

THE DOCTOR IN SPITE OF HIMSELF

(Le Médecin Malgré Lui)

Music by
Charles Gounod

Based on a play by Molière

English Version by
Donald Pippin
(1995)

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

Géronte	A wealthy landowner
Lucinda	His daughter
Leander	Lucinda's lover
Sganarelle	A woodcutter
Martine	His wife
Jacqueline	Lucinda's nursemaid
Robert	A neighbor of Sganarelle
Valère	Géronte's servant
Lucas Géronte's servant	Jacqueline's husband,
Thibaut	A peasant
Perrin	His son
Chorus of woodsmen, musicians, and peasants	

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ACT I

Sganarelle and Martine, his wife, are in the heat of argument.

SGANARELLE Stop! Bicker, badger,
You gain nothing by it.
Here I'm the master;
I want some quiet!

MARTINE And I repeat, sir, I am not your slave;
I shall hassle till you behave.

SGANARELLE Such a wife
Would drive a saint to the bottle.
Wise Aristotle put it well
When he said married life
Was like a living hell.

MARTINE Go along with your Latin
And your Aristotle!

SGANARELLE My profound erudition
Know-nothings find unnerving.
In the woods, look around,
And where else can you find
A scavenger as sound
On the nature of the mind,
Who can boast on the side
Of seven years of serving
A doctor known nation-wide
For command of the art?
Who else could conjugate
In Latin at the age of eight?

MARTINE All this I know by heart.

SGANARELLE This harpy should discourage
Any fellow thinking of marriage!

MARTINE Poor me! Broken down! Worn away!
 No wonder, enslaved to you,
 Enslaved to you.
 Nothing but disaster
 Since the fatal day
 I said I do.

SGANARELLE Say goodbye to song,
 Merriment and laughter,
 Enslaved by you.
 Nothing but disaster
 Since the fatal day
 I said I do.

MARTINE It serves you right to suffer.

SGANARELLE If not one thing, another.

MARTINE A wastrel, an idler, a lazy bum
 Who eats me out of house and home.

SGANARELLE You lie! For drink is half my diet.

MARTINE In barroom brawls, a life of riot ...

SGANARELLE Home again, it's more of the same.

MARTINE You should hide your head in shame,
 Even selling our bed for liquor.

SGANARELLE So that you will not oversleep.

MARTINE A bitter harvest some day you'll reap.
 The neighbors scoff at you and snicker.
 While you gamble, squander and spend,
 I have babes-in-arms to attend.

SGANARELLE Put them down, dear. No need to hold them.

MARTINE Poor little things! All underfed,
 From dawn to dusk they cry for bread.

SGANARELLE They only cry because you scold them,
 They cry because you scold them.

MARTINE Poor me! Broken down! Worn away!
 No wonder, enslaved to you,
 Nothing but disaster
 Since the fatal day I said I do.

SGANARELLE Say goodbye to song,
 Merriment and laughter,

Enslaved by you.
Nothing but disaster
Since the fatal day I said I do.

MARTINE Putting right over wrong
Is a matter of choice.

SGANARELLE So you're the angel, I'm the boor!
Slow down, my dear, and save your voice.

MARTINE The ordeal I daily endure
From your indecent and dissolute ways.

SGANARELLE Expected of wives nowadays.

MARTINE That unquenchable thirst never under control!

SGANARELLE Your testy temper takes a toll.
I'll stomach no more of your nagging.
I've an able arm, and a hand.

MARTINE Of his brawn the bully is bragging.

SGANARELLE Or a stick ready to land.

MARTINE My tongue he's attempting to tame?

SGANARELLE Sweet, you leave no other recourse;
Sick and tired of playing a game,
You force me to answer with force.

MARTINE How manly!

SGANARELLE I've given you warning!

MARTINE Mister Big!

SGANARELLE This I will not stand.

MARTINE You sot!

SGANARELLE I am taking command.

MARTINE Show me! Take a swat.
You good-for-nothing pig!

SGANARELLE Seek and ye shall find,
Dearest heart, dearest treasure.
Get set, here we go!
Otherwise inclined,
How can I say no?

Dear, although reluctant,

Duty now compels me;
Observation tells me
Battle has begun.

When the lightning flashes,
When the temper rages,
Husbands through the ages
Do what must be done.

We husbands through the ages
Do what we must do.
Battle lines are drawn;
Now to see it through.

We are at war,
Here to decide:
Slavery, or
Honor and pride.

My castle till the end
I shall defend.

Sganarelle lifts his stick as Robert, a mild-tempered neighbor, approaches.

MARTINE Coward! Bully! Liar! Swine!

ROBERT (*entering in haste*) Hey, hey! What's going on? Why, this is outrageous!
A burly brute striking his wife. Stop it at once.

MARTINE (*turning on Robert in fury*) And suppose I like being struck?

ROBERT Well, well then. That's a different story.

MARTINE Did anybody ask you to butt in?

ROBERT Sorry, my mistake.

MARTINE It's no concern of yours.

ROBERT None whatever.

MARTINE The nerve! Trying to stop a husband from striking his own wife.

ROBERT I take it back.

MARTINE What's it to you?

ROBERT Absolutely nothing.

MARTINE Have you any right to come barging in?

ROBERT No right at all. I was wrong.

MARTINE Then you can just mind your own business.

ROBERT I won't say another word.

MARTINE (*with a smack*) Idiot! Sticking your nose in where it doesn't belong.

ROBERT (*turning to Sganarelle*) Good neighbor, I apologize. I overstepped. Go ahead. Smack her, knock her around, and if you want a little help ...

SGANARELLE And who needs a helping hand?

ROBERT Sorry, no offense intended.

SGANARELLE I shall strike her when I choose, and not strike her when I choose not to.

ROBERT Your privilege.

SGANARELLE She's my wife, not yours.

ROBERT No argument there.

SGANARELLE Am I to take orders from you?

ROBERT Not for a moment.

SGANARELLE I can handle this myself.

ROBERT Of course you can.

SGANARELLE And you are an ignoramus to come meddling. Off with you! Run along! Beat it! (*He chases off Robert, then turns to his wife*) Come, let's make up. Truce!

MARTINE After the way you struck me?

SGANARELLE Love taps, my dear. Nothing serious. Come, here's my hand.

MARTINE I wouldn't touch it.

SGANARELLE What!

MARTINE You heard me.

SGANARELLE No hard feelings.

MARTINE Get away from me.

SGANARELLE Let's not hold on to grudges.

MARTINE Don't try to take my grudges away from me. You have abused me.

SGANARELLE Very well. I admit it, I apologize, and now let's forgive and

forget. Come, give me your hand.

MARTINE All right. I forgive you. (But I won't forget).

