

THE MORTAL BED

By Lewis Routh

DOLUS, APPRENTICE TO THE GODS

PROMETHEUS, A TITAN

ACT ONE: *an empty stage, a queen-size bed at center. Dolus, wearing a simple, plain, Greek, short length chiton¹, is sitting on the bed, disgusted.*

Dolus

(Sighs heavily. Stands and paces. Stops and looks at the bed once, shakes his head in abject disappointment and paces on. He sits on the foot of the bed. He looks out at the audience and speaks to them, matter-of-factly, building to a crescendo of effrontery.)

If you're waiting for a prologue, it's not going to happen. The playwright forgot to write a prologue. Wait. "Forgot" is not the apropos word – the playwright didn't forget! He did NOT include a prologue deliberately, intentionally, premeditatedly!

(He is out of breath from his explosive anger.)

I'm not surprised. Playwrights today have lost the eloquence of language – the splendor of the spoken word – the lyrical, lilting, heroic pentameter of prose! Today's plays have little resemblance to the pageantry of theatre in the glorious days of the Dionysia. Ah! Now THAT had style! That had a prologue! That was theatre!

(Dolus crosses as if to exit, stops short of the wing and begins his majestic entrance as he speaks, the grandness wears off to expose the inelegant actor below the façade.)

If there were a prologue, I would strut out onto the stage – regally, robed in the finest velvets trimmed in delicate silks and shimmering satins – not in this shoddy, inelegant rag created by a female-impersonator of a certain age who is, of course, my dearest friend and I just adore her to death.

(Grand posture again, as he speaks the elegance wears thin exposing the actor again.)

If this were the prologue, I would wear a fabulous mask – not come fresh-faced-naked looking like any old lost commoner who had stumbled onto the stage looking for the public piss-pot tended by a handsome slave!

(He pantomimes a mask - he takes it and puts it on. His entire character becomes alive – exaggerated, imbued with a new sense of theatricality. Grand posture again.)

If this were a prologue, I would stand like a statue, awaiting the complete silence and attention of the audience.

(Standing, grandly, in an elegant pose, wait for the audience to be silent. This may require several severe looks of castigation as the audience laughs, coughs, and gets all this out of their system.)

As soon as the audience had achieved a modicum of attentive dignity, I would address them grandly:

(A scroll appears in his hand and he reads aloud)

"I honor, in my humble prayers, the awesome majesty of Zeus..."

(To the audience, rolling his eyes)

Yes, I know! That's how these things always start!

(Reading from the scroll again)

"Twenty-five hundred years ago! Two thousand years before Shakespeare! Western theatre was born in Athens, Greece!"

(To the audience.)

Many people – moved by the magnitude of this information – find it their duty to applaud.

(Rolls his eyes, begins reading the scroll again.)

"Between 600 and 200 BC, the ancient Athenians created an illustrious theatre culture whose form, technique and terminology have lasted two millennia. They created plays that are still considered CLASSICS -- the greatest works of world drama! Their achievement is truly remarkable when one considers that there have been only two other periods in the history of theatre that could be said to approach the greatness of ancient Athens - Elizabethan England and, perhaps the Twentieth Century..."

(Aside to the audience.)

...when Tennessee Williams gave audiences a brutish, sexy hunk of a man in a torn wife-beater!

(A beat.)

Mmmmmmm!

(Reading again from the scroll.)

“The greatest playwright of Elizabethan England was unquestionably Shakespeare, but Athens produced at least five equally great playwrights.”

(To the audience)

Five! Go ahead, you may applaud there. I would!

(Reading again)

“The God Dionysus – or more accurately the Cult of Dionysus – propagated theatre with the Dionysia Festival performances and contests. Theatre can therefore be said to have evolved from a group of fifty men, costumed as satyrs, singing, dancing and playing instruments while wearing huge phalluses.

(A beat.)

Mmmmmmm!

(Aside to the audience.)

But there will be no phalluses in this play! I can see the disappointment in your drowsy faces!

(He stands grandly again, looks at the scroll as if he might read and tosses it aside, announces dramatically... triumphantly)

Prometheus! I. Am. Waiting.

(Dolus allows that statement to sink in a moment before continuing He strikes his grand, elegant pose, waits for the audience to be silent. Grandly, elegantly, dramatically proclaims.)

I am waiting for a man.

(After a beat he finds this hysterical.)

Aren't we all?

(Laughs again. Tires of laughing. Calls out.)

Prometheus?

(After a beat. An expletive.)

Where is that son-of-a-Titan?

(Calls out, firmly just as Prometheus enters)

Promethee...!

Prometheus

(Swaggers in wearing an elegant exomis².)

I heard you the first time, Dolus!

(He sees Dolus' grand pose, then he sees the audience)

A performance? A performance!

(Registers delight – puffing up his chest and wearing his cocky smile. Strutting.)

Who calls me thusly? Who summons the mighty Prometheus?

Dolus

You know who I am, stop acting! Why didn't you answer?

Prometheus

The mighty Prometheus does not answer to his trickster of an apprentice, Dolus! My apprentice of Trickery answers to me!

Dolus

(Insincerely bowing, followed by a curtsey.)

You are – of course – so correct, Sire, I hope you are not disturbed.

Prometheus

(Stretching as if sleepy; but it allows him to show his muscles)

I was sleeping. When one has spent centuries tortured, chained to a rock, daily an eagle comes to eat my regenerated liver.

Dolus

Yeah, yeah, everybody's got a hard-luck story.

Prometheus

(Stops short when he sees the bed)

By Jove and all the Gods of Olympus, what is that?

Dolus

Obviously, it's a bed, Prometheus... for your precious mortals!

Prometheus

A bed? A bed? Is this some ruse you have concocted?

Dolus

It is true, Sire, no machinations. 'Tis a bed, for truth be known, it is truly a bed!

Prometheus

For some Sultan?

Dolus

Not for royalty, you handsome braggart -- though it is called "queen size" -- this is the bed for a common man. In point of fact, it belongs to a guy named Steve, a known homosexual. Not that all guys named Steve are known homosexuals...

(He laughs at the punch-line to come)

...some Steve's don't know it yet!

Prometheus

A common man? A RICH common man!

Dolus

Not rich, Sire, but he does have what they call a "disposable income."

Prometheus

Mankind is marvelous! "Disposable incomes" and "opposable thumbs!" How clever of me to think of that!

Dolus

Yes, I'm at a loss for accolades. But, Sire, all men have a bed... well, no that's not entirely true...

Prometheus

(A revelation)

Ah! How delightful! All men have become rich! Rich from the gifts that I, Prometheus, graciously endowed...

Dolus

They're not rich, you gorgeous, puffed-up bag of braggadocio, many men have a bed such as this, and the bed is not the real issue here; it is the bed's owner that...

Prometheus

But a soft cushion such as this...

(He feels the sheets)

And fine linens as these...

Dolus

Six hundred thread count, \$89.95 at Bed Bath and Beyond.

(A solemn oath – left hand over heart; right hand up)

It is written.

Prometheus

A bed such as this would make a man weak, and soft! A man with strength -- a man with mighty character -- needs but a pile of reeds or straw placed in a corner to lie upon.

Dolus

Well, they would... but it's about all those vermin!

Prometheus

(He presses the top of the mattress; its softness raises his Titan ire)

Has mankind and its ungrateful mortals become such mewling babes that they lay slack and flaccid on such a coddling-couch as this?!

Dolus

It's called a "pillow-top," Sire.

(Prometheus checks Dolus's face to make certain he is truthful and is not fooling)

'Tis true, Sire. No jest. "A pillow-TOP!" The mortals demand it! "A Unique Memory Foam Pillow-top Mattress is like sleeping on a cloud."

(A solemn oath – left hand over heart; right hand up)

Same tome: *Woman's Day*. It is written!

