

MENAECHI

¶ A pleafant and fine Con-
ceited Comædie, taken out of the moft ex-
Cellent wittie Poet *Plautus* :

*Chofen purpofely from out the reft, as leaft harmefull, and
yet moft delightfull.*

Written in Englifh, by VV. VV.

{illustration}

VIRESSIT VULNERE VERITAS

LONDON

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and are to be fold by William Barly, at his
fhop in Gracious ftreete.

1 5 9 5.

{ornament}

The Printer to the Readers.

T *He writer hereof (louing Readers) ha-
uing diuerse of this Poettes Comedies
Englished, for the use and delight of
5 his priuate friends, who in Plautus
owne words are not able to understand
them : I haue preuailed so far with him
as to let this one go farther abroad, for
a publike recreation and delight to all those,that affect the
10 diuerse sorts of bookes compiled in this kind,wherof (in my
iudgement) in harmlesse mirth and quicknesse of fine con-
ceit,the most of them come far short of this. And although
I found him very loath and unwilling to hazard this to the
curious view of enuious detraction, (being as the tels mee)
neither so exactly written, as it may carry any name of a
15 Translation,nor such liberties therin used,as that he would
notoriously varie from the Poets owne order : yet fith it is
onely a matter of meriment,and the litle alteration therof,
can breede no detriment of importance , I haue ouer-rulde
him so farre, as to let this be offered to your courteous accep-
20 tance, and if you shall applaude his litle labour heerein, I
doubt not but he will endeuour to gratifie you with some of
the rest better laboured,and more curiously pollished.*

Farewell.

25 * Where you finde this marke,the Poets conceit is some-
what altred,by occasion either of the time,the country, or
the phrafe.

{ornament}

The Argument.

*T *Wo Twinborne fonnes, a Sicill marchand had,
 Menechmus one, and Soficles the other:
The first his Father loft a litle Lad,
5 The Grandfire namde the latter like his brother.
 This (growne a man)long trauell tooke to feeke,
 His Brother, and to Epidamnum came,
 Where th' other dwels inricht, and him fo like,
 That Citizens there take him for the fame:
10 Father, wife, neighbours, each mistaking either,
 Much pleasant error, ere they meete together.*

{ornament}

{ornament}

A P L E A S A N T A N D F I N E C O N -
ceited Comædie called *Menechmus*, taken out of
the most excellent Poet Plautus.

Act. I. Scene.I.

Enter Peniculus a Parasite.

5

P *Eniculus* was giuen mee for my name
when I was yong,bicaufe like a broome
I fwept all clean away , where fo ere I
10 become : Namely all the vittels which
are fet before mee. Now in my iudge-
ment , men that clap iron bolts on fuch
captiues as the would keepsake, and
tie thofe feruants in chaines,who they thinkes will run away,
15 they commit an exceeding great folly: my reafon is, thefe
poore wretches enduring one miferie vpon another, neuer
ceafe deuifing how by wrenching afunder their giues, or by
fome fubtiltie or other they may efcape fuch curfed bands.
If then ye would keep a man without all fufpition of running
20 away from ye,the fureft way is to tie him with meate, drinke,
and eafe: Let him euer be idle,eate his belly full,and caroufe
while his skin will hold,and he fhall neuer I warrant ye, ftir a
foote.Thefe ftrings to tie one by the teeth,paffe all the bands
of iron,fteele,or what mettall fo euer,for the more flack and
25 eafie ye make them,the fafter ftill they tie the partie which is
in them. I fpeake this vpon experience of my felfe, who am
now going for *Menechmus*, there willingly to be tied to his
goode cheare : he is commonly fo exceeding bountifull and
liberall in his fare, as no maueryle though fuch gueftes as my
30 felfe be drawne to his Table, and tyed there in his difhes.

25

30

A pleasant Comedie called

Now becaufe I haue lately bene a fstraunger there, I meane
to vifite him at dinner: for my ftomacke mee-thinkes euer
thrufts me into the fetters of his daintie fare. But yonder I
his doore open, and himfelfe readie to come foorth.

35

Scene. 2.

*Enter Menechmus talking backe to his
wife within.*

40

I F ye were not a brabbling foole and
 mad-braine fcold as yee are, yee would
 neuer thus croffe your husbände in all
 actions. Tis no matter, let her ferue me
 thus once more, Ile fend her home to
 her dad with a vengeance. I can neuer
45 go foorth a doors, but fhee asketh mee
 whither I go? what I do? what bufines?

45

what I fetch? what I carry? *As though fhe were a Confta-
ble, or a tollgatherer. I haue pamperd her too much: fhe
hath feruants about her, wooll, flax, and all things neceffary
to bufie her withall, yet fhe watcheth & wondreth whither
50 I go. Well fith it is fo, fhe fhall now haue fome caufe, I mean
 to dine this day abroad with a fweet friend of mine.

50

Pen. Yea mary now comes hee to the point that prickes
me: this laft fpeech ganles mee as much as it would doo his
55 wife; If he dine not at home, I am dreft.

55

Men. We that haue Loues abroad, and wiues at home,
are miferably hampred, yet would euery man could tame his
fhrewe as well as I doo mine. I haue now filcht away a fine
ryding cloake of my wiues, which I meane to beftow vpon
60 one that I loue better. Nay, if fhe be fo warie and watchfull
 ouer me, I count it an almes deed to deceiue her.

60

Pen. Come, what fhare haue I in that fame?

Men. Out alas, I am taken.

Menechmus.

Pen. True, but by your friend.

65 *Men.* What, mine owne *Peniculus*?

Pen. Yours (ifaith) bodie and goods if I had any.

Men. Why thou haft a bodie.

Pen. Yea, but neither goods nor good bodie.

Men. Thou couldst neuer come fitter in all thy life.

70 *Pen.* Tush, I euer do so to my friends, I know how to come
alwaies in the nicke. Where dine ye today?

Men. Ile tell thee of a notable pranke.

Pen. What did the Cooke marre your meate in the dref-
fing? Would I might see the reuerfion.

75 *Men.* Tell me didst thou see a picture, how *Iupiters* Eagle
fnatcht away *Ganimede*, or how *Venus* stole away *Adonis*.

Pen. Often, but what care I for fhadowes, I want fub-
ftance.

Men. Looke thee here, looke not I like fuch a picture?

80 *Pen.* Oho, what cloake haue ye got here?

Men. Prethee say I am now a braue fellow.

Pen. But hearke ye, where fhall we dine?

Men. Tush, say as I bid thee man.

Pen. Out of doubt ye are a fine man.

85 *Men.* What? canst adde nothing of thine owne?

Pen. Ye are a most pleafant Gentleman.

Men. On yet.

Pen. Nay not a word more, vnleffe ye tell mee how you
and your wife be fallen out.

90 *Men.* Nay I haue a greater fecret then that to impart to
thee.

Pen. Say your minde.

Men. Come farther this way from my houle.

Pen. So, let me heare.

95 *Men.* Nay farther yet.

Pen. I warrant ye man.

Men. Why thou haft a bodie.

Pen. True, but by your friend.

* *Men.* Nay yet farther.

100 *Pen.* Tis pittie ye were not made a water-man to row in
a wherry.

A pleafant Comedie called

Men. Why?

Pen. Because ye go one way, and looke an other, ftill leaft
your wife fhould follow ye. But what's the matter, Ift not
105 almoft dinner time?

Men. Seeft thou this cloake?

Pen. Not yet. Well what of it?

Men. This fame I meane to giue to *Erotium*.

Pen. That's well, but what of all this?

Men. There I meane to haue a delicious dinner prepard
110 for her and me.

Pen. And me?

Men. And thee.

Pen. O fweet word. What, fhall I knock prefently at her
115 doore?

Men. I knocke. But ftaie too *Peniculus*, let's not be too
rafh. Oh fee fhee is in good time coming forth.

Pen. Ah, he now lookes againft the Sun, how her beames
dazell his eyes.