SGANARELLE Now wasn't it silly to get all steamed up about nothing? These little flare-ups bring people together. An exchange of whacks between a loving couple stimulates affection. So now it's off to the woods. I'll be back with a hundred bundles.

(exits merrily)

MARTINE Some proud women seek satisfaction,
Slyly stepping out with a lover
To pay a wayward husband back.

Pushed and prodded, goaded into action,
I wrack my brain to discover
A bolder method of attack.
No light tap am I forecasting;
Give me vengeance deep and lasting.

Husband dear, bear in mind,
When with me you collide,
You will find no cringing martyr,
But a Tartar, a Tartar inside.
One tough Tarter, a Tartar inside.

On the surface smirking and smiling,
I'll wait until the time is ripe.
Spurred by clashes past reconciling,
I'm not the meek and gentle type.

No faint heart, no idle bluffer,
For these blows I'll see you suffer.
Husband dear, bear in mind,
When with me you collide,
You will find no cringing martyr,
But a Tartar, a Tartar inside.
One tough Tartar, a Tartar inside.

Lucas and Valère enter, not seeing Martine

LUCAS A wild goose chase! And then home again with an empty bag.

VALÈRE No use grumbling. The master commands, the servant obeys.
And remember, we both have an interest in the health of his daughter. If we can bring off that marriage which has been postponed because of her illness, I would expect a suitable expression of gratitude. And Horace is an excellent match.

LUCAS She wants Leander ...

VALÈRE Her father knows best.

MARTINE *(brooding)* How to get even!

LUCAS Do you expect to find a cure yourself? The doctors are baffled.

VALÈRE Yes, but solutions are sometimes just around the corner. You have to keep looking.

MARTINE (*still absorbed*) Get even I shall, come what may. Those whacks on the back went straight to the heart. They are not to be tolerated, and — gentlemen! I beg your pardon. I didn't see you. Preoccupied. Some personal matters on my mind. Problems.

LUCAS Problems! You've got problems? What about us?

MARTINE Could I be of help?

VALÈRE Not very likely. What we need is a medical wizard, a specialist. It's for our master's daughter. She has been seized all of a sudden by a mysterious disease that has made her speechless. She can't make a sound. The local doctors are at their wits end.

MARTINE (Aha! Revenge!) Gentlemen, believe it or not, you have come to the right place. I've got the very man you are looking for — a miracle worker. There is nothing he cannot cure.

VALÈRE My word! What luck! Where can we find him?

MARTINE Just a few steps away. This will amuse you — he's chopping wood.

LUCAS A physician chopping wood?

VALÈRE Culling herbs, you mean.

MARTINE No, this is a man not to be judged by ordinary standards. Bizarre, capricious, crotchety — you would never take him for what he really is. He dresses outlandishly, as if to hide his knowledge, and will go to any lengths to avoid using his marvelous talent for medicine.

VALÈRE Yes, these brainy fellows sometimes have a touch of madness. Not like the rest of us.

MARTINE But his madness defies imagination. He will not even admit to being a doctor until thrashed from head to toe. And that is what you must do if you want him to help you.

VALÈRE An odd way to ask for a favor.

MARTINE True, but once you have gained his cooperation, he is incomparable, second to none.

VALÈRE What is his name?

MARTINE Sganarelle. You'll recognize him instantly — in green and yellow.

LUCAS Green and yellow! A man or a parrot?

VALÈRE Is he really all that wonderful?

MARTINE Words cannot do him justice. Only six weeks ago, a woman was given up for dead. No sign of life for seven hours! As they are about to bury her, the gentleman we're speaking of is literally dragged onto the scene. After one quick look, he puts a drop of I don't know what under her tongue, and she leaps from the grave and rushes home to finish sorting the laundry.

VALÈRE This was no over-the-counter remedy.

MARTINE I suspect not. And less than three weeks ago, a twelve-year-old lad fell from the top of a church steeple. His skull was smashed. Ribs, arms, legs — all broken. Our man is roped into action. He rubs the child's body with a certain ointment known only to himself. And the boy, up on his feet, runs off to resume a game of hopscotch.

LUCAS By Jove! He's just the man we're looking for. Quick, let's go find him.

VALÈRE How can we thank you?

MARTINE Don't mention it. But I warn you, he will protest, deny, resist ... you know what to do.

(she exits)

LUCAS Never fear! With a good thrashing, this fox is in the bag.

VALÈRE Today is our lucky day.

LUCAS Listen! I hear someone singing. And look! He's been chopping wood.

SGANARELLE *(entering)* Well, well! After work comes the reward.

(He takes out a jug of wine)

Little jug, little jug,
Soothe me with your soft, gentle voice;
Little jug, little jug,
Say again glug glug,
And again glug glug.

Ah! My music, my music, my music of choice!
Ah! A song, a song to give the heart a tug.
Dull cares I sweep beneath the rug;
In higher regions I rejoice.

Little jug, little jug
Soothe me with your soft gentle voice.
Little jug, say again glug glug,
And again glug glug glug glug glug glug,
Little jug, little jug.

Lovers, cry farewell to woe;
Dry the tears of lamentation;
When the winds of winter blow,
Here is sweeter consolation
As the juice begins to flow.

Little jug, little jug,
Soothe me with your soft, gentle voice.
Little jug, little jug
Little jug, say again glug glug,
And again glug glug glug glug glug glug,
Little jug, little jug.

When the marriage comes to grief,
Man and wife in daily deadlock,
Here is comfort and relief
From the strife and strain of wedlock.
Learn to laugh and give a shrug;
Love is after all, humbug.

Ah! my music, my music, my music of choice!
A song, a song to give the heart a tug.
Dull cares I sweep beneath the rug;
In higher regions I rejoice.

Little jug, little jug,
Soothe me with your soft, gentle voice;
Little jug, little jug,
Little jug, say again glug glug,
And again glug glug glug glug glug glug.
Say again, little jug,
Glug glug glug glug, ...
Glug glug!

VALÈRE That's him!

LUCAS I think you're right. Here under our nose.

SGANARELLE Ah, dear little jug! A friend in need.
(*noticing Lucas and Valère*) What the devil are these fellows after?

VALÈRE No mistaking.

LUCAS Yes siree! He fits the description.

SGANARELLE Why are they giving me the eye? What gives?

VALÈRE Oh, sir!

LUCAS Oh, sir!

VALÈRE A moment, please!

LUCAS A moment, please!

VALÈRE Is it Sganarelle we're addressing?

LUCAS Is it Sganarelle we're addressing?

SGANARELLE Me? Could be.

VALÈRE Are you not the man?
Do not be coy, time is pressing.

SGANARELLE Maybe. Entirely up to you.

VALÈRE A man of genius and compassion!
Known as a pillar of society!

SGANARELLE If that's the case, you've got it right.
I'm Sganarelle, and what you say rings true.

VALÈRE Oh, sir! Oh, sir! A pleasure and delight!

