

Woman Hates Soldier: A Structural Approach to New Comedy

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MENANDER is the beginning of the long line of social comedies which runs through Plautus, Terence, Shakespeare, Goldoni, Molière, Sheridan, Pinero, Belasco, Milne, Lonsdale, Eliot and beyond, with many others whose names I do not know—the comedy which held the English stage in my youth: middle to upper class households well equipped with butlers, maids and nurses, in which after surmounting a number of obstacles true love found its way. This is Menander's interest for students of comparative literature.¹

Until 1907 Menander was known only from something like 1,000 quotations in ancient authors, seldom more than five lines long and mostly much shorter, and from the adaptations of four plays by Plautus and four plays by Terence. In 1907 a papyrus text was published which contained rather over half of Menander's *Arbitrants* and rather over a third of *The Samian Woman* and *The Girl Loses her Locks* (*Perikeiromene*). From that time on Egypt has produced more and more papyri of Menander, including the first virtually complete play *Grumpy* (or *Dyskolos*).

The play which I shall discuss now, *Woman Hates Soldier* (*Misoumenos*), is in a thoroughly unsatisfactory state. The sources are seven papyri, fourteen quotations in ancient authors, and a picture of the last act on a mosaic, which helps very little. The papyri preserve (1) the opening 13 lines, (2) about 75 lines, very badly preserved, of the second act, (3) 328 lines, very badly preserved but in places reinforced by three other copies, of the third and fourth acts, (4) then after a gap of 160 lines, the last 50 lines of the play. We have something like half

¹ This is the text of the Gildersleeve Lecture given at Barnard College, Columbia University, on March 27, 1973. For the prologue of *Misoumenos* I have used the new papyrus published by E. G. Turner in GRB Monograph 6, *The Papyrologist at Work* (Durham [N.C.] 1973) App. 57–58. I have discussed the identification of the central door as an inn and Getas' first monologue (160ff) in the volume in honour of Franz Blatt, *Classica et Mediaevalia*, ed. B. D. Larsen (Copenhagen 1973). On fr.13 Koerte (fr.9 Sandbach) see W. G. Arnott, *CR* 18 (1968) 11. In my interpretation of the brother I have followed W. Kraus, *RhM* 114 (1971) 1ff.

the play, though even that very badly preserved, and the worst gaps are in the first act and at the end of the fourth act. Guesswork is needed to complete the play and indeed to interpret what we have got. The second part of my title, "A Structural Approach," is meant to suggest the kind of guesswork that we have to use.

Comedy was produced in Athens at the Lenaia and City Dionysia, both festivals held in honour of Dionysos. The cult hymn of the Lenaia called on Iakchos, son of Semele, giver of wealth: it was an early spring appeal for the fertility which Dionysos could give. At the City Dionysia in late March the appeal for fertility was even more obvious, because the god was given *phalloi*, apparently sent from all the cities that made up the Athenian empire. The religious function of comedy was to persuade the god to act by showing him a relevant story, using laughter both hilariously to create the necessary relaxed atmosphere and as mockery to drive away evil spirits (such as politicians, generals and philosophers). These two functions of laughter, as we know them from Greek comedy, are very interestingly illustrated in the Pueblo rain-drama.² Menander comes late in the story of comedy, more than a century and a half after the first official production at the City Dionysia, and both the hilarity and still more the ribald mockery have faded away in this very sophisticated comedy written for educated audiences. But the basic story of fertility drama, the union of youth and girl achieved after surmounting obstacles, remains. This is Menander's tribute to the festival and the god.

He wrote according to ancient sources 108 plays, of which some 96 titles survive. Of 60 plays we know enough to say that they conform to the basic type; of the rest we can only say that nothing in their titles or their fragments precludes it. In tackling the fragmentary remains of Menander we are rather in the position of the anthropologist who has collected a large number of myths which are somehow interconnected and wants to describe their interconnections and their differences. The French structural anthropologist C. Lévi-Strauss has a terminology³ which I find extraordinarily useful. He says: "I propose to give the name 'armature' to a combination of properties that remain invariant in two or several myths; 'code' to the pattern of

² Jerome Rothenberg, ed., *Shaking the Pumpkin: Traditional Poetry of the Indian North Americas* (New York 1972) 214.

