

## A Doctor in Spite of Himself

by Molière  
Adapted by Joellen Bland

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A case of mistaken identity brings about hilarious results in this classic farce. . . .

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### Characters

SGANARELLE, a woodcutter

MARTINE, his wife

VALERE  
LUCAS } servants

GERONTE, their master

JACQUELINE, maid

LUCINDE, Geronte's daughter

LEANDRE, in love with Lucinde

TIME: The 1600's.

SETTING: A wood, played before the curtain.

BEFORE RISE: SGANARELLE and MARTINE enter, quarreling, from left.

SGANARELLE: How dare you argue with me, Martine! I am your master!

MARTINE: You are my husband, Sganarelle. I did not marry you to be treated so badly.

SGANARELLE: You? I am the one who is miserable. With a complaining wife like you, how can I be anything else?

MARTINE: Idiot! I have plenty to complain about! You have brought us to the poorhouse! You eat us out of house and home.

SGANARELLE: What? Do you deny me food?

MARTINE: You have sold everything in the house, even the bed!

SGANARELLE: We shall just get up earlier in the morning.

MARTINE: There isn't a stick of furniture left.

SGANARELLE (*Smugly*): We'll have nothing to pack when we move.

MARTINE: You squander away all our money in the village!

SGANARELLE: Only to keep up my spirits! Do you want me to be unhappy?

MARTINE: Of course not. But what am I to do at home with four little children on my hands?

SGANARELLE: Put them on the floor!

MARTINE: But they are hungry! They cry for bread.

SGANARELLE: Nonsense! Give them a thrashing and a drink of water.

MARTINE (*Furiously*): I don't know how much longer I can put up with this.

SGANARELLE: Don't get excited, Martine.

MARTINE: I must find a way to bring you to your senses.

SGANARELLE: If you insist on being angry, I'll leave you and give my ears a rest. I have wood to cut.

MARTINE: Yes, wood to cut and sell, but your wife and children never see the earnings! Scoundrel!

SGANARELLE: Scream at the trees, if you must! I'll take myself beyond the reach of your noise! (*Exits right*)

MARTINE (*Pacing*): I must teach him a lesson! Once he was a good husband and father, but the company of bad fellows has made him forget his duty. He *must* learn his duty again, but what can I do? (*Paces right, thinking to herself. LUCAS and VALERE enter left. MARTINE does not notice them.*)

LUCAS: How are we to get out of this fix, Valère? We have been given an impossible order!

VALERE: Lucas, our master Geronte is the richest and most powerful gentleman in the province. As his servants, we must obey him. Besides, we love his daughter Lucinde as though she were our own, and her illness concerns us as much as it does her father.

LUCAS: The poor young lady! To have her marriage to Horace postponed because of this sudden illness! (*Shakes head*) It is terrible!

VALERE: Lucinde is so unhappy. Her

maid Jacqueline told me something that might be the cause of her unhappiness.

LUCAS: What is that?

VALERE: She told me that Lucinde looked very favorably on that young fellow, Léandre.

LUCAS: Léandre? A nice young man, to be sure, but he is penniless!

VALERE: True. Geronte would never consent to such a marriage, and I told Jacqueline to advise her mistress that it was unthinkable. Although Horace is some thirty years older than Lucinde, he will make her a perfect husband. He has a tremendous fortune, and loves the girl.

MARTINE (*At right, still thinking; to herself*): I must think of a plan! I must!

LUCAS: Poor Lucinde! Not a single doctor has been able to cure her strange malady. I hate to think of the beating we will get if we fail in our mission to find a doctor who can cure her!

MARTINE (*To herself*): Where are my wits? I can't seem to think of anything! (*Starts walking left, bumps into VALERE and LUCAS*) Oh! I beg your pardon! I didn't see you here, gentlemen.

VALERE: You look very upset. Are you in trouble, madame?

MARTINE: It is kind of you to ask. My whole life is one great trouble! I am looking for a solution to a very serious problem.

LUCAS: Why, so are we!

MARTINE: Indeed? Perhaps I can help you.

