

PERUSAL SCRIPT



The Doctor
In Spite of Himself
by Moliere

Adapted and Translated by
J.D. Newman



Newport, Maine

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THE DOCTOR IN SPITE OF HIMSELF

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CAST OF CHARACTERS
(3 men, 2 women, 5 either gender)

SGANARELLE -- A common kindling cutter who once served as a doctor's assistant

MARTINE -- Long-suffering wife of SGANARELLE

MONSIEUR [or MADAME] ROBERT – Meddling neighbor of SGANARELLE and MARTINE.

VALERE [or VALERIE] – Sophisticated servant of GERONTE

LUCAS – Less sophisticated servant of GERONTE and husband of JACQUELINE

MONSIEUR [or MADAME] GERONTE -- Wealthy single parent of LUCINDE.

LUCINDA -- GERONTE's daughter, in love with LEANDER, feigning muteness

LEANDER -- LUCINDA's lover

THIBAUT -- A peasant who seeks a remedy from SGANARELLE

PERRIN [or PERRINE] -- Child of the peasant THIBAUT

Scene -- Outside Sganarelle's house in the woods and inside the house of Monsieur Geronte

Time -- 1666; a very good year for farce

THE DOCTOR IN SPITE OF HIMSELF by Moliere. Adapted and Translated by J.D. Newman. 3m 2w 5either gender. 1 interior 1 exterior. The long-suffering wife of Sganarelle, a woodcutter and former doctor's assistant, decides to avenge herself for her husband's neglect and abuse. She convinces two servants who are seeking a physician that they must beat her brilliant but eccentric husband until he admits to being a doctor. When confronted by the servants, Sganarelle repeatedly denies any knowledge of medicine, but when they beat him, he decides to go along with their presumption. Sganarelle is brought by the servants to their master whose daughter has become mute. He makes an effective pretense of trying to cure the daughter, quoting Latin and doing what he has seen other doctors do. The lover of the master's daughter confides to Sganarelle that the young woman is faking muteness in order to escape an unwanted marriage to an old man. Sganarelle helps the young lovers to elope but in doing so puts his own life in jeopardy. Sganarelle is rescued from hanging when the lovers return and the young man announces that his rich uncle has died, conveniently making him a suitable suitor. Sganarelle is forgiven and returns home with his wife, insisting that she must respect him now that he has become a doctor. **Order # 3129**

JOHN D. NEWMAN is a professor of theatre at Utah Valley University and the director of the Noorda Theatre Center for Children and Youth. He lives with his family in Sandy City, Utah. Dr. Newman became the first recipient of the Reba R. Robertson Award from the Children's Theatre Foundation of America. At UVU, Dr. Newman has directed *The Secret Garden*, *Princess Academy*, and *Androcles and the Lion* in the Noorda Theatre. He has also served as the director of the Noorda Theatre Summer Camp and has produced or co-produced touring productions including *A Village Fable*, *The Princess and the Goblin*, *Honk!*, and *Pedro's Magic Shoes*. As a playwright, he has adapted scripts for Newbery medalists including Avi, Paul Fleischman, and Richard Peck. Newman taught and directed at Highland High School for eighteen years, from 1991 to 2010 with a sabbatical to Texas in 1998-99. He served as Artistic Director of the Salt Lake School for the Performing Arts during the 2009-2010 school year. Newman earned his B.F.A. and M.Ed. from the University of Utah, his M.A. from the University of Texas, and his Ph.D. from New York University. With Judy Matetzschk-Campbell, he co-authored *Tell Your Story: The Plays and Playwriting of Sandra Fenichel Asher*. Dr. Newman chairs the Playwrights In Our Schools Project and served three years on the board of the American Alliance for Theatre and Education. *Sandy and the Weird Sisters* is his first novel, published by Leicester Bay Books.

Note: *The acts are divided into French scenes. There is no break in the action except between acts.*

ACT I, Scene 1

*Setting: Outside the humble home of SGANARELLE, a common kindling cutter.
SGANARELLE appears, pursued by his outraged wife MARTINE.*

SGANARELLE: No, it is for me to speak and to be the master!

MARTINE: And I'm telling you that you'll live according to my desire, and that I didn't marry you to endure your follies.

SGANARELLE: O how tiring it is to have a wife! And how right Aristotle was when he said that a wife is worse than a demon!

MARTINE: There goes the wise man with his ridiculous Aristotle!

SGANARELLE: Wise man indeed! Find me another kindling cutter who knows how to reason things like I do, who has served a famous doctor for six years and who has learned, at his young age, his practice by heart.

MARTINE: Pest of a fool!

SGANARELLE: Pest of a hag!

MARTINE: Cursed be the hour and the day that I decided to say "I do."

SGANARELLE: Cursed be the horned nose of the notary who made me sign my ruin!

MARTINE: Is it for you to complain of this match? Should there ever be a moment you don't thank the heavens that you have me as your wife? And did you deserve to marry a person like me?

SGANARELLE: It is true that you do me too great an honor and indeed I must sing praises to our wedding night. Hey, morbleu! Don't make me say any more about that. I could say... certain things.

MARTINE: What? What could you say?

SGANARELLE: Let's leave that chapter alone. Suffice it to say that we know what we know and that you should consider yourself blessed to have me as your husband.

MARTINE: Would you consider yourself blessed to have a husband like you? A man who reduces me to the hospital? A degenerate, a traitor who eats everything I have?

SGANARELLE: You lie. I *drink* part of it.

MARTINE: Who sells, piece by piece, all the furniture in the house?

