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Shakespeare's Comedies



Edited by

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The Comedy of Errors



The *Comedy of Errors* is a superb illustration of Shakespeare's "apprenticeship" in comedy. It is more imitative of classical comedy, especially of Plautus, than is Shakespeare's mature work. Its verbal humor, including the scatological jokes about breaking wind, the bawdy jests about cuckold's horns, and the overly ingenuous banter (as in 2.2), is at times adolescent. The play abounds in the farcical humor of physical abuse, so endearing to children of all ages. It is perhaps the most uncomplicatedly funny of all Shakespeare's plays. Yet the softening touches of Shakespeare's maturity are unmistakably present as well. Shakespeare frames his farce of mistaken identity with old Egeon's tragicomic story of separation, threatened death, and eventual reunion. He adds characters to his chief sources, Plautus's *Menaechmi* and *Amphitruo* (see Appendix 2), in order to enhance the love interest and to reconcile Plautus with English moral conventions. He touches upon themes of illusion, madness, and revelry that are to figure prominently in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and in *Twelfth Night*, a later comedy of mistaken identity. In these respects, *The Comedy of Errors* is both a fascinating prelude to Shakespeare's later development and a rich achievement in its own right. On stage, it has not attracted the greatest Shakespearean actors, since it offers no complex or dominating roles, but it has seldom failed to delight audiences.

We cannot be sure precisely how early the play was written. A performance took place on December 28, 1594, at Gray's Inn, one of the Inns of Court, before an unruly assembly of lawyers, law students, and their guests. This was probably not the first performance, however. Topical allusions offer hints of an earlier date. When Dromio of Syracuse speaks of France as "armed and reverted, making war against her heir" (3.2.123-4), he clearly is referring to the Catholic League's opposition to Henry of Navarre, who was the heir apparent to the French throne until 1593, when he became king. Another allusion, to Spain's sending "whole armadas of carracks" (lines

135-6), would possibly have lost its comic point soon after the Invincible Armada of 1588. The play's style, characterization, and imitative construction are all consistent with a date between 1589 and 1593.

Whatever the exact date, Shakespeare's youthful fascination with Plautus is manifest. Shakespeare's command of Latin, though sneered at by Ben Jonson, was undoubtedly good enough to have let him read Plautus with pleasure. He must have been drilled in Latin for years as a student in the town of Stratford-upon-Avon. Indeed, the influence of not only Plautus but also Ovid and Seneca (together with touches of Horace, Catullus, etc.) is a prominent feature of Shakespeare's early work, dramatic and nondramatic. Shakespeare may have consulted Plautus both in the original and in a contemporary translation, as was frequently his custom with non-English sources. From Renaissance Latin editions of Plautus, he apparently took the odd designation "Antipholis Sereptus" (i.e., "surreptus," snatched away), which appears in the Folio text in a stage direction at 2.1.0 to indicate the twin who was separated from his father. On the other hand, a translation of the *Menaechmi* by "W. W." (? William Warner), published in 1595, was registered in 1594 and might have been available earlier to Shakespeare in manuscript.

Plautus had much to offer Shakespeare and his fellow dramatists, especially in the way of tightly organized and complex plot construction. Native English drama of the sixteenth century tended to be episodic and panoramic in its design. Shakespeare's apprenticeship in neoclassical form can be seen in his precise observation of the unities of time and place—those unities which he openly disregarded in most of his later plays. At the play's beginning, Egeon is informed that he has until sundown to raise his ransom money, and the play then moves toward that point in time with periodic observations that it is now noon, now two o'clock, and so on. (At one point, time even seems to go backwards, but that is part of the

illusion of madness.) The action is restricted to the city of Ephesus; events that have happened elsewhere, at an earlier time (such as the separation of the Antipholus family), are told to us by persons in the play, such as old Egeon. Although Shakespeare's company did not employ the sort of painted scenery drawn in perspective used by continental neoclassicists, with fixed locations for houses facing on a street, the original production of this play may nonetheless have used one stage "house" or door to represent the dwelling of Antipholus of Ephesus (the Phoenix) throughout the drama. The entire play can be staged as if all the action occurs in the vicinity of this single "house," with the Courtesan's establishment and abbey near at hand. Never again does Shakespeare utilize such a neoclassical stage.

These unities of time and place are mechanical matters, but they do also harmonize with a more essential unity of action. The story moves, as though in perfect accord with neoclassical five-act theory, from exposition and complication to climax, anagnorisis (discovery), and peripeteia (reversal of fortune). The brilliance of the plotting is decidedly Plautine. Shakespeare pushes to its limit the interweaving of comic misunderstandings only to unravel all these seemingly tightly woven knots with ease. Yet the imitation of Plautus, even in matters of construction, is by no means slavish, for Shakespeare borrows both from Plautus' farce on the mistaken identity of twins (*Menaechmi*) and from Plautus's best-known comedy (*Amphitruo*), in which a husband and his servant are excluded from their own house while a disguised visitor usurps the master's role within. Such ingenious adaptations and rearrangements were common among neoclassical dramatists like Ludovico Ariosto, and, although Shakespeare seems not to have used any of the sixteenth-century analogues to this play, he does reveal an acquaintance with neoclassical comedy and an ability to compete with the best that Europe had to offer in this vein. Such versatility is noteworthy in a young dramatist who was to reveal himself in time as far less of a neoclassicist than a native English writer. Moreover, even if his self-imposed neoclassical training was only an apprenticeship, it was to prove invaluable to Shakespeare. Despite his later tendency toward "romantic" plotting—toward the depiction of multiple actions extending over widely separated spaces and extended periods of time—Shakespeare's greatest comedies continue to point toward the same gratifying resolution of dramatic conflict in a single and well-structured denouement.

For all its Plautine skill of design, *The Comedy of Errors* is quite far removed from *The Menaechmi* in tone and spirit. Gone are the cynicism, the satirical hardness, and the amoral tone of the Roman original. The characters, though still recognizable as types, are humanized. The familiar Plautine parasite is excluded entirely. The usual clever servant happily becomes the Dromio twins.

Plautus's quack Doctor, Medicus, is hilariously transmuted into Dr. Pinch, a pedantic schoolmaster. The Courtesan's role is no longer prominent. Instead, Shakespeare creates Luciana, the virtuous sister of Adriana, who pleads the cause of forbearance in marriage and who eventually becomes the bride of Antipholus of Syracuse. *The Comedy of Errors* does not end, as do most of Shakespeare's later comedies, with a parade of couples to the altar, but the marriage of Antipholus and Luciana is at least one important step in that direction. Besides, we are told of yet another marriage still to come—that of Dromio of Ephesus to Luce, the kitchen wench. This belowstairs parody of wedded affection is thoroughly English in character and recalls a similar mirroring of courtship among the comic servants of Henry Medwall's *Fulgens and Lucrece* (c. 1497). The motif is not sufficiently stressed to threaten the unity of the main plot, but the potentiality for double plotting is unmistakable.

An even more significant contrast to Plautine farce is to be found in the romantic saga of old Egeon and his long-lost wife, the Abbess. Their story is one not of mistaken identity (though that contributes to the denouement) but of painful separation, wandering, and reunion. Indeed, the note struck at the beginning of the play might seem tragic were we not already attuned to the conventional romantic expectation that separated members of a family are likely to be restored to one another again. Egeon, threatened with immediate execution, unfolds to us a narrative of wedded bliss interrupted by the malignancy of Fortune. In contrast to the tightly controlled unity of time of the farcical action, the romantic narrative extends (by recollection) over many years of error and suffering. Egeon's tragicomic story of testing and of patient endurance is very much like that of *Apollonius of Tyre*, a popular tale used by Shakespeare in his late romance *Pericles* (c. 1606-1608). The conventions of this sort of romance, ultimately Greek in origin, stress improbability: identical twins who can be told apart only by birthmarks, a storm at sea splitting a vessel in half and neatly dividing a family, and so on. The sea is emblematic of unpredictable Fortune, taking away with one hand and restoring with the other. The wife who is lost at sea, like her counterpart in *Apollonius* or *Pericles*, takes to a life of cloistered devotion, suggesting a pattern of symbolic death, healing, and ultimate rebirth. The ending of *The Comedy of Errors* has just a hint of death restored mysteriously to life: "After so long grief, such nativity!" (5.1.407).

Egeon's story of endurance counterpoints the farce in yet another way. His arraignment before the Duke of Ephesus introduces into the play a "tragic" world of law, punishment, and death. Egeon's date with the executioner is not illusory. His predicament is the result of the bitter "mortal and intestine jars" (1.1.11) between two cities caught in a frenzy of economic reprisals. The law cannot be merciful, even though the unfairness of Egeon's plight

is manifest to everyone, including the Duke. These potentially tragic factors must not be overstressed, for the first scene is brief and we are reassured by the play's hilarious tone (and by our surmising that Egeon is father of the Antipholus twins) that all will be well. Still, Shakespeare's addition of this romance plot suggests his restlessness with pure farce. As in his later comedies, which are virtually all threatened by catastrophes, the denouement of *The Comedy of Errors* is deepened into something approaching miraculous recovery. Moreover, the backdrop of a near-tragic world of genuine suffering heightens our appreciation of comic unreality in the self-contained world of Plautine farce and stresses the illusory nature of the dilemmas arising out of purely mistaken identity. Such delusions are all the more comic because they are the delusions that supposedly sane people suffer: contentiousness and jealousy in marriage, concern for respectable appearances among one's neighbors, and the suspicion that one is always being cheated in money matters. These are the chimeras that, by being made to look so plausible and yet so patently insane, are farcically exploited in Shakespeare's comic device: the inversion of madness and sanity, dreaming and waking, illusion and reality.

What happens when the behavior of one twin is mistaken for that of the other? The situation is, of course, amusing in itself, but it also serves as a test of the other characters, to discover what mad hypotheses they will construct. Adriana, faced with her husband's seeming refusal to come home to dinner, launches into a jealous tirade against husbands who neglect their wives for courtesans. The illusory situation, in other words, brings out her latent fears. We understand better now why she acts shrewishly: she fears rejection and the fading of her beauty, and she imagines that her fading beauty may be the cause of her husband's neglect. Actually, even as she speaks, her husband is busy making arrangements about a chain he means to give Adriana; but, when subsequently he is locked out of his own house and jumps to the conclusion that Adriana is being faithless, he resolves in his fury to bestow the chain on a courtesan in order to "spite my wife." He would actually do so were he not saved from this destructively revengeful impulse by the accidentally comic action of the farcical plot: through mistaken identity, the chain is delivered into the hands of his twin. Once again, illusion has prompted a character to assume the worst, to reveal his suspicions of a plot against him. And so it goes when Antipholus of Ephesus is arrested for nonpayment of the chain (he assumes that all merchants are thieves) or is denied his bail money by the servant he thinks he sent to fetch it (he assumes that all servants are thieves). We laugh at the endless capacity of the human mind for distortions of this self-punishing sort.

The metaphor used most often to convey this sense of bewilderment, even a confusion about one's own identity, is that of metamorphosis. All have drunk of Circe's cup (5.1.271) and have been transformed into animals—

most of them into asses. All have hearkened to the mermaid's song and are enchanted. Ephesus, they conclude, must be haunted by sorcerers, witches, goblins, and spirits (4.3.11 ff.). Ephesus is, in fact, associated in the Bible with exorcism (Acts 19:13 ff.), and "Circe" suggests that Antipholus of Syracuse is a becalmed Odysseus. In such a mad world, the characters assume a license to embark on Saturnalian holiday. The experience of transformation thus leads to various forms of "release" from ordinary social behavior, but the experience is also disturbing and continually reminds the characters of exorcism, hell, and devils. The threat of incest hovers over the comic business of two brothers sharing a wife, and indeed there is a dark subtext to the twinning that is unavoidably present throughout the play: the twinned cities of Ephesus and Syracuse, the twinned brothers, the twinned servants, all of whom are trying to discover their identities amid the paradoxes of singleness and doubleness. The play's farcical action is never far from violence. Witches and fat kitchen wenches suggest a fascination with unruly women. The characters can explain their inverted world only by assuming that all men are lunatic, all honest women whores, and all true men thieves. "Do you know me, sir? . . . Am I myself?" "Am I in earth, in heaven, or in hell? / Sleeping or waking, mad or well advised?" (3.2.73-4, 2.2.211-12). Perhaps, as Barbara Freeman suggests, the whole play can be looked at as Egeon's dream. It is both reassuring and hilariously anticlimactic that these questionings can finally be dispelled by the most mundane of explanations: there are two Antiphouses and two Dromios.

Contained within this framework of madness and waking is a playful yet serious examination of the dynamics of courtship and marriage. The two most important women in the play are meaningfully paired and contrasted. Adriana, the shrewish wife, frets at social custom that allows her husband Antipholus to roam abroad while she is domestically confined. Her unmarried sister Luciana endorses the traditional view that husbands enjoy a precedence found everywhere in nature: males "are masters to their females, and their lords" (2.1.24). What Luciana calls obedience (line 29) her married sister calls "servitude" (line 26). Who is right? The debate, left unresolved, nonetheless raises skeptical questions about marital hierarchies. The plot also probes and tests through fantasies of inversion. A wife, believing herself rejected for having aged in her wifely obedience, locks her husband out of the house and dines with a stranger. Luciana meantime finds herself courted by what appears to be her own brother-in-law and thus must face a conflict between desire and loyalty to her sister. Of course, Adriana does not know that she is inverting authority by excluding her husband from his own hearth, but the plot of mistaken identities does allow her to act out her self-assertiveness without being, in fact, guilty of disloyalty. Her husband's role is to play the wandering

male and to be eventually forgiven by his wife; presumably his exposure in Act 5 will make him a more tolerant husband, like Count Almaviva in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*. The discovery of identities in Act 5 allows Luciana to marry the man she has learned to love, but without the guilt of her fantasy experience. Patriarchal values are restored by the play's conclusion, yet the partners in love and marriage have been, to some extent, liberated by their role playing in a plot of metamorphosis. These issues of domestic relations will be further explored in *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Othello*, and other plays.