VALERE: It is you who are kind, madame. Our master has sent us to

find a doctor who can cure a strange malady that has stricken his daughter.

MARTINE: What sort of malady?

LUCAS: The poor young lady has lost her power of speech.

VALERE: Alas, she cannot speak a word. Many physicians have attended her, but none have afforded her any relief. Her father is desperate.

MARTINE (*Aside*): Here is the answer to my problem! (*To LUCAS and VALERE*) How fortunate that you ran into me! I know a doctor who specializes in strange diseases.

VALERE (*Eagerly*): You do? Madame, where is he?

MARTINE: He is in the forest, cutting wood.

LUCAS (*Puzzled*): A doctor — cutting wood?

MARTINE: He is a very unusual man. You would never recognize him as a doctor, for he insists on dressing as a common woodcutter, and goes about pretending that he knows nothing about medicine.

VALERE: How odd!

MARTINE: Yes, but he is a genius!

VALERE: I have heard of great men who have strange habits such as this — a bit of foolishness mixed in with their great knowledge.

MARTINE: This man's foolishness is beyond belief, I assure you. He will often suffer a sound beating rather than admit he is a skilled physician.

LUCAS: Why, I have never heard of such a thing.

MARTINE: Let me warn you — he'll never admit that he is a doctor, nor will he tend the sick, unless someone beats him.

VALERE (*Astounded*): This cannot be possible!

MARTINE: But once he is subdued, he works wonders!

VALERE: Then we must have him! What is his name?

MARTINE: Sganarelle.

LUCAS: Is he really as skillful as you say? We cannot afford to make a mistake.

MARTINE: He can work miracles! A woman in our village was dying, and no doctor could save her. But Sganarelle took one look at her, put a little drop of something into her mouth, and she was up and walking around the room in less than a minute!

LUCAS (*Impressed*): A miracle, indeed!

MARTINE: And not two weeks ago, a boy fell off the church tower and broke every bone in his body. When Sganarelle was forced to attend him, he rubbed the child all over with a special ointment, and the boy jumped up and ran off to play marbles!

VALERE: That is incredible! We must find Dr. Sganarelle at once.

MARTINE (*Looking off right*): I believe he will spare you that trouble. I hear him coming this way. Good day, gentlemen! I must be going.

VALERE: How can we ever repay you, madame?

MARTINE: You have, by solving my problem! My heart is light now. Good day, gentlemen! (*Runs off left, laughing. After a moment, SGANARELLE enters, right, with a bottle, which he turns upside down.*)

SGANARELLE (*Disappointed*): Empty! How am I to work when I am so thirsty?

VALERE (*To LUCAS*): The woman was right. He doesn't look like a doctor.

LUCAS: Quite a shabby bumpkin!

SGANARELLE (*To himself*): Who are these fellows? Why are they looking at me?

LUCAS: Come, we must speak to him. (*VALERE and LUCAS start to cross right.*)

SGANARELLE: They are coming this way!

VALERE (*Approaching SGANARELLE*): Pardon, sir, is your name Sganarelle?

SGANARELLE (*Suspiciously*): Yes and no, depending upon what you want with him.

VALERE: We want to show him every courtesy, and beg his assistance in a very urgent and important matter.

SGANARELLE: In that case, I am Sganarelle, and I will be glad to help you if I can. I'm the best woodcutter in France!

VALERE: We are not interested in woodcutting.

SGANARELLE: But no one can cut wood better than I!

VALERE (*Puzzled*): Why, sir, does a man with the vast skill and learning that you possess, insist on hiding his identity and concealing his talent?

SGANARELLE (*Astonished*): What? I don't understand you.

LUCAS: Don't try to deceive us. We know all about you.

SGANARELLE (*Suspiciously*): What do you know about me?

VALERE: That you are the greatest doctor in this province!

SGANARELLE: Doctor! Why, I'm not a doctor now, and I never was!

LUCAS (*To VALERE, knowingly*): He denies it.

VALERE: Just as the woman said he would. (*To SGANARELLE*) Come, sir, don't force us to do something for which we might be sorry later.

