

Young Spartacus

? NT Film Script Services 1995 (Geoff O'Callaghan)

Written for International Children's Day, this comedy is cast especially for boys in order to attract them to the subject of drama in schools. (A little positive discrimination.)

It is intended that it be treated as a farce, somewhat in the styles of Seinfeld, or Monty Python. The play involves fight scenes, and has its fair share of gory bits, but it is not intended to be a horror story. Visual humour is encouraged.

It reminds us that the ancient Roman civilization was very bloodthirsty. The sanctity of a boy slave's life was not respected. Agricultural slaves, and gladiatorial slaves, were harshly treated. Spartacus was 12 when he entered the gladiator school. The Romans chose to train youngsters at this age so they would be skilled in the arena. They bet on the results, so left little to chance. Recent archaeological digs indicate some boys were trained as gladiators from a younger age.

When introducing the play to students, it is timely to discuss how many boys are treated in the modern world. Boy Soldiers die in combat in Africa and SE Asia. Street children are executed in S. America. Consider Mu-Thai, the Thai system of boxing. Boys start training at 6 or 7 years of age. Other abuses include carpet slavery, cocoa plantation slaves, and their forcible use as camel jockeys.

At the end of the Slaves Revolt in 73BC, The Romans crucified 6000 surviving male slaves over the age of ten along the Apian way. They sold the women, girls, and younger boys back into slavery.

Spartacus was not crucified. He died in the battle. Very little is known about him, but a fictional account describes him as a Thracian soldier in the Roman army who was sold into slavery. This is not believed by modern scholars. For one thing, why would a Thracian be called "Spartacus"? Why would a Roman Soldier be sold as a slave? How would such a person gain the confidence of the revolting gladiators? And so on. It is believed now, that Spartacus was trained as a professional gladiator from early childhood. The story in the play is fictional and has no basis in historical fact.

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YOUNG SPARTACUS

The play opens with LUCIUS, a soldier, who acts as the COMMENTATOR. He was once employed to train the young gladiators. He knew Spartacus when the boy was just a lad learning to fight.

CAST

LUCIUS

The commentator. Roman Soldier and head Tutor for the gladiator school. (78 lines)

CANIS

Personal slave to Lucius. Former gladiator. His tongue is cut out during the play, so he cannot talk. (13 lines)

SPARTACUS

Young gladiatorial slave - about 12 years old. Small, but wiry and cheeky. (35 lines)

GLADIATORS

Bostar and Certis are bigger boys, but all the rest should be about the same size if possible. Casting can be variable, but it is more effective visually to have more than less gladiators. They act as a movement chorus, doing drill, fighting, etc. (11)

ALBINUS

A blonde haired slave boy from Northern Europe. About 12 years old. (1)

BOSTAR

A thickset 14 year old. (34)

CROTO

A Moorish slave. About 12. (4)

CERTIS

A large slow boy about 14 (13)

DEMETRIUS

about 13 (5)

GALLO

about 13 (18)

HOSTUS

about 13 (6)

FELICIA

A slave girl, about 14, who prepares food, etc for the young gladiators. (5)

MARCUS &

Soldiers who help Lucius with the young gladiators. (24) (19)

LENTULUS

SEXTUS

Owner of the gladiator school. (7 lines)

DRUSULA

Wife to Sextus. A cruel woman. (19)

(For an avant-garde look, the civilians could wear evening dress, the soldiers combat fatigues, and the gladiators black jeans and skivvies.)

The Set

PROPS



The Boy Gladiators' Cell.

Costumes

Basic Roman garb for civilians - togas, etc. Roman armor for Lucius and the soldiers. The gladiators wear rough hemp tunics, but when in practice wear appropriate gladiator helmets, armor, and weapons.

Gladiators' wooden weapons, staves Shields & helmets, Slop-kitchen utensils & bowls, Roman Soldiers' swords, shields & weapons, Heavy steel manacle sets for the gladiators & Chains neck to wall length. Wall shelves, Table & 2 chairs.

SOUND

During the play, the clink of chains, the sounds of metal against metal, and the clang of weapons punctuate the dialogue. It is important to build up

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YOUNG SPARTACUS

this noisy atmosphere. Some parts require dead silence.

The Play:

"Young Spartacus"

? ?

NT Film Script Services

Front of Curtain

Somewhere along a road leading to Rome. It is after the Slaves Revolt in 73 BC. The surviving slaves are being crucified.

SFX

Tortured screams are heard off.

Lucius, a soldier, enters with Canis his personal slave who carries a wooden bucket of water in his left hand. Lucius throws down a large mallet and we see his right arm is covered with blood.

LUCIUS

What a task! What a task! It's enough to put anyone off crucifixions for life. I used to enjoy them, but six thousand... It's too much.

Canis has placed the bucket on the floor. He brings a cloth across and begins to wash Lucius' arms. Then he carefully sponges the soldier's breast plate, shield, and helmet. laying the latter carefully on the floor.

Lucius hardly acknowledges this, but turns himself about as the slave attends to him. He continues to discourse all the time.

LUCIUS

Aren't you lucky I found you, Canis. You could be up there on a cross with them.

He grasps a thong attached to something hanging around the boy's neck. It looks like a piece of

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YOUNG SPARTACUS

leather. It is Canis' tongue, dried and hard. Lucius holds it up.

LUCIUS

But without your tongue, you couldn't implore the gods to save you.

CANIS

(whines in discomfort)

LUCIUS

Arrgh!(Releases Canis and indicates bucket.) Get rid of that.

Canis exits down left with bucket.

(cheerfully)Slaves. You can't trust them. Can't live without them.

They are so stupid - Hear that one out there? "Dig the hole for your cross two cubits deep," I tell him. But does he listen? No. He sulks. "Do you want it to fall over so you land on your silly face?" I ask. He sulks. No good threatening him with my gladius (Draws his short sword out, but sheaths it again.) Finally, I promised him that if he dug the

hole properly, I would make it quick for him.

SFX

Screaming outside stops with a gurgle.

LUCIUS

(Hand to ear. Then puts his thumb up. And winks.)
And I'm as good as my word.

Lucius remains a commentator to the audience, even as he takes part in the play. He moves onto the stage area, down right, as the Young gladiators are marched into their holding cell at the start of Scene 1.

ACT 1 Scene 1

CURTAIN

Open on the Boys' Holding Cell of Padua Gladiator's School. It is a large living Area - a plain room, with a bar-locked door on the rear wall Back Right. 9 Chains hang on the back wall. On the Left wall is a wide door which leads to the School Arena. Staves, shields, and wooden swords are hung on hooks. The Right wall contains shelves for food and eating utensils, and there is a wooden table and 2 plain wooden chairs Down Right.