120 *Enter Erotium.*

Eroti. What mine owne *Menechmus*, welcome fweete
heart.

Pen. And what am I, welcome too?

Erot. You fir? ye are out of the number of my welcome
125 guefts.

* *Pen.* I am like a voluntary fouldier, out of paie.

Men. *Erotium*, I haue determined that here fhall be pitcht
a field this day ; we meane to drinke for the heauens : And
which of vs performes the braueft feruice at his weopon the
130 wine boll, your felfe as Captaine fhall paie him his wages ac-
cording to his deferts.

Erot. Agreed.

Pen. I would we had the weapons , for my valour pricks
me to the battaile.

Men. Shall I tell thee fweete moufe? I neuer looke vpon
135 thee, but I am quite out of loue with my wife.

Eroti. Yet yee cannot chufe , but yee muft ftill weare

Menechmus.

something of hers: what this fame?

140 *Men.* This? such a spoyle (fweete heart) as I tooke from
her to put on thee.

Ero. Mine owne *Menechmus* , well woorth to bee my
deare,of all deareft.

145 *Pen.* Now she shewes her selfe in her likenesse,when shee
findes him in the giuing vaine, she drawes close to him.

Men. I thinke *Hercules* got not the garter from *Hypoli-
ta* so hardly,as I got this from my wife. Take this, and with
the fame,take my heart.

150 *Pen.* Thus they must do that are right Louers:especially
if they meane to beggers with ane speed.

Men. I bought this fame of late for my wife,it stood mee
(I thinke) in some ten pound

Penicu. There's tenne pounde bestowed verie thrif-
tily.

155 *Menechmus.* But knowe yee what I woulde haue yee
doo?

Erotium. It shall bee done, your dinner shall be rea-
die.

160 * *Men.* Let a good dinner be made for vs three. Harke
ye, some oyfters,a mary-bone pie or two, some artichokes,
and potato rootes,let our other dishes be as you please.

Erot. You shall fir.

Men. I haue a litle bufinesse in this Citties , by that time
dinner will be prepared. Farewell till then, fweete *Erotium*:
Come *Peniculus*.

165 *Pen.* Nay I meane to follow yee : I will fooner leefe my
life, then fight of you till this dinner be done.

Exeunt.

Erotium. Who's there? Call mee *Cylindrus* the Cooke
hither.

170 Enter *Cylindrus*.

Cylindrus, take the Hand-basket , and heere , there's

A pleafant Comedie called

ten fhillings is there not?

Cyl. Tis fo miftrefe.

175 *Erot.* Buy mee of all the daintieft meates ye can get, ye know what I meane: fo as three may dine paffing well , and yet no more then inough.

Cyl. What guefts haue ye to day miftrefe?

Erot. Here will be *Menechmus* and his Parafite, and my felfe.

180 *Cyl.* That's ten perfons in all.

Erot. How many?

Cyl. Ten,for I warrant you, that Parafite may ftand for eight at his vittels.

185 *Erot.* Go difpatch as I bid you, and looke ye returne with all fpeed.

Cyl. I will haue all readie with a trice.

Exeunt.

Act. 2. Scen.1.

Enter *Menechmus*,*Soficles*. *Meffenio* his feruant,
and fome Saylers.

5 M *En.* Surely *Meffenio*, I thinke Sea-fairers neuer take fo comfortable a ioy in any thing, as when they haue bene long toft and turmoylde in the wide feas, they hap at laft to ken land.

10 *Meff.* Ile be fworn, I fhuld not be gladder to fee a whole Country of mine owne,then I haue bene at fuch a fight. But I pray, wherfore are we now come to *Epidamnum*?muft we needs go to fee euerie Towne that we heare off?

Menech. Till I finde my brother,all Townes are alike to me: I muft trie in all places.

15 *Meff.* Why then let's euen as long as wee liue feeke your brother: fix yeares now haue we roamde about thus, *Iftria*, *Hispania*,*Mafsyia*, *Ilyria*, all the vpper fea, all high *Greece*, all Hauen Towns in *Italy*, I think if we had fought a needle all this time, we muft needs haue found it, had it bene aboue ground. It cannot be that he is aliue, and to feek a dead man

Menechmus.

20 thus among the liuing,what folly is it?

Men. Yea, could I but once find any man that could certainly enforme me of his death, I were satisfied ; otherwise I can neuer defist feecking:Litle knowest thou *Meffenio* how neare my heart it goes.

25 *Meff.* This is washing of a Blackamore. Faith let's goe home, vnlesse ye meane we should write a stories of our tra-uaile.

Men. Sirra,no more of these fawcie speeches, I perceiue I must teach ye how to serue me,not to rule me.

30 *Meff.* I, fo, now it appears what it is to be a seruant. Wel yet I must speake my conscience. Do ye heare fir? Faith I must tell ye one thing, when I looke into the leane estate of your purse, and consider aduisedly of your decaying stocke, I hold it verie needfull to be drawing homeward, left in loo-
35 king your brother, we quite lose our selves. For this assure your selfe , this Towne *Epidamnum*, is a place of outrageous expences, exceeding in all ryot and lasciuiousnesse: and (I heare) as full of Ribaulds,Parasites,Drunkards, Catchpoles, Cony-catchers,and Sycophants,as it can hold:then for Cur-
40 tizans,why here's the currantest stamp of them in the world. Ye must not thinke here to scape with as light cost as in o-ther places.The verie name shews the nature,no man comes hither *fine damno*.

45 *Men.* Yee say very well indeed: giue mee my purse into mine owne keeping,because I will so be the safer,*fine damno*.

Meff. Why fir?

Men. Because I feare you wil be busie among the the Cur-
tizans,& so be cofened of it: then should I take great paines
in belabouring your shoulders, so to auoid both these harms,
50 Ile keep it my selfe.

Meff. I pray do so fir,all the better.

Enter Cylindrus.

* I haue tickling geare here yfaith for ther dinners: It
grieues me to the hear to think how that cormorant knaue
55 *Peniculus* must haue his share in these dainties morfels. But

A pleafant Comedie called

what ? Is *Menechmus* come alreadie, before I could come from the Market? *Menechmus* how do ye fir? how haps it ye come fo foone?

60 *Menech.* God a mercy my good friend, doeft thou know mee?

Cyl. Know ye? no not I. Where's mouldichappes that muft dine with ye? A murrin on his manners.

Men. Whom meaneft thou good fellow?

65 *Cyl.* Why *Peniculus* worfhip,that whorfon lick-trencher, your Parafiticall attendant.

Men. What *Peniculus*? what attendant? My Attendant? Surely this fellow is mad.

Meff. Did not I tell ye what cony-catching villaines yee fhould finde here?

70 *Cyl Menechmus,* harke ye fir, ye come too foone backe again to dinner,I am but returned from the Market.

Men. Fellow, here thou fhalt haue money of me,goe get the prieft to facrifice for thee. I know thou art mad,els thou wouldft neuer vfe a ftraunger thus?

75 *Cyl.* Alas fir, *Cylindrus* was wont to be no ftranger to you, know ye not *Cylindrus*?

Men. *Cylindrus*, or *Coliendrus*, or what the diuell thou art, I know not,neither do I care to know.

Cyl. I know you to be *Menechmus*.

80 *Men.* Thou fhouldft be in thy wits , in that thou nameft me fo right, but tell me,where haft thou knowne me?

Cyl. Where? Euen heere, where ye firft fell in loue with my miftrefse *Erotium*.

85 *Men.* I neither haue Louer, neither knowe I who thou art.

Cyl. Know ye not who I am : who fils your cup & drefes your meate at our houfe?

Meff. What a flaue is this? That I had fomewhat to break the Rascals pate withall.

90 *Men.* At your houfe,when as I neuer came in *Epidamnum* till this day.

Menechmus.

Cyl. Oh that's true. Do ye not dwell in yonder house?

¶ *Men.* Foul flame light vpon them that dwell there, for my part.