The playfulness about illusion should not be overemphasized, for the play expends most of its energies in farce. The Dromios, with their incessant drubbings, are often the center of interest in performance, and rightly so. Shakespeare employs no behind-the-scenes manipulator of illusion, such as Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* or the Duke in *Measure for Measure*. His interest in the metaphor of the world as a stage is discernible only as the foreshadowing of greatness to come. Nevertheless, Shakespeare's alterations of Plautus amply reveal the philosophic and idealistic direction that his subsequent comedy is to take.

The Comedy of Errors



[Dramatis Personae]

SOLINUS, Duke of Ephesus
EGEON, a merchant of Syracuse
EMILIA, Lady Abbess at Ephesus, and Egeon's wife

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS, } twin brothers,
ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE, } sons of Egeon
and Emilia
DROMIO OF EPHESUS, } twin brothers,
DROMIO OF SYRACUSE, } bondsmen to the
two Antiphouses

ADRIANA, wife of Antipholus of Ephesus
LUCIANA, her sister

SCENE: Ephesus]

LUCE, Adriana's kitchen maid (also known as NELL)

BALTHASAR, a merchant
ANGELO, a goldsmith
FIRST MERCHANT, friend to Antipholus of Syracuse
SECOND MERCHANT, to whom Angelo is a debtor
DOCTOR PINCH, a conjuring schoolmaster
A COURTESAN
AN OFFICER
A MESSENGER

Jailer, Headsman, Officers, and other Attendants

EGEON
Proceed, Solinus, to procure my fall,
And by the doom of death end woes and all. 2
DUKE
Merchant of Syracuse, plead no more.
I am not partial to infringe our laws.
The enmity and discord which of late
Sprung from the rancorous outrage of your Duke 3
4
6

1.1. Location: Some editors argue that the play was staged according to classical practice with three visible doors backstage representing three "houses"—that of Antipholus of Ephesus (in the center), that of the Courtesan, and that of the Priory—with the stage itself representing a marketplace or open area. More probably, the stage may have been open and unlocalized. The present scene may be at the Duke's court.

2 doom judgment 3 Syracuse, in Sicily 4 partial predisposed, biased 6 outrage violence

6 THE COMEDY OF ERRORS: 1.1

To merchants, our well-dealing countrymen,
Who, wanting guilders to redeem their lives,
Have sealed his rigorous statutes with their bloods,
Excludes all pity from our threat'ning looks.
For since the mortal and intestine jars
Twixt thy seditious countrymen and us,
It hath in solemn synods been decreed,
Both by the Syracusians and ourselves,
To admit no traffic to our adverse towns.
Nay, more, if any born at Ephesus
Be seen at any Syracusan marts and fairs;
Again, if any Syracusan born
Come to the bay of Ephesus, he dies,
His goods confiscate to the Duke's dispose,
Unless a thousand marks be levied
To quit the penalty and to ransom him.
Thy substance, valued at the highest rate,
Cannot amount unto a hundred marks;
Therefore by law thou art condemned to die.

EGEON
Yet this my comfort: when your words are done,
My woes end likewise with the evening sun.

DUKE
Well, Syracanian, say in brief the cause
Why thou departed'st from thy native home
And for what cause thou cam'st to Ephesus.

EGEON
A heavier task could not have been imposed
Than I to speak my griefs unspeakable.
Yet, that the world may witness that my end
Was wrought by nature, not by vile offense,
I'll utter what my sorrow gives me leave.
In Syracusa was I born, and wed
Unto a woman, happy but for me,
And by me, had not our hap been bad.
With her I lived in joy; our wealth increased
By prosperous voyages I often made
To Epidamnum, till my factor's death
And the great care of goods at random left
Drew me from kind embracements of my spouse;
From whom my absence was not six months old
Before herself, almost at fainting under
The pleasing punishment that women bear,
Had made provision for her following me,
And soon and safe arrived where I was.

8 wanting guilders lacking money; the guilder was a Dutch coin
worth about one shilling eight pence. redeem ransom 9 sealed rat-
ified bloods i.e., lives. (The grim analogy is to red sealing wax.)
11 mortal . . . jars deadly civil quarrels 13 synods assemblies
15 To . . . towns to allow no trade between our hostile towns.
16 Ephesus a port on the Aegean coast of modern Turkey 17 marts
markets 20 confiscate confiscated. dispose disposal 21 marks
money worth thirteen shillings four pence 22 quit pay 23 Thy
substance The sum total of your wealth. 32 unspeakable indescri-
bable. (But with a punning oxymoron on the literal sense: Egeon will
speak that which cannot be spoken.) 34 by nature i.e., by natural
affection; hero, a father's love 35 gives me leave allows me
37-8 happy . . . bad happy except for my misfortune, and happy indeed
through me if we had not suffered misfortune. 41 Epidamnum (So
spelled in Plautus's *The Menechmi*); Epidamus, a port on the coast
of modern Albania. factor's agent's 42 care of anxiety about

11-52 • 53-98

There had she not been long but she became
A joyful mother of two goodly sons,
And, which was strange, the one so like the other
As could not be distinguished but by names.
That very hour and in the selfsame inn
A mean woman was delivered
Of such a burden male, twins both alike.
Those, for their parents were exceeding poor,
I bought and brought up to attend my sons.
My wife, not meanly proud of two such boys,
Made daily motions for our home return;
Unwilling I agreed. Alas, too soon
We came aboard.
A league from Epidamnum had we sailed
Before the always-wind-obeying deep
Gave any tragic instance of our harm.
But longer did we not retain much hope;
For what obscurèd light the heavens did grant
Did but convey unto our fearful minds
A doubtful warrant of immediate death,
Which, though myself would gladly have embraced,
Yet the incessant weepings of my wife—
Weeping before for what she saw must come—
And piteous plainings of the pretty babes,
That mourned for fashion, ignorant what to fear,
Forced me to seek delays for them and me.
And this it was, for other means was none:
The sailors sought for safety by our boat
And left the ship, then sinking-ripe, to us.
My wife, more careful for the latter-born,
Had fastened him unto a small spare mast
Such as seafaring men provide for storms;
To him one of the other twins was bound,
Whilst I had been like heedful of the other.
The children thus disposed, my wife and I,
Fixing our eyes on whom our care was fixed,
Fastened ourselves at either end the mast,
And, floating straight, obedient to the stream,
Was carried towards Corinth, as we thought.
At length the sun, gazing upon the earth,
Dispersed those vapors that offended us,
And by the benefit of his wished light
The seas waxed calm, and we discovered
Two ships from far, making amain to us,
Of Corinth that, of Epidaurus this.
But ere they came—Oh, let me say no more!
Gather the sequel by that went before.

DUKE
Nay, forward, old man. Do not break off so,
For we may pity, though not pardon thee.

52 As that they 54 mean of low birth 58 not meanly to no small
degree 59 motions proposals, entreaties 62 league a measure of
distance, about three miles 64 instance proof, sign 68 doubtful
dreadful 72 plainings wailings 73 for fashion in imitation
74 delays i.e., delays from death 77 sinking-ripe ready to sink
78 careful anxious. latter-born (Compare line 124, however, from
which we learn that the younger or "latter-born" was saved with the
father.) 84 whom those on whom, or, him on whom 86 straight at
once 89 vapors clouds 92 making amain proceeding at full speed
93 Epidaurus a Greek town southwest of Athens and Corinth; or pos-
sibly Dubrovnik, on the Adriatic coast 95 that that which

99-144 • 145-183

EGEON

Oh, had the gods done so, I had not now
Worthily termed them merciless to us!
For, ere the ships could meet by twice five leagues,
We were encountered by a mighty rock,
Which being violently borne upon,
Our helpful ship was splitted in the midst,
So that in this unjust divorce of us
Fortune had left to both of us alike
What to delight in, what to sorrow for.
Her part, poor soul, seeming as burdenèd
With lesser weight, but not with lesser woe,
Was carried with more speed before the wind,
And in our sight they three were taken up
By fishermen of Corinth, as we thought.
At length, another ship had seized on us,
And, knowing whom it was their hap to save,
Gave healthful welcome to their shipwrecked guests,
And would have reft the fishers of their prey
Had not their bark been very slow of sail;
And therefore homeward did they bend their course.
Thus have you heard me severed from my bliss,
That by misfortunes was my life prolonged,
To tell sad stories of my own mishaps.

DUKE

And, for the sake of them thou sorrowest for,
Do me the favor to dilate at full
What have befall'n of them and thee till now.

EGEON

My youngest boy, and yet my eldest care,
At eighteen years became inquisitive
After his brother, and importuned me
That his attendant—so his case was like,
Reft of his brother, but retained his name—
Might bear him company in the quest of him,
Whom whilst I labored of a love to see,
I hazarded the loss of whom I loved.
Five summers have I spent in farthest Greece,
Roaming clean through the bounds of Asia,
And, coasting homeward, came to Ephesus—
Hopeless to find, yet loath to leave unsought
Or that or any place that harbors men.
But here must end the story of my life,
And happy were I in my timely death
Could all my travels warrant me they live.

DUKE

Hapless Egeon, whom the fates have marked
To bear the extremity of dire mishap!

98 had . . . so i.e., had the gods shown pity 99 Worthily justly
103 helpful ship i.e., the mast 106 What something 107 as if
114 healthful saving 115 reft bereft 116 bark sailing vessel
122 dilate at full relate at length 127 so . . . like in a similar situation
128 Reft . . . name (Evidently Egeon, presuming that the lost son and
servant are dead, has given their names to the surviving twin brothers.) 130-1 Whom . . . loved i.e., while I labored lovingly to find the
lost twin, I ran the risk of losing my younger son, whom I loved no
less. 133 clean entirely. bounds boundaries, territories 134 coast-
ing traveling along the coast 135 Hopeless despairing 136 Or
either 138 timely speedy, opportune 139 travels "travails," or
hardships, as well as travels. warrant assure 141 mishap (Punning
on Hapless in line 140.)

Now, trust me, were it not against our laws,
Against my crown, my oath, my dignity,
Which princes, would they, may not disannul,
My soul should sue as advocate for thee.
But though thou art adjudged to the death,
And passed sentence may not be recalled
But to our honor's great disparagement,
Yet will I favor thee in what I can.
Therefore, merchant, I'll limit thee this day
To seek thy health by beneficial help.
Try all the friends thou hast in Ephesus;
Beg thou, or borrow, to make up the sum,
And live; if no, then thou art doomed to die.—
Jailer, take him to thy custody.

JAILER
I will, my lord.

EGEON
Hopeless and helpless doth Egeon wend,
But to procrastinate his lifeless end.

Exeunt. 158

[1.2]

Enter Antipholus [of Syracuse], [First] Merchant,
and Dromio [of Syracuse].

FIRST MERCHANT

Therefore give out you are of Epidamnum,
Lest that your goods too soon be confiscate.
This very day a Syracusan merchant
Is apprehended for arrival here
And, not being able to buy out his life,
According to the statute of the town
Dies ere the weary sun set in the west.
There is your money that I had to keep.

[He gives money.]

S. ANTIPHOLUS [giving the money to S. Dromio]
Go bear it to the Centaur, where we host,
And stay there, Dromio, till I come to thee.
Within this hour it will be dinnertime.
Till that, I'll view the manners of the town,
Peruse the traders, gaze upon the buildings,
And then return and sleep within mine inn,
For with long travel I am stiff and weary.
Get thee away.

9

S. DROMIO
Many a man would take you at your word
And go indeed, having so good a mean.

18
Exit Dromio [of Syracuse].

S. ANTIPHOLUS

A trusty villain, sir, that very oft,
When I am dull with care and melancholy,

1

143 dignity high office 144 would they even if they wished.
disannul annul, cancel 146 the death i.e., death by judicial sentence
147 recalled revoked 148 But except 150 limit allow, appoint
158 procrastinate postpone
1.2. Location: The street.
1 give out say 8 keep safeguard. 9 Centaur the name of an inn,
identified by its sign over the door. In mythology, a centaur is half
horse, half man. host lodge 11 dinnertime i.e., noon. 18 mean
(1) opportunity (2) money. 19 villain servant. (Said good-humoredly.)

19

Lightens my humor with his merry jests.
What, will you walk with me about the town
And then go to my inn and dine with me?

FIRST MERCHANT

I am invited, sir, to certain merchants,
Of whom I hope to make much benefit;
I crave your pardon. Soon at five o'clock,
Please you, I'll meet with you upon the mart
And afterward consort you till bedtime.
My present business calls me from you now.

S. ANTIPHOLUS

Farewell till then. I will go lose myself
And wander up and down to view the city.

FIRST MERCHANT

Sir, I commend you to your own content.

S. ANTIPHOLUS

He that commands me to mine own content
Commends me to the thing I cannot get.
I to the world am like a drop of water
That in the ocean seeks another drop,
Who, falling there to find his fellow forth,
Unseen, inquisitive, confounds himself.
So I, to find a mother and a brother,
In quest of them, unhappy, lose myself.

Enter Dromio of Ephesus.

Here comes the almanac of my true date.—
What now? How chance thou art returned so soon?

E. DROMIO

Returned so soon? Rather approached too late:
The capon burns, the pig falls from the spit,
The clock hath stricken twelve upon the bell;
My mistress made it one upon my cheek.
She is so hot because the meat is cold;
The meat is cold because you come not home;
You come not home because you have no stomach;
You have no stomach, having broke your fast.
But we that know what 'tis to fast and pray
Are penitent for your default today.

S. ANTIPHOLUS

Stop in your wind, sir. Tell me this, I pray:
Where have you left the money that I gave you?

E. DROMIO

Oh—sixpence that I had o'Wednesday last
To pay the saddler for my mistress' crupper?
The saddler had it, sir; I kept it not.

S. ANTIPHOLUS

I am not in a sportive humor now.
Tell me, and dally not: where is the money?
We being strangers here, how dar'st thou trust
So great a charge from thine own custody?