SGANARELLE: It's living off our equity.

MARTINE: Who has removed everything down to the bed I used to own?

SGANARELLE: Now you never have to get out of bed in the morning.

MARTINE: In short, who doesn't leave a single stick of furniture in the house?

SGANARELLE: It makes it easier to move.

MARTINE: And who, from morning to night, does nothing but play and drink?

SGANARELLE: It keeps me from getting bored.

MARTINE: And what do you expect me to do with my family in the meantime?

SGANARELLE: What you will.

MARTINE: I'm raising four little children...

SGANARELLE: Then put them down.

MARTINE: ...who beg me for bread every hour.

SGANARELLE: Give them the whip! When I have drunk well and eaten well, I want everyone in my house

to have their fill.

MARTINE: And you believe, you drunkard, that things are going to continue this way?

SGANARELLE: Let's not lose our tempers, dear wife.

MARTINE: And that I don't know the way to make you fulfill your duty?

SGANARELLE: My dear wife, you know that I don't have a patient soul but that I have a reasonably strong arm!

MARTINE: I laugh at your menacing.

SGANARELLE: My little wife, my muffin, your skin is getting itchy for its usual remedy.

MARTINE: I'll show you that I don't fear you in the least.

SGANARELLE: My better half, you're hankering to receive something from me.

MARTINE: Do you believe that I faint at your words?

SGANARELLE: Sweet object of my desires, I'll make your ears sting!

MARTINE: Drunkard that you are!

SGANARELLE: I'll beat you!

MARTINE: Bag of wine!

SGANARELLE: I'll thrash you!

MARTINE: Reprobate!

SGANARELLE: I'll tan your hide!

MARTINE: Traitor! Insolent! Deceiver! Slacker! Rascal! Hangman! Scoundrel! Rogue! Scamp!
Marauder! Thief!

SGANARELLE: Ah! So this is what you want!

(He beats MARTINE.)

Voila! The only true way to appease you!

ACT I Scene 2

A neighbor, MONSIEUR [or MADAME] ROBERT enters and takes SGANARELLE'S stick.

M. ROBERT: Enough! Enough! Enough! What do I see? What infamy! Cursed be the scoundrel who beats his wife that way!

MARTINE: *(Taking the stick from M. ROBERT)* But I want him to beat me.

M. ROBERT: Oh! Then I consent with all my heart.

MARTINE: What are you getting yourself into?

M. ROBERT: I was wrong.

MARTINE: Is this your affair?

M. ROBERT: You're right.

MARTINE: Look at this impertinent soul who wants to prevent husbands from beating their wives!

M. ROBERT: I retract.

MARTINE: What concern is it to you?

M. ROBERT: None.

MARTINE: Is it your duty to stick your nose into this?

M.ROBERT: No.

MARTINE: Mind your own affairs.

M. ROBERT: I won't say another word.

MARTINE: It pleases me to be beaten.

M. ROBERT: All right.

MARTINE: It's none of your business.

M. ROBERT: That's true.

MARTINE: And you are a fool to poke yourself into things that you have nothing to do with.

M. ROBERT: *(To SGANARELLE)* Comrade, I beg your your pardon with all my heart. Go. Beat your wife, as you should. I'll even help you, if you like.

SGANARELLE: It pleases me not.

M. ROBERT: Oh, then that's another matter.

SGANARELLE: I want to beat her when I want to beat her and don't want to beat her when I don't want to beat her.

M. ROBERT: Very well.

SGANARELLE: She's my wife, not yours.

M. ROBERT: No doubt.

SGANARELLE: You can't tell me what to do.

M. ROBERT: All right.

SGANARELLE: I don't need your help.

M. ROBERT: As you wish.

SGANARELLE: And you are impertinent to meddle in the affairs of another. Remember that Cicero said, "twixt the tree and the thumb, one must not stick his bark."

(Caught between SGANARELLE and MARTINE, M. ROBERT flees.)

SGANARELLE: Oh, come on, let's make peace, the two of us.

MARTINE: Oh yes! After having beaten me that way?

SGANARELLE: That was nothing. Shake.

MARTINE: I don't want to.

SGANARELLE: But...

MARTINE: No.

SGANARELLE: My dear wife...

MARTINE: Absolutely not.

SGANARELLE: Go on, I'm telling you.

MARTINE: I'll have none of it.

SGANARELLE: Come on, come on, come on...

MARTINE: No. I want to be mad.

SGANARELLE: Oh, it was nothing. Go on, go on!

MARTINE: Leave me alone.

SGANARELLE: Shake, I'm telling you.

MARTINE: You've mistreated me too much!

SGANARELLE: Oh all right! I beg your forgiveness. Place your hand in mine.

MARTINE: Leave me alone.

SGANARELLE: Shake, I'm telling you!

MARTINE: You've mistreated me too much!

SGANARELLE: Come on...

MARTINE: Oh all right! I forgive you...

(Aside)

But you will pay for it!

SGANARELLE: You're a fool to take issue with that! Those are the little things that are necessary from time to time in romance! And five or six blows, between people who love each other, only serve to enhance their affection. Go on. I'm off to the woods and I promise to bring you more than a hundred bundles of kindling.

(He heads for the woods.)

ACT I Scene 3

MARTINE: Go on! Regardless of the face I put on, I won't forget my resentment and I burn within myself to find means to punish him for the blows he dealt me. I know that a woman always has in her hands the means to avenge herself on her husband, but that's a punishment too delicate for my hangman. I want a vengeance that he'll feel more keenly, and it still won't be sufficient for the blows that I've received.

