

Excerpt terms and conditions



This excerpt is available to assist you in the play selection process.

You may view, print and download any of our excerpts for perusal purposes.

Excerpts are not intended for performance, classroom or other academic use. In any of these cases you will need to purchase playbooks via our website or by phone, fax or mail.

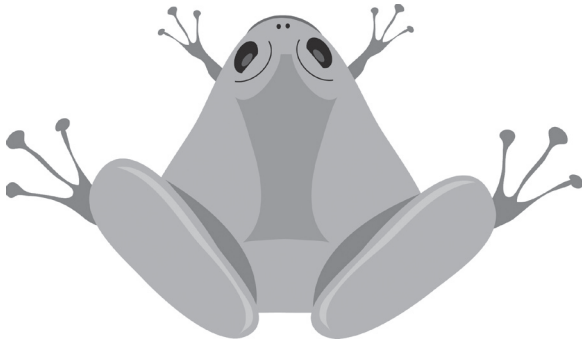
A short excerpt is not always indicative of the entire work, and we strongly suggest reading the whole play before planning a production or ordering a cast quantity.

Dramatic Publishing

Aristophanes'

THE FROGS

Comedy adapted by
I.E. Clark



THE FROGS

“We love the show and are doing it twice more by popular demand.”
(Waco, Texas)

“Plays for the junior-high level are usually trite and unworthy of a director’s time. Your adaptation of *The Frogs* is so delightful.”
(Glencoe, Ill.)

Comedy. Adapted by I.E. Clark from Aristophanes. Cast: 5m., 5w., extras (cast may include 20 or more). Greece was left without a first-rate tragic poet, so Bacchus set out for Hades to find Euripides. The trip is a fearful one, and Bacchus, one of the less godly gods, dies a thousand comic deaths along the way. Unfortunately, nearly all of Aristophanes’ allusions to the writers of his day are meaningless to modern audiences. To simulate the author’s satirical stabs at the inferior poets of Ancient Greece, we have replaced the Grecian literary allusions with references to current television programs and popular songs. This is not an attempt to rewrite an immortal classic, but rather an effort to help modern audiences (especially young ones who may have a tendency to regard classics as stuffy) to understand Aristophanes’ satire. Directors have permission to update the references. A delightful introduction to Greek comedy and an outstanding contest play for high schools, junior highs and colleges. *A director’s script is available containing drawings of costumes and set, details on all technical aspects of staging, and discussion of characterization, plot and theme. It also suggests the complete blocking and full stage directions for all movement and business. The director’s script gives suggestions for making The Frogs a delightful theatre experience—as it has been for more than 2,000 years. Bare stage. Costumes: Greek. Detailed but simple choreography for a Frog Chorus. Approximate running time: 35 to 40 minutes. Code: FE3.*

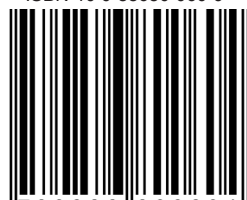
Family Plays

311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098-3308
Phone: (800) 448-7469 / (815) 338-7170
Fax: (800) 334-5302 / (815) 338-8981

www.FamilyPlays.com

ISBN-13 978-0-88680-060-4

ISBN-10 0-88680-060-9



9 780886 800604 >

The Frogs

Aristophanes'

THE FROGS

A ONE-ACT COMEDY

ADAPTED BY

I. E. CLARK

Family Plays

311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098-3308

Phone: (800) 448-7469 / (815) 338-7170 • Fax: (800) 334-5302 / (815) 338-8981

www.FamilyPlays.com

*** NOTICE ***

The amateur and stock acting rights to this work are controlled exclusively by FAMILY PLAYS without whose permission in writing no performance of it may be given. Royalty must be paid every time a play is performed whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. A play is performed any time it is acted before an audience. Current royalty rates, applications and restrictions may be found at our website www.FamilyPlays.com, or we may be contacted by mail at: FAMILY PLAYS, 311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098.