95 *Cyl.* Questionleffe, hee is mad indeede, to curse himselfe thus. Harke ye *Menechmus.*

Men. What faist thou?

Cyl. If I may aduise ye, ye shall bestow this money which ye offred me, vpon a sacrifice for you selfe : for out of doubt
100 you are mad that curse your selfe.

Meff. What a verlet art thou to trouble vs thus?

Cyl. Tush he wil many times iest with me thus. Yet when his wife is not by, tis a ridiculous iest.

Men. VVhats that?

105 *Cyl.* This I say, Thinke ye I haue brought meate inough for three of you? If not, ile fetch more for you and your wench, and snatchcruft your Parasite.

Men. VVhat wenches? what Parasites?

Meff. Villaine, Ile make thee tell me what thou meanest
110 by all this talke?

Cyl. Away Iack Napes, I say nothing to thee, for I know thee not, I speake to him that I know.

Men. Out drunken foole, without doubt thou art out of thy wits.

115 *Cyl.* That you shall see by the dressing of your meat. Go, go, ye were better to go in and finde somewhat to do there, whiles your dinner is making readie. Ile tell my mistresse ye be here.

Men. Is he gone? *Meffenio* I thinke vpon thy words al-
120 readie.

Meff. Tush marke I pray, Ile laie fortie pound here dwels some Curtizan to whom this fellow belong.

Men. But I wonder how he knowes my name.

125 *Meff.* Oh ile tell yee. These Courtizans assoone as anie strange shippe arriueth at the Hauen, they sende a boye or a wench to enquire what they be, what their names be, // they come, wherefore they come, &c. If they can by

A pleafant Comedie called

any meanes ftrike acquaintance with him, or allure him to
their houfes, he is their owne. We are here in a tickle place
maifter, tis beft to be circumfpect.

130

Men. I miſlike not thy counfaile *Meffenio*.

Meff. I, but follow it then. Soft, here comes ſomebodie
forth. Here fir, Marriners, keep this ſame amongſt you.

Enter Erotium.

135

Let the doore ſtand ſo, away, it ſhall not be ſhure. Make
haſt within there ho: maydes looke that all things be readie.
Couer the boord, put fire vnder the perfuming pannes, let all
things be very handſome. Where is hee, that *Cylindrus* ſayd
ſtood without here? Oh, what meane you ſweet heart, that
ye come not in? I truſt you thinke your ſelfe more welcome
to this houſe then to your owne, and great reaſon why you
ſhould do ſo. Your dinner & all things are readie as you wil-
led. Will ye go fit downe?

140

Men. Whom doth this woman ſpeake to?

145

Ero. Euen to you fir, to whom elſe ſhould I ſpeake?

Men. Gentlewoman ye are a ſtraunger to me, and I mar-
uell at your ſpeeches.

Ero. Yea fir, but ſuch a ſtraunger, as I acknowledge ye for
my beſt and deareſt friend, and well you haue deferred it.

150

Men. Surely *Meffenio*, this woman is alſo mad or drunke,
that vſeth all this kindneſſe to mee vppon ſo ſmall acquain-
tance.

Meff. Tush, did not I tell ye right? theſe be but leaues
which fall vpon you now, in compariſon of the trees that wil
tumble on your necke ſhortly. I tolde ye, here were ſiluer
tong'de hacſters. But let me talke with her a litle. Gentle-
woman what acquaintance haue you with this man? where
haue you ſeene him?

155

Ero. Where he ſawe me, here in *Epidamnum*.

160

Cyl. I know you to be *Menechmus*.

Meff. In *Epidamnum*? who neuer till this day ſet his foote
within the Towne.

Ero. Go, go, flowing Iack. *Menechmus* what need al this?
I pray go in.

Menechmus.

- 165 *Men.* She also calls me by my name.
 Meff. She smells your purse.
 Men. *Meffenio* come hither, here take my purse. Ile know
whether she aime at me or my purse, ere I go.
 Erot. Will ye go in, to dinner fir?
170 *Men.* A good motion, yea and thanks with all my heart.
 Erot. Neuer thanke me for that which you commaunded
to be prouided for your selfe.
 Men. That I commaunded?
 Erot. Yea, for you and your Parafite.
175 *Men.* My Parafite?
 Erot. *Peniculus*, who came with you this morning when
you brought me the cloake which you got from your wife.
 Men. A cloake that I brought you, which I got from my
wife?
180 *Erot.* Tush what needeth all this iefting? Pray leaue off.
 Men. Ieft or earnest, this I tell ye for a truth. I neuer had
wife, neither haue I, nor neuer was in this place till this in-
stant: for only thus farre am I come, since I brake my fast in
the ship.
185 *Erot.* What ship do ye tell me off?
 * *Meff.* Marry ile tell ye, an old rotten weather-beaten
ship, that we haue faild vp and downe in this fixe yeares, Ift
not time to be going homewards thinke ye?
 Erot. Come, come, *Menechmus*, I pray leaue this sporting
190 and go in.
 Men. Well Gentlewoman, the truth is, you mistake my
person, it is some other that you looke for.
 Erot. Why, thinke ye I know ye not to be *Menechmus*,
the sonne of *Mofchus*, and haue heard ye say, ye were borne
195 at *Syracusis*, where *Agathocles* did raigne, then *Pythia*, then
Liparo, and now *Hiero*.
 Men. All this is true.
 Meff. Either shee is a witch, or else shee hath dwelt there
and knew ye there. (matter.
200 *Men.* Ile goe in with her *Meffenio*, Ile see further of this

A pleafant Comedie called

Meff. Ye are caft away then.

205 *Men.* Why fo? I warrant thee. I can loofe nothing, fomewhat I fhall gaine, perhaps a good lodging during my abode heere. Ile diffemble with her an other while. Noew when you pleafe let vs go in, I made ftraunge with you, becaufe of this fellow here,leaft he fhould tell my wife of the cloake which I gaue you.

210 *Ero.* Will ye ftaie any longer for your *Peniculus* your Parafite?

Men. Not I, Ile neither ftaie for him, nor haue him let come in, if he do come.

Erot. All the better. But fir, will yee doo one thing for me.

215 *Men.* What is that?

Ero. To beare that cloake which you gaue me,to the Diars,to haue it new trimd and altred.

220 *Men.* Yea that will be well, fo my wife fhall not know it. Let mee haue it with mee after dinner. I will but fpeake a worde or two with this fellowe , then ile follow yee in. Ho *Meffenio* come afide:goe and prouide for thy felfe, and thefe fhipboyes in fome Inne, then looke that after dinner you come hither for me.

225 *Meffenio.* Ah maifter will yee be conycatcht thus wilfully.

Men. Peace follifh knaue, feeft thou not what a fot fhe is,I fhall coozen her I warrant thee.

Meff. Ay maifter.

Men. Wilt thou be gone?

230 * *Meff.* See, fee, fhe hath him fafe inough now. Thus he hath efcaped a hundreth Pyrates hands at fea : and now one land-rouer hath bourded him at firft encounter.Come away fellowes.

Menechmus.

Act. 3.

Enter *Peniculus*.

*T wentie yeares I thinke and more, haue I playde
 the knaue, yet neuer playd I the foolifh knaue as I
5 Haue done this morning. I follow *Menechmus*, and he goes
 to the Hall where now the Seffions are holden: there thru-
 fting our felues into the preafe of people, when I was in
 midft of all the throng, he gaue me the flip, that I could ne-
 uer more fet eye on him, and I dare fweare, came directly
10 to dinner. That I would he that firft deuifed thefe Seffions
 were hang'd, and all that euer came of him: tis fuch a hinde-
 rance to men that haue belly bufineff in hand. If a man be
 not there at his call, they amearce him with a vengeance.
 Men that haue nothing elfe to do, that do neither bid anie
15 man, nor are themfelues bidden to dinner, fuch fhould come
 to Seffions, not we that haue thefe matters to looke too. If it
 were f, I had not thus loft my dinner this day: which I think
 in my confcience he did euen purpofely couzen me off. Yet
 I meane to go fee : If I can but light vppon the reuerfion, I
20 may perhaps get my penny-worthes. But how now? is this
 Menechmus coming away from thence? dinner done, and
 all difpacht? what execrable lucke haue I?