³ C. Lévi-Strauss, *Le cru et le cuit: mythologiques* (Paris 1964) 207 (= *The Raw and the Cooked*, transl. J. and D. Weightman [New York 1969] 199).

functions ascribed by each myth to these properties; and 'message' to the subject matter of an individual myth." I am not quite sure in what sense he uses 'armature', but it is clear that it is the basic story—for Menander the union of youth and girl after surmounting obstacles. If we want to subdivide further, we can distinguish (a) youth is united with *hetaira* (*Dis Exapaton*), (b) youth is reunited with wife (*Arbitrants* and *Ring*), (c) youth marries girl whom he has raped (*Samian Woman*), (d) youth marries virgin (*Woman Hates Soldier*). This is the basic story, and enacting it fulfils the religious requirements of the festival. The codes are irrelevant to the festival but relevant to Menander and his audience.

In the Indian myths that he examines Lévi-Strauss distinguishes various kinds of code: ecological, sociological, technological, acoustic, cosmological, astronomical, aetiological. What he means is that elements in the myth can be interpreted in this way by the audience. One great advantage of this terminology is that it allows for great variation between myths and between audiences. A myth need not contain all the codes, and a member of the audience may decipher the code well or badly or may miss it altogether or may find a code that is not there. Arnaldo Momigliano once said to me, when I asked him whether he believed a recent political interpretation of a Greek lyric, "How do I know that one member of the original audience was not stupid enough to interpret it like that?"

In trying to understand Menander I have found it useful to distinguish a historical code, a biographical code, a social code, an ethical code, a tragic code and a professional code. These are not all important for our play, but I should like to illustrate them briefly to show my approach. By historical code I mean the clues which the audience would interpret as references to historical events and which help us to date his plays. Here our play is of some interest. The soldier Thrasonides has received the girl as a captive; her father Demeas comes to look for her; he has come from Cyprus, and he puts up with a guest-friend. The place is not his home but somewhere where one might expect to ransom captives. Cyprus was in the news in 306 when Demetrios the Besieger won it from Ptolemy I of Egypt in a successful battle, the year after he had restored democracy in Athens by expelling the tyrant Demetrios of Phaleron, who took refuge with Ptolemy in Egypt. The Athenians would therefore naturally be interested in what went on in Cyprus. My colleague, Professor Lionel

Pearson, saw that the obvious place to look for captives from Cyprus was Rhodes. So I think that Rhodes was the setting of this play: Thrasonides was an Athenian mercenary in the army of Demetrios the Besieger. Demeas was an Athenian living in Cyprus, who had presumably gone away at the time of the attack.

Our play was, therefore, produced in 305 when Menander was 37 years old. A number of events from the past (headlines, as we might say) stuck in Menander's mind, and in his later plays he made the past history of his characters real by associating them with some of these events, which would wake an echo in the memories of his contemporaries and seniors. This is what I mean by the biographical code, an idea I owe to my colleague, William Berg. To take an obvious instance, *Heautontimoroumenos* is probably to be dated about 298 because Athens is described as safe: this would mean that the old woman, the supposed mother of the girl, left Corinth at the time of the troubles of 314, the 'headlines' which had given rise in that year to *The Girl Loses her Locks* (*Perikeiromene*), and the sixty-year-old Menedemos campaigned under Alexander, the 'headlines' of Menander's childhood. Our play is too badly preserved to give its biographical code, but I should be prepared to guess that Demeas was one of the Athenians driven out of Samos in 322 and took his children to Cyprus. The evacuation of Samos was 'headlines' for *The Samian Woman* and for *Dis Exapaton*, produced in 320 or soon after, and was remembered also in *The Eunuch*, which was produced a couple of years before our play.