VALÈRE and LUCAS
(Here no doubt is the great M.D.;
Yes, we're in luck, if you're asking me.)

VALÈRE *(to Sganarelle)*
From a nearby town we come seeking;
Your skill and advice we require.

SGANARELLE And of what talents are we speaking?

VALÈRE Your hat! Put it on,
For the sun's very bright.

LUCAS From heat and glare you need protection.
Cover up carefully!

SGANARELLE *(putting on his hat)*
How's that? (These men are extremely polite.)

VALÈRE and LUCAS
Too much on his mind!
Now that we have found him
We shall get around him,
Wriggle though he may.

SGANARELLE What have they in mind?

Have they come to hound me,
 Riddle and confound me?
 I am on my way.

VALÈRE You must already have a notion,
 Good man, of why we come to call.

SGANARELLE Of course! Of course!
 Far worse you could have chosen.

LUCAS A man of such renown!
 The name is known to one and all.

SGANARELLE “What's in a name?” said one great writer.

VALÈRE No other name is shining brighter.

SGANARELLE True enough ... On gathering of wood
 I dare you find somebody better.

VALÈRE Ha ha ha ha ha! Very, very good!
 But here's no laughing matter.

SGANARELLE Do I cheat? Do I overcharge?

LUCAS Oh, come! Why dither, duck and dodge?

SGANARELLE I have to make a modest profit.
 No, no! I cannot sell for less.

VALÈRE The joke has gone too far, come off it!

LUCAS You're laughing up your sleeve, confess.

SGANARELLE My price already under par —
 No wrangling, I entreat you.

VALÈRE Sir, why do you force us to beat you?

SGANARELLE (Good Lord! Some people are bizarre!)

VALÈRE and LUCAS Too much on his mind!
 Now that we have found him
 We shall get around him,
 Wriggle though he may.

SGANARELLE What have they in mind?
 Have they come to hound me,
 Riddle and confound me?
 I am on my way.

VALÈRE To common sense am I appealing;
 Sir, why conceal a gift for healing?
 Depriving the world is never justified.

LUCAS Can proven talent be denied?

SGANARELLE Deprive? Deny?

LUCAS You take us both for babies.

SGANARELLE But for what are you taking me?

VALÈRE For a great man of medicine,
 No buts or maybes.

SGANARELLE Yes, and you're another. (Both insane!)

LUCAS Admit, you're putting us on trial.
 Your persistence in flat denial
 Is a joke that's getting old.

SGANARELLE Absurd! I've never once, never once
 Been a doctor, unless I was and wasn't told.

VALÈRE For shame! You deny your profession!

SGANARELLE (My word! I myself start to doubt.
 The plot I cannot figure out.)

VALÈRE and LUCAS Confess, you're the doctor we need.

SGANARELLE No!

VALÈRE and LUCAS No?

SGANARELLE A thousand nos!

VALÈRE and LUCAS Then we're forced to proceed.
(they start to whack him)

SGANARELLE Ah! Ah! Ah! Murder! Help! Police!
 On second thought, I now agree;
 Just tell me who I am to be.
 Ah! Ah! Ah!
 Any role necessary!
 I agree, I concur —
 M.D. extraordinary!
 Doctor or apothecary,
 Name the title you prefer.
 But the stick that you carry

Lay aside, put it down.
Put on my cap and gown.

Gladly, gladly
I'll go whichever way the wind is blowing;
Maybe, maybe
I did become a doctor without knowing.

VALÈRE and LUCAS

Though perverse and contrary,
We have found our man,
No mere apothecary,
To carry out the plan.

Despite his odd maneuvers,
If beaten black and blue
The doctor will come through.
What we can, we shall do,
And Lucinda recovers.

Though perverse and contrary,
We have found our man,
No mere apothecary,
To carry out the plan.

VALÈRE and LUCAS

The M.D. to a tee,
No mere apothecary,
Not a mere apothecary,
We have found our man.

SGANARELLE

Rather worse now for wear,
I am your man,
A mere apothecary,
Whatever you may plan.
As you will,
The M.D. to a tee,
Or mere apothecary,
But a mere apothecary,
You are looking at the man.

VALÈRE So you've come to your senses. You have decided to behave yourself.
I am delighted.

LUCAS It does my heart good.

VALÈRE And we humbly beg your pardon.

LUCAS Taking such a liberty ...

SGANARELLE Good heavens! Is it my mistake? Did I become a doctor
without knowing it?

Tucked away behind the scene,
Husbands barking, wives rebelling:
Dare we rush to intervene?

If pears were ever in season,
Or if favors came for free,
Or if others listened to reason,
How happy the world would be!
If pears and parsnips were ever in season,
Or if others bowed to reason,
How happy the world would be!

WOMEN

Life has daily ups and downs,
But on and on flows the river.
April smiles, November frowns;
Still the rain will fall as ever
On the saints and on the clowns.

If pears and parsnips
Were ever in season,
How surprised the world would be!
If parents and children
Would listen to reason,
How surprised the world would be!

End of Act I

ACT II

Scene: Old Géronte's living room; young Leander sings from outside.

LEANDER

While we linger
For love to ripen,
We but squander brief youth away.

Spring is ever
Time to savor
Playful colors in life's mixed bouquet.

Comes December
With cold reminder
Of shy and tender buds that bloomed in May.

We that waken
When love is calling
Hear a message none can explain.

Spurning freedom,
Taken captive,
What true lover would cast off the chain?

In surrender,
Two hearts discover
Heaven can offer no sweeter pain.

GÉRONTE The devil take these lovers with their serenades. I'll teach that fine young Leander to go singing under my daughter's window.

Lucas and Valère rush in, followed by Jacqueline.

LUCAS Oh, sir!

VALÈRE Oh, sir!

GÉRONTE What's all this?

LUCAS We've got him.

VALÈRE Got him.

GÉRONTE Got who? Leander?

LUCAS No, no! The doctor!

VALÈRE The foremost in the world.

LUCAS Fantastic!

VALÈRE Awesome!

LUCAS Miracles one after another.

VALÈRE Folks cured even after they were dead. But don't be misled by appearances.

LUCAS He's a little odd.

VALÈRE Absent-minded, that's all. Sign of genius.

LUCAS And he can talk just like it's coming out of a book.

VALÈRE Already famous. People lining up for treatment.

GÉRONTE Then we must get to the head of the line. Bring him here at once.

VALÈRE I'll go get him.

(he exits)

JACQUELINE Take my word for it, he'll turn out just like the others. There's only one doctor that will do your daughter any good, and that's the right husband.

GÉRONTE Well, well! Dear lady! Such an authority, such an expert!

LUCAS Hold your tongue, woman! I didn't marry you to hear your opinions.

JACQUELINE This is fact. All the doctors in the world won't help her out. She doesn't need tonics and ointments. I've told you what she needs.