Enter *Menechmus* the trauailer.

25 Tufh I warrant ye, it fhall be done as ye would wifh, Ile
 haue it fo altered and trimd anew, that it fhall by no meanes
 be knowne againe.

Pen. He carries the cloake to the Dyars, dinner done, the
 wine drunke vp, the Parafite fhut out of doores. Well, let me
 liue no longer, but ile reuenge this iniurious mockerie. But
30 firft ile harken awhile what he faith.

Men. Good goddes, who euer had fuch lucke as I? Such
 cheare, fuch a dinner, fuch kinde entertainment: And for a
 farewell, this cloake which is meane fhall go with me.

A pleafant Comedie called

- 35 *Pen.* He fpeakes fo foftly, I cannot heare what hee faith,
I am fure he is now flowting at me for the loffe of my dinner.
- 40 *Men.* She tels me how I gaue it her, and ftole it from my wife. When I perceiued fhe was in an error, though I knew not how, I began to footh her, and to fay euery thing as fhe faid. Meane while I far'd well, and that a free coft.
- Pen.* Well, I'll go talke with him.
- Men.* Who is this fame that comes to me?
- 45 *Pen.* O well met fickle-braine, falfe and treacherous dealer, craftie and vniuft promife breaker. How haue I deferued, you fhould fo giue me the flip, come before and difpatch the dinner, deale fo badly with him that hath reuerenft ye like a fonne.
- 50 *Men.* Good fellow what meaneft thou by thefe fpeeches? Raile not on mee, vnleffe thou intendft to receiue a Railers hire.
- Pen.* I haue receiued the iniury (fure I am) alreadie.
- Men.* Prethee tell me, what is thy name?
- Pen.* Well, well, mock on fir, mock on, doo ye not know my name?
- 55 *Men.* In troth I neuer fawe thee in all my life, much leffe do I know thee.
- Pen.* Fie, Awake *Menechmus* awake, ye ouerfleepe your felfe.
- 60 *Men.* I am awake, I know what I fay.
- Pen.* Know you not *Peniculus*?
- Men.* *Peniculus*, or *Pediculus*, I know thee not.
- Pen.* Did ye filch a cloake from your wife this morning, and bring it hither to *Erotium*?
- 65 *Men.* Neither haue I wife, neither gaue I any cloake to *Erotium*, neither filcht I any from any bodie.
- Pen.* Will ye denie that which you did in my company?
- Pen.* Wlith thou fay I haue done this in thy company?
- Pen.* Vvill I fay it? Yea I will ftand to it.
- Men.* Away filthie mad driuell away, I will talke no lon-

Menechmus.

70

ger with thee.

Pen. Not a world of men shall staie me, but ile go tell his wife of all the whole matter, fith he is at this point with me I will make this fame as vnleft a dinner as euer he eate.

75

Men. It makes mee wonder, to see how euery one that meetes me cauls thus with me. Vwherefore comes forth the mayd now?

Enter *Ancilla*, *Erotiums* mayd.

80

Menechmus, my mistress commends her hartily to you, and seeing you goe that way to the Dyars, shee also desireth you to take this Chaine with you, and put it to mending at the Goldsmithes, shee would haue two or three ounces of gold more in it, and the fashion amended.

Men. Either this or any thing else within my power, tell her, I am readie to accomplish.

85

Anc. Do ye know this Cahine fir?

Men. Yea I know it to be gold.

Anc. This is the same you once tooke out of your wifes Casket.

Men. Vwho, did I?

90

Anc. Haue you forgotten?

Men. I neuer did it.

Anc. Giue it me againe then.

Men. Tarry, yes I remember it: tis it I gaue you mistress.

Anc. Oh, are ye aduised?

95

Men. Vwhere are the bracelets that I gaue her likewife?

Anc. I neuer knew of anie

Men. Faith, when I gaue this, I gaue them too.

Anc. Vwell fir, ile tell her this shall be done.

100

Men. I, I, tell her so, shee shall haue the cloake and this both together.

Anc. I pray *Menechmus*, put a litle iewell for my eare to making for me, ye know I am alwaies readie to please you.

Men. I will, giue mee the golde, ile paie for the workmanship.

105

Anc. Laie out for me, ile paie it ye againe.

A pleafant Comedie called

Men. Alas I haue none now.

Anc. When you haue,will ye?

110 *Men.* I will. Goe bid your miftrefse make no doubt of
theſe, I warrant her,ile make the beſt hand I can of them. Is
ſhe gone? Doo not all the gods conſpire to loade mee with
good lucke? well I fee tis high time to get mee out of theſe
coafte, leaſt all theſe matters ſhould be lewd deuifed to draw
me into ſome fnare. There ſhall my garland lie, becauſe if
they feeke me,they may thinke I am gone that way. * I wil
115 now goe ſee if I can finde my man *Meſſenio*, that I may tell
him how *I* haue ſped.

Act. 4.

Enter *Mulier*, the wife of *Menechmus* the Citizen,
And *Peniculus*.

5 *MV* *lier.* Thinkes he *I* will be made ſuch a fot, and to be
ſtill his drudge,while he prowles and purloynes all that
I haue to giue his Trulles?

Pen. Nay hold your peace, wee'll catch him in the nicke.
This way he came,in his garland forfooth,bearing the cloak
to the Dyars. And ſee *I* pray where the garland lyes, this
way he is gone. See, ſee, where he comes againe now with-
10 out the cloake.

Mul. Vvhat ſhall *I* now do?

Pen. Vvhat^ that which ye euer do,bayt him for life.

Mul. Surely *I* thinke it beſt fo.

15 *Pen.* Stay, wee will ſtand a fide a little, ye ſhall catch him
vnawares.

Enter *Menechmus* the Citizen.

20 *Men.* It would make a man at his wittes end, to ſee how
brabbling cauſes are handled yonder at the Court. If a
poore man neuer ſo honſt,haue a matter come to be ſcand,
there is hee outfalte, and ouerlaide with countenance: *I* a

Menechmus.

Rich man neuer fo vile a wretch come to fpeake, there they
are all readie to fauour his caufe. Vvhat with facing out bad
caufes for the oppreffors, and patronizing fome iuft actions
for the wronged, the Lawyers they pocket vp all the gaines.
25 For mine own part, *I* come not away emptie, though *I* haue
bene kept long againft my will : For taking in hand to dif-
patch a matter this morning for one of my acquaintaunce,
I was no fooner entered into it , but his aduerfaries laide fo
hard vnto his charge , and brought fuch matter againft him,
30 that do what *I* could, *I* could not winde my felfe out til now.
I am fore afrayd *Erotium* thinks much vnkindnes in me that
I ftaid fo long, yet fhe will not be angry confidering the gift
I gaue her to day.

Pen. How thinke ye by that?

Mul. *I* thinke him a moft vile wretch thus to abufe me.

Men. *I* will hie me thither.

Mul. Yea go pilferer, goe with fhame inough, no bodie
fees your lewd dealings and vile theeuery.

Men. How now wife, what aile yee? What is the mat-
40 ter?

Milier. Aske yee whats the matter ? Fye vppon
thee.

Pen. Are ye not in a fit of an ague, your pulfes beate fo
fore? To him *I* fay.

Men. Pray wife, why are ye fo angry with me?

Mul. Oh you know not?

Pen. He knowes, but he would diffemble it.

Men. What is it?

Mul. My cloake.

Men. Your cloake.

Mul. My cloake man, why do ye blufh?

Pen. He cannot cloake his blufhing. Nay *I* might not go
to dinner with you, do ye remember? to him *I* fay.