SGANARELLE: What are you talking about? (*Adamantly*) I tell you, I'm not a doctor!

LUCAS: Sir, we beg of you, admit you are a doctor and come with us at once.

SGANARELLE: How can I admit I am a doctor when I positively am not?

VALERE (*With resignation*): Then we must bring you to your senses. At him, Lucas! (*VALERE and LUCAS begin to pummel SGANARELLE*)

SGANARELLE (*Falling to his knees*): Oh! Ow! Stop! Gentlemen, please, stop! I'll be anything you say, if you'll just stop beating me! (*VALERE and LUCAS stop.*)

VALERE: Why did you make us use violence, sir? We have no wish to harm you.

SGANARELLE: Then why have you nearly killed me? And why do you insist that I call myself a doctor?

VALERE (*In disbelief*): Do you still insist that you are not a doctor?

SGANARELLE (*Yelling*): I am a woodcutter! A poor, honest woodcutter!

LUCAS: I hate to do this, but we are desperate men! (*VALERE and LUCAS pummel SGANARELLE again.*)

SGANARELLE: Oh! Ow! Stop! Stop! All right — as you please! I'm a doctor! I'm a doctor! (*VALERE and LUCAS stop, but still hold onto SGANARELLE's shoulders.*)

VALERE: Are you the most skilled and learned doctor in the province?

SGANARELLE: Yes! Yes!

LUCAS: A doctor who specializes in strange diseases?

SGANARELLE: Of course! Whatever you say! (LUCAS and VALERE release SGANARELLE.)

VALERE: That's better. At last you've come to your senses.

SGANARELLE (Holding his head): Oh-h-h! I think you have knocked my senses to bits and pieces!

LUCAS: We beg your pardon, sir, but you won't regret admitting that you are a doctor. Our master, G ronte, will reward you generously when you have cured his daughter.

SGANARELLE (Eagerly): Reward?

VALERE: Just name your fee, and our master will gladly pay you.

SGANARELLE: My fee?

VALERE: Yes!

SGANARELLE: Any amount?

VALERE: Any amount!

SGANARELLE: Ah! (Confidently) Yes, now I remember distinctly. I am a doctor. (Rubs hands together) Now, what seems to be the problem with your master's daughter?

VALERE: She has lost her tongue.

SGANARELLE (Jokingly): But, gentlemen, I don't have it.

LUCAS: Ha! You must have your joke! Sir, a doctor with a sense of humor is much to our liking! (VALERE and LUCAS lead SGANARELLE off right. MARTINE slips in from left and looks after them.)

MARTINE: This is turning out better than I expected! I will follow them and see this through to the finish. (Laughing, she runs off after them. Blackout)

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TIME: A short time later.

SETTING: A room in G ronte's house, elegantly furnished.

AT RISE: GERONTE is seated in chair, with VALERE and LUCAS on either side of him. JACQUELINE, the maid, is dusting the furniture and listening in on the conversation.

VALERE: Master, we have brought you the best doctor that can be found. We are sure you will be satisfied.

LUCAS: He has performed miraculous cures!

GERONTE: If he can make my darling Lucinde speak again, it will be the greatest miracle of all.

VALERE: You will see that he is rather eccentric, master. His mind wanders and he likes to play the fool.

LUCAS: But he is very learned and he can speak quite elegantly when he wants to.

GERONTE: I don't care how he speaks, as long as he cures my daughter. Bring him to me at once!

VALERE (Bowling): Yes, master, at once! (Runs out right)

JACQUELINE (Crossing to GERONTE): Please, listen to me, master! I never fail to give you good advice. This doctor will fare no better than all the others. In my opinion, the best doctor you can give your darling Lucinde is a handsome young man for a husband — a man she truly loves!

GERONTE (Angrily): This is none of your business, Jacqueline!

LUCAS (To JACQUELINE): Hold your tongue, you silly! You'll only get yourself and your mistress in trouble.

JACQUELINE (Ignoring LUCAS): Master, there is not a doctor in the world

who can do my mistress a bit of good. I tell you, a true and loving husband is the cure for her illness!