Prometheus

(A plea to the Gods he stand on the bed)

Zeus, you can bind me to the mountain again! Hephaistos, chain me once more to the Caucasia! My attempt to create mankind was ineffective. Man has become a weakling, an infirm nursling, coddled in nocturnal slumber as a babe fresh from the womb! Sleeping on a pillow-top. A "queen-sized, cloudlike, pillow top."

Dolus

(Rolling his eyes at Prometheus' grand-stand performance.)

You know, this would be a lot easier if you'd act like this isn't the Dionysian Theatre. I mean, really, Prometheus, get down to earth! This isn't some great tragedy by Aeschylus and you're not the hero; okay?

Prometheus

Trickery? What say you? If not a work by a pirating playwright -- capitalizing upon my name and fame -- what is this tragedy but a stage play? It's certainly not a comedy! I'm in it!

Dolus

Do you see a chorus?

(Prometheus looks there is no chorus)

Do you see a pipe player?

(Prometheus looks there is no pipe player)

Do you see spear-carriers?

(Prometheus looks, points to Dolus)

Am I carrying a spear?

(To the audience – an aside)

Why are the good-looking ones always so dense?

Prometheus

(During this speech, Prometheus bears his verbal strength upon Dolus who ends-up lying flat upon the stage floor)

But this IS a play, Dolus! Ha! You try to trick me! Ha! You think me thick -- but I have eyes! I can see spectators! Attentive spectators! I hear them laugh at inappropriate moments, I hear them cough during my great speeches, I see the uncomfortable peasants who have rushed through dinner -- and now suffer the torment of dyspepsia adjusting their large backsides on the inadequately upholstered chairs, and I hear the pencils of the churlish critics who sit near the exits and pray for fire!

(Through Prometheus' forceful delivery, Dolus falls upon the floor)

Ah ha! You see, they laugh, they find your abject dishonor amusing – that proves this is an audience! And... and! This is most assuredly a theatre! It doesn't require an incompetent playwright, desperate to choose between notoriety and alcoholism to write me the line, "this IS a play!" Dolus let me assure you, despite its lack of appropriate outfitting, if Prometheus is summoned to appear, especially by a subordinate, supporting character as YOU, then Prometheus IS the hero and this IS a play!

(An ill-timed and poorly executed tiny flash of smoke puffs to accent his ire, two beats after the word "play!")

Dolus

(From the floor)

Oh, yes, great Prometheus, giver of mankind to the world, giver of FIRE to humanity, benefactor to mortal man with the arts and sciences, you are the noblest of heroes! Listen to the spectators applaud your magnificence! Hear the crowd's authentic cheers!

(The crowd either DOES or DOES NOT cheer – this determines Dolus's visual [or ad libbed] response.)

Sit, my noble hero – sit just a moment – and let me tell you why I have summoned you here.

Prometheus

(Prometheus sits on the bed. Bounces on it a time or two; trying it on for size. He leaps up – appalled!)

Sit? On such a sniveling-soft bed as this?

Dolus

Well, Sire... that is partly the problem. Here sit. Rest.

(Dolus holds Prometheus' ample, muscular arm and lightly steers him toward the bed to sit.)

Oh, my! That's quite a muscular arm you have on you there, heroic-Prometheus.

(Prometheus offers him the other arm, flexed, so that Dolus might admire it as well)

Oh, my! Two of them! A set! How wonderful it must be to be embraced by such powerful arms.

(Prometheus stands to offer him an embrace)

But we do not have time for such playful if phenomenally appealing scenes...

(Dolus directs this at someone in the audience)

...no matter how delighted a particular spectator might be at such immorality!

(Petting, massaging, calming Prometheus. A moment passes. Tenderly.)

Prometheus?

(Prometheus grunts a response.)

Remember the glorious night when you were creating man?

Prometheus

Not glorious, Dolus; the poets have always characterized it as "the illustrious night."

Dolus

(Less than enthusiastic he prods the egotist again)

Remember the ILLUSTRIOUS night when you were creating man?

Prometheus

(Boastful, his voice fills the stage.)

Zeus, the king of the gods, the ruler of Mount Olympus, and the god of the sky and thunder, had entrusted me to create mankind.

Dolus

And your idiot brother...

Prometheus

My brother is not an idiot! He is... foolish.

Dolus

Your “foolish” brother gave all the positive traits to the animals... he gave away flight, and swiftness, and warm fur, and superior hearing and poor YOU, Prometheus, you and you alone were forced to create man with no positive traits remaining.

Prometheus

I created man from inert clay, and despite the foolishness of my brother, I shared with mankind what knowledge I had. I gave man the arts of civilization: writing, mathematics, agriculture, medicine, and science. I created mankind, made in my own handsome and intelligent visage! Perfect!

Dolus

Well, not the perfection you had intended, Sire. Remember, you drank a bit too much wine?

Prometheus

Ah, here we go again! By Jove, will it never cease? Go ahead; say it! Prometheus unleashed ... unleashed homosexuality upon the world! Ah, what shame! What a calamity!

Dolus

What a spectacle!

Prometheus

(Dolus allows Prometheus to fret and strut. He is polite and waits while Prometheus rages on dramatically)

I am filled with contempt that this minor infraction – this trivial bit of inconsequential nothingness has blown into some cataclysmic effrontery. I've explained this at every inquiry! I am not at fault, even Dionysus says it so. The man-woman Dionysus poured the wine... heavily poured the wine... His “special wine” – the wine assured to intoxicate! And I...

Dolus

And you got so drunk you created homosexuality and unleashed it on an unsuspecting world.

Prometheus

I did not, Dolus! You quote Aesop – and what does he know with his silly “every thing must have a moral” philosophy? Sometimes tales have no morals!

Dolus

Yours certainly didn't have any!

Prometheus

Well how could morality appear when that impish, tempting, incorrigible Dionysus is around!

(He fondly remembers the exploits he shared with Dionysus and a smile crosses his lips)

Dionysus DOES – sometimes – add a bit of delightful passion to life. There is nothing wrong with it! It hurts no one and the parties oft time delight in it. I did not CREATE homosexuality – as Aesop would have the world believe. Homosexuality existed before I was born, before my brother Atlas shouldered the celestial sphere. It existed before the ARTS of the Gods! Who do you think painted all those salacious scenes on all those vases? Oh the Mount Olympian Gods act all swaggering; but they've dipped their pen in more than one ink pot! I therefore could not and did not “unleash homosexuality on an unsuspecting world.”

Dolus

Yes you did. Everybody says it. Aesop said it; so did Aeschylus and Sappho – Sappho had a LOT to say about it – hoo-hoo!

Prometheus

Who's going to believe Sappho? She's a... a...

Dolus

A lesbian?

Prometheus

Well, that's certainly not my fault! I didn't release homosexuality... well... not deliberately! I got so drunk I didn't know what I was doing.

Dolus

Oh, yes, Sire... the old "I was so drunk last night" syndrome. A feeble fable, I fear will last the ages! Yet no one ever believes the truth of it!

Prometheus

I agree, I should not have allowed Dionysus to take advantage of me.

Dolus

You poor, big old thing! Letting that little womanly wino take advantage of you and those rippling muscles of yours!

Prometheus

He did. With that special erotic red wine of his. The result was: a smile on my face to last the ages, and... homosexuality.

Dolus

Which YOU let loose upon mankind!

Prometheus

I let nothing loose!

Dolus

Except your morals!

Prometheus

Well, at the time, it seemed like a great amusement.

Trickery

One that you quickly embraced.

Prometheus

Not as quickly as Aesop would have you believe. And certainly not with the passionate leadership attributed to me by Sappho! Dionysus wished to become my eromenos – my beloved – and the wine helped to make him desirable... for a time.

Dolus

From what I hear a LONG time.

Prometheus

You spend too much time at the theatre!

Dolus

Can you deny it? You and Dionysus were an item! You were a couple! And you liked it! He was a God! You were just a mere son of a Titan.

Prometheus

I assure you—though he was a god -- I was the superior of that pair.

Dolus

And a pretty pair you were, too! Parading around the cradle of Western Civilization, with nothing on but a silly smile.