Menander is careful to fix his people in society, and the indications would be a much clearer social code to his contemporaries than they are to us. In different plays the dowry named for the girl is 10, 6, 4, 3, 2, 1 talents or nothing. This must arrange the fathers in a scale of wealth, and on our evidence for the fourth century, unless the figures are very much exaggerated (and I cannot see the point of quoting figures if they are much exaggerated) all the fathers down to the two-talent level are very rich, probably among the top 300 richest men in Athens. Demeas in our play puts up two talents dowry, which is between the three talents offered by the very rich father Kallippides in *Dyskolos* and the one talent given by Knemon in the same play. Knemon's one talent is a maximum for him; it represents half his fortune. Demeas' two talents puts him low in the scale of the very rich; he also has a son to help, and he may well have suffered a major

reverse if he was driven out of Samos, and possibly more recently in Cyprus.

Our play is not concerned, as far as we can see, with another aspect of the social code, the gulf between the rich and the poor—the assumption of the poor that they are being exploited, which is often shown in the particular case to be unfounded. The most obvious example is the relationship between the young peasant Gorgias and the rich Sostratos in *Dyskolos*. A curious instance is the hostility between the messenger and the rich father Smikrines in *Sikyonios*. Before the messenger speech the messenger abuses Smikrines as an oligarch who despises and exploits others, while he himself claims to use his power as a juror to prevent exploitation and describes how a deme-assembly of ordinary citizens thwarted a rich young man who was trying to get hold of a girl. It is ironical that the deme-assembly follows the advice of the rival lover, who is equally rich, and that both young men turn out to be sons of the Smikrines who is listening to the recital. There seems to be no way of identifying the messenger with one of the other characters in the play, and I cannot help wondering whether the particular form in which Menander has cast this scene might not be attributed to the historical code as well as the social code. Other indications suggest that *The Sikyonian* was produced some year soon after 308, and this particular (and for the plot irrelevant) emphasis on the political activity of the poor citizen would suit very well the atmosphere of the restored democracy when Demetrios the Besieger had expelled the tyrant Demetrios of Phaleron in 307.

It would take too long to discuss in detail the evidence for a connection between Menander and Aristotle and Aristotle's successor Theophrastos, whose pupil Menander was said to have been. Again and again the audience would recognize philosophical language, particularly the terminology of the *Nicomachean Ethics* (for which reason I call this the ethical code), and would have to determine whether Menander was serious, as he surely was when he explains so carefully the effects of 'misunderstanding' on the soldier's behaviour in the prologue of *Perikeiromene*, or fooling (but still saying something about the education of the character) as when he makes the slave mock the old man in the last act of *The Arbitrants*. In our play the soldier Thrasonides uses two Aristotelian words. In a very corrupt passage he defends himself against the charge of being *μικρόψυχος*, 'small-souled', evidently in the Aristotelian sense of being excessively grieved

by misfortunes, and he refers to an *ἀτύχημα*, a 'mischance': I suspect this is how he describes his supposed killing of the girl's brother, a defence which she does not accept.

Tragedy (particularly classical tragedy of the fifth century), like philosophy, could be used both for serious and comic effect, and it was up to the audience to interpret Menander's intentions, his use of this tragic code. The opening speech of our play, quoted below, is certainly serious. The string of tragic quotations with which the slave in *Aspis* persuades the old man of the feigned mortal illness of Chairestratos is certainly comic. But a lot of passages between these may very well have depended on how the actor played them. In addition to tragic quotation and use of tragic metre, Menander sometimes takes over from tragedy a situation which would be improbable in ordinary life but is accepted as possible just because it has occurred in tragedy: tragedy is history, as Aristotle says. The scene which gives *The Arbitrants* its name is taken over from Euripides' *Alope*, where Kerkyon similarly arbitrates in favour of his own unrecognised foundling grandson. In our play Demeas recognises the inscribed sword in Thrasonides' arsenal and draws the conclusion that Thrasonides has killed his son. It is a false conclusion, but the situation is made plausible because in the *First Hippolytos* Theseus similarly deduced that Hippolytos had raped Phaidra from the fact that he found her faking suicide with Hippolytos' sword.