ACT I Scene 4

(LUCAS and VALERE [or VALAIRE] enter.)

LUCAS: Parbleu! We've taken on a devil of a task, and I don't even know what we're hoping to find.

VALERE: What more do you need to know, my dear Lucas? We must obey our master, Monsieur [or Madame] Geronte! And, also we have an interest, you and I, in the health of her daughter, Lucinda. Without a doubt, her marriage, postponed by her malady, will merit us a certain recompense. Horace, who is generous, has the most honorable claim on her person, and despite that fact that she has shown love for a certain Leander, you well know that her father will never consent to receive him as his son-in-law.

MARTINE: *(Aside)* Shouldn't I be able to find some scheme to avenge myself?

LUCAS: But why does Monsieur Geronte still have this crazy idea in his head, since all the doctors we've brought have exhausted their Latin?

VALERE: One sometimes discovers, by virtue of searching, the things one overlooks at first, and often, in simple places...

MARTINE: (*Aside*) Yes, I must avenge myself whatever the price. The blows of his stick wound me to the heart. I cannot absorb them and...

(*She encounters LUCAS and VALERE.*)

Oh, I beg your pardon. I didn't see you there and I was thinking of something that I can't put my finger on.

VALERE: Everyone has his own concerns in this world, and we also have something that we greatly desire to find.

MARTINE: Is it something I can help you with?

VALERE: That is very possible, for we are trying to encounter some wise man, some particular doctor, who can offer some relief to the daughter of our master, attacked by a malady which, in one stroke, has deprived her of the use of her tongue. Many doctors have already exhausted their science in her behalf, but sometimes one finds people with admirable secrets, with peculiar remedies, which most often do what the others are not able to do, and that is what we seek.

MARTINE: (*Aside*) Ah! The heavens have inspired me with a remarkable scheme to avenge myself of my hangman!

(*To VALERE and LUCAS*)

Please, tell us, where can we find him?

MARTINE: (*Pointing*) Right now, you'll find him right over there, amusing himself by cutting kindling.

LUCAS: A doctor who cuts kindling?!

VALERE: Amusing himself by cutting herbs, don't you mean?

MARTINE: No! He's an extraordinary man who enjoys cutting kindling! Fantastical, bizarre, crotchety, and you'd never take him for what he really is. He goes and dresses himself in an extravagant manner in order to appear ignorant, withholding his science as a secret and does nothing all day but avoid exercising the marvelous medical talents he's received from the heavens.

VALERE: (*to LUCAS*) It's an admirable thing that all great men always have some caprice, some grain of folly mixed with their science.

MARTINE: The folly of this one is even greater than you can believe, for sometimes he goes so far as to want to be beaten before he'll acknowledge his ability. I'm telling you that he's so fixed in his humor that he'll never admit to being a doctor unless both of you beat him with sticks until he admits what he first denied. That's what *we* do when we need his services.

VALERE: What a strange folly!

MARTINE: That's true, but in the end, you'll see him work wonders!

LUCAS: What do they call him?

MARTINE: He calls himself "Sganarelle" and he's easy to recognize. He sports a large black beard and a ruff around his neck with a green and yellow suit.

LUCAS: A green and yellow suit?! Is he a doctor for parrots?

VALERE: But is it really true that he is as gifted as you say?

MARTINE: Come again? This is a man who works miracles! Six months ago, a woman was abandoned by all of her doctors. She was taken for dead for six hours and was almost buried when the man I spoke of arrived on the scene. He put a small drop of something in her mouth and in that same instant, she rose from her bed and began to walk around as if nothing had ever happened.

LUCAS: Ooh!

VALERE: It must have been a drop of liquid gold!

MARTINE: That may well have been. It wasn't three weeks later that a twelve-year-old child fell from the top of a bell tower to the ground and broke his head, his arms, and his legs on the pavement. No sooner had they sent for our man than he had coated the body with a certain ointment that he knows how to make, and the boy leaped to his feet and ran off to play in the woods!

LUCAS: That man must possess the universal medicine!

MARTINE: Who could doubt it?

LUCAS: Parbleu! That's just the man we need! Let's go get him!

VALERE: We thank you for the pleasure you've brought us.

MARTINE: But remember the instructions I gave you!

LUCAS: Oh, morbleu! Let us do our thing! If we just have to beat him, the cow is ours!

VALERE: We're delighted to have made your acquaintance and I conceive for myself the greatest hope in the world.

(MARTINE exits.)

ACT I Scene 5

(SGANARELLE is heard singing.)

VALERE: I heard someone singing and cutting wood.

SGANARELLE: *(SGANARELLE enters singing and carrying a bottle)*

In faith, that's plenty of work for a spell. Let's take a breather.

(He drinks.)

After all, that wood is as salty as all the devils.

(He sings to his bottle.)

SWEET YOU ARE, BEAUTIFUL BOTTLE.

SWEET YOU ARE, MY LITTLE "GLOU-GLOU"

BUT HOW OTHERS WOULD ENVY MY LOT

IF YOU WERE ALWAYS FULL, BUT YOU'RE NOT.

AH, MY PRETTY BOTTLE,

WHY MUST YOU E'ER RUN DRY?

VALERE: There he is himself!

LUCAS: I think you're right! We're right on the nose

VALERE: Let's take a closer look.

SGANARELLE: *(He notices VALERE and LUCAS, acknowledges them, and speaks to his bottle.)*

Ah, my little rascal, how I love you, my little cork...