Prometheus

Dionysus persuaded me to “take a stroll” – as he put it. I knew he wore me on his arm like a trophy.

Dolus

Yet you said nothing. You liked being the plaything of a God!

Prometheus

He kept me intoxicated. If you’ve ever sipped from his cup, you’ll know what I mean! He’s always been extremely pretty; some with visual impairments have even claimed Dionysus was beautiful. And anyone can be beautiful if you’ve had enough wine!

Dolus

And all the time you “strolled” through the Acropolis, arm-in-arm, you had no idea that you had introduced homosexuality to the mortals?

Prometheus

Not!! Dionysus did the deed! I didn’t know – I swear I didn’t know -- Dionysus had secretly slipped a little homosexuality to mankind, maybe 10%! Just a taste! I did not realize it until I woke up... then it was too late!

Dolus

You could have asked mankind to return it!

Prometheus

Return it? You can’t return it! You have a little sip and you say, “Ambrosia!” or you say, “That’s ghastly! I don’t like wine, I’ll have an ouzo.”

Dolus

So, you admit homosexuality is an ambrosia?

Prometheus

Dionysus... filled my cup and blamed me for the gaff and I was too intoxicated on the special wine of eroticism to remember if I was truly at fault! All I remember is Dionysus whispering in my ear, “Imagine the thrills and vivification that awaits you! Ride the sensuous wave, Prometheus!”

(He looks to see if his acting is affecting his audience and he feebly adds)

“Ride the wave.” And I rode! I rode it well! But there is nothing shameful about my ride! No matter how sordid your imaginations make it! Oh, I can see what you’re picturing in your minds! ME and Dionysus! Oh, there is nothing worse than imagination without taste

Dolus

That is another wonderful trait you gave to humanity... the ability to blame someone else for your own mistakes!

Prometheus

It is not blame I offer; but truth! It was Dionysus’ fault! You know how he likes the men! Do I like the men?

(Dolus’ rapid look at Prometheus lets us see the answer.)

Well, not exclusively! I was doing a perfectly good job of creating man...without anyone’s help... I had no eronemos to assist me... then Dionysus flounced into the picture. Remember, Dolus, it was I who gave man the gift of fire!

Dolus

You stole it from the gods!

Prometheus

Another lie! I didn't STEAL fire! See how these stories get twisted and the truth gets set in a clay statue without feet? When one STEALS something, the object is removed completely from its owner, it is STOLEN. I did not remove fire from the gods – I merely borrowed an ember – a tiny ember. An ember so tiny it fit inside a ferula tube! And I carried it to man like a torch bearer, I did not hide it like a thief but bore it proudly like a benefactor!

Dolus

(Unenthusiastic)

And even today, your gift is celebrated at the Olympic Games as the torch of fire is brought, uniting all mankind!

Prometheus

You see!?! That's true, that's true! It was a good thing and I've been labeled and libeled as a "thief!"

Dolus

And – poor you -- all the good you did is overshadowed by the huge mistake you made! Whether you're a thief or a benevolent benefactor, you raised the ire of Zeus!

Prometheus

Oh Zeus knows no other emotion but ire! Thunder and lightning! Loud and all-powerful! A boom and a flash! Zeus is all show!

Dolus

And strong enough to chain you to a mountain for centuries!

Prometheus

Yes, and I was saved by Heracles... blah blah blah! This debate is pointless! What prompted you to summon me to this ridiculously soft and mewling bed used by mortals?

Dolus

Not just any mortals: Gay mortals!

Prometheus

Mankind is happy and gay, and I am thrilled, Dolus.

Dolus

No no no, wait! You misunderstand. These mortals are "gay" – they are homosexual – this is the bed of a homosexual couple.

Prometheus

A man and his eromenos is of no interest to me.

Dolus

It will be when they arrive back. What time is it?

Prometheus

By the Gods how should I know?

Dolus

By the stars, Prometheus. Have you forgotten how to read the heavens' time?

Prometheus

(Looks up; waves his hand – STARS APPEAR -- and Prometheus is startled by what he sees)
What heaven is this? Has my brother Atlas dropped the sphere of heaven and it rolled to another part of the universe?

Dolus

I forgot... I forgot... my bad And it's... just past midnight. This is New Orleans 2008.

Prometheus

(Stares at him, speechless)

I have no idea what you just uttered.

(Looks up at the sky)

Where is the constellation Sagittarius – the arrow of Heracles which killed the eagle that tormented me? It should be there and it is missing!

Dolus

Forget it... this isn't Athens... we're clear around on the other side of the globe.

(By his expression Prometheus is "lost" to Dolus's meaning)

Oh, yeah! Globe! Uh earth! The earth is round.

Prometheus

Round?

Dolus

Yeah, like a pear. Athens is on one side and we're clear around here on the other side.

Prometheus

And Zeus made it this way deliberately? Ah! I see! Zeus did this deliberately to punish me further for...

Dolus

No, Zeus didn't know. In fact, Zeus didn't create the earth. This other God actually created the earth.

Prometheus

What? What other God? Who? I know the Gods! Who claims to be more powerful than mighty Zeus?

Dolus

God.

Prometheus

Yes, this God. What is His name?

Dolus

God. His name is "God."

Prometheus

This God's name is "God?"

Dolus

And before we get lost in some Abbott and Costello routine, God's name is "God!"

Prometheus

And his cat's name is "Cat," and his dog's name is "Dog," This God is not very creative!

Dolus

(As Prometheus laughs heartily)

Yeah, He's a simple kind-a guy.

(Calming Prometheus' laughter)

I wouldn't laugh too loudly, I hear this God-of-all-things is vengeful; and yet some say He is a merciful Father and forgiving. The jury's still out on it. For me, I pretty much don't test the theory either way.

Prometheus

Zeus and Heracles will protect me from the wrath of this...
(*Dolus claps a hand over Prometheus' mouth.*)

Dolus

Calling His name in vain is a blasphemy, and I hear He doesn't like it. He calls it a sin. Sin is very very bad. He's the creator of all things... and He kind-a has the opinion "I made you, I can kill you." So, don't push your luck. You're lucky you're a titan's child; he destroyed all the Olympian Gods.

Prometheus

Destroyed...? All of them?

Dolus

I hear Zeus rose up in all his might... you know Zeus had no patience for anyone who challenged him... and God [the Father] merely snapped his fingers...

(*Demonstrates a snap of his fingers*)

No thunder, no lightening, just a little snap and Zeus was reduced to a limestone statue. Not marble, mind you which can endure the elements; but limestone which over time withers and wastes away to dust in the wind! Would you believe it; nobody worships Zeus any longer? Nobody. It's sad really. In fact nobody worships any of the Olympian Gods any more. But once a week [and sometimes two and three times a week] the mortals will crowd into temples the size of coliseums and worship God the Father.

Prometheus

This Father-God killed all the Olympian Gods? Even Dionysus?

(*Dolus nods, we see the pain this causes Prometheus, even though he hides it.*)

Where is He, the Father-God?

Dolus

Everywhere.

Prometheus

How can He be every...

Dolus

Trust me. Every. Where. So, act penitent.

Prometheus

God the Father has no home?

Dolus

Oh, yeah. He lives in heaven.

Prometheus

Ah, with Zeus.

Dolus

With a... just His followers. The ones who have died and who worshipped Him properly on earth get to live in heaven with Him afterward. So... uh... Zeus probably isn't there.

Prometheus

(*Bows his head reverently, sneaks a look around hoping for a glimpse of God*)

What does this God named God look like?

Dolus

He has no physical appearance, not that we can see; but a mortal named Moses saw Him once as a burning bush.

Prometheus

A what?

Dolus

A burning bush.

Prometheus

A bush?

Dolus

Burning.

Prometheus

God came to this mortal Moses in the guise of a “bush?!?”

Dolus

On fire. A bush on fire; yes.

