how the women are planning to punish Euripides for portraying them too accurately in his tragedies. Another plot features the god Dionysus and his slave Xanthius going down to the underworld to retrieve Euripides after his death because they miss watching his plays at the festival.⁵

These practitioners of tragedy and comedy lived and wrote mainly in a time when Athenian power and influence was spreading throughout the Aegean and the possibility of eventual defeat and subservience was only a shadow in the back of their minds, but soon the situation changed drastically for the Athenians. Their defeat at the hands of the Spartans in 404 BCE at the end of the Peloponnesian War not only crushed their defensive long walls, but it also leveled their defiant spirit.⁶ Although they soon reestablished a democracy and rebuilt their defenses, they now lived in a world in which they knew Athens could be conquered. A further blow was dealt in 338, when Philip II of Macedon, a region which the Athenians barely

³ K.B. Frost *Exits and Entrances in Menander* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988) 3. There is some debate about whether or not the three-actor rule was still in force during Menander's day. There is actually no written source which explains this rule, but in all of the victory lists from the Dionysia and Lenaea and in inscriptions of actors guilds in ancient Athens, actors are always listed in groups of three. Also, there are never more than three speaking actors on stage at one time. Often, when three are already on the stage and another speaking character is about to enter, one actor will leave the stage about twenty lines before the entrance of the next character, presumably to change mask and costume so that he can come out as the newly entered character.

⁴ The term 'Classical Age' here refers to the 5th century BCE in Athens.

⁵ The previous two examples refer to Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazusae*, produced in 411, and *Frogs* produced in 405.

⁶ The 'long walls' were defensive fortifications which ran from the city of Athens down to its port, the Piraeus. During the Peloponnesian War (431-404 BCE) the Athenians and farmers in the countryside surrounding the city took refuge within these fortification in order to avoid meeting the Spartans in a land battle. When Sparta finally overcame the Athenians, they forced them to dismantle the long walls and they also established a pro-Spartan oligarchy known as the Thirty Tyrants, to replace the democracy that had ruled Athens for over a century. After eighteen months and thousands of lives lost to their bloody reign, the Thirty were ousted and a democracy was reinstated.

considered to be Greek, led his army to victory over the coalition of Greek states which was led by Athens and Thebes at the Battle of Chaeronea. The Greeks lived under Macedonian rule during the reigns of Philip II and Alexander the Great, until in 322 BCE, shortly after the death of Alexander, when the Athenians attempted once again to gain their independence. Despite their high hopes their insurrection was put down with ease by Alexander's regent Antipater at the Battle of Krannon.⁷ They were forced to finally admit to themselves that the age of the independent city-state was over.

This loss of autonomy had an effect on the type of drama that the people wanted to see as well. In a world that seemed to be growing every day more similar to a plot written by Sophocles, people no longer wished to watch the mythic characters of tragedy falling into the same mistakes all over again, nor was it safe for comedians to lampoon political figures and poke fun at current events, as it had been during the Classical Age. Instead, a new form of comedy developed which displayed the humor existing in the problems encountered by everyday people. Although the characters of these plays didn't always get off scot-free, they almost always found their way into a happy ending. The Athenian audience no doubt hoped that in the precarious world in which they lived, they would be able to find a similar happy ending for themselves. This new form of drama has come to be known as New Comedy.

Menander and New Comedy

New comedy differs from Old comedy in a number of ways. First, it lacks the chorus which filled such an important role in Aristophanes' plays, most of which were named after the chorus. For example, *The Wasps* got its name because the chorus was dressed in elaborate wasp costumes and danced backwards to show off their stingers. The chorus talked with the main characters and helped to move the plot forward. They also gave a speech in the middle of the play called the *parabasis*, which was basically an opportunity for the playwright to address the audience directly and discuss whatever was on his mind, from debating political issues to chastising the audience for not picking him as the winner in last year's competition. None of this was present in New Comedy. There was no chorus present on stage for the actors to talk to during the regular scenes, and the spaces in between acts were filled with random song and dance numbers, called choral interludes.

The characters and subject matter of New Comedy were also strikingly different from those of Old Comedy. Instead of imitating influential citizens and presenting outlandish characters, the plays of New Comedy are staffed by a contingent of everyday characters such as the irascible old man, the devious slave, the rich young man with too much time on his hands, the resourceful hetaira, and so on. The plots are also fueled by domestic affairs such as marriage, adoption, rape, suppositious children, recognition of long lost family members, and the like, as opposed to the political agendas which provide the back drop for many of Aristophanes' plays. The characters in New Comedy were also recurring, meaning they appeared in multiple plays. Sometimes the relationships and circumstances of the characters varied from play to play, but Demeas is always a disgruntled old man, Smikrines is always a miser, and Moschion is always a young man who falls in love with a girl and often ends up raping and later marrying her.⁸ These

⁷ J. Michael Walton and Peter D. Arnott, *Menander and the Making of Comedy* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1996) 27.

⁸ For a more thorough discussion of recurring characters in Menander, consult W. Thomas MacCary "Menander's Characters: Their Names, Roles, and Masks," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 101 (1970)

characters are sometimes referred to as stock characters. These New Comedies, with their domestic plots and everyday characters who appear from play to play, are very similar to our modern-day sitcoms.

Although we know that hundreds if not thousands of plays were written in this genre, only a handful of fragments are now extant, and most of those which we have were written by the New Comic playwright Menander, who lived and wrote about a century after Aristophanes and the three tragedians. Menander was born in Athens, likely around 344 BCE, although the date is uncertain.⁹ He produced his first play at the Dionysia in 324 or 323 BCE, and died in about 291 BCE from a swimming accident, having written 105 different plays, 96 of which the titles are still extant. During his day, Menander was considered to be an excellent playwright, but he still lagged behind Philemon in popularity.¹⁰ However, after his death and throughout the rest of antiquity, Menander was thought of as one of the best playwrights the world had known and his works were routinely performed.

Menander's prowess as a playwright can be traced to several different sources. First, he learned his stagecraft by apprenticing himself to the comic poet Alexis of Thuri, who allegedly wrote 245 plays over the course of an amazing eighty-year career.¹¹ From him, Menander likely learned a great deal about how to construct plots and how to weave the various scenes of his plays into a coherent whole. Besides the education which he received from Alexis, Menander also studied philosophy under Theophrastus, one of Aristotle's pupils who succeeded him as head of the Lyceum. Theophrastus loved observing behavior in animals and humans, and one of his most famous works was entitled *The Characters*, which was a series of descriptions of different classifications of human character types, based on his observations of human behavior.¹² Menander was a master of creating believable characters who fit into the various types but at times also play against them. Certainly, he must have learned much about how to portray character from his studies with Theophrastus.

Another powerful influence on Menander's playwriting was the overall tradition of Greek drama, of which he was a part. There is much debate about whether tragedy or Old Comedy should be seen as the direct predecessor to New Comedy. Even during antiquity there were conflicting opinions with respect to this.¹³ The issue gets even more complicated because there is a space of about seventy years, between the last play of Aristophanes and the first play of Menander, in which we know plays were being written but we don't have enough fragments to know exactly what these plays were like. Plays written during this period are referred to as Middle Comedy. Some aspects of Menander's plays are very similar to the works Euripides, the tragedian. At times it even appears that he is playing out certain moments from Euripides but with everyday characters, not the heroes from mythology that appear in Euripides' tragedies. At the same time, however, Aristophanes often lampoons certain scenes from plays by Euripides.

277-290 and W. Thomas MacCary "Menander's Slaves: Their Names, Roles, and Masks," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 100 (1969) 277-294.

⁹ *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Third ed. rev., s.v. "Menander."

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ W.G. Arnott, "Menander, Qui Vitae Ostendit Vitam." *Greece and Rome* 15.1 (1968) 7.

¹² *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Third ed. rev., s.v. "Theophrastus."

¹³ W.G. Arnott, "Menander and Earlier Drama," *Studies in Honor of T.B.L. Webster I*, eds. J.H. Betts, J.T. Hooker, and J.R. Green (Bristol, 1986) 1. In the third century BCE the commentator Satyrus claimed that the types of plots used by Menander had been previously perfected by Euripides. However, in an anonymous *Vita Aristophanis*, it is written that Aristophanes wrote a play late in his career, which is no longer extant but which introduced the type of plots that Menander later emulated.

Could Menander be doing a similar thing to what Aristophanes was doing, just in a less flamboyant and fantastic manner? It is difficult to say, but either way, the traditions of Euripides and Aristophanes were important influences on Menander and his playwriting.

Menander's Samia

The only complete play of Menander's which we now possess is the *Dyskolos*, a story about a misanthropic old man who eventually gets reintegrated into society through the marriage of his daughter to a wealthy young man. His second best preserved play is the *Samia*, which means "the woman from Samos." It is named after one of the characters in the play, a hetaira from Samos named Chrysis. The play centers around the birth of an illegitimate child and the confusion which ensues when false assumptions are made about who the parents of the child are. All of this happens while a wedding is being prepared as well.

Demeas, a wealthy landowner, leaves on a business trip with his less-affluent neighbor Nikeratos. While the men are gone in Byzantium, Moschion, Demeas' adopted son, rapes and impregnates Nikeratos' daughter Plangon.¹⁴ He goes to the mother and promises to marry the girl once his father returns. Chrysis, Demeas' hetaira, who was pregnant when Demeas left, gives birth to her baby at about the same time that Plangon does. Demeas had told her that if she should find out that she was pregnant, she should get rid of the baby because he didn't wish to raise it. Chrysis' baby dies soon after birth, before she has the chance to carry out Demeas' orders, but in an attempt to help Moschion, Chrysis pretends that Plangon's baby is actually hers and that she kept it against Demeas' orders. Moschion, Chrysis, and the household slave Parmenon all plot to pass the baby off as Chrysis' until Moschion can convince Demeas to arrange a marriage between him and Plangon. Once that happens, the truth about the baby can come out.

By the end of the second act the marriage has been planned and it appears that everything is going smoothly, until Demeas overhears Moschion's old nurse saying that the baby is actually Moschion's. Immediately assuming the worst, Demeas figures that Moschion has had an affair with his mistress Chrysis, and is now trying to pass the baby off as Chrysis and Demeas'. After much confusion about the matter, and after Nikeratos accuses Moschion of having an affair with

¹⁴ In our society rape has a very negative connotation, as it very well should; however in antiquity that was not always the case. To the Greeks adultery was a worse crime than rape. The Greek word *moicheia* is often translated as adultery but refers to illicit sexual relations with either a married or a single woman. Rape was seen as a less serious crime because the woman was not complicit, whereas in the case of adultery she had been seduced and corrupted by the man involved. (Susan Guettel Cole "Greek Sanctions against Sexual Assault" *Classical Philology* 79.2 (1984) 101-102.)

With respect to rape in New Comedy, Elaine Fantham says, "we may recoil at this feature of rape, rather than seduction, but the latter would probably have prejudiced the audience irremediably against the girl, while they seem to have found rape a human error, when mitigated by darkness, drink, and youthful desire." (Elaine Fantham "Sex, Status, and Survival in Hellenistic Athens: A Study of Women in New Comedy." *Phoenix* 29.1 (1975) 53-54.)

It's a sticky subject to be sure, but what Moschion did was not an act of violence intended to intimidate or show control, he really loved the girl and let his emotions get the better of him. (Fantham, "Sex, Status, and Survival," 54). Not that that is excusable in any way, but the Greeks would have seen what he did as less offensive than seducing the girl. By the time the play starts, Plangon actually loves Moschion too, but whether that were the case before the incident is unclear. To the Greek mind this likely wouldn't matter much, since they saw women as being unable to control their appetites, especially with respect to Greek men.

Chrysis too, everyone finally figures out the truth, that the baby actually belongs to Moschion and Plangon. Once again it appears that the wedding is on until Moschion decides, in Act V, to get even with his father for accusing him of such an awful crime by pretending to run away. His plan backfires when Demeas reprimands him for being angry about the accusations, and things get even worse when Nikeratos sees Moschion and thinks that he is about to leave his daughter standing at the altar. In the end Demeas manages to smooth things over and calls the bride out for the wedding, which takes place without further incident.

Another alternate title for the play is *Kedeia*, which means connection or relationship based on marriage, or some other non-genetic tie. This title is very appropriate because no one in Demeas' household is actually related by blood. The play seems to be an experiment on how artificially constructed families cope when different strains are put on their relationships. Since Moschion was adopted by Demeas and is therefore not actually his son by birth, their relationship is based primarily on the mutual trust and good will that exists between the two of them.¹⁵ The confusion which takes place during the play puts that trust into question, and it is interesting to see how the two men react to the idea that the other has betrayed this trust.

Recovery of the Text

Although Menander was considered to be one of the best practitioners of Greek New Comedy, until about a hundred years ago his writings were only known to modern scholars through quotations which exist in the works of later authors. Unlike other Greek dramatists whose work we possess, Menander was not fortunate enough to have any of his writings survive through the Middle Ages. They were all lost during the seventh and eighth centuries CE, as result of Arab invasions into Byzantine territory and general neglect on the part of the Greeks.¹⁶ Despite the loss of these works, scholars could still get a glimpse of Menander's style by studying the writings of the Roman playwrights Plautus and Terrence, who admittedly borrowed most of their storylines, to some extent, from Greek comedians such as Menander and Diphilus.

Then something exciting happened – exciting for scholars of ancient drama anyway. Towards the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, archaeologists began to discover scraps of papyrus which contained portions of plays by Menander. The largest of these came from a papyrus book, or codex, which contained text from the plays *Epitrepontes* (*The Arbitration*), *Perikeiromene* (*Rape of the Locks*), and *Samia* (*The Girl from Samos*), although none of the three plays were preserved in entirety.¹⁷ The book was written between the fourth and fifth centuries CE and was apparently owned by a lawyer who lived in Aphroditopolis during the 500's CE. He had dismantled the pages of the book and had used them to wrap documents which were stored in jars.¹⁸ The text from this codex was published in 1907, and the papyrus is now housed in a museum in Cairo, hence this manuscript is referred to as *P. Cairensis* or just "C," for Cairo.¹⁹

Another manuscript came to light in the 1950's, in the possession of a Swiss collector named Martin Bodmer. It is referred to as the "B" manuscript or *P. Bodmer*, and the text of *Samia*

¹⁵ Sander M. Goldberg *The Making of Menander's Comedy* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980) 99.

¹⁶ *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Third ed. rev., s.v. "Menander."

¹⁷ Menander, *Samia*, ed. and trans. D. M. Bain (Chicago: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 1983), xxiii.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.* A photographic edition of this manuscript was published by the London Institute of Classical Studies in 1978. *The Cairo Codex of Menander*, London, 1978.

which it contains was first published in 1969.²⁰ The papyrus codex itself was originally written sometime during the third century CE. There are also a few other minor fragments which were found at Oxyrhynchus in Egypt which contribute a few new lines and confirm other parts of the larger manuscripts.²¹ By combining these manuscripts, about four fifths of the *Samia* is able to be read. All of the large lacunas, or gaps in the text, come in the first two acts.

Process of Translation

Numerous translations of Menander's *Samia* already exist, many of which I examined as part of this project. In translating this play, I did not set out to make a more accurate translation than others had. In fact, I am greatly indebted to the work of Norma Miller, D.M. Bain, and W.G. Arnott, whose translations greatly helped me understand the subtleties of Menander's style. Since my primary goal was not to translate the *Samia*, but to produce it on the stage, my focus as a translator was to make a version of the text in English which would play well on the stage and hopefully, to some extent, capture the humor and gently-drawn characters of the original.

For my translation, I primarily used the Greek editions put together by D.M. Bain and W.G. Arnott. Since this was not a practice in paleography, I did not feel it necessary to consult a photographic edition of the text. By examining each word of the Greek carefully, looking at the corresponding phrases in the afore mentioned translations, and discussing each possible choice of interpretation with Dr. Mark Damen, my director for this project, I chose the phrases which I felt best represented the Greek but also sounded relatively normal to the average English speaker's ear.

At times there were certain metaphors and jokes in the Greek which could not be translated directly into English, either because the play on words is not the same or there is just too much cultural difference for the joke to be understood. In cases such as these, I tried to preserve the sense of the Greek joke, by finding a reasonable equivalent in English or by putting in directions for the actors so that they could physically convey the meaning of the words they were saying. My ultimate goal in making this translation was to try to give an English speaking audience the chance to hear Menander the way a Hellenistic Greek audience would have heard him.

Of course, an important part of my project was filling in the lacunas so that I could turn the pieces of the Menandrian original into a completed, smoothly flowing play, able to be produced on stage. As I said earlier, all of the sizeable gaps in the *Samia* come during the first two acts. This made it possible for me to go through the rest of the play and figure out what kind of things Menander must have told the audience in the first half of the play in order for the second half to make sense. I wrote all of this information out and then I listed all of the lacunas, making note of who was on stage and what happened immediately before and after each gap. I then examined the list and began matching up gaps with the information, deciding where it would be best to tell the audience certain pieces of information. When that was done, I figured out who would be on stage during the lacunas and began writing out the dialogue for those characters.

In deciding how to write the dialogue, I went through many of Menander's other plays and looked for situations similar to the ones which I was trying to describe in the lacunas. I examined these passages and looked at how Menander and his characters dealt with certain

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

situations, and then I took that information into account when writing the dialogue to fill in the gaps. In the following text of my play, the parts which I have written are underlined. With the exception of the stage directions, everything that is not underlined is a translation of Menander's original play. In places where the pages of the manuscript were torn in half and we possess half lines of the Greek, I attempted to work the Greek words into my sentences as much as possible. Thus, you will see some sentences which are half underlined, meaning half of the sentence came from Menander and the other half was written by me.

In one lacuna in particular, I was able to find a short monologue from an unidentified play of Menander which fit nicely into the gap. To show that this passage was not in the original manuscript of the *Samia* but was still written by Menander, I have put the text in a different font.²²

Although it is possible to find out, by studying the manuscripts, just how many lines are missing in each lacuna, I did not take this into consideration when I was writing the dialogue to fill them. Unless more of this play is found in the desert somewhere, there is no possible way to know for sure what Menander had originally written in the parts which are now missing. Given Menander's creativity and penchant for writing unexpected twists, virtually anything could have appeared in these lacunas. So, instead of trying to guess exactly what and how much he wrote in each gap, I just focused on trying to make smooth transitions between the original and the parts which I supplied.

In my translation and supplementation, I did not worry about making sure that the script would work according to the three-actor rule which was likely still enforced in Menander's day. Since there are no such conventions in modern-day theater, and since I was not planning on this play being produced with Athenian style masks and costumes either, I did not worry about dividing the roles up between three actors.

I also added an extra character, the Choregos, or Stage Manager, who gives short monologues between the acts which explain certain aspects of Greek theater and culture. In a normal Greek New Comedy, the act breaks are filled by random song and dance numbers which are not outlined in the script. I figured that instead of doing something along those lines, I would take the time to give the audience any additional information they might need in order to enjoy the show.

I hope that by doing this I have been able to create a completed script of Menander's *Samia* which is easy to read and fun to perform, and will be interesting to those involved in history, theater, literature, and whomever else happens to read it.

²² cf. pp16-17.

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*For additional reading on Menander see the Bibliography beginning on page 74⁶.

