

LYSISTRATA: Our country's fate is henceforth in our hands:  
To destroy the Peloponnesians root and branch—  
CALONICE: What could be nobler!  
LYSISTRATA: Wipe out the Boeotians—  
CALONICE: Not utterly. Have mercy on the eels!<sup>1</sup>  
LYSISTRATA: But with regard to Athens, note I'm careful  
Not to say any of these nasty things;  
Still, thought is free. . . But if the women join us  
From Peloponnesus and Boeotia, then  
Hand in hand we'll rescue Greece.  
CALONICE: How could we do  
Such a big wise deed? We women who dwell  
Quietly adorning ourselves in a back-room  
With gowns of lucid gold and gawdy toilets  
Of stately silk and dainty little slippers. . .  
LYSISTRATA: These are the very armaments of the rescue.  
These crocus-gowns, this outlay of the best myrrh,  
Slippers, cosmetics dusting beauty, and robes  
With rippling creases of light.  
CALONICE: Yes, but how?  
LYSISTRATA: No man will lift a lance against another—  
CALONICE: I'll run to have my tunic dyed crocus.  
LYSISTRATA: Or take a shield—  
CALONICE: I'll get a stately gown.  
LYSISTRATA: Or unsabbard a sword—  
CALONICE: Let me buy a pair of slippers.  
LYSISTRATA: Now, tell me, are the women right to lag?  
CALONICE: They should have turned birds, they should have grown  
wings and flown.  
LYSISTRATA: My friend, you'll see that they are true Athenians:  
Always too late. Why, there's not a woman  
From the shoreward demes arrived, not one from Salamis.  
CALONICE: I know for certain they awoke at dawn,  
And got their husbands up if not their boat sails.  
LYSISTRATA: And I'd have staked my life the Acharnian dames  
Would be here first, yet they haven't come either!

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1. The Boeotian eels were highly esteemed delicacies in Athens.

CALONICE: Well anyhow there is Theagenes' wife  
We can expect—she consulted Hecate.  
But look, here are some at last, and more behind them.  
See... where are they from?

CALONICE: From Anagyra they come.  
LYSISTRATA: Yes, they generally manage to come first.

*Enter MYRRHINE.*

MYRRHINE: Are we late, Lysistrata? . . . What is that?  
Nothing to say?

LYSISTRATA: I've not much to say for you,  
Myrrhine, dawdling on so vast an affair.

MYRRHINE: I couldn't find my girdle in the dark.  
But if the affair's so wonderful, tell us, what is it?

LYSISTRATA: No, let us stay a little longer till  
The Peloponnesian girls and the girls of Boctia  
Are here to listen.

MYRRHINE: That's the best advice.  
Ah, there comes Lampito.

*Enter LAMPITO.*

LYSISTRATA: Welcome Lampito!  
Dear Spartan girl with a delightful face,  
Washed with the rosy spring, how fresh you look  
In the easy stride of your sleek slenderness,  
Why you could strangle a bull!

LAMPITO: I think I could.  
It's fræ exercise and kicking high behint.<sup>2</sup>

LYSISTRATA: What lovely breasts to own!

LAMPITO: Oo... your fingers  
Assess them, ye tickler, wi' such tender chucks  
I feel as if I were an altar-victim.

LYSISTRATA: Who is this youngster?

LAMPITO: A Boeotian lady.  
LYSISTRATA: There never was much undergrowth in Boeotia,  
Such a smooth place, and this girl takes after it.

CALONICE: Yes, I never saw a skin so primly kept.

2. The translator has put the speech of the Spartan characters in Scotch dialect which is related to English about as was the Spartan dialect to the speech of Athens. The Spartans, in their character, anticipated the shrewd, canny, uncouth Scotch highlander of modern times.

LYSISTRATA: This girl?  
LAMPITO: A sonsie open-looking jinker!  
She's a Corinthian.  
LYSISTRATA: Yes, isn't she  
Very open, in some ways particularly.  
LAMPITO: But who's garred this Council o' Women to meet  
here?  
LYSISTRATA: I have.  
LAMPITO: Propound then what you want o' us.  
MYRRHINE: What is the amazing news you have to tell?  
LYSISTRATA: I'll tell you, but first answer one small question.  
MYRRHINE: As you like.  
LYSISTRATA: Are you not sad your children's fathers  
Go endlessly off soldiering afar  
In this plodding war? I am willing to wager  
There's not one here whose husband is at home.  
CALONICE: Mine's been in Thrace, keeping an eye on Eucrates  
For five months past.  
MYRRHINE: And mine left me for Pylos  
Seven months ago at least.  
LAMPITO: And as for mine  
No sooner has he slipped out frae the line  
He straps his shield and he's snickt off again.  
LYSISTRATA: And not the slightest glitter of a lover!  
And since the Milesians betrayed us, I've not seen  
The image of a single upright man  
To be a marble consolation to us.  
Now will you help me, if I find a means  
To stamp the war out.  
MYRRHINE: By the two Goddesses, Yes!  
I will though I've to pawn this very dress  
And drink the barter-money the same day.  
CALONICE: And I too though I'm split up like a turbot  
And half is hackt off as the price of peace.  
LAMPITO: And I too! Why, to get a peep at the shy thing  
I'd clamber up to the tip-top o' Taygetus.  
LYSISTRATA: Then I'll expose my mighty mystery.  
O women, if we would compel the men  
To bow to Peace, we must refrain—