COPYRIGHT LAW GIVES THE AUTHOR OR THE AUTHOR'S AGENT THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO MAKE COPIES. This law provides authors with a fair return for their creative efforts. Authors earn their living from the royalties they receive from book sales and from the performance of their work. Conscientious observance of copyright law is not only ethical, it encourages authors to continue their creative work. This work is fully protected by copyright. No alterations, deletions or substitutions may be made in the work without the prior written consent of the publisher. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, videotape, film, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. It may not be performed either by professionals or amateurs without payment of royalty. All rights, including, but not limited to, the professional, motion picture, radio, television, videotape, foreign language, tabloid, recitation, lecturing, publication and reading, are reserved.

For performance of any songs, music and recordings mentioned in this play which are in copyright, the permission of the copyright owners must be obtained or other songs and recordings in the public domain substituted.

© 1965 by
I. E. CLARK

Printed in the United States of America
All Rights Reserved

(THE FROGS)

ISBN: 978-0-88680-060-4

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of the play must give credit to the author(s) of the play in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the play and in all instances in which the title of the play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the play and/or a production. The name of the author(s) must also appear on a separate line, on which no other name appears, immediately following the title, and must appear in size of type not less than fifty percent the size of the title type. Biographical information on the author(s), if included in the playbook, may be used in all programs. In all programs this notice must appear:

“Produced by special arrangement with
Family Plays of Woodstock, Illinois”

Aristophanes'
THE FROGS

Adapted by I. E. Clark

[The curtain opens on a bare stage. The only prop is a sign above an Up Center opening in the backdrop. The sign reads ΗΕΡΑΚΛΕΣ. DIONYSUS, the puniest of the gods, enters, followed by his slave XANTHIAS riding a stick-donkey and holding Dionysus's bundles on a pole balanced across his shoulders. DIONYSUS walks and talks very delicately, with a spurious air of sophistication. As they converse, they slowly circle the stage, obviously taking a journey and obviously looking for something. Over his saffron Olympian robe Dionysus wears a cheap, obviously fake lion's skin in imitation of Heracles' traditional costume. He also carries a small, light-weight imitation of Heracles' club. See the Director's Production Script for details of costume and props]

XANTHIAS. Master, shall I begin with the usual jokes that the audience always laughs at?

DIONYSUS. If you please; any joke you please except "I don't get no respect." Don't use that one yet—there's time enough later.

XANTHIAS. Well, something else that's comical and clever?

DIONYSUS. I forbid "Plop plop, fizz fizz, oh what a relief it is."

XANTHIAS. What's the use then of my being burdened here with all these bundles? If I'm to be deprived of the common jokes that are allowed even the servants in famous tragedies like—like *Love Boatus!**

DIONYSUS. Pray, leave them off—for those ingenious dramas have such an effect upon my health and spirits that I feel grown old and dull when they are ended.

XANTHIAS. Is that why we are going to Hades, master?

DIONYSUS. Yes, of course. My heart yearns for the sight of a good tragic drama—and not a single decent one has been written since poor Euripides died. So I am going to hell to bring him back again.

XANTHIAS. How will we find the way?

The director may wish to substitute the name of some currently popular, extremely melodramatic TV show, giving it a spurious Greek or Roman-sounding name as was done here with "Love Boat." The asterisks () in the rest of the script mark allusions which may need to be brought up to date (see Introduction to Director's Production Script).

DIONYSUS. Ah, that's where your master Dionysus has used his brains as well as his brawn. [*XANTHIAS doubles up with silent laughter as DIONYSUS waves his club and tries to flex his non-existent muscles*] Heracles himself has just returned from a trip to Hades where he kidnapped Cerberus, the three-headed dog. Oh, what a prank that was! [*Laughs sillily*] So I have dressed myself like Heracles, and we are going to follow the same route he took to the infernal regions. [*DIONYSUS admires his fake lion's skin and waves his little club in what he thinks is a vicious manner. He is exceedingly proud of his cleverness*]

XANTHIAS. Just one corny little joke before we continue our journey?

DIONYSUS. No.

XANTHIAS. Oh, my poor aching back! You are broken and I am not permitted to tell a single joke.