GÉRONTE A husband, is it? What husband would have her in her present condition? And besides, when I expressly ordered her to get married, she was dead set against it. In fact, that was when the trouble began.

JACQUELINE But you are backing the wrong man. You want to saddle her with a husband she can't stand. Whisper Leander and see what happens. A different story, I assure you. You will find her most obedient. And I have an idea that he will gladly take her just as she is.

GÉRONTE And I say again, this Leander will not do. No money, no property, no income ...

JACQUELINE But he has an uncle, rich and childless.

GÉRONTE A fortune in the offing — poppycock! A bird in the hand, that's what I want. Why, this uncle could outlive him. Death is not always so obliging. A sturdy young fellow can turn grey and wrinkled waiting for an old relative to kick off.

JACQUELINE Money's not everything.

Go ask a wife or bride-to-be
What riches they secretly covet.
Yes, gold is good, they all agree,
But love is a level above it.

Close by, under your eye,
This rule we can apply:
Women, given the chance,
Take a stand for romance.

Pity these fathers when a daughter weds
Though she would sooner die;
Look at them wring their hands and shake their heads
And wonder what's awry.
When girls are free to do the choosing,
Pile up the gold however high,
You play on the side that is losing.

Go ask around if you would find
The reason we make a selection.
Though glist'ning gold may come to mind,
My vote is for warmth and affection.

Right here, under your roof,
Let me offer the proof:
Women, now as before,
Want the man they adore.

Take the example of Farmer Jake
Who gave to Jack his daughter's hand,
Ready to cause her heart to break
To gain a paltry piece of land.
To greed the girl became a martyr;
A father's wish was her command,
Her heart a mere item for barter.

To wed for love, so I've been taught,
Not only is sweeter but wiser,
For bags of gold add up to naught
When held in the hands of a miser.

With love under the gun,
Lay off, leave 'em alone:
Women, twenty to one,
Can decide on their own.

GÉRONTE That's enough out of you. If you get all heated up, your milk will curdle.

LUCAS You heard what he said. Your thoughts on the subject have not been asked for. The master knows what he is doing. I'll say it again, and again, and again! (*rapping on G ronte to emphasize each word.*)

G RONTE Gently, please! Gently!

LUCAS (*continuing to hammer home each point*) She should learn manners, respect, courtesy, civility ...

G RONTE Yes, but not on me.

Val re returns, with Sganarelle.

VAL RE Sir, meet the doctor!

G RONTE Ah, what a pleasure and relief! Delighted that you can pay us a call. You are just the man we need.

SGANARELLE (*to G ronte*) Glad to be of service, doctor.

G RONTE Doctor? You don't mean me?

SGANARELLE Who else?

G RONTE But I'm no doctor. Perish the thought.

SGANARELLE Not a doctor?

G RONTE Certainly not. Never have been.

SGANARELLE Are you sure?

G RONTE Of course I'm sure. (*Sganarelle starts whacking him*) Aie! Aie!

What are you doing?

SGANARELLE Making a doctor out of you. Same way it happened to me.

GÉRONTE Where did you find this madman?

VALÈRE We warned you that he was a bit eccentric.

GÉRONTE He can take his eccentricities elsewhere.

LUCAS You mustn't take him seriously, sir. A little joke, that's all.

GÉRONTE It's no laughing matter.

SGANARELLE Sir, if I have taken a liberty ...

GÉRONTE Well, let's get on with it.

SGANARELLE I would feel crushed, mortified, humiliated ...
(*continuing to drive home each point*)

GÉRONTE Yes, yes. We'll overlook it.

SGANARELLE Striking you on the head, on the shoulder, on the backside ...

GÉRONTE Please! No more apologies. Sir, I have a daughter who has come down with a strange affliction.

SGANARELLE How delightful! What a treat! An opportunity to serve!
I only wish that you and your whole family were in similar need.

GÉRONTE Most obliging. I'll go get her.
(*he limps out*)

SGANARELLE (*indicating Jacqueline*) And who might this lady be?

JACQUELINE Wet-nurse.

SGANARELLE Wet-nurse! Succulent nurse! My medicine pales beside yours. Lucky infant who imbibes that delicious milk! For a sip, I would trade my entire pharmacy.

LUCAS Doctor, I will thank you to keep your hands off my wife.

SGANARELLE Your wife?

LUCAS Yes, my wife!

SGANARELLE Fortunate man! How happy I am for you!
(*throwing his arms around Jacqueline*)

LUCAS And you can keep your happiness to yourself.

SGANARELLE It goes without saying that a case involves not just the patient, but the people around her as well. I must start by sampling the nurse's milk and examining her breast.

LUCAS Oh, no you won't!

SGANARELLE Contradicting the doctor? Rejecting science?

LUCAS Standing up for decency, that's what.

SGANARELLE If the patient succumbs, I disclaim all responsibility.

JACQUELINE (*to Lucas*) Stay out of this. I'm a big girl, and I can take care of myself.

LUCAS Well, don't let him go poking around.

SGANARELLE Ah, jealousy! Petty minds, forever holding back the advance of knowledge.

Géronte returns with Lucinda

GÉRONTE Doctor, my daughter Lucinda.

SGANARELLE Lucinda! What a lovely name! Our patient.

GÉRONTE Yes, my one and only daughter. Too young to die!

SGANARELLE Heaven forbid! Not without a doctor's help.

GÉRONTE She's laughing.

SGANARELLE The first step towards a cure.

My dear! Speak up, without delaying!
Hold nothing back, do not be shy.
So what's the complaint?
Do you ache? You're feeling faint?
Come, come, reply!

LUCINDA Han! Hi! Ho! Han!

SGANARELLE What is she saying?

LUCINDA Han! Hi! Ho! Han!

SGANARELLE What? Here's a language unknown to me.

VALÈRE Oh, sir! But that is just the point!

SGANARELLE How so? Now what is just the point?

OTHERS Yes, indeed! That is just the point.

Her speech, her speech is out of joint,
For reasons no one seems to know.

GÉRONTE Because of this untimely blow,
Her marriage daily grows more distant.

SGANARELLE How so?

GÉRONTE Her future husband is kind, though insistent:
No wedding bells will sound
Until a cure is found.

SGANARELLE This man's out of his mind!
Ass and donkey combined!
For such a fool there's no explaining.
A silent wife and he's complaining?
While he is fretting,
Morning till midnight I'm regretting
My own wife has not the same
Charming problem you name.
From morn till night I'm regretting
My own wife has not the same
Charming problem you name.

GÉRONTE My jilted daughter put to shame!

OTHERS The merry doctor plays a game.

SGANARELLE The same affliction that you name!

GÉRONTE Have a heart! Oh, please go ahead!
Help a father close to despair.

SGANARELLE In my hands you are not misled;
I shall have her soon in repair.

OTHERS A doctor brilliant though bizarre!
Unorthodox, he should go far.

GÉRONTE Ah! The blow caught us unaware,
Unaware! Unaware!

SGANARELLE So, taking on the case —
Are there signs of distress?

GÉRONTE Yes, indeed!

SGANARELLE *(in deep thought)*
Excellent! Hm! Hm! Is she often in pain?

GÉRONTE To say the least!

SGANARELLE Better yet!

Would you hazard a guess,
Your daughter would prefer
To have her voice back again?

GÉRONTE One and all would rejoice.
No dispute.

SGANARELLE *(to Lucinda)* Good! Now the pulse ... hold steady ...

(to G ronte) Aha! Because she cannot speak,
Your daughter now is a mute, sir!

OTHERS Astonishing! You've gone to the source!
The crux of her complaint you've diagnosed.

SGANARELLE Of course! Of course! Though loath to boast —
Savvy and clever, savvy and clever,
Smarter than ever,
To great acclaim
From coast to coast,
I'm known by name.

Given the mission
Of a physician,
I pass the test
And frankly rank among the best.

Master of science!
Ask grateful clients.
Doctor on call,
Topping them all.

OTHERS Savvy and clever,
Smarter than ever,
Known by name from East to West.
Given the mission
Of a physician,
Frankly ranking with the best.

Master of science!
Ask grateful clients.
Doctor on call,
Topping them all.
Best of all!

SGANARELLE We experts in the art
Know what it's all about.
Though others, no doubt,
May assert this or that —
They misread, they distort.
I, that know more and preach less,
Venture to report
That your daughter is speechless.

OTHERS Mercy! What a mind!
Vast! One of a kind!

GÉRONTE But ... It's the cause of her complaint
That we are seeking.

SGANARELLE I maintain ...
Because she's lost the power of speaking.

GÉRONTE But why has she no longer the power of speaking?

SGANARELLE Through failure of the lip, or the tongue.
Apropos —
On this point Aristotle has concurred.
Let me see ...
You're fluent in Latin, of course?

GÉRONTE Not so much as a word.

SGANARELLE No Latin, not even a word?

(continues in dialogue over music:)

SGANARELLE Cabricias arcithuram catalamus, etc. Yes! And the result?
Qui substantive, ...

Now to review my line of reasoning: I maintain that this impediment in the action of the tongue is caused by certain humours which we in learned circles call the peccant humours, or in other words, the humours that are peccant. Passing from the liver on the left to the heart on the right, they converge in the lungs, where they encounter vapours emanating from the venticles of the scapula, or shoulder blade. I urge you to follow my reasoning closely —

JACQUELINE, LUCAS and VALÈRE Yes, indeed!

SGANARELLE Ossabandus, nequis, naquer, potarium, quipsa, milus — And that, in simple words, is precisely why your daughter is speechless.

(singing resumes)

ALL Savvy and clever,
Smarter than ever,
With acclaim from East to West,
{He's/I'm} known by name.

 Given the mission
Of a physician
He meets the test
{And/I} frankly ranks among the best.

 Master of science!
Ask grateful clients.
Doctor on call,

Topping them all.
Best of all!
Far best of all!

GÉRONTE If I'd only kept on with my studies!

JACQUELINE So this is what they call education.

VALÈRE Brilliant! I don't understand a word of it.

GÉRONTE You can't expect a learned man to talk like everybody else. But sir, there is one thing that bothers me — the location of the liver and the heart. Haven't you got them mixed up? The liver is on the right, the heart on the left.

SGANARELLE No longer. That's been modernized. Medicine is constantly advancing.

GÉRONTE You must excuse my ignorance.

SGANARELLE The layman is not expected to keep up with the expert.

GÉRONTE Heavens no! But sir, about the present case, what do you advise?

SGANARELLE You want my professional advice?

GÉRONTE Very much so.

SGANARELLE Then I recommend that you send the patient back to her room and give her bread with wine several times a day.

GÉRONTE Bread and wine?

SGANARELLE Yes, taken together they have long been known to loosen the tongue. Note well that we use the same treatment for parrots when training them to talk.

GÉRONTE That certainly makes sense. Quick! Bread and wine, at once!

SGANARELLE I'll be back this evening to find out how the cure is progressing. *(to Jacqueline)* Just a moment. Don't go. *(to G ronte)* Sir, I have in mind a treatment for your nurse.

JACQUELINE For me? I've never felt better in my life.

SGANARELLE An ominous sign. Perfect health can only get worse. It calls for immediate bloodletting.

G RONTE Bloodletting? When there is no disease?

SGANARELLE The disease is superfluous. Bear in mind, we drink to ward off thirst. Likewise, we purge to ward off illness.

JACQUELINE Fine theory, but I'll not have my body turned into a workshop.

(she exits, with Lucas and Valère)

SGANARELLE I would urge you to be more open-minded. I, too, must be leaving.

GÉRONTE One thing we're forgetting.

SGANARELLE You want more of me?

GÉRONTE I want to pay you for your service.

SGANARELLE I deplore money.

GÉRONTE But I insist.

SGANARELLE Money is beneath me.

GÉRONTE Nonetheless ...

SGANARELLE It violates my principles.

GÉRONTE I beg you.

SGANARELLE It is degrading.

GÉRONTE *(slipping money into his pocket)* There, it's yours.

SGANARELLE Base material profit.

GÉRONTE We live in a material world. Good day, sir.

(he exits)

SGANARELLE Hm! Not bad, not bad. *(starting to count)*
Solid silver. And tomorrow ...

LEANDER *(entering)* Doctor, I've been watching from outside. I'm desperate.
You must help me.

SGANARELLE I see. Flushed complexion, rapid pulse ...

LEANDER I'm perfectly healthy. That's not the issue.

SGANARELLE If you're not sick, why do you need a doctor?

LEANDER Let me explain. My name is Leander, and I'm in love with Lucinda,
your patient. But I'm not allowed even to see her, thanks to her testy old
father. You must help a lover out. I've got to speak to her. My life, my
happiness depend on it.

SGANARELLE And what do you take me for? A bawd, a pimp, a pander?

LEANDER Please, not so loud.

SGANARELLE I will shout it from the rooftops. Oh, this wicked world that we live in! Full of rude people ... insolent, unscrupulous ...

LEANDER Softer, please! Lower your voice.

SGANARELLE People who go about corrupting ...

LEANDER Pardon, please.

SGANARELLE Undermining morality, insulting my profession ...

LEANDER Take this ... (*taking out a purse*)

SGANARELLE Offering bribes. (*taking it*) Of course, I'm not talking about you. You're an honest, decent fellow whom I'd like to help out.

LEANDER Forgive me if I have taken a liberty.

SGANARELLE Not at all. What can I do for you?

LEANDER First, you must understand the situation. The illness you are called on to cure is a sham. Doctors have uttered their usual gibberish. Her disease has been traced to the brain, the liver, the pulse, the nerve, you name it. But the real cause pertains to the heart. She is in love, and has taken on this affliction in order to avoid an odious marriage.

SGANARELLE Not so dumb, after all. Ha, ha! Young man, you have stirred me to the depths of my soul. I feel deeply concerned for the outcome of this thwarted romance. We must work together. Does her father know you?

LEANDER I doubt it. We've barely met.

SGANARELLE Enough! I will stake my medical reputation on it. The invalid will be yours. You've come to the right doctor.

CHORUS (*enters*)
Today, not tomorrow,
You are back on course
By means we can borrow
From an age-old source.

Restore vim and vigor;
Put the pills aside.
Tonic cheap and quicker
Song and dance provide.

The tough city slicker,
The buckeroo,
The farmer, too,
A list including you and you
Are refortified.

Restore vim and vigor;
Put the pills aside.
Tonic cheap and quicker
Song and dance provide.

The tough city slicker,
The buckeroo,
The farmer, too,
A list including you and you
Are refortified.

Today, not tomorrow,
You are back on course
With a cure we borrow
From a trusty source.

LEANDER

Pining in a cage I carried
Perched a silent turtle dove,
Separated from her love.
Gone the melodious tone;
Down, though not yet broken-hearted,
Sustained by hope alone,
Too long the pair has been parted.

Alas, poor little bird!
Pensive in grief, your music unheard.
Be of cheer; repair the drooping feather!
Love all the more!
Later as one, together,
When love at last prevails,
Your song again will soar.

Soon will sparkling dawn
Lift the veil of sorrow;
Oh, sweet bird, sing on,
And hail bright tomorrow.

Night is nearly over,
The dark of despair.
When the clouds uncover,
Receive an unwavering lover
With song in the air.
Receive a worshipping lover
With song in the air.

SGANARELLE As you can see, sir, the song has already had a soothing effect upon the patient. There is a sparkle in her eye that I have not detected before. A round of dance will lead us closer yet to a complete cure.

GÉRONTE Well, if you recommend it.

CHORUS Today, not tomorrow,

You are back on course
By means we can borrow
From an age-old source.

Restore vim and vigor;
Put the pills aside.
Tonic cheap and quicker
Song and dance provide.

The tough city slicker,
The buckeroo,
The farmer, too,
A list including you and you
Are refortified.

Restore vim and vigor;
Put the pills aside.
Tonic cheap and quicker
Song and dance provide.

The tough city slicker,
The buckeroo,
The farmer, too,
A list including you and you
Are refortified.

Today, not tomorrow,
You are back on course
With a cure we borrow
From a trusty source.

End of Act II

ACT III

The scene is an adjacent courtyard, or garden.

SGANARELLE (*alone*) For the life of me, I can't figure it out. Why the devil do they all take me for a great doctor? But the change is not for the worse. In fact, I've half a mind to stick to my new vocation.

What profession is finer?
Qualms and quibbles are minor.
From a life cutting wood,
Now I've made good.

The doctor, right and wrong,
Is immune from attack,
For the distressed
When laid to rest
Seldom talk back.

Quote a phrase from Hippocrates,
Refer to this or that disease,
Sing your own chorus of acclaim,
And you have made the Hall of Fame.

Name a trade or vocation
So free of preparation.
Lawyers, teachers, earn their degree.
For me, credentials lacking,
All it took was a whacking,

And lo, behold!
I'm an M.D.
In record time
Uplifted, I'm
The great M.D.

Opportunity knocking!
Closed doors are unlocking.
Made a quack with a whack
Laid on the back.

The doctor in his wisdom
Leaves nothing to chance,
He leaves nothing to chance.
For come the worst
He's reimbursed,
Paid in advance.

If we kill or cure, does it matter?
Our purses grow fatter and fatter.
Money in the bank guaranteed;
Little does it take to succeed.
If in doubt,
Look about:
Out and out gall is all you need.

By a blow elevated,
I'm a pro dedicated,
Nor would I change it if I could.
For gulling my good neighbor
I count as less a labor,
Less a labor
Than a long, back-breaking, racking day
Hacking wood.

Glorified and promoted!
Worshipped by the devoted!
People cheer and applaud,
Drawn by the fraud;
Some are thrilled, some enthralled,
Some overawed.

The doctor, high and mighty,
Need bear no rebuke,
He need bear no rebuke,
For if mistook,
No dirty look
Comes from a spook.

What vocation can match it?
Drop the knife and the hatchet.
From a life cutting wood
I've now made good.

Opportunity knocking!
Closed doors are unlocking!
Made a quack with but a whack
Laid on the back.

No profession finer!
Qualms and quibbles minor!
People love and applaud
The happy fraud.

Leander enters, in the robe of an apothecary

SGANARELLE Ah, there you are!

LEANDER Do I look like an apothecary? Will her father fall for it?

SGANARELLE He's fallen for bigger impostors.

LEANDER I don't suppose you could supply me with a few medical terms to throw out in conversation. I want to come across like a professional.

SGANARELLE Jargon is unnecessary. The robe will do it. And besides, on the subject of medicine I'm as ignorant as you.

LEANDER You? Ignorant? You're joking!

SGANARELLE It's the truth, so help me God. You've been honest with me, so I'll be honest with you.

LEANDER Then you are not really ...

SGANARELLE You have hit the nail on the head. They've made me a doctor over my own dead body. Frankly, all of this Latin is Greek to me. Don't ask me why, but they have got it into their heads that I am a medical wizard, and there's no talking them out of it. What can I do but go along?

LEANDER No choice.

SGANARELLE Ah, here come two who look as if they are coming to consult. I must put on my dignity again. Go, wait for me in front of the house.

(Valère presents Thibaut and Perrin, father and son, to Sganarelle)

PERRIN Sir, two more, knocking at your door.

THIBAUT Come to plead, argue and implore.

PERRIN Man of science, eloquence and learning ...

THIBAUT To your proven talents we are turning.

BOTH Here because of urgent need,
How fortunate to catch you!
Wise and profound,
Word's got around:
For results guaranteed,
No man alive can match you.

THIBAUT, PERRIN and VALÈRE
So we come, knocking at your door
To persuade, pester and implore.

SGANARELLE Enough! What do you want?

THIBAUT and PERRIN
Your skill as a physician.

THIBAUT His aunt — my cousin — down!

PERRIN Daily declining condition.

BOTH Doctor, you must take on the case.

SGANARELLE Sorry, but I fail to follow.

PERRIN Confined and convulsive, her forces fail;
We see her shake and shiver
And fear collapse of lung and liver.
Daily bleedings have been of no avail.