21 humor mood, disposition 26 Soon at About 28 consort accom-
pany 30 lose myself roam freely 35 to in relation to 37 to . . . forth
to find his companion 38 confounds himself mingles indistinguish-
ably. 41 the almanac . . . date (Being born in the same hour, Dromio
serves as an almanac by which Antipholus can see his age.) 42 How
chance How comes it 46 My . . . cheek i.e., your wife slapped my
cheek. (Dromio puns on the idea of the clock striking the hour.)
47 hot angry 49 stomach appetite 52 penitent doing penance (i.e.,
suffering hunger). default fault 53 wind i.e., words 56 crupper
leather strap on a saddle that is passed under the horse's tail in order
to keep the saddle from riding forward. 61 charge responsibility

21 E. DROMIO
I pray you, jest, sir, as you sit at dinner.
I from my mistress come to you in post;
If I return, I shall be post indeed,
For she will scour your fault upon my pate.
Methinks your maw, like mine, should be your clock
And strike you home without a messenger.

26 S. ANTIPHOLUS
Come, Dromio, come, these jests are out of season;
Reserve them till a merrier hour than this.
Where is the gold I gave in charge to thee?

30 E. DROMIO
To me, sir? Why, you gave no gold to me.

33 S. ANTIPHOLUS
Come on, sir knave, have done your foolishness,
And tell me how thou hast disposed thy charge.

35 E. DROMIO
My charge was but to fetch you from the mart
Home to your house, the Phoenix, sir, to dinner;
My mistress and her sister stays for you.

37 S. ANTIPHOLUS
Now, as I am a Christian, answer me
In what safe place you have bestowed my money,
Or I shall break that merry sconce of yours
That stands on tricks when I am undisposed.
Where is the thousand marks thou hadst of me?

41 E. DROMIO
I have some marks of yours upon my pate,
Some of my mistress' marks upon my shoulders,
But not a thousand marks between you both.
If I should pay Your Worship those again,
Perchance you will not bear them patiently.

44 S. ANTIPHOLUS
Thy mistress' marks? What mistress, slave, hast thou?

47 E. DROMIO
Your Worship's wife, my mistress at the Phoenix,
She that doth fast till you come home to dinner
And prays that you will hie you home to dinner.

50 S. ANTIPHOLUS
What, wilt thou flout me thus unto my face,
Being forbid? There, take you that, sir knave.
[He beats Dromio of Ephesus.]

53 E. DROMIO
What mean you, sir? For God sake, hold your hands!
Nay, an you will not, sir, I'll take my heels.
Exit Dromio of Ephesus.

56 S. ANTIPHOLUS
Upon my life, by some device or other
The villain is o'erlaught of all my money.
They say this town is full of cozenage,
As nimble jugglers that deceive the eye,

63 post haste 64 post door-post of a tavern used for keeping reckon-
ings 65 scour beat. (With a pun on the idea of keeping score.)
66 maw stomach. (Applied usually to animals.) 73 disposed dis-
posed of 75 the Phoenix the sign of Antipholus of Ephesus's shop.
(He lives and carries on his business in the same dwelling.) In
mythology, a phoenix is a fabulous bird that periodically is regen-
erated from its own ashes. 79 sconce head 80 stands on insists on
engages in 90 hie hasten 94 an if. take my heels take to my
heels. 96 The . . . money the rascal has cheated me out of all my
money. 97 cozenage cheating

Dark-working sorcerers that change the mind,
Soul-killing witches that deform the body,
Disguised cheaters, prating mountebanks,
And many suchlike liberties of sin.
If it prove so, I will be gone the sooner.
I'll to the Centaur to go seek this slave.
I greatly fear my money is not safe.

Exit.

2.1

Enter Adriana, wife to Antipholus [of Ephesus], with Luciana, her sister.

ADRIANA

Neither my husband nor the slave returned
That in such haste I sent to seek his master?
Sure, Luciana, it is two o'clock.

LUCIANA

Perhaps some merchant hath invited him,
And from the mart he's somewhere gone to dinner.
Good sister, let us dine, and never fret.

A man is master of his liberty;

Time is their master, and when they see time
They'll go or come. If so, be patient, sister.

ADRIANA

Why should their liberty than ours be more?

LUCIANA

Because their business still lies out o'door.

ADRIANA

Look when I serve him so, he takes it ill.

LUCIANA

Oh, know he is the bridle of your will.

ADRIANA

There's none but asses will be bridled so.

LUCIANA

Why, headstrong liberty is lashed with woe.
There's nothing situate under heaven's eye
But hath his bound, in earth, in sea, in sky.
The beasts, the fishes, and the wingèd fowls
Are their males' subjects and at their controls.
Man, more divine, the master of all these,
Lord of the wide world and wild wat'ry seas,
Endued with intellectual sense and souls,
Of more preeminence than fish and fowls,
Are masters to their females, and their lords.
Then let your will attend on their accords.

ADRIANA

This servitude makes you to keep unwed.

LUCIANA

Not this, but troubles of the marriage bed.

ADRIANA

But, were you wedded, you would bear some sway.

LUCIANA

Ere I learn love, I'll practice to obey.

ADRIANA

How if your husband start some other where?

LUCIANA

Till he come home again, I would forbear.

ADRIANA

Patience unmoved! No marvel though she pause;
They can be meek that have no other cause.

33

A wretched soul, bruised with adversity,
We bid be quiet when we hear it cry;

34

But were we burdened with like weight of pain,
As much or more we should ourselves complain.

39

So thou, that hast no unkind mate to grieve thee,
With urging helpless patience would relieve me;

40

But if thou live to see like right bereft,

41

This fool-begged patience in thee will be left.

LUCIANA

Well, I will marry one day, but to try.

42

Here comes your man; now is your husband nigh.

43

Enter Dromio of Ephesus.

ADRIANA

Say, is your tardy master now at hand?

45 E. DROMIO Nay, he's at two hands with me, and that
my two ears can witness.

ADRIANA

Say, didst thou speak with him? Know'st thou his
mind?

E. DROMIO

48 I? Ay, he told his mind upon mine ear.
Beshrew his hand, I scarce could understand it.

49

LUCIANA Spake he so doubtfully thou couldst not feel his
meaning?

50

52 E. DROMIO Nay, he struck so plainly I could too well
feel his blows, and withal so doubtfully that I could
scarcely understand them.

ADRIANA

54 But say, I prithee, is he coming home?
It seems he hath great care to please his wife.

56

56 E. DROMIO Why, mistress, sure my master is horn-mad.

ADRIANA

Horn-mad, thou villain?

58 E. DROMIO I mean not cuckold-mad.
But sure he is stark mad.
When I desired him to come home to dinner,

30 start . . . where i.e., goes off elsewhere, after other women.

33 other cause to be otherwise. 34 A wretched soul i.e., A
fussy, crying baby 39 helpless passive 40-1 But i.e., but if
you live to see your rights similarly taken away, you will abandon
this foolishly urged patience. 42 but to try i.e., just to put it to the
test. 43 man servant 45 at two hands (Alluding to the beating he
received at 1.2.92.) 48 told (Punning on "tolled.") 49 Beshrew Bad

luck to.

understand (With pun on "stand up under"; also in line 53.)
50 doubtfully ambiguously 52 doubtfully dreadfully 56 horn-
mad mad as a horned beast. (With a quibble on the sense of rage at
being made a cuckold.)

He asked me for a thousand marks in gold.
"Tis dinnertime," quoth I. "My gold!" quoth he.
"Your meat doth burn," quoth I. "My gold!" quoth he.
"Will you come home?" quoth I. "My gold!" quoth he.
"Where is the thousand marks I gave thee, villain?"
"The pig," quoth I, "is burned." "My gold!" quoth he.
"My mistress, sir—" quoth I. "Hang up thy mistress!
I know not thy mistress. Out on thy mistress!"

LUCIANA Quoth who?

E. DROMIO Quoth my master.

"I know," quoth he, "no house, no wife, no mistress."
So that my errand, due unto my tongue,
I thank him, I bare home upon my shoulders;
For, in conclusion, he did beat me there.

ADRIANA Go back again, thou slave, and fetch him home.

E. DROMIO Go back again and be new beaten home?
For God's sake, send some other messenger.

ADRIANA Back, slave, or I will break thy pate across.

E. DROMIO And he will bless that cross with other beating.
Between you I shall have a holy head.

ADRIANA Hence, prating peasant! Fetch thy master home.
[She beats Dromio.]

E. DROMIO Am I so round with you as you with me,
That like a football you do spurn me thus?
You spurn me hence, and he will spurn me hither.
If I last in this service, you must case me in leather.
[Exit.]

LUCIANA Fie, how impatience loureth in your face!

ADRIANA His company must do his minions grace,
Whilst I at home starve for a merry look.
Hath homely age th'alluring beauty took
From my poor cheek? Then he hath wasted it.
Are my discourses dull? Barren my wit?
If volatile and sharp discourse be marred,
Unkindness blunts it more than marble hard.
Do their gay vestments his affections bait?
That's not my fault; he's master of my state.
What ruins are in me that can be found
By him not ruined? Then is he the ground

66 Hang up i.e., To hell with 71 due . . . tongue which I should have delivered by my tongue 72 I bare . . . shoulders I took in the form of a beating 78 he . . . cross i.e., he will add further devotion in the form of a beating. (There is a pun on "to bless," to wound, from the French *blessier*. Cross is a quibble on *across* in the previous line.) 79 holy (Punning on the sense "full of holes.") 81 round plainspoken. (With pun on the sense of "spherical.") 85 loureth frowns, scowls 86 His . . . grace He bestows favors on his darling paramours 88 took taken 89 wasted (1) squandered (2) laid waste to, ruined 90 discourses conversations 91-2 If . . . hard i.e., If my flu- ent and sometimes too shrewish discourse seems peevish to my husband, unkindness on his part simply blunts it even more than when a sharp instrument is struck against hard marble. 93 his affections bait entice his passions. 94 state outward estate, condition, i.e., clothes. 96 ground cause

97 Of my defeatures. My decayèd fair
A sunny look of his would soon repair.
But, too unruly deer, he breaks the pale
And feeds from home. Poor I am but his stale.

LUCIANA Self-harming jealousy! Fie, beat it hence!

ADRIANA Unfeeling fools can with such wrongs dispense.
I know his eye doth homage elsewhere,
Or else what lets it but he would be here?
Sister, you know he promised me a chain.
Would that alone o' love he would detain,
So he would keep fair quarter with his bed!
I see the jewel best enamelèd
Will lose his beauty; yet the gold bides still
That others touch, and often touching will
Wear gold; and no man that hath a name
By falsehood and corruption doth it shame.
Since that my beauty cannot please his eye,
I'll weep what's left away, and weeping die.

LUCIANA How many fond fools serve mad jealousy!

Exeunt.

[2.2]

Enter Antipholus of Syracuse.

S. ANTIPHOLUS The gold I gave to Dromio is laid up
Safe at the Centaur, and the heedful slave
Is wandered forth in care to seek me out
By computation and mine host's report.
I could not speak with Dromio since at first
I sent him from the mart. See, here he comes.

Enter Dromio of Syracuse.

How now, sir, is your merry humor altered?
As you love strokes, so jest with me again.
You know no Centaur? You received no gold?
Your mistress sent to have me home to dinner?
My house was at the Phoenix? Wast thou mad,
That thus so madly thou didst answer me?

S. DROMIO What answer, sir? When spake I such a word?

97 defeatures disfigurements. decayèd fair impaired or perished beauty 99 pale enclosure 100 from away from. stale rejected lover who has become a laughingstock. (With a pun on *stale*, tire-somely lacking in freshness; she is stale to him, he dear [dear] to her.) 102 Unfeeling . . . dispense Only an insensitive fool would condone such wrongs. 104 lets hindres 106 Would . . . detain Would that he would withhold only that token of his affection. 107 So . . . bed! provided he would remain faithful to his marriage bed! 108-12 I be ashen-faced. (With pun on the meaning "fort" in line 35 and "scone" head. (With pun on the meaning "fort" in line 35 and "helmet" or "protective covering" in line 37; the *battering*, lines 35-6, is both a beating and assault by a battering ram.) 36 An If 37-8 insconce shelter within a scone or fortification 38-9 I shall . . . shoulders i.e., my head will be beaten into my shoulders. 47 out of season inappropriately 51 Marry i.e., Truly. (A shortened form of the oath "by the Virgin Mary.")

2.2 Location: The street before Antipholus of Ephesus' house.

4 computation estimation, reckoning 8 strokes blows

S. ANTIPHOLUS Even now, even here, not half an hour since.
S. DROMIO I did not see you since you sent me hence
Home to the Centaur with the gold you gave me.

S. ANTIPHOLUS Villain, thou didst deny the gold's receipt
And told'st me of a mistress and a dinner,
For which I hope thou felt'st I was displeased.

S. DROMIO I am glad to see you in this merry vein.
What means this jest? I pray you, master, tell me.

S. ANTIPHOLUS Yea, dost thou jeer and flout me in the teeth?
Think'st thou I jest? Hold, take thou that, and that

Beats Dromio.

S. DROMIO Hold, sir, for God's sake! Now your jest is earnest.
Upon what bargain do you give it me?

S. ANTIPHOLUS Because that I familiarly sometimes
Do use you for my fool and chat with you,
Your sauciness will jest upon my love
And make a common of my serious hours.
When the sun shines let foolish gnats make sport,
But creep in crannies when he hides his beams.
If you will jest with me, know my aspect
And fashion your demeanor to my looks,
Or I will beat this method in your scone.

S. DROMIO "Scone" call you it? So you would leave battering, I had rather have it a head. An you use these blows long, I must get a scone for my head and insconce it too, or else I shall seek my wit in my shoulders. But I pray, sir, why am I beaten?

S. ANTIPHOLUS Dost thou not know?

S. DROMIO Nothing, sir, but that I am beaten.

S. ANTIPHOLUS Shall I tell you why?

S. DROMIO Ay, sir, and wherefore; for they say every why hath a wherefore.

S. ANTIPHOLUS "Why," first—for flouting me; and then, "wherefore"—for urging it the second time to me.

S. DROMIO Was there ever any man thus beaten out of season, When in the why and the wherefore is neither rhyme nor reason?

Well, sir, I thank you.

S. ANTIPHOLUS Thank me, sir, for what?

S. DROMIO Marry, sir, for this something that you gave me for nothing.

22 in the teeth to my face. 24 earnest serious. (With a pun on the financial sense: money paid as an installment to secure a bargain.)