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YOUNG SPARTACUS

We hear the tramping sound of marching feet outside. The bellowing voice of a Roman Soldier can be heard off:

MARCUS Right, you lot. Look lively. When you get inside, line up straight.

LUCIUS I can remember the first time I set eyes on Spartacus. He was just a boy.

The young gladiators enter under the control of Bostar, an older boy about 14 wearing leather collar and wrist straps. The younger boys wear chained steel wrist manacles, collars and slave tunics. They reach the centre of the stage and line up facing Lucius who has moved down left.

Bostar takes his place centre front and salutes.

BOSTAR Hail Lucius. We who are about to die salute you.

The gladiators do not salute, but call out in unison:

GLADIATORS Hail Lucius. We who are about to die salute you.

Marcus and Lentulus enter. They salute Lucius, who salutes back. He ignores the slaves.

LUCIUS Report!

LENTULUS Recruits for Padua Gladiator School - Sir!

MARCUS Sextus bought these at the slave auction this morning.

Lucius walks down the line inspecting the boys carefully. He checks their teeth and feels their muscles.

LUCIUS Hmm. Not bad. How much did he pay for them?

MARCUS Too much, if you ask me. By the way - he did say - that you are not to waste them.

Lucius draws his gladius and pretends to cut Bostar's throat from behind. Bostar is nervous, but stands rock still. Only the tremble of his hand betrays him.

LUCIUS I understand. I can train them, but I can not waste them. (laughs)

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YOUNG SPARTACUS

He releases Bostar, and sheaths his gladius. Bostar reacts with nervous relief.

Lucius turns to address the boys.

LUCIUS Train well, work hard, and you shall be well rewarded. Secure them, Bostar. Make sure they are fed and watered.

He turns to Lentulus.

LUCIUS Marcus, Lentulus, Check that they are secured before you leave. Then join me for an afternoon's feast. Checking in new slaves is thirsty work.

He exits.

Bostar signals the boys to line up against the chain wall. They are attached via their collars, and sit down with crossed legs. Marcus checks them carefully.

MARCUS Check this one carefully, Bostar. His name is Spartacus, and he always runs away.

He hoists Spartacus to his feet by pulling on the chain. Turns him round to lift his tunic. Displays the scars on the slave's back.

LENTULUS With a back like that, I'd run away too.

BOSTAR I shall be careful, Sir.

MARCUS You'll be more than that. You have a trusted place here, Bostar. If he runs away again, I will see that you are a torch at the next games.

Bostar drops to a kneeling position in front of Marcus. He stretches his arms forward, and places his face on the floor.

BOSTAR He shall not escape, Sir. I'll make sure of that.

Marcus places his foot casually on top of Bostar's head.

MARCUS I'm sure you will, Bostar. Your fear of me will make you obedient, if nothing else will.

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YOUNG SPARTACUS

He kicks Bostar over and leaves, followed by Lentulus. The door is closed, and there is the sound of it being barred shut outside. Bostar remains frozen on the floor.

There is a long silence.

Spartacus adjusts his tunic and turns round to face Bostar. He sits and pokes at the boy with his hands.

SPARTACUS

What is a torch?

BOSTAR

Pray to the gods that you never find out for yourself.
They tie you to the top of a pole.
Upside down, and cover you with tar.

When they set you alight, you burn slowly - feet first. It can take two hours or more to die.

The more you scream, the more the crowd loves it.

There is another long silence. Spartacus sits back away from Bostar.

SPARTACUS

(swallows) Sorry I asked.

DEMETRIUS

The soldiers said that you'd feed and water us ...

Bostar stands up and moves towards the shelves down right. He starts to gather bowls and puts them into a pile. He reaches into the cupboard and brings out a wooden bucket of water.

BOSTAR

Food. Water. Yes, I can do that.

GALLO

How is it that you aren't chained up?

CANIS

They trust him. He's one of them, as anyone can see.

BOSTAR

Watch your tongue, slave. I'm no Roman. I am a Gaul, and proud of it.

CANIS

So why are you free?

BOSTAR

Free! (Points to the door.) Do I look free to you?

He comes out from behind the table and stands hands on hips looking at them.

BOSTAR

I will tell you all something.

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YOUNG SPARTACUS

Do what you are told.
Never speak to them unless they
ask you a question. Never look
them in the eyes. Bow always.
Grovel often. In time, they will
unchain your hands. Maybe, if you
are very good to them, they will
unchain you from the wall.
But they will NEVER take the
chains off your heart.

He hands each boy a bowl of water to drink -
except Canis.

Then he hands out a lump of bread to each -
except Canis.

CANIS What about me? What did I do?

BOSTAR Lesson number one, Canis the Dog.
Lesson number one.

Canis looks to his companions, but they have drunk
their water and consumed the bread. Bostar puts
bread and water just out of Canis' reach. Canis
strikes at it with his feet, but it is just too far.
Bostar stands back with folded arms.

BOSTAR Can you work out lesson number
two, I wonder?

Canis looks up at him defeated.

CANIS Please may I have the food and
water, Bostar.

BOSTAR I do believe you are close.

Canis adopts the grovel position.

Certis (who is next to him) grasps Canis by the chain
and lifts him up from the floor.

CERTIS (To Bostar) Hey. Feed him. He
asked nicely.

BOSTAR All right, Certis. I was just
having a bit of fun. Just fun.

He hands Canis the water bowl and bread.

CERTIS Fun. I like fun. I'm going to ask
if I can practise gladiating with
you.

SPARTACUS Hey, stop it! Everyone - stop
quarrelling.

Bostar, are you one of us, or are
you Roman?

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YOUNG SPARTACUS

BOSTAR

I look after myself, Spartacus. I told you that. I am pretty good with the Gladius. If I can win in the arena, I may get my freedom.

GALLO

You have got to go into the arena and fight those gladiators? That is tough.

HOSTUS

No, Gallo. He has got to go into the arena and fight us. That is what I call tough.

GALLO

Us!??

CROTO

Daylight dawns.

ALBINUS

Finally, the boy understands.

GALLO

(Who is next to Spartacus) But I can't fight. I'm hopeless. I'll be killed.

BOSTAR

Hey, Gallo. That is why I am here-to train you. I'm here to stop you being killed.

This is the Gladiator School of Padua. The best. Our graduates are famous over all the world. Our motto is "Have a great day at the Arena. Let us take you out."

He collects all the bowls and puts them back on the shelves.

SPARTACUS

So now what do we do?

BOSTAR

If you're wise, you'll rest. Tomorrow you will start training.

It will be a busy day.

END ACT 1 - Scene 1

Front of Curtain

Lucius is sitting in a studio chair in front of a small table.