(Singing)

BUT HOW OTHERS WOULD ENVY MY LOT, IF...

(Beat)

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What the devil do they want?

VALERE: *(Aside to LUCAS)* It's him all right.

LUCAS: *(Aside to VALERE)* There he is, the spitting image of what she described.

(SGANARELLE places his bottle beside him on the ground. VALERE bows on that side.

Believing VALERE is after his bottle, SGANARELLE moves the bottle to the other side. LUCAS bows to SGANARELLE on that side and SGANARELLE draws the bottle close to himself.)

They consult each other while they look at me. What are they up to?

VALERE: Monsieur, are you not the one they call Sganarelle?

SGANARELLE: What?

LUCAS: You Sganarelle?

SGANARELLE: Yes... and no, depending on what you want him for.

VALERE: We only want to offer him all the civilities that we may.

SGANARELLE: In that case, I am the one who is called Sganarelle!

VALERE: Monsieur, we are overjoyed to see you. Someone referred us to you and we implore you to help in what we need.

SGANARELLE: If it's something, gentlemen, that depends on my simple trade, I stand ready to render you service.

(He removes his hat.)

VALERE: Monsieur, it is too much kindness that you render us, but Monsieur, cover yourself, if you please.

The sun may make you uncomfortable.

LUCAS: Monsieur, put in on.

SGANARELLE: *(Replacing his hat, aside)* Look how full of ceremony these people are!

VALERE: Monsieur, you must not find it strange that we come to you. Able men are always in demand and we are informed of your capacity.

SGANARELLE: Ah, it is true that I am the best man in the world... for making kindling.

VALERE: Ah, Monsieur...

SGANARELLE: I spare no pains and I make it in an impeccable manner.

VALERE: Monsieur, it is not that of which it is a question.

SGANARELLE: But also, I sell my bundles for a hundred and ten sous per hundred.

VALERE: Let's not talk about that, if you please.

SGANARELLE: I promise you that I wouldn't think of selling them for less.

VALERE: Monsieur, we know things...

SGANARELLE: If you knew things, you would know that that is what I sell them for!

VALERE: Monsieur, you're just fooling yourself...

SGANARELLE: I'm not joking! I cannot cut my price!

VALERE: May we please discuss something else?

SGANARELLE: Indeed you can find them for less somewhere else. There is kindling and there is kindling, but what I make...

VALERE: Monsieur, let's please set aside this discourse.

SGANARELLE: I swear to you that you will not have them if you offer me even one sou less!

VALERE: Fie!

SGANARELLE: No, in good conscience, that is what you'll pay. I speak sincerely and I'm not a man who overcharges.

VALERE: Is it necessary, Monsieur, that a person like you amuse himself with these gross pretenses? That he abase himself by speaking in this manner? That a man so wise, a famous doctor like you are, should want to disguise himself from the eyes of all, and keep buried the beautiful talents that he possesses?

SGANARELLE: *(Aside)* He's crazy!

VALERE: Please, Monsieur, don't try to deceive us anymore.

SGANARELLE: How's that?

LUCAS: This tomfoolery is useless. We know what we know.

SGANARELLE: So what? What do you want me to say? Who do you take me for?

VALERE: For what you are, for a great doctor.

SGANARELLE: Doctor yourself! I'm no such thing and I never have been!

VALERE: *(To LUCAS)* Voila the folly to which he holds.

(To SGANARELLE)

Monsieur, would you kindly not deny things any further? And let's please not resort to those... maddening extremities.

SGANARELLE: To what?

LUCAS: To certain things that we'll be forced to do.

SGANARELLE: Morbleu! Take whatever measures you wish. I am not a doctor and don't know what you're talking about!

VALERE: *(to LUCAS)* I see that we will surely need to make use of the remedy.

(To SGANARELLE)

Monsieur, once more, I pray you, acknowledge who you are!

LUCAS: Oh for crying out loud! Don't fool around with us and admit that you're a doctor!

SGANARELLE: *(Aside)* This is maddening!

VALERE: Why deny what we already know?

LUCAS: Why all of these games? What good do they do you?

SGANARELLE: In one word, as well as two thousand, I tell you that I am not a doctor.

VALERE: You're not a doctor?

SGANARELLE: No!

LUCAS: You're no doctor?

SGANARELLE: No, I'm telling you!

VALERE: Since you insist, we must resolve this dilemma.

(VALERE and LUCAS beat SGANARELLE.)

SGANARELLE: Ah! Ah! Ah! I'm whatever you want me to be!

VALERE: Why, Monsieur, do you oblige us to this violence?

LUCAS: What good does it do you to make us beat you?

VALERE: I assure you that it causes me all the regret in the world.

LUCAS: On my word, I am frankly sorry!

SGANARELLE: *(He takes both of their sticks.)* What the devil is this? Sakes alive, does this make you laugh? Or do you both have a fixation with wanting me to be a doctor?

VALERE: What? Are you going back on your word and refusing to be a doctor?

SGANARELLE: The devil take me if that's what I am!

LUCAS: It's not true that you're a doctor?

SGANARELLE: No! Enough of this game.

(LUCAS and VALERE take back their sticks and beat SGANARELLE again.)

SGANARELLE: Ah! Ah! All right! Since you insist, I am a doctor! I am a doctor, an apothecary too, if it pleases you.

VALERE: Ah! There you are, Monsieur! I'm so glad to see you being reasonable.

LUCAS: You put joy in our hear when I hear you talk like that!

VALERE: I beg your forgiveness with all my heart.

