

01 *Aristophanes*

LYSISTRATA

The Lookout

KINESIAS

Well, look here, Lookout. I'd like to see Myrrhine.
How's the outlook?

LYSISTRATA

Unlikely. Bring Myrrhine
to you? The deal

Just by the by, who are you?

KINESIAS

A private citizen. Her husband, Kinesias.

LYSISTRATA

Meeting you—I'm glad to come!

Not

is not without its fame among us girls.

aside.

—Matter of fact, we have a name for it.—
I swear, you'll never out of Myrrhine's mouth.
She won't even nibble a quince, or swallow an egg,
without remarking, "Here's to Kinesias!"

KINESIAS

For god's sake

will you ...

LYSISTRATA

Sleeping on over his agony.

Word of honor, it's true. Why, when
we discuss our husbands (you know how women
Myrrhine refuses to argue. She simply insists
"Compared with Kinesias, the rest have nothing!"

Myrrhine and Kinesias 1 F 1 M

KINESIAS

Bring her out here!

LYSISTRATA

get out of this? And what would I

KINESIAS

You see my situation. I'll give
whatever I can. This can all be yours.

LYSISTRATA

*She descends from the platform and moves to Myrrhine,
out of Kinesias' sight.*

KINESIAS

Speed!
—Life is a husk. She left our home, and happiness
went with her. Now pain is the tenant. Oh, to enter
that wifeless house, to sense that awful emptiness,
to eat that tasteless, joyless food—it makes
it hard, I tell you.

Harder all the time.

MYRRHINE

Still out of his sight, in a voice to be overheard.

Oh, I do love him! I'm mad about him! But he
doesn't want my love. Please don't make me see him.

KINESIAS

Myrrhine darling, why do you act this way?
Come down here!

MYRRHINE

Appearing at the wall.

Down there? Certainly not!

KINESIAS

It's me, Myrrhine. I'm begging you. Please come down.

MYRRHINE

I don't see why you're begging me. You don't need me.

KINESIAS

I don't need you? I'm at the end of my rope!

MYRRHINE

I'm leaving.

She turns. Kinesias grabs the boy from the slave.

KINESIAS

No! Wait! At least you'll have to listen to the voice of your child.

To the boy, in a fierce undertone.

—(Call your mother!)

Silence.

... to the voice
of your very own child ...

—(Call your mother, brat!)

CHILD

MOMMYMOMMYMOMMY!

KINESIAS

Where's your maternal instinct? He hasn't been washed or fed for a week. How can you be so pitiless?

MYRRHINE

Him I pity. Of all the pitiful excuses for a father. ...

KINESIAS

Come down here, dear. For the baby's sake.

MYRRHINE

Motherhood! I'll have to come. I've got no choice.

KINESIAS

Soliloquizing as she descends.

It may be me, but I'll swear she looks years younger—
and gentler—her eyes caress me. And then they flash:
that anger, that verve, that high-and-mighty air!
She's fire, she's ice—and I'm stuck right in the middle.

MYRRHINE

Taking the baby.

Sweet babykins with such a nasty daddy!
Here, let Mummy kissums. Mummy's little darling.

KINESIAS

The injured husband.

You should be ashamed of yourself, letting those women
lead you around. Why do you DO these things?
You only make me suffer and hurt your poor,
sweet self.

MYRRHINE

Keep your hands away from me!

KINESIAS

But the house, the furniture, everything we own—you're
letting it go to hell!

MYRRHINE

Frankly, I couldn't care less.

KINESIAS

... but your weaving's unraveled ...
... less about that?