DIONYSUS. Well, this is quite monstrous and insupportable! Such insolence in a servant! I—your master—Dionysus, the flower of the grapevine—Bacchus, the son of a wine-jug—am going afoot and have provided you with a beast to carry your load!

XANTHIAS. What! Do I carry nothing?

DIONYSUS. You're being carried yourself.

XANTHIAS. But I carry bundles, don't I?

DIONYSUS. But the beast bears all the burdens that you carry.

XANTHIAS. [*Indicating the bundles on his shoulder*] Not those that I carry myself—it's I that carry 'em.

DIONYSUS. How can *you* claim to carry them when *you're* carried yourself, I want to know!

XANTHIAS. I can't explain it, but I feel it in my shoulders plainly enough.

DIONYSUS. Well, if the beast isn't helping you, change places with the mule and *you* carry *him*!

XANTHIAS. Bless Apollo! I wish I had gone on welfare and left you to yourself. [*The donkey pitches*] Whoa there, Elvis!*

DIONYSUS. [*Stops below a sign reading HEPAKAEΣ*] Dismount, you rascal! Here we are at the house where Heracles lives. Hello, there! Who's within there!

HERACLES. [*Carrying his club and wearing his lion's skin, HERACLES steps through the opening in all his mighty, gigantic strength*]

*See footnote at bottom of page 1.

Who's there? [*He sees Dionysus and surveys his ridiculous costume—the tiny lion's skin thrown over the robe. DIONYSUS in turn curiously inspects Heracles' celebrated muscles and compares them with his own—not unfavorably in his opinion. DIONYSUS also compares his club with Heracles' and is disappointed that his is smaller. HERACLES finally gets the picture and withdraws into his house, clearly trying to suppress a laugh. DIONYSUS interprets the move as an indication that Heracles is afraid of him and intends to make sure that Xanthias does not miss the spectacle*]

DIONYSUS. Ha! Xanthias!

XANTHIAS. What?

DIONYSUS. Did you notice how I frightened him?

XANTHIAS. I suppose he was afraid you were going mad.

HERACLES. [*Peeking through opening*] By Jove! I shall laugh outright! [*HERACLES withdraws again to hide his laughter, and this movement strengthens DIONYSUS's belief that Heracles is afraid of him*]

DIONYSUS. Come hither, friend. I won't hurt you.

HERACLES. [*Comes out*] But I can't help laughing, to see the lion's skin over a saffron robe, and the club with the woman's sandals—what's the meaning of it all? Have you been abroad?

DIONYSUS. I've been abroad—in the Fleet—with Cleisthenes.

HERACLES. *You* fought?

DIONYSUS. Yes, that we did—we gained a victory, and we sank the enemies' ships—thirteen of 'em.

HERACLES. *You?*

DIONYSUS. Yes, by Apollo.

HERACLES. You're dreaming!

DIONYSUS. But aboard the fleet, as I pursued my studies, I read the tragedy of *Little House on the Acropolis**; and then such a vehement passion for the old poets—the great poets—struck my heart, you can't imagine.

HERACLES. A small passion, I suppose . . . [*He flexes his muscles and stands huge, emphasizing Dionysus's smallness and delicateness*], my little fellow—a moderate little passion?

DIONYSUS. [*Gets up on his toes trying to be as big as Heracles; measures himself with Heracles*] It's just as small as Gargantua is—that's all—Gargantua the wrestler, I mean—as small as he is— [*DIONYSUS realizes that Heracles isn't catching on. HERACLES is flexing his muscles like a Mr. America candidate and swinging his club. DIONYSUS imitates Her-*

acles' movements, but is ashamed of his small club. They exchange clubs. Heracles' club is so heavy that DIONYSUS drops it] Oh, dear! [HERACLES laughs at him. This infuriates DIONYSUS] No, friend, you must not laugh; it's past a joke; it's quite a serious feeling—quite distressing; I suffer from it—

HERACLES. Well, explain. What is it?

DIONYSUS. I can't declare it at once; but I'll explain it theatrically and enigmatically. Were you ever seized with a sudden passionate longing for a mess of . . . Rice Krispies? . . . that go, "snap, crackle, pop"?* [*Tragically*] Such is the passion that possesses me for poor Euripides.