28 jest upon trifle with 29 common public playground 32 aspect look, expression; also, astrological favor or disfavor of a planet

34 scone head. (With pun on the meaning "fort" in line 35 and "helmet" or "protective covering" in line 37; the *battering*, lines 35-6, is both a beating and assault by a battering ram.) 36 An If 37-8 insconce shelter within a scone or fortification 38-9 I shall . . . shoulders i.e., my head will be beaten into my shoulders.

47 out of season inappropriately 51 Marry i.e., Truly. (A shortened form of the oath "by the Virgin Mary.")

S. ANTIPHOLUS I'll make you amends next, to give you nothing for something. But say, sir, is it dinnertime?

S. DROMIO No, sir, I think the meat wants that I have. 55

S. ANTIPHOLUS In good time, sir, what's that? 56

S. DROMIO Basting. 57

S. ANTIPHOLUS Well, sir, then 'twill be dry.

S. DROMIO If it be, sir, I pray you, eat none of it.

S. ANTIPHOLUS Your reason?

S. DROMIO Lest it make you choleric and purchase me another dry basting. 61

S. ANTIPHOLUS Well, sir, learn to jest in good time.
There's a time for all things.

S. DROMIO I durst have denied that before you were so choleric.

S. ANTIPHOLUS By what rule, sir?

S. DROMIO Marry, sir, by a rule as plain as the plain bald pate of Father Time himself.

S. ANTIPHOLUS Let's hear it.

S. DROMIO There's no time for a man to recover his hair that grows bald by nature.

S. ANTIPHOLUS May he not do it by fine and recovery? 73

S. DROMIO Yes, to pay a fine for a periwig and recover the lost hair of another man.

S. ANTIPHOLUS Why is Time such a niggard of hair, being, as it is, so plentiful an excrement?

S. DROMIO Because it is a blessing that he bestows on beasts, and what he hath scantled men in hair he hath given them in wit.

S. ANTIPHOLUS Why, but there's many a man hath more hair than wit.

S. DROMIO Not a man of those but he hath the wit to lose his hair. 83

S. ANTIPHOLUS Why, thou didst conclude hairy men plain dealers without wit.

S. DROMIO The plainer dealer, the sooner lost. Yet he loseth it in a kind of jollity. 88

S. ANTIPHOLUS For what reason?

S. DROMIO For two, and sound ones too.

S. ANTIPHOLUS Nay, not sound, I pray you. 91

S. DROMIO Sure ones, then.

S. ANTIPHOLUS Nay, not sure, in a thing falsing. 93

S. DROMIO Certain ones, then.

S. ANTIPHOLUS Name them.

S. DROMIO The one, to save the money that he spends in tiring; the other, that at dinner they should not drop in his porridge.

S. ANTIPHOLUS You would all this time have proved there is no time for all things.

55 wants that lacks that which 56 In good time Indeed 57 Basting (1) Moistening with butter or drippings during cooking (2) Beating.

61 choleric (Hot or dry food was thought to produce or aggravate the choleric or irascible humor.) 62 dry basting hard beating.

73 fine and recovery a legal procedure for converting an entailed estate, one in which the property is limited to specified heirs, into a fee simple, one in which the owner has unqualified ownership.

77 excrement outgrowth (of hair). 83-4 he . . . hair (A reference to the venereal diseases in which loss of hair was a symptom.)

87 dealer i.e., dealer with women 88 a kind of jollity i.e., sexual pleasure. 91 not sound invalid. (With a pun on "venereally diseased.") 93 falsing deceptive. (Continuing the joke on venereal disease.) 97 tiring dressing the hair

12 THE COMEDY OF ERRORS: 2.2

S. DROMIO Marry, and did, sir; namely, e'en no time to recover hair lost by nature.
 S. ANTIPHOLUS But your reason was not substantial why there is no time to recover.
 S. DROMIO Thus I mend it: Time himself is bald and therefore to the world's end will have bald followers.
 S. ANTIPHOLUS I knew 'twould be a bald conclusion. 107
 But soft, who wafts us yonder? 108

Enter Adriana [beckoning], and Luciana.

ADRIANA Ay, ay, Antipholus, look strange and frown. 109
 Some other mistress hath thy sweet aspects; 110
 I am not Adriana, nor thy wife.
 The time was once when thou unurged wouldest vow
 That never words were music to thine ear,
 That never object pleasing in thine eye,
 That never touch well welcome to thy hand,
 That never meat sweet-savored in thy taste,
 Unless I spake, or looked, or touched, or carved to thee.
 How comes it now, my husband, oh, how comes it, 119
 That thou art then estrangèd from thyself?
 Thyself I call it, being strange to me
 That, undividable, incorporate,
 Am better than thy dear self's better part.
 Ah, do not tear away thyself from me!
 For know, my love, as easy mayst thou fall
 A drop of water in the breaking gulf,
 And take unmingled thence that drop again
 Without addition or diminishing,
 As take from me thyself and not me too.
 How dearly would it touch thee to the quick,
 Shouldst thou but hear I were licentious
 And that this body, consecrate to thee,
 By ruffian lust should be contaminate!
 Wouldst thou not spit at me, and spurn at me,
 And hurl the name of husband in my face,
 And tear the stained skin off my harlot brow,
 And from my false hand cut the wedding ring,
 And break it with a deep-divorcing vow?
 I know thou canst, and therefore see thou do it.
 I am possessed with an adulterate blot;
 My blood is mingled with the crime of lust.
 For if we two be one, and thou play false,
 I do digest the poison of thy flesh,
 Being strumpeted by thy contagion.

105 Time . . . bald (Time is conventionally personified as an old bald man, with only a forelock of hair; one must seize opportunity by the forelock, i.e., quickly, or the occasion will be lost.) 107 bald i.e., senseless, stupid. (Continuing the joke about baldness.) 108 soft gently, wait a minute. 109 strange estranged, distant 110 aspects glances 119 then therefore, estrangèd from thyself (1) behaving unlike yourself (2) estranged from me, your other half. 124 fall let fall 125 breaking gulf surf-crested sea 128 and . . . too without taking me from myself (since we are inseparable and indivisible). 129 the quick the most sensitive or vulnerable part. 131 consecrate consecrated 132 contaminate contaminated. 133 spurn kick 138-43 I know . . . contagion i.e., Go ahead and divorce me, since you have the right to do it; because we are one flesh as husband and wife, when you commit adultery it taints me also with the guilt of having been a strumpet. (Said with bitter irony.)

496-539 • 540-576

Keep then fair league and truce with thy true bed, 144
 I live distained, thou undishonored. 145
 S. ANTIPHOLUS Plead you to me, fair dame? I know you not.
 In Ephesus I am but two hours old, 149
 As strange unto your town as to your talk,
 Who, every word by all my wit being scanned, 150
 Wants wit in all one word to understand.
 LUCIANA Fie, brother, how the world is changed with you! 152
 When were you wont to use my sister thus?
 She sent for you by Dromio home to dinner.
 S. ANTIPHOLUS By Dromio?
 S. DROMIO By me?
 ADRIANA By thee; and this thou didst return from him:
 That he did buffet thee and in his blows
 Denied my house for his, me for his wife.
 S. ANTIPHOLUS Did you converse, sir, with this gentlewoman?
 What is the course and drift of your compact? 160
 S. DROMIO I, sir? I never saw her till this time.
 S. ANTIPHOLUS Villain, thou liest, for even her very words
 Didst thou deliver to me on the mart.
 S. DROMIO I never spake with her in all my life.
 S. ANTIPHOLUS How can she thus then call us by our names,
 Unless it be by inspiration?
 ADRIANA How ill agrees it with your gravity 167
 To counterfeit thus grossly with your slave, 168
 Abetting him to thwart me in my mood! 169
 Be it my wrong you are from me exempt, 170
 But wrong not that wrong with a more contempt. 171
 Come, I will fasten on this sleeve of thine.
 [She clings to him.]
 Thou art an elm, my husband, I a vine,
 Whose weakness, married to thy stronger state,
 Makes me with thy strength to communicate.
 If aught possess thee from me, it is dross,
 Usurping ivy, brier, or idle moss,
 Who, all for want of pruning, with intrusion
 Infect thy sap and live on thy confusion.
 S. ANTIPHOLUS [aside] To me she speaks; she moves me for her theme. 180

144 Keep . . . bed If you remain faithful to your marriage vows
 145 distained unstained (by contagion) 149-50 Who . . . understand
 i.e., and I, though listening intently to every word, cannot understand
 one word of what you've said. 152 use treat 160 compact plot.
 167 gravity social dignity 168 grossly obviously 169 Abetting
 helping. mood anger. 170-1 Be . . . contempt i.e., It's bad enough
 that I have to endure your seeing other women; don't make it worse
 with your contempt. 175 with . . . communicate share in your
 strength. 176 If . . . dross If anything usurps my possession of you,
 it is an impure substance 177 idle unprofitable 178 Who which.
 want lack. intrusion forced entry 179 confusion ruin.
 180 moves . . . theme appeals to me as her subject of discourse.

577-612 • 613-642

What, was I married to her in my dream?
 Or sleep I now and think I hear all this?
 What error drives our eyes and ears amiss?
 Until I know this sure uncertainty,
 I'll entertain the offered fallacy.

LUCIANA Dromio, go bid the servants spread for dinner. 186

S. DROMIO Oh, for my beads! I cross me for a sinner. 187
 [He crosses himself.]

This is the fairy land. Oh, spite of spites,
 We talk with goblins, elves, and sprites! 189
 If we obey them not, this will ensue:
 They'll suck our breath or pinch us black and blue. 191

LUCIANA Why prat'st thou to thyself and answer'st not? 192
 Dromio, thou drone, thou snail, thou slug, thou sot! 193

S. DROMIO I am transformèd, master, am not I?

S. ANTIPHOLUS I think thou art in mind, and so am I.

S. DROMIO Nay, master, both in mind and in my shape.

S. ANTIPHOLUS Thou hast thine own form.

S. DROMIO No, I am an ape. 197

LUCIANA If thou art changed to aught, 'tis to an ass.

S. DROMIO 'Tis true; she rides me and I long for grass.
 'Tis so, I am an ass; else it could never be
 But I should know her as well as she knows me. 199

ADRIANA Come, come, no longer will I be a fool,
 To put the finger in the eye and weep
 Whilst man and master laughs my woes to scorn.
 Come, sir, to dinner—Dromio, keep the gate.—
 Husband, I'll dine above with you today
 And shrive you of a thousand idle pranks.—
 Sirrah, if any ask you for your master,
 Say he dines forth, and let no creature enter.—
 Come, sister.—Dromio, play the porter well.

S. ANTIPHOLUS [aside] Am I in earth, in heaven, or in hell?
 Sleeping or waking, mad or well-advised?
 Known unto these, and to myself disguised?
 I'll say as they say, and persevere so,
 And in this mist at all adventures go.

184 Until . . . uncertainty Until I can fathom the meaning of what is
 certainly a mystery. (Stated as an oxymoron.) 185 entertain accept.
 fallacy delusive notion, error. 186 spread set the table 187 beads
 rosary beads. 189 sprites spirits. 191 suck our breath (This piece
 of folklore was perhaps connected with the old idea that the breath of
 a person was that person's soul. Fairies were famous for sucking and
 pinching.) 192 prat'st thou do you chatter 193 sot fool. 197 ape
 i.e., counterfeit. 199 for grass for freedom (as a horse put out to pasture).
 206 above i.e., on the second floor, above Antipholus's shop
 207 shrive hear confession and give absolution 208 Sirrah (Customary
 form of address to servants.) 209 forth away from home
 212 well-advised in my right mind. 215 at all adventures whatever
 may happen

S. DROMIO Master, shall I be porter at the gate?
 ADRIANA Ay, and let none enter, lest I break your pate.

LUCIANA Come, come, Antipholus, we dine too late.
 [Exeunt. Dromio of Syracuse remains as porter,
 visible to the audience but not to those approaching
 the door.]



3.1

Enter Antipholus of Ephesus, his man Dromio, Angelo the goldsmith, and Balthasar the merchant.

E. ANTIPHOLUS Good Signor Angelo, you must excuse us all;
 My wife is shrewish when I keep not hours. 2
 Say that I lingered with you at your shop
 To see the making of her carcanet 4
 And that tomorrow you will bring it home.—
 But here's a villain that would face me down
 He met me on the mart, and that I beat him
 And charged him with a thousand marks in gold, 8
 And that I did deny my wife and house.—
 Thou drunkard, thou, what didst thou mean by this? 9

E. DROMIO Say what you will, sir, but I know what I know.
 That you beat me at the mart, I have your hand to show. 12
 If the skin were parchment and the blows you gave
 were ink,
 Your own handwriting would tell you what I think.

E. ANTIPHOLUS I think thou art an ass.

E. DROMIO Marry, so it doth appear
 By the wrongs I suffer and the blows I bear.
 I should kick, being kicked, and, being at that pass, 17
 You would keep from my heels and beware of an ass.