LUCAS: I beg your forgiveness for the liberty that we took.

SGANARELLE: Yes...

(Aside)

Could it be that I'm the one who's mistaken, and could I have become a doctor without realizing it?

VALERE: Monsieur, you will not regret having revealed your identity to us, and I assure you that you will be satisfied.

SGANARELLE: But, tell me, aren't you mistaken yourselves? Is it really true that I'm a doctor?

LUCAS: Yes, in faith!

SGANARELLE: On the level?

VALERE: Without a doubt!

SGANARELLE: The devil take me if I ever knew!

VALERE: How's that? You're the wisest doctor in the world!

SGANARELLE: Oh? Oh!

LUCAS: A doctor who has cured I don't know how many people.

SGANARELLE: Parbleu!

VALERE: A woman had been declared dead for six hours. She was ready to be buried when you, with a certain drop of something, brought her back to life and made her walk out of her room!

SGANARELLE: Peste!

LUCAS: A little twelve-year-old child fell from the top of a bell tower to the ground and broke his head, legs, and arms, and you, with I don't know what ointment, brought him right to his feet and sent him off to play in the woods!

SGANARELLE: The devil take me!

VALERE: In short, Monsieur, you will be content with our offer, and you shall earn what you please by coming with us.

SGANARELLE: *(After a beat)* I'll earn what I please?

LUCAS: Yes.

SGANARELLE: Ah! I'm a doctor, without contradiction! I forgot about that, but I just remembered. What's the problem? Where do we go?

VALERE: We'll lead the way. You must go visit a young lady who has lost her voice.

SGANARELLE: In faith, I haven't found it.

VALERE: He likes to joke. Let's go, Monsieur.

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SGANARELLE: Without a doctor's robe?

LUCAS: I'll get you one.

SGANARELLE: (*Handing the bottle to VALERE*) You, hold this. That is where I put my potions.
(*To LUCAS*)

And you....

(*He spits.*)

Step on that, by order of the doctor.

LUCAS: Parbleu! That's a doctor I like! I think he'll succeed, for he's a buffoon!

End of Act I

ACT II Scene 1

Setting: At the home of MONSIEUR [or MADAME] GERONTE.

VALERE and LUCAS tell M. GERONTE about SGANARELLE. JACQUELINE, the wet-nurse, listens incredulously.

VALERE: Yes, Monsieur. I believe that you will be satisfied, for have brought you the greatest doctor in the world.

LUCAS: Oh, morbleu! You can close the door after this one comes in, for the others aren't worthy to remove his sandals.

VALERE: He's a man who works marvelous cures.

LUCAS: Who has healed people who were dead!

VALERE: He is sometimes a little capricious, as I told you, and there are moments when he loses his senses and doesn't appear to be what he is.

LUCAS: He loves to play the fool, and one might say... don't let this disturb you... that he's taken one too many ax-blows to the head.

VALERE: But deep down he's all science and very often he says things that are completely remarkable.

LUCAS: When he puts his mind to it, he speaks as finely as if he were reading from a book.

VALERE: His reputation precedes him in these parts and everyone comes to see him.

M. GERONTE: I'm dying of anticipation to see him. Bring him to me at once!

VALERE: I'll send him in.

(VALERE exits.)

JACQUELINE: By my faith, Monsieur. I think this one will do just what the others have done and I think it will be the same thing all over again. In my opinion, the best medicine that someone could offer your daughter would be a good and handsome husband who she loves.

M. GERONTE: Indeed, my dear wet-nurse, you mix yourself up in plenty of matters.

LUCAS: Shut up, Nurse Jacqueline. It's not your business to stick your nose in it!

JACQUELINE: If I've told you once I've told you a thousand times that all these doctors will offer nothing but clear water and that your daughter has need of something other than rhubarb. A good husband will heal all the ailments of your daughter.

M. GERONTE: Is she in a state right now that anyone would take her, with the infirmity that she has contracted? And when I intended to give her in marriage, did she not oppose me?

JACQUELINE: Of course she did. You wanted to give her to a man that she didn't love in the least. Why didn't you give her to Leander, who has touched her to the heart? She would have been perfectly obedient and, I would bet, he would have taken her as she is.

M. GERONTE: This Leander is not the one she needs. He doesn't have as many goods as the other.

JACQUELINE: He is heir to a rich uncle.

M. GERONTE: All of those riches to come are hardly worth a song. One has nothing until he holds it himself and one takes a great risk when he counts on the goods that another possesses. Death doesn't always have open ears for the wishes and prayers of one's inheritors and one may grow long in the teeth while awaiting the death of another.

JACQUELINE: All the same, I have always heard tell that in marriage, as in other things, contentment surpasses wealth. Mothers and fathers have this terrible habit of asking “what does he have?” and “what does she have?” Just like in a stage-play, where the good father Pierre marries his daughter to Gross Thomas for vineyard he has more than young Robin, to whom she has devoted her love. And voila, the good daughter turns yellow as a quince and is good for nothing from that time forward. It’s a fine example for you, Monsieur. One has nothing but joy in this life, and I’d rather give my daughter to a good husband who she loves than gain all of the harvest of La Bausse.

M. GERONTE: Peste, Madame Wet-nurse, how you rattle on! Be still, I pray you. You take on too many matters and you’re overheating your milk.

LUCAS: *(to JACQUELINE)* Hey, shut your mouth! You’re nothing but an impertinent woman. Monsieur doesn’t need your lectures and he knows what to do. Just nurse the baby without trying to be the voice of reason.