Men. Hold thy peace *Peniculus*.

Pen. Ha hold my peace, looke ye, he beckons on mee to
55 hold my peace

A pleafant Comedie called

Men. I neither becken nor winke on him.

Mul. Out,out,what a wretched life is this that I liue.

Men. Why what aile ye woman?

60 *Mul.* Are ye not afhamed to deny fo confidently , that
which is apparent.

Men. I proteft vnto you before all the goddes (is not this
inough) that I becond not on him.

65 *Pen.* Oh fir, this is an other matter, touch him in the for-
mer caufe.

Men. What former caufe?

Pen. The cloake man, the cloake, fecth the cloake againe
from the Dyars.

Men. What cloake?

70 *Mul.* Nay ile fay no more, fith ye know nothing of your
owne doings.

Men. Tell me wife,hath any of your fervants abufed you?
Let me know.

Mul. Tufh, tufh.

75 *Men.* I would not haue you to be thus difquietted.

Mul. Tufh, tufh.

Men. You are fallen out with fome of your friends.

Mul. Tufh, tufh.

Men. Sure I am,I haue not offended you.

80 *Mul.* No, you haue dealt verie honeftly.

Men. Indeed wife, I haue deferued none of thefe words,
tell me,are ye not well?

Pen. What fhall he flatter ye now?

Men. I fpeak not to thee knaue.Good wife come hither.

85 *Mul.* Away,away,keep your hand off.

Pen. So,bid me to dinner with you againe,then flip away
from me, when you haue done, come forth brauely in your
garland to flout me: Alas you knew not me,euen now.

90 *Men.* Why Affe, I neither haue yet dined, nor came I
there,since we were there together.

Pen. Vvho euer heard one fo impudent? Did yee not
meete me here euen now,and would make me beleeeue I was

Menechmus.

mad, and faid ye were a ftraunger, and ye knew me not?

95 *Men.* Of a truth fince wee went together to the Seffions Hall, I neuer returned till this very inftant, as you two met me.

Pen. Go too, go too, I know ye well inough. Did ye think I would not cry quittance with you, yes faith, I haue tolde your wife all.

100 *Men.* What haft thou told her?

Pen. I cannot tell, aske her.

Men. Tell me wife, what hath he told ye of me? Tell me I fay, what was it?

Mul. As though you knew not, my cloake is ftolne from

105 *Men.* Is your cloake ftolne from ye? (me.

Mul. Do ye aske me?

Men. I knew, I would not aske.

Pen. O craftie companion, how he would fhift the matter, Come, come, deny it not, I tell ye, I haue bewrayd all.

110 *Men.* What haft thou bewrayd?

Mul. Seeing ye will yeeld to nothing be it neuer fo manifef, Heare mee, and ye fhall know in fewe words both the caufe of my grieve, and what he hath told me. I fay my cloake is ftolne from me.

115 *Men.* My cloake is ftolne from me?

Pen. Looke how he cauils, fhe faith it is ftolne from her.

Men. I haue nothing to fay to thee: I fay wife tell me.

Mul. I tell ye, my cloake is ftolne out of my houfe.

Men. Who ftole it?

120 *Mul.* He knowes beft that carried it away.

Men. Who was that?

Mul. *Menechmus.*

Men. T'was very ill done of him. What *Menechmus* was that?

125 *Mul.* You.

Men. I, who will fay fo?

Mul. I will.

Pen. And I: and that you gaue it to *Erotius.*

D<1r>

Men.

A pleafant Comedie called

Men. I gaue it?

130

Mul. You.

Pen. You, you, you, fhall we fetch a kennel of Beagles that may cry nothing but you,you,you,you.Fir we are wearie of it.

135

Men. Heare me one word wife, I proteft vnto you by all the gods,*I* gaue it her not, indeed I lent it her to vfe a while.

Mul. Faith fir, *I* neuer giue nor lend your apparell out of doores, mee thinkes ye might let mee difpofe of mine owne garments,as you do of yours. *I* pray then fetch it mee home againe.

140

Men. You fhall haue it againe without faile.

Mul. Tis beft for you that *I* haue : otherwife thinke not to rooft within thefe doores againe.

Pen. Harke ye.what fay ye to me now,for bringing thefe matters to your knowledge?

145

Mul. *I* fay , when thou haft anie thing ftolne from thee, come to me, and I will helpe thee to feeke it. And fo fare-well.

150

Pen. God a mercy for nothing, that can neuer be, for *I* haue nothing in the world worth the ftealing. So now with husband and wife and all, *I* am cleane out of fauour. A mifchiefe on ye all.

Exit.

155

Men. My wife thinks fhe is notably reueng'd on me, now fhe fhuttes mee out of doores, as though I had not a better place to be welcome too.If fhe fhut me out, I know who wil fhut me in. Now will I entreate *Erotium* to le me haue the cloake againe to ftop my wiues mouth withall,and then will *I* prouide a better for her. Ho who is within there ? fomebodie tell *Erotium* I muft fpeake with her.

160

Enter Erotium.

Erot. Who calls ?

Men. Your friend,more then his owne.

Menechmus.

Erot. O *Menechmus*, why stand ye here? Pray come it.

Men. Tarry, I must speake with ye here.

165 *Ero.* Say your minde.

Men. Wot ye what? my wife knowes all the matter now, and my coming is, to request you, that I may haue againe the cloake which I brought you, that so I may appease her: and I promise you, I'll giue ye an other worth two of it.

170 *Erot.* Why I gaue it you to carry to your Dyars, and my chaine likewise, to haue it altered.

Men. Gaue me the cloake and your chaines? In truth I neuer sawe ye since I left it heere with you, and so went to the Sessions, from whence I am but now returned.

175 *Erot.* Ah then sir, I see you wrought a device to defraude mee of them both, did I therefore put yee in trust? Well, well.

Men. To defraud ye? No, but I say, my wife hath intelligence of the matter.

180 *Erot.* Why sir, I asked them not, ye brought them me of your owne free motion. Now ye require them againe, take them make fops of them: you and your wife together, think ye I esteeme them or you either. Goe, come to mee againe when I fend for you.

185 *Men.* What so angry with mee, sweete *Erotium*? Staie, I pray staie.

* *Erot.* Staie? Faith sir no: thinke ye I will staie at your request?

190 *Men.* What gone in chafing, and clapt to the doores: now I am euery way shut out for a very benchwhiffler: neither shall I haue entertainment heere nor at home. I were best go trie some other friends, and aske counsaile what to do.

A pleafant Comedie called

Act. 5.

Enter *Menechmus* the Traueller, *Mulier*.

MO ft foolifhly was I ouerfeene in giuing my purfe and
money to *Meffenio*, whom I can no where find,I feare
he is fallen into fome lewd companie.

5

Mul. I maruaile that my husband comes not yet, but fee
where he is now,and brings my cloake with him.

Men. I mufe where the knaue fhould be.

Mul. I will go ring a peale through both his eares for this
his difhoneft behauiour. Oh fir,ye are welcome home with
your theeuery on your fhoulders , are ye not afhamde to let
all the world fee and fpeake of your lewdneffe?

10

Men. How now? what lackes this woman?

Mul. Impudent beaft, ftand ye to queftion about it? For
fhame hold thy peace.

15

Men. What offence haue I done woman, that I fhould
not fpeake to you?

Mulier. Askeft thou what offence? O fhameleffe bold-
neffe.

20

Men. Good woman, did ye neuer heare why the Greci-
ands termed *Hecuba* be a bitch?

Mul. Neuer.

Men. Becaufe fhe did as you do now,on whom foeuer fhe
met withall, fhe railed,and therfore well deferued that dog-
ged name.

25

Mul. Thefe foule abufes and contumelies,I can neuer en-
dure,nay rather will I liue a widowes life to my dying day.

Men. What care I whether thou liueft as a widow or as a
wife. This paffeth,that I meet with none but thus they vex
me with ftraunge fpeeches.