SGANARELLE I simply can't imagine what
You gentlemen are driving at.

THIBAUT, PERRIN and VALÈRE
Oh, sir! We have a hazy notion
You may have some pill or potion ...
For your service you will be paid, of course.
Count 'em out — seven pieces!

SGANARELLE Ah! How my compassion increases!
Do overlook the oversight.
Suddenly I see the light.
Yes, silver helps me understand you.

THIBAUT, PERRIN and VALÈRE

Then here you are,
Shiny and brand new.
As before, doctor, we implore:
Drive us not from your door.

SGANARELLE

In short,
You speak about a near and dear relation,
Aunt, or cousin — lung, liver
In revolution.
I am called to the rescue.

THIBAUT and PERRIN

We merely mention one reason why ...

SGANARELLE

Reason why?

THIBAUT and PERRIN

You must not let her die.

SGANARELLE

Understood.

THIBAUT and PERRIN

It goes against the grain,
Throwing money down the drain.
Why should we pay a fee
For what people do for free?

SGANARELLE

Very wise! Listen well —
For a cure, give her cheese.

THIBAUT and PERRIN

Only cheese? Only cheese?

SGANARELLE

Ah, but — cheese enriched!
It contains powdered pearl,
Some coral, a pinch of gold.
Loaded with minerals, so I am told.
Discover it yourself:
From the earth for the ailing,
With benefits unailing,
And seldom found upon the shelf.

THIBAUT, PERRIN and VALÈRE

At once! At once! We have no time to dally.
Here's a cheese that touches the heart,
Rich with pearl and laden with stone.
If she now refuses to rally,
We have done at least our part;
The fault is entirely her own.
We dare not dally!
Today, modern science goes on the line!
If she now refuses to rally,

The failure is no fault of mine.

SGANARELLE Away! You'll find her feeling better
If orders are followed to the letter.
Down with disease! Give cheese a try,
And only then
The grandest funeral that gold can buy.

THIBAUT and PERRIN
At once! At once! We have no time to dally.
Here's a cheese that touches the heart,
Rich with pearl and laden with stone.
If she now refuses to rally,
We have done at least our part;
The fault is entirely her own.
We dare not dally!
Today, modern science goes on the line!
If she now refuses to rally,

THIBAUT, PERRIN and VALÈRE
The failure is no fault of mine.

(Thibault, Perrin and Valère leave)

Jacqueline enters

SGANARELLE Ah, just as I hoped! We meet again. The nurse I've always dreamed of. My calomel, my magnesia, my epsom salts ...

JACQUELINE None of this romantic talk for me, doctor. I speak a different language.

SGANARELLE Dear nurse, do me a favor. Catch a disease, come down with a fever. I've a cure that I'm longing to try.

JACQUELINE Thanks. But I don't need any such cure.

SGANARELLE But tomorrow, who knows? A lovely girl, in the springtime of life, saddled with a bad-tempered, jealous husband.

JACQUELINE I brought it on myself. When you make your bed you have to lie in it.

SGANARELLE Come, come! Sharing a bed with a lout like that? With an old crank who spies on you, who won't even allow you a little conversation with an intelligent man.

JACQUELINE You don't know the half of it. He's not even faithful.

SGANARELLE Incredible!

Ah! I know someone close at hand,
A friend inclined to fill the slot.
An understanding man, he awaits your command
To show a husband what is what.
As the Good Book says,

Vengeance satisfies.
And like the wind, time flies!

JACQUELINE Turned-off wives do indeed complain
When saddled with a husband like mine.
When marriage weighs upon us like a ball and chain,
We, too, would venture out of line,
Even cast an eye
On the fruit forbidden,
Tasted on the sly.

SGANARELLE Oh, your husband has it coming —
Turn to one I could name.
While his restless eye is roaming
You could also do the same,
Do the same, do the same.

JACQUELINE Wayward husbands have it coming —
There is one I could name.
While his restless eye is roaming
Mine could also do the same,
Do the same, do the same.

(Lucas enters without being seen)

SGANARELLE So fair, with cheeks like budding roses!
Thrown away on a clumsy clod,
On a blockhead who supposes
He can rule with iron rod.
Why should you abide
A husband stern as Moses?
Pleasure on the side
Someone else close at hand
Can provide.

JACQUELINE You have painted a pretty picture,
And revenge would serve him right.
Nor do I need the guiding light
Of holy scripture
On the pathway where you invite.
Not to be outdone,
Merely getting even,
Justice can be fun,
Justice can be fun.

SGANARELLE Oh, your husband has it coming,
Turn to one I could name.
While his restless eye is roaming
You could also do the same,
Do the same, do the same.

JACQUELINE Wayward husbands have it coming —
There is one I could name.

While his restless eye is roaming
Mine could also do the same,
Do the same, do the same.

(Sganarelle and Jacqueline exit on opposite sides)

GÉRONTE *(entering)* Say, Lucas! Have you seen our doctor about?

LUCAS *(who has been eavesdropping during the duo)* Have I seen him?
I'll say! Giving my wife a close examination.

GÉRONTE Always on duty. Go, see how my daughter is doing.

(Lucas exits as Sganarelle enters, with Leander in apothecary garb)

GÉRONTE Ah, doctor! I was just asking about you.

SGANARELLE Taking a brief stroll about the courtyard. How is your daughter?

GÉRONTE Somewhat worse after your medication.

SGANARELLE An excellent sign! The cure is working.

GÉRONTE If she doesn't die first.

SGANARELLE No cause for alarm. My best remedies I save till I hear
the death rattle.

GÉRONTE Who is the gentleman with you?

SGANARELLE *(while pantomiming measuring dosages, pouring out liquids, etc.)*
My head of state ...

GÉRONTE Your what?

SGANARELLE My prime minister ...

GÉRONTE Huh!

SGANARELLE My first lieutenant ...

GÉRONTE Ah, the apothecary!

SGANARELLE Essential for your daughter's recovery.

JACQUELINE *(appearing briefly)* Sir, your daughter wants to walk around a bit.

SGANARELLE The air will do her good. *(to Leander)* Go with her. Keep your
hand on her pulse, check her breathing. Bring back a full report.

(drawing Géronte aside and continually distracting him from the lovers)

Sir, one of the profound and subtle questions that we doctors put to ourselves —
which is easier to cure, a man or a woman? Attention, please! Some say the
one, some say the other. I say both the one and the other. Because of

the incongruity of the opaque humors — sir, you're not following — frequently found in women, the instinctual anima collides with the intellectual matrix, both relating to the oblique orbit of the moon. One must conclude ...

LUCINDA *(to Leander, in a firm, clear voice)*

I know my own heart. Nothing will ever induce me to change.

GÉRONTE Good Lord! My daughter just spoke! Success! A miracle! Doctor, how can I repay you?

SGANARELLE I never abandoned faith.