(Tapping repeatedly on M. GERONTE)

Monsieur is the father of his daughter, and he is good and wise in seeing to her needs.

M. GERONTE: Take it easy, Lucas.

LUCAS: Monsieur, I want to mortify her a little, to teach her the respect that she owes you.

M. GERONTE: Yes, but all of these gestures are hardly necessary.

ACT II Scene 2

VALERE: *(Entering)* Monsieur, prepare yourself. Behold our doctor!

(SGANARELLE enters in a black robe and a pointed hat.)

M. GERONTE: Monsieur, I am delighted to see you in my home, for we have great need of your services.

(SGANARELL tips his hat and M. GERONTE returns the favor.)

SGANARELLE: Hippocrates said... that we should both cover ourselves.

M. GERONTE: Hippocrates said that?

SGANARELLE: Indeed.

M. GERONTE: In what chapter, if you please?

SGANARELLE: In his chapter... on hats.

M. GERONTE: If Hippocrates said it, then we must oblige.

(They both put on their hats.)

SGANARELLE: Monsieur Doctor, having learned many marvelous things...

M. GERONTE: Excuse me, but to whom are you speaking?

SGANARELLE: Why to you, of course.

M. GERONTE: But I’m not a doctor.

SGANARELLE: You’re not a doctor?

M. GERONTE: No.

SGANARELLE: On the level?

M. GERONTE: On the level.

(SGANARELLE beats M. GERONTE)

Ah! Ah! Ah!

SGANARELLE: Now you're a doctor. I've never had any other license!

M. GERONTE: What devil of a man have you brought me?

VALERE: Monsieur, I warned you that he liked to play the fool.

M. GERONTE: Yes, and I'd like him to take his foolishness out of here!

LUCAS: Don't worry about that, Monsieur. That was all in jest.

M. GERONTE: His jesting does not please me!

SGANARELLE: Monsieur, I ask your pardon for the liberty that I took.

M. GERONTE: Monsieur, I am your humble servant.

SGANARELLE: I am grieved...

M. GERONTE: It was nothing.

SGANARELLE: ...for the blows...

M. GERONTE: There is no harm done.

SGANARELLE: ...which I had the honor to lay upon you.

M. GERONTE: Let's not say any more about it. Monsieur, I have a daughter who has fallen victim to a strange malady.

SGANARELLE: I am delighted, Monsieur, that your daughter has need of me, and I would wish with all my heart that you might have need of me also, you and all of your family, to demonstrate the desire I have to serve you.

M. GERONTE: I am touched by your sentiments.

SGANARELLE: I assure you that it is from the depth of my soul that I speak.

M. GERONTE: You do me too much honor.

SGANARELLE: What is your daughter's name?

M. GERONTE: Lucinda.

SGANARELLE: Ah Lucinda! Beautiful name to medicate! Lucinda!

M. GERONTE: I'll go see what she is doing.

SGANARELLE: *(Eying JACQUELINE)* Who is that woman there?

M. GERONTE: She is the wet-nurse of a little grandchild that I have.

(He exits.)

SGANARELLE: Peste! What a pretty piece of handiwork! Ah, wet-nurse, charming wet-nurse, my medicine is the humble servant of your nursery, and I would wish that I could be the fortunate baby who saps the milk of your good graces. All of my remedies, all of my science, all of my capacity is at your service and...

LUCAS: With your permission, Monsieur Doctor, leave my wife alone!

SGANARELLE: What? Is she your wife?

LUCAS: Yes.

SGANARELLE: Oh really?

(He acts like he is going to embrace LUCAS but embraces JACQUELINE instead.)

I had no idea and I rejoice in your love for one another.

LUCAS: *(Pulling SGANARELLE away)* Take it easy, if you please.

SGANARELLE: I assure you that I am overjoyed that you are united together.

(He again acts like he is going to embrace LUCAS and, passing under LUCAS' arm, embraces JACQUELINE again.)

I congratulate her for having a husband like you and I congratulate you for having a wife so beautiful, so wise, and so well constructed as she is.

LUCAS: *(pulling SGANARELLE away again)* Peste! Enough compliments, I beseech you.

SGANARELLE: Don't you want me to rejoice with you for having such a beautiful union?

LUCAS: With me, as much as you like, but with her, cut the ceremony!

SGANARELLE: I share equally in the joy of you both...

(He repeats the same bit.)

...and if I embrace you to witness of my joy, I must embrace her and give her my witness as well.

LUCAS: *(Ripping SGANARELLE away)* Morbleu, Monsieur Doctor, nothing but nonsense!

ACT II Scene 3

M. GERONTE: *(Entering)* Monsieur, my daughter will be brought here momentarily.

SGANARELLE: I await her, Monsieur, with all of my medicine.

M. GERONTE: Where is it?

SGANARELLE: *(Pointing to his head)* All in here.

M. GERONTE: Very well.

SGANARELLE: *(Reaching for JACQUELINE)* But as I interest myself in the health of all of your family, it is essential that I test a little of your wet-nurse's milk and that I examine her bosom.

LUCAS: *(Pushing SGANARELLE away)* No no! Uh uh! I'll have none of that!

SGANARELLE: It is the duty of the physician to inspect the breasts of wet-nurses.

LUCAS: You have no such duty, with all due respect.

SGANARELLE: Have you the audacity to oppose the doctor?

LUCAS: I scoff at that.

SGANARELLE: *(To LUCAS)* I'll give you a fever!