Prometheus

You play the trickster! You fool me, Dolus! Oh, your ruse seemed honest for a moment...

Dolus

No no no! It's true. There is a passage in the Book. The mortals have written a book...

Prometheus

Mortals have mastered the art of writing?

Dolus

Yeah, you've been asleep for quite a while. All the arts which you so graciously gave the mortals have created wonderful things that these mortals excel at!

Prometheus

All the arts you say? They all took hold and found fertile soil to root and grow?

Dolus

And flourish!

Prometheus

Writing? And Music? And Theatre?

Dolus

Yes, almost all mortals read and write. And they all dearly love their music -- playing it deafeningly loud. And theatre! Ah, the theatre has flourished so! Actors have become the idols of the masses! More popular than the Gods ever were. Still the people couldn't give a peach-pit who the playwright is; but who is that GORGEOUS nude actor? No, it's true! Theatre is immensely popular, especially with the sordid-seeking, wine-loving set who demand a bit of bawdiness be served with their decadent entertainment.

(enthusiastically)

I love it!

(Back to business)

Anyway, these mortals wrote this book about God called The Holy Bible. And in this book is a chapter called Revelations which describes what God the Father looks like. Get this! It says, “His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.”

Prometheus

Sounds a lot like Zeus.

Dolus

Except for the seven stars.

Prometheus

Yeah, what's that about?

Dolus

You got me. I didn't ask. Personally, I think it's best not to second-guess the omnipotent power of the one almighty God.

Prometheus

And this book the mortals wrote is all about God?

Dolus

And man.

Prometheus

And man? Then I am in this Bible book!

Dolus

No, not even mentioned; in fact – and don't take this the wrong way – God says He created man from clay!

Prometheus

He takes credit for MY accomplishments?

Dolus

Yeah, except for the homosexual thing – He blames YOU for that! But – listen to this -- in this book – the Bible Book -- the burning bush gives Moses Ten Commandments.

Prometheus

Commandments?

Dolus

Yep – they're like rules – laws -- given to Moses by the burning bush.

Prometheus

The burning bush that was God, the creator of all things?

Dolus

Right. And don't laugh! The first command the burning bush gave to man was: "You shall have no other Gods but me."

Prometheus

You mean He's it?

Dolus

Yep, the one and only! Solo – Single – Solitary – He is IT! Numero Uno. The Big Cheese! The Head Honcho! All other Gods are "false gods!"

Prometheus

False Gods? You don't mean all twelve?

Dolus

(He makes a "prrrfft!" sound!)

All twelve! And the capital "G" for god?

Prometheus

Yes?

Dolus

Reserved for Him only. All the other gods... little "g."

Prometheus

Oooo! I'll bet Zeus had something to say about that!

Dolus

(Snaps his fingers)

Gone.

Prometheus

And Aphrodite, Apollo, and... my sweet attentive Dionysus?

(Dolus quickly offers him three snaps signifying their demise. Prometheus ponders this new world a moment before speaking.)

I still don't understand why you summoned me here. If the gods are no more, and Titans haven't walked the earth for centuries, and this new God named "God" who comes to earth as a flaming bush and "commands" -- why summon me? What can I do? Mortals do not know who I am!

(He asks someone in the audience)

Have YOU ever heard of Prometheus?

(Ad lib based on their answer – thrilled if someone has heard of you, appalled if they've not heard the name "Prometheus" before.)

Dolus

You've got to fix this.

Prometheus

Fix what?

Dolus

This mankind homosexual thing. It's getting way out of hand. See, I completely understand WHY you and Dionysus came up with the idea... and personally I LIKE homo-sex; but that's just ME! The problem is this Bible God the Father. He doesn't like homo-sex.

Prometheus

So let Him have His sex the way He likes it, He's a God; right? He can satiate His sexual appetite the way He wants! What's the use of being a God if you can't take advantage of mortals?

Dolus

(He thinks about this a moment)

I don't think God the Father has sex at all.

Prometheus

No sex? None of any kind? No wonder He is vengeful. Okay, so God the Father doesn't like homo-sex, so why did you summon me? I can't make anyone be a homosexual... especially not a God!

Dolus

No, see he doesn't want ANYbody to like it, too!

Prometheus

What? Ah, these immortals can be such fools! So, what can I do, Dolus?

Dolus

You have to remove homosexuality from the mortals.

Prometheus

Are you mad? Can you remove the dimples from the smile of a child?

Dolus

Well, you endowed man with reason, perhaps you can persuade him that homo-sex is... stinky.

Prometheus

Is what?

Dolus

Stinky. You know, make homo-sex smell bad like the Amorphophallus plant.

Prometheus

What are you babbling about?

Dolus

The Corpse Plant from Sumatra it has a flower shaped like a huge penis – I mean HUGE -- it's LOVELY -- but it smells like rotting flesh – if you made homo-sex...

Prometheus

Do you know how disgusting that sounds?

Dolus

You think is sounds disgusting... you should smell it!

Prometheus

No!

Dolus

It's just an idea. We have to rid mankind of homosexuality.

Prometheus

Why?

Dolus

(Secretively)

God the Father thinks it's icky.

Prometheus

Thinks it's what?

Dolus

Icky! Obscene. Wrong!

Prometheus

Obs...! Has He tried it?

Dolus

No, and I wouldn't suggest that as a possible solution. He's very sensitive about things like that.

Prometheus

Well, how does He know something is wrong if He hasn't tried it?

Dolus

It's like boiled-okra, you don't have to taste it to know it wouldn't be good.

Prometheus

And that my friend, is the perfect analogy to prove my point. Some people like boiled-okra and some people wouldn't eat it if it came with a prize. It's the same with homosexuality, it's not for everyone; but you have to admit it offers some – especially those who -- like Dionysus -- love to live their lives openly – and for others the very thought of... that slimy... okra, makes them shudder. Someone needs to tell this God the Father that sexuality is in the eye of the beholder!

Dolus

I elect you!

(To the audience)

All in favor say, "Aye!"

(Clapping Prometheus on the back)

Congratulations on the unanimous appointment to your new post, "God's Messenger."

Prometheus

How do I address a God who I cannot see; but who is everywhere?

Dolus

Prayer. It's easy. Just talk, He can hear you.

Prometheus

Are you certain His name is "God?"

Dolus

Yes. Quit worrying about that!

Prometheus

You're trying to trick me... it's just like you Dolus, who was renamed "Trickery!"

Dolus

No, I swear, that's His name.

Prometheus

Trickery? If He was a King of some country, he'd be King-whatever-his-name-is! Like King Solomon or King David. It would be rude to walk in and say, "Hey, King." I don't want to repulse Him by saying, "Hey, God..."

Dolus

I swear, that's His name. "God."

Prometheus

(to an audience member)

Have you heard of this omnipotent, the one-and-only God-the-Father-person? Is His name "God?" That's it, just "God." It's not "Alexander the God" or something like that? Just "God?" Sheesh, I hope you're right.

(Praying)

God,...

(Dolus frantically puts Prometheus' hands together in prayer)

Dolus

Don't ask, it's what they do! I don't know why.

Prometheus

God. My heartiest felicitations to you, Sire. I am Prometheus... and I'm the guy that got drunk with Dionysus and somehow homosexuality got loose on mankind. Accidents happen! Look... God... it's not for everybody; but some folks like it. Some folks like it a lot! If you ever met Dionysus you'd know what I mean... oh, that's right, you killed him. So, anyway... uh... please don't make it stinky or anything. Don't make it smell like a penis plant – the lesbians would hate that – And... uh... Sappho's a little pushy and.. overbearing but she's a good kid. So, anyway, just let the men and the women enjoy themselves the way they want to. Life is short; you know? And, God? It's "okay" if you don't like it and you don't have to try it if you think it's...

(He looks to Dolus for help.)

What's that word?

Dolus

Icky.