LUCIUS

I almost hesitate to tell you all what happened next. Where is that boy? He should have my tea ready by now.

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YOUNG SPARTACUS

Canis enters with a basket. He puts it down in front of the squatting Lucius.

LUCIUS Ah. Here he is. What have we got?
Honeyed mice, grapes, apples, and
lots of wine. Beer from Egypt.

Tucks in while Canis watches. Lucius throws him a mouse, which Canis eats.

See, we Romans can generous, if
we're not - pushed.

ACT 1 Scene 2

Lentulus is overseeing the boys as they train with weights and other strength building activities. Some are lifting concrete blocks. Others are doing pushups and sit-ups. The chains at the back of the wall hang downwards - unused except for one occupant - Spartacus. He stands - manacled behind - watching the others as they perform.

LENTULUS Well done. You've all worked
hard. Today, I've got a surprise
for you. A dead Rabbit. There's
nothing like a bit of meat to put
fire in the belly.

The boys leave off their training and swarm over to the table where Felicia, a slave girl, ladles out the gruel, bread, and pieces of rabbit to the boys.

BOSTAR Come on. Line up, line up. You all
know that.

While the boys are at the table being organized, Lentulus wanders over to Spartacus.

LENTULUS Hungry yet? Thirsty?

SPARTACUS I'm **not** going to kill anyone. I'll
never be a gladiator.

LENTULUS You'd rather be a torch?

SPARTACUS You can whip me, starve me, perish
me, even burn me - but I'm not
playing your game. I would rather
die.

LENTULUS I do believe you would.

He grabs Spartacus by the chin and holds his head so they look at each other eye to eye. Spartacus makes a noise with his mouth and prepares to spit in the Roman's face. All the boys have stopped eating and watch tensely.

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YOUNG SPARTACUS

LENTULUS

Don't even think of it, Spartacus. I'll not be goaded into gutting you. Sextus paid good money for your hide. He believes that you will make a good gladiator - to his profit.

I'll have Gallo whipped to an inch of his life in your place.

GALLO

No! Spartacus! Don't let him!

LENTULUS

Is he your little friend?

Spartacus closes his mouth and swallows.

LENTULUS

An eloquent answer. There's no place for friendship in the arena, Spartacus. I'll prove it to you.

He points at Gallo and beckons him forward. Gallo puts his bowl on the table and comes forward quickly, but nervously.

LENTULUS

Certis. You will do.

Lentulus grabs two staves from the armory wall. He hands one to each Gallo and Certis.

LENTULUS

Certis, break Gallo's legs. Gallo, you may defend yourself. Certis, if you fail, I will break yours.

Lentulus moves down left to clear the area. Certis looks surprised and his attention is on Lentulus, but Gallo doesn't wait. He bops Certis on top of the head with a sudden, quick blow. Certis drops to the floor, unconscious.

Lentulus bursts out into laughter. He doubles up in mirth.

LENTULUS

Well done! Well done, Gallo! What a little champ! How far you've come in such a short time.

GALLO

Creamed him in one.

SPARTACUS

Gallo! No!

GALLO

Sorry, Spartacus. I didn't want to hurt Certis. But it was him or me.

LENTULUS

And that's the whole point, Spartacus. Him, or me. You Greeks might read philosophy, ethics, and logic. When it comes to the pinch, it's dog eats dog.

? NTFSS

YOUNG SPARTACUS

CANIS

You Romans should know.

LENTULUS

What was that?

CANIS

(Suddenly humble) I mean - you Romans know all about being very good at fighting.

Lentulus picks up the staff and belts Canis across the shoulders. Canis drops to the floor. Lentulus breathes heavily with suppressed anger. He walks from the room and shuts the door behind him, from outside we hear the sound of the bars being dropped to lock the door.

Bostar and Hostus tend to Canis.

BOSTAR

You fool, Canis. I've told you - Watch your tongue. Keep it still inside your mouth.

Felicia runs across to Spartacus with some bread and a bowl of water Gallo Demetrius and Albinus tend to Certis.

FELICIA

This is all your fault, Spartacus. You know Lentulus has to get results. Why do you stir him so?

SPARTACUS

Because he's ripe for stirring. Lucius is too clever to be fooled. I'll work for him, or even Marcus.

That will make Lentulus look like a fool. Sextus will get rid of him. He'll be transferred to the German Frontier.

CERTIS

Oh my aching head! I'll get you back, you little rat! OOOH!

He lies back and groans.

GALLO

I didn't mean it, Certis. Really, I didn't.

Certis stands groggily and grabs one of the staves from the floor. Then he advances on Gallo. The boys, including Bostar, pounce on Certis and drag him down before he can do any damage.

CERTIS

Get off! Get off!

BOSTAR

You settle down and we'll get off. Gallo didn't mean it. You know that. He had to clobber you one.

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YOUNG SPARTACUS

HOSTUS

Hey, guys, Canis is really sick.
Lentulus whacked him across the
neck.

They gather round and lift Canis onto the table. He
groans, and they turn him onto his side. There is a
noise without, and the door opens. Lentulus, Marcus,
and Lucius enter. Felicia is bathing his neck with a
damp cloth.

LENTULUS

He insulted me, and he insulted
the whole of Rome.

FELICIA

He's dying!

LUCIUS

Stand aside. Move back, all of
you.

The slaves move back, Marcus shuts the door,
Lentulus and Lucius examine Canis.

LENTULUS

I didn't hit him very hard.

LUCIUS

I trust Sextus will accept your
explanations, Lentulus. Don't
worry. He'll live. His neck will
be sore for a week, but he will
live.

Take the rest of the afternoon
off, soldier. Cool yourself. I
shall train the little gladiators.
Marcus and I will have this little
lot well in hand ready for you to
try them again tomorrow.

LENTULUS

(Salutes) Sir!

He leaves via the back door.

Marcus and Lucius look at each other. Lucius gives
a sigh.

MARCUS

He's young, Sir.

LUCIUS

He's a Roman Soldier. He should
know what an order is. No wastage.

Looks across at Spartacus

And why is that little fly stuck
to the wall?

MARCUS

Shall I release him?

LUCIUS

He'll learn nothing there.
Bostar. How long has Spartacus
been chained on the wall?

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YOUNG SPARTACUS

BOSTAR

Two days, Sir - without food or water. But he would not obey ...

LUCIUS

Don't tell me. I can guess.
Little leather back does not heed the whip or chain.

He puts his hands behind his back and walks over to Spartacus.

LUCIUS

Well.
What does it take to make you train?

SPARTACUS

(looking down) Chickens.
Wine. Onions. Fruit. A little oil. Bread.