Finally, Menander was a professional writing comedy, a kind of drama with its own conventions, some old and some new, which encouraged the audience to make predictions. From his earliest play they would know that he used five acts and that the climax came in the fourth; they would know that if a character left the acting area, he would not return until the next act, whether he was visiting somewhere near like the marketplace or somewhere far like his country estate (if the play was located in the city). They would know sex, status and age of each character from costume and mask, and from earlier comedy would predict that fathers disapproved of love-matches for their sons but could be outwitted by slaves, that *hetairai* were only interested in money, that soldiers were brutal and licentious, and that cooks were garrulous and conceited, and a great deal else. But Menander might show them a reality which contrasted with appearance and so falsify their predictions. These are the sorts of considerations that must guide us in reconstructing *Woman Hates Soldier*.

The audience sees three doors in the stage building, a larger door in the centre (which I believe represents an inn) and a smaller door to left and right. The soldier (Thrasonides, as we learn later) comes out of his house, the lefthand door, and speaks:

O Night (for no god has greater share of Aphrodite than you, and in you many words are spoken and many thoughts of love), have you ever seen a man more wretched, a lover more ill-starred? I am standing at my own door, and walking in the alley, up and down, both, up to now, when you are in mid-course and I could sleep and possess my beloved—for she is in my house, and I can, and I want her as passionately as any lover. But I do not do it. I prefer to stand under the winter sky, trembling and talking to you.

It is a startling beginning. Tragic metre and language show that the soldier is serious, and he certainly cannot be called licentious. The text breaks off here. We know that his slave Getas comes out to him, and a fragment, “a cheap little slave-girl has completely enslaved me, whom not one of my enemies ever (frightened),” probably belongs here. Possibly he decided that as he cannot stay in his own house, he will go to the inn, leaving Getas to inform him of what happens in his own house. He must also have said that the girl hates him and therefore he cannot take advantage of her, but he may not know why.

Having roused the audience’s interest, Menander must have told them the story and as in many other plays have used a goddess or an abstract figure, perhaps Tyche (the way things happen) to do it. What she told them was something like this:

An Athenian Demeas was turned out of Samos with his two small children, the girl Krateia and her brother X, and settled in Cyprus. When they were grown up, he went away for a year on business. Late in that period Demetrios the Besieger attacked Cyprus; the soldier Thrasonides was an Athenian mercenary in his army. On the night of the battle Krateia was at home; her brother was dining with friends. In the confusion when the alarm was given, he snatched someone else’s sword, and someone else, whom we will call Y, took his inscribed sword. They were parted in the battle; X was wounded and captured, but Y was killed by Thrasonides, who kept the inscribed sword. Krateia was also captured and was later sold to Thrasonides, who sets up house with her in Rhodes. Being a soldier, he cannot help bragging of his triumphs, which include the killing of X (on the evidence of the inscribed sword). For this reason she hates him and thinks

more kindly of Kleinias, another Athenian who lives in the house on the right and has fallen in love with her. "Do not worry," ends the speech, "everything will turn out all right in the end."

The second act opens with a scene between Getas and Thrasonides. Presumably Getas reports; Thrasonides is so depressed that he demands a sword to commit suicide, and Getas refuses to get it for him and goes back in. Demeas arrives and asks for Kleinias, who is his 'guest-friend'. Thrasonides points to the door and goes back into the inn. Demeas calls Kleinias out. He is looking for his daughter Krateia; Kleinias tells him a Krateia is living with the soldier. Demeas evidently fears it may be the wrong Krateia, and Kleinias stresses the brutality of the soldier. Again the text deserts us; what must have happened, I think, is that Demeas goes into Kleinias' house; Kleinias finds Thrasonides and invites him and Krateia to dinner; he refuses. Kleinias somehow manages to suggest to Krateia that she and her old slave should get out carrying suppliant boughs, while he goes off to market to hire a cook. The act probably ends with Getas going into Kleinias' house to deposit with Kleinias' old female slave Thrasonides' arsenal of swords (including the inscribed sword), so that if Thrasonides asks for a sword again he can say "The swords have vanished."

