

Instructions for Doctus

As an introduction to conversing and navigating in the VRoma online virtual environment and to "living as a Roman in VRoma," we are going to enact a role-playing scenario. Instead of connecting with your own VRoma character, you are going to connect as a lower-class Roman based on a real person who once lived in the city of Rome, a person known to us now only through one or more inscriptions but once a living, breathing Roman.

The characters have been assigned at random to the members of the class. Your character will be **Doctus** (Gaius Fundilius Doctus), an *archimus*, the chief actor and playwright for a troupe of mimes. Connect with the special username and password that your teacher will give to you.

You will enter VRoma in your special location (in this case **Orchestra** of the Theater of Marcellus, which is your character's "home"). Click on the icon for Doctus and read the description carefully, including all the links, one of which will show you the actual inscription on which your character is based. Below the description, you will see that you are carrying a Scroll for Doctus. Click this and read your specific instructions for the game. Others will be able to see and read your description, but not this scroll. Before your class acts out the scenario, you should explore all sections of the Theater of Marcellus, carefully reading all the links so that you will have sufficient information about Roman dramatic productions, the theater itself, and the backstage activities. This will prepare you to carry out your tasks (described in your scroll, the text of which is also included below).

Scenario:

The *praefectus annonae* has invited you to be part of a group of Romans who will accompany a young woman from the province of Baetica, Coelia Mascellina, on a tour of various locations in Rome. She has recently taken over her mother's business of exporting olive oil and wine from Baetica, and the prefect wants to make sure she enjoys this tour so that he can negotiate a favorable contract with her to supply olive oil for the troops. He is counting on you to introduce her to the part of Rome you know best.

Your Tasks:

1) Reveal your personality to Coelia and the others in the group as you converse and move about the city. You, Doctus, are a very successful mime actor, but you want to be viewed as an artist and intellectual. Your profession's low reputation makes you insecure, so you tend to be rather pompous and pretentious. You dress most respectably in a beautifully draped toga, and you declaim quotations from your favorite playwright, the mime author Publilius Syrus, whenever you can work them into the conversation. Here are a few such quotations; you can find many others by typing "Publilius Syrus quotations" in Google:

- Do not turn back when you are just at the goal.
- It is a very hard undertaking to seek to please everybody.
- Practice is the best of all instructors.
- No one knows what he can do until he tries.
- There are no shortcuts to any place worth going.
- To do two things at once is to do neither.
- No one should be judge in his own case.
- Nothing can be done at once hastily and prudently.
- Money alone sets all the world in motion.

2) Take the group to the Theater of Marcellus. Ask everyone to start at Rome by using the Quick Jump bookmark or typing **@go Rome**, then click on **Region 9 South** in the map (lowest part of the region near the bend in the Tiber), then click **Theater of Marcellus**. Using the exits, lead them through the Porticus, Vomitorium, Orchestra, Cavea, and Scaena. Tell them a little about the theater as they go; just pick out a few interesting facts to highlight for the group (and tell them which links in the descriptions they should click). Be sure to include information about the mime (and quotations from Publilius Syrus) whenever you can. Once at the Scaena, have them all click "Dressing Room (English)," Mercury, and Sosia to learn about the scene they are going to view. Then you type **/activate Sosia** (don't forget the slash) and after he has appeared type **/activate Mercury** to launch the scene. After the scene is over, you can make disparaging comparisons with the mime. If there is time, the group can go back to the Orchestra and attempt to converse with the comic actor Pseudolus (a bot).