LUCIUS

HOW DARE YOU BARGAIN WITH ME!

Spartacus hangs his head as he replies

SPARTACUS

You did ask.
And I will train with **you**.

LUCIUS

You'll train with me?

SPARTACUS

They say that you are very good with the gladius. The best in Rome.

LUCIUS

(understands) If I train you, you'll give up this nonsense?

SPARTACUS

Yes. If you teach me properly. I don't want to die in the arena.

LUCIUS

Done. I will make a gladiator of you that the whole world will know.

He unchains Spartacus, who kneels in front of him.

Get up, boy. I can't undo your manacles if you are down there.

Spartacus stands to be released. Lucius throws a staff at him, and takes the other in both hands. They advance on each other.

LUCIUS

Defend yourself, Spartacus!

They fight, while the rest of the gladiators, Felicia, and Marcus stand around to watch.

CURTAIN

End ACT 1 Scene 2

Front of Curtain

LUCIUS

I thought that crack you made
about the dogs was very witty,
Canis.

Canis grins and nods his head. Lucius smacks him
across the ear.

I'm glad your tongue dried out
properly. I wasn't sure whether
to use salt, smoke, or oak-bark.
Oak bark did the job. Plenty of
Tannin.

(Aside) I like what happened next.
Things got distinctly better for
young Spartacus - before they got
a lot worse.

ACT 2 Scene 1

Curtain

Life in the Young Gladiators' quarters has taken a
distinctly better turn. Spartacus is now "King of
the kids" as it were. He's managed to squeeze

himself and Felicia into wide chair. They sit
eating a chicken in between, Felicia feeds him
grapes. Certis and Bostar sit back to back in the
gladiator circle passing a wine jug back and
forward. Demetrius, Gallo, Croto, and Hostus are
seated around the table throwing dice. Canis and
Albinus are having a friendly chat. Canis's neck is
wrapped in a white bandage.

The door swings open. Lentulus enters. The noise
stops, and everyone is very still.

LENTULUS

So, you little rats. You think you
got one up on me.

I've just had the word from
Sextus. He's arranged for me to
get a field commission in Northern
Gaul. At last, I make Captain.
After two years of service, I may
even become a Centurion.

So I bid you all - farewell.

Spartacus - I hear that Lucius has
taken you under his wing. You're
to learn how to wield the Gladius.
Take care, Boy. It's a double
edged sword.

? NTFSS

YOUNG SPARTACUS

Canis - take my advice. Watch
your tongue. It may well eat you.

He exits with a wave of his hand, and a few parting
words.

Feast on. Get as potted as you
like. Tomorrow, Lucius will want
fifteen hours of hard work out of
you - drunk or sober. And he
believes that nothing sobers a
gladiator as quickly as a hundred
lashes. (laughs ironically)

His words have put a real dampener on things. They
sigh and groan as they break the party up.

FELICIA

He's right. You all have to train
tomorrow. If you're not up to it,
that's the last feast we'll have.

That's how his mind works. He
gives you his half of the bargain,
and if you don't give him yours,
end of story. Deal's off.

CERTIS

Things have only just got started.
And I haven't killed Gallo yet.

BOSTAR

Oh, forget Gallo, Certis. We told
you - he didn't mean it. We just
want to finish the bottle,
Spartacus.

SPARTACUS

Felicia is right. We've had a lot
of fun, and good food. If we do
things right, we'll get some more
of the same. I say we should call
it a night.

CERTIS

And who are you to say anything,
"Leatherback".

BOSTAR

It's my job to tell everyone when
to get to bed, Spartan.

CANIS

I've got a thumping headache. I'm
turning in.

He goes to his chain position and lies on his sack.

ALBINUS

Me too, I guess.

DEMETRIUS

And me.

The rest start to follow, leaving Spartacus and
Bostar staring each other out across the circle.

? NTFSS

YOUNG SPARTACUS

BOSTAR

Any time. You want to challenge me? Anytime.

SPARTACUS

You're in the pot, Bostar. I don't want to challenge you. Not tonight. I'm too tired.

FELICIA

So am I. Marcus will be down soon to lock you all in. If you're all asleep, he won't bother with the chains.

She leaves by the door.

BOSTAR

What in Hades. It doesn't matter. You got us a good feed, good wine. You're right. Why kill it off.

Good night, Spartan.

He stumbles over to his chain position, lays out his sack and collapses onto it with a long burp. Spartacus walks over to his with exaggerated dignity, and collapses.

A few moments later, the door opens. Lucius and Marcus enter. Lucius puts his finger to his lips, indicating silence. Marcus looks around and shakes his head. He whispers to Lucius:

MARCUS

They look so peaceful when asleep. So young and innocent. Who would believe they will become - the deadliest of men? Ferocious killers.

Even as boys they must be chained lest they turn on their masters.

LUCIUS

Not tonight. The little tigers lie in fatted sleep. Tomorrow we will raise their fighting spirit, That they shall growl and spit fire at the very Sun and Moon. Come. Close and lock fast the door.

They exit, and we hear the shutter on the cell door being lowered.

Curtain

End ACT 2 Scene 1

Front Curtain

Lucius enters with Canis They carry wooden swords.

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YOUNG SPARTACUS

LUCIUS

Now for a lesson on the use of the Gladius. (Aside) Did you get the one about the double edged sword? Good. I hate a slow audience.

He thrusts at Canis, who dodges and parries.

LUCIUS

Nice parry there, Canis. Well done. You see, People, there are three things you can do with a sword.

Canis shakes his head and holds up 6 fingers

LUCIUS

Four? Five? Six?!! Look - you can thrust, slash, and block. Those are the basic moves.

Canis draws and sheathes his wooden sword, then pulls it out again.

Right. You can put your sword in and out, in and out. We all know that.

Even with your tongue cut out, you can still manage to be cheeky.

Canis throws his sword down and kicks it.

And you can throw it away. I understand your sentiments, but it's a very bad move. Especially around us Romans.

He chases after Canis, who picks up his sword as he runs off stage, followed by Lucius.

CURTAIN

ACT 2 Scene 2

The young gladiators are in an extended line across the middle of the stage. Lucius stands in front of them, facing the audience, and they copy his moves. It is a choreography piece.

LUCIUS

Unsheathe! Guard! Slash Slash! Thrust! Block! Block! Thrust! Slash! Slash! Block! Thrust! Guard!

GLADIATORS

Unsheathe! Guard! Slash Slash! Thrust! Block! Block! Thrust! Slash! Slash! Block! Thrust! Guard!