E. ANTIPHOLUS You're sad, Signor Balthasar. Pray God our cheer
 May answer my good will and your good welcome
 here. 19

BALTHASAR I hold your dainties cheap, sir, and your welcome
 dear. 21

E. ANTIPHOLUS Oh, Signor Balthasar, either at flesh or fish,
 A table full of welcome makes scarce one dainty
 dish. 23

3.1 Location: Before the house of Antipholus of Ephesus. The scene is continuous with the previous one.

2 keep not hours am not punctual. 4 carcanet necklace (the chain of 2.1.105 and line 115 below) 6 face me down maintain to my face
 that 8 charged him with entrusted him with possession of 9 deny
 disown 12 hand i.e., handwork on my body. (With a pun on "handwriting.") 17 at that pass in that situation 19 sad serious, cheer
 entertainment 20 answer agree with, match 21 dainties delicacies,
 cheap of minor importance. dear of primary importance.
 23 makes scarce scarcely equals

BALTHASAR
Good meat, sir, is common; that every churl affords. 24
 E. ANTIPHOLUS
And welcome more common, for that's nothing
but words.
 BALTHASAR
Small cheer and great welcome makes a merry feast.
 E. ANTIPHOLUS
Ay, to a niggardly host and more sparing guest. 27
But though my cates be mean, take them in good
part;
Better cheer may you have, but not with better heart.
[They approach the door of Antipholus of Ephesus's
house.]
But soft! My door is locked. [To Dromio] Go bid them
let us in.
 E. DROMIO [calling]
Maud, Bridget, Marian, Cicely, Gillian, Ginn!
 s. DROMIO [speaking from the other side of the door]
Mome, malt-horse, capon, coxcomb, idiot, patch!
Either get thee from the door or sit down at the
hatch.
Dost thou conjure for wenches, that thou call'st for
such store?
When one is one too many? Go, get thee from the
door.
 E. DROMIO
What patch is made our porter? My master stays in
the street.
 s. DROMIO
Let him walk from whence he came, lest he catch cold
on's feet.
 E. ANTIPHOLUS
Who talks within there? Ho, open the door!
 s. DROMIO
Right, sir, I'll tell you when, an you'll tell me
wherefore.
 E. ANTIPHOLUS
Wherefore? For my dinner. I have not dined today.
 s. DROMIO
Nor today here you must not. Come again when
you may.
 E. ANTIPHOLUS
What art thou that keep'st me out from the house I
owe? 42
 s. DROMIO
The porter for this time, sir, and my name is Dromio.

24 every churl i.e., everyone 27 sparing self-denying 28 cates provisions, dainties. mean plain, simple 32 s.d. speaking... door entrances of Luce and Adriana at lines 47 and 60.) 32 Mome Dolt, blockhead, malt-horse brewer's horse; stupid person. patch fool, clown. 33 hatch half-door that can be kept closed while the upper half is opened. 34 conjure for summon as if by magic. store quantity 36 What... porter? i.e., What clown is this who is acting as gatekeeper? stays waits 37 on's in his 39 an if. wherefore why. 42 owe own.

E. DROMIO
O villain! Thou hast stol'n both mine office and my
name. 45
The one ne'er got me credit, the other mickle blame.
If thou hadst been Dromio today in my place,
Thou wouldest have changed thy face for a name or
thy name for an ass. 47
 Enter Luce [above, concealed from Antipholus of
Ephesus and his companions].
 28 LUCE
What a coil is there, Dromio? Who are those at the
gate? 48
 E. DROMIO
Let my master in, Luce. Faith, no, he comes too late,
 LUCE
And so tell your master. 51
 E. DROMIO
Oh, Lord, I must laugh!
Have at you with a proverb: Shall I set in my staff?
 32 LUCE
Have at you with another: that's—When, can you
tell? 52
 s. DROMIO
If thy name be called Luce, Luce, thou hast answered
him well. 54
 E. ANTIPHOLUS [to Luce]
Do you hear, you minion? You'll let us in, I hope?
 36 LUCE
I thought to have asked you. And you said no.
 s. DROMIO
 E. DROMIO
So, come help. [They beat the door.] Well struck!
There was blow for blow.
 E. ANTIPHOLUS [to Luce]
Thou baggage, let me in. 57
 LUCE
Can you tell for whose sake? 57
 E. DROMIO
Master, knock the door hard. Let him knock till it ache.
 LUCE
 E. ANTIPHOLUS
You'll cry for this, minion, if I beat the door down.
[He knocks.]
 LUCE
What needs all that, and a pair of stocks in the town? 60
 Enter Adriana [above, concealed, like Luce and
Dromio of Syracuse, from those at the door].

45 The one... blame i.e., My name has never benefited me, my office of servant has got me much blame. 47 Thou... ass i.e., you would have been glad to change places with someone else (since I was beaten like a beast of burden). 47.1 Enter Luce [above] (Luce here and then Adriana at line 70 may enter above in such a way that the audience understands them not to be visible to those who are calling at the door.) 48 coil noise, disturbance. 51 Have... staff Let me come at you with a proverb: Shall I take up my abode here? (With a phallic joke.) 52 When... tell? i.e., Never. (Another proverbial expression, used derisively to turn aside a question.) 54 minion hussy. hope (A line following with an answering rhyme may be missing; perhaps it would have cleared up the present obscurity of lines 55 and 56.) 57 baggage good-for-nothing 60 What... town? i.e., Why do we need to put up with this disturbance, when the town provides stocks for punishment?

ADRIANA
Who is that at the door that keeps all this noise? 61
 s. DROMIO
By my troth, your town is troubled with unruly boys.
 E. ANTIPHOLUS
Are you there, wife? You might have come before.
 ADRIANA
Your wife, sir knave? Go get you from the door.
[Exit with Luce.]
 E. DROMIO
If you went in pain, master, this "knave" would go
sore. 65
 ANGELO
Here is neither cheer, sir, nor welcome. We would
fain have either. 66
 BALTHASAR
In debating which was best, we shall part with
neither. 67
 E. DROMIO
They stand at the door, master. Bid them welcome
hither. 68
 E. ANTIPHOLUS
There is something in the wind, that we cannot
get in. 69
 E. DROMIO
You would say so, master, if your garments were thin.
Your cake is warm within; you stand here in the
cold. 70
It would make a man mad as a buck to be so bought
and sold. 72
 E. ANTIPHOLUS
Go fetch me something. I'll break ope the gate.
 s. DROMIO
Break any breaking here, and I'll break your knave's
pate. 73
 E. DROMIO
A man may break a word with you, sir, and words
are but wind, 75
Ay, and break it in your face, so he break it not
behind. 76
 s. DROMIO
It seems thou want'st breaking. Out upon thee, hind! 77
 E. DROMIO
Here's too much "Out upon thee!" I pray thee, let
me in. 78
 s. DROMIO
Ay, when fowls have no feathers and fish have no
fin. 79
[Exit.]

61 keeps keeps up 65 If... sore i.e., Yourself and this "knave" she mentions are the same person. went i.e., were 66 fain gladly
67 part depart 68 They... hither i.e., Both cheer and welcome have been barred at the door, master. Invite them in. (Said ironically, as an impossibility.) 69 something... wind something strange going on
70 You... thin i.e., If you were more thinly dressed (like me), master, you'd say it's a cold wind indeed that shuts you out this way.
(Dromio takes the proverbial wind of line 69 in a literal sense.) 72 as a buck i.e., as a male deer in rutting season. (Compare horn-mad, 2.1.57.) bought and sold i.e., betrayed, ill-treated. 75 break a word exchange words. (Punning on break in the previous lines.) 76 behind i.e., in farting. 77 thou... breaking you need to be broken in by a beating. hind boor, menial. 79 s.d. Exit (If Dromio of Syracuse has been visible to the audience, he probably leaves at this point.)

E. ANTIPHOLUS
Well, I'll break in. Go borrow me a crow. 80
 E. DROMIO
A crow without feather? Master, mean you so?
For a fish without a fin, there's a fowl without a
feather.—
If a crow help us in, sirrah, we'll pluck a crow
together. 83
 E. ANTIPHOLUS
Go, get thee gone. Fetch me an iron crow.
 BALTHASAR
Have patience, sir. Oh, let it not be so!
Herein you war against your reputation
And draw within the compass of suspect
Th'unviolated honor of your wife. 87
 Once this: your long experience of her wisdom,
Her sober virtue, years, and modesty. 89
Plead on her part some cause to you unknown; 90
And doubt not, sir, but she will well excuse
Why at this time the doors are made against you.
Be ruled by me. Depart in patience, 92
And let us to the Tiger all to dinner, 93
And about evening come yourself alone
To know the reason of this strange restraint.
If by strong hand you offer to break in
Now in the stirring passage of the day, 98
A vulgar comment will be made of it, 99
And that supposed by the common rout
Against your yet ungallèd estimation,
That may with foul intrusion enter in
And dwell upon your grave when you are dead; 100
For slander lives upon succession,
Forever housed where it gets possession. 101
 E. ANTIPHOLUS
You have prevailed. I will depart in quiet, 102
And, in despite of mirth, mean to be merry.
I know a wench of excellent discourse,
Pretty and witty, wild and yet, too, gentle.
There will we dine. This woman that I mean,
My wife—but, I protest, without desert—
Hath oftentimes upbraided me withal. 108
To her will we to dinner. [To Angelo] Get you home
And fetch the chain; by this I know 'tis made. 115
Bring it, I pray you, to the Porcupine,
For there's the house. That chain will I bestow—
Be it for nothing but to spite my wife—
Upon mine hostess there. Good sir, make haste.
Since mine own doors refuse to entertain me,
I'll knock elsewhere, to see if they'll disdain me. 116

80 crow crowbar. (Introducing a quibble by Dromio of Ephesus.)
83 pluck... together pick a bone together, settle accounts.
87 draw... suspect bring under suspicion 89 Once this To be brief,
in short 90 virtue merit, general excellence 92 excuse justify
93 made fastened 95 the Tiger (Presumably an inn.) 98 offer
attempt 99 stirring passage bustle 100 vulgar public
101 And... rout and it will be presumed true by everyone
102 yet... estimation still unsullied reputation 105 lives upon
succession passes from generation to generation 108 in... mirth
despite my not feeling mirthful, or, in spite of the mockery
112 desert my deserving it 115 this this time 116 Porcupine (The
name of the Courtesan's house.)

ANGELO
I'll meet you at that place some hour hence.
E. ANTIPHOLUS
Do so. This jest shall cost me some expense. *Exeunt.*

[3.2]

Enter Luciana with Antipholus of Syracuse.

LUCIANA
And may it be that you have quite forgot
A husband's office? Shall, Antipholus,
Even in the spring of love, thy love springs rot?
Shall love, in building, grow so ruinous?
If you did wed my sister for her wealth,
Then for her wealth's sake use her with more
kindness;
Or if you like elsewhere, do it by stealth:
Muffle your false love with some show of
blindness.
Let not my sister read it in your eye;
Be not thy tongue thy own shame's orator;
Look sweet, speak fair, become disloyalty;
Apparel vice like virtue's harbinger.
Bear a fair presence, though your heart be tainted;
Teach sin the carriage of a holy saint;
Be secret-false. What need she be acquainted?
What simple thief brags of his own attainst?
'Tis double wrong to truant with your bed.
And let her read it in thy looks at board.
Shame hath a bastard fame, well managed;
Ill deeds is doubled with an evil word.
Alas, poor women! Make us but believe,
Being compact of credit, that you love us.
Though others have the arm, show us the sleeve;
We in your motion turn and you may move us.
Then, gentle brother, get you in again.
Comfort my sister, cheer her, call her wife.
'Tis holy sport to be a little vain
When the sweet breath of flattery conquers strife.

S. ANTIPHOLUS
Sweet mistress—what your name is else, I know not,
Nor by what wonder you do hit of mine—
Less in your knowledge and your grace you show not
Than our earth's wonder, more than earth divine.

3.2 Location: Antipholus of Ephesus's house or in front of it, cer-
tainly so by line 163.
1 may can . . . 2 office duty. 3 love springs tender shoots of love
8 Muffle hide. show of blindness deceptive appearance. 11 fair
courteously. become disloyalty carry off your infidelity gracefully
12 harbinger messenger, forerunner. 14 carriage demeanor
16 simple simple-minded. attain stain, dishonor. 17 truant with
be faithless to 18 board table. 19–20 Shame . . . word i.e., shameful
behavior, if cleverly managed, can assume a false reputation for humili-
able conduct, whereas sin is made twice as heinous by callous boasting
of it. 22 Being . . . credit i.e., we who are wholly inclined to believe
you. 24 We . . . turn we in your orbit are governed by your motion
(referring to the motion of the heavenly spheres). 27 holy sport vir-
tuous jesting. (An oxymoron.) vain false 29 else otherwise 30
wonder miracle. hit of hit upon, guess 31–2 Less . . . divine i.e.,
you seem no less wise and graceful than our divine queen, wonder of
the earth. (Seemingly a flattering reference to Queen Elizabeth.)

Teach me, dear creature, how to think and speak;
Lay open to my earthly-gross conceit,
Smothered in errors, feeble, shallow, weak,
The folded meaning of your words' deceit. 34
Against my soul's pure truth why labor you
To make it wander in an unknown field? 36
Are you a god? Would you create me new?
Transform me then, and to your power I'll yield. 37
But if that I am I, then well I know
Your weeping sister is no wife of mine,
Nor to her bed no homage do I owe. 38
Far more, far more to you do I decline.
Oh, train me not; sweet mermaid, with thy note,
To drown me in thy sister's flood of tears! 40
Sing, siren, for thyself, and I will done.
Spread o'er the silver waves thy golden hairs,
And as a bed I'll take them and there lie, 42
And in that glorious supposition think
He gains by death that hath such means to die. 44
Let Love, being light, be drowned if she sink!
8 LUCIANA
What, are you mad, that you do reason so?
S. ANTIPHOLUS
Not mad, but mated—how, I do not know. 46
12 LUCIANA
It is a fault that springeth from your eye.
14 S. ANTIPHOLUS
For gazing on your beams, fair sun, being by. 48
16 LUCIANA
Gaze where you should, and that will clear your sight. 50
18 S. ANTIPHOLUS
As good to wink, sweet love, as look on night. 52
20 LUCIANA
Why call you me "love"? Call my sister so.
22 S. ANTIPHOLUS
Thy sister's sister.
LUCIANA That's my sister. 54
S. ANTIPHOLUS
It is thyself, mine own self's better part,
Mine eye's clear eye, my dear heart's dearer heart,
My food, my fortune, and my sweet hope's aim,
My sole earth's heaven, and my heaven's claim. 56
LUCIANA
All this my sister is, or else should be.
S. ANTIPHOLUS
Call thyself sister, sweet, for I am thee. 58

34 Lay . . . conceit explain to my dull understanding 36 folded con-
cealed. 37–8 Against . . . field? Why do you strive against the pure
yearning of my soul, as if desiring it to seek elsewhere? 44 decline
inclination. 45 train entice. mermaid siren. (In classical myth, one of a
group of nymphs who lured sailors to destruction with their sweet
singing.) note song 49 take use 51 die cease to live. (With a pun
on "achieve sexual climax.") 52 Let . . . sinkd i.e., Love is supposed
to be light and frivolous, but this experience of mine would be like
drowning in love, dying thus happily. 53 reason talk, argue
54 mated amazed, confounded. (With quibble on the sense of
"matched with a wife.") 56 by near. 58 As . . . night i.e., If I were
to close my eyes or avert my gaze from you, I might as well be in
darkness, unable to see at all. 64 My sole . . . claim my sole heaven
on earth and my claim on heaven hereafter. 66 Call . . . thee i.e., You
and I are indivisible, as it were, through the bond of spiritual love,
and therefore the sister I love is yourself.