Dramatis Personae

(In Order of Appearance)

Choregos	The ancient Greek version of a Stage Manager
Moschion	A rich young man, the adopted son of Demeas
Chrysis	A beautiful hetaira, Demeas' live-in girlfriend
Parmenon	A wily slave belonging to Demeas' household
Demeas	A wealthy Athenian gentleman
Nikeratos	A poor merchant, Demeas' next-door neighbor
The Chef	A very philosophical culinary artist

Mute Roles

(Can be played by two or three actors)

Plangon	Nikeratos' daughter, mother of Moschion's baby
Demeas' servants	
A sheep	

ACT I

*The scene is a street in Athens. There are two houses on either side of the stage. On the left is the home of Demeas, a wealthy landowner who lives there with his adopted son Moschion, his live-in girlfriend Chrysis, and numerous servants, including Parmenon. Also to the left is an exit leading to the marketplace. The house on the right belongs to Nikeratos, a poor merchant who lives with his wife and daughter Plangon. Downstage right is another exit leading to the harbor.¹ In the middle of the stage is an altar and a statue of the god Apollo. The Choregos ENTERS from the marketplace.**

Prologue

Choregos: Picture yourself on a clear spring morning, with sound of birds and the smell of wild flowers hanging gently in the background. The city is buzzing around you as you slowly make your through the crowds. You push past the merchants hawking their wares, around groups of disoriented foreigners, and finally you have arrived – you are at the Theatre of Dionysus. It's festival time in Athens, and this is the day you've been waiting for – the day that the comedians will take the stage, competing for first prize. And in Hellenistic Athens, no comedian was better known than Menander.

But before we begin our play here today – by a show of hands, how many of you have ever seen a comedy by Menander before? Okay, we'll try again. How many of you have ever seen a Greek comedy before? Alright, how many of you have seen any type of play before? Okay, we can work with that. But I have to warn you, there are going to be a few surprises in store for you. In some ways Greek Comedy is very similar to our modern-day comedy, but it can also be pretty different too. Fortunately for all of you, I'm here to help out with that. I'm the Choregos or stage manager.² In case you're wondering, *choregos* is the Greek word for the person who directs and leads the chorus in a Greek play. Normally, between the acts in a comedy by Menander, there would be song-and-dance numbers, all Vegas style, but instead of that, for our performance today, I'll be showing up between acts to explain some of the peculiarities of Greek comedy and culture to you.³ Believe me, you'll thank me for it in the end.

Now, almost all of Menander's plays begin with a prologue delivered by a god of some sort who has some special knowledge about the plot.⁴ So, for our performance today, I have taken it upon myself to be the deity who delivers the divine prologue – who better to tell you about the plot than the Choregos himself?

* N.B. Underlined text represents material added by the translator to fill the gaps in the Menandrian original.

Text in Courier font represents material actually written by Menander which is found in unattributed fragments, but was added by the translator to fill gaps in the Menandrian original.

But first off, let's talk about Menander. He was a playwright who lived in Hellenistic Athens near the end of the fourth century BC. There is a famous quote from antiquity which reads, "Menander and life: which imitated which?"⁵ People really saw Menander's plays as being very similar to their lives, and there was discussion about whether Menander wrote the way he did because he was imitating everyday speech and occurrences, or whether people acted and spoke the way they did because Menander's plays were so popular and people were imitating them.

He wrote the *Samia* in about the year 314 BC.⁶ Although he was well known throughout antiquity as the most famous playwright of the genre we now refer to as Greek New Comedy, none of his plays made it through the Middle Ages. But about one hundred years ago, archaeologists began finding papyrus scrolls dating from the first few centuries AD, which contain pieces of plays by Menander. I say pieces because, although the manuscripts were preserved well enough to be read, not all of the pages were there. His play *The Malcontent* is the only complete work of his that we now possess, although sources say that he wrote approximately 105 different plays.⁷

Only about four fifths of the *Samia*, the play we're presenting this afternoon, has been recovered – but don't worry, I didn't invite you here today to see only part of a play. The translator for our play has undertaken the daunting task of completing the play, so that it could be presented in one fluid performance, without stopping and starting where the gaps exist.⁸

Now, in doing this, we don't pretend to know what Menander had actually written in these gaps. Until more fragments are found there is no possible way of knowing that. Menander is famous for plot twists and writing the unexpected – so there is virtually no way of guessing exactly what belongs in the gaps. I like to think of this play as a beautiful painting that has been tattered and torn and has some pieces missing. A worker in a museum might mend the edges, patch the holes, and with his own brush restore enough of the picture so that the people who come to the museum can enjoy it and get a pretty good idea of what the original must have looked like. By filling in the gaps in Menander's *Samia*, our translator has attempted to provide a framework in which the parts of the play which Menander actually wrote might be enjoyed.

But like I said earlier, there are going to be a few differences between this performance and what you expect from modern theater. For one, you'll notice that the characters in Greek plays have a much closer relationship with the audience. There is no hiding behind the "fourth wall" and spying on what's happening in our characters' lives. In fact, you're really not safe back there – especially you. [pointing to an audience member] You could consider the front row here to be the proverbial splash zone.

Another important thing to note about New Comedy is that the characters were recurring. From their names alone, the Greek audience could recognize them and had a pretty good idea about what they would be up to. Although the specific circumstances in the characters' lives changed from play to play – like to whom they were related, where they lived, etc. – they were still basically the same people. Demeas is always an angry old man, Parmenon always a trouble-making slave, and Moschion always an arrogant kid who gets tangled up with a girl he likes.⁹

The sound of a baby crying begins to come from Nikeratos' house.

Playwright: As you can hear, once again, our friend Moschion has been up to his own particular brand of trouble. Here he comes now.

Moschion ENTERS from Demeas' house and crosses into Nikeratos' house.

Playwright: He's a good kid for the most part, but he's still got a lot of growing up to do. Let's hope he doesn't have to learn everything the hard way. I'll get outa here so we can hear what he's got to say.

Moschion ENTERS with the baby in his arms¹⁰ and rocks the child until it quiets down.¹¹

Moschion: Oh, hello. Well, ladies and gentlemen, now that you've seen me here holding this baby, you're probably wondering what the story is – how did a fine, upstanding, handsome young man, at the peak of health and the prime of life, end up caring for an infant. Well, it's difficult to say, but not because I'm unaware of what happened – I know that better than anyone. It's just that – well, I'm ashamed. I'm ashamed to tell all of you about it, but most of all, I'm ashamed to face my father, Demeas. He's a reasonable enough man, I suppose. It's just that sometimes he loses his temper – and then I don't know what he'll do next. I guess technically, he's not even my real father. When I was still quite young, he adopted me from some less fortunate acquaintances of his who didn't have the means to give me the life they felt I deserved.¹² Now he's gone away on business and he's trusted me to take care of things – [sarcastically] I took care of them all right! And I feel just terrible about it. It's good though, I guess – I'm supposed to feel sorry. But all the same, I'm afraid it will be painful for me to tell you what happened, because I did mess up. But to help you understand things better, I ought to start by telling you everything about my father's character. 5
 Immediately following my adoption, I was pretty spoiled.
 Even though I was a small child, I remember that well. We can skip over that.
 At that age, I didn't think at all about how well he was treating me.
 Then, when I was eighteen, I was enrolled as a citizen,
 like everyone else. "Just one of the crowd," as they say. 10
 And now things have gotten even worse – because we're rich,
 father and I.¹³ Back then, I stood out in producing plays

and running charities. Father bred hounds for me,
and horses. I led my cavalry column, in the parade,
with great skill.¹⁴ I even had enough to moderately help out
my friends when they were in need. 15

Yes, because of him, I grew up! But all the same, I gave
a civilized favor back to him – I was well behaved.
And that's when it happened – I figure I might as well
tell you our lives' story all at once – since I have the time. 20
Father fell in love with a certain girl from Samos¹⁵
– a normal thing to do.

He tried to hide it – he was ashamed – but I still found out,
even though he didn't want me to. I figured that
if he didn't let her into the house to live with us,
then he'd be mobbed by younger rivals.¹⁶ 25

But he was ashamed to do this, probably because of me.
He said, "Imagine, a man my age sneaking around with a girl like that!" So I told
him not to worry about it – hundreds of people do it all the time. If Pericles can
get away with it why not him?¹⁷ So in the end, he did take her into our house, and
things went pretty well for a while. But then father started to become friendly
with our next-door neighbor, Nikeratos, a poor merchant.¹⁸ He began noticing
how Nikeratos bore his poverty so nobly –always working hard, providing what
little he could for his family. And I have to admit, that's when I began noticing
Nikeratos' daughter, Plangon. She was beautiful, simple, quiet, well mannered –
everything a man looks for in a wife. But I didn't do anything about it because I
could guess what Father would think about arranging a marriage with a poor girl.
[imitating his father] "That's not the way we do things, Moschion!" Anyhow,
Father decided to help out Nikeratos by financing a business trip to Byzantium. At
first he was just going to provide the necessary capital, but then he got excited
about the voyage and decided to go, leaving me in charge here. Things went so
well in Byzantium that they decided to go on into the Black Sea. They sold a lot
but they got stuck in an early storm and had to wait out the winter.¹⁹ He sent word
to me to go free up some funds to help Nikeratos' family make it through until
they got back. Of course, I was more than eager to show the girl, and her mother,
how helpful I could be. So, that very afternoon, I went and found our banker – I
saw him carrying some documents through the market place – only after I'd
looked for him everywhere. I got some of our deeds from him, the ones father
said to give to our neighbors, and I broke the seals on them so I could get the
money. Then I carried it to their house, like a hero. Everyone was very impressed.
Things had been getting pretty lean at Nikeratos' place.

By that time The girl's mother had become friendly with
father's girlfriend, the Samian, 35

who was at their house a lot, and they in turn
came over to our house sometimes. Then it happened –
one day I was hurrying back from the farm and found them
gathered together at our house celebrating the Festival of Adonis, 40
with a few other women.²⁰ Boy, I never knew religion

could be so fun! And this may shock you,
 but I became a spectator – *oimoi!* I couldn't sleep at all,
 with the sound of them running up and down the stairs,
 carrying pots onto the roof, dancing, 45
 up all night scattered around in little groups.
 I'm afraid to tell you the rest, maybe because I'm ashamed
 when there's no real reason to be. All the same – I am ashamed.
 [pause] The girl got pregnant.²¹ That makes it pretty clear
 what happened before. I didn't deny that 50
 I was to blame. First off, I went to the girl's mother and promised
 to marry her whenever my father returned – I swore an oath!²²
 Not long ago, the baby was born, and I acknowledged it as my own.
 And then, as luck would have it, and quite coincidentally,
 Chrysis gave birth – Oh, that's what we call Father's girlfriend.
It means Goldie. We gave her that nickname a while ago,
when she first came to live with us. As it turns out, when Father left he told
Chrysis that if she should find out that she was pregnant, she should get rid of the
baby.²³ I think again he was worried about me – he thought that a son born to him
might someday threaten my standing in the household. I wasn't too worried
though. It didn't really matter anyways, because sadly enough, Chrysis' baby was
stillborn.²⁴ I don't know if she would have kept it or not, but not even getting the
chance – well...she cried and cried. I was in pretty bad shape too because I was
worried about what Father would do when he got home and found out about my
baby. Then Parmenon, our slave, came up with a plan – he's good at that. [acting
out the conversation] He said "Let's let Chrysis pretend your baby is hers, and
that she kept it against Demeas will." "Why would we do that?" I said. "Because
she can keep that act up long enough for you to talk your dad into arranging a
marriage between you and Plangon. See? [suddenly angry] You are going to talk
to him aren't you? This isn't some game! It's time to be a man about this,
Moschion!"²⁵ [back to the audience] I'm going to tell him, I just need to...you
know...think about what I'm going to say.

Chrysis ENTERS and eavesdrops for a moment.

Moschion: I had it all planned out too, but then we got a letter from Father not long ago
saying that he would be arriving soon. So, basically – I'm scared out of my mind!
I don't think I can pull this off! I'm a terrible actor when it comes to this sort of
thing. When the moment comes to perform I just...freeze up. So, I sent Parmenon
down to the harbor to keep watch. [looking anxiously offstage] He should have
reported back by now. Probably gossiping with his cook friends in the
marketplace.

Chrysis: Hey, any news from the harbor?

Moschion: [startled] Oh, Chrysis. What was that?

Chrysis: News, any news from Parmenon?

Moschion: No, I'll probably have to go fetch him – again!

Chrysis: [*taking the baby*] Here, I'll take the baby inside.

Moschion: Thanks. I'm off!

Moschion EXITS towards the harbor.

Chrysis: [*to the baby*] Here you are! Here's my sweet baby, yes you are! I'm gonna keep you and take care of you for as long as I can! [*to the audience*] At least, Ladies and Gentlemen, I can pretend it's mine for a while. Besides, how could Demeas be mad when he sees this little face, this little smile! And I know it'll take Moschion long enough to break the news to him – so, for now, the baby's mine. [*to the baby*] That's right! Yes you are! Uh oh, I think I hear them coming [*looking offstage*] They're headed over here, and fast...
I'll wait and hear what they have to say. 60

Moschion: You saw him, you saw Father yourself, Parmenon?

Parmenon: Didn't you listen? I said yes.

Moschion: And our neighbor?

Parmenon: They're here.

Moschion: [*hesitantly*] I'm so happy they're back.

Parmenon: Now you need to be a man,
and bring up the topic of marriage right away! 65

Moschion: How am I supposed to do that! This is very hard
on my nerves, now that the time has come –

Parmenon: What's that?

Moschion: I'm ashamed to face my father.

Parmenon: What about the girl you violated
and her mother? Aren't you afraid
to face them, Mr. Sensitivity?²⁶

Chrysis: [*to Parmenon, motioning to Nikeratos' house*]
Why don't you shout a little louder, idiot!

- Parmenon:** Oh, and Chrysis is here too! You wanna know why I'm shouting? I want there to be a wedding! I want this man here to stop moping around in front of these doors, [*pointing to Plangon's house*] I want him to get in there and remember what he has sworn to do – to sacrifice, get dressed up for the wedding, cut the cake! Aren't these good enough reasons for shouting? 70
75
- Moschion:** I'll do everything, you don't have to keep yelling about it!
- Parmenon:** Yeah, I'm sure you will.
- Moschion:** And the baby?
Do we let her raise it and as if it is hers and pretend that she's the mother?
- Chrysis:** Why not?
- Moschion:** Dad's gonna freak!
- Chrysis:** Yeah, but then he'll stop. He's in love, dear boy, just as badly as you are, and love quickly brings even the angriest men to the bargaining table. But I think I'd rather endure anything, before I'd see the baby here fostered out to some adoption agency. 80
85
- Parmenon:** Well, I don't care what happens with the baby. [*to Moschion*] You just need to get in there and tell your father the truth as soon as you can.
- Moschion:** But Parmenon, your plan is foolproof. Both households have been coached on what to do. He won't suspect anything! And I'll tell him, I will. I just need to, you know, get my thoughts together.
- Parmenon:** Well, get 'em together soon! I'm done with foolproof plans!
- Chrysis:** But your plans always go so well.
- Parmenon:** Yes, they always go so well for *you two*. I'm the one who always gets in trouble in the end!²⁷ Remember when your cousin Sostratos went off on a business trip to collect on a debt for Demeas, and he fell in love with the slave girl from Ephesus? I convinced your dad that the money had been stolen so that Sostratos could use it to buy the girl's freedom. But then his "conscience" got the better of him and he gave the money back – and who gets beaten? Parmenon does.

Moschion: Yeah, but –

Parmenon: And then there's the time your friend Chaereas fell in love with the soldier's girlfriend, so I told her to pretend to be her own twin so she could sneak over and see him. You remember what almost happened to me there?

Moschion: That wasn't that bad.

Parmenon: That bad? He was going to make me into Parmenon the eunuch!

Moschion shrugs his shoulders.

Parmenon: And then when your other friend racked up so many debts at all his drinking parties that I convinced him to sell his father's house to pay for it all. And then when his dad got back into town I told him to pretend that the house was haunted so his dad wouldn't go back in and find out it had been sold...

Moschion: [*laughing*] Yeah, that was pretty good!

Parmenon: I had to hide out on the altar for four days until he finally calmed down!
– without bathroom breaks!

Chrysis: Oh, come on.

Parmenon: And then this last time, Demeas said if I ever did anything like that again, he'd brand me! Me! Parmenon! You know, super-heated metal searing into my flesh!²⁸

Moschion: He was just trying to scare you!

Parmenon: Well it worked! And besides, he's only going to tolerate the baby in the house for so long.

Chrysis: Nonsense! I'll be able to calm him down.

Parmenon: [*sarcastically*] Yeah, okay.

Chrysis: Sure! Here, Moschion, you pretend you're Demeas.

Moschion: Why?

Chrysis: I'll show you how it'll work.²⁹

Moschion: Alright.

Moschion frowns and stomps around.

Moschion: [imitating Demeas] What did you think? I'd bring up a bastard in my house! No way! That's not my style!

Parmenon: [laughing] That's good! That's Demeas to a "T!"

Chrysis: Okay, now all I have to do is walk like this, put on my pouty face, and say, "But Demeas!"

Moschion's demeanor softens a little, but then gets serious again.

Moschion: Don't try to herd me, woman!

Parmenon: I can almost feel the brand on my forehead!

Chrysis: And if that doesn't work, I just whisper in his ear like this!

Chrysis whispers something in Moschion's ear. He gets embarrassed and cracks.

Chrysis: See, putty in my hands!

Moschion: That was pretty good!

Parmenon: [shaking his head] Look, we've got to get ready, they'll be here any minute!

Chrysis: You're right, I'm going to go inside.

Parmenon: Me too. [Moschion turns to leave as well, but Parmenon stops him] But I want you to stay here and get ready to talk to your father!

Parmenon and Chrysis EXIT. Moschion stays on stage, pacing around.

Moschion: [to the audience] Look at me! Look at how I'm shaking! You'd accept this from a soldier going to battle for the first time, but I feel like my situation's more wretched than anyone's! Why don't I just hang myself quickly! An orator alone in front of a crowd at least hopes his audience will be friendly towards his news. In my upcoming contest, I don't even think I can count on that. [he paces a bit longer] Forget it! I'm going off to practice somewhere. This is not going to be your average boxing match!³⁰

Demeas and Nikeratos ENTER from the port with two or three slaves lugging their baggage.

Demeas: Don't you already notice the change of scenery, how much this place differs from that hell hole?³¹

Nikeratos: [with a grumble] The Black Sea.

- Demeas:** Thick old men.
- Nikeratos:** Fish at every meal.
- Demeas:** No joy in anything!
- Nikeratos:** Then Byzantium –
- Demeas:** Absinthe.
- Nikeratos:** Everything bitter.
- Demeas:** Apollo! But here – pure goodness for the poor. 100
Dearest Athens, I wish you had everything you deserve!
Then we, who love our city,
would be happy in everything – [*he notices the slaves standing around*]
get inside, all of you! [*everyone goes in but one*]
Are you paralyzed or just checking me out? 105

The last slave EXITS into Demeas' house.