30

Mul. What ftraunge fpeeches? I fay I will furely liue a
widowes life,rather then fuffer thy vile dealings.

Men. Prethee for my part, liue a widow till the worldes
end,if thou wilt.

Mulier. Euen now thou deniedft that thou ftoleft it from

Menechmus.

40 mad, and now thou bringest it home openly in my sight. Art not ashamed?

Men. Woman, you are greatly to blame to charge me with stealing of this cloak, which this day another gave me to carry to be trimmed.

45 *Mul.* Well, I will first complain to my father. Ho boy, who is within there? *Vecio* go run quickly to my father, desire him of all love to come over quickly to my house. He tell him first of your pranks, I hope he will not see me thus handled.

50 *Men.* What a God's name meaneth this mad woman thus to vex me?

Mul. I am mad because I tell ye of your vile actions, and lewd pilfering away my apparel and my jewels, to carry to your filthy drabbles.

55 *Men.* For whom this woman taketh me I know not, I know her as much as I know *Hercules* wife's father.

Mul. Do ye not know me? That's well, I hope ye know my father, here he comes, look, do ye know him?

60 *Men.* As much as I know *Calcas* of Troy. Euen him and thee I know both alike.

Mul. Does he know neither of us both, me nor my father?

Men. Faith nor thy grandfather neither.

Mul. This is like the rest of your behaviour.

Enter Senex.

65 * Though bearing so great a burthen, as old age, I can make no great haste, yet as I can, I will go to my daughter, who I know hath some earnest business with me, that she sends in such haste, not telling the cause why I should come. But I durst lay a wager, I can guess near the matter: I suppose it is some brabble between her husband and her. These young women that bring great dowries to their husbands, are so masterfull and obstinate, that they will have their own wills in every thing, and make men servants to their weak affections. And young men too, I must needs say, be naught nowadays. Well, I'll go see, but yonder me thinks stands

70

75

A pleafant Comedie called

my daughter, and her husband too. Oh tis euen as I geffed.

Mulier. Father ye are welcome.

Sen. How now daughter? What? is all well? why is your husband fo fad? haue ye bin chiding? tell me, vvhich of you is in the fault?

Mul. Firft father know, that I haue not any way misbehaued my felfe, but the truth is, I can by no meanes endure this bad man to die for it : and therefore defire you to take me home to you againe.

Sen. What is the matter?

Mul. He makes me aftale and a laughing ftocke to all the world.

Sen. Who doth?

Mul. This good husband here, to whom you married me.

Sen. See, fee, how oft haue I warned you of falling out with your husband?

Mul. I cannot auoid it, if he doth fo fowly abufe me.

Sen. I alwaies told ye, you muft beare with him, ye muft let him alone, ye muft not watch him, nor dog him, nor meddle with his courfes in any fort.

Mulier. Hee hauntes naughtie harlottes vnder my nofe.

Sen. Hee is the wifer, becaufe hee cannot bee quiet at home.

Mulier. There hee feaftes and bancquets, and fpendes and fpoiles.

Sen. Wold ye haue your husband ferue ye as your drudge? Ye will not let him make merry, nor entertaine his friendes at home.

Mul. Father will ye take his part in thefe abufes, and forfake me?

Sen. Not fo daughter, but if I fee caufe, I wil as well tel him of his dutie.

Men. I vvould I vv ere gone from this prating father and daughter.

Sen. Hitherto I fee not but hee keepes ye vvell, ye vvant

Menechmus.

nothing, apparell, mony, seruants, meate, drinke, all thinges
neceffaire: I feare there is fault in you.

Mul. But he filcheth away my apparrell and my iewels, to
giue to his Trulles.

115 *Sen.* If he doth so, tis verie ill done, if not, you doo ill to
fay so.

Mul. You may beleue me father, for there you may see
my cloake which now he hath fetcht home againe, and my
chaine which he stole from me.

120 *Sen.* Now will I goe talke with him to knowe the truth.
Tell me *Menechmus*, how is it, that I heare such disorder in
your life? Why are ye so fad man? wherein hath your wife
offended you?

125 *Men.* Old man (what to call ye I know not) by high *Iobe*,
and by all the Gods I sweare vnto you, whatsoeuer this wo-
man here accuseth mee to haue stolne from her, it is vtterly
falshe and vntrue, and if I euer set foote within her doores, I
wil the greatest miserie in the worlde to light vpon
me.

130 *Sen.* Why fond man, art thou mad to deny that thou euer
setst foote within thine owne house where thou dwellest?

Men. Do I dwell in that house?

Sen. Dost thou denie it?

Men. I do.

135 *Sen.* Harke yee daughter, are ye remooued out of your
house?

Mul. Father, he vseth you as he doth me, this life I haue
with him.

140 *Sen.* *Menechmus*, I pray leaue this fondnesse, ye iest too
peruerfly with your friends.

Men. Good old father, what I pray haue you to do with
me? or why should this woman thus trouble me, with whom
I haue no dealings in the world?

145 *Mul.* Father, marke I pray, how his eyes sparkle, they rowle
in his head, his colour goes and comes, he lookes wildly.
See, see.

<D4r>

Men.

A pleafant Comedie called

Men. What? they fay now I am mad, the beft way for me
is to faine my felfe mad ineed, fo I fhall be rid of them.

Mul. Looke how he ftares about,now he gapes.

150 *Sen.* Come away daughter,come from him.

* *Men.* *Eachus, Appollo, Phebus*, do ye call mee to come
hunt in the woods with you,I fee, I heare, I come, I flie, but
I cannot get out of thefe fields. Here is an old maftiffe bitch
ftands barking at mee, and by her ftandes an old goate that
155 beares falfe witneffe againft many a poore man.

Sen. Out vpon him Bedlam foole.

Men. Harke, *Appollo* commaunds me that I fhould rende
out hir eyes with a burning lampe.

Mul. O father, he threatens to pull put mine eyes.

160 *Men.* Good gods, thefe folke fay I am mad, and doubt-
leffe they are mad themfelues.

Sen. Daughter.

Mul. Here father, what fhall we do?

Sen. What if I fetch my folkes hither, and haue him car-
165 ried in before he do any harme.

Men. How now? they will carry mee in if I looke not to
my felfe: I were beft to skare them better yet. Doeft thou
bid me *Phebus*, to teare this dog in peeces with my nayles?
If I laie hold on him,I will do thy commandment.

170 *Sen.* Get thee into thy houfe daughter,away quickly.

Men. She is gone : yea *Appollo* I will facrifice this olde
beaft vnto thee: and it thou commandeft mee, I will cut his
throate with that dagger that hands at his girdle.

Sen. Come not neare me firra.

175 *Men.* Yea I will quarter him, and pull all the bones out
of his flefh,then will I barrell vp his bowels.

Sen. Sure I am fore afraid he will do fome hurt.

Men. Many things thou commandeft me *Appollo*, wouldft
thou haue me harneffe vp thefe wilde horfes,and then clime
vp into the Chariot,& fo ouer-ride this old fticking tooth-
180 leffe Lyon. So now I am in the Chariot, and I haue hold on
the raines,here is my whip, hait, come ye wilde Iades,make a

Menechmus.

Hideous noyfe with your ftamping : hait I fay, will ye not go?

Sen. What? doth he threaten me with his horfes?

185 *Men.* Harke, now *Appollo* bids mee ride ouer him that that ftands there , and kill him. How now? who pulles mee downe from my Chariot by the haire of my head. Oh fhall I not fulfill *Appolloes* commandment?

190 *Sen.* See, fee, what a fharp difeafe this is, and how well he was euen now. I will fetch a Phifition ftraight, before hee grow too farre into this rage.

Exit.

Enter Senex and Medicus.

195 *Sen.* My loines ake with fitting, and ///////////////////////////////////king, while I ftaie for yonder laizie ///////////////////////////////////the creeping drawlatch comes.