Thee will I love and with thee lead my life;
Thou hast no husband yet, nor I no wife.
Give me thy hand.
LUCIANA Oh, soft, sir! Hold you still.
I'll fetch my sister, to get her good will. 70
Enter Dromio [of] Syracuse, [running].
S. ANTIPHOLUS Why, how now, Dromio, where runn'st
thou so fast?
S. DROMIO Do you know me, sir? Am I Dromio? Am I
your man? Am I myself?
S. ANTIPHOLUS Thou art Dromio, thou art my man,
thou art thyself.
S. DROMIO I am an ass, I am a woman's man, and be- 77
sides myself. 78
S. ANTIPHOLUS What woman's man? And how besides
thyself?
S. DROMIO Marry, sir, besides myself I am due to a
woman: one that claims me, one that haunts me, one
that will have me.
S. ANTIPHOLUS What claim lays she to thee?
S. DROMIO Marry, sir, such claim as you would lay to
your horse; and she would have me as a beast—not
that, I being a beast, she would have me, but that she
being a very beastly creature, lays claim to me. 86
S. ANTIPHOLUS What is she?
S. DROMIO A very reverend body; ay, such a one as a
man may not speak of without he say "sir-reverence." 91
I have but lean luck in the match, and yet is she a 92
wondrous fat marriage.
S. ANTIPHOLUS How dost thou mean, a fat marriage?
S. DROMIO Marry, sir, she's the kitchen wench, and all
grease, and I know not what use to put her to but to 96
make a lamp of her and run from her by her own light.
I warrant her rags and the tallow in them will burn a 98
Poland winter. If she lives till doomsday, she'll burn a 99
week longer than the whole world.
S. ANTIPHOLUS What complexion is she of?
S. DROMIO Swart like my shoe, but her face nothing like 102
so clean kept. For why? She sweats a man may go over 103
shoes in the grime of it. 104
S. ANTIPHOLUS That's a fault that water will mend.
S. DROMIO No, sir, 'tis in grain. Noah's flood could not 106
do it.
S. ANTIPHOLUS What's her name?
S. DROMIO Nell, sir; but her name and three quarters— 109

70 good will approval. (This is perhaps a mere excuse, but it may be a
sign she is attracted.) 77–8 besides myself also myself. (With a pun
on the sense of "out of my mind.") 79 besides (A further quibble:
"in addition to.") 86 a beast (With a pun on "abased," reflecting
Elizabethan pronunciation of beast as "baste.") 91 without unless.
"sir-reverence" i.e.; save your reverence, an expression used in apol-
ogy for the remark that follows it. 92 lean poor, meager 96 grease
(With a pun on "grace," reflecting Elizabethan pronunciation.)
98–9 a Poland winter i.e., a long, cold winter. 102 Swart Swarthy,
dark 103 She sweats a man She sweats so much that a man
103–4 over shoes ankle-deep. (Her sweat makes mud of her face's
grime, so deep that a man would be ankle deep in it.) 106 in grain
indelible, fast dyed. 109 Nell (The maidservant appearing in 3.1 is
named Luce; usually the two are assumed to be one person.)

that's an ell and three quarters—will not measure her 110
from hip to hip.

S. ANTIPHOLUS Then she bears some breadth?
S. DROMIO No longer from head to foot than from hip
to hip. She is spherical, like a globe. I could find out
countries in her.
S. ANTIPHOLUS In what part of her body stands Ireland?
S. DROMIO Marry, sir, in her buttocks. I found it out by
the bogs.
S. ANTIPHOLUS Where Scotland?
S. DROMIO I found it by the barrenness, hard in the 120
palm of the hand.
S. ANTIPHOLUS Where France?
S. DROMIO In her forehead, armed and reverted, 123
making war against her heir. 124
S. ANTIPHOLUS Where England?
S. DROMIO I looked for the chalky cliffs, but I could find 126
no whiteness in them. But I guess it stood in her chin, 127
by the salt rheum that ran between France and it. 128
S. ANTIPHOLUS Where Spain?
S. DROMIO Faith, I saw it not, but I felt it hot in her
breath.
S. ANTIPHOLUS Where America, the Indies?
S. DROMIO Oh, sir, upon her nose, all o'er embellished 133
with rubies, carbuncles, sapphires, declining their rich 134
aspect to the hot breath of Spain, who sent whole 135
armadas of carracks to be ballast at her nose. 136
S. ANTIPHOLUS Where stood Belgia, the Netherlands?
S. DROMIO Oh, sir, I did not look so low. To conclude, 138
this drudge or diviner laid claim to me, called me 139
Dromio, swore I was assured to her, told me what 140
privy marks I had about me—as the mark of my 141
shoulder, the mole in my neck, the great wart on my
left arm, that I amazed ran from her as a witch.
And, I think, if my breast had not been made of
faith and my heart of steel,
She had transformed me to a curtail dog and made
me turn i'the wheel. 145
S. ANTIPHOLUS Go, hie thee presently; post to the road. 146

110 an ell forty-five inches. (With a pun on "a Nell.") 120 barrenness
callused hardness and dryness. (Perhaps with a pun on "barren ness,"
a barren promontory.) 123 reverted in rebellion. (See the Intro-
duction for an explanation of the reference to the French war.) 124 heir
(With a pun on "hair" and a joke about syphilis as causing baldness.)
126 chalky cliffs i.e., her teeth. (In his geographic metaphor, Dromio
of Syracuse identifies white teeth with the cliffs of Dover.) 127 them
i.e., her teeth. 128 salt rheum nasal discharge. (Here Dromio jokingly
makes a comparison to the English Channel.) 133–6 Oh . . . nose
(Dromio imagines whole fleets of Spanish galleons taking on ballast at
this woman's nose, embellished as it is with pimples and boils that
resemble the treasures pillaged by the Spanish in the Americas. A
carbuncle is both a precious jewel and a pimple. The eruptions on her
nose pay homage (declining their rich aspect) to the hot breath of Spain,
suggesting both her foul breath and the hot importunity of the Span-
ish.) 138 so low (A joke about the female genitalia. The Netherlands
were known as the Low Countries.) 139 diviner sorceress
140 assured affianced 141 privy secret, personal 145 curtail dog dog
with a docked tail. (And hence not used in hunting.) turn i'the
wheel run in a wheel to turn the spit. 146 hie thee presently hasten
at once. post hasten. road harbor, roadstead.

An if the wind blow any way from shore,
I will not harbor in this town tonight.
If any bark put forth, come to the mart,
Where I will walk till thou return to me.
If everyone knows us and we know none,
'Tis time, I think, to trudge, pack, and be gone.

S. DROMIO
As from a bear a man would run for life,
So fly I from her that would be my wife.

S. ANTIPOHOLUS
There's none but witches do inhabit here,
And therefore 'tis high time that I were hence.
She that doth call me husband, even my soul
Doth for a wife abhor. But her fair sister,
Possessed with such a gentle sovereign grace,
Of such enchanting presence and discourse,
Hath almost made me traitor to myself.
But, lest myself be guilty to self-wrong,
I'll stop mine ears against the mermaid's song.

Enter Angelo with the chain.

ANGELO
Master Antipholus—

S. ANTIPOHOLUS Ay, that's my name.

ANGELO
I know it well, sir. Lo, here's the chain.
I thought to have ta'en you at the Porcupine;
The chain unfinished made me stay thus long.
[He presents the chain.]

S. ANTIPOHOLUS
What is your will that I shall do with this?

ANGELO
What please yourself, sir. I have made it for you.

S. ANTIPOHOLUS
Made it for me, sir? I bespeak it not.

ANGELO
Not once, nor twice, but twenty times you have.
Go home with it and please your wife withal,
And soon at suppetime I'll visit you
And then receive my money for the chain.

S. ANTIPOHOLUS
I pray you, sir, receive the money now,
For fear you ne'er see chain nor money more.

ANGELO
You are a merry man, sir. Fare you well.

S. ANTIPOHOLUS
What I should think of this, I cannot tell.
But this I think: there's no man is so vain
That would refuse so fair an offered chain.
I see a man here needs not live by shifts,
When in the streets he meets such golden gifts.
I'll to the mart and there for Dromio stay;
If any ship put out, then straight away.



147 An if 149 bark ship 152 pack depart 159 Possessed with
having possession of 162 to of 166 ta'en overtaken, met up with
169 What please yourself Whatever you please 170 bespeak
requested 179 vain foolish 181 shifts stratagems, tricks
184 straight at once

147 4.1

149 Enter a [Second] Merchant, [Angelo the]
goldsmith, and an Officer.

152 SECOND MERCHANT [to Angelo]

You know since Pentecost the sum is due,
And since I have not much importuned you,
Nor now I had not, but that I am bound
To Persia and want guilders for my voyage.
Therefore make present satisfaction,
Or I'll attach you by this officer.

159 ANGELO

Even just the sum that I do owe to you
Is growing to me by Antipholus,
And in the instant that I met with you
He had of me a chain. At five o'clock
I shall receive the money for the same.
Pleaseth you walk with me down to his house,
I will discharge my bond and thank you too.

162 Enter Antipholus [and] Dromio of Ephesus from
the Courtesan's.

166 OFFICER

That labor may you save. See where he comes.
E. ANTIPOHOLUS [to Dromio of Ephesus]
While I go to the goldsmith's house, go thou
And buy a rope's end; that will I bestow
Among my wife and her confederates
For locking me out of my doors by day.
But soft! I see the goldsmith. Get thee gone.
Buy thou a rope and bring it home to me.

169 E. DROMIO

I buy a thousand pound a year! I buy a rope!
Exit Dromio.

170 E. ANTIPOHOLUS [to Angelo]

A man is well holp up that trusts to you!
I promisèd your presence and the chain,
But neither chain nor goldsmith came to me.
Belike you thought our love would last too long
If it were chained together, and therefore came not.

179 ANGELO [showing a paper]

Saving your merry humor, here's the note
How much your chain weighs to the utmost carat,
The fineness of the gold and chargeful fashion,
Which doth amount to three odd ducats more
Than I stand debted to this gentleman.

181 4.1. Location: The street.

1 Pentecost the commemoration of the descent of the Holy Ghost
upon the Apostles, celebrated on the seventh Sunday after Easter
2 since then. importuned harassed with demands, bothered
4 want guilders lack money 5 present satisfaction immediate pay-
ment 6 attach arrest, seize 7 Even just Precisely 8 growing due,
accruing 12 Pleaseth May it please 16 a rope's end a fragment of
rope (to be used as a whip). bestow employ 19 soft i.e., wait a
minute. 21 I... rope! (An obscure line. Dromio may mean that in
buying a rope as he is bidden, he is purchasing for himself a thou-
sand poundings or beatings a year.) 22 holp up helped
23 promised was promised 25 Belike Perhaps 27 Saving With
respect for 29 chargeful fashion expensive workmanship
30 ducats gold coins (of several European countries)

I pray you, see him presently discharged,
For he is bound to sea and stays but for it.

E. ANTIPOHOLUS

I am not furnished with the present money;
Besides, I have some business in the town.
Good signor, take the stranger to my house,
And with you take the chain, and bid my wife
Disburse the sum on the receipt thereof.
Perchance I will be there as soon as you.

ANGELO

Then you will bring the chain to her yourself?

E. ANTIPOHOLUS

No, bear it with you, lest I come not time enough.

ANGELO

Well, sir, I will. Have you the chain about you?

E. ANTIPOHOLUS

An if I have not, sir, I hope you have,
Or else you may return without your money.

ANGELO

Nay, come, I pray you, sir, give me the chain.
Both wind and tide stays for this gentleman,
And I, too blame, have held him here too long.

E. ANTIPOHOLUS

Good Lord! You use this dalliance to excuse
Your breach of promise to the Porcupine.
I should have chid you for not bringing it,
But, like a shrew, you first begin to brawl.

166 SECOND MERCHANT [to Angelo]

The hour steals on. I pray you, sir, dispatch.

ANGELO

You hear how he importunes me. The chain!

E. ANTIPOHOLUS

Why, give it to my wife and fetch your money.

ANGELO

Come, come, you know I gave it you even now.
Either send the chain or send me by some token.

E. ANTIPOHOLUS

Fie, now you run this humor out of breath.
Come, where's the chain? I pray you, let me see it.

170 SECOND MERCHANT

My business cannot brook this dalliance.
Good sir, say wh'er you'll answer me or no.
If not, I'll leave him to the officer.

E. ANTIPOHOLUS

I answer you? What should I answer you?

ANGELO

The money that you owe me for the chain.

E. ANTIPOHOLUS

I owe you none till I receive the chain.

ANGELO

You know I gave it you half an hour since.

E. ANTIPOHOLUS

You gave me none. You wrong me much to say so.

32 ANGELO

You wrong me more, sir, in denying it.
Consider how it stands upon my credit.

34 SECOND MERCHANT

Well, officer, arrest him at my suit.

OFFICER [to Angelo]

I do, and charge you in the Duke's name to obey me.

ANGELO [to Antipholus of Ephesus]

This touches me in reputation.

Either consent to pay this sum for me,
Or I attack you by this officer.

41 E. ANTIPOHOLUS

Consent to pay thee that I never had?
Arrest me, foolish fellow, if thou dar'st.

ANGELO

Here is thy fee. Arrest him, officer. [He gives money.]

I would not spare my brother in this case
If he should scorn me so apparently.

OFFICER [to Antipholus of Ephesus]

I do arrest you, sir. You hear the suit.

47 E. ANTIPOHOLUS

I do obey thee till I give thee bail.—
But, sirrah, you shall buy this sport as dear

48 As all the metal in your shop will answer.

ANGELO

Sir, sir, I shall have law in Ephesus,
To your notorious shame, I doubt it not.