- Nikeratos:** There's one thing that amazed me the most
about that place, Demeas. Sometimes
you couldn't see the sun for a really long time.
It was like some thick mist was blocking it out.
- Demeas:** Well, the sun didn't see anything noteworthy there 110
so it shone on them as little as possible. [*laughing*]
- Nikeratos:** [*laughing*] By Dionysus, you're right!
- Demeas:** Let's let others worry about that. Now, about the things
we were discussing earlier, what have you decided?
- Nikeratos:** You mean about the wedding for your son?
- Demeas:** Yes.
- Nikeratos:** My answer is still the same. Let's do this – 115
let's pick a day, and good luck to us!
- Demeas:** You're sure?
- Nikeratos:** Positive!
- Demeas:** Just remember – it was my idea first!

Nikeratos: Call me when you leave.

Nikeratos begins to exit.

Demeas: Of course there are a few other things we need to discuss.

Nikeratos: Other things?

Demeas: Like the dowry.

Nikeratos: Oh, yes. Umm...about that....

Demeas: And I was thinking –

Nikeratos: It'll take some time to get it all, but –

Demeas: Nikeratos...

Nikeratos: I'll save and I'll...um...cut back where possible –

Demeas: [*louder*] Nikeratos!

Nikeratos: Huh?

Demeas: I'll take care of the dowry.

Nikeratos: [*incredulously*] What?

Demeas: I'll pay your daughter's dowry. I've made at least double that on this business trip.

Nikeratos: [*flustered*] No, but you can't, I mean, that's not how it works!

Demeas: You can still pay for the feast, the ceremony, procession – I'll just take care of the dowry.³²

Nikeratos puzzles about his choice.

Demeas: Doesn't it make more sense for me to pay it? I'm the one that's got the money. Besides, wealth comes and goes, but a true friend is better than some secret treasure kept buried somewhere.³³

Nikeratos: I suppose....

Demeas: Good, then it's settled.³⁴ [*reluctantly*] Now, I'll just go talk to the boy....

Nikeratos: [*reluctantly*] Great. And I'll go break the news to my wife....

Both men turn to their houses but stop and give a collective SIGH.

Demeas: Yeah, I'll just tell him I've arranged this marriage for him. I'm sure he'll be...very pleased.

Nikeratos: Yeah, I'm sure he will. You know, Moschion's not the type to buy in to those modern ideas about love and romance in a relationship – how young people ought to choose who they want to marry.³⁵

Demeas: You're right, he's not.

Nikeratos: Yeah.

They both pause, nodding.

Demeas: And your wife, ...well...good luck with that!³⁶

Demeas EXITS quickly into his house.

Nikeratos: Wait! Demeas!

Nikeratos stands grumbling by his door for a moment. Then he looks off stage.

Nikeratos: Uh oh, looks like a crowd of drunken partiers headed this way.³⁷ Oh wait, actually it's just one person. Hmm...I can't tell who it is, but he looks pretty boring. He'll probably gas on forever about some sort of history crap. I'm outa here!

Nikeratos quickly ENTERS his house.

First Choral Interlude

Choregos: Thank you, Nikeratos, for that fabulous introduction. That was pretty funny when he called me boring just now, but don't worry, the Choregos always gets the last laugh!

So, Demeas and Nikeratos, have just been discussing the marriage of their children Moschion and Plangon. In specific, they've been discussing the question of the dowry. The dowry was a large sum of money and goods that was paid to the groom by the bride's family to ensure that she would be treated well by her new husband. If he did anything which warranted divorce, the wife's dowry would return to her father's household. If the husband had spent the money, he would have to come up with the equal amount very quickly.³⁸ That was usually a good enough reason for men to treat their wives well. Don't you just love a romance?

So, one of the reasons Nikeratos has to put up with his wife – besides the fact that she wears the pants in their relationship – is that the dowry she brought to the marriage probably represents a large percentage of Nikeratos' net worth – a little something he avoids discussing with his friends at the barbershop.

For a poor family like Nikeratos', their daughter's dowry would represent years of saving. The higher the social status of the man to whom the daughter was married, the higher the dowry would need to be. So, if Nikeratos wanted his daughter to marry a classy guy, he'd have to save up for quite a while to be able to do that.

In Menander's plays, it wasn't unheard of for the rich groom's family to provide the dowry for the bride, if the boy had fallen in love with a girl from a less well-to-do family.³⁹

Now we've also heard that Demeas told Chrysis that if she had a baby, then she was supposed to get rid of it. This usually meant taking the infant out into the countryside and abandoning it.⁴⁰ It sounds terrible, I know, but the reasoning was that if the gods wanted the baby to live, they would send someone to rescue it, and if not, then the blood of the infant wouldn't be on the parents' hands. A Greek audience would have seen this as normal. So if you've got some negative feelings towards Demeas right now for asking Chrysis to dump the baby, try to suppress them. You'll have plenty of reasons for being angry with him later.

The main reason that Demeas didn't want the child is because when it grew up it could threaten Moschion's place in his adoptive father's household. If you look at it this way, it's kind of sweet that Demeas would go to such trouble to preserve this bond between himself and his adopted son – a bond that was based on mutual respect and loyalty instead of on blood relationship. In addition to that, according to the strict interpretation of the law, the child wouldn't be considered an Athenian citizen, because only one of its parents was Athenian.

So, taking all this into consideration, I don't think that Demeas is going to be very pleased when he sees that Chrysis has kept their baby – well, at least what he thinks is their baby. But then again, Chrysis can be pretty persuasive, if you know what I mean. Oops, I hear them coming. The door is rattling.

Demeas and Chrysis ENTER.

Choregos: That's another convention of Greek comedy. The ancient Greeks must have had a serious shortage of door oil, because doors are always rattling in Greek comedy and the characters always comment on this. I mean, what's with that?

Demeas and Chrysis are glaring at the Choregos

Choregos: Excuse me.

The Choregos EXITS

ACT II

Demeas: [*rubbing his ear*] Stop trying to whisper in my ear, like some snake! I can't even stand to look at you right now!⁴¹

Chrysis: But Demeas...!

Demeas: No! No, "but Demeas!" I was serious when I told you I didn't want a child and I'm serious now – I don't want it!

Chrysis: Come on, you've had a rough trip, and –

Demeas: Yes, I have had a rough trip, by God, and this doesn't make coming home any easier!

Demeas scowls at Chrysis. She puts on her signature pouty face and tries out her sultry walk.

Demeas: No! Stay over there! I need some time to figure this out. Just...just leave me alone.

Demeas threatens her with his stare until she finally EXITS, retreating into the house.

Demeas: [*to the audience*] A man, when he leaves town, expects that a certain order will be maintained at home – that servants, women, children will be obedient. What a fool I was! [*to the statue*] Lord Apollo! I pray that you will grant me the patience and the wisdom to sort out this damnable mess!

Demeas stands meditating by the statue. Moschion ENTERS from the market place.

Moschion: Well, Ladies and Gentlemen, it's all been taken care of – the wedding's already happened. That's right, I imagined the whole thing in my mind just now. I hid so I could practice the speech I would make to my father, but
 I didn't do any of the things I meant to when I left. 120
 I found this little out-of-the-way spot where I could be alone.
 I did the sacrifice, invited my friends to the dinner,
 sent the women to get the holy water,
 I walked around handing out the cake, 125
 sang, hummed the wedding song – I was a complete idiot!
 Once I'd had my fill of that – [*seeing Demeas*]
 Holy Apollo!⁴² That's father there! Has he heard?
 [*Demeas approaches him*] Oh, hello Father.

Demeas: Yes, and you too son.

Moschion: You look upset. What's up?

Demeas: What's up? I'll tell you. I thought I had
 a girlfriend, but apparently I have a wife! 130

Moschion: A wife? How? I don't get it.

Demeas: Without my knowledge, I've gotten a son, it seems.
 And the hell with that! She'll leave and take it with her!

Moschion: My God! Don't!

Demeas: Don't? Why not?
 Do you think I'm going to raise a child in there – 135
 a bastard? No way! That's not my style.

Moschion: But who among us *is* legitimate, for gods' sake,
 and who's a bastard? We're all just human, right?

Demeas: You're joking.

Moschion: No, by Dionysus, I'm serious! How does one man's
 birth make any difference from another's? 140
 Look at the situation fairly – doing what you ought to
 makes a man legitimate and causing trouble makes you
 both a bastard and a lowlife.⁴³ Some people are so quick to rattle
 off their genealogy to you, but how does that make you
 any better than the next man? There's no one I know of
 who doesn't have a grandfather – how else could you be
 born? If someone can't name his lineage because he's
 moved, or was adopted, or lost his friends, does that

make him a bastard? But if a man's naturally inclined to do what's right, that makes him legitimate - it doesn't matter who he is or where he's from.⁴⁴

Demeas: So you think I should keep the child?

Moschion: I don't see a good reason why you shouldn't.

Demeas: Moschion, think about what you're saying! This baby is my child by blood. If I keep it, it could grow up to threaten your birthright and your standing in my house. I can't allow that to happen!⁴⁵

Moschion: I know, and you *won't* allow it, whether the child stays with us or not. I'm not worried about it, Dad.

Demeas: [*glumly, beginning to concede*] It's not even full Athenian.

Moschion: It could be worse. It could be half-Persian or Egyptian. When you think about it, half-Samian isn't that bad.

Demeas: Semi-Samian? I don't know...

Moschion: Besides, you love her, right? Why would you send her away if you still have feelings for her - that's why you took her in in the first place.

Demeas: Well, I suppose...

Moschion: I mean, what's the point of being with anyone if there's not love involved, right?

Demeas: [*uncomfortably*] Well, yes Moschion - that's important, but there are other -

Moschion: And speaking of love, there's something else I need to talk to you about.⁴⁶

Demeas: Good, there's something I need to talk to you about too. It's about marriage.

Moschion: [*worried*] Oh?

Demeas: Yes, I know your generation thinks a lot about the importance of love in a marriage, but other things are important too - like tradition.

Moschion: What do you mean?

Demeas: Well, traditionally, a father chooses the girl his son will marry.

Moschion: [*beginning to panic*] Well, that's great! I might have a few suggestions, just some girls for you to think about.

- Demeas:** No Moschion, it's already been decided.
- Moschion:** What? Decided?
- Demeas:** That's right. I told her father that you had always been respectful to me in the past and that you wouldn't disobey me now. Am I wrong?
- Moschion:** Whoa! Wait a second! If you can be with Chrysis because of love, why can't love have anything to do with my choice of who to marry?
- Demeas:** Your choice?
- Moschion:** Yes, for gods' sake, it ought to be mine!
- Demeas:** That's not how it's done, Moschion.
- Moschion:** No, that's not how it *used* to be done! Homer and Hesiod died a long time ago, Dad!
- Demeas:** Yes, but tradition didn't!
- Moschion:** Fine, you want to talk about tradition? *Traditionally*, you ought to believe in the gods, right?⁴⁷
- Demeas:** Of course.
- Moschion:** Well, love is a god, isn't it?
- Demeas:** So they tell us.
- Moschion:** Then why should we be so reluctant to obey it?
- Demeas:** Yes, well you could say obedience is a god in the same sense, and so you ought to obey your father!
- Moschion:** My father?
- Demeas:** Yes, by Zeus, I am your father, and if you really wanted to be my son you'd do this!
- Moschion:** I can't, Dad!
- Demeas:** It's arranged!
- Moschion:** I'm in love with Plangon!

Demeas: You're going to marry Plangon!

Moschion: What's that?

Demeas: It's final! I've already discussed this with Nikeratos. I'm sure he's in there telling his wife about it right now.

Moschion: You mean Plangon, our-next-door-neighbor's-daughter Plangon?

Demeas: Do you know a different one?

Moschion: No. This is great!

Demeas: Good, I'm glad to see you're finally listening to reason.

Moschion: Reason? I'm in love with her, Dad!

Demeas: What?

Moschion: She's the girl I'm in love with!

Demeas: You're serious?

Moschion: Yes, I wanted to talk to you about marrying her – I'm in love!

Demeas: Well, I didn't know you wanted this marriage. That makes things much easier, son!

Moschion: Yes, I want to get married. It's like I can't even wait another day!

Demeas: Okay, but you'd be better off if you were a little patient.

Moschion: Oh, but I'm done being patient. You've been gone for over a year. It has to be today!

Demeas: [*pause*] Alright. I can tell this is important to you. We'll do the wedding today.

Moschion: Thanks!

Demeas: I'll just go talk to Nikeratos and make sure it's okay with him.

Demeas heads towards Nikeratos' house. Moschion, feeling guilty, stops him.

Moschion: Father, wait. There is something else...something I need to explain.

Demeas: I don't need to know anything else about it, except that you mean business -- if they offer the girl, you'll marry her?

Moschion: Yes, but if you haven't heard everything about the matter, you won't know how serious I am. You want to help me, don't you?⁴⁸

Demeas: Serious? Heard everything? [*laughing*] I understand what you're talking about, Moschion. I'll go right away and talk to Nikeratos about doing the wedding. 155
Our part of things will be ready.

Moschion: Great! [*pause*] I'll go in and wash myself, pour a libation, place incense on the altar -- then I'll go get the girl!⁴⁹

Demeas: Whoa, not yet!
Not until I know if he'll go along with us. 160

Moschion: He won't try to stop you. But I'd just get in the way if I were there -- that wouldn't be right. I'm off.

Moschion EXITS towards the agora.

Demeas: Luck must be a god, I guess.
It rescues us from all the things we can't foresee.
I had no idea the boy was in love! 165
Now all I have to do is convince Nikeratos -- that should be easy enough. Then all he has to do is convince his wife -- hmm, there's the trouble. I'd better call him out here soon. [*Knocking on Nikeratos' door*] Come here in front, come talk to me, Nikeratos, come out!⁵⁰

Nikeratos ENTERS.

Nikeratos: What for?

Demeas: Well hello to you too.

Nikeratos: Likewise. What's up?

Demeas: Tell me, do you remember how we didn't set a date for the wedding earlier?

Nikeratos: We didn't?

Demeas: No, but it doesn't matter because I've picked the perfect day, and then we can both know for sure when the wedding will take place.

Nikeratos: Where? When?

Demeas: Well, the sooner we start it the sooner it'll be over, right? So how about today?

Nikeratos opens his mouth to protest.

Demeas: Don't worry! I'll take care of everything.

Nikeratos: How?

Demeas: I'll pay for it.

Nikeratos: But that's not how it's done, Demeas!

Demeas: Yeah, but when has that ever mattered to me? Seriously, you don't have to worry about a thing!

Nikeratos: Well what about the guests, by Hercules!

Demeas: Let me give you some advice, Nikeratos – forget about the guests. Maybe just run and tell a friend or two.

Nikeratos: [*bewildered*] Okay, but before I tell my friends, I guess I have to convince my wife.

Demeas: Nikeratos, just do this for me, as a favor.

Nikeratos: But what should I do? What should I say to her?

Demeas: Just tell her the kids are in love. She'll understand.

Nikeratos: I don't think so. Do you remember what happened last time we talked about love?

Demeas: [*nodding with frown*] Oh, right.... Well then, just tell her that you're the man of the house, and what you say goes!

Nikeratos: Are you serious?

Demeas: You are the man of the house, aren't you?

Nikeratos: [*sullenly*] I guess. Fine, I'll go along with you. It's stupid to always want to win.

Demeas: You're a smart man, Nikeratos. Good for you! Now, you go tell your family and I'll tell mine.

Nikeratos: Alright, I'm on my way.

Demeas: Oh, and when you're done, could you go to the market and get a sheep for the sacrifice? I'll send Parmenon to get everything else.

Nikeratos: Fine.

Demeas: Parmenon! Hey, Parmenon!

Parmenon ENTERS from Demeas' house.

Demeas: We need garlands,
meat, sesame – get a basket and 190
just basically buy everything in the marketplace,
then come back quickly.

Parmenon: Everything? If it were up to me –

Demeas: Move it! I already told you! And bring a cook.

Parmenon: A cook too? After I've bought everything else?

Demeas: Yes.

Parmenon: I'll need more money – 195

Demeas hands him a bag of money.

Parmenon: I'm off!

Parmenon EXITS into the house. Nikeratos lingers on stage rehearsing what to say to his wife.

Demeas: Haven't left yet, Nikeratos?

Nikeratos: I'm just going in to tell my wife to get things ready inside,
then I'll follow him [*pointing to Parmenon*].⁵¹

Nikeratos EXITS into his house. Parmenon ENTERS from Demeas' house, yelling over his shoulder to those inside.

Parmenon: That's all I know!
That's all he told me to do. I'm in a hurry here!

Demeas: He'll have some trouble persuading his wife. 200
[*begins going towards Nikeratos' house, but stops short*]
It's not my job to spend time giving him advice.
[*seeing Parmenon dallying*] Hey! Get busy! Why aren't you running?....

*Demeas EXITS into the house and Parmenon EXITS towards the market. Nikeratos ENTERS from his house.*⁵²

Nikeratos: *[to the audience] You know, a man leaves on business and comes back a year later. You'd expect his loving, obedient wife to be happy to see him. But no! I can't get a word in edgewise! I swear, the woman is into everything! I try to talk to her. I beg for her to let me be in charge of just one thing at home – the marriage of our daughter. And then what? She says that she already knows about it and approved it before I even got a chance to talk to her. How does she get to know so much! I swear, she has spies everywhere. [looking around in a paranoid fashion] They're probably looking at me right now! I gotta get out of here!*

Nikeratos EXITS towards the marketplace.

Second Choral Interlude

Choregos: Yes, Nikeratos, they're watching you! Now, we've seen Demeas and Moschion's argument about whether or not to keep the baby and we've already talked briefly about Athenian citizenship. Being a citizen of Athens meant more than just living there. To be a true Athenian citizen, a person's parents both had to be Athenian citizens as well. If an Athenian had a child with someone who was Greek, but not from Athens, the child could not truly be considered Athenian, and was thus denied the rights of citizenship.⁵³

This didn't mean that only Athenian citizens could live in Athens – there were many non-citizens living there – but only the registered citizens could enjoy all of the benefits and protections of the law. There were also different classes among the citizens themselves, which were based on the amount of wealth and land a person owned. So, although Demeas and Nikeratos were both citizens, they belonged to different social classes, because Demeas was a rich landowner and Nikeratos was, shall we say, financially challenged.

In this play, we've also got a few characters from some non-citizen social classes in Athens, like Parmenon, who is a slave. Slavery in antiquity was not based on race, but instead, whoever was unfortunate enough to be captured by someone – because of military conquest, debts, or other circumstances – such a person could be sold into slavery.⁵⁴ It's not fun to talk about, but it is one of the ugly realities of ancient culture. Slaves working in households could be treated quite well, especially ones that nursed or tutored their master's children. But there were plenty of instances of slaves acting out and getting punished for it, as Parmenon so eloquently stated during the first act. The worst punishment for a slave was to be branded. Masters would brand disobedient slaves on their forehead, so everyone who saw them would know that they had behaved badly.

Chrysis is also a non-citizen living in Athens, but she's not a slave, she is a hetaira.⁵⁵ Now, a hetaira is technically a type of prostitute. Kinky, huh? There were many levels of prostitution in ancient Athens, and the hetairai were at the top. You could consider them to be kind of a high-class, personal escort service. Unlike women who were Athenian citizens, hetairai were well educated and were trained to be able to talk politics and philosophy with the men they accompanied. The word hetaira is actually the female form of the Greek word *hetairos*, who was a guy friend who you hung out and had fun with, and who could talk with you about current issues. So being with a hetaira had all the perks of hanging out with your best bud, except he wasn't a "he," he was a "she," and she was really hot too! So, for Greek guys this was pretty much as good as it gets.

It was good for a hetaira to eventually find some guy to settle down with, because she made her living by being young, beautiful, and intriguing. So after a few years, when she stopped being all of those things, if she hadn't found someone to take care of her, she could end up on the streets and in pretty bad shape. So, it's in

Chrysis' best interest to remain in Demeas' household. If she were to get kicked out, she wouldn't have very many options open to her. So when you think about it, it's really nice of Moschion to put Chrysis in this position where she is in danger of being thrown out of Demeas' house, just so that he can save his own skin. Let's just hope that Demeas can keep a level head about all this. But, if I know Demeas, I'm not entirely sure he's capable of that.

ACT III

Demeas ENTERS from his house.

Demeas: Have you ever been out sailing and the sky
and the sea are just perfect. Everything's going smoothly.
You're making good headway, coming out of a fair run – then
all of a sudden a big storm comes up unexpectedly.
It smashes and throws overboard those
who were once watching a calm sea.
That's what happened to me just now. 210
I was putting the wedding together, sacrificing to the gods,
everything was going exactly according to plan –
and now I don't know if I'm seeing straight anymore!
I'm staggering around like I've just taken
a sharp left hook out of nowhere! 215
I can't believe it! Examine this carefully and see
if I'm in my right mind or totally insane –
not thinking clearly and just making trouble for myself.
As soon as I went in – I'm very serious
about doing this wedding thing – I laid out the situation clearly 220
to those inside and told them to get everything ready that we'd need –
clean things up, cook, put the wedding basket together.
Which means, of course, everything was going smoothly, but the speed
of it all was causing quite a commotion, with everyone hard at work,
as you might expect. The baby was set out of the way on a couch, 225
bawling its head off. The women were shouting all at once,
"Flour! Water! Give me the olive oil! Charcoal!"⁵⁶
And I was helping out, giving them some of these things,
when I went into the pantry to get more –
and to take a little breather! 230
I didn't come out right away. While I was in there,
a woman came down from upstairs
into the room right in front of the pantry –
there happens to be a weaving room there,
which means that you have to go through it to go upstairs 235
or to get into the pantry. The woman was Moschion's nurse,

kind of old – she started out as a servant of mine,
 but now she's been freed. She saw the baby,
 but she didn't see me and had no idea
 that I was inside the pantry. She figured it was safe to talk, 240
 so she started out saying all the regular things you'd say to a baby,
 "Darling baby! Little treasure! Where's mommy?"
 She kissed it, carried it around.
 When it stopped crying,
 she said to herself, "O dear me! 245
 Not long ago Moschion was just like this,
 and I nursed him and loved him, and now since
 this baby of his has already been born,
I'm happier than I've ever been.
I never thought I'd live to see a son of his born."⁵⁷ 250
 And then a certain little serving girl came running in
 from outside, and the old woman said to her,
 "Bathe the baby, fool! Don't you know babies
 should be clean on their fathers' wedding day!"
 But right away the girl said, "You idiot! You talk too much! 255
He's inside!" "No he isn't! Where?
 In the storeroom?" Then a little louder, the maid said,
 "Nurse, the mistress is calling you," then she whispered,
 "Go! Hurry! He hasn't heard anything. You're lucky!"
 Then the nurse said, "Oh dear! Me and my blabbering!" 260
 Then she went off out of the way – I don't know where.
 And I calmly stepped out of the pantry,
 acting just the same as I had when I walked in,
 as if I hadn't heard or found out anything.
 Then as I was coming out here I saw *her* holding *it*, 265
 my Samian nursing the baby!
 So it's clear that the baby is hers,
 but who is the father? Is it me, or is it –
 I can't even say it to you, Ladies and Gentlemen!
 I won't jump to conclusions, but I've laid out the facts for you – 270
 or what I heard anyway – and I'm not angry, not yet.
 I know a thing or two about my son, by the gods!
 Before all this, he was always well behaved
 towards me and as respectful as possible.
 But then again, when I think back on the nurse and what 275
 she said about Moschion, not realizing I was there,
 or when I look back at *her* loving *it*,
 insisting on raising it, even though I didn't want to –
 I'm completely beside myself!
 Oh good, I see Parmenon's here, 280
 back from the market.
 I'll let him take his entourage inside.

Parmenon ENTERS from the marketplace, followed by The Chef and two slaves carrying bags.

Parmenon: For God's sake, cook, I don't know why you carry this meat tenderizer around with you. Your talking is quite capable of grinding up anything!⁵⁸

The Chef: Peasants.⁵⁹ 285

Parmenon: Peasant, me?

The Chef: You seem like it to me at least, by the gods.
If I try to find out how many tables you intend to set, *how* many women will be there drinking, *when* the meal will be served, *whether* it will be necessary to bring my own waiter, *if* you have enough plates in the house, *whether* or not the kitchen is covered, *if* everything else is provided – 290

Parmenon: *If* you haven't noticed, good sir, you're turning my brain into hamburger, and that was your plan, wasn't it?

The Chef: Oh, go to hell!

Parmenon: Same to you, for all the trouble you give me. Now inside, everyone!

Everyone EXITS into Demeas' house except Parmenon.

Demeas: [*whispering*] Parmenon! 295

Parmenon: Did someone call me?

Demeas: Yes...

Parmenon: Hello master.

Demeas: Put the basket down and come back here.

Parmenon: My lucky day.

Parmenon EXITS.

Demeas: I'm sure that no business done in this house gets past his nose – he's nosey like no one's business! 300
Oh, but here he is fumbling with the door.

Parmenon ENTERS from Demeas' house, talking back over his shoulder.

Parmenon: Hey! Chrysis! – Make sure the *chef* gets everything he needs. And for God's sake keep the old woman away from the dishes!

A large CRASH comes from inside as Parmenon shuts the door.

Parmenon: How can I be of service, master?

Demeas: How can you be of service? Come away from the doors ...a little further...

Parmenon: Voila!

Demeas: Now listen up, Parmenon. 305
By the twelve gods, I'd really rather not whip you, for several reasons.

Parmenon: Whoa! Whip me? But what did I do?

Demeas: You're hiding something from me. I know.

Parmenon: Me? No I'm not, I swear by the god of wine, by the god of reason here, by the god rescue, ooh, and by the god of healing!⁶⁰ 310

Demeas: You really shouldn't swear, Parmenon. I'm not guessing here!

Parmenon: But I'd never, I swear, umm...

Demeas: Hey, look in there...

He escorts Parmenon to the door and they both peer inside.

Parmenon: Ok, I'm looking.

Demeas: The baby, whose is it?

Parmenon: Oh!

Demeas: Whose baby is that, Parmenon? – This is a real question!

Parmenon: It's Chrysis'.

Demeas: And who is the father?

Parmenon: You...she says.

Demeas shuts the door.

Demeas: You're done for. You're cheating me!

Parmenon: Me? 315

Demeas: I asked. I found out everything, completely!⁶¹
The child is Moschion's, you are in on it,
and now *she* is raising it for him!

Parmenon: Says who?

Demeas: Says everyone! But tell me, is this all true?

Parmenon: It is, master. But, the secret – 320

Demeas: The secret?! One of you slaves, bring me a leather strap
for my little con-artist here!

Parmenon: No, for gods' sake!

Demeas: I will brand you, by the fire of Helios!⁶²

Parmenon: *Brand me?*

Demeas: Consider it done!

Parmenon: Consider me done!

Parmenon EXITS towards the harbor.

Demeas: Where are you going, you whipping post? After him! 325

A slave with a rope dashes after Parmenon.

- Demeas:** O fortress of Kekropia! O vapid firmament!
 O what the hell is wrong with me?⁶³
 What are you shouting about, you fool? Get a hold of yourself!
 Buck up! Moschion hasn't wronged you.
 Now as crazy as this logic sounds, ladies and gentlemen,
 there is truth to it. Because if Moschion did this thing willingly, 330
 or bitten with passion for Chrysis or hatred for me,
 he would still be resolutely marshalling
 his forces against me. But he defended himself to me
 and looked pleased when the marriage was
 presented to him, not because he was 335
 in love with Plangon, as I then thought.
 He just wanted to get out of my house,
 intent on fleeing from that Helen of mine in there!⁶⁴
 Yes, she's the one to blame for all this.
 Obviously she caught him just drunk enough so 340
 that he wasn't himself. Alcohol and adolescence
 can be a troublesome tag-team, especially with
 Chrysis ringside as their coach.⁶⁵
 It doesn't seem at all likely to me that a boy who's been
 well-behaved towards everyone and so self-controlled
 in his dealings with others, would act that way toward me. 345
 No! Not if he were ten times adopted, not my son by birth.
 I can see that it's not in his character.
 It's that human trampoline, that bitch! But what's
 the point? She won't be around much longer! Now it's time to be
 a man, Demeas. Forget your yearning – don't love her! 350
 You have to keep this all under wraps for as long as possible,
 for your son's sake, and shove that lovely Samian
 out of your house, onto her head. To hell with her!
 And you have the perfect excuse – she kept the child!
 You just can't let any of this show. 355
 No biting anyone, stay strong, and remember – you're noble.

The Chef ENTERS from the house.

- The Chef:** Then he must be out here!
 Hey! Parmenon?! The fellow has abandoned me
 without the slightest bit of help!
- Demeas:** Out of the road, jackass!
- The Chef:** Holy Hercules! What's all this? 360
 Hey! Some old mad man has just rushed inside!
 Perhaps some trouble's brewing. But what do I care. Hey!
 [*the cook attempts to open the door, but it is locked*]

There is a crash offstage.

The Chef: By Poseidon, the man's quite mad – that's my opinion!

Demeas yells something incomprehensible.

The Chef: He certainly yells loud enough...

Demeas shouts a profanity.

The Chef: Well-mannered, I must say.

Another large crash offstage.

The Chef: If the dishes I set out are lying "in his road" 365
he'll smash them to pieces for sure!

Something hits the door with a thud.

The Chef: He hit the door!
Well double damn you, Parmenon,
for having brought me here.

A big crash right in front of the door.

The Chef: Perhaps I'll stand back a bit.

Chrysis ENTERS clutching the baby, followed by an enraged Demeas.

Demeas: Can't you hear? Get out!

Chrysis: But where will I go? Oh my!

Demeas: Go to hell for all I care!

Chrysis: Woe is me!

Demeas: Yes, woe is you! Just go on and cry. Be pitiful! 370
So help me, I'll keep you from –

Chrysis: From doing what?

Demeas: Never mind! You have the child,
the old woman! Now get the hell out of here!

The baby begins to cry. Chrysis tries to quiet it.

Chrysis: Because I kept the baby?

Demeas: For that, and...

Chrysis: And what?

Demeas: For that!

The Chef: Oh! So *that's* the trouble!

Chrysis: I don't get it. 375

Demeas: You didn't know a good thing when you had it!

Chrysis: I Didn't?

Demeas: You came to me, Chrysis,
with only the sun dress on your back,
and it was off-the-rack!⁶⁶ Get it?

Chrysis: So?

Demeas: Back then, when you weren't doing so well,
I was everything to you.

Chrysis: Is there someone else?

Demeas: Don't even talk to me! You've got what's yours. 380
Have the maidservants, Chrysis, just get out of my house!

The Chef: The problem here is anger management. Time for intervention.⁶⁷
[*To Demeas*] See here, good sir –

Demeas: Why are you talking to me?

The Chef: Whoa! No biting!

Demeas: Another woman will be happy with what I have to offer. 385
She'll thank the gods for it!

The Chef: What's going on?

Demeas: You've had a son – that's all you get!

The Chef: Hmm...hasn't bitten yet. [*To Demeas*] All the same –

Demeas: [*To the Chef*] One more word and I'll bust your skull wide open.

The Chef: Rightly so, but do just look – I'm outa here!

The Chef EXITS into the house.

Demeas: [*To Chrysis*] Well, Hot Stuff, in the city 390
 you'll see yourself for what you really are, not what
 you've imagined yourself to be, Chrysis. To make just ten drachmas
 women like you run off to dinner parties
 and drink the hard stuff until they die,
 and unless they do this fast and free, they go hungry – 395
 something you'll learn better than anyone else.
 Then you'll know how good you had it and
 how badly you screwed up!⁶⁸

Demeas EXITS slamming the door behind him.

Chrysis: Oh, what awful luck!

Chrysis finally calms the baby down. Nikeratos ENTERS with a scrawny sheep in tow.

Nikeratos: This sheep here will do.⁶⁹ It meets all the requirements 400
 of the gods...or maybe the goddesses.
 It has blood. The gall bladder's decent. Nice bones.
 And the spleen is really big – that's all the gods get anyway.
 I'll even share with my friends, so that they can have a taste –
 I'll send them the skin, all chopped up. And the rest? It's all for me!

Nikeratos notices Chrysis crying.

Nikeratos: Hefty Hercules! What's this? Is this Chrysis 405
 in front of the house crying? Well, it's not anyone else.
 What happened?

Chrysis: He's thrown me out,
 your friend, the nice one! What does it look like?

Nikeratos: Hefty Hercules!⁷⁰ Who, Demeas?

Chrysis: Yes.

Nikeratos: Why?

Chrysis: Because of the baby.

Nikeratos: I heard from the women that you kept the baby
and are raising it. The stupidest thing I ever heard! 410
[*she begins to cry*] Oh, but Demeas is really understanding...

Chrysis: Well, he didn't get angry at first, but after a while...

Nikeratos: Just now?

Chrysis: He told me to get everything ready inside for the wedding,
then he attacked me like a crazy man and threw me out! 415

Nikeratos: Demeas must be depressed.
The Black Sea is not a healthy place.
Come on, let's go see my wife. Cheer up!

Chrysis turns as if to return to Demeas' house.

Nikeratos: Where are you going? He'll stop being angry
once he's figured out what he's done. 420

Nikeratos and Chrysis EXIT into Nikeratos' house.

Third Choral Interlude

Choregos: Before we go much further, I had better explain the important role that myths and drama played in the lives of the people of Athens. Nowadays, we see Greek myths as a collection of peculiar, old stories, and we often look at live drama as somewhat outdated compared to television and movies – of course, not here in this theater, since all of you were kind enough to show up today – but for the ancient Greeks both myth and drama were very real influences on them.

They really viewed themselves as the descendents of mythical figures such as Theseus and Danaë. Everyone always wants to know to what extent the Greeks actually believed in the more supernatural aspects of these myths. It's always hard to judge someone's belief by looking at historical data, but it's true that *some* ancient Greeks actually *did* believe in the stories told in myth while others thought that mythical figures were not necessarily historical, but provided real examples and paradigms for their lives.⁷¹

The same can be said about drama. It was still a very new art form in Menander's day, and in a time without movies, video games, TV, comic books, it was just about the best form of entertainment they could get. People loved going to plays and loved discussing them with others. In fact, during the disastrous Sicilian Expedition, many captured Athenians were saved from death in the quarries because they knew and could sing the latest choruses by Euripides.⁷²

Myth and theater also go hand in hand, because the vast majority of Greek plays, especially tragedies, deal with mythological characters. Theater and myth were so much a part of everyday Athenian life that people, like the characters in our story, pictured themselves playing out these stories in their lives.

Although he tries not to think about it, Demeas right now sees himself as playing the part of Theseus in the Hippolytus myth.⁷³ Theseus went on a quest to the underworld – which according to Demeas' report isn't too different from going to the Black Sea – and while he was gone his young wife Phaedra made advances on Theseus' son, her stepson, Hippolytus. Demeas is trying really hard not to play this myth out, but he is afraid that Moschion will end up like Hippolytus. That's why he was reluctant to take Chrysis in in the first place.

Demeas views his son as having been seduced by some foreign tramp. Nikeratos, on the other hand, is a little slow on the uptake, but once he figures out what Moschion has done, he'll feel like he's in a different tragedy – like one involving Oedipus, Tereus, or Thyestes. We all know about Oedipus' problems – killed his father, married his mother, later sued Freud for slander, etc. – but the story of Tereus might be new to you. He was married to woman named Procne, who had a sister named Philomela. In a stunning feat of intellect, he decided it would be a good idea to rape his wife's sister Philomela and then cut out her tongue so that she wouldn't tell anyone. But Philomela was one of those smart, Lifetime-Movie

chicks, so she depicted the story in a tapestry which she wove and sent to her sister. When Procne got the tapestry, she took her revenge on Tereus by killing their son and feeding the boy to her husband – so in the end, I guess he got his...literally. And after that, he chased after the women and they all turned into birds – a peaceful ending to a very disturbing story.

Thyestes has an equally unsettling story. He seduced his brother Atreus' wife Aerope, in an attempt to secure the rule of the kingdom to which they both heirs. His plan worked, but Atreus got his revenge by cooking Thyestes' own children and feeding them to him – I don't know where they got this idea from, but it's really gross – and then Atreus sent him into exile for being disgusting.

There will also be talk about Amyntor, who, in one of Euripides' plays, falsely accuses his son Phoenix of sleeping with his mistress. As a penalty Amyntor blinds Phoenix. Interestingly enough, both Phoenix and Moschion are innocent of the crime they have been accused of.

You're also going to hear them talking about Danaë and her father Acrisius. Acrisius didn't want Danaë to have any kids, so he locked her up in a tower. But Zeus entered the tower through the roof as a shower of golden rain, and nine months later, Danaë gave birth to Perseus, much to Acrisius' consternation. I could see getting pregnant *in* the rain, but *from* it? What would you call that, a baby shower?

But seriously folks, although these myths might sound incredible to us, to the ancient Greeks they really provided patterns that everyday people played out in their everyday lives. The question the Greeks wanted to be answered was, "Which myth am I playing out right now?" Let's hope our characters can stay inside a nice Menandrian comedy and not end up in one of Euripides' tragedies. Everyone liked watching his plays, but no one wanted to be *in* one – trust me!

ACT IV

Nikeratos ENTERS from his house, shouting back over his shoulder to his wife.

Nikeratos: You're going to be the death of me, woman! Yes, I'm going to "attack him." [*to the audience*]
Oh, I wouldn't have wanted this to happen, by the gods, not at any price. And in the middle of the wedding preparations, too! This is a bad omen. She was thrown out, comes to stay with us, with her baby too.
Then the crying starts. The women begin rioting.
Demeas is such a shithead! By Poseidon and the gods, he'll be sorry he's such a klutz!

Moschion ENTERS from the marketplace.

Moschion: Ah, Helios, will you never set? What else can I say?
It seems the night has forgotten itself. This is one long afternoon!
Might as well take a third dip in the swimming pool.⁷⁴
I can't think of anything else to do.

Nikeratos: Well hello, Moschion. 430

Moschion: Are we going to start the wedding now? Parmenon
told me, when I met him, in the marketplace just now.
Any reason I shouldn't go get Plangon?

Nikeratos: You don't know, do you?

Moschion: What?

Nikeratos: What's happened? It's not pleasant – definitely weird.

Moschion: Hercules! What? I don't know – I just got here. 435

Nikeratos: It's Chrysis. He drove her out of your house, dear boy,
your father just now.

Moschion: Come again?

Nikeratos: That's what happened.

Moschion: Why?

Nikeratos: Because of the baby.

Moschion: So, where is she now?

Nikeratos: She's inside with us.

Moschion: Whoa, that's terrible!⁷⁵ And completely out of the blue!

Nikeratos: Well, if you think *that's* terrible –

Demeas ENTERS from his house, yelling over his shoulder to his servants.

Demeas: Just let me get my hands on a stick! I'll show you 440
 what real tears are! [*Whining from offstage*] Nonsense!
 Why don't you help "the chef?" Of course you're crying, by Zeus!
 You've lost a great ally from the household.
 All this ruckus makes that clear!

Demeas shuts the door and addresses the statue of Apollo.

Demeas: Lord Apollo!
 Please, with good fortune for all, allow us to have this wedding which 445
 we intend to perform. [*to the audience*] For I intend to follow through
 with this wedding, Ladies and Gentlemen, and swallow my anger.
 Watch carefully, Lord Apollo, and see to it personally that my feelings
 aren't obvious to anyone – force me to sing the wedding hymn and smile.
 And don't let them see me as I am now. But what am I worried about? 450
 She won't be coming back!

Nikeratos: [*pushing Moschion forward*] You go first Moschion, then me.

Moschion: Ok...hey Dad, what's going on?

Demeas: What do you mean, Moschion?

Moschion: What do I mean? Why has Chrysis gone and left? Tell me.

Demeas: [*to the audience*] Clearly, someone has dispatched ambassadors
 to me – won't work! [*to Moschion*] This is none of your business,
 by Apollo! It's mine alone. [*to the audience*] 455
 What is this crap? [*with a sudden realization*]
 Good God! He's out to get me too!

Moschion: [*to Demeas*] Excuse me?

Demeas: [*continuing to audience*] It's true! Why else would he approach
 on her behalf? He ought to be happy about this.

Moschion: What do you expect your friends will say when they find this out?

Demeas: Well, Moschion, I expect my friends – Don't push me!⁷⁶

Moschion: What kind of person would I be if I didn't? 460

Demeas: Oh, are you going to stop me?

Moschion: That's right!

Demeas: [to audience] Do you see this? It's too much!
This is worse the worst thing yet!

Moschion: Anger is never the right answer.

Nikeratos: You know, Demeas, he's right.

Moschion: Nikeratos, run and tell Chrysis to come over here.

Nikeratos hesitates and doesn't exit. Demeas tries to stop Moschion from interfering

Demeas: Moschion, don't push me! Don't, Moschion! I've told 465
you that three times.

Moschion tries to push past him. Demeas grabs him and pulls him away from Nikeratos' house.

Demeas: I know everything.

Moschion: What everything?

Demeas: I don't want to talk about it.

Moschion: But you have to, father!

Demeas: Have to? Am I not the master of my own house?

Moschion: Do it for me as a favor.

Demeas: Some favor! You'd like it if I went away, left the house,
so it's just the two of you! Let's just do the wedding! 470
Let *me* do the wedding, if you have any sense at all.

Moschion: That's fine, but I want Chrysis to be here with us.

Demeas: Chrysis?

Moschion: For your sake most of all.

Demeas: [Aside] Isn't it obvious! Isn't it clear!
I call you as witness, Apollo, he is conspiring
with my enemies – this person! Oh, I'm going to explode! 475

Moschion: What are you talking about?

Demeas: You want me to tell you!

Moschion: Of course!

Demeas: [*Pulling Moschion further away from Nikeratos*] Over here.

Moschion: Tell me.

Demeas: I will. The baby is yours. I know. I've heard it from the keeper of secrets himself – Parmenon. Don't toy with me.

Moschion: So, what's your problem with Chrysis, assuming the child is mine?

Demeas: Who should I blame? You?

Moschion: Well, how is she at fault?

Demeas: What are you saying? 480
Do neither of you have any scruples at all?⁷⁷

Moschion: Don't shout!

Demeas: I'll shout if I want to, you reject!⁷⁸
Are you taking the blame upon yourself?
Tell me! How dare you look me in the face and say this!
Do you really think so little of me?

Moschion: Me? What do you mean?

Demeas: What do I mean? How can you even ask that? 485

Moschion: This isn't the worst thing that ever happened, Dad.⁷⁹
I bet thousands of people have done this.

Demeas: O Zeus! The nerve! In the presence of witnesses
I ask you this – you're the father, right. [*Moschion nods*]
So, who's the mother? Tell Nikeratos this if you don't
think it's the worst thing that ever happened!

Moschion: [*pulling Demeas aside and whispering fiercely*]
Well, for God's sake, it'll become the worst thing that ever 490
happened when I tell him! He'll be so mad when he finds out.

Nikeratos: [*Finally understanding*] The worst of all men who ever lived! I'm just
beginning to understand what happened, the unholy act you committed!⁸⁰

- Moschion:** This sounds like my last act!
- Demeas:** Now do you get it, Nikeratos?
- Nikeratos:** How couldn't I? This has got to be the worst thing that ever happened! The sins of Tereus, Oedipus, Thyestes, and all the other tales we're told, you make them look like misdemeanors!⁸¹ 495
- Moschion:** I do?
- Nikeratos:** How dare you do this! The nerve! It has become your fate now, Demeas, to take upon yourself the anger of Amyntor and blind this man!
- Demeas:** [*To Moschion*] It's all your fault he's found this out! 500
- Nikeratos:** Who would you not touch? Whose bed would you not defile, assuming I gave you my daughter as your wife. I'd rather – knock on wood, as they say⁸² – have Diomnestus here marry her.⁸³ [*pointing to an audience member*] Who *wouldn't* call that bad luck?
- Demeas:** [*To Nikeratos*] Now don't go overboard. Look at me, I'm the one who's wronged and I held back. 505
- Nikeratos:** Yeah, well you're a sucker Demeas! If he had defiled my marriage bed, I wouldn't let him outrage someone else's, not him or his concubine! I would be the first in line to sell the tramp, and I'd kick the boy out, too. Every barbershop, every corner of the plaza would be buzzing from the break of dawn, and everyone would talk all day about me – how Nikeratos is a real man for prosecuting justice on a murderer! 510
- Moschion:** A murderer?
- Nikeratos:** It's murder, I think, when someone ups and does this sort of thing.⁸⁴
- Moschion:** [*beginning to hyperventilate*] I can't feel my toes – I need a drink – Oh God, this is bad! 515
- Nikeratos:** But on top of everything else, I received into my home the doer of these dreadful deeds!
- Demeas:** Throw her out, Nikeratos, as a favor to me. You should feel nobly wronged along with me, the way a friend would.

Nikeratos: [*hesitating*] I'll explode if I see her – [*seeing Moschion*]
What are you looking at, you barbarian?
Thracian!⁸⁵ Get out of the way!

Nikeratos pushes Moschion aside and storms into his house.

Moschion: Listen father, for gods' sake! 520

Demeas: I won't listen to a word.

Moschion: Not even if nothing you suspect actually happened?
I think I finally get what's going on.

Demeas: "Nothing?" How is that?

Moschion: Chrysis is not the mother of the child that she's now raising.
She's just doing me a favor pretending it's hers.

Demeas: What's that?

Moschion: The truth.

Demeas: Why is she doing this favor for you? 525

Moschion: Well, I don't really want to say, but I'll escape the felony and
plea to the misdemeanor, if you find out what really happened.

Demeas: Am I going to die before you tell me?

Moschion: It belongs to Nikeratos' daughter, and to me.
I was hoping this wouldn't get out.

Demeas: Come again?

Moschion: That's the way it happened.

Demeas: Don't try to herd me! 530

Moschion: When you can check the evidence? What good would that do me?

Demeas: Nothing – but someone's coming...

Nikeratos ENTERS in a panic.

Nikeratos: Oh wretched, wretched me! I can't believe what I just saw!
I had to come outside! It's making me crazy!
Who could foresee this? I think I'm having a heart attack!

Demeas: What's he talking about?

Nikeratos: My daughter, just now, with the baby
– I saw her nursing it, inside!

Demeas: [*Aside*] So it's true. 535

Moschion: Father, are you listening?

Demeas: You didn't wrong me Moschion. I wronged you.
I shouldn't have suspected you in such a way.⁸⁶

Nikeratos: Demeas! I'm coming for you!

Moschion: Well, I'm gonna go now.

Demeas: Come on!

Moschion: One look from him and I'll die!

Moschion EXITS ducking away towards the market place.

Demeas: [*To Nikeratos*] So, what's up?

Nikeratos: She was nursing the baby,
just now, inside. I saw my daughter! 540

Demeas: [*fishin' for lie*] Maybe, she was faking.

Nikeratos: She was *not* faking! When she saw me coming in,
she fainted on the spot!

Demeas: Maybe, she thought that perhaps...

Nikeratos: Maybe you will kill me with your maybe-ing!

Demeas: [*Aside*] This is all my fault.

Nikeratos: What was that?

Demeas: You don't really believe what you're saying, do you? 545

Nikeratos: But I saw it!

Demeas: What a crock!

Nikeratos: This is not some story! I'll go back and...

Demeas: You know what, wait a minute, buddy...

Nikeratos EXITS into his house.

Demeas: He's gone. Everything's turned upside down. It's over!⁸⁷
 By Zeus, once he hears the facts, he'll have a fit. [*crash from offstage*]
 Then he'll yell. [*muffled yelling from offstage, followed by another crash*]
 He's one tough hombre – calls a spade a spade. 550
 I had to be suspicious! I'm such an ass, by Hephaistos!
 I deserve to die! [*more yelling off stage*]
 Hercules, he's got that screaming down. Whoa! He wants fire!
 He's threatening to burn the baby! Oh no, I'm going
 to see my grandson roasted! There goes the door again. 555
 He's like some whirlwind or thunderbolt.

Nikeratos ENTERS with a meat cleaver lodged in his straw hat.

Nikeratos: Demeas! She's plotting against me and is doing every dreadful thing imaginable – your Chrysis, I mean!

Demeas: What are you talking about?

Nikeratos: She's convinced my wife not to say anything!
 And my daughter too! She's hanging onto the baby
 and won't let it go, she says. Don't be surprised if I kill her. 560

Demeas: Kill who, your wife?

Nikeratos: She's in on everything!

Demeas: You should never kill your wife, Nikeratos.

Nikeratos: I just wanted to give you advanced warning.

Nikeratos EXITS into his house.

Demeas: [to audience] He suffers from depression.
 [large crash off stage] He's landed. Ah, what's a person to do in such a predicament? I've never been in a mess like this before, by God. 565
 I suppose it's best to admit what actually happened.
 [another crash near the door] Whoa, there's the door again!

Chrysis ENTERS, clutching the baby tightly.

Chrysis: Heaven help me! What should I do? Where should I go?
 He'll take the baby from me!

Demeas: Chrysis, here!

Chrysis: Who's that?

Demeas: Inside, run!

Nikeratos ENTERS with a pie squished across his clothes.

Nikeratos: Where is she, where are you going?

Demeas: Apollo, looks like I'm going to have to fight him one-on-one today. 570
 [to Nikeratos] What do you want? Who are you chasing?

Nikeratos: Demeas, get out of the way! Let me by! Getting hold of that baby's the only way to make those women talk!

Demeas: Not a chance.

Demeas assumes a ridiculous fighting stance. Nikeratos laughs.

Nikeratos: So, you gonna hit me first?⁸⁸

Demeas: That's right! [to Chrysis] Hurry, get the hell inside!

Nikeratos: You wanna fight? Let's fight!

Nikeratos stretches like a boxer.

Demeas: Run Chrysis! He's stronger than me! 575

Nikeratos: Just remember, you started it. I've got witnesses! [pointing to the audience]

Demeas: Yeah, well you're chasing a free woman with a stick!⁸⁹

Demeas kicks a stick towards Nikeratos' feet.

- Nikeratos:** Perjurer!
- Demeas:** Same to you!
- Nikeratos:** Bring me the baby!
- Demeas:** That's a laugh. It's mine!
- Nikeratos:** No it's not!
- Demeas:** Yes it is!
- Nikeratos:** [*To audience*] Hey people, do you see this?
- Demeas:** Go on, shout!
- Nikeratos:** Fine, I'll go kill my wife! What else can I do? 580
- Demeas:** Oh no, not this again. I can't allow it. Where are you going? Wait!
- Nikeratos:** Don't even try to touch me!
- Demeas:** Then get a grip!
- Nikeratos:** You're in the wrong here, Demeas – caught red-handed.
You're in on the entire plot!
- Demeas:** Fine, then just ask *me*. Don't bother your wife about it.
- Nikeratos:** That boy of yours has dished me up for real! 585
- Demeas:** That's bull! He'll take the girl. It's not that kind of thing.
Come on, let's take a little walk – you and me.
- Nikeratos:** Take a walk?
- Demeas:** Yeah, and get a hold of yourself.
Haven't you heard the saying, you know Nikeratos,
from the tragedians, that Zeus, turning into gold,
flowed through the roof into the room of the girl who had
been shut up in the tower, and then wham, bam – he's outa there?⁹⁰ 590
- Nikeratos:** So? What about it?

- Demeas:** Perhaps it's good to be prepared for anything. Think about it
– does any part of your roof leak?
- Nikeratos:** Most of it. But what does that have to do with this?
- Demeas:** Sometimes Zeus turns into gold,
sometimes rain, get it? That's his job. 595
It can come as quite a shock.
- Nikeratos:** Don't try and herd me!
- Demeas:** No, by Apollo, I swear I'm not.
But you might be just as lucky as Akrisios, who knows?
If that girl was honored, then surely your –
- Nikeratos:** Oh my God! Moschion has really screwed me over!⁹¹
- Demeas:** He'll marry her. Don't worry about that.
You ought to know what's happened here is a miracle, of sorts. 600
I can point out to you thousands walking around in broad daylight
who are children of the gods, but you say it's impossible for this to happen.
[*picking someone out of the audience*] First off, there's Chairephon here.⁹²
He's never paid for a dinner in his life.
You don't call that a miracle?
- Nikeratos:** I suppose. What can I do? I can't argue with you about that.
- Demeas:** That's 'cause you've got brains, Nikeratos. 605
Next, Androkles here [*picking someone else out of the audience*]⁹³
He's lived how many years? But he runs, he jumps,
he gets in everybody's business. And look at this healthy tan!
He wouldn't even be pale if he were dead,
not even if you killed him and drained the blood out of him.
How is he not an act of God?
So just pray that this marriage will work out well. Burn incense,
make an offering. My son will be along to get the girl soon. 610
- Nikeratos:** I guess I don't have much of a choice.
- Demeas:** You just keep getting smarter!
- Nikeratos:** But if I had caught him...
- Demeas:** No no! Don't get upset. Just go get things ready inside.
- Nikeratos:** Okay.

Demeas: And I'll do the same at my house.

Nikeratos: Alright.

Demeas: You're a smart man, Nikeratos.

Nikeratos EXITS into his house. Demeas breathes a sigh of relief.

Demeas: Thank all the gods that what I thought was true
didn't actually happened!

615

Demeas EXITS into his house.

Fourth Choral Interlude

Choregos: Well, this is great! It seems that everything has been resolved. Everyone's straight on whose baby it is. The marriage will be happening this evening. No one was killed, or beaten up, or burned on the altar – despite Nikeratos' best efforts. So you're probably wondering why we're still here. Normally we'd have a curtain call right now, but we've only done four acts. In Menander's day there were always five – so if you were sitting in the Theatre of Dionysus watching this you'd be wondering what still needed to be resolved in the last act. Well, there's just one problem left – the same problem that started this whole mess – Moschion.

After getting so wound up in secret plots and false accusations, our young friend seems to have completely forgotten the fact that, when it comes down to it, he did do wrong and he's still to blame for that.

Since Moschion wasn't born into Demeas' high-class family, he always feels the need to prove that he's not some lowlife – that he really deserves the social status he's received by being Demeas' son. So, he figures that a true gentleman would be outraged if someone accused him of the things Demeas had just accused him of.

Of course in all his righteous anger, he's forgotten an important detail or two – like the fact that he lied to his father and plotted with the household slave and with his father's mistress to hide his wrongdoing. And even though he does love Plangon and wants to marry her, he's forgotten that he did assault her and have a child out of wedlock with her – which is a very serious deal. So serious in fact, that the Greeks were accustomed to exact a penalty from those who acted the way Moschion did, which was rather, shall we say, unpleasant.⁹⁴ Guys, listen up!

If a girl's father found out that her daughter had been assaulted and raped by some rich little punk, he had the right, to make a public example of him by taking a large radish – or they had a certain species of fish, the mullet, which had spikes sticking out of its head – and he would insert it into the offenders posterior – not a punishment for Moschion to take sitting down.⁹⁵ In fact, it'd be while before he did any type of sitting, I'd guess. And I don't care what kind of budget Nikeratos is on, I'm sure he'd be able to scrape together enough to go buy the fish.

So with that in mind, Moschion should have just humbly accepted the wedding and begged for everyone's forgiveness. But of course, he wouldn't be Moschion if he did that. Uh oh, I think I hear him coming now.

ACT V

Moschion ENTERS wearing an oversized army helmet.

Moschion: I, when I was cleared of the false charges against me
 a while ago, I was pretty happy and I thought
 I was lucky that things turned out the way they did.⁹⁶
 But now that I've come to my senses and had a chance
 to think about it, I'm beside myself, totally furious 620
 that my father suspected me of committing such crimes!
 If this thing hadn't happened with the girl and there weren't
 all these other obstructions – my oath, the fact that I like her,
 the timing, the relationship we've developed –
 all these things that hold me back – 625
 he would never have accused me of such things to my face,
 'cause I would've been outa here, out of the city,
 out of sight, to India somewhere...or maybe Cincinnati,⁹⁷
 spending my time as a soldier there, fighting the forces of evil.
 But now, dearest Plangon, on account of you, 630
 I'll never do anything manly again. For it is not possible,
 nor is it allowed by the current master of my will – Love.⁹⁸
 But I can't take this insult lying down, as if I were complete
 trailer-trash.⁹⁹ No, if nothing else I want to scare him,
 in word only, telling him that I'm going to leave. 635
 Then in the future, he'll be sure not to act so
 thoughtlessly towards me, when he sees
 that I won't suffer this lightly.
 But look, the perfect man for this type of thing.
 Here he is, just the man I wanted to see. 640

Parmenon ENTERS from the harbor, not sensing Moschion's presence.

Parmenon: Great God Zeus! I've done a foolish thing,
 and someone ought to slap me hard!
 I was innocent, but I got scared and ran away from
 my master. Now, why did I do that?
 Let's examine this piece by piece. 645
 The adoptee commits a gross indecency against a freeborn
 woman – clearly no crime was committed...by Parmenon!
 The girl gets pregnant – Parmenon definitely not to blame.
 The baby comes into the house,
 our house – his doing, not mine. 650
 A certain someone in the household claims that she's the mother.
 What did Parmenon do wrong there?
 Nada! So why did you flee then, you worthless, spineless
 excuse for a man? [*Arguing with himself*]¹⁰⁰ Moron! He threatened

to brand me! Get it? There's not one grunt of difference 655
between taking a beating when you deserve it and when you don't.
Either way, it's not pretty.

Moschion: Hello...!

Parmenon: Hello, yourself.

Moschion: Cut the crap and go inside. Hurry up!

Parmenon: To do what?

Moschion: Bring me a uniform and a weapon...or something.¹⁰¹

Parmenon: [*incredulously*] You want *me* to bring *you* a weapon?

Moschion: And now! 660

Parmenon: What for?

Moschion: Move it! And keep quiet about what I told you.

Parmenon: [*suddenly interested*] Something going on?

Moschion: Don't make me take off my belt!

Parmenon: Fine, fine. I'm going.

Parmenon waits, staring at Moschion, hoping he will divulge his secret.

Moschion: So why are you still here?

Parmenon reluctantly EXITS.

Moschion: Father will come out here now.
He'll beg me to stay – that's clear. 665
I'll let him beg for a while – yeah, that's got to happen – then,
whenever the time is right, I'll allow myself
to be persuaded by him. Now all I have to do is be a good actor,
and God knows I'm not that!
Uh oh, the door's opening!

Parmenon ENTERS.

Parmenon: You must be reading last week's paper,
because you're totally behind on what's going on inside. 670
You don't know, do you? You haven't heard at all. You've
upset yourself for no good reason and now you're driving yourself crazy.

Moschion: Where's the stuff?

Parmenon: They're doing your wedding! The wine's being mixed,
the incense is on, the sacrifice is underway, the meat's on the barbecue
man – [*quoting tragedy*] slow roasting over Hephaistos' flame!¹⁰²

Moschion: Hey! Where's the stuff!

Parmenon: Dude, they've all been waiting for you for a really long time! 675
Are you going to get the girl or what? Lucky man!
Yeah, you got it goin' on! Cheer up! – Is something wrong?

Moschion slaps Parmenon across the face.

Moschion: *You're telling me* what to do, bitch!

Parmenon: Ow! What are you doing, Moschion?

Moschion: Go inside now and bring me out what I told you to!

Parmenon: Man, you cut my lip!

Moschion: And you're still talking!

Parmenon: I'm going! Great Zeus, this is one hell of a day I've had. 680

Parmenon begins to exit, but then stops and turns back around to Moschion.

Moschion: [*threatening to hit him again*] Still here?

Parmenon: They're doing your wedding, really.

Moschion: Not this again? Tell me something I don't know!

Parmenon EXITS into Demeas' house.

Moschion: Now they're sure to come out. [*Pause*]
 But, ladies and gentlemen, what if he doesn't beg me to stay?
 What if he gets angry
 and lets me leave? I didn't figure that into my plans just now.
 What'll I do then?
 Well he probably won't do that – but what if he does?
 Anything's possible. 685
 I'll look pretty stupid, by Zeus, if I back out after all this!

Parmenon ENTERS with a silly uniform and a flimsy weapon.

Parmenon: Here. Here's your uniform and your weapon. Go on, take them!

Moschion pauses, looking at what Parmenon brought.

Moschion: Fine, give them to me. Did anyone inside see you?¹⁰³

Parmenon: Not a soul.

Moschion: No one? Not even one!

Parmenon: I said no.

Moschion: What do you mean, no? I hope Zeus damns you to hell and leaves you there!

Parmenon: Well then, go off to wherever you're headed. You're so full of shit!

*Moschion begins to come after Parmenon but stops when Demeas ENTERS.*¹⁰⁴

Demeas: Then where is he, tell me? [*Demeas sees Moschion's uniform*] 690
 Oh no! What's this?

Parmenon: [*mocking Moschion*] Forward, march! Double time!

Demeas: What does this outfit mean? What happened?
 What are you doing, leaving? Talk to me! Hey, Moschion

Parmenon: As you can see, he's already shipping out. Now I have
 to say farewell to everyone inside. I've got my marching orders too.

Parmenon salutes Moschion and Demeas and EXITS into the house.

Demeas: Moschion, you're angry, and bless you for that. I don't blame 695
 you one bit if you were hurt, and wrongly so – I take the blame for that.
 But, you need to consider this too. Who's been hurt more? Me.
 I'm the father here. I took you as a child and raised you up.

If you've enjoyed any part of your life so far, I'm the one
 who gave that to you. You ought to find some way to cope 700
 if you're unhappy with me, and put up with my behavior,
 the way a son would. I was wrong. I shouldn't have accused you.
 I was ignorant. It was a mistake. I was mad. But think about this –
 I injured other people as well, because I was trying to look out for you.
 And, I kept it to myself, wrong as I may have been. 705
 I didn't tell it to those who hate us and would be happy about it.
 But now you're publishing *my* mistake, and make witnesses to *my* stupidity.
 Moschion, that isn't right. Don't dwell on the one day of my life
 when I tripped up a little, and forget what went before.
 I could say a lot more about this, but I'll leave it there. 710
 It's not right to obey your father reluctantly, you know
 that perfectly well. It's right to do it willingly.

Nikeratos ENTERS from his house, yelling over his shoulder.

Nikeratos: Leave me alone! Everything's taken care of – the baths,
 the preparations, the wedding –
 so if he happens to show up, he can take the girl and keep her!
 [*suddenly seeing Moschion*] What the hell is this?

Demeas: Don't ask me, by Zeus, I've no idea!

Nikeratos: How can you not know? 715
 A uniform? He's planning to go AWOL!¹⁰⁵

Demeas: So he says.

Nikeratos: So he says? How can you let him leave, an admitted adulterer, taken in the act?¹⁰⁶
 I'm gonna tie you up little boy, right now!

Moschion: [*pretending to be brave*] Tie me up? Just try it!

Nikeratos: Cut the bullshit! Drop the sword! Now!

Nikeratos and Moschion fight.

Demeas: Drop it, Moschion! For God's sake don't piss him off!

Moschion: There, I dropped it. Since you asked so nicely. 720

Nikeratos: Asked nicely? Get over here!

Nikeratos puts Moschion in a sleeper hold.

Moschion: Ok, just tie me up.

Demeas: Don't tie him up!

Nikeratos releases Moschion reluctantly.

Demeas: [*into Nikeratos' house*] Someone bring the bride out here.
[*to Nikeratos and Moschion*] Now shake.

Nikeratos holds his hand out. Moschion extends his hand but then retracts it in fear.

Demeas: Good enough.

Moschion pulls Demeas aside

Moschion: If you'd done this first, father,
you could've saved yourself that speech you made just now.

Nikeratos greets Plangon as she ENTERS with the rest of his household. Parmenon, Chrysis, and Demeas' slaves all ENTER from his house.

Nikeratos: Go in front of me. 725
In the presence of witnesses I give this girl to you to have
a crop of legitimate children. And forthwith I also give you as a dowry
all my possessions when I die – which God forbid – I plan to live forever!

Moschion: I do, I take her, I love her.

Demeas: Now all that's left is to fetch the holy water. [*pointing offstage*]
Chrysis, send the women, the water bearer, and the flute girl. 730
Someone bring out a torch and some garlands,
so we can have the procession.

Moschion: Here, this guy's got it.

The Choregos ENTERS carrying wreathes and garlands for the newlyweds.

Demeas: [*to Moschion*] Cover your head and put this on!

Moschion: I am!

Choregos: Boys, girls, ladies and gentlemen, and everyone else, 735
let's give a big hand for our actors today.
And hopefully you'll always clap for my plays!
Thank you and good day!

Notes

Act I

¹ Based on the location of the Theater of Dionysus with respect to the marketplace and harbor of Athens, K.B. Frost suggests that the exit to the right leads to both the harbor and to the marketplace, while the exit to the left leads to the countryside. (K.B. Frost *Exits and Entrances in Menander* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988) 5, 103.) Since most of the audience watching this version of the play probably has not been to Athens, or if they have they probably have not paid that close of attention to the topography of the city, for the sake of simplicity I have divided up the exits, situating the harbor to the right and the marketplace to the left. I did not include a separate exit to the countryside because none of the characters in the play ever state explicitly that they are going out to the country. Moschion says that he is going off some place to practice alone (line 90), but that does not necessarily mean that he is leaving the city.

² The choruses for the plays which competed at the dramatic festivals in Athens were funded and organized by wealthy citizens as a type of public service. "a *choregos* (literally 'leader of a chorus') was responsible for the recruitment, training, maintenance, and costuming of the *choreutai* (members of a chorus) for competitive performance at a festival." (*Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Third ed. rev. s.v. "*choregia*.") Moschion, as a wealthy young man, actually volunteered as a *choregos* once or twice (cf. line 12).

³ Of the choral interludes which appeared in an original performance of New Comedy, W.G. Arnott says "These acts seem to have been separated from each other by irrelevant interludes, sung and danced by an anonymous chorus of tipsy young men reveling in honor of the god of riotous drunkenness [Dionysus]." (W.G. Arnott, "Menander, Qui Vitae Ostendit Vitam." *Greece and Rome* 15.1 (1968) 1.) In Old comedy and tragedy the chorus played an important part in the play, conversing with the main characters and explaining through song and dance things which helped to further the plot.

⁴ The prologue in New Comedy was intended to introduce the main characters, tell the audience where the play was set and how the houses in the background were being used (i.e. which characters lived where). Its purpose was also to introduce the audience to the main conflict in the plot. Most often the prologue was given by a god such as Pan, Chance, or Oblivion, who had some kind of special knowledge about the plot. (Sylwester Dworacki, "The Prologues in the Comedies of Menander." *Eos* 61 (1973) 44-45). Although in this version of the *Samia* I have decided to have the *Choregos* give a brief prologue, the real prologue to the play itself is given by Moschion at the beginning of Act I. What the *choregos* does here is introduce Menander and the genre of New Comedy to the audience members who are probably unfamiliar with them. Although it is uncharacteristic to have a regular character give the prologue, Moschion is as qualified as any because he knows all of the facts about the situation. This detail also makes the *Samia* unique, because there is no secret about the plot that at least one of the characters doesn't know about. They don't need the help of a god to set things straight, but because of their own

character flaws – Demeas' anger and Moschion's cowardice – it takes five acts for everyone to finally come to an understanding.

⁵ This phrase comes from Aristophanes of Byzantium, who is different from the Aristophanes of Athens who wrote Old Comedy. There is also a passage from Cicero which states that New Comedy is a "mirror-image of society." (Qtd. in Elaine Fantham "Sex, Status, and Survival in Hellenistic Athens: A Study of Women in New Comedy." *Phoenix* 29.1 (1975) 44.)

⁶ Judging from evidence within the text of the play (reference to names and events) W.G. Arnott dates the play to sometime during the first ten to fifteen years of Menander's career, and suggests the date of 314 BCE, though there is still debate about this. (Menander, *Menander: Volume III* W.G. Arnott, ed. and trans. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000) 11-12.)

⁷ For more information on this see Introduction: Recovery of the Text.

⁸ For more information on this see Introduction: Process of Translation.

⁹ For a more thorough discussion of recurring characters in Menander, consult W. Thomas MacCary "Menander's Characters: Their Names, Roles, and Masks," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 101 (1970) 277-290 and W. Thomas MacCary "Menander's Slaves: Their Names, Roles, and Masks," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 100 (1969) 277-294.

¹⁰ There is no indication that Moschion had the baby with him during this monologue, but I thought it would be interesting to see him explain the story while holding the physical result of his actions. At any rate, it is certain that Chrysis has the baby with her when she gives her brief monologue, so she either takes it from Moschion or brings it out herself. The latter was probably more likely, but I thought it was more interesting dramatically to have Moschion holding the baby during his monologue.

¹¹ Moschion's opening speech is very lengthy. Long monologues such as this were used by Menander to explain the plot. In addition, especially when the speech is given by one of the main characters of the play, monologues of this type were used to give insight into the nature of the character speaking. Much can be learned about Moschion by hearing how he describes the situation that he has gotten himself into. (George F. Osmun, "Dialogue in Menandrian Monologue," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 83 (1952) 162.)

¹² Nowhere in the extant Greek does Menander explain the circumstances of Moschion's adoption. This is understandable because the important part about his adoption, as far as the plot is concerned, is simply that he *was* adopted, it doesn't matter how or from whom. I have chosen to explain the adoption briefly in Moschion's opening monologue, in order to dismiss the question quickly as unimportant. I did add the detail that the family he came from was less fortunate than Demeas' family, because throughout the extant parts of the play, Moschion often feels the need to prove that he is not a lowlife and that he deserves the wealth and opportunities that he gets by being Demeas' only son (cf. lines 633-638).

¹³ The beginning of this line is lost so it is unclear exactly what Moschion is saying here. Bain suggests that Moschion is saying to the audience "I can say this to you because we are alone (i.e. none of the other characters are out on stage)." (p.6). Arnott supplies a different word in the gap, which means "now I'm more wretched than ever because we're rich." (p.17). The meaning behind this statement is that Moschion is miserable because he realizes that his higher social class makes it difficult for his father to arrange a marriage between himself and Plangon. If he were poorer, in the same social class as her, it wouldn't be an issue. Arnott's reading is more appealing because it uses a colloquial Greek phrase, which is likely more fitting for Moschion's character.

¹⁴ The words "in the parade" do not exist in the Greek, but this is meaning behind the statement. As a wealthy young man Moschion would have learned to ride and lead a column of cavalry in the city processions, all for show, but it is quite certain that someone with Moschion's cowardly disposition would not be put in charge of leading a cavalry column into battle. Moschion's inexperience with military matters is attested in Act V when he asks Parmenon to bring him "some sword" (lit. trans. from the Greek, line 659) from inside, instead of asking for "his" sword, which implies that Moschion didn't even own his own weaponry. Parmenon's incredulous response is also further proof that Moschion was not a military man.

¹⁵ Chrysis, the girl from Samos, was a hetaira, a high-class personal escort or prostitute (cf. Second Choral Interlude). Athens had had a rocky history with the island of Samos, which was a member of the Delian league during the 5th century, until it revolted against Athens in 440 BCE. After an eight-month long standoff, the Athenians finally won and established a colony, or cleruchy on Samos. (*Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Third ed. rev. s.v. "Samos") In 404, at the end of the Peloponnesian War, the Spartans drove the Athenians and those loyal to them off of the island and installed an oligarchy. In 365 the Athenians again drove out the population of the island and installed another cleruchy, which held power until 324 when Alexander declared his intention to restore Samos to the Samians. Although he died a year later, Alexander's general Perdikkas followed through on his dead king's wish and defeated the Athenians in 321, expelling them from the island and leading the Samians back to their native land. (Christian Habicht, "Athens, Samos, and Alexander the Great," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 140.3 (1996) 398-399.) The victory of the Samians was short-lived because in 319 BCE the Athenians went back and once again expelled the Samians in order to establish a cleruchy of their own. Chrysis was likely expelled from Samos at this time (319) and went to live in Athens, making her living as a hetaira (*Menander: Volume III*, Arnott, 9).

¹⁶ Occasionally a Greek man would officially bring a hetaira under his control and protection by entering into a sort of contract with her, which was at times was even financed by a type of dowry. (Fantham, "Sex, Status, and Survival" 49). This could be why in Act III, lines 373 and 380, when Demeas throws Chrysis out, he allows her to take her servants with her.

¹⁷ Pericles was a famous Athenian statesman from the Classical Age who settled down with a Milesian hetaira named Aspasia after he had divorced his wife. (*Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Third ed. rev. s.v. "Aspasia").

¹⁸ It is unclear from the extant Greek whether Demeas is the merchant or whether Nikeratos is. I have decided for my version to make Demeas a wealthy landowner and Nikeratos a struggling merchant. If Nikeratos were a struggling farmer, like Gorgias or Knemon from the *Dyskolos*, he would have a difficult time leaving his household for a year because he would need someone to tend his fields, especially since he doesn't have a son to help him. If he were a merchant it would be more understandable for him to leave his family for a long period of time since that is how he made his living.

¹⁹ There is no explanation in the extant portion of the play about why the men were gone for so long. I decided to add the detail that they were caught in an early storm and had to wait out the winter before they could return home. With the type of boats the Greeks used at this time, and given the violent weather which was common in the Aegean during winter, it was too much of a risk to attempt a maritime voyage during that time of the year, especially in a boat loaded with all of the profits the men had accumulated during their journey.

²⁰ Adonis was a mythical personage who died young in a hunting accident and was loved by both Aphrodite and Persephone. It was decreed by Zeus that he should spend four months of every year in the underworld with Persephone, four months with Aphrodite, and the final four months were left to his choosing. The Festival of Adonis was celebrated at midsummer and, in Athens, it involved women planting seeds in broken pots that were placed on the roof so that they would germinate and wither quickly, just like the life of Adonis. During the festival, celebrants at once mourned his death and commemorated his yearly resurrection. It was often characterized as a lively, noisy celebration, intended in Athens to be exclusively for women, which gave them the opportunity to associate with one another and escape the monotony of their everyday tasks. (*Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Third ed. rev. s.v. "Adonis").

²¹ This is as close as Moschion gets to explaining the circumstances behind the impregnation of Plangon, but it is commonly accepted that he raped her. According to Greek social values at the time, Moschion's crime was less serious if it was rape, because if she was complicit it meant that Moschion had seduced and corrupted her. (See note 14, Introduction).

For this translation I have avoided using the term rape because of its negative connotation in modern society. If it were said outright that Moschion had raped Plangon, then modern audiences would immediately be more prejudiced against Moschion than Menander had intended. For Menander's audience it would have been worse if she agreed to the act because in his culture "sexual passion is expected of a young man but is unforgivable in a young woman." (Susan Guettel Cole "Greek Sanctions against Sexual Assault" *Classical Philology* 79.2 (1984) 107). As far as the plot is concerned, it doesn't matter so much *how* she got pregnant, but the fact that she *did* get pregnant. To explain how this happened, Menander picked rape, the lesser of the two crimes in his day. Therefore, if an explanation were necessary, I would say to a modern-day audience that Moschion had seduced her, or that she was complicit although they both knew pre-marital sex was wrong, since in our culture this is a lesser crime than rape.

²² It is very important that Moschion promise to marry the girl, because if he didn't marry her, she would be considered unworthy to marry anyone else and would be forced to remain in her father's household, as a disgrace to herself and to her family. (Cole "Sanctions"107).

²³ It was a common practice in ancient Athens for an unwanted child to be exposed, that is taken into the countryside and left to die. But despite what it sounds like, in Greek culture exposure was not the same as child-murder. The distinction was not so much in the act but in the status of the victim. When a baby was born, there was a ceremony which took place in the household on the fifth, seventh, or tenth day after its birth (there are differing accounts as to which day this ceremony took place, but in Athens it was definitely on the tenth day, because in Athens one name for the ceremony was the *Dekatê* – a name which comes from the number ten). In this ceremony, which was commonly called the *Amphidromia*, the father or head of the household (*kyrios*) would take the baby and walk it around the hearth, inspecting it to see if it were worth rearing. If the child passed the inspection it was accepted as an official member of the household (*oikos*). Before this ceremony, or if the infant didn't pass the ceremony, it was considered to be a *brephos* instead of a child, the same word used to describe a fetus in the womb. The Greeks didn't have a problem with abortion and did not distinguish between abortion and exposure – they were both ways of getting rid of an unwanted *brephos*, but if the child had been formally accepted into the household, it was no longer considered a *brephos* and it was a crime to harm it. (Cynthia Patterson, " 'Not Worth the Rearing': The Causes of Infant Exposure in Ancient Greece." *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 115 (1985) 104-106.)

Some reasons for rejecting the child might include physical deformity, illegitimacy, impoverishment of the parents, or the birth of a female child (Patterson, "Infant Exposure," 113). From Demeas' subsequent lines it is clear that despite his official relationship with Chrysis, having taken her into his custody as his concubine, he sees the child as illegitimate and thus has grounds for wanting the child to be disposed of. Although it is convenient that Demeas gives his reasoning for not wanting the child, the *kyrios* did not need to have any other reason to get rid of a baby besides the fact that he did not want it.

²⁴ It is unclear exactly what happened to Chrysis' baby from the extant Greek. Either it died in childbirth or soon after, or she actually did follow through with Demeas' order to expose it and later lived to regret it. The latter option is not very probable, because in what we have of Menander, exposed infants always survive and are later reunited with their household. I chose to have Chrysis' baby be stillborn, because of the uncertainty that is caused by Chrysis not even getting the chance to make the decision. Perhaps she will never really know if she actually would have kept the child or would have gotten rid of it as Demeas commanded.

²⁵ One way in which Menander livened up his monologues was by quoting a dialogue between two characters. Since the Greek actors were trained to play multiple roles in each play, this gave the actor an opportunity to act out the conversation and show off his skill at playing two different roles at once. Besides adding variety to monologues, it also gave the speech a metatheatrical touch. "We must never forget, as Menander never did, that he was writing for the stage and that direct quotation is an excellent device from a dramatic point of view in that it allows the actor to

play two parts with the appropriate gestures for each.” (Osmun, “Menandrian Monologue,” 156-157, 161).

²⁶ The Greek word used here is *androgynē*, the literal translation of which is “manwoman.” I chose to avoid ambiguous “she-male” and the hackneyed Schwarzeneggerism “girly man,” and go with something simple and humorous – Mr. Sensitivity.

²⁷ The Greek audience would already know what kind of trouble a slave like Parmenon would be up to, but for the benefit of our modern audience I decided to include some plots from New Comedy that illustrate devious slaves at their devious best. The following three plots are taken from Menander's *Bacchides* (*The Two Bacchises*), Plautus' *Miles Gloriosus* (*The Braggart Soldier*) and his *Mostellaria* (*The Haunted House*). Plautus was a Roman playwright who flourished about century after Menander, but his work is relevant here because he “borrowed” most of his plots from plays by Menander and other Greek comedians of the fourth century BCE.

²⁸ One of the worst punishments for troublemaking slaves was to be branded on the forehead. Besides being painful, this was a sign to everyone who saw the slave that he had been disobedient to his master.

²⁹ There are no grounds to assume that such an imitation scene actually occurred in the original Menander, but if it did, it would have been very humorous for the Greek audience because they would have already been familiar with Demeas' character, and seeing Moschion do an impersonation of him would have been very funny.

³⁰ In this brief speech, as in other passages throughout the play that feature text which is part underlined and part not, I have tried to reconstruct coherent speech from a series broken lines in the Greek. As much as was possible, I attempted to use the words which were present in the Greek fragments and incorporate them, in a coherent fashion, into sentences which I fashioned. It is probably not at all close to what existed in the original Menander, but then once again, my goal was not to try to guess what Menander wrote, but instead to provide a framework in which his actual words can be enjoyed in one fluid performance.

³¹ There is debate between the editors of the Greek texts as to which of the following choppy lines should be attributed to which character. Some give all the all the lines to Demeas, others to Nikeratos, and still others split them in the middle somewhere. The reason why is because it is difficult to tell from the Greek manuscript who is speaking. On the papyrus copies that we have of *Samia*, the text appears in large blocks on the page – it is not broken up into separate lines where the speaker changes. Characters were identified in the margin when they spoke for the first time in a scene. After that, the scribe simply put a small line, called a *paragraphos* (_), below the edge of the writing in the left margin which indicated that somewhere in the line there was a change of speaker. If there were three characters on stage, it did not indicate who the new speaker was. Occasionally, the scribe would put a *dicolon* (:) at the spot in the line where the speaker changed, but this was not at all standard and sometimes the *dicolon* just represented a spot where there was an emphatic stop, it need not indicate a change of speaker at all. Therefore, it can be very difficult at times for editors to figure out who speaks where in a play. Add to this

the fact that most of the pages are damaged somehow and these punctuations can be difficult or impossible to read. Also, a sloppy scribe would often neglect to put in the *paragraphos* where they appeared in the original, assuming that the reader would be able to tell where the speaker changed. (Sander M. Goldberg *The Making of Menander's Comedy* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980) 11).

Taking all of this into account, I decided to come up with my own attribution for this passage, giving every other phrase to the next actor. I based this decision on what I thought would look best on stage, not on an examination of photographs of the actual manuscripts.

³² The dowry was often a very large sum of money given by the bride's family to the groom as a type of insurance policy that their daughter would be treated well. "The dowry was capital kept in trust for her [the bride], the equivalent of her maintenance, and should she or her husband decide on divorce, for any reason other than adultery, it returned with her to her family home. Although the husband, as her *kyrios* while she lived with him, had the free use of her dowry, he must be able to repay it, since legally she could withdraw herself and reclaim it at any time." (Fantham, "Sex, Status, and Survival," 48.)

³³ This line comes from *Dyskolos* lines 810-811, a speech in which Sostratos convinces his father Kallipides to allow Gorgias to marry Sostratos' sister. The situation was similar so I incorporated the line in order to get as much of Menander as possible into my play.

³⁴ Although this portion is supplied by me, it appears that the decision to give Plangon to Moschion without a dowry was decided at some point during the first two acts, before either of the fathers found out about the rape. It is interesting to note that one of the possible penalties for having committed rape was forcing the young man to marry the girl without a dowry. Unwittingly, the fathers exact this penalty against Moschion by deciding to waive Plangon's dowry. (Cole "Sanctions," 105).

³⁵ Young people in New Comedy often felt the need to base their marriages on love and romance. Traditionally, the bride was chosen by the young man's father and the motivating factor behind the match was the desire to seal a friendship between the two families. (Fantham, "Sex, Status, and Survival" 52, 54). Demeas had good reason to believe that Moschion would not find this traditional view very appealing, especially since Demeas was only Moschion's father by adoption, not by birth.

³⁶ Although she never appears on stage, there is a feeling throughout the play that Nikeratos' wife is some silent terror that lurks in the wings. As W.G. Arnott puts it, she "is always presented as force to be reckoned with." (*Menander: Volume III*, Arnott, 57).

³⁷ The introduction of the chorus at the end of the first act as a crowd of drunken revelers is standard in New Comedy. Since Nikeratos is only introducing one person, I decided to play with this convention a little bit.

Act II

³⁸ See Act I, note 32.

³⁹ This happens in *Dyskolos* lines 845-849.

⁴⁰ See Act I, note 23.

⁴¹ When there is a big confrontation between characters, sometimes Menander chooses to have that confrontation take place off stage. There are many examples of this in Acts III and IV. Here I have decided to show the audience the tail end of the confrontation between Demeas and Chrysis.

⁴² Throughout much of the play, the characters call on various deities when they are upset or surprised. Many translators change these polytheistic references to things such as "Good Heavens" or "My God," but I decided, for the most part, to leave the names which appeared in the original Greek. At times I've added words such as "holy" to the names, in order to give the phrase a more colloquial sound in English, while still preserving the reference to the ancient deity (i.e. Holy Hercules!). At times I changed "by Zeus" into "by God" when the tone of the passage was more intense, and thus deserved a more serious expression in English. When the characters called on the gods in the plural I translated it as "for gods' sake," as opposed to the singular "for God's sake." My decisions were somewhat arbitrary, based on what I thought would sound best on the stage.

⁴³ Moschion's attitude in this passage is a reflection of ideas of panhellenism which were emerging around this time. Philosophers such as Isokrates taught that Hellenism was "a state of mind not an accident of birth. Character and intellect, not race alone, should determine who was Greek and who was not." (J. Michael Walton and Peter D. Arnott, *Menander and the Making of Comedy* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1996) 23).

⁴⁴ This speech, which is in courier font, is adapted from *Menandri Reliquiae Selectae* Fragment 612 (533 K) (Menander, *Menandri Reliquiae Selectae* F. H. Sandbach tran. and ed. (Oxford University Press, 1990) 319). I thought this speech sounded like something Moschion would say at this point in the play to try to persuade his father. I would have liked to have incorporated more of these fragments into my suppletions, but I was unable to find others that fit in so well. The line about being adopted especially hits home for Moschion's character.

⁴⁵ According to the strict interpretation of the law which was made in 451 BCE by Pericles, and later reenacted in 403 BCE, only individuals whose mother and father were *both* Athenian citizens could be eligible for citizenship. (David Whitehead "Women and Naturalisation in Fourth-Century Athens: The Case of Archippe," *Classical Quarterly* 36.1 (1986) 109).

Therefore, if the child did belong to Demeas and Chrysis, as Demeas thinks at this time, technically it would not be able to be his heir. But, the leadership in Hellenistic Greece was constantly changing, and at any time these laws could be changed as well. I added this detail about Demeas not wanting to keep the child because it might threaten Moschion's birthright in an attempt to soften the idea that Demeas could require Chrysis to get rid of the baby. Demeas wouldn't have to have any other reason to get rid of it besides the fact that he didn't want it. This was understandable to the Greeks but seems less palatable to modern audience.

⁴⁶ Filling this lacuna presented an interesting challenge because at the beginning Moschion and Demeas are talking about whether or not Demeas should keep Chrysis and the baby in the house. When the text resumes, Moschion has convinced Demeas to keep her and the two have already discussed the marriage of Plangon to Moschion. These few lines here represent the transition between the topics.

⁴⁷ The following argument made by Moschion was inspired by Gorgias' *Encomium of Helen*.

⁴⁸ This line, where the Greek begins again after the lacuna, is very difficult to translate. It begins in the middle of syntax and, although the meaning of the individual words is clear, it is difficult to understand what the overall phrase means. I took it to mean that Moschion is just about to tell his father the truth about the baby, but Demeas cuts him off. Moschion tries again in this line, but when he is cut short again he is not brave enough to try a third time.

⁴⁹ All of these things were ritual preparations for a Greek wedding.

⁵⁰ "A brief survey of earlier drama shows that the act of summoning a character from his house by knocking at his door had by Menander's time acquired a number of comic associations....this was due to the popularity of knocking with its scope for farce and slapstick in Old Comedy." (Frost, *Entrances and Exits*, 9). Given this quote, the actor playing Demeas should find some way to add physical comedy to this moment and make it humorous.

⁵¹ Here Nikeratos does what is called a delayed exit, which can either introduce an important scene or give insight into an individual's character. (Frost, *Entrances and Exits*, 15). In Nikeratos' case, we once again see how apprehensive he is about approaching his wife, even after the pep talk he has received from Demeas.

⁵² This device is called a false exit, when a character leaves and comes back just moments later. Menander uses these often to create a fast-paced, unpredictable atmosphere in his plays.

Act III

⁵³ See note 45 on Athenian Citizenship.

⁵⁴ For an in depth discussion on slavery, see *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Third ed. rev. s.v. "slavery."

⁵⁵ Hetairai were part of a larger group of non-Athenian women, who according to law could not legally marry an Athenian man and have legitimate children by him. This seriously limited the opportunities available to women of this status. Many of them became hetairai, earning as much as possible through relationships with multiple paramours, so that they could support themselves. Some even earned enough support a household complete with servants. Others bought young female slaves who they trained to be flute or harp girls. They would contract these girls out to play music at feasts and to work as prostitutes.

There was no restriction against a married man having a relationship with a hetaira on the side. It was even more common for rich young men who were not married yet to spend their sexual energy on high priced hetairai. It was in the best interest of a hetaira to either earn enough during her younger years to support herself later in life or to eventually settle down with a man who would accept her formally as his concubine and offer her his protection. (Fantham, "Sex, Status, and Survival," 49-51). This is the situation that Chrysis was in. Demeas had formally taken her in to be part of his *oikos* or household.

⁵⁶ Menander often added variety to his monologues by quoting dialogue. This allowed the Greek actor, who was trained to play multiple roles inside a single play, to have the opportunity to play multiple roles within a single monologue. The actor, to add humor to the situation, would act out these different speaking parts. For Demeas speech, the conversation between the nurse and the slave girl (lines 242-260) was also acted out. (cf Act I, note 24)

⁵⁷ After these two missing lines, there are no more sizeable lacunas in the text. From here on out it is just my translation of Menander.

⁵⁸ Menander does a play on words here that doesn't necessarily translate directly into English. In a literal translation, Parmenon asks the cook why he carries around so many knives with him, "because his talking is quite capable of cutting up anything." The verb "to cut up" in Greek has a double meaning – it means to literally cut up or also to annoy or bore someone. Later, in line 292, Parmenon accuses the cook of trying to bore him to death with his speaking. I did the best I could at making the metaphor work in English.

⁵⁹ A cook almost always had some sort of cameo appearance in New Comedy and was without exception pompous and pretentious. They always use heightened, pseudo-sophisticated language, often with a medical tone to it, and they enjoy talking down to others. There are many scenes of friendly (or not-so-friendly) banter between cooks and slaves. (E.W. Handley "Conventions of the Comic Stage and their Exploitation by Menander," *Entretiens Hardt* 16 (1969) 8-10.) The cook in this scene does not differ at all from what Menander's audience expected. The situation is even worse because Parmenon has received no details on the party he is planning and only assumes that it is the wedding, and so he unable to give the cook any details on what his job entails.

⁶⁰ The gods that Parmenon refers to here are Dionysus, Apollo, Zeus, and Asclepius. In the Greek Menander just gives the names of these gods, because a Greek audience would be familiar with their function. I decided to refer to these gods by their function, not their name, in order to preserve the joke for modern audiences.

⁶¹ The Greek verb used here means to find something out by inquiry. Demeas is exaggerating because he didn't actually ask anyone anything; he just overheard and jumped to conclusions. If he had asked would probably have found out the truth and the play would have been over.

⁶² *Helios* is the Greek word for sun and is also the name of a sun god, similar to Apollo.

⁶³ At this point Demeas is afraid that he is actually experiencing a Greek tragedy first hand, and he begins speaking the way characters in tragedy do. After just two lines, he realizes what he is doing and stops himself before he gets too carried away. For more information on how the Greek viewed themselves with relation to tragedy and myth see the Third Choral Interlude and the Introduction.

⁶⁴ Demeas compares Chrysis to Helen of Troy, whom the Greeks despised because they blamed her for the Trojan War and all of the lives lost in it.

⁶⁵ By assuming that Moschion was seduced by Chrysis, Demeas is thinking in a way contradictory to mainstream Greek thought. It was commonly held, with respect to heterosexual intercourse, that women were always the passive object of the act. In literature, men are always depicted as the initiators – even the grammar used shows this. Men always do sexual acts in the active voice, while women accept the action as objects in the passive voice. (Cole, "Sanctions" 97). Even in cases of rape or adultery, it is only a question of whether the man had forced the woman's body only or her mind as well. Although hetairai are viewed differently from free Athenian women, Demeas is really stretching to try to exonerate his son by assuming that *he* was seduced.

⁶⁶ This is obviously a modern reference. In the actual Greek, Demeas says that Chrysis only had the linen dress on her back when she arrived, and it was plain, without any embellishments. I thought that the term "off-the-rack" conveyed well the meaning of the original Greek in only a few syllables. The curtiness of this phrase preserves the pace of the Greek dialogue.

⁶⁷ I have tried to present in modern terms the type of technical jargon that the chef is so fond of using. That is why I chose to use terms like "anger management" and "intervention."

⁶⁸ "Most often the hetaira would cut her losses and enter into a concubinage before she grew too old to please." (Fantham, "Sex, Status, and Survival" 50). It was really in Chrysis best interest to stay in Demeas' house, because she had reached an age when there were hetairai younger than her who would be more appealing to the high-class men who could offer her a good life, like the one she had enjoyed with Demeas.

⁶⁹ The pathetic sheep that is about to be sacrificed was also a running gag in New Comedy. In *Dyskolos* the sheep bit is combined with the infamous cook, who enters carrying a sheep that has been slowing its eventual approach to the sacrificial altar by grabbing leaves and tree branches in its mouth along the way. (W.G. Arnott, "Menander, Qui Vitae Ostendit Vitam." *Greece and Rome* 15.1 (1968) 15).

In this scene Nikeratos points out that it is good that the gods only get the skin, bones, and internal organs, because that is all this sheep has. The spleen was seen in antiquity as the organ which caused excessive anger or discontent, so by saying that the sheep has a big spleen, Nikeratos is actually saying that it is a very unpleasant creature.

⁷⁰ Characters in Menander's plays often repeat the same phrases over and over again and employ certain speech patterns in their dialogue. In Nikeratos' case, he often swears by the god Hercules. Arnott sees this as a very modern and sophisticated way of showing distinction between characters. (W.G. Arnott "Menander's Manipulation of Language for the Individualisation of Character," *Lo Spectaculo Delle Voc: a cura di Francesco de Martino e Alan H. Sommerstein* II (1995) 147-164 and W.G. Arnott, "The Modernity of Menander," *Greece and Rome* 2nd Series 22.2 (1975) 140-155.)

Act IV

⁷¹ "The Greeks were often ready to find in what we call their 'mythology' parallels for contemporary behavior." (A.W. Gomme and F.H. Sandbach *Menander: A Commentary* (Oxford, 1973) 598.)

⁷² Plutarch, *Life of Nicias*, 29.

⁷³ This myth was dramatized by Sophocles, twice by Euripides, and once by the Roman author Seneca the Younger. Only the second version by Euripides and the Seneca version are now extant. In all versions of the story, Phaedra, Hippolytus' step-mother, makes advances on Hippolytus while his father Theseus is gone on a voyage to the underworld. When Hippolytus turns her down, Phaedra kills herself and leaves a note saying that she did it because Hippolytus tried to rape her. This myth is very similar to the Joseph and Potiphar story from the Bible. In the end, Theseus prays to his father Poseidon that he send a bull to run Hippolytus down and kill him. (*Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Third ed. rev. s.v. "Hippolytus.")

⁷⁴ The literal Greek here refers to a third trip to the public bathhouse, a common place for young men to mingle.

⁷⁵ Throughout Act IV Nikeratos, Moschion, and Demeas repeat the word *deinos* over and over again. It is a difficult word to translate because it can have positive, negative or neutral connotation, depending on the context. Since most uses of the word here are negative I have used the word "terrible" in most places that *deinos* appears. It is unclear whether Menander is trying to be humorous by repeating the word, or if he is just showing that the characters are picking up on each other's language.

⁷⁶ The Greek phrase which I have translated as "don't push me" is *ea me* which literally means "allow me" or "let me go" This is one of Demeas' phrases that he repeats to help distinguish him as an individual character. He repeats it twice again in line 465. (Arnott, "Manipulation of Language," 158).

⁷⁷ The legal protector of a concubine or hetaira had the right to exact a penalty on any individual who committed adultery with his companion. This involved paying a large fine or, in certain circumstances, death for the perpetrator. (Fantham, "Sex, Status, and Survival," 50). Demeas thinks that Moschion is admitting to having an illicit relationship with Chrysis and is baffled that Moschion is completely unphased by the possible consequences of his confession.

⁷⁸ The Greek word that I translated as "reject" is *katharma*, which is what is leftover after a catharsis or cleansing. Here Demeas is at his angriest point in the play, and it is likely that his use

of this word is a reference to the fact that Moschion was adopted. Taking that possible meaning into consideration, the word "reject" has a much sharper edge to it.

⁷⁹ The word in the Greek which I have translated as "the worst thing ever" is *pandēinos*, a form of the word *deinos* referred to earlier (Act IV note 75). It literally means "entirely terrible." The characters all take turns repeating this word too, just as they do with *deinos*.

⁸⁰ In Nikeratos' following lines he not only refers to many mythical figures from Greek tragedy, but he also tries to imitate their speech as well. This worked for Menander's stage because tragedy was still a popular enough art form that his audiences would have recognized what Nikeratos was doing. It is difficult to achieve this same effect in English because even if a modern audience did recognize the tragic language employed by Nikeratos, they may not necessarily understand why he was speaking in such a manner. I tried to preserve enough of the tragic flavor of Nikeratos' speeches in order stay true to the Menander, while toning them down a little bit to make them more colloquial. As is said in the Third Choral Interlude, Demeas and Nikeratos feel that they have found their way into a plot from some sort of twisted tragedy and are unsure how to escape.

⁸¹ For the stories of the following characters from Greek myths, refer to the Third Choral Interlude.

⁸² The phrase "knock on wood" is obviously a modern substitute for something archaic. The actual Greek refers to an ancient practice of spitting into one's cloak when a person was about to say something that he hoped would not happen. People probably didn't actually spit, but they said the phrase "spit into the bosom" just as we say the phrase "knock on wood" even if there is no wood to knock on. This ancient practice was meant to avert the attention of the goddess Adrasteia, who was thought to be the one responsible for cheating extravagant hopes. (Gomme and Sandbach, *Commentary*, 599).

⁸³ It is uncertain who the Diomnestus referred to here is. There are a few individuals by this name known in Greek history, but none of them do anything that would make them a bad son-in-law. The reference probably referred to some contemporary scandal in Menander's day. (Gomme and Sandbach, *Commentary*, 600). To preserve the humor of this joke, without changing the name and making a modern reference, the actor could pick someone from the audience and call him Diomnestus. (cf note 92)

⁸⁴ Here Nikeratos uses the term "murder" to refer to a sexual offense. This wasn't a common practice and it confused Moschion. Nikeratos is probably just getting carried away and is exaggerating the crimes of Moschion, which at this point he believes to be bad enough anyway, without exaggeration.

⁸⁵ Thrace was a province to the north of Greece, the inhabitants of which were considered to have an insatiable sexual appetite. (Gomme and Sandbach, *Commentary*, 602). Not only was it an insult to call Moschion Thracian, but even worse, Nikeratos called him a barbarian, a term which refers to someone who is so uncivilized that they don't even speak Greek.

⁸⁶ This is the first of two potentially touching moments between father and son that are broken up abruptly by an irate Nikeratos. The second one comes when Nikeratos enters in Act V on line 712.

⁸⁷ This is a common trick used in Menander to increase the humor of a moment and also to avoid having to stage difficult or inappropriate moments on the stage. Instead of seeing the fight between Nikeratos and his household, we just hear bits and pieces of it and get Demeas' commentary. There are no stage directions in the Greek, so there is no indication as to what specific sounds were coming from the wings, but it is not difficult to imagine what they might have been.

⁸⁸ The fight which is about to ensue is interesting because neither of the men really want to initiate it. Nikeratos is unwilling to throw the first punch because then Demeas could sue him later. Demeas doesn't want to start it because he knows Nikeratos is stronger than him and will win the fight. It appears that a literal fistfight never actually occurs. Instead there is just an awkward standoff while the two men shout insults at each other.

⁸⁹ There is no indication in the text that Nikeratos actually has a stick. Demeas could kick one towards his feet, in order to blackmail him. If Nikeratos had actually been chasing Chrysis with a stick, Demeas would have the right to start the fight and therefore Nikeratos would be unable to sue him. Both men are thinking about the possible battle that could ensue in court as a result of this confrontation, which is why Nikeratos calls Demeas a perjurer and calls for witnesses.

⁹⁰ This is a reference to the story of Danaë, see the Third Choral Interlude for more information.

⁹¹ Here Nikeratos is just beginning to understand what has happened. He is upset because it was a huge disgrace to a Greek household if a bastard child was born to one of the daughters, whether it was result of rape or seduction. The girl would then be unfit to marry anyone except her assailant, and if he didn't marry her for some reason then the girl had to remain unmarried in the father's household. Not only was this a sign of disgrace, but it also prevented the *kyrios* from forming economic ties with other families through the marriage of his daughter. (Cole "Sanctions," 107). For this reason Nikeratos is afraid that Moschion will back out of the wedding.

⁹² "Chaerephon was an Athenian parasite notorious for gatecrashing dinners, and he became a constant butt of comedians in the city from the time that Menander began writing [324 BCE] until 310 BCE." (*Menander: Volume III*, Arnott, 10-11) A parasite is an individual who follows a wealthy people around and lives off of their generosity and leftovers. If the jokes here about Chaerephon and Androkles referred to specific individuals in Athens, then they would have lost their humor when the play was performed in other cities throughout the Hellenistic world. Since we know that Menander's plays were performed outside of Athens and for hundreds of years after his death, there must have been an alternate way to play these jokes, which would make them humorous to those who had never heard of the Chaerephon and Androkles referred to by Menander. I have suggested that the actors pick individuals out of the audience to represent

Chaerephon and Androkles, to make the joke humorous again. They could go so far as to have the audience member stand up for a moment on stage with the actors, or the actors could give the individual a sign with the name "Chaerephon" or "Androkles" on it.

⁹³ The Androkles which Menander speaks of here has not been certainly identified, but the name was common in Athens during the 4th Century BCE. (*Menander: Volume III*, Arnott, 10).

 Act V

⁹⁴ An adulterer or rapists, according to the law, could be forced to pay an exorbitant fine to the family that he offended. In certain circumstances he could also be killed with impunity – if he were caught in the act. (cf. Act V note 98; Cole, “Sanctions,” 101, 103)

⁹⁵ The *Oxford Classical Dictionary* states that sexual abuse was one form of punishment exacted on adulterers and rapists. (*Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Third ed. rev. s.v. “heterosexuality”). Aristophanes is more explicit about the nature of these punishments, as indicated in *Clouds* line 1083 (and the scholia), *Wealth* line 168, and the scholia at line 537 of *Thesmophoriazusae*. Juvenal refers to the mullet in Juv. 10.317.

⁹⁶ This speech by Moschion is filled with pronouns and verbs in the first person, showing his preoccupation with himself. I have tried to reflect that in the English by repeating the pronoun “I” often throughout his speech.

⁹⁷ The actual places referred to by Moschion are Baktria and Karia. Baktria was in India, in one of the farthest regions reached by Alexander in his conquests. Just the thought of going that far away quickly frightens Moschion and he changes his mind, suggesting that Karia, a spot just across the Aegean from Athens in Asia Minor, might be more fitting for him. I translated these places as India and Cincinnati, attempting to preserve the humor of the joke for an audience which likely doesn't know where Baktria and Karia are.

⁹⁸ The word used here for “love” is *eros*, which refers specifically to erotic love, so it is clear what is on Moschion's mind on the day of his wedding. I translated the word as “love,” but the subtext here is definitely “lust.”

⁹⁹ “trailer-trash” is obviously a modern reference. The original Greek means “low-born.”

¹⁰⁰ In this monologue, instead of having Parmenon quote dialogue to liven things up, Menander actually has Parmenon have an argument with himself. (cf. Osmun, “Menandrian Monologue,” 157)

¹⁰¹ See Act I note 14 for a discussion about Moschion's lack of military experience.

¹⁰² Parmenon is paraphrasing Euripides' *Iphigenia in Aulis*, line 1601.

¹⁰³ Moschion was really counting on Parmenon telling everyone in the household that he was leaving to go fight as a mercenary soldier, but the one time Moschion was counting on it the most was the one time that Parmenon didn't behave in his typical fashion.

¹⁰⁴ Moschion's silence over the next 25 lines is proof of his cowardice and, as he himself says, his inability to put on an act at the critical moment.

¹⁰⁵ Nikeratos is upset for many reasons by the thought that Moschion is leaving without marrying his daughter. Foremost among those reason is the fact that a girl who had been raped or seduced and then had given birth to a bastard child was only worthy of marrying her assailant. (Cole "Sanctions," 107). If Moschion refused to marry Plangon, she would be forced to live unmarried in her father's household, which would bring disgrace on her and her entire family.

¹⁰⁶ Here Nikeratos uses the term *moichos* (adulterer) to refer to Moschion and says that he was "taken in the act." Neither of these things are actually true. Although it is not explicitly stated in Menander's text, it is assumed that Moschion raped Plangon instead of seducing her. The Athenians considered rape to be a lesser crime than *moicheia* or adultery. (cf. Act I note 21, Introduction note 14).

It is precisely for this reason that Nikeratos refers to Moschion as an adulterer instead of a rapist, because the crime and the penalty were more serious. Both adulterers and rapists could be required by law to pay large fines to the father, husband, or legal guardian (*kyrios*) of the woman who was wronged, but if an adulterer was taken in the act, as Nikeratos claims Moschion was, the father or husband had the right to kill him. (Cole, "Sanctions," 101, 103) Nikeratos is probably not planning on killing Moschion, but he does exaggerate Moschion's crime in order to justify any form of punishment which he decides to exact.

There was also another law which stated that if an adulterer sued his accuser for false accusation, but then lost the suit, the accuser had the right to exact whatever penalty he wished on the adulterer in court, as long as the penalty did not involve a knife. (Cole, "Sanctions," 100) Likely punishments such as those mentioned earlier by the choregos (anal penetration by a large radish or fish) would have been customary here. All of these ideas about various fines and punishments are surely going through Nikeratos head when he makes this exaggerated accusation against Moschion.

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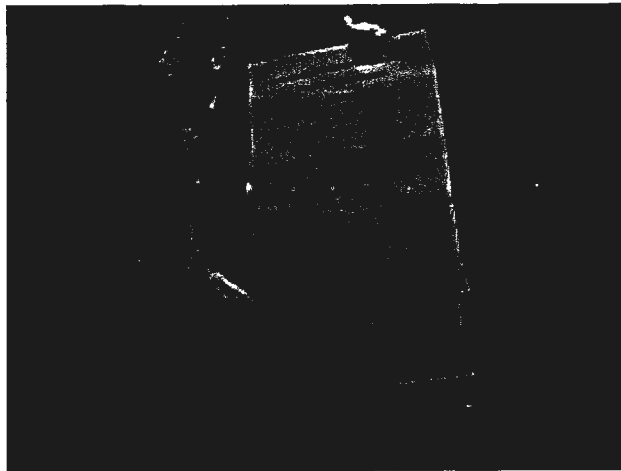
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Appendix

Performance Photographs

The following photos were taken at the staged reading of my new translation of Menander's Samia, on April 26, 2006 in the Studio Theater at Utah State University.

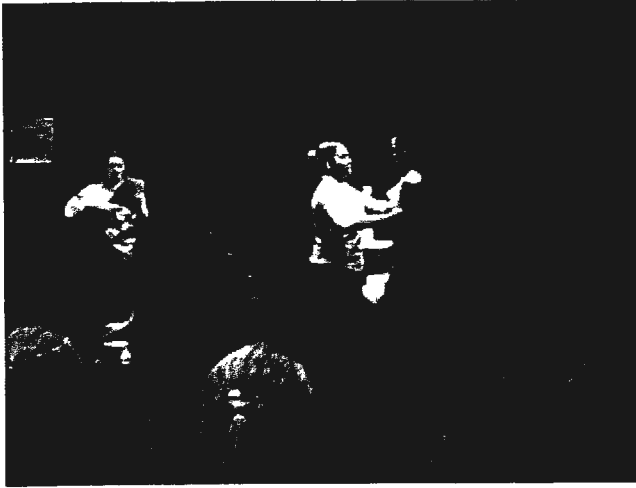
Parts were played by the following actors: Brandon Pearson – Demeas, Lucas Bybee – Moschion, Heather Hunsaker – Chrysis, Chris Tyngey – Nikeratos, Jenae Jeppesen – Parmenon, Seth Jeppesen – Choregos, The Chef, and slave; Dr. Frances Titchener – Plangon, slave, and the Sheep.



The Choregos explains the various types of ancient gods to the audience.

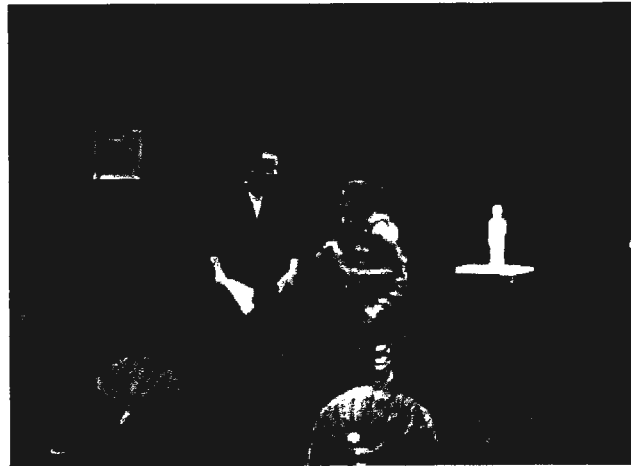


Chrysis holding the baby.



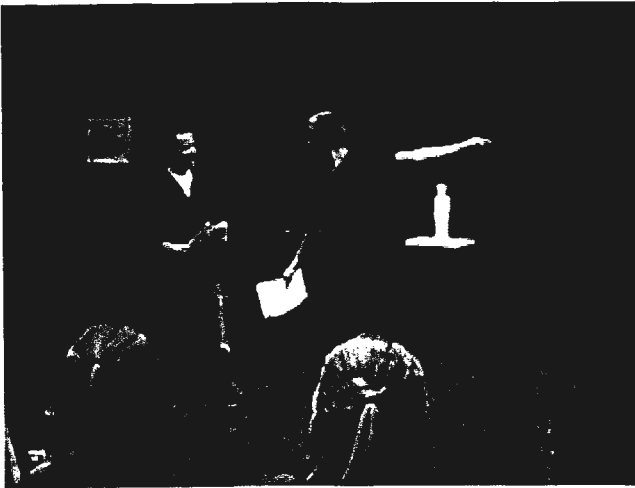
*Parmenon gives
Moschion a pep talk
before he sends him off
to face his father.*

*Moschion does his impression
of Demeas.*



*Nikeratos and Demeas rejoice
at having arrived home safely.*





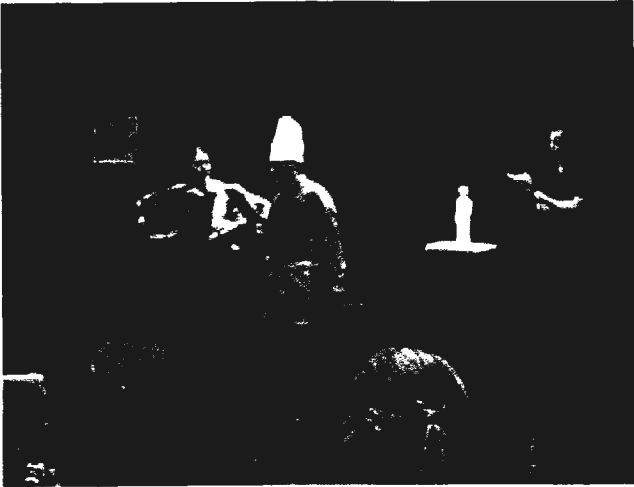
Demeas tells Moschion that he has to marry Plangon.



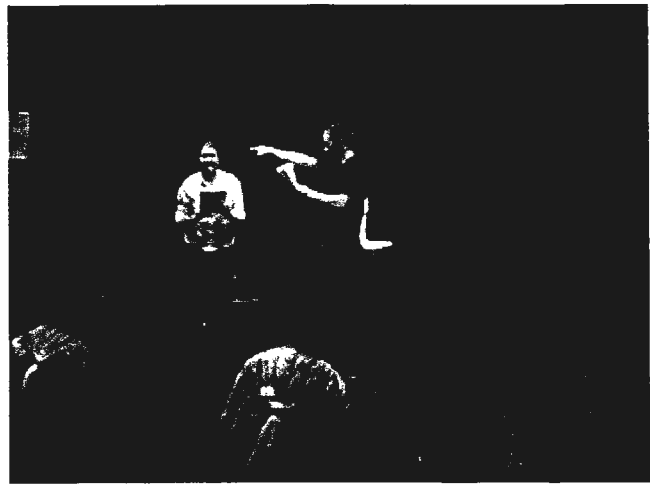
Nikeratos complains about his wife.



Demeas discusses life with the audience.



Parmenon and The Chef have a confrontation.



Demeas asks Parmenon who the parents of the baby are.



Demeas kicks Chrysis out while The Chef watches in the background.



Nikeratos inspects the sheep which he has brought back from the market.



*Nikeratos finds out about
what Demeas has accused
Moschion of doing.*

*Nikeratos finds out that his
daughter is really the
mother of the baby.
Demeas hides from him
behind the statue of Apollo.*

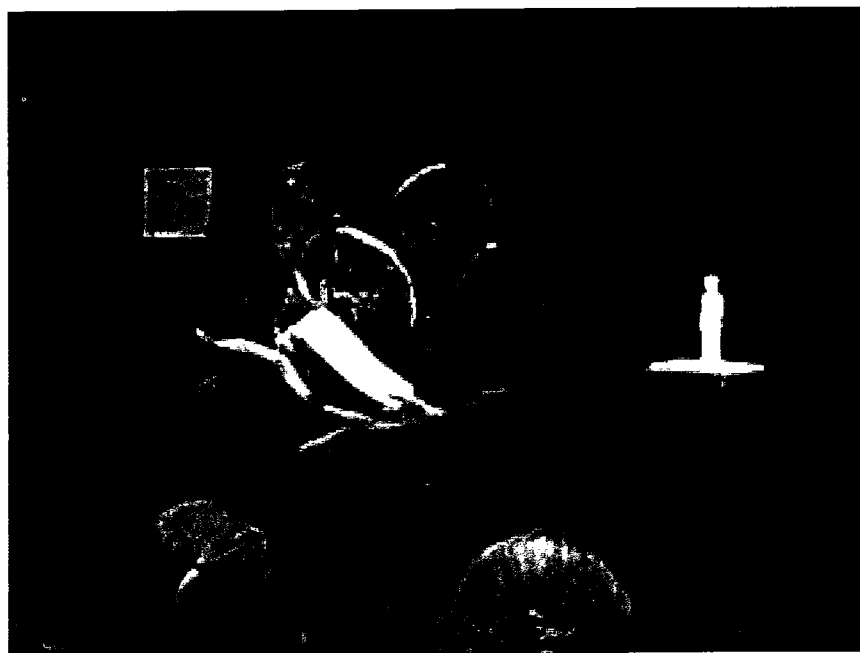


*Nikeratos enters
covered in pie after a
fight with his wife.*





Demeas and Nikeratos get ready to fight.



Demeas explains to Nikeratos that the pregnancy was all Zeus' fault.



Parmenon fixes Moschion's helmet.



Parmenon discusses the preparations for the wedding with Moschion.



Parmenon salutes Moschion as she leaves the stage.



Moschion prepares to defend himself against Nikeratos.

Nikeratos attempts to strangle Moschion but Demeas intervenes.



Moschion and Nikeratos shake on it.

Moschion and Plangon finally get married.