JACQUELINE: *(Pushing LUCAS away)* Get out of my way. Am I not big enough to defend myself if he does something that he shouldn't?

LUCAS: I don't want him to touch you!

SGANARELLE: Fie on the villain who is jealous of his wife.

ACT II Scene 4

(VALERE escorts LUCINDA into the room.)

M. GERONTE: Voila my daughter.

SGANARELLE: Is she the patient?

M. GERONTE: Yes, she is my only daughter and I would have all the regrets in the world if she should go and die on me.

SGANARELLE: That must be prevented at all cost! She must not die without doctor's orders.

M. GERONTE: Here we are. Have a seat.

(LUCINDA sits.)

SGANARELLE: Here's a patient who is not too revolting, and I expect that a good, healthy man would do well by her.

(LUCINDA laughs.)

M. GERONTE: You've made her laugh, Monsieur.

SGANARELLE: So much the better. When the doctor makes the patient laugh, it's the best sign in the world.

Now then, what seems to be the matter? What do you have? From what ailment do you suffer?

LUCINDA: *(Pointing to her mouth, head, and chin)* Haw, hee, ho, haw.

SGANARELLE: Uh, what's that you say?

LUCINDA: Haw, hee, how, haw, haw, he, ho.

SGANARELLE: Haw, hee, ho, haw, ho? I don't understand a word you say! What a devil of a language is that?

M. GERONTE: Monsieur, that is her malady. She has become mute, and up until now we haven't been able to discover the cause. It's a misfortune that has postponed her wedding.

SGANARELLE: And why is that?

M. GERONTE: He whom she must marry wants to wait for her recovery before concluding the affair.

SGANARELLE: And who is this fool who doesn't want his wife to be mute? Would to heaven mine had this same malady! I'd be slow to want to have her cured.

M. GERONTE: Anyhow, Monsieur, we pray you use all of your cures to heal her of this ailment.

SGANARELLE: Ah, don't worry about a thing. Tell me something. This malady, does it give her cramps?

M. GERONTE: Yes, Monsieur.

SGANARELLE: So much the better. Does she feel great pain in her head and kidneys?

M. GERONTE: The greatest.

SGANARELLE: That's even better. Does she go... you know where?

M. GERONTE: Yes.

SGANARELLE: Copiously?

M. GERONTE: I don't catch your meaning.

SGANARELLE: The material, is it praiseworthy?

M. GERONTE: I know nothing of such things.

SGANARELLE: *(To LUCINDA)* Give me your arm. Here's a pulse that indicates that your daughter is mute!

M. GERONTE: Ah, yes, Monsieur! That's her malady. You found it on your first try.

SGANARELLE: Aha!

JACQUELINE: (*Unimpressed*) Look how he guessed her ailment!

SGANARELLE: We great physicians, we know these things. An amateur wouldn't have known what to say, and would've said, "it's this" or "it's that." But me, I put my finger on it the first time and I'm telling you that your daughter is mute.

M. GERONTE: Yes, but I would certainly appreciate it if you could tell me from what this malady arises.

SGANARELLE: There is nothing easier. It comes from having lost her voice.

M. GERONTE: Very well, but what is the cause, if you please, that made her lose her voice?

SGANARELLE: All of the best writers would say that it comes from the impediment of the action of her tongue.

M. GERONTE: But again, your thoughts on the impediment of the action of her tongue?

SGANARELLE: Aristotle, in this regard, said... some very beautiful things.

M. GERONTE: I believe it.

SGANARELLE: Ah, he was a man of great stature.

M. GERONTE: Without a doubt.

SGANARELLE: (*Raising his hand above his head*) A man of even greater stature than my own... Now returning to our reasoning, I maintain that the impediment of the action of her tongue is caused by particular humors which, between us doctors, we call peccadillo humors, that is to say... humors that are... peccadillo. And in as much as the vapors formed by the exhalations of the influences that arise in the region of the malady, coming from, so to speak... Do you understand Latin?

M. GERONTE: Not a word.

SGANARELLE: (*With astonishment*) You don't understand Latin?!

M. GERONTE: No.

SGANARELLE: Cabricias arci turam, catalamus, singularitay, nominativo, hike musa (the muse) bonus, bona, bonum, Bleu sanctos, estne oratio latinias? Etiam! (Yes!) Quare (Why?) Quia substantivo et adjectivum concordat in generi, numerum, et casus!

M. GERONTE: Ah, if only I had studied!

JACQUELINE: (*Sarcastically*) What a wise man!

LUCAS: It was so beautiful that I didn't understand a word of it.

SGANARELLE: Or, in other words, these vapors, of which I spoke, as they pass from the left side, where the liver is found, to the right side, where the heart is found, it happens that the lung, which in Latin we can "armyan," having communication with the brain, which in Greek is "nasmus," by way of the vein cavity, which we call in Hebrew "cubile," encounters in route the said vapors, which fill the ventricles of the shoulder blades. And because the said vapors... understand this reasoning well, I pray you... and because the said vapors have a certain malignity... listen to this, I beseech you...

M. GERONTE: Yes,

SGANARELLE: ... have a certain malignity, which is caused... pay attention, if you please!

M. GERONTE: I'm with you!

SGANARELLE: ... which is caused by the acidity of the humors encompassed in the concavity of the diaphragm, it happens that these vapors... ossabandus, nequeys, nequer, potarium, quipsa milus! Voila the very thing that makes your daughter mute!

JACQUELINE: Ah, how well our man explained that!

LUCAS: Could I ever wag my tongue so well?

M. GERONTE: One cannot reason better, without a doubt. There was only one thing that shocked me, which was the location of the liver and the heart. It seems to me that you placed them opposite of where they should be, that the heart is on the left side and the liver is on the right side.

SGANARELLE: Yes, it used to be that way, but we've changed all that and now we practice medicine in an entirely new way.

M. GERONTE: I wasn't aware of that, and I beg your pardon for my ignorance.

SGANARELLE: There's no harm done, and you're not obliged to be as wise as we are.

M. GERONTE: Assuredly, but Monsieur, what do you believe ought to be done for this malady?

SGANARELLE: What I think ought to be done?

M. GERONTE: Yes.

SGANARELLE: My opinion is that she should be put to bed and should be given as remedy a quantity of bread dipped in wine.

M. GERONTE: Why so, Monsieur?

SGANARELLE: Because in wine and bread, mixed together, there is a sympathetic virtue that makes one talk. Don't you see how you give nothing else to parrots and how they learn to speak by eating it?

M. GERONTE: That is true! Ah! The great man! Quickly, a quantity of bread and wine!

(LUCAS exits.)

SGANARELLE: I'll come back this evening to see what state she is in.

(He stops JACQUELINE.)

Not so far, you, Monsieur, here's a wet-nurse on whom I must work certain remedies.

JACQUELINE: Who? Me? I feel fine!

SGANARELLE: Too bad, nurse, too bad. This great health is to be feared, and besides, it won't do any harm to give you some agreeable bleeding, to administer a dulcifying enema.

M. GERONTE: But Monsieur, that's a procedure that I do not understand. Why go ahead and bleed someone who isn't even sick?

SGANARELLE: It doesn't matter. The procedure is beneficial, for as one drinks for a thirst to come, one must also bleed for a malady to come.

JACQUELINE: In faith! That's nonsense, and I don't want to make my body an apothecary's workshop.

(She exits.)

SGANARELLE: You are resistant to remedies, but I know how to get you to submit to reason.

(To M. GERONTE)

I bid you good day.

M. GERONTE: Wait a moment, if you please.

SGANARELLE: What do you want?

M. GERONTE: To give you money, Monsieur.

SGANARELLE: *(Holding out his hand)* I won't take any of it, Monsieur.

M. GERONTE: Monsieur...

SGANARELLE: *(Gesturing with an open palm)* None at all.

M. GERONTE: One moment.

SGANARELLE: *(Stretching out his hand)* Absolutely no way!

M. GERONTE: Please...

SGANARELLE: You're only fooling yourself.

M. GERONTE: It's all ready for you.

SGANARELLE: I'll have none of it.

M. GERONTE: But...

SGANARELLE: It is not money that makes me work.

M. GERONTE: I believe it.

(M. GERONTE places a pouch of coins into SGANARELLE's hand.)

SGANARELLE: Is it up to weight?

M. GERONTE: Yes, Monsieur

SGANARELLE: I am not a mercenary doctor.

M. GERONTE: I know that well.

SGANARELLE: Self-interest doesn't govern me in the least.

M. GERONTE: I never thought it did.

(M. GERONTE exits.)

ACT II Scene 5

SGANARELLE: *(Aside, looking at his money pouch)* In faith, this isn't going so badly, and provided that...

LEANDER: *(Entering stealthily)* Monsieur, I've waited to see you for quite a while and I come to implore your assistance.

SGANARELLE: *(Feeling LEANDER's pulse)* Here's a pulse that is very ill.

LEANDER: I'm not sick, Monsieur, and it's not for that that I came to see you.

SGANARELLE: If you're not sick, then why the devil didn't you say so?

LEANDER: No, to tell you the matter in two words, I am Leander, who is in love with Lucinda, who you just visited. And since, because of the ill humor of her father, any sort of access to her is barred to me, I'm taking the risk of approaching you to help me pursue my love and to give me a chance to execute a scheme that I've conceived, to be able to tell her three words on which absolutely depend my happiness and my life!

SGANARELLE: What do you take me for? How dare you address yourself to me to serve you in your amorous pursuits and to try to reduce the dignity of a doctor to tasks of that nature!

LEANDER: Monsieur, don't make so much noise!

SGANARELLE: I want to make noise! You're impertinent!

LEANDER: Monsieur, softly...

SGANARELLE: You're imprudent!

LEANDER: Please...

SGANARELLE: And I will teach you that I'm not the man for your scheme, and that it is extreme insolence...

LEANDER: *(Handing SGANARELLE a pouch of money)* Monsieur...

SGANARELLE: ... to try to employ me... Of course, I'm not speaking about you, for you are an honest man, and I would be delighted to render you service, but there are certain impertinent people in the world who come and take others for what they're not, and I assure you that that sends me into a rage.

LEANDER: I beg your pardon, Monsieur.

SGANARELLE: It is all right. What's this all about?

LEANDER: You should know, Monsieur, that this malady which you are trying to cure is a false malady. The doctors have reasoned about it as they should, and have said that it arises from the brain, from the entrails, from the spleen, from the liver or what have you, but it is certain that love is the true cause and that Lucinda hasn't accrued this malady except to deliver her from a marriage to which she would have been submitted. But, for fear that someone should see us together, let's retire from this place, and I'll tell you as we walk what I wish for you to do.

SGANARELLE: Let's go, sir. You have given me for your love an inconceivable tenderness, and I will exhaust all of my medicine in her behalf. Either the patient will perish or else she's all yours.

(They exit together.)

End of Act II

8 more pages make up Act Three