Prometheus

...And you don't have to try it if you think it's icky. I mean, if you really are a God... uh... pardon me... if you really are THE God... the one and only Supreme God... then you want mankind to be happy; right? And nothing makes mankind happier than feeling fulfilled in life. And some humans feel fulfilled following you... maybe even REAL fulfilled! And then other humans feel fulfilled following another human into the bath house. Humanity is made up of all types!

Dolus

Tell God some of His followers are killing homosexuals and you'd like Him to tell them to stop it.

Prometheus

What? You didn't tell me that!

Dolus

Well, I forgot until just now; but you're doing a good job there, Prometheus, and... uh... somebody needs to tell God that His followers... not all but some of them are killing homosexuals.

Prometheus

God? Are you still there?

(He waits for an answer that does not come. Prometheus asks someone in the audience.)

Do you think He's still listening? Okay. Uh, God, if you're still there... uh... I hear that some of your followers have thought you'd want them to kill some homosexuals. Now, I'm certain that's not the way you want to go. If it is... well, then heaven didn't make you very heavenly... ha ha! Zeus tried to wipe-out mankind and... uh... boy it was a mess. I jumped right in and saved mankind, you know? I had to! Somebody had to! Mankind is kind-a puny next to the Gods... and I told Zeus, "Hey, the world is dangerous enough for man without having to worry about the dangers of the Gods." And... uh... that's true for you, too, there, God! And you know, if you really take a good long look at man, I mean really look at him, he's a pretty fascinating creature. When man gets all fired up – and I mean homosexuals, too – boy, those homosexuals really know how to fire-up – they flame ha ha – like aburning bush!

Dolus

Watch your step around the whole flaming bush idea.

Prometheus

Right! And you know what God? Man tries most to be like you! No, it's true! That's why mankind goes to the temples and burns offerings... and...

(Dolus is waving frantically)

No burnt offerings? They don't do that any more? You know God, that proves to me you're a just and righteous God! Letting the animals live like that. No more sacrifices! That's beautiful! But the people are going to the temples and they are praying to you because they want to be more like you are. To be good and just and righteous like their God the Father up in His Heaven.

(He becomes contrite and honest now)

And, can I tell you something? Really? I've been trying to be a God. No, it's true. That's why I let Dionysus... well, you know... in the... everywhere and everything! I wanted to be a God like him... like You. So mankind would talk about me. For ages and ages. And they'd write plays about me. But I just realized something, God. I realized that the influence one human being can have on another is a kind of an immortality, too. And that kind-a makes all humans God-like, you know? Now, don't take offence and kill everybody, this is just me talking. Just me, Prometheus. And I'm the one who made mankind and got drunk and spilled homosexuality and it leaked on humanity – and I'm sorry for that...

(The light dawns on his face.)

No, wait – no, I'm not – I'm glad for it! It's my fault. Okay? And maybe, if that's all I'm remembered for, well, maybe the homosexuals will form choruses, wear big phalluses and sing tributes to me! And God-of-all-things, if you are truly All-powerful, you can snap your fingers and no one would ever remember homosexuality or Prometheus or his assistant, Dolus!

(With an affectionate arm around Dolus)

Is that it?

Dolus

You're supposed to say "Amen" when you're finished.

Prometheus

Amen.

(Prometheus is looking up at the heavens.)

How can you tell He was listening?

Dolus

I don't know, but you know that part about "You could snap your fingers and no one would ever remember..."

(Prometheus nods, still looking up at the heavens)

Either God wasn't listening, or He heard you and got the point!

(Lights fade as they both stare up at the heavens)

¹ CHITON: Worn by both sexes. A chiton is a rectangular piece of cloth approximately 1.5 to 2.5 to 3 meters long & at least 1 meter wide on the drop, which is sewn into a tube. The length varied from mid-thigh to full length ankle versions.

2 EXOMIS: Worn by males only. Construct a rectangular piece of cloth approx. 2 meters long and least 1 meter wide. The length varied from genitalia exposing to just above knee length. The material is folded in half, the person steps inside the tube & draws the material under the right arm fastening it over the left shoulder. The garment is then belted & the material arranged to drop evenly.

THE BED TRICK

By Lewis Routh

RICK, A “STRAIGHT” COLLEGE BOY IN HIS MID TWENTIES

STEVE, RICK’S GAY FRIEND, ALSO MID TWENTIES

ACT TWO: *an empty stage with a bed lit by moonlight containing two college boys, Rick and Steve, both are nude although we only see them from the waist-up because of the sheets. Before lights up, we hear snoring.*

Rick

(raising up, startled. He looks over and sees a sleeping and snoring Steve. A look of sheer exasperation crosses Rick’s face. Then a smile as if remembering some sensitive cherished moment. He lightly smacks Steve’s leg to wake him.)

Steve!

(another smack)

Steve!

(starts to smack him again when Steve rises to sitting in the bed, looking dazed and confused)

Good morning.

Steve

It’s not morning, Asshole.

Rick

And I love you, too.

Steve

Sorry.

(a quick peck of a kiss, it is apparent that Rick would prefer a longer kiss.)

What’s up? Good God, Rick, it’s the middle of the night!

Rick

It’s early and you don’t have to call me “Good-God-Rick,” I’m not really one of the Gods, just a mortal.

Steve

An immoral mortal! Rick, let me sleep some more.

Rick

It’s early Tuesday morning, my fine romantic rogue, who so eloquently whispered in my ear just moments ago when our passions were the fire that radiantly lit the room.

Steve

(a muffled laugh of remembrance, with a hint of tawdry pleasure)

Rick, I’m certain Professor Dickinson will be thrilled that you’ve taken his “assignment” to heart and so readily embraced it; but I’m tired. I’m sleepy. I don’t want to play “Shakespeare and the Stable Boy” anymore. You’re cute. Goodnight.

Rick

Goodnight? That’s how you would finish this, my randy rogue; with a perfunctory “goodnight?”

Steve

Rick, it’s the middle of the night.

Rick

It's "the morrow" my sweet conqueror. Midnight has struck hours ago and now... NOW is the glorious morrow, sweet with the taste of you still on my lips. Dawns anew this life of mine and you are my glorious sun. Sun. S-U-N; not son: S-O-N.

Steve

(confidentially)

Well, your sun – however you spell it -- is still sleeping... 'cause it's nighttime. See the lack of daylight? That's how you can tell. I am not your sun... I'm your moon. See?

(Steve moons Rick quickly pulling the covers back up to his chin)

Now shut up and go to sleep.

Rick

Arise, my sun and let me kill the envious moon...

(Rick swats Steve's butt through the sheet)

Steve

(exasperated)

Rick! Shut the fuck up, man! I want to sleep.

(Rick stares at the callous Steve who has turned-over and laid back down. Rick reaches for his boxer shorts, pulls them, stands up is looking around for his pants.)

Where are you going?

Rick

Do you see my pants?

Steve

They're in the living room.

(Rick starts off, Steve rises, wrapping himself in the sheet, grabs Rick before he exits)

What's the matter?

Rick

Nothing, I see how it's going to be?

Steve

What?

Rick

Us!

Steve

(Sitting up again)

What are you talking about?

Rick

Us! Our relationship. This... person who calls me "asshole" and tells me to "shut the fuck up," is not the same person whose prose... tamed me! Who is this callous fiend; and what have you done with my lover?

Steve

(calmly, explaining as if to a very small child)

Rick, I'm not your lover.

(Steve looks around.)

Where's my underwear? I can't talk without my underwear.

(Rick gets Steve's underwear from the other side of the bed, brings it to him while he is speaking, Steve puts on his underwear.)

We went to dinner. We came back to my room and started working on Professor Dickinson's assignment, "Write a 1st person narrative in the prose of Shakespeare," which led to our little impromptu performance of "Shakespeare and the Stable Boy," and then we had phenomenal sex and then... we had more phenomenal sex... and then we went to sleep. THAT does not constitute a relationship. If anything... it's... just a date. A good date; a wild and wonderful date; but only a date! Thank you and now, get naked and come back to bed.

Rick

(a cynical laugh)

Typical!

Steve

What do you mean, "Typical?"

Rick

(looking him dead in the eyes)

You know what, STEVE? You make a lousy homosexual.

Steve

Well, for your information Mr. Rick "I played football and I only like women" Norris, you do a worse impersonation of a straight-guy!

(Steve goes back to bed rolls over angrily, snaps the covers over himself and tries to go to sleep.

Rick merely stands there, looking as if he might cry. A moment – possibly a moment and a half – then Steve can bear it no more, he rolls back over, sits up.)

What do you mean "typical?"

Rick

(Petulantly)

I figured you were...

(Rick is trying to find the word "recruiting.")

Steve

Oh, you did; did you?

Rick

Yeah!

Steve

You figured I was what? Gay? That's real wise, Mr. Norris; considering everyone at Tulane already knows!

Rick

Not gay! Everyone at Tulane AND Loyola knows you're gay.

Steve

You figured I was "what?" Easy? Here's someone I can "bag?"

Rick

No... I... I figured you were... you know... "recruiting."

Steve

Recruiting?!?!?

Rick

Yeah, you know, bringing straight-guys into your homosexual lifestyle.

Steve

I didn't BRING you anywhere. In fact, you said, "I'd like to eat you."!

Rick

I suggested... that's all. I said, "I'm starved, let's grab a bite to eat."

Steve

Close but no cigar; it was a very suggestive suggestion. "I'm so HUNGRY I could EAT anything."

Rick

Innocent. Completely innocent. And we had lobster tail and white wine.

Steve

That's two sins.

Rick

What?

Steve

Two sins, Rick. In the Bible... in Leviticus it says, "homosexuality is a sin," – but it also says, "eating lobster is a sin." You committed two grievous sins today, Rick: eating lobster and eating ME. I am ashamed for you. Now come back to bed and quit acting like an idiot.

(Rick stomps back to the bed, gets in and angrily turns over. Steve looks at his backside for a moment. Then smacks him.)

Rick

(Sits up, shocked)

What was THAT for?

Steve

That's for saying "typical" and then blaming ME for your own latent desire to have sex with another man!

(Steve angrily turns over and lies down. Rick smacks Steve's backside. Steve rises up shocked.)

What was that for?

Rick

That's for being a lousy homosexual!

(Rick angrily turns over and lies down. Steve smacks Rick's backside, Rick sits up shocked and angry)

What was THAT for?

Steve

THAT's for knowing the difference!

(Steve angrily rolls over, lies down and stews, as Rick stands, starts out, stops and softly begins to cry. Steve hears it, is drawn out of his anger, becomes tender, romantic, gets up. Tenderly embraces Rick.)

I'm sorry, Rick.

Rick

Don't you like me anymore?

Steve

Of course I do. That's a stupid thing to ask.

Rick

Don't you want to... you know... be with me again?

Steve

Sure I do, Rick; but a guy's got to rest... to sleep. You know? Come to bed.

(Steve crosses to the bed, leading Rick, sets Rick down, crosses around to the other side of the bed, Rick stands and crosses down right. Steve starts to get in bed; but there is no Rick.)

Rick

Our first fight. Not even "married" a day and we're already having our first fight.

Steve

(Stopped – along with time)

Married? When did we get married?

Rick

Two people of the same sex can't get married, it's illegal.

Steve

(Cross down to him.)

Yes, I'm aware of that, Rick; but you just said "married." "Not even married a day and we're already having a fight."

Rick

(correcting him)

Our FIRST fight.

Steve

Yeah, our first fight... but when did we get married? I missed that part.

Rick

Well, obviously... if we're here... in your bed... "bathed in the afterglow of our passions" – which by the way was an excellent way of putting it, Professor Dickinson will love that...

Steve

I know, I wrote it down.

Rick

Good.

Steve

(reading the underside of his pillow)

"Bathed in the afterglow of our lusty passions." Oooo! Our "lusty passions."

Rick

That's better.

(reads the pillow)

"Bathed in the afterglow of our lusty passions."

Steve

But what do our lusty passions have to do with getting married?

Rick

Well, I figured -- we'd get married if we could; if it was legal. I mean... the sex was... perfect.

Steve

Outstanding!

Rick

Twice!

Steve

Yeah, twice!

Rick

Don't you think we'd get married; if we could?

Steve

But we can't.

Rick

But if we could...

Steve

I... you know, I'm not certain marriage is such a good idea... really. Do you want to get married? If we could?

Rick

Well, yeah. Other wise... that would make me a... a...

Steve

A whore?

Rick

(Looks at Steve, wide-eyed shock that Steve would call Rick a whore.)

I can't believe you called me that!

Steve

No, I didn't I thought you were...

Rick

A whore! You think I'm a whore. Just sleep with me and then toss me aside like an old boot!

(Begins to look about.)

Where's my pants? No wonder the Christian Right is against everything you stand for!

Steve

How did Christians get into this? I never called you anything!

Rick

That was your plan all along; wasn't it? Recruit me, then get me to drink wine and sin eating lobster tail and then the fabulously perverted sins of the flesh with you! You made me a whore and that hurts, Steve.

Steve

I didn't make you anything. I didn't recruit you, I didn't force you to drink wine or eat lobster tail, and I didn't make you a whore or a homosexual. You did that all by yourself! I just...

Rick

(a sudden realization – the proverbial light bulb goes off and it's brighter than a klieg-light)

That's what's wrong with you! You... you... fraud! You took the LOVE out of lovemaking! OH, HO HO! I see now! You're very good at seducing, with your talented tongue, tripping across the temptations of my torso, "bathing me in the afterglow of our passions..."

Steve

Our LUSTY passions!

Rick

What other kind of passions are there? You... you.. you RECRUITER!

Steve

If you call me that one more time you whore...

Rick

Recruiter!

Steve

Whore!

(Both of them draw back as if to take a swing; but the "physical" turns passionate as they embrace and kiss – a surprise to us and to them, too.)

Rick

I must admit, you are excellent in bed!

Steve

Thank you, I'll add that to my resume.

Rick

(As they head arm in arm back to the bed)

Don't be flippant! You can be very persuasive and you're like a sexual Disneyland in the sack; always making certain I'm not uncomfortable, bringing me again and again to the ultimate climax.. then... stopping so we can start again! Oh, you're a lusty artist!

Steve

Are you mad about it; or glad about it?

Rick

BUT! And it's a big but, too! There is no LOVE in your lovemaking. There's SEX – oceans of sex – mountains of sex – a tsunami of sex –

Steve

I get the idea: There's lots of sex.

Rick

I drowned in it!

Steve

It was kind of...

Rick

But no love what so ever! You careless fool! Your passions – the lusty ones -- are devoid of love! That's why Christians all over the world want to... I don't know... banish you or something. Stone you! Burn you at the stake! Toss you screaming into the fiery pits of hell!

Steve

Those Christians sure can fuck up a good thing, can't they?

Rick

(Crossing away from Steve.)

I should have seen it! The sin of Sodom and Gomorrah... sodomy! No love! None! Sex without love is "sodomy." You're Disneyland, Steve! A sexual Disneyland!

Steve

(Stopped, along with time again.)

I'm confused. I thought "being a sexual Disneyland" was a good thing?

Rick

Oh, I thought so, too! First you're all excited... a ride on The Lusty Tsunami? Oh, I can't wait! You're standing in line for hours, anticipation coursing through your veins! "I want to sit in the splash zone!" "I hear you almost drown!" "The last corkscrew at the end is the best!" Then when it's over, you realize you wasted all that time waiting in line -- for three minutes of "Oh, what a thrill," and -- when it's over -- the feeling you're going to throw-up!

Steve

Three minutes!?! More like an hour and a half!

Rick

It's not the endurance of it; it's the false hope and the vomiting after.

Steve

You threw up? I didn't know you threw-up.

Rick

I didn't; but I felt like I might -- for a moment; and that's not the point! The point is the disappointment, Steve! The promise of a lifetime of fulfillment! You made me believe you loved me, then tossed me aside like an old shoe!

(He's looking around again.)

Where's my pants?

Steve

(Stunned silent stares at Rick. Finally. Exits and quickly returns with Rick's pants which he tosses to Rick.)

Which is it, Rick, an old shoe or an old boot? Or perhaps a better metaphor would be like a used condom!

(brightly)

Yeah, that's it! "Bathed in the afterglow of our lusty passions, then tossed aside like an old condom!"

Rick

You're cold, Steve!

Steve

(Goes back to bed)

And you're a piece of work, Rick!

Rick

What does that mean?

Steve

(Stands as Rick puts on his pants.)

You spend all your time at Tulane making certain everyone KNOWS you're a big heterosexual stud...

(Mocking, impersonating Rick)

"Oh, man-oh-man, did I score last night! Blonde, big boobs! Oh man-oh-man! Bang-go Bong-go!"

Rick

I never said "Bang-go Bong-go!" I said "Ka-bam, ka-boom!"

Steve

It's the sentiment that counts!

Rick

But that's different.

(Looking around.)

Where's my shirt?

Steve

Over there under the bed. How is it different?

Rick

(Speaks as he retrieves and puts on his shirt which was under the bed.)

Well... that's the way it is. With a guy and a girl... I thought with... you know... two guys... it'd be different. I'm tired of "Ka-bam, ka-boom!" I want tenderness – I want love. That's why I thought it'd be so perfect... you know... two guys! They both like the same things, they both ... you know... know what feels good... and what hurts... but women don't know. 'Cause... you know... they're women... and I just expected that a gay guy would want... you know... something different afterwards.

Steve

(imitating Rick's tearful, you know, delivery)

And now – afterwards – you know... you're in love with me?

Rick

Yes! Are you just now realizing that? We go on date after date.

(He proves how nice he looks by the clothes he now has on)

I get all dressed up! We laugh and laugh!

Steve

What date after date? When did we date?

Rick

Monday night, what did we do? Alone. Together.

Steve

(Thinks a moment, then remembers)

Ordered pizza and watched a DVD.

Rick

What DVD did we watch, Steve?

Steve

Steel Magnolias.

Rick

Two guys – even if only one of them is gay -- do NOT watch *Steel Magnolias* unless it's a date!

Steve

You are a piece of work!

Rick

And what about that "Trailer Park -- Trailer Trash" play you took me to!

Steve

What are you babbling about now?

Rick

(Stunned silent for a moment.)

You don't remember our first date?

Steve

(shrugs)

Sorry, I don't remember any "dates," first or last.

Rick

You mean to tell me, you don't remember us going to that Grenade Mac-Whatever's Trailer-Trash Christmas show and we laughed and laughed? That first date?

Steve

(Rick has sat upon the bed to put on his socks, which were tucked into the back pocket of his pants. This requires him to stand and sit and then stand and sit. Steve yoyo's up and down.)
No "Grenade;" – "Grenadine!"

Rick

Whatever!

Steve

There's a difference! And – Mr. I'm Too Straight -- That wasn't a date. I had two tickets to the theatre and I tried to get someone to go with me. I asked everybody in Dickinson's class. I asked Ralph, Henry, Dorothy, Edna, Emily and – last but not least -- YOU. You were the only one who could go.

Rick

You asked all those women before you asked ME?

Steve

And Ralph and Henry, too. I asked guys, too.

Rick

Are you deliberately trying to break my heart?

Steve

I didn't know it meant that much to you!

Rick

Every time we're together, we laugh. I love to laugh, Steve. I tell you that. I say, "I love to laugh, Steve." And I say, "Nobody makes me laugh like you do, Steve." Don't you have fun with me?

Steve

Sure I do!

Rick

And tonight?

Steve

Tonight I had a tsunami of fun – oceans of fun – lots of fun! So much fun we ruined the sheets! Now, let's get some sleep, okay? Tomorrow's the big assignment for Dickinson's class.

Rick

What kind of uncaring, hateful fraudulent homosexual are you? Here I am, practically dressed, ready to leave, do you care? No! You'll probably go back to class and BRAG! "Guess who I ka-bam ka-boomed this weekend?"

Steve

Kissing and telling is strictly a heterosexual compulsion. Your dirty-little-secret is safe with me.

Rick

You're cold and callous, Steve.

Steve

And you're a piece of work!

Rick

Stop referring to me as "my piece!" Damn it!

Steve

A piece of work! I did not call you "a whore," I did not call you "my piece," and pizza and a chick-flick do not a date make!

Rick

Just perform "the dirty deed" and then... roll-over and "glow" to sleep! Heartless and cruel.

Steve

Hey, I didn't hear you complaining while the "dirty-deed" was enthusiastically performed!

Rick

Don't you call what we had together "the dirty-deed!" Don't you cheapen our love, Steve!

Steve

I didn't call it the "dirty-deed;" you did!

Rick

What we had wasn't "dirty!" What we had was... Perfection! Glorious rapture! I can die now, I've experienced ecstasy! And I don't mean the drug.

Steve

I know what you mean. It was pretty good; wasn't it?

Rick

Pretty Good? It was euphoria! I became someone else! Someone completely new; someone I didn't recognize! Whoever I became, I wasn't me any longer. I was abandon. I was free! I was unrestrained!

Steve

Well, could you bring back the person you became? He was a lot more fun.

Rick

(Rick unbuttons three buttons on his shirt, as if "it's "hot" in here.)

And YOU! You took advantage of me! You wanted me to be careless – to offer myself to your pleasures. Me a dazzling smorgasbord to your insatiable appetite!

Steve

I get where you're going, Rick; you were this great new person and I was the same old shit-heel I've always been.

Rick

No, you were glorious, too! You knew what to do and when to do it, and for how long —and how to make it better.

(He unbuttons his shirt and tosses it aside)

You were skilled!

Steve

I've had a lot of training.

Rick

But the knowledge you possess made your spontaneous creativity all the more passionate and profound!

(unbuttons his pants.)

You were exploring new avenues.

Steve

Oh, I'd been down that road a couple of times before...

Rick

Not with me! You took the road that no one had trod before and THAT made all the difference!

(Rick drops his pants to his ankles)

Steve

Blame Robert Frost, he taught me that trick.

Rick

And now that our bliss lies panting in desperation, you easily fall asleep and have the damnable effrontery to snore!

(Tosses his pants off stage again.)

Steve

And that's the kind of guy I am, Rick. Sleepy. Take a look at what's in store for you in this homosexual lifestyle. Lots of amazing sex, then, "goodnight, Sweet Prince, panting is such sweet sorrow." Take a long look before you agree to join the club. We're men, Rick. Men don't need love when we have sex.

Rick

If you don't need love, what do men need?

Steve

A place. Take off those socks!

(Rick sadly, sits on the bed, he is crying, starts to take off his socks, blows his nose on one of them, dabs his eyes with it.)

What's the matter?

Rick

Nothing.

Steve

Now, don't be that way. Talk to me!

Rick

And say what? There's nothing to say.

(Gets under the covers, pulls off his boxers tosses them off)

Steve

Rick, talk to me.

(Pulls off his boxers, too)

If we're destined to have a relationship, it has to be based in honesty.

(Rick looks into Steve's eyes... is the truth there?)

Tell me.

Rick

I don't want a relationship where the sex is phenomenal...

(He begins to cry)

...but there is no love.

Steve

(At first, Steve is reluctant to agree to the “Love” required in Rick’s arrangement. Embrace’s him softly.)

There’s love, Rick. There’s lots of love! Oceans of love!

Rick

A tsunami of love!

Steve

We’re drowning in it! We’re “bathed in the afterglow of our lusty passions!”

Rick

(They are embracing.)

Ummmm, that feels nice.

Steve

(After a beat.)

Rick?

(Rick grunts.)

What did Professor Dickinson mean – Shakespeare’s Bed Trick? Did you understand that?