The sword dance is choreographed to percussion of sword against sword & shield:

? NTFSS

YOUNG SPARTACUS

1 The gladiators do a rhythmic percussion drill in extended line.

2. Every second gladiator steps forward. Spartacus teams up with Lucius for the Pairs drill.

3. Lucius drops out and the gladiators split into groups of three.

4. In extended line they once more perform their sword drill, and come to a sudden stop with Guard! Sheathe!

GLADIATORS

Slash Slash! Thrust! Block! Block!
Thrust! Slash! Slash! Block!
Thrust! Guard! Sheathe!

LUCIUS

Rest! Phew, that's a fine exercise.

Always remember to thrust! It's the thrust that kills. Oh, you can slash him and draw a little blood, but you only have to get your gladius a finger deep into his torso, twist, and he's gone.

You know it, and he knows it. The crowd doesn't have to vote. He

is dead! Now let us practice the salute.

He stands facing them and puts both hands out as if to get a response.

GLADIATORS

Hail Lucius! We who are about to die salute you!

LUCIUS

Very good. Very well done.

Tell me, Bostar. How do we die in the arena?

BOSTAR

Why, great Centurion, everyone knows that. We die to please the crowd.

Lucius thrusts his sword at Bostar, who catches it between his arm and chest so it sticks out. He spins about in a circle, waving his arms and screaming. Then he drops to the ground and thrashes about, kicking his feet up and down.

BOSTAR

AAArrrrgh! (dies).

LUCIUS

More kicking. More kicking. The crowd doesn't come here to eat meats. They want to see you die.

? NTFSS

YOUNG SPARTACUS

Bostar obliges by more kicking and screaming.

LUCIUS Good! Good! Now a death rattle.
A loud death rattle!

Bostar gets a mouth full of spittle and gargles out
a death rattle, then lies still after one or two
leg-jerks.

LUCIUS Yes! That is an excellent death!
Resume your place, Bostar.

Bostar gets up, with a deep bow, hands the wooden
sword to Lucius and resumes his spot in line.

The boys clap spontaneously.

LUCIUS I'm glad you all appreciate his
performance.

You'll all get a chance to do it
for real one day.

The gladiators clapping slows to a s t o p.

LUCIUS Most of you
Unless you pay attention.

Now watch here!

Spartacus! Guard yourself!

Spartacus draws his sword to the guard position as
Lucius comes up With his in a slashing movement
strikes him across the chest.

Got you!

Spartacus drops, winded.

SPARTACUS That's not fair! You didn't
guard! You drew and hit me.

LUCIUS FAIR!
I would have thought you of all
people would know about UNFAIR.

I drew, and I slew.
When you go out into the arena,
the only thing you need to know is
that the other person in there
with you is your enemy.
If you don't kill him, he'll
certainly kill you.

There is a noise at the door. Marcus enters and
stands at attention, with the door open. Sextus
enters with Drusula. They are attended by Felicia
dressed in white with flowers in her hair. She
carries a tray.

? NTFSS

YOUNG SPARTACUS

LUCIUS

All Hail Sextus Otiphias, Supreme Governor of Padua!

GLADIATORS

(Saluting) Hail Sextus! We who are about to die salute you!

LUCIUS

All Hail Lady Drusula. Wife of Sextus Otiphias, Supreme Governor of Padua!

GLADIATORS

Hail Lady Drusula! We who are about to die salute you!

DRUSULA

Oh, how lovely!

SEXTUS

About to die? I hope not. Not after what I paid for them. They are a long term investment. These will be the most thoroughly trained gladiators in the whole Roman Republic. Nobody will be able to stand against them. I'll make a fortune.

DRUSULA

Boys toys. I hope you make a fortune, dear husband. You certainly spent one.

SEXTUS

Worth every dinar.

DRUSULA

So let us see. We'll sit here, and Lucius will arrange a small demonstration.

Felicia puts the tray down & brings a chair (down right) for Lady Drusula to sit on. Bostar brings the other chair over for Sextus. Then he stands behind the two Romans with Felicia in a serving position. Marcus and Lucius take up station at the rear. It is a tableaux audience. (Bostar has seen this sort of thing before. He's out of the way.)

DRUSULA

(Points to Albinus and Croto)
Those two will do. The rest of you line up against the wall.

The boys line up against the back wall.

Secure them.

Marcus and Lucius move behind the boys attaching them to the neck chains. It is quickly done.

SEXTUS

My dear, is this a good idea?

DRUSULA

Marcus, and Lucius, give them your swords. (They hesitate and she hisses quietly at them:) You are not frightened of two small boys, I hope.

? NTFSS

YOUNG SPARTACUS

The soldiers hand their steel swords to Croto and Albinus. The two boys swallow nervously and look at each other.

LUCIUS Right - do it properly. You know how to salute the lady. Do so.

CR. & ALB. Hail Lady Drusula. We who are about to die, salute you.

LUCIUS Louder, boys. Make it louder!

CR. & ALB. HAIL LADY DRUSULA! WE WHO ARE ABOUT TO DIE SALUTE YOU!

DRUSULA Now - Kill each other!

LUCIUS FIGHT, Boys. Like I **showed** you. Fight!

SEXTUS (loudly) A good slash or a knockout will do!

The boys set to with vigor, slashing, blocking, parrying, and thrusting. But neither of them seems keen on killing the other.

LUCIUS Remember what Bostar showed you. Die!

The boys move into a position so Drusula cannot easily see what is happening. Her view of Croto is blocked. Suddenly, he screams a bloodcurdling scream and falls to the floor. His feet kick about and he gurgles then falls silent. Meanwhile, Felicia has handed Lucius a beet-root from the food shelf. (Sorry - tomatoes, (and potatoes) arrived from the New World after 1492 ad.)

Albinus turns to face Drusula. He salutes her with the sword, then bows on one knee.

DRUSULA It is obvious that you men have a lot of work to do with these boys. That was hardly entertaining.

Lucius has retrieved the sword from Croto, cutting it with a beetroot to make it appear bloodstained. He takes the other sword from Albinus, and both stand in the way so she hasn't got a really clear view of Croto.

DRUSULA Make them bleed before you kill them. Cut off an ear. Or a nose. Gouge out an eye. Anything but that dull slash slash thrust parry block stuff.

? NTFSS

YOUNG SPARTACUS

She stands and walks out, followed by Sextus and Felicia. We hear her off as she shouts back through the door:

DRUSULA (off) And beetroot doesn't look a bit like real blood, Lucius. I wasn't taken in for a moment.

Lucius winces as he hears this.

SEXTUS (Poking his head back through the door) But I thought it was a great idea. A money saving idea. She knows they've only had a bit of training.

She's really in a good mood today. Took the joke rather well, I thought.

(Exits)

MARCUS Lucky for you.