GERONTE: When I wanted to marry her off, she balked and gave me nothing but trouble.

JACQUELINE: Of course she did, master. You wanted to give her away to an old man she doesn't love. Why can't you let her marry a man she cares for?

GERONTE: Such as?

JACQUELINE: Such as young master L andre!

GERONTE: Nonsense! L andre hasn't a penny to his name!

JACQUELINE: He is the only heir of a rich old uncle!

GERONTE: Money to come is nothing compared to money in hand!

JACQUELINE: But, master, I have always heard that happiness in marriage is worth far more than wealth.

GERONTE (Loudly): And I have always heard that a maid who doesn't tend to her work and hold her tongue may get her ears boxed!

LUCAS (Taking JACQUELINE's arm): Come, Jacqueline! The master knows what is best for his daughter.

JACQUELINE: I'm not so sure about that! (She returns to her dusting, as VALERE enters with SGANARELLE, who is dressed in a long black robe, and carries a black bag.)

VALERE (Bowling): Master, here is Doctor Sganarelle!

GERONTE (Rising and bowing): I am honored to meet you, sir. I am in urgent need of your help.

SGANARELLE: I thought it was a young lady who needed my help.

GERONTE: Indeed, yes, it is. My daugh-

ter, Lucinde, has fallen victim to a terrible malady!

SGANARELLE: Lucinde! What a beautiful name for a patient!

GERONTE: I'll send for her. Jacqueline! Bring your mistress here at once.

JACQUELINE: Yes, master. (To herself) For all the good it will do!

SGANARELLE (Looking at JACQUELINE; appreciatively): Who is this pretty young woman?

GERONTE: Only Jacqueline, my daughter's maid.

SGANARELLE: If the mistress is half as pretty as the maid, I am most fortunate to be in attendance here! (JACQUELINE frowns at SGANARELLE and exits left.)

LUCAS (To SGANARELLE): Come, sir! Is this any way to behave?

SGANARELLE: Forgive me! I humbly await my patient with all my resources of medical science!

GERONTE: And where are they — your resources?

SGANARELLE (Touching head): In my head, sir! Where else? (JACQUELINE enters left with LUCINDE.)

LUCAS: Here she is!

SGANARELLE: Ah! My patient! Lovely! Lovely!

GERONTE: She is my only daughter, sir. I would have a broken heart if (Breaking down) . . . if she were to . . .

SGANARELLE: Come, come, sir! Take heart! (To LUCINDE) Now, my dear, what is the trouble? (LUCINDE points to her mouth.) What? I can't hear you.

GERONTE: That is the trouble, sir. She can't speak, and no one can discover

why. Her marriage has been delayed because of this unfortunate affliction.

SGANARELLE: Why has her marriage been delayed?

GERONTE: Her intended husband will not marry her in this condition.

SGANARELLE: What? He is an idiot! What man would refuse a wife who is always silent? Oh, if only my wife could have this disease — how peaceful my life would be!

GERONTE: Come, sir. I want my daughter married at once. You see (*Hesitates*) . . . her intended husband is quite wealthy, and I don't wish to lose him. You must cure my daughter!

SGANARELLE: Yes, of course. (*To LUCINDE*) My dear, give me your hand. (*Takes LUCINDE's hand, looks at it closely, kisses it, then examines it again*) Ah! The young lady's pulse definitely indicates that she has lost the ability to speak.

JACQUELINE (*Aside*): Now, there's a clever man.

GERONTE: We know that. But how has this happened?

SGANARELLE: I assure you, sir, that the best medical authorities would agree there is some impediment in the use of her tongue.

GERONTE (*Impatiently*): Yes, yes! But what is to be done about it?

SGANARELLE: My advice is to put her to bed immediately and give her plenty of bread dipped in wine.

GERONTE (*Surprised*): The cure is as simple as that, sir?

SGANARELLE: Sir, the combination of bread and wine is the surest cure for loss of speech. Parrots are fed

nothing else, and you know how much they chatter!