49 Enter Dromio [of] Syracuse, from the bay.

53 S. DROMIO

Master, there's a bark of Epidamnum
That stays but till her owner comes aboard,
And then she bears away. Our freightage, sir,
I have conveyed aboard, and I have bought
The oil, the balsamum, and aqua vitae.

56 The ship is in her trim; the merry wind

Blows fair from land; they stay for naught at all
But for their owner, master, and yourself.

57 E. ANTIPOHOLUS

How now? A madman? Why, thou peevish sheep,
What ship of Epidamnum stays for me?

60 S. DROMIO

A ship you sent me to, to hire waftage.

E. ANTIPOHOLUS

Thou drunken slave, I sent thee for a rope
And told thee to what purpose and what end.

61 S. DROMIO

You sent me for a rope's end as soon.
You sent me to the bay, sir, for a bark.

E. ANTIPOHOLUS

I will debate this matter at more leisure
And teach your ears to list me with more heed.

68 how . . . credit how it affects my reputation for honesty. 69 at my
suit on my petition. 71 touches injures, affects 78 apparently
openly. 84.1 from the bay i.e., presumably from a side entry which
we understand to represent the direction of the bay. 89 balsamum
balm, a fragrant and healing resin. aqua vitae strong liquor. 90 in
her trim rigged and ready to sail 93 peevish silly. sheep (With play
on ship in next line.) 95 waftage passage. 98 a rope's end i.e., a
whipping, or perhaps a hangman's noose; see line 16 and note
101 list listen to

To Adriana, villain, hie thee straight. [He gives a key.]
Give her this key, and tell her, in the desk
That's covered o'er with Turkish tapestry
There is a purse of ducats; let her send it.
Tell her I am arrested in the street,
And that shall bail me. Hie thee, slave, begone!
On, officer, to prison till it come.
Exeunt [all but Dromio of Syracuse].

S. DROMIO To Adriana! That is where we dined,
Where Dowsabel did claim me for her husband.
She is too big, I hope, for me to compass.
Thither I must, although against my will,
For servants must their masters' minds fulfill. *Exit.*

[4.2]

Enter Adriana and Luciana.

ADRIANA Ah, Luciana, did he tempt thee so?
Mightst thou perceive austerely in his eye
That he did plead in earnest, yea or no?
Looked he or red or pale, or sad or merrily?
What observation mad'st thou in this case
Of his heart's meteors tilting in his face?

LUCIANA First he denied you had in him no right.

ADRIANA He meant he did me none; the more my spite.

LUCIANA Then swore he that he was a stranger here.

ADRIANA And true he swore, though yet forsown he were.

LUCIANA Then pleaded I for you.

ADRIANA And what said he?

LUCIANA That love I begged for you he begged of me.

ADRIANA With what persuasion did he tempt thy love?

LUCIANA With words that in an honest suit might move.
First he did praise my beauty, then my speech.

ADRIANA Didst speak him fair?
LUCIANA Have patience, I beseech.

ADRIANA I cannot, nor I will not, hold me still.

110 Dowsabel (Used ironically for Nell or Luce; derived from the French *douce et belle*, "gentle and beautiful.") 111 compass achieve. (With added meaning of "put my arms around.")

4.2. Location: The house of Antipholus of Ephesus.
2 austerely objectively, strictly 4 or red either red-faced or sad either sad 6 meteors tilting i.e., passions warring. (The next line begins a passage of stichomythia, dialogue in which each speech consists of a single line, much used in classical drama.) 7 no i.e., any 8 spite vexation, grief. 10 true . . . were i.e., though no foreigner, he spoke true in the sense that he is a stranger to my heart and thus false to his vows. 14 honest honorable 16 Didst . . . fair? Did you encourage him?

18 My tongue, though not my heart, shall have his will.
19 He is deformed, crooked, old, and sere,
20 Ill faced, worse bodied, shapeless everywhere;
21 Vicious, ungentle, foolish, blunt, unkind,
22 Stigmatical in making, worse in mind.

LUCIANA Who would be jealous then of such a one?
No evil lost is waisted when it is gone.

ADRIANA Ah, but I think him better than I say,
26 And yet would herein others' eyes were worse.
27 Far from her nest the lapwing cries away;
My heart prays for him, though my tongue do curse.

Enter Dromio of Syracuse, [running, with the key].

S. DROMIO Here, go—the desk, the purse! Sweet, now, make haste.

LUCIANA How hast thou lost thy breath?
S. DROMIO By running fast.

2 ADRIANA Where is thy master, Dromio? Is he well?

4 S. DROMIO No, he's in Tartar limbo, worse than hell.
6 A devil in an everlasting garment hath him,
One whose hard heart is buttoned up with steel;
7 A fiend, a fairy, pitiless and rough;
8 A wolf, nay, worse, a fellow all in buff;
A back friend, a shoulder clapper, one that countermans
10 The passages of alleys, creeks, and narrow lands;
A hound that runs counter and yet draws dryfoot well;

One that before the judgment carries poor souls to hell.

ADRIANA Why, man, what is the matter?

5 S. DROMIO I do not know the matter. He is 'rested on the case.'

ADRIANA What, is he arrested? Tell me at whose suit.

6 S. DROMIO I know not at whose suit he is arrested well;

14 18 his its 19 sere withered 20 shapeless misshapen 22 Stigmatical in making deformed in appearance 26 And . . . worse i.e., and yet I wish that others would look disapprovingly at his behavior, or I would find him less attractive. 27 Far . . . away i.e., I am like the lapwing (a bird that flies away from its nest to divert the attention of intruders from its young) in that what I say is very different from what I feel. 29 Sweet (An inoffensive term of endearment. Some editors emend it to *Sweat*.) 32 Tartar limbo Tartarus or pagan hell, worse than Christian hell. 33 everlasting garment i.e., buff leather attire of the police officer; everlasting both because of its durability and because of the joke about perpetual durance in limbo or jail. (*Everlasting* is itself the name of a coarse woolen fabric sometimes used for the uniforms of petty officers of justice.) 35 fairy i.e., malevolent spirit 37-9 one . . . well i.e., one who prohibits the movement of people in alleys and narrow passages; a hound that follows a trail in the direction opposite to that which the game has taken (with a quibble on *counter*, a prison) and skillfully tracks game by the mere scent of the footprint 40 judgment legal decision. (With a pun on "Judgment Day," continuing the joke about jail as Tartar limbo.) 42 'rested on the case arrested in a lawsuit.

45 But is in a suit of buff which 'rested him, that can I tell.
Will you send him, mistress, redemption, the money in his desk?

ADRIANA Go fetch it, sister. *Exit Luciana.*

This I wonder at,
That he, unknown to me, should be in debt.
Tell me, was he arrested on a band?

5 S. DROMIO Not on a band, but on a stronger thing:
A chain, a chain! Do you not hear it ring?

ADRIANA What, the chain?

6 S. DROMIO No, no, the bell. 'Tis time that I were gone.
It was two ere I left him, and now the clock strikes one.

ADRIANA The hours come back! That did I never hear.

7 S. DROMIO Oh, yes, if any hour meet a sergeant, 'a turns back for very fear.

ADRIANA As if Time were in debt. How fondly dost thou reason!

8 S. DROMIO Time is a very bankrupt and owes more than he's worth to season.

Nay, he's a thief too. Have you not heard men say That Time comes stealing on by night and day? If 'a be in debt and theft, and a sergeant in the way, Hath he not reason to turn back an hour in a day?

Enter Luciana [with the purse].

ADRIANA Go, Dromio, there's the money. Bear it straight, And bring thy master home immediately.

[*Exit Dromio, with the purse.*]

Come, sister. I am pressed down with conceit—
Conceit, my comfort and my injury. *Exeunt.*

45 And everyone doth call me by my name.
Some tender money to me; some invite me;
Some other give me thanks for kindnesses;
Some offer me commodities to buy.

5 Even now a tailor called me in his shop
And showed me silks that he had bought for me
And therewithal took measure of my body.
Sure, these are but imaginary wiles,
And Lapland sorcerers inhabit here.

10 *Enter Dromio of Syracuse, [with the purse].*

11 S. DROMIO Master, here's the gold you sent me for.
What, have you got the picture of old Adam new-
appareled?

12 S. ANTIPHOLUS What gold is this? What Adam dost thou mean?

13 S. DROMIO Not that Adam that kept the Paradise, but
that Adam that keeps the prison; he that goes in the calf's skin that was killed for the Prodigal; he that came behind you, sir, like an evil angel, and bid you forsake your liberty.

14 S. ANTIPHOLUS I understand thee not.

15 S. DROMIO No? Why, 'tis a plain case: he that went, like a bass viol, in a case of leather, the man, sir, that, when gentlemen are tired, gives them a sob and 'rests them; he, sir, that takes pity on decayed men and gives them suits of durance; he that sets up his rest to do more exploits with his mace than a morris-pike.

16 S. ANTIPHOLUS What, thou mean'st an officer?

17 S. DROMIO Ay, sir, the sergeant of the band; he that brings any man to answer it that breaks his band; one that thinks a man always going to bed, and says, "God give you good rest!"

18 S. ANTIPHOLUS Well, sir, there rest in your foolery. Is there any ships puts forth tonight? May we be gone?

19 S. DROMIO Why, sir, I brought you word an hour since that the bark *Expedition* put forth tonight, and then were you hindered by the sergeant to tarry for the hoy *Delay*. Here are the angels that you sent for to deliver you.

20 [He gives the purse.]

[4.3]

Enter Antipholus of Syracuse, [wearing the chain].

21 S. ANTIPHOLUS

There's not a man I meet but doth salute me
As if I were their well-acquainted friend,

22 45 suit (1) suit of clothes (2) lawsuit 49 band bond. (But Dromio puns on the sense "neckband" in the next line.) 54 one (One and on were pronounced very much alike; the word here rhymes with *gone*.) 56 if . . . fear Time appears to go backwards, like a person in debt (an "over," punning on *hour*), or a whore (pronounced like *hour*) running away from an arresting officer. 'a it, she, he 57 fondly foolishly 58 Time . . . season i.e., Having overspent itself, Time is so much in debt that it is of little worth when it comes to fruition. (With a probable pun on *season* and *seisin*, legal possession.) to season to bring to fruition, make acceptable. 61 theft i.e., a thief, in the way lying in wait to arrest 63 straight straightforward, immediately 65 conceit imaginings 66 Conceit . . . injury (Adriana is filled with imaginings, both of the wrongs she has suffered and the comfort she can provide her wayward husband.) 43. Location: The street.

4 tender offer 5 other others 10 imaginary wiles tricks of the imagination 11 Lapland sorcerers (Lapland was said to surpass all

nations in the practice of witchcraft and sorcery.) 13-14 What . . . new-appareled? (Dromio wonders how his master has managed to evade the arresting officer who apprehended Antipholus (of Ephesus, not Syracuse) in 4.1. *New-appareled* plays on [1] a new suit of clothes [2] a new lawsuit. Adam, *new-appareled* in beasts' skins after the fall of man [Genesis 3:21], reminds Dromio of the correcting officer in his buff leather jerkin or jacket.) 16 kept the Paradise (This sounds like an allusion to an inn of which the innkeeper was named Adam.) 18 calf's . . . Prodigal (An allusion to the fatted calf killed for the Prodigal Son's return; see Luke 15:23.) 23 case (With a pun on *plain case*, line 22.) 24 a sob (1) a sob of pity; see next line (2) a breathing-space given to a horse to allow it to recover from its exertions 24-5 rests them (1) arrests them (2) gives them respite 25 decayed financially ruined. (With a pun on the usual sense.) 26 durance a kind of long-wearing cloth like buff. (With a pun on "imprisonment.") 27 sets . . . rest stakes his all. (With a continuing pun on "rest; the metaphor of staking all one's venture is from the game of primero.)

27 mace staff of office carried by a constable. morris-pike a weapon, supposedly of Moorish origin 29 band troop 30 band bond 32 rest (Continuing the wordplay on *arrest*.) 37 hoy a small coastal vessel 38 angels gold coins worth about ten shillings

S. ANTIPHOLUS
The fellow is distract, and so am I,
And here we wander in illusions.
Some blessed power deliver us from hence!

Enter a Courtesan.

COURTESAN
Well met, well met, Master Antiphonus.
I see, sir, you have found the goldsmith now.
Is that the chain you promised me today?

S. ANTIPHOLUS
Satan, avoid! I charge thee, tempt me not.

S. DROMIO Master, is this Mistress Satan?

S. ANTIPHOLUS It is the devil.

S. DROMIO Nay, she is worse, she is the devil's dam, and
here she comes in the habit of a light wench; and
thereof comes that the wenches say, "God damn me,"
that's as much to say, "God make me a light wench."
It is written they appear to men like angels of light;
light is an effect of fire, and fire will burn; ergo, light
wenches will burn. Come not near her.

COURTESAN
Your man and you are marvelous merry, sir.
Will you go with me? We'll mend our dinner here.

S. DROMIO Master, if you do, expect spoon meat, or
bespeak a long spoon.

S. ANTIPHOLUS Why, Dromio?

S. DROMIO Marry, he must have a long spoon that must
eat with the devil.

S. ANTIPHOLUS [to the Courtesan]
Avoid then, fiend! What tell'st thou me of supping?
Thou art, as you are all, a sorceress.
I conjure thee to leave me and be gone.

COURTESAN
Give me the ring of mine you had at dinner
Or, for my diamond, the chain you promised,
And I'll be gone, sir, and not trouble you.

S. DROMIO
Some devils ask but the parings of one's nail,
A rush, a hair, a drop of blood, a pin,
A nut, a cherrystone;
But she, more covetous, would have a chain.
Master, be wise. An if you give it her,
The devil will shake her chain and fright us with it.

COURTESAN
I pray you, sir, my ring, or else the chain!
I hope you do not mean to cheat me so?