HERACLES. But he's dead.

DIONYSUS. No human power can prevent my going to him.

HERACLES. What, to the bottom of Hades?

DIONYSUS. Yes, and below the bottom, if necessary.

HERACLES. But what's your object?

DIONYSUS. Why my object is that I want a clever poet—for the good ones, the talented and the creative, are dead and gone; the worthless and the weak are left alive. The writers who are left are good for nothing—warblers of the grove—little, foolish, fluttering things—poor puny wretches that dawdle and dangle about with the tragic muse, incapable of any serious meaning. There's not one hearty poet amongst them all that's fit to risk an adventurous, valiant phrase.

XANTHIAS. But nobody thinks of me; standing all this while with the bundles on my shoulders. [*HERACLES does not appreciate this interruption from a mere slave and gives Xanthias a menacing look. XANTHIAS's reaction excites the donkey, which bucks, kicks, and runs off Right (someone offstage pulls it off)*] Elvis—wait! Come back, Elvis!

HERACLES. [*To Dionysus*] How—"hearty"—what do you mean by "valiant phrase"?

DIONYSUS. I mean a . . . kind . . . of a . . . doubtful, bold expression to talk about . . . [*Singing to his club in an off-key, whining voice (any classical music may be used)*] To-re-a-dor-a-dum-de-dum-de-dum.

HERACLES. [*Obviously a country-and-western fan*] Do you like that kind of stuff?

DIONYSUS. I'm crazy after it.

HERACLES. Why, sure, it's trash and rubbish—don't you think so?

DIONYSUS. Men's fancies are their own—let mine alone.

HERACLES. But nothing could be more nauseating.

DIONYSUS. You'll tell me next what I ought to like for supper.

XANTHIAS. But nobody thinks of me here, with the bundles. [*HERACLES gives Xanthias a devastating look. XANTHIAS melts*] Here, Elvis . . . !

DIONYSUS. But now to the business that I came upon—with this apparel that you see—the same as yours [*giggles*]—to obtain a direction to take me to Hades. I'd like to go the way you went when you were there recently. If you'll communicate any information relative to the country . . . the roads—the streets—the bridges, the saloons, the wharfs—the public walks, the public houses, the fountains—aqueducts—and inns, and taverns, and lodgings—free from bugs and fleas, if possible. If you know any such—

HERACLES. What a notion! *You!* Will you really go down to Hades? Are you mad?

XANTHIAS. Nobody thinks of me . . . [*HERACLES takes a few threatening steps toward XANTHIAS, who quivers fearfully*]

DIONYSUS. [*Distracting HERACLES from Xanthias*] I beseech you, say no more—no more of that, but inform me briefly and plainly about my journey: the shortest road and the most convenient one—neither too hot nor too cold.

HERACLES. Well, which shall I tell you first, now? Let me see now—there's a good convenient road by the Rope and Noose. [*DIONYSUS doesn't understand*] The Hanging Road.

DIONYSUS. Be silent! Your road is choking me.

HERACLES. Then there's an easy, fair, well-beaten track, as you go by the Hemlock Tree.

DIONYSUS. What, take poison?

HERACLES. To be sure—

DIONYSUS. That's much too cold—it will never do. They tell me it strikes a chill to the legs and feet.

HERACLES. Should you like a speedy, rapid downhill road?

DIONYSUS. Indeed I should, for I don't like long walks.

HERACLES. Go to the Keramicus then.

DIONYSUS. And then?

HERACLES. Go up to the very top of the tower.

DIONYSUS. What then?

HERACLES. Stand there and watch when the marathon begins; and mind, when you hear the people cry, "Start! start!" then start at once with 'em!

DIONYSUS. Me? Start? Where from?

HERACLES. From the top of the tower—to the bottom.

DIONYSUS. No, not I. It's enough to dash my brains out! I'll not go such a road upon any account.

HERACLES. Well, which way then?

DIONYSUS. The way you went yourself. You're not dead. [*Tries to touch him to make sure, but doesn't quite dare*]

HERACLES. But it's a long one, for first you come to a monstrous bottomless lake . . .