GERONTE (*Beaming*): Why, you are right! (*Patting SGANARELLE on shoulder*) What a wonderful doctor you are! (*Turns to JACQUELINE*) Jacqueline, put your mistress to bed at once, and bring her as much bread dipped in wine as she can eat.

JACQUELINE: Yes, master. (*Aside*) This is ridiculous! (*JACQUELINE and LUCINDE exit left.*)

SGANARELLE: I will look in on her later this evening.

GERONTE: Will she be cured by morning?

SGANARELLE: Very likely. Now, I must go.

GERONTE: But first I must pay you, sir.

SGANARELLE: Yes, of course. I almost forgot.

GERONTE (*Giving him money*): You are too modest. I can't thank you enough! Now, I'd better be certain Lucinde gets the best wine in the house. Valère, Lucas, come with me! (*GERONTE, VALERE, LUCAS exit left.*)

SGANARELLE: I'd better be well away from here before dawn. (*Looking at money*) Look at this! Doctoring pays much better than cutting wood! (*LEANDRE enters from right, carrying bag which contains wig, beard, long robe and hat.*)

LEANDRE (*Cautiously*): Sir!

SGANARELLE (*Startled*): What do you want? Who are you?

LEANDRE: I need your help desperately! (*SGANARELLE crosses to LEANDRE, holds his wrist.*)

SGANARELLE: Ah! Your pulse is very weak.

LEANDRE: I am not ill, sir!

SGANARELLE: Then what do you want with me?

LEANDRE: My name is Léandre, and I am in love with Lucinde.

SGANARELLE: Ah!a!

LEANDRE: Lucinde loves me, too, but her father will not let me see her. If you will help me, I have a plan for speaking to her. Our happiness depends on it!

SGANARELLE (*Pretending to be angry*): You are asking me, a dignified, learned, famous physician, to stoop to some lover's intrigue?

LEANDRE: Please, sir, don't shout!

SGANARELLE (*Haughtily*): Don't give me orders, you impudent rascal!

LEANDRE: Please, I beg of you, not so loud!

SGANARELLE: You are a bold scoundrel. If Master Géronte knew you were here in his house he would —

LEANDRE (*Stuffing a purse into SGANARELLE's hand*): Sir, this is all yours if you will help me! (*SGANARELLE shakes purse, hears sound of coins, and tucks purse under his robe.*)

SGANARELLE: You're not really a bad fellow after all. What do you want me to do?

LEANDRE: First, let me tell you that the cause of Lucinde's illness is love.

SGANARELLE: Love! How is that?

LEANDRE: She only pretended to lose her voice, to avoid being forced to marry a man she doesn't love.

SGANARELLE: Why, the little vixen! Then she isn't really ill?

LEANDRE: No.

SGANARELLE: How can I cure her?

LEANDRE: Listen to my plan. I will disguise myself as an apothecary whom

you have brought in on Lucinde's case. If you will teach me a few medical terms, I can convince old Géronte that I am a learned man.

SGANARELLE: But I know nothing of medical terms.

LEANDRE (*Confused*): What? But you are a doctor!

SGANARELLE: I am no more a doctor than you an apothecary. I was forced into this crazy masquerade. (*Laughs*) What a team we will make!

LEANDRE (*Shaking head*): You certainly had me fooled. Well, let us see if we can get the old gentleman to release his daughter to my care. (*Looks off left*) Oh! Here he comes now. Quick! Help me get into my disguise! (*LEANDRE removes beard, wig, hat, and robe from bag. SGANARELLE helps him put them on.*) It's a good thing Géronte has seen me only once. He won't recognize me at all.

GERONTE (*Entering left*): Doctor, you are still here. Who is this gentleman with you?

SGANARELLE: This is my trusted apothecary, sir. I never go anywhere without him. He has an additional remedy I have prescribed for your daughter.

GERONTE (*Pleased*): Another remedy? Very good. (*Frowns*) I'm afraid the first one you prescribed is nearly choking her. (*LUCINDE enters left, with JACQUELINE.*)

JACQUELINE: Master, your daughter will not stay in bed. She insists on walking about.