Med. What difeafe hath hee faid you? Is it a letarge or a lunacies, or melancholia, or dropfie?

200 *Sen.* Wherefore I pray do I bring you, but that you fhuld tell me what it is? And cure him of it.

Med. Fie, make no queftion of that, Ile cure him I warrant ye. Oh here he comes, ftaie, let vs marke what he doth.

Enter Menechmus the Citizen.

205 *Men.* Neuer in my life had I more ouerthwart fortune in one day, and all by the villanie of this falfe knaue the Parafite, my *Vliffes* that works fuch //mifchiefs againft mee his king. But le me liue no longer, but ile be reuengde vpon the life of him: his life? Nay tis my life, for hee liues by my meate and drinke, Ile vtterly withdraw the flauers life from
210 him. And *Erotium* fheweth plainly what fhe is : who becaufe I require the cloake again to carrie to my wife, faith I gaue it her , and flatly falles out with me. How vnfortunate am I?

Sen. Do ye heare him?

E<1r>

Med.

A pleafant Comedie called

215 *Med.* He complains of his fortune.
 Sen. Go to him.
 Med. *Menechmus*, how do ye man? why keepe you not
your cloake ouer your arme? It is verie hurtfull to your dif-
eafe. Keepe ye warme I pray.
220 *Men.* Why hang thy felfe, what careft thou.
 Med. Sir can you fmell anie thing?
 Men. I fmell a prating dolt of thee.
 Med. Oh I will haue your head throughly purged. Pray
tell me *Menechmus*, what vse you to drinke? white wine or
225 claret?
 Men. What the diuell careft thou?
 Sen. Looke, his fit now begins.
 Men. Why doeft not as well aske mee whether *I* eate
bread, or cheefe, or ////////// or porredge //////////////////eare
230 feathers, or fif//////// talke he falleth into.
 Med. Tarry, I will aske him further.
 Menechmus, tell me, be not your eyes heauie and dull some-
times?
 Men. What doeft thinke I am an Owle?
235 *Med.* Doo not your guttes gripe ye, and croake in your
belly?
 Men. When I am hungrie they do, else not.
 Med. He fpeakes not like a mad man in that. Sleepe ye
foundly all night?
240 *Men.* When I haue paid my debts I do. The mifchiefe
light on thee, with all thy friuolous queftions.
 Med. Oh now he rageth vpon thofe words, take heed.
 Sen. Oh this is nothing to the rage he was in euen now.
He called his wife bitch, and all to nought.
245 *Men.* Did *I*?
 Sen. Thou didft, mad fellow, and threatenedft to ryde o-
uer me here with a Chariot and horfes, and to kill mee, and
teare me in peeces. This thou didft, *I* know what I fay.
 Men. *I* fay, thou ftoleft *Iupiters* Crowne from his head,

Menechmus.

250 and thou wert whipt through the Towne for it , and that
thou haft kild thy father , and beaten thy mother. Doo ye
thinke I am fo mad that I cannot deuife as notable lyes of
you, as you do of me?

Sen. Maifter Doctor, pray heartily make fpeede to cure
255 him, fee ye not how mad he waxeth?

Med. Ile tell ye , hee fhall be brought ouer to my houle,
and there will I cure him.

Sen. Is that beft?

Med. What elfe,there I can order him as I lift.

260 *Sen.* Well,it fhall be fo.

Med. Oh fir , *I* will make yee take neefing powder this
twentie dayes.

Men. Ile beate yee firft with a baftanado , this thirtie
dayes.

265 *Med.* Fetch men to carry him to my houle.

Sen. How many will ferue the turne?

Medicus. Being no madder then hee is now , foure will.
ferue.

Sen. Ile fetch them, ftaie you with him maifter Doctor.

270 *Med.* No by my faith, Ile foe home to make readie all
things neefull.Let your men bring him hither.

Sen. I go.

Exeunt.

275 *Men.* Are they both gone? Good Gods what meaneth
this? Thefe men fay I am mad,who without doubt are mad
themfelues. I ftirre not, I fight no, *I* am not ficke. I fpeake
to them,I know them. Well what were I now beft to do? I
would goe home, but my wife fhuttes me foorth a doores.
Erotium is as farre out with me too. Euen here *I* will reft me
280 till the euening, I hope by that time, they will take pittie
on me.

Enter *Meffenio* the Trauellers feruant.

* The prooffe of a good feuant, is to regard his maifters
bufineffe as well in his abfence , as in his prefence : and I
285 thinke him a verie foole that is not carefull as well for his

A pleasant Comedie called

ribbes and shoulders, as for his belly and throate. When I
think vpon the rewards of a fluggard, I am euer pricied with
a carefull regard of my backe and shoulders : for in truth I
haue no fancie to these blows,as many a one hath : methinks
290 it is no pleafure to a man to be basted with a ropes end two
or three houres together. I haue provided yonder in the
Towne, for all our marriners , and safely bestowed all my
mafters Trunkes and fardels: and am now coming to fee
if he be yet got forth of this daungerous gulfe,where I feare
295 me is ouer plunged, pray God he be not ouerwhelmed and
and pafte helpe ere I come.

Enter *Senex*,with four Lorarij,porters.

Before Gods and me, I charge and commaund you firs,
to execute with great care that which I appoint you: if yee
300 loue the fafetie of your owne ribbes and shoulders,then goe
take me vp my fonne in lawe, laie all hands vpon him, why
ftand ye ftill?what do ye doubt?I faie,care not for his threat-
nings,nor for anie of his words. Take him vp and bring him
to the Phifitions houfe: I will go thither before.

Exit.

Men. What newes? how now mafters? what will ye do
with me? why do ye thus befet me? whither carrie ye mee?
Helpe,helpe,neighbors,friends,Citizens.

Meff. O *Iupiter* , what do I fee? my maifter abufed by a
310 companie of varlets.

Men. Is there no good man will helpe me?

Meff. Helpe ye maifter ? yes the villaines fhall haue my
life before they fhall thus wrong ye. Tis more fit I fhould
be kild,then you thus handled. Pull out that rafcal's eye that
315 holds ye about the necke there. I'll clout these peafants,out
ye rogue,let go ye varlet.

Men. I haue hold of this vaillaines eie.

Meff. Pull it out,and let the place appeare in his head. A-
way ye cutthroat theeues,ye murtherers.

Le.Omnes. O,O,ay,ay, crie pittifullie.

Meff. Away,get ye hence,ye mongrels, ye dogs. Will ye

Menechmus.

be gone? Thou raskall behind there, ile giue thee fomewhat more, take that. It was time to come maifter, you had bene in good cafe if I had not bene heere now, I tolde you what
325 would come of it.

Men. Now as the gods loue me, my good friend I thank thee : thou haft done that for me which I fhall neuer be able to require.

Meff. I'le tell ye how fir, giue me my freedome.

Men. Should I giue it thee?

Meffe. Seeing you cannot require my good turne.

Men. Thou art deceiued man.

Meffe. Wherein?

Men. On mine honeftie, I am none of thy maifter // had
335 neuer yet anie feruant would do fo much for me.

Meff. Why then bid me be free: will you?

Men. Yea furelie, be free, for my part.

Meff. O fweetly fpoken, thanks my good maifter.

Seruus alius. *Meffenio*, we are all glad of your good for-
340 tune.

Meff. O maifter, ile call ye maifter ftill. I praie vfe me in anie feruice as ye did before, ile dwell with you ftill, & when ye fo home, ile wait vpon you.

Men. Nay, nay, it fhall not need.

Meff. Ile goe ftraight to the Inne and deliuer vp my accounts, and all your ftuffe : your purfe is lockt vp fafely fealed in the casket, as you gaue it mee. I will goe fetch it to
345 you.

Men. Do, fetch it.

Meffe. I will.