S. ANTIPHOLUS
Avant, thou witch!—Come, Dromio, let us go.

40 distract deranged, distracted 46 avoid! begone! (See Matthew 4:10.) 49 dam mother 50 habit demeanor, manner; also, dress. light wanton 51 damn me i.e., dam me, make me a mother. 53 angels of light (See 2 Corinthians 11:14, where Satan is referred to as transformed into an angel of light.) 54 ergo therefore 55 will burn i.e., will transmit venereal disease. 57 mend supplement, complete 58 spoon meat food for infants, hence delicacies 59 bespeak 61-2 he... devil (A proverbial idea.) 63 What Why 73 An order 77 Avaunt Begone

E. ANTIPHOLUS
To what end did I bid thee hie thee home?
E. DROMIO To a rope's end, sir; and to that end am I returned.

E. ANTIPHOLUS
And to that end, sir, I will welcome you.
[He starts to beat Dromio of Ephesus.]

OFFICER Good sir, be patient.
E. DROMIO Nay, 'tis for me to be patient. I am in adversity.

OFFICER Good now, hold thy tongue.
E. DROMIO Nay, rather persuade him to hold his hands.

E. ANTIPHOLUS Thou whoreson, senseless villain!
E. DROMIO I would I were senseless, sir, that I might not feel your blows.

E. ANTIPHOLUS Thou art sensible in nothing but blows, and so is an ass.

E. DROMIO I am an ass, indeed; you may prove it by my long ears. I have served him from the hour of my nativity to this instant and have nothing at his hands for my service but blows. When I am cold, he heats me with beating; when I am warm, he cools me with beating. I am waked with it when I sleep, raised with it when I sit, driven out of doors with it when I go from home, welcomed home with it when I return. Nay, I bear it on my shoulders, as a beggar wont her brat, and I think when he hath lamed me I shall beg with it from door to door.

[Enter Adriana, Luciana, Courtesan, and a schoolmaster called Pinch.]

E. ANTIPHOLUS
Come, go along. My wife is coming yonder.
E. DROMIO [to Adriana] Mistress, respice finem, respect your end; or rather, to prophesy like the parrot, "Beware the rope's end."

E. ANTIPHOLUS Wilt thou still talk? Beats Dromio.
COURTESAN [to Adriana]

How say you now? Is not your husband mad?

ADRIANA
His incivility confirms no less.—
Good Doctor Pinch, you are a conjurer;
Establish him in his true sense again,
And I will please you what you will demand.

LUCIANA
Alas, how fiery and how sharp he looks!

COURTESAN
Mark how he trembles in his ecstasy!

22 Good now Pray you 27 sensible in sensitive to; also, made sensible by 30 ears (With a pun on "years"; Dromio says he is an ass for having served his master so long.) 37 wont is accustomed to (bear) 41 respice finem consider your end. (A pious sentiment on the brevity of life and the approach of death; with a play on respice finem, "consider the hangman's rope." A parrot might be taught to say respice finem, or perhaps "rope.") 47 Doctor (An honorific term for any learned person. Pinch is not a medical doctor.) conjurer (Being able to speak Latin, Pinch could conjure spirits.) 48 true sense right mind 49 please pay 50 sharp angry 51 ecstasy fit, frenzy.

PINCH [to Antiphonus]
Give me your hand, and let me feel your pulse.
E. ANTIPHOLUS [striking him]
There is my hand, and let it feel your ear.

PINCH
I charge thee, Satan, housed within this man,
To yield possession to my holy prayers
And to thy state of darkness hie thee straight!
I conjure thee by all the saints in heaven!

E. ANTIPHOLUS
Peace, doting wizard, peace! I am not mad.

ADRIANA
Oh, that thou wert not, poor distressed soul!

E. ANTIPHOLUS
You minion, you, are these your customers?
Did this companion with the saffron face
Revel and feast it at my house today,
Whilst upon me the guilty doors were shut
And I denied to enter in my house?

ADRIANA
Oh, husband, God doth know you dined at home,
Where would you had remained until this time,
Free from these slanders and this open shame!

E. ANTIPHOLUS
Dined at home? [To E. Dromio] Thou villain, what sayest thou?

E. DROMIO
Sir, sooth to say, you did not dine at home.

E. ANTIPHOLUS
Were not my doors locked up and I shut out?

E. DROMIO
Pardie, your doors were locked and you shut out.

E. ANTIPHOLUS
And did not she herself revile me there?

E. DROMIO
Sans fable, she herself reviled you there.

E. ANTIPHOLUS
Did not her kitchen maid rail, taunt, and scorn me?

E. DROMIO
Certes, she did. The kitchen vestal scorned you.

E. ANTIPHOLUS
And did not I in rage depart from thence?

E. DROMIO
In verity you did. My bones bears witness,
That since have felt the vigor of his rage.

ADRIANA
Is't good to soothe him in these contraries?

PINCH
It is no shame. The fellow finds his vein,
And yielding to him humors well his frenzy.

60 minion hussy, i.e., Adriana 61 companion fellow, i.e., Pinch. saffron yellow 66 would I wish 71 Pardie (An oath, from the French *pardieu*, "by God.") 73 Sans Without 75 Certes Certainly. kitchen vestal (ironically, her task was like that of the vestal virgins of ancient Rome, to keep the fire burning.) 79 soothe encourage, humor. contraries denials, lies. 80-1 It... frenzy i.e., Such a humoring of Antiphonus is not reprehensible. Dromio grasps the nature of his master's madness, and giving in this way can soothe the patient's frenzy.

24 THE COMEDY OF ERRORS: 4.4

E. ANTIPHOLUS [to Adriana]
Thou hast suborned the goldsmith to arrest me.
ADRIANA
Alas, I sent you money to redeem you
By Dromio here, who came in haste for it.
E. DROMIO
Money by me? Heart and good will you might,
But surely, master, not a rag of money.
E. ANTIPHOLUS
Went'st not thou to her for a purse of ducats?
ADRIANA
He came to me, and I delivered it.
LUCIANA
And I am witness with her that she did.
E. DROMIO
God and the rope maker bear me witness
That I was sent for nothing but a rope!
PINCH [to Adriana]
Mistress, both man and master is possessed;
I know it by their pale and deadly looks.
They must be bound and laid in some dark room.
E. ANTIPHOLUS [to Adriana]
Say wherefore didst thou lock me forth today?
[To E. Dromio] And why dost thou deny the bag of gold?
ADRIANA
I did not, gentle husband, lock thee forth.
E. DROMIO
And, gentle master, I received no gold.
But I confess, sir, that we were locked out.
ADRIANA
Dissembling villain, thou speak'st false in both.
E. ANTIPHOLUS
Dissembling harlot, thou art false in all
And art confederate with a damned pack
To make a loathsome abject scorn of me!
But with these nails I'll pluck out those false eyes
That would behold in me this shameful sport.
[He threatens Adriana.]
ADRIANA
Oh, bind him, bind him! Let him not come near me. 105
Enter three or four, and offer to bind him. He strives.
PINCH
More company! The fiend is strong within him.
LUCIANA
Ay me, poor man, how pale and wan he looks!
E. ANTIPHOLUS
What, will you murder me?—Thou jailer, thou,
I am thy prisoner. Wilt thou suffer them
To make a rescue?
OFFICER
Masters, let him go. 111
He is my prisoner, and you shall not have him.
82 suborned induced 85 Heart... might You might have sent love
and good wishes by me 86 rag scrap 93 deadly deathlike
94 bound... room (The regular treatment for lunacy in Shakespeare's
day.) 95 forth out. (Also in line 97.) 102 pack i.e., of conspirators
103 abject scorn despicable object of contempt 106.1 offer attempt
111 make a rescue take a prisoner by force from legal custody
Masters Good sirs

1369-1404 • 1405-1441

PINCH
Go bind his man, for he is frantic too.
[They bind Dromio of Ephesus.]
ADRIANA
What wilt thou do, thou peevish officer? 114
Hast thou delight to see a wretched man
Do outrage and displeasure to himself?
OPICER
He is my prisoner. If I let him go,
The debt he owes will be required of me.
ADRIANA
I will discharge thee ere I go from thee.
Bear me forthwith unto his creditor,
And, knowing how the debt grows, I will pay it. 119
Good Master Doctor, see him safe conveyed
Home to my house. Oh, most unhappy day!
E. ANTIPHOLUS
Oh, most unhappy strumpet!
E. DROMIO
Master, I am here entered in bond for you. 125
E. ANTIPHOLUS
Out on thee, villain! Wherefore dost thou mad me? 126
E. DROMIO
Will you be bound for nothing? Be mad,
good master; cry, "The devil!"
LUCIANA
God help, poor souls, how idly do they talk! 129
ADRIANA
Go bear him hence. Sister, go you with me. 130
Exeunt [Pinch and his assistants, carrying off
Antiphonus and Dromio of Ephesus]. Manent
Officer, Adriana, Luciana, Courtesan.
Say now, whose suit is he arrested at?
OFFICER
One Angelo, a goldsmith. Do you know him?
ADRIANA
I know the man. What is the sum he owes? 102
OFFICER
Two hundred ducats.
ADRIANA
Say, how grows it due?
OFFICER
Due for a chain your husband had of him.
ADRIANA
He did bespeak a chain for me, but had it not. 136
COURTESAN
Whenas your husband all in rage today
Came to my house and took away my ring—
The ring I saw upon his finger now—
Straight after did I meet him with a chain.
ADRIANA
It may be so, but I did never see it.—
Come, jailer, bring me where the goldsmith is.
I long to know the truth hereof at large. 143
Enter Antiphonus and Dromio [of] Syracuse with
their rapiers drawn.

114 peevish silly, senseless 116 displeasure injury, wrong 119 dis-
charge pay, clear the debt for 121 knowing... grows when I know
how the debt accrued 123 unhappy fatal, miserable 125 entered in
bond (1) bound up, tied (2) pledged 126 mad exasperate 129 idly
senselessly 130.2 Manent They remain onstage 136 bespeak order
137 Whenas When 143 at large in full, in detail.

1442-1479 • 1480-1514

LUCIANA
God, for thy mercy! They are loose again.
ADRIANA
And come with naked swords. Let's call more help. 145
To have them bound again.
OFFICER
Away! They'll kill us. 146
Run all out. Exeunt omnes, as fast as may be,
frighted. [Antiphonus and Dromio of Syracuse
remain.]
S. ANTIPHOLUS
I see these witches are afraid of swords.
S. DROMIO
She that would be your wife now ran from you.
S. ANTIPHOLUS
Come to the Centaur. Fetch our stuff from thence. 149
I long that we were safe and sound aboard.
S. DROMIO
Faith, stay here this night. They will surely
do us no harm. You saw they speak us fair, give us 152
gold. Methinks they are such a gentle nation that, but
for the mountain of mad flesh that claims marriage of
me, I could find in my heart to stay here still and turn 155
witch.
S. ANTIPHOLUS
I will not stay tonight for all the town.
Therefore, away, to get our stuff aboard. Exeunt.
5.1
Enter the [Second] Merchant and [Angelo] the
goldsmith.
ANGELO
I am sorry, sir, that I have hindered you;
But I protest he had the chain of me,
Though most dishonestly he doth deny it.
SECOND MERCHANT
How is the man esteemed here in the city?
ANGELO
Of very reverend reputation, sir,
Of credit infinite, highly beloved,
Second to none that lives here in the city.
His word might bear my wealth at any time.
SECOND MERCHANT
Speak softly. Yonder, as I think, he walks.
Enter Antiphonus and Dromio [of] Syracuse again,
[Antiphonus wearing the chain].
ANGELO
Tis so, and that self chain about his neck
Which he forswore most monstrously to have.
Good sir, draw near to me. I'll speak to him.—
Signor Antiphonus, I wonder much
That you would put me to this shame and trouble
And, not without some scandal to yourself,

145 naked drawn 146.1 omnes all 149 stuff goods, baggage
152 speak us fair speak courteously to us 155 still always
5.1. Location: Before the priory and Antiphonus of Ephesus's house.
1 hindered you delayed your journey 8 might bear is worth
10 self same 11 forswore denied under oath

With circumstance and oaths so to deny
This chain which now you wear so openly.
Beside the charge, the shame, imprisonment,
You have done wrong to this my honest friend, 16
Who, but for staying on our controversy,
Had hoisted sail and put to sea today.
This chain you had of me. Can you deny it?
S. ANTIPHOLUS
I think I had. I never did deny it.
SECOND MERCHANT
Yes, that you did, sir, and forswore it too.
S. ANTIPHOLUS
Who heard me to deny it or forswear it?
SECOND MERCHANT
These ears of mine, thou know'st, did hear thee.
Fie on thee, wretch! 'Tis pity that thou liv'st
To walk where any honest men resort.
S. ANTIPHOLUS
Thou art a villain to impeach me thus. 29
I'll prove mine honor and mine honesty
Against thee presently, if thou dar'st stand. 31
SECOND MERCHANT
I dare, and do defy thee for a villain. They draw.
Enter Adriana, Luciana, [the] Courtesan, and
others.

ADRIANA
Hold, hurt him not, for God sake! He is mad.
Some get within him; take his sword away.
Bind Dromio too, and bear them to my house. 34
S. DROMIO
Run, master, run; for God sake, take a house!
This is some priory. In, or we are spoiled! 36
Exeunt [Antiphonus and Dromio of Syracuse]
to the priory.

Enter [Emilia, the] Lady Abbess.

ABBESS
Be quiet, people. Wherefore throng you hither?
ADRIANA
To fetch my poor distracted husband hence.
Let us come in, that we may bind him fast
And bear him home for his recovery.

ANGELO
I knew he was not in his perfect wits.
SECOND MERCHANT
I am sorry now that I did draw on him.

ABBESS
How long hath this possession held the man?
ADRIANA
This week he hath been heavy, sour, sad,
And much different from the man he was;
But till this afternoon his passion

16 circumstance details, particulars 18 charge cost 19 honest hon-
orable 20 on as a result of 29 impeach accuse 31 presently at
once. stand take a fighting stance, put yourself to the test. 32 defy
challenge. villain base person. 34 within him under his guard
36 take take refuge in 37 spoiled ruined, done for. 45 This week
All this week. sad melancholy

Ne'er brake into extremity of rage.
 ABBESS Hath he not lost much wealth by wreck of sea?
 Buried some dear friend? Hath not else his eye
 Strