

Domina (Pages 81 – 83)

(DOMINA enters U.L., crosses D.S., addresses audience.)

DOMINA

Since sending my husband back to Rome, I have been haunted by the premonition that he is up to something low.

(Calls to center house.)

Hysterium!

HYSTERIUM

(Entering from center house with cup)

Coming master-mistress! You're home!

DOMINA

And parched with thirst, ever-thoughtful Hysterium.

(SHE reaches for cup, HE Pulls it away.)

HYSTERIUM

No! It's a potion!

DOMINA

What sort of potion?

HYSTERIUM

To make you thirsty. And you're already thirsty, so you don't need it.

(Puts cup in holder, house S.L.)

DOMINA

Thirst is the lesser of my problems. Hysterium, on the best of intuition, I believe my husband is fouling the nest.

HYSTERIUM

(Looking nervously at house S.L.)

No! Never!

DOMINA

Never? Old friend and confidant, you are talking to a woman who faces facts.

SONG

MILES

(From inside center house)

Why?

DOMINA

Ah, I hear him now!

MILES

Why must I always be surrounded by fawning admirers?

DOMINA

(To HYSTERIUM)

That is not my husband's voice. Tell me, who is in my house?

HYSTERIUM

I think it's a captain.

DOMINA

A captain?

HYSTERIUM

Yes ... he thinks that ... your house ... is the ... I hope you do not object to my offering him your hospitality.

DOMINA

Object? When I, myself, am the daughter of a Roman general? Hysterium, I must meet him.

HYSTERIUM

You wouldn't like him. He's very vulgar.

DOMINA

All soldiers are, in a grand sort of way.

(MILES appears in doorway of center house)

MILES

... interminable!

(Shouts at HYSTERIUM.)

Bring more food and drink, eunuch!

HYSTERIUM

(To DOMINA)

You see?

DOMINA

Captain, I was just coming inside to give you a proper welcome.

(HYSTERIUM winces.)

MILES

(Thinking SHE is one of LYCUS' girls.)

You are of this house?

DOMINA

For years and years. You know, Captain, my father was General Magnus.

(MILES reacts.)

On the last anniversary of his death, I entertained over two hundred officers.

MILES

Two hundred? By yourself?

DOMINA

Of course not. Hysterium here was a big help.

(HYSTERIUM smiles proudly, then reacts painfully.)

But now my business takes me to the Forum, but I shall return. And for the length of your stay I shall bend over backwards to please you.

MILES

(Horried)

That will not be necessary!

(HE exits into center house.)

DOMINA

(To HYSTERIUM)

I do wish I could chat on with him, but I must find out why my husband was so anxious to return to Rome. Hysterium, when next we meet I shall be in some form of disguise. If you recognize me, not a word.

(Waving to MILES, who appears in door of center house.)

Until later, captain.

(MILES moans, exits into center house. DOMINA starts off D.L. as PSEUDOLUS enters U.L., sees her, starts polishing pillar center house.)

Ah, Pseudolus, busy as ever.

PSEUDOLUS

Yes, madam.

(SHE exits D.L. PSEUDOLUS crosses to HYSTERIUM.)