DIONYSUS. And what must I do to pass?

HERACLES. You'll find a boat there; a little tiny boat, as big as *that*. An old man named Charon ferries you over in it for a dollar.

DIONYSUS. Ah! That same dollar governs everything wherever it goes. I wonder how it managed to find its way to hell?

HERACLES. Foreign aid to depressed areas. Next you'll meet serpents, and wild beasts and monsters . . . horrific to behold!

DIONYSUS. Don't try to frighten me; you'll not succeed. I promise you, I'm determined.

HERACLES. Then there's a deep canyon with an eternal stench—a veritable cesspool—in which the damned lie wallowing and overwhelmed: those who write soap operas—and those who act in them—and those who watch them; all the consumers who never choose Brand X; the so-called “funny” stand-up comics—and audiences who laugh at them; situation comedies with the same plot week after week; singers who shake so much they can't sing—and those whose singing gives us the shakes . . .

DIONYSUS. And, by Jove! The game show hosts and all their contestants ought to be there—they're worse, or quite as bad.

HERACLES. But after this your sense will be saluted with a gentle breathing sound of flutes and voices, and a beautiful spreading light like ours on earth, and myrtle glades and happy throngs of men and women with loud applause and laughter . . .

XANTHIAS. And I am the donkey that carries the bundles. I won't stand here like a mule in a procession any longer. [*HERACLES gets ready to strike Xanthias with his club, but is distracted by DIONYSUS just in time to keep Xanthias from being annihilated*]

DIONYSUS. And who are these happy folks?

HERACLES. The initiated—those who go to see amateur plays. They'll tell you everything you want to know, for they live close by the road to Pluto's Place. So fare you well, my little fellow. [*Exits into his house, returns, pulls down his sign and takes it off with him*]

DIONYSUS. I wish you better. *[To Xanthias]* You, sirrah, take your bundles up again!

XANTHIAS. What, before I put them down?

DIONYSUS. Yes! Now, this moment.

XANTHIAS. Nah! Don't insist; there's plenty of people going to Hades as corpses with the convenience of a carriage; they'd take it for a gratuity gladly enough.

DIONYSUS. But what if we meet with nobody?

XANTHIAS. Then I'll take 'em.

DIONYSUS. Come, come that's fairly spoken, and in good time . . . *[DEADMAN enters Left on bier carried by four BEARERS]* for they're carrying a corpse out to be buried. *[To corpse]* Hello! You there—Deadman—can't you hear? Would you take any bundles to hell with you, my good fellow?

DEADMAN. Are they very heavy?

DIONYSUS. These. *[Attempts to take bundles from Xanthias. Stagers under their weight and lets them fall, nearly falling himself]*

DEADMAN. Then I must have two drachmas.

DIONYSUS. I can't—you must take less.

DEADMAN. Bearers, move on.

DIONYSUS. No, stop! We shall settle between us—you're so hasty!

DEADMAN. It's no use arguing; I must have two drachmas.

DIONYSUS. I'll give you an autographed picture of the Rolling Stones.*

DEADMAN. I'd sooner be dead! *[Procession exits]*

DIONYSUS. Fine airs the fellow gives himself—a rascal! I'll have him punished, I vow, for overcharging.

XANTHIAS. Best give him a good beating. Give *me* the bundles, I'll carry 'em. *[Picks up bundles]*

DIONYSUS. Let's move on to the ferry.

[CHARON enters, pulling his boat ashore. CHARON is very old and almost blind]

CHARON. Ho! Bear a hand, there—heave ashore!

DIONYSUS. What's this?

XANTHIAS. By Zeus, it's the lake—the place Heracles told us about. And there's the boat, by Demeter—and this must be old Charon!

DIONYSUS. Well, Charon! Welcome, Charon! Welcome kindly!

CHARON. *[Like a barker hawking tickets]* Who wants the ferryman?

Anybody waiting to remove from the sorrows of life? A passage anybody? To Lethe's wharf? To Cerebus's Reach? To Tartarus? To Perdition?

DIONYSUS. Yes, I.

CHARON. Get in then.

DIONYSUS. Tell me, where are you going? To—to Perdition really?

CHARON. Yes, to oblige you, I will with all my heart—step in there.

DIONYSUS. [*Gingerly puts one foot in boat*] Have a care! Take care, good Charon!—Charon, have a care! [*During this fusillade CHARON has been forcing DIONYSUS into the boat; it rocks precariously; DIONYSUS calls to Xanthias for help*] Come, Xanthias, come, you slave!

CHARON. I take no slaves aboard unless they've volunteered for the naval victory.

XANTHIAS. I could not—[*imitating Charon's near-sightedness*] my eyes were bad.

CHARON. You must trudge away then, round by the end of the lake there.

XANTHIAS. Oh, unhappy wretch that I am. [*Exits*]

CHARON. [*To Dionysus*] Sit down at the oar. [*Continues barking*] Come quick, if there's more coming! [*DIONYSUS attempts to sit on side of boat at the oarlock; the boat tips over and DIONYSUS falls out*] Hey! What's that you're doing?

DIONYSUS. [*Abashedly sets boat upright and again tries to sit on oarlock*] What you told me. I'm trying to sit at the oar. [*Boat tips over again*]

CHARON. [*Rights boat; grabs Dionysus and shoves him to the bottom of the boat*] Sit there, fatso—that's your place.

DIONYSUS. [*Pleased that boat does not rock when he sits in bottom*] Well, so I do.

CHARON. [*Gets in and takes up an oar*] Now ply with your hands and arms.

DIONYSUS. [*Makes a silly waving motion with his arms*] Well, so I do.

CHARON. You'd best leave off your fooling. Take to the oar and pull away.

DIONYSUS. Row! *Me!* How can I, who have never set foot on a ship?

CHARON. We can manage it if you will sit still. As soon as you begin you shall have some music that will teach you to keep time.

DIONYSUS. What music's that?

CHARON. Frogs with the voices of swans—it's most delightful.

DIONYSUS. Well, set the stroke.

CHARON. [*Both begin to paddle in time to his chant*] Whooh up, up; whooh up, up.

[*FROGS enter, one at a time, leaping froglike onto stage as each says her line. DIONYSUS is dreadfully afraid of them. (See Director's Production Script for suggested choreography for the Frog Chorus)*]

FROGS. Brekekekex-koax-koax . . .

FROG 1. Shall the choral choiristers of the marsh . . .

FROG 2. . . be censured and rejected . . .

FROG 3. . . as hoarse and harsh; . . .

FROG 4. . . and their chromatic essays deprived of praise?

FROGS. No, let us raise afresh

Our obstreperous brekekekex; . . .

FROG 1. . . the customary cry . . .

FROG 2. . . of the creatures . . .

FROG 3. . . at the theatres . . .

FROG 4. . . in their yearly revelry.

FROGS. Brekekekex-koax-koax!

DIONYSUS. [*Rowing frantically*] How I'm mauled, how I'm galled; worn and mangled to a mash—there they go! "Koax-koax!"

FROGS. Brekekekex-koax-koax.

DIONYSUS. Oh, beshrew all your crew. You don't consider how I smart.

FROGS. Now for a sample of our art: Brekekekex-koax-koax.

DIONYSUS. I wish you hanged with all my heart. Have you nothing else to say? "Brekekekex-koax-koax" all day!

FROGS 1 & 4. We've a right . . .

FROGS 2 & 3. We've a right . . .

FROGS. [*Clawing and poking at DIONYSUS, who weakly tries to defend himself*] . . . and we croak at you for spite!

FROGS 1 & 4. We've a right, we've a right; . . .

FROGS 2 & 3. Day and night, day and night,

FROGS. Night and day, still to creak and croak away:

Brekekekex-brekekekex-koax-koax!

DIONYSUS. Oh, the frogs, consume and rot 'em, I've a blister on my bottom. Hold your tongues, you tuneful creatures! [*He strikes at them with his paddle*]

FROGS. Cease with your profane entreaties all in vain forever striving.

Silence is against our natures. With the vernal heat reviving,
Shady plants of asphodel are the lodges where we dwell.

FROG 1. Meagre . . .

FROG 2. Eager . . .

FROG 3. Leaping . . .

FROG 4. Lunging . . .

FROGS. From the sedgy wharfage plunging
To the tranquil depths below, there we muster all a-row;
Where, secure from toil and trouble, with a tuneful hubble-
bubble,

Our symphonious accents flow: Brekekekex-koax-koax.

DIONYSUS. [*God-like—but with no hope that he will be obeyed*] I
forbid you to proceed!

FROGS. That would be severe indeed;
Arbitrary, bold and rash—Brekekekex-koax-koax.

DIONYSUS. I command you to desist—[*Flails at them and hurts
himself*] Oh, my back, there! Oh, my wrist! What a twist! What a sprain!

FROGS. Once again—we renew the tuneful strain:
Brekekekex-koax-koax.

DIONYSUS. I disdain—hang the pain—all your nonsense, noise, and
trash. Oh, my blister! Oh, my sprain!

FROGS. Brekekekex-koax-koax.

FROG 1. Friends and frogs, we must display all our powers of voice
today.

FROG 2. Suffer not this stranger here, with fastidious foreign ear . . .

FROG 3. . . . to confound us and abash.

FROGS. Brekekekex-koax-koax.

DIONYSUS. [*Realizing that the Frogs have not hurt him, he becomes
braver*] Well, my spirit is not broke; if it's only for the joke, I'll outdo
you with a croak—here it goes—"Koax-koax!"

FROGS. Now for a glorious croaking crash . . .
Brekekekex-koax-koax!

DIONYSUS. [*Hitting at them with his paddle*] I'll disperse you with
a splash.

FROGS. Brekekekex-koax-koax. [*Begin to exit*]

DIONYSUS. I'll subdue your noisy crew—have amongst you there,
slapdash! [*Now that they are leaving, he becomes very brave and strikes
out in earnest, although they are far beyond his reach*]

FROGS. Brekekekex-koax-koax. [*Exit. DIONYSUS is extremely
proud because he feels that he has run them off*]

CHARON. Hold! We're ashore—shift your oar. Get out. Now pay your fare.

DIONYSUS. *[Getting out of boat]* There—there it is—your dollar.

[CHARON exits, pulling his boat after him. DIONYSUS, finding himself alone in a strange place, begins to call out fearfully]

DIONYSUS. Ho, Xanthias! Xanthias, I say! Where's Xanthias?

XANTHIAS. *[Entering]* Ahoy.

DIONYSUS. Come here.

XANTHIAS. I'm glad to see you, master.

DIONYSUS. *[Pointing at audience]* What's that before us there?

XANTHIAS. The mire and the darkness.

DIONYSUS. Do you see the villains and the perjurers that he told us of?

XANTHIAS. *[Pointing at audience]* Yes, plain enough, don't you?

DIONYSUS. Ah! Now I see them indeed, quite plain. There are the crooks. Isn't that Public Enemy Number One over there?

XANTHIAS. Sh-h-h—that's the judge. *[NOTE: If this play is not being done at a contest, substitute the name of some prominent person in the audience]* We'd best move forward; for this is the place that Heracles told us was haunted by those horrible monsters!

DIONYSUS. Oh, confound him! He invented yarns to frighten me, but I am a brave fellow and he is jealous of me. I should rather *like* to meet with an adventure in some shape. I might meet some monster and distinguish myself by some daring deed.

[Offstage scream. DIONYSUS jumps into Xanthias's arms]

XANTHIAS. By Zeus! I think I hear a noise.

DIONYSUS. Where? Where?

XANTHIAS. There, just behind you.

DIONYSUS. *[Scrambling in front of Xanthias]* Get behind me, then. *[Another bloodcurdling scream]*

XANTHIAS. There!—it's before you now. There!

DIONYSUS. *[Scrambling behind Xanthias]* Go before me, then.

XANTHIAS. Ah! Now I see it—a monstrous beast indeed!

DIONYSUS. What kind?

XANTHIAS. A dreadful kind—all kinds at once. It changes and transforms itself. Now it's a mule. Now an ox,—and now it's a beautiful creature—a woman!