

## SYNOPSIS OF ORIGINAL PLAY

The crafty Scapin, servant to the household of Geronte, jumps into the story as he first promises to help in the affairs of his neighbor's son, Octave, then to aid in those of his own charge, Leander (Geronte's son). Both young men have fallen in love with unlikely, and penniless, beauties, and both need money to help solve their dilemmas.

Scapin knows a good ruse will always win the day and he drafts Sylvestre, Octave's servant, into his schemes. Convincing Sylvestre he's a wonderful actor (and allowing him to build characterizations using movie clichés), Scapin has him play characters who will deceive the family patriarchs into parting with large sums of money.

The final scene of the first act is a vaudeville/music hall version of Molière's famous scene in which Scapin spins a tale of kidnapping, foreigners, and ransom. Once the money is obtained, however, Scapin pushes further in order to exact a little revenge on those he's served. Thinking Geronte has said something nasty about him, Scapin sets out to teach him a lesson. The roguish words, however, are Scapin's own lies and stories finally coming back to him; his revenge backfires and he must flee.

In the end however, Scapin's schemes aid in revealing the penniless beauties to be the exact right mates for the young charges—being of high birth after all since they are discovered to be the missing children of both patriarchs—and Scapin returns to his post, with the pleasant punishment of having to marry the maidservant of one of the daughters. There is a final chase and dance among all the participants, which, inevitably, becomes the raucous, delightful curtain call.