LUCIUS I don't expect the boys to start killing each other yet. Stand them down at the chain.

He points to the wall. Albinus and Croto take up position while Lucius neck chains them with the others.

Bostar - feed and water them. After that bit of excitement, you can rest a while. We will continue training later.

After checking that the boys are secure, Marcus and Lucius leave, locking the door behind them. Bostar prepares the water bowls and bread.

SPARTACUS Why have they left us chained up?

CANIS I have a feeling this isn't going to be a chicken and wine evening.

Bostar hands out the bowls of water and the hunks of bread.

BOSTAR You don't know?
The answer's very simple -
You must be slow.
One of those boys was supposed to go.

ALBINUS I was supposed to kill him?

BOSTAR Of course.

? NTFSS

YOUNG SPARTACUS

ALBINUS

But I like Croto. He's my friend.

BOSTAR

All this friendship has to end.

I don't know how you got away with it. The Lady Drusula is not sentimental over slaves.

SPARTACUS

(While eating and drinking) We must be worth a lot of money - not now, perhaps, but later

HOSTUS

Most gladiators are ordinary slaves or condemned criminals. They learn their craft in a few weeks or months.

SPARTACUS

If we are trained to be expert gladiators, trained as boys until we are men, we should be able to kill any of our opponents easily.

CANIS

And Sextus will make a killing on the wagers. He'll sell us at a huge profit.

The door opens quietly. The boys do not see Drusula, who is standing in the opening.

CANIS

That is why Lady Drusula didn't mind when Albinus faked Croto's death. She stands to profit too. My name might be Canis, but I am neither a witch, nor a bitch.

Drusula enters. There is momentary confusion, and all the boys bow deeply. She walks in front of them as if inspecting the line. Canis assumes the grovel position. The rest follow him.

DRUSULA

I heard my name while walking by. The muses say one should never listen to conversations about oneself. The chatter of slaves is idle.
But -
There are some things - which cannot pass.

She leaves and closes the door behind her. Terrified, the boys stay put in absolute silence. Bostar sobs in fear. A few moments later, Marcus and Lucius enter.

They waste no time. Canis is unchained and taken to the table. He lies on his back. His wrists are tied to his ankles under the table so he cannot move. The boy's head lies over the edge. Lucius presses his sword across Canis' mouth.

? NTFSS

YOUNG SPARTACUS

LUCIUS Open it, or I will smash it open.

Canis obeys, moaning in terror.

MARCUS This will not destroy your
capacity to fight. It will give
you good cause to hate.

Drusula enters, holding a knife. The blade glows red
hot. She hands it to Marcus.

DRUSULA His tongue, Centurion.

Marcus, Lucius, and Drusula lean over Canis so we
cannot see, except that he screams and his legs
kick. There is a hissing noise and a scream.
Drusula holds up the tongue.

DRUSULA Hang it around his neck so that he
will remember me until his death.

LUCIUS I fear it will rot away, my lady.

DRUSULA Do I have to tell you everything?
Tan it first. Turn it into
leather.

(To Canis) I could have had your
eyes, your arms, your legs, or

your skin, but you are right.
There is no profit in your death.

You will fight for me, little boy.
You will win me fortunes, but you
will never sing of your victories.

MARCUS

I fear he is out cold, my lady.
The pain is too great for anyone
to bear and stay conscious.

DRUSULA

See that he does not die. My
husband has invested much money in
him.

I have given him with the gift of
silence, the knowledge of pain;
and you, Lucius, will teach him
the skill of **total** obedience.

She leaves, followed by Marcus. The door closes
behind her and Lucius is left to clean up the mess.

LUCIUS

Oh, Canis. You were warned.

(To the others) You have all been
warned.

Before the gods - take heed.

? NTFSS

YOUNG SPARTACUS

CURTAIN

END ACT 2 Scene 2

FRONT CURTAIN

LUCIUS

What a bloodthirsty scene. The producer was in conference for hours before we decided to show you that bit.

Cutting out tongues. YUCK!

(To Canis, who has appeared Down Right.)

You enjoyed doing that scene, didn't you?

Canis nods with a smile.

Not much fun at the time, though, was it?

Canis frowns & shakes his head.

But think of it this way - All the parts you have in the play from now on are non-speaking. You don't have to learn any more lines.

Canis expresses his joy in dance and movement, exiting down left, followed by Lucius.

ACT 2 Scene 3

The Holding Cell. Spartacus and Gallo, armed with wooden swords, face each other. Nobody else is in the room. (No explanation is given for this).

SPARTACUS

Lift your blade higher, Gallo. You have to strike down with energy. Remember - the gladius is like a heavy knife.

Swap your grip on it. Practice holding it two ways. To stab down, and to sweep up.

He demonstrates as he says this, and leads Gallo through a series of knife and sword drills.

You're getting it, Gallo. You're getting it.

? NTFSS

YOUNG SPARTACUS

Gallo performs his sword movements - a piece of choreography to show his skill at the blade and shield.

Gallo stops, exhausted. He shakes his head, and drinks from a bowl of water on the table.

GALLO Don't tell me. There'll be no water in the arena. I just feel so thirsty. Thank you for training me.

SPARTACUS Don't tell anyone. You may have to take them by surprise - without resorting to tricks.

GALLO You are my true friend, Spartacus.

SPARTACUS I plan to escape from here, Gallo. I want you to come with me.

GALLO They crucify runaway slaves.

SPARTACUS We won't get caught.

GALLO It takes many days for a boy to die by crucifixion.

We aren't heavy enough to suffocate.

SPARTACUS

Lucius told us that to frighten us.

All that stuff about the blood going green first is rubbish.

Still. Men die in hours, boys in days. I believe that bit.

GALLO

It is better to die in the arena. The blade of a gladiator is quick and sure.

SPARTACUS

(Laughing at the joke) No twitching and jerking.

GALLO

No twitching, jerking, or dancing round. Friends until death, Spartacus?

They clasp hands to elbows in the warrior's salute.

SPARTACUS

Until death, Gallo.

GALLO

Until we meet each other in the arena - and with Sextus, that may never happen.

CURTAIN

? NTFSS

YOUNG SPARTACUS

ACT 3 Scene 1

FRONT CURTAIN

Spartacus and Gallo perform a ritual sword dance and sword drill before the curtain.

CURTAIN

The ARENA. A door (Center Right) leads into the boys' holding room. The theatre audience will be the spectators, but for now, do not interact.

(Drumbeats off)

The arena door slides open, and the boys march in to line up centre stage. It is several months later.

They are now a well disciplined, taught, trained, terrific, squad.

There is no laughter. No humor.

They have become a merciless killing machine.

Lucius and Marcus enter Down Left.

LUCIUS

Gladiators - Salute!

GLADIATORS

Hail Lucius! Hail Marcus! We who are about to die, salute you!

LUCIUS

Today we have a special surprise for you. You will be divided into two teams of four. Then you will fight each other. The winning team will divide into two pairs. They will fight each other. The winning pair will then fight each other.

MARCUS

If you are knocked down, you will be counted as being dead. Stay down. The winner will have the chance to bring honor to this school. He will be especially rewarded.

LUCIUS

Spartacus, you will not fight this day. Stand aside.
Bostar - you will lead the Blue team. Certis, you will lead the

? NTFSS

YOUNG SPARTACUS

Red team. Bostar may choose first.

Bostar and Certis move to the front to choose their teams. It is an age old ritual - the chosen line up behind their leader. Spartacus moves to the side of the arena. No comment is made about this. Nobody dares to ask any questions. Lucius and Marcus move to their seats in the audience rows. Spartacus kneels at alert on one knee in front of Lucius - facing the arena. (When the battle gets going, he is permitted to sit in comfort, cross legged in front of the soldiers, but not on the seats with them.)

BOSTAR Demetrius

CERTIS Hostus

BOSTAR Gallo

CERTIS Croto

BOSTAR Canis

CERTIS Albinus

Marcus hands out Blue scarves to Bostar's team, and Red scarves to Certis' team. The boys line up in two teams facing each other.

LUCIUS

Begin!

The ensuing battle is a free-form choreography of a fight between two teams. It takes several minutes to complete, and it is suggested that it be done with a suitable clashing musical background. The audience may be encouraged to cheer and to take the place of the crowd.

As the fight progresses, Certis' Red team begins to lose. One by one, they drop - defeated - to the ground. Finally, only Bostar's team stands.

BLUE TEAM

Hail Lucius. Hail Marcus. We claim this victory to your honor.

LUCIUS

Bostar. Blue Team may help Certis and his defeated team from the arena. See that the injured are tended to, then return.

Bostar salutes. They help Certis' team off. Many are stunned and groaning in pain. Marcus goes with them.

A few moments later, Marcus returns with Bostar and the rest of his team.

? NTFSS

YOUNG SPARTACUS

MARCUS

Not too badly hurt, Lucius. They are all on the chain. Two days without food or water might encourage them to try harder next time.

LUCIUS

So, Bostar. You now know the fate of those who lose. Bostar and Gallo may retain their Blue scarves. Red is for Demetrius and Canis.

Salute!

Bostar, Gallo, Demetrius, and Canis raise their swords in salute.

GLADIATORS

Hail Lucius! Hail Marcus! Those who are about to die salute you!

LUCIUS

Canis - I didn't hear you.
Salute!

Canis stands forward, raises his wooden sword aggressively and gives a throaty growl.

Lucius and Marcus grin at their cruel joke.

LUCIUS

Begin.

The four youngsters get stuck into each other vigorously, but more carefully. They are somewhat tired, but their battle proceeds apace. Bostar kicks Demetrius in the stomach, and the boy falls winded. Canis is distracted for a moment, and Gallo smacks him in the face with a backhanded shield. Canis drops like a rock.

MARCUS

Drag them out. One day on the chains without food or water.

He follows as Bostar and Gallo help Demetrius and Gallo from the arena.

LUCIUS

Spartacus

Spartacus comes to the alert kneeling position facing Marcus.

SPARTACUS

Sir!

LUCIUS

Are you enjoying the contest?

SPARTACUS

They seem to be fighting well, Sir.

LUCIUS

That is not what I asked.

SPARTACUS

I am enjoying the contest, Sir!

? NTFSS

YOUNG SPARTACUS

Bostar, Gallo, and Marcus re-enter the arena.

MARCUS Canis has a flattened nose.
Demetrius a broken rib. Both will
survive.

LUCIUS So it's between Bostar and little
Gallo. How interesting.

Spartacus assumes the grovel position before Lucius

SPARTACUS Sir! Please may I speak?

LUCIUS As you are already speaking, What
is it?

SPARTACUS Sir! Gallo is too unmatched to
fight Bostar. May I take his
place?

LUCIUS No. Resume your position, slave.
One more word from you, and I
shall give Gallo fifty lashes.

Bostar. Gallo. Are you ready?

Gallo doesn't wait. He bashes his shield across
Bostar's chest, and smacks his sword across the
older boy's shins. As they both start fighting,
Gallo screams out the salute.

GALLO

Hail Lucius! We who are about to
die salute you!

BOSTAR

I'll kill you! You sneaky little
rat!

Lucius jumps up from his chair. Marcus is right
with him

LUCIUS

Yes! Yes! He's got it! He's got
it!

MARCUS

You did it Lucius! The boy's a
tiger. You turned the lamb into a
roaring lion!

Unhinged by Gallo's pr-emptive strike, Bostar is
felled. Gallo kicks him down onto the sand.

GALLO

Hail Lucius. Hail Marcus. I,
Gallo, claim this victory!

LUCIUS

Well done, Gallo.

MARCUS

His reward, Lucius. Tell him his
reward.

LUCIUS

An old friend has returned. The
noble tribune, Lentulus Gaius,

? NTFSS

YOUNG SPARTACUS

wishes to field a gladiator in the games given to celebrate his promotion to high office.

MARCUS

We rejoice at his good fortune. He has done well on the Northern Frontier. On his return, he thought of us.

LUCIUS

Two days hence, you Gallo, and you, Spartacus, shall meet in the arena. You shall have real swords. Lentulus has purchased both of you, to the profit of Sextus.

SPARTACUS

But real swords means ...

MARCUS

A fight to the death. Lentulus wants the best. The very best.

LUCIUS

I have trained you well, Spartacus, but Gallo is also well trained. He fights like a demon. It shall be a great contest.

MARCUS

And the winner will have the honor of fighting in the Arena of Rome. He will fight the best and most experienced of gladiators.

Now tend to Bostar. Take him inside. He fought well, and need not be chained.

The boys move over to tend Bostar. He does not move.

SPARTACUS

Sir. There is no life in him. Bostar is dead.

LUCIUS

Oh. It did not look like a fatal blow, but one never can tell.

The cage is yours, tonight, Spartacus. You are now in charge of the boys.

Marcus and Lucius exit down left. Spartacus and Gallo grasp Bostar by the arms and legs ready to drag him back into the boy gladiators' cell.

CURTAIN

END ACT 3 Scene 1

Front Curtain

? NTFSS

YOUNG SPARTACUS

Lucius enters down right.

LUCIUS

What a problem for Spartacus. He was warned - not to make friends. He had a soft side, you see. He cared.

Canis enters from the other side. He sees Lucius and stops.