Men. I was neuer thus perplext Some deny me to be him that I am, and fhut me out of their doores. This fellow faith he is my bondman, and of me he begs his freedome : he will fetch my purfe and monie: well if he bring it, I will receiue
355 it, and fet him free, I would he would fo go his way. My old father in law, and the Doctor faie I am mad, who euer fawe fuch ftraunge demeanors ? well though *Erotium* be neuer fo

A pleafant Comedie called

angie, yet once againe ile go fee if by intreatie *I* can get the
cloake on her to carrie to my wife.

360

Exit.

Enter *Menechmus* the Traueller, and *Meffenio*.

Men. Impudent knaue, wilt thou fay that I euer faw thee
fince I fent thee away to day , and bad thee come for mee
after dinner?

365

Meffe. Ye make me ftarke mad: I tooke ye away and re-
skued ye from foure great bigboand villaines, that were car-
rying ye away euen heere in this place. Heere they had ye
vp, you cried, Helpe, helpe, I came running to you, you
and I together beate them away by maine force. Then for
my good turne and faithfull feruice, ye gaue mee my free-
dome: I tolde ye I would go fetch your Casket, now in the
mean time you ranne fome other way to get before me, and
fo you denie it all againe.

370

Men. I gaue thee thy freedome?

375

Meff. You did.

Men. When I giue thee thy freedome , Ile be a bondman
my felfe : go thy wayes.

Meff. Wheew, marry I thank ye for nothing.

Enter *Menechmus* the Citizen.

380

Forfworne Queanes, fweare till your hearts ake, and your
yes fall out, ye fhall neuer make me beleue that I carried
hence either cloake or chaine.

Meff. O heauens, maifter what do I fee?

Men. Tra. What?

385

Meff. Your ghoaft.

Men. Tra. What ghoaft?

Meff. Your Image, as like you as can be poffible.

Men. Tra. Surely not much vnlike me as I thinke.

390

Men. Cit. O my good friend and helper, well met: thanks
for thy late good helpe.

Meff. Sir, may I craue to know your name?

Menechmus.

Men. Cit. I were too blame if I should not tell thee anie thing,my name is *Menechmus*.

Men. Tra. Nay my friend,that is my name.

395 *Men. Cit.* I am of *Syracufis* in *Sicilia*.

Men. Tra. So am I.

Meff. Are you a *Syracufan*?

Men. Cit. I am.

400 *Meff.* O,ho, I know ye : this is my maifter,I thought hee there,had bene my maifter,and was proffering my seruice to him,pray pardon me fir,if I faies anything I should not.

Men. Tra. Why doating patch,didst thou not come with me this morning from the ship?

405 *Meffe.* My faith he faies true, this is my maifter, you may go looke ye a man: God faue ye maifter: you fir farewell.
This is *Menechmus*.

Men. Cit. I fay that I am *Menechmus*.

Meffe. What a iest is this? Are you *Menechmus*?

Men. Cit. Euen *Menechmus* the sonne of *Mofchus*.

410 *Men. Tra.* My fathers sonne?

Men. Cit. Friend, I go about neither to take your father nor your country from you.

415 *Meff.* O immortall Gods, let it fall out as I hope,and for my life these are the two Twinnes, all things afree so iump together. I will speake to my maifter. *Menechmus* ?

Both. What wilt thou?

Meff. I call ye not both, but which of you came with me from the ship?

Men. Cit. Not I.

420 *Men. Tra.* I did.

Meff. Then I call you. Come hither.

Men. Tra. Whats the matter?

425 *Meff.* This fame is either some notable coufening Iugler,or else it is your brother whome we seeke. I neuer sawe one man so like an other, water to water, nor milke to milke, is not liker the he is to you.

Men. Tra. Indeed I thinke thou faiest true. Finde it

A pleafant Comedie called

that is thy brother and *I* haue promife thee thy freedom.

430 *Meffe.* Well, let me about //// Haue ue fir, you fay your
name is *Menechmus*.

Men. Cit. I do.

Meff. So is this mans. You are of *Syracufis*?

Men. Cit. True.

Meffe. So is he. *Mofcus* was your father?

435 *Men. Cit.* He was.

Meffe. So was he his. What will you fau, if I find that ye
are brothers and twins?

Men. Cit. I would thinke it happie newes.

440 *Meff.* Nay ftaie maifters both, I meane to haue the honor
of this exploit. A//// me your name is *Menechmus*?

Men. Cit. Yea.

Meff. And yours?

Men. Tra. And mine.

Meff. You are of *Syracufis*.

445 *Men. Cit.* I am.

Men. Tra. And I.

Meff. Well, this goeth right thus farre. What is the far-
theft thing that you remember there?

450 *Men. Cit.* How I went with my father to *Tarentum*, to a
freat mart, and there in the preaffe I was ftolne from him,

Men. Tra. O *Iupiter*!

Meff. Peace, what exclaiming is this? How old were ye
then?

455 *Men. Cit.* About feuen yeare old,for euen then I fhedde
teeth, and fince that time, I neuer heard of anie of my kin-
dred.

Meff. Had ye neuer a brother?

Men. Cit. Yes, as I remember, I heard them fay, we were
two twinnes.

460 *Men. Tra.* O Fortune!

Meff. Turn, can ye not be quiet? Were ye both of one
name?

Men. Cit. Nay (as I think)they cald my brother,*Soficles*.

Menechmus.

- 465 *Men. Tra.* It is he, what need farther prooffe?
O Brother, Brother, let me embrace thee.
- Men. Cit.* Sir, if this be true, I am wonderfully glad, but
how is it, that ye are called *Menechmus*?
- 470 *Men. Tra.* When it was tolde vs that you and our father
were both dead, our Graundfire (in memorie of my fathers
name) chaungde mine to *Menechmus*.
- Men. Cit.* Tis very like he would do fo indeed. But let me
aske ye one question more, what was our mothers name?
- Men. Tra. Theufimarche.*
- 475 *Men. Cit.* Brother, the most welcome to mee, that
the world holdeth.
- Men. Tra.* I ioy, and ten thousand ioyes the more, hauing
taken so long trauaile and huge paines to seeke you.
- Meff.* See now, how all this matter comes about. This it
was, that the Gentlewoman had ye in to dinner, thinking it
480 had bene he.
- Men Cit.* True it is, I willed a dinner to be prouided for
me heere this morning, and I also brought hither closely a
cloake of my wiues, and gaue it to this woman.
- Men. Tra.* Is not this the fame, Brother?
- 485 *Men. Cit.* How came you by this?
- Men. Tra.* This woman met me, had me in to dinner, en-
tertained me most kindly, and gaue me this cloake, and this
Chaine.
- Men. Cit.* Indeed she tooke ye for mee: and I beleue I
490 haue bene as straungely handled by occason of your com-
ming.
- Meffe.* You shall haue time inough to laugh at all these
matters hereafter. Do ye remember maister, what ye pro-
mised me?
- 495 *Men. Cit.* Brother I will intreate you to performe your
promise to *Meffenio*, he is worthie of it.
- Men. Tra.* I am content.
- Meff. Io Tryumphe.*
- Men. Tra.* Brother, will ye now go with me to *Syracusis*?

A pleafant Comedie called

500 *Men. Cit.* So foone as I can fell away fuch goods as I poffeffe here in *Epidamnum*, I will go with you.

Men. Tra. Thanks my good Brother!

Men. Cit. Meffenio, plaie thou the Crier for me, and make a proclamation.

505 *Meff.* A fit office. Come on. O yes.
What day fhall your fale be?

Men. Cit. This day fennight.

Meff. All men, women and children, in *Epidamnum*, or elsewhere, that will repaire to *Menechmus* houfe this day fennight, fhall there finde all maner of things to fell: feruaunts, houfhold ftuffe, houfe, gronnd, and all: fo they bring readie money.

510 Will ye fell your wife too fir?

Men. Cit. Yea, but I thinke no bodie will bid money for her.

515 *Meff.* Thus Gentlemen we take our leues, and if we haue pleafde, we require a *Plaudite*.

FINIS

{ornament}