

HYSTERIUM

(Disbelievingly, with a fake smile)

Of course. Hero, this will never do. Never, never. Bid farewell to this young lady so that she can go about her — uh — business.

HERO

But Pseudolus said —

HYSTERIUM

Pseudolus! I might have known!

(PSEUDOLUS runs on)

PSEUDOLUS

(Spots HYSTERIUM, then to HERO)

Hero! Master!

HYSTERIUM

Pseudolus!

(PSEUDOLUS reacts, polishes pillar of house)

Pseudolus!

PSEUDOLUS

Yes, Hysterium?

HYSTERIUM

Pseudolus!

PSEUDOLUS

Pronounced perfectly! You know, a lot of people say *Pseudolus*, and I hate it.

(Aside to HERO)

Show the girl our garden.

(HERO and PHILIA exit behind SENEX's house)

HYSTERIUM

How dare you! Arranging an assignation between an innocent boy and a you-know-what!

PSEUDOLUS

(Stopping him)

Hysterium, there is something you should know about that you-know-what.

HYSTERIUM

What?

PSEUDOLUS

That girl, about whom you think the worst, is my daughter.

HYSTERIUM

Your what?

PSEUDOLUS

My daughter. You've heard me speak of her.

HYSTERIUM

Never!

PSEUDOLUS

Well, I don't like to talk about her.

(Polishes pillar)

HYSTERIUM

That girl is not your daughter.

PSEUDOLUS

My sister?

HYSTERIUM

I shall go tell his parents.

PSEUDOLUS

Wait! Hysterium, the truth. She has been sold to a captain who comes any moment now to claim her.

HYSTERIUM

Oh?

(Then)

I go tell his parents!

PSEUDOLUS

I go with you!

HYSTERIUM

You don't want to be there when I tell them about you!

PSEUDOLUS

No, I want *you* to be there when I tell them about *you*!

HYSTERIUM

Tell them *what* about me? I have nothing to fear. I am a pillar of virtue. I go.

(HE starts to leave, PSEUDOLUS stops him)

PSEUDOLUS

I think it might be of interest to the family that their slave-in-chief, their pillar of virtue, has secreted within the confines of his cubicle Rome's most extensive and diversified collection of erotic pottery.

(HYSTERIUM freezes in horror)

HYSTERIUM

Pseudolus!

(Calls out)

Hero!

PSEUDOLUS

Tell me, where did you ever get that fruit bowl with the frieze of—?

(HE indicates an erotic pose or two)

HYSTERIUM

Pseudolus!

(Calls out)

Hero!

(HERO and PHILIA enter)

Hero, as you know, your mother and father placed me in charge of your innocence. However, I have decided to allow you to remain with the girl until the arrival of her captain.

HERO

Oh, Philia!

(Embraces her)

HYSTERIUM

Here! Stop doing that!

(Separates them)

You could hurt each other!

(Exiting into SENEX's house)

Ohhhhh!