Take Canis for instance. Now I do not care about Canis. He is a slave, who means nothing to me. I don't even own him. He belongs to Sextus and the Padua Gladiators' School. Sextus is dead, and the school destroyed. Spartacus did that. It just goes to show how ungrateful slaves can be. After all the training - all the preparation - he turned on his masters.

(To Canis) Have you got your crucifix ready yet? I told you to get a good one.

Canis shakes his head.

LUCIUS

I can't crucify you without a decent stake and cross bar, can I?

Canis shakes his head again.

I've got orders to crucify all six thousand survivors. That's Barred vee, em. Not Barred vee, cee, em, ex, cee, eye, ex. We can count, you know. Romans are very good at counting. Our mathematics might be Rattus excretas, but our counting is very good.

Canis assumes the grovel position in front of Lucius.

LUCIUS

Oh, get up, Canis. I'm not going to crucify you. It's lucky that I found you after the battle, and not somebody else. Just remember - you're my personal slave. And if anybody asks, that's what you can tell them.

Well - whatever.

Technicalities.

? NTFSS

YOUNG SPARTACUS

Oh, I am the soft hearted one.

Now - where were we?

Oh, yes. The night before the battle.

CURTAIN

ACT 3 Scene 2

The Boy Gladiators' Cell. The boys, heavily swathed in bandages, are being released from their chains. They form a line center stage, where Marcus addresses them.

MARCUS

Two days on the chain without food
-Let that be a lesson to you all.
In this school, you work hard, and
you do your best.
When dismissed, you may partake of
a little water and bread. Do not
gorge yourselves on it.
Are you ready for them, Spartacus?

SPARTACUS

Yes, Sir!

MARCUS

Take over. Then rest. Tomorrow is a big day.

He exits through the rear door. Spartacus and Gallo distribute the bread and water to the boys - small amounts.

CERTIS

We haven't eaten for two days, and this is all you give us?

SPARTACUS

Would you quarrel with the master's orders?

CERTIS

You would tell him? For two days, we have watched you eat your fill. You gave us nothing.

GALLO

By their command.

DEMETRIUS

When you were punished, we managed to feed you. You were our friend. We looked after you.

SPARTACUS

Friendship is a curse, Demetrius. I have no friends. In this place, I have no friends.

HOSTUS

And what says Gallo? He who slew Bostar. Has he any friends?

? NTFSS

YOUNG SPARTACUS

GALLO

I ... I do not deserve ... friends.
The death of Bostar was the death of friends. I thought I had a friend, But in this place, there are no friends.

ALBINUS

To have a friend is to have weakness. To have a friend is to slow the sword.

CROTO

To have a friend is to court Death.
And what do you think, Spartacus?
Are you still friends with Gallo?

SPARTACUS

If I had a friend
Which I have not - in this place,
It would be Gallo.

GALLO

And if I had a friend,
Which I do not.
It would be Spartacus.

The two boys grasp each other by the right hand to the elbows in the Roman handshake, in front of the line of gladiators.

GLADIATORS

HAIL SPARTACUS! HAIL GALLO! We,
who are about to die, salute you!

GALLO

I could ... I could have a friend until tomorrow.

SPARTACUS

Until tomorrow.

And for all their stupid orders
Let us eat and drink until we are full.

He goes to the cupboard and brings back all the bread.

GALLO

It may be bread and water, but for tonight, let it be a feast amongst friends.

They set to work, consuming the rations.

CURTAIN

Canis enters down right with his wooden sword. He looks at the audience and gives his guttural growls while doing a solo sword routine.

CURTAIN

ACT 3 Scene 3

? NTFSS

YOUNG SPARTACUS

The School Arena:

The boy gladiators, manacled, take their position in front of the audience, kneeling. Marcus, Lucius, and Lentulus enter and take up the central seat positions. Sextus and Drusula enter to see the show. Felicia brings them refreshments.

SEXTUS Now we shall see how finely these boys have trained, Tribune.

LENTULUS I trust I have not come all this way for nothing.

DRUSULA (Spilling a little wine) A libation for the gods that they shall smile on this happy venture.

ROMANS To the gods.

LUCIUS Begin the contest.

Spartacus and Gallo enter side by side from the cell room. They march to a central position in front of the spectators, and salute with the steel swords.

LUCIUS I warned them not to strike before the salutation. They shall stand apart before the contest begins.

SPAR. & GALL

Hail Lentulus! We who are about to die salute you.

They move apart and take position. Lentulus throws a red scarf into the arena, and the contest begins.

The fight scene choreography should take a while. It needs to be an interesting fight, with the contest going first one way, then the other. While this is happening, the Romans cheer their favorites on.

LUCIUS Come on, Spartacus. Remember all I've taught you!

MARCUS Take him, Gallo! Take him!

The gladiators sit quietly through all this. They do not cheer, but merely watch.

DRUSULA My bet with Lentulus is on Gallo. I favor the timid one who has become a lion. Gallo - Kill the rat! Kill him!

LENTULUS What a strike! Spartacus has drawn blood!

LUCIUS Now, Spartacus. Thrust now!

? NTFSS

YOUNG SPARTACUS

Gallo, severely wounded, drops his sword and shield. He staggers across towards Spartacus and falls to his knees.

Drusula is on her feet, thumb down.

DRUSULA Kill him! Kill him, Spartacus.

SPARTACUS (drops his sword and kneels in front of Gallo.)

GALLO You must, Spartacus.
You must!

Spartacus picks up his sword and plunges it into Gallo, who dies. There is no death rattle. He falls back dead. Spartacus stays kneeling and moves to the grovel position in front of the corpse of Gallo.

(There is a long silence and the actors freeze in position.)

CURTAIN

END ACT 3 Scene 3

The Gladiators line up in front of the curtain with the rest of the cast on their Left.

SPARTACUS

We dedicate this play to the bashed and abused boys of this world.

CANIS

To those who are bashed so that they can become real men.

DEMETRIUS

To the boys in the world's trouble spots who become soldiers before their time.

GALLO

To the street kids in South America who are killed because they are poor

HOSTUS

To children who work as slaves to make carpets, soccer balls, and shoes because their labor is cheap.

CROTO

To children who are abused in secret.

ALBINUS

to poor and starving children everywhere.

? NTFSS

YOUNG SPARTACUS

BOSTAR

To children who cannot buy bread
because their governments are
buying weapons instead of grain.

CERTIS

We dedicate this play to all the
children in the lucky country, in
the hope that their luck will
continue.

The boy gladiators give the Roman Salute with their
swords.

GLADIATORS

Hail World Leaders !
We who are about to die, salute
you!

CURTAIN

THE END