SGANARELLE: Perhaps a little exercise will do her good. (*To LUCINDE*) My dear, my trusted apothecary will tell

you about his latest remedy. (*Pushes LUCINDE to LEANDRE, then leads GERONTE to opposite side of room.*) Now, sir, did you know that learned doctors are still debating whether women are easier to cure than men?

GERONTE: Really? How is that so?

LEANDRE (*Softly*): Lucinde, it is I, Léandre!

LUCINDE (*Hoarsely*): Léandre! How wonderful!

SGANARELLE (*Loudly, to GERONTE*): Indeed! Some physicians say yes, some say no. I say both yes and no. For, you see . . . (*Ad libs conversation with GERONTE*)

LEANDRE: Do you still love me, Lucinde?

LUCINDE (*Aloud*): Oh, there has been no change in my affection.

GERONTE (*Suddenly*): What's that? My daughter's voice! Lucinde, you can talk again! (*Runs over to her, embraces her*)

LUCINDE: Yes, Father. I can speak, but I have to tell you right now, that I will have no one but Léandre as my husband!

GERONTE (*Angrily*): What? Is this the first thing you have to say to me?

LUCINDE: I will never marry Horace. Never!

GERONTE: But you must!

LUCINDE (*Louder*): I am resolved to marry Léandre, or no one at all!

GERONTE: This is unheard of!

LUCINDE (*Louder still*): Nothing you can say or do can make me change my mind!

GERONTE: But Lucinde, you —

LUCINDE (*Shouting*): I won't marry Horace! I absolutely refuse! Léandre will be my husband!

GERONTE (*Holding his ears*): Good heavens! What a noise! (*To SGANARELLE*) Sir, I beg of you, make her speechless again!

SGANARELLE: I'm afraid that is impossible.

GERONTE: Oh, enough of this nonsense! Lucinde, I am your father, and I say that you will marry Horace this very night.

LUCINDE: Never! I will die first!

SGANARELLE: Sir, allow me. Lucinde's illness still affects her mind, but I believe I can cure her.

GERONTE: You can cure ailments of the mind, too?

SGANARELLE: Yes. Just leave it to me and my trusted apothecary. (*To LEANDRE*) You see how determined Géronte is that his daughter marry this Horace, even though her ardent affection is for Léandre only. I'm afraid her case is serious and must be dealt with quickly. There is no time to lose. Let me suggest a hasty dose of runaway purgative mixed with drafts of matrimony, as necessary. If she makes a fuss, be firm. But make her swallow it as gently as you can. Now, take her out and go in the direction of the church, while I talk to her father. Jacqueline, you may want to witness the cure. Hurry! It's the only remedy.

JACQUELINE: Yes, sir!

LEANDRE (*Happily*): Thank you, Doctor! (*LUCINDE, LEANDRE, and JACQUELINE run out right.*)

GERONTE: What was that medicine you were prescribing, Doctor? Runaway purgative, and —

SGANARELLE (*Quickly*): Special medicines, sir, used only in an emergency like this.

GERONTE: I hope they will cure my daughter's insolence!

SGANARELLE: Daughters of her age are often headstrong.

GERONTE: How true. She is so stubborn! Ever since I learned how madly in love she was with this Léandre, I have kept her shut up in the house.

SGANARELLE: A very wise move, sir.

GERONTE: I would not allow them to speak to each other. Though I have been told that Léandre was making every effort to try to see her.

SGANARELLE: Young lovers are so foolish!

GERONTE: But he's just been wasting his time.

SGANARELLE: He'd have to be pretty smart to fool you.

LUCAS (*Rushing in, right*): Master! Master! Oh, what a calamity!

GERONTE: What's the matter, Lucas? You're as pale as a sheet! Do you need the doctor?

LUCAS: No! He has been your undoing!

GERONTE: What do you mean? Speak up, man!

LUCAS: Your daughter has just run off with the apothecary — whose real name is Léandre — and the doctor helped them.

GERONTE: What? (*Points to SGANARELLE*) This doctor?

SGANARELLE (*Nervously*): Now, sir, be calm. It was part of the cure.

GERONTE: A cure! You have stabbed me in the back. (*SGANARELLE runs to door.*) Lucas, stop him! Don't let him get away! Hold him while I go for the police! (*Runs out, shouting*) Help! Police! Police!

LUCAS (*Holding SGANARELLE*): You'll be hanged for this, Doctor!

SGANARELLE: Doctor! You are the one who insisted I be a doctor!

MARTINE (*Entering right*): Sganarelle, is it you? (*To LUCAS*) Why are you holding the doctor?

LUCAS: To keep him here. He is going to be hanged!

MARTINE (*Upset*): Hanged? My husband! What has he done?

LUCAS: He has arranged for my master's daughter to run away with the wrong man!

MARTINE: Sganarelle, is this true?

SGANARELLE: Not to my way of thinking!

GERONTE (*Entering right*): The police are coming. Now you'll get what's coming to you, you impostor!

SGANARELLE: Sir, I would gladly submit to a sound beating, if you'll only let me go afterwards.

GERONTE: A beating is too good for you! (*LUCINDE enters with LEANDRE, without his disguise.*)

JACQUELINE: Master, hear this young man, please.

LEANDRE: Sir, I am Léandre, and I've brought Lucinde back to you. We were going to run away and be married, but I don't want to steal your daughter — I would rather you give her to me, freely and willingly.

GERONTE (*Enraged*): Never! You penniless, impudent young meddler!

LEANDRE: Sir, I wish to inform you that I have just received a letter telling me of my uncle's death. I am his only heir, and all his possessions are now mine.

GERONTE (*Softening*): Indeed? Well, sir, I am very glad to hear it.

(Beaming) I insist that you marry Lucinde at once . . . with my blessing, of course!

LUCINDE (Embracing GERONTE): Oh, Father, thank you! I am so happy!

SGANARELLE (Wiping his brow): I hope, sir, that you will not wish to see me hanged now.

GERONTE (Brusquely): Just get out of my sight! I've had enough cures for one day. Lucas, show him out. (LUCAS takes SGANARELLE by the arm.)

SGANARELLE (Pulling away from LUCAS): I'm going! Come, Martine. I've had enough doctoring.

MARTINE: Aren't you going to thank me? I'm the one who procured for you the honor of being a doctor.

SGANARELLE: Yes, and because of you

I received a terrible thrashing, and was almost hanged!

MARTINE: Perhaps you would rather be a woodcutter, then?

SGANARELLE: Aye, that I would, for it's work I know, and I'm not likely to be beaten or hanged for it, either.

MARTINE (Slyly): And perhaps you would like to be a good husband and father again, to the wife and children who need you.

SGANARELLE: Yes, that too, Martine. I want to go home and never think about doctors again!

LUCINDE (Loudly): But you were a wonderful doctor, Sganarelle. You cured me, and Léandre and I shall never forget you! (Curtain)

THE END

#### PRODUCTION NOTES

##### A DOCTOR IN SPIRE OF HIMSELF

Characters: 5 male, 3 female.  
Playing Time: 30 minutes.

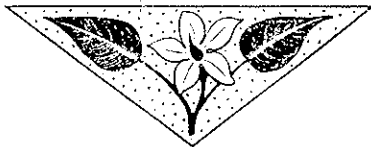
Costumes: Seventeenth century period. Peasant dress for Martine and Sganarelle (Sganarelle adds long black robe in Scene 2); simple outfits for Lucas and Valère, richer outfits for Geronte, Lucinde; maid's dress, apron and cap for Jacqueline, simple outfit for Léandre, with disguise of wig, beard, long gown, and hat.

Properties: Bottle, feather-duster or cloth for Jacqueline, black doctor's bag, coins, bag

containing wig, beard, long robe, hat, purse containing coins.

Setting: Before Rise: A wood, somewhere in France. This is played before the curtain. If desired, some cut-out trees or shrubbery may be placed across the front of the stage. At Rise: A room in Geronte's house, elegantly furnished with two or three arm chairs, one or two small tables, draperies over doors at right and left.

Lighting: No special effects.



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