LUCINDA Yes, father. My speech has been restored.

GÉRONTE Yes, but ...

LUCINDA And I've only one thing to say. I shall marry Leander and no one else.

GÉRONTE Yes, but ...

LUCINDA You are wasting your time trying to force Horace on to me.

GÉRONTE Yes, but ... but ...

LUCINDA Rant and rave at me, dear father.
Even with my back to the wall,
I can save you fuss and bother,
For I've chosen once and for all.

Never shall I be divided
From Leander, him I shall wed.

GÉRONTE But I —

LUCINDA So consider it decided —
Nothing further need be said.

LUCINDA Understand: I want Leander!
I say it, now no longer mute,
And dare to speak in simple candor,
Fortified by a mind resolute,
Resolute, resolute!

SGANARELLE Surrender, give her to Leander.

GÉRONTE To her caprice I shall not pander;
Who but a father should decide?
And I'll have none of this Leander,
A fellow so unqualified.

OTHERS Surrender, give her to Leander;
For her own self must she decide;
Sir, you may guide but not command her;

Not you but she will be the bride.

LUCINDA Though your motives are paternal,
You shall not prevail by force;
True to larger laws eternal
I must pursue my rightful course.

I have chosen, I have spoken;
It is my life that I defend.
If my heart is to be broken,
In the convent, my pain will end.

Understand: I want Leander,
I say it, now no longer mute,
And dare to speak in simple candor,
Fortified by a mind resolute,
Resolute, resolute!

OTHERS Surrender, give her to Leander;
For her own self must she decide;
Sir, you may guide but not command her;
Not you but she will be the bride.

LUCINDA Any other wouldn't do.
Listen, father: no, no, no, ... no!

GÉRONTE Must a father undergo his overthrow?

OTHERS Who can misconstrue
When the word is no?

GÉRONTE What a flood of words! No stopping it! Doctor, I implore you.
Make her speechless again.

SGANARELLE That is beyond my skill. However, I might suggest an alternative.
I could make you deaf.

GÉRONTE No, thank you. *(to Lucinda)* Now listen here!

LUCINDA There's no point in arguing. Nothing that you can say will have
the slightest effect on me.

GÉRONTE You will marry Horace this evening.

LUCINDA I will die first.

SGANARELLE Stop! Let the doctor handle this. It is clear to me that her
illness has taken a new turn.

GÉRONTE And can you cure this one?

SGANARELLE Possibly. But I shall need the help of our apothecary here.
(to Leander) A word. You can see that her passion for Leander is utterly contrary

to her father's wishes and must be dealt with. We've not a minute to lose. Her symptoms are already severe, and delay will only make her condition worse. I can think of only one remedy: elopenol, an immediate application of scampoo, followed by matrimonisia. The patient may resist, but I rely on your tact and skill to bring her round. Start with a stroll in the garden in order to prepare her mentally, while I hold hands with her father. Above all, lose no time.

(Leander hurries off with Lucinda)

GÉRONTE And what are these drugs you are prescribing?

SGANARELLE Remedies that I use only as a last resort.

GÉRONTE A point that we have certainly reached. Have you ever seen anyone so obstinate, so headstrong, so inconsiderate? ...

SGANARELLE Daughters can be difficult.

GÉRONTE Leander's to blame. She's out of her mind.

SGANARELLE Fever in the blood. Young people are dangerously susceptible.

GÉRONTE I spotted the danger right away and had her locked up.

SGANARELLE Very wise of you.

GÉRONTE Cut off all communication.

SGANARELLE Naturally.

GÉRONTE Even one secret meeting could be dangerous.

SGANARELLE Catastrophic.

GÉRONTE Who knows? She might even try to run off with him.

SGANARELLE Who knows better than a father?

GÉRONTE It's not been easy. I am told that he is desperate to see her and will stop at nothing. Trickery, slight of hand, disguise ...

SGANARELLE Surely not!

GÉRONTE He'll have to try harder than that.

SGANARELLE Aha!

GÉRONTE Yes, sir! He'll keep his distance while I'm around.

SGANARELLE I should think so! Does he take you for an idiot? A blockhead? A nincompoop?

LUCAS *(rushing in)* Heaven help us! What a mess! Sir, your daughter has run off with the apothecary! I mean Leander! That was him. And it was our

great doctor here who masterminded the whole thing.

GÉRONTE What! My daughter! Leander! Quick, call the police. And don't let that doctor get away. Oh, you traitor! The law will punish you for this.
(*he exits*)

LUCAS Lord, sir. It looks like the rope. And not a minute too soon.

MARTINE (*entering*) Goodness gracious! The trouble I've had finding this house! Any news about that doctor I recommended?

LUCAS News! He's made the headlines. See for yourself. About to be hanged.

MARTINE My husband hanged! But why? What has he done?

LUCAS He has helped our master's daughter to elope.

MARTINE My dear husband! Is it true that they're going to hang you?

SGANARELLE You see what you've brought me to.

MARTINE To die in public! How can you let this happen?

SGANARELLE What do you suggest I do about it?

MARTINE And all that wood still to be cut! I would feel so much better if you had finished.

SGANARELLE Go, leave me. You're breaking my heart.

MARTINE No, I shall remain to give you courage to meet your death. And I shall not leave until the last gasp.

SGANARELLE (*wincing*) Aie!

GÉRONTE (*returning*) An officer of the law is on the way. You will be locked up until ...

SGANARELLE Oh, take pity, sir! Couldn't the sentence be changed? Something that would give me a good, stiff lesson?

GÉRONTE Certainly not. Justice will be served. But what's this?

LEANDER (*returning with Lucinda*) Sir, I return to reintroduce myself as Leander, the person that I really am, and to deliver Lucinda back into your charge. Also to bring you news. I have just received a letter informing me that my uncle has died, naming me the heir to all of his property. Read it for yourself.

GÉRONTE Dear young man! I have always had the highest regard for you. Gladly, from the bottom of my heart, I give you my daughter.

SGANARELLE And medicine lives on!

MARTINE You mean they are not going to hang you? In that case, you can thank me for having made you a doctor.

SGANARELLE Yes, and for a good many whacks on the back as well.

LEANDER Now, now. All has turned out for the best. Such a gloriously happy ending leaves no room for squabbling.

SGANARELLE All right. I'll forget the blows and the bruises in exchange for the honor and glory that you have promoted me to. But hereafter, please, a little respect to a man of my dignity. Otherwise, watch out! Your doctor gets the last word.

CHORUS Wise are the few
 That find their own vocation!
 Some that bring home the wood
 Are doctors in disguise.
 You, rich or poor,
 May undergo a transformation;
 Snug and secure,
 You may be heading for surprise.

 Wise are the few
 That find their own vocation!
 Some that gather the wood
 Are doctors in disguise.

End of the Opera