The third act opens with Krateia and her slave coming out with suppliant boughs, presumably to sit on the stage altar until Kleinias returns. Getas comes out of Kleinias' house and shoos them back into Thrasonides' house again. Left alone, he sums up the situation in a very difficult monologue, which is so characteristic that it is worth quoting in full:

I was wrong to leave these women, if he comes back after buying the dinner. You were a thick-eyed fool. The woman is a sow. She says, "You were watching to try and spy on us women from outside. Is this the way a slave should behave? But that man once sang a song of peace." Ye precious gods, one ought to get a clear view of that man. "At the symposion (she says) he drank and sang exactly as the proverbial good man should, a good thing to hear." You come to us. But why did you turn back home, and why do you set out again giving your slave the dinner-money? Unless you are doing us some harm? Nonsense to ask this man back to dinner because he has asked my master. He is clearly a criminal. I will go inside and hide myself so that I can try and watch all that is being done and said.

It is clear that Getas thinks of Kleinias as a rival for Krateia, and expects him soon to make an attempt to get hold of her. What actually

happens is that the old woman slave of Kleinias comes out of his house and expresses her surprise that Demeas is examining "the swords of the neighbours in our andron." The audience realise that he has seen his son's sword among them. Demeas follows her and asks her to knock on Thrasonides' door; she refuses and goes back. As he calls to the slaves to admit him, Krateia comes out with her old slave; she is making another attempt to get to the altar. The following sequence is clear and worth translating:

DEMEAS. Zeus, what vision unexpected do I see?

KRATEIA (*to the old slave*). What do you mean, granny? What are you saying to me? My father? Where?

DEMEAS. My daughter, Krateia.

KRATEIA. Who is calling me? Father, dearest, all my greetings.

DEMEAS. I hold you, my child.

KRATEIA. To my longing you appear. I see you whom I thought never to see again.

GETAS. She has gone out. Damn, what's this? What's she to you? Man there, what are you doing? Didn't I say? Red-handed I've caught my suspect. But he's old, grey, some sixty years. All the same he shall suffer. You, who do you think you are embracing and kissing?

KRATEIA. This is my father, Getas.

The old woman is taken by a mute because the three actors are all needed. Demeas' language and metre is close to a recognition scene of tragedy, and Krateia rises to the same tone when she recognises him. Getas' staccato style and prosaic language is a sharp contrast. He breaks in, thinking his worst fears, expressed in the preceding monologue, are justified. He is, however, soon convinced and goes into the inn to fetch Thrasonides.

Demeas is left alone with Krateia. He evidently asks her about her brother, and the dialogue seems to go:

KRATEIA. He is no more.

DEMEAS. Who tells you the story? I am utterly undone.

KRATEIA. Woe is me, wretched in my mischance. How pitiable, father dearest, are our sufferings.

DEMEAS. Is he dead?

KRATEIA. By a hand which should have been the last to do it.

DEMEAS. Do you know him?

KRATEIA. I know him and I live with him as a captive.

Again the tone is tragic. Demeas' conjecture from seeing the sword seems to be confirmed by Krateia's supposed knowledge. They go into Thrasonides' house to plan for the future.

Thrasonides comes out of the inn with Getas. The actor who played Getas now plays Thrasonides. Thrasonides sees that his meeting with Demeas is crucial. If Demeas does not “validate him completely and give him his daughter,” he is ruined. He goes in “in fear and trembling,” “with a foreboding of ill.”