Rick

I think so. You didn’t get it?

Steve

Not a clue.

Rick

“The Bed Trick” has to do with a theatrical device whereby person A is in love with person B, and goes to bed with who he THINKS is person C, but he’s really having sex with person B – get it?

Steve

You lost me. Use real names.

Rick

Okay, look. Let’s assume that you are person A and I am person B and we’re in love.

Steve

Assume away.

Rick

And you and I had a huge fight.

Steve

Never!

Rick

And for spite you decided to sleep with... Brad Pitt.

Steve

I like where this is going.

Rick

So, you sneak off to Brad Pitt’s bed; but Brad’s not there!

Steve

Just my luck!

Rick

I'm there and you have sex with me instead.

Steve

Hardly a substitute for Brad but better than Angelina!

Rick

But, the whole time you THOUGHT you'd had sex with Brad Pitt. THAT'S the "bed Trick."

Steve

How are you at impressions?

Rick

Lousy. How are you at love?

Steve

I am wonderful at love! I make it all the time!

Rick

Are we in love, Steve?

Steve

I don't know, bend over and I'll find out.

Rick

I'm serious... Do you love me?

Steve

I will love you forever... or until Brad Pitt shows up... which ever comes first!

Rick

(Although he likes the joke – a lot – he is serious.)

Stop kidding around, Steve. Are we in love?

Steve

Yes.

(Kisses him a peck to prove it.)

Rick

How do you know?

Steve

Because – you came to my bed a straight guy – willingly came to my bed – and now you won't leave! And I love you for that! We're in love because our passions are lusty and we glow! We're lusty little glow sticks!

(Steve sees the morning light)

Oh, look. The sun's coming up. We're still up and the sun is coming up.

Rick

(looks under the covers, confirms it)

Yep, I am still "up!" Are you ready for Dickinson's class?

Steve

(looks under the covers -- in the vernacular of Shakespeare and the Stable Boy)

Sir, my quill is limp, I do not believe that I can write.

(looks under the covers)

Perhaps I could print.

(looks under the covers)
But long-hand is out of the question!

Rick
Cursive, foiled again!

Steve
Now, who makes who laugh?

Rick
But, it's a new day after all, young stable boy. 'Tis not your quill I'll need to pen my letter for I have my own ready and mightier than the sword!

Steve
My Lord, shall I groom thy steed for a brisk canter before breakfast?

Rick
Ah, you would do well, Boy to curry the favor of my manhood!

Steve
Again, my Lord? Though our lustful passions danced full circle in the moonlight, you wish to bow and tip in the morning light as well?

Rick
Aye! And perhaps we shall dance the day away as well!

Steve
But the Professor, Sire, what would Master Dickinson imagine seeing the both of us missing for the day without our assignments and only our vacant chairs paired-up as he – the unknown matchmaker – left them? Which – me thinks – the impish pucker did deliberately!

Rick
He'd see the stable empty, too, my boy, and he'd think we've gone a-riding!

Steve
(straddling Rick)
And so we have!

Rick
(laying Steve back and "topping" him)
But first... to add just a little love to the occasion. A vow this time, my saucy friend, a vow to last a lifetime.

Steve
How can I refuse when you have me pinned?

Rick
A vow to last at least until the sun rises or sets... again... sometime when – or if -- we waken from this audacious dream! I vow...
(with such sincerity, it takes Steve and the audience by surprise)
...to love you – no more – and no less – than I do right at this very moment in time.

Steve
A moment – captured in my mind's eye – not easy to forget.

Rick
Impossible to forget!

Steve

I've but to close my eyes and you are always poised above me...

Rick

Ready to make you a part of me.

Steve

The best part...

(Steve flips Rick onto his back and Steve tops Rick now)

... my love is reversible!

(they seal the pledge with a passionate kiss)

Rick

Your quill has awakened!

Steve

Love always has that effect on me!

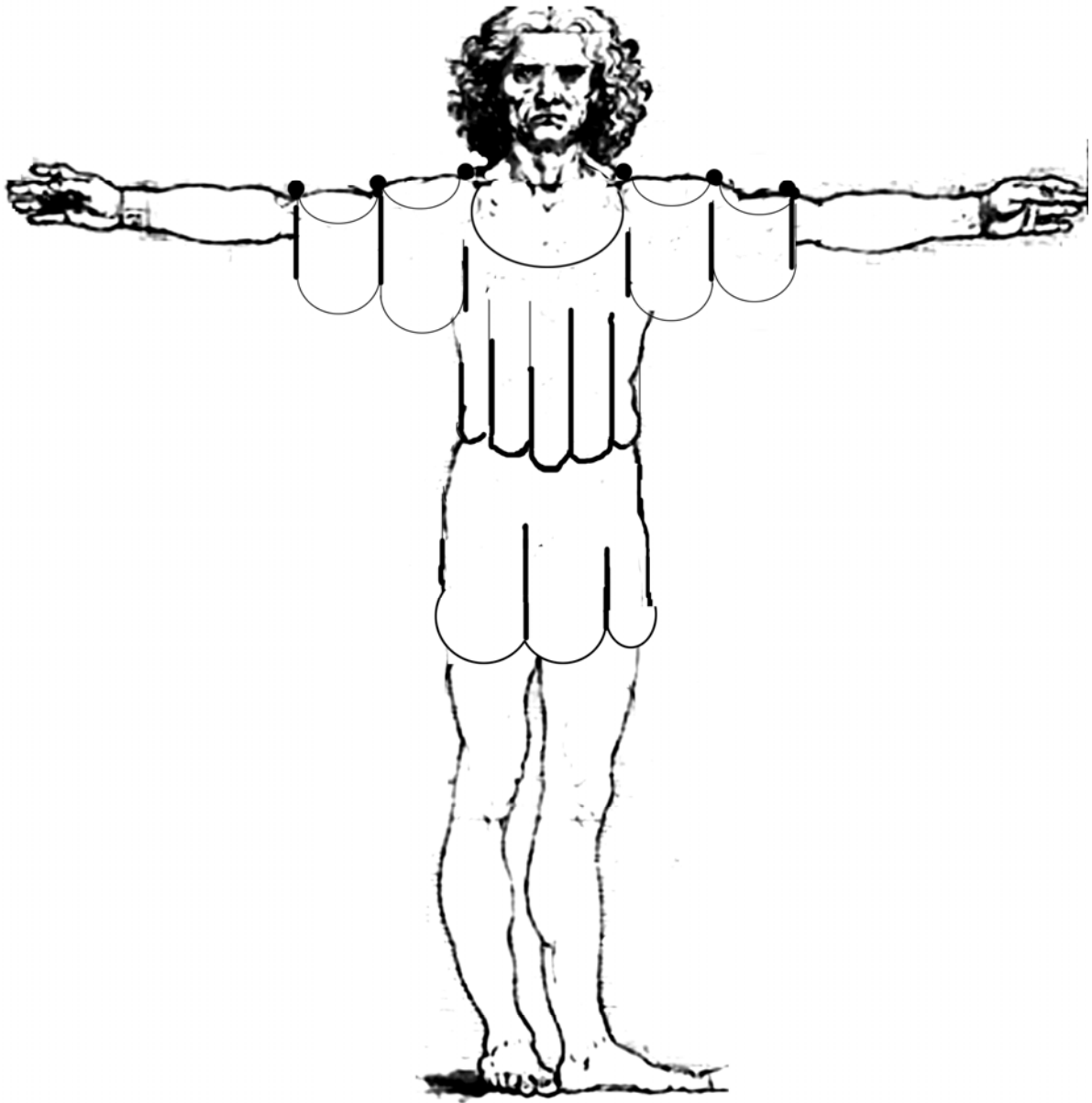
Rick

And tonight we shall celebrate scandalously with lobster tail and wine!

Steve

Ah! My three favorite things!

(The lights fade as they begin their lovemaking... again.)



CHITON COSTUME for TRICKERY



EXOMIS COSTUME for PROMETHEUS