As he goes in, Kleinias comes on talking to the cook. “There is one guest-friend and me and thirdly a girl-friend of mine—if, by Zeus, she has arrived. For I too am worried. If not, only the guest-friend. For I shall run round the whole city looking for her. But you go on, and see that you are quick.” They both go in. The audience will have expected Kleinias back because they had seen him go marketing in the act before. The surprise is the silence of the cook, since cooks are the most talkative of comic characters. But Menander wants to finish the act. One other prediction the audience may make. As far as I know, a cook is always a good omen; if a cook is there, whatever the obstacles, a marriage feast or a pre-marriage feast will be eaten before the play ends.

The fourth act starts with Kleinias coming out of his house. He talks back to his old slave, the old woman:

What do you say? He recognised the sword which was deposited with us and went to the neighbours' when he heard it was theirs? When did they leave it here, and why with us, old woman? . . . But there's a noise: someone is coming out of their door so that I shall hear the whole thing clearly.

Getas enters and for nearly forty lines gives vent to his rage at the behaviour of Demeas and Krateia to Thrasonides, while Kleinias vainly tries to break in. I give what is clear of this remarkable speech without the interruptions of Kleinias:

Honoured Zeus, extraordinary cruelty of both, and inhuman by the Sun . . . Herakles, the stubbornness . . . He did not answer a syllable . . . then, “I myself am the father of the girl you love; you have the legal power,” he says. “I fall on my knees, weeping, beseeching.” A donkey and a lyre. This one thing he repeats: “I here demand that you let me ransom my daughter; I'm her father.” “But I, Demeas, having found you, ask for her as my wife.” . . . Herakles, she cannot take what happened like a human being. A sow on the mountain, as the saying is. But that is not so bad. He begs her again: “I beseech you, Krateia. Don't leave me in the lurch. You were a virgin when I took you. I was the first to be called your husband, I cherished you. I cherish you, I love you, dearest Krateia. What in my house pains

you? You will hear that I am dead if you leave me in the lurch." Not an answer. A barbarian. The woman's a lioness . . . Unexpected. He's not completely sane. I would not have let her be ransomed, by Apollo here. Hellenic, and happens everywhere, we know. But it's right to pity one who'll return pity. When you don't pity me, I have no care or thought for you. You cannot? Why? in no way absurd, I think. In vain he'll shout and plan to get up and kill himself. His eyes blaze, he groans, weeps, and tears his hair.

Then at last Kleinias succeeds in breaking in. Getas is immediately suspicious: "Where has he come from?" The conversation continues for about fifteen lines and then Kleinias goes into his own house. He can hardly be said to have heard "the whole thing clearly," which was what he hoped. But he must have grasped that Demeas has recognised Krateia as his daughter, that Thrasonides has accepted ransom for her, and that Krateia has resisted Thrasonides' appeals; and these essential points may also have been made clear in the final dialogue with Getas. If Kleinias is in love with Krateia—and I think this is a fair deduction from Getas' suspicions and from his own concern (he said to the cook "I too am worried")—he must be considerably relieved: Demeas is his guest and a fellow-Athenian; he will obviously want to take his daughter away from Thrasonides; dinner is being prepared; all Kleinias has to do is to wait until they come.

Menander could have made the confrontation of Thrasonides, Demeas and Krateia a stage scene. Perhaps he felt that would have been too serious, and preferred the comic possibilities of a tirade by Thrasonides' loyal slave, interrupted ineffectively by Thrasonides' rival; and it has the further advantage of conveying the information to Kleinias without another scene. In *The Arbitrants*, late in the fourth act, the slave's comic description of his master's reactions when he overhears his wife telling her father that she is not going to leave him, is followed by the master's own serious monologue on the same theme. So here the audience would expect to hear Thrasonides' own views on the situation. The text is extremely unclear for the last 60 lines before the big gap, but where anything can be made out Thrasonides seems to be speaking. I suggested above that he defended himself against the charge of smallness of soul in the Aristotelian sense of giving way to grief, and this collapse is exactly what Getas has described. Then four lines later: "So be it; to cover up and make my heart a stone and conceal my sickness from my companions, shall I be able to do that? . . . How shall I restrain this and bear it easier?"

For drink will strip the plaster from my lurking wound.” What follows is extremely difficult, but it looks as if he said that Krateia deserves pity for the mischance, his supposed killing of her brother, and imagines the audience telling him to conquer her hatred by pity. Then he quotes Krateia: “ ‘You are headstrong, and your completely irrational courage makes your life impossible.’ This reproach which she shot at you, you must wipe out by giving her so much that in return she may regard you as a god. How can I . . . ?” And there the text breaks off, but we know from Arrian that he sent her gifts, and this must happen in the long gap of 160 lines.

Shortly after the text resumes Getas tells Thrasonides: “They are giving you a wife.” The only possible way to break the impasse is for Krateia’s brother to turn up alive either late in the fourth act or at the beginning of the fifth act. The former is the more likely because his discovery is the climax of the play. The neat solution would be for Kleinias to turn out to be the brother. But Kleinias is known to Krateia and Demeas. He could only be the brother if he had been kidnapped as a baby. But that is ruled out by the sword. A child can have a miniature sword as a recognition token but not a full-size sword. And in any case the sword had arrived in Thrasonides’ arsenal and would have led him or Krateia or Getas straight to Kleinias. To suppose that Kleinias both lost his sword and changed his name is perhaps possible but surely too complicated. The solution must be, as suggested above, that the brother X switched swords with a companion in the confusion of the attack; the companion was killed by Thrasonides, who kept X’s sword. X was wounded and captured by somebody else. X has now been freed or escaped: like Demeas, he searched for Krateia; like Demeas, he knows that Rhodes is a good place to look for captives from Cyprus, and he naturally, like Demeas, seeks out the family guest-friend Kleinias as a base of operations.

We have in fact a text for this. Professor Arnott made out that the correct reading in fr.13 (fr.9 Sandbach) is: “father, but they have not killed,” but he attributed it to Krateia. It is much more natural in the mouth of the brother: “They have wounded me, father, but they have not killed me.”

We can only guess at the actual sequence of scenes. Possibly (1) Thrasonides after his monologue goes into the inn, (2) Demeas, Krateia and the old woman move over to Kleinias’ house, (3) before Demeas goes in, the brother appears, looking for Kleinias’ house, just

as Demeas had looked for Kleinias' house in the second act. Father and son recognise each other, and they both go into Kleinias' house. This ends the fourth act.

The fifth act is illustrated by a mosaic from Mytilene, which unfortunately does not give the characters' names. Like several of these mosaics it has to be read from right to left. A woman dismisses a youngish man, and a slave moves off quickly to the left. That the woman is Krateia and the slave Getas is certain. The youngish man cannot be Demeas, and I think that Thrasonides can be excluded; the man is not dressed as a soldier and appears to have no relation to Getas. He must be either the brother or Kleinias. As he is very pale, and a one-word fragment 'corpse-colour' is well suited to a wounded man, I take him to be the brother. Krateia is saying good-bye to her brother. Getas has been sent out by Thrasonides to see what is going on, overhears the doorstep conversation and returns to report. Thrasonides, I think, sends Getas back with gifts for Krateia.

When the text picks up, Thrasonides is on stage alone. Getas comes out and announces, "They are giving you a wife." If the plural is to be taken literally, it should mean the brother as well as Demeas. Thrasonides wants details, and Getas tells him that Krateia said, "Yes, father, I truly wish to marry him." Then Demeas comes out and makes the formal proposal. Then, "by chance . . . supper . . . let us go in . . . tomorrow." This is enough to show us that the cook's meal is now going to be eaten and that the wedding will take place tomorrow. So the play ends. Krateia has been consistent: as long as Thrasonides seemed to have killed her brother she would have nothing to do with him. But she must have realised that he had shown great generosity both while she was his slave and in allowing Demeas to ransom her; the curious phrase which she uses when Demeas asks her about her brother's death—"By a hand that should have been the last to do it"—shows in fact that she does realise his generosity. Even our scrappy text allows us to see an extraordinarily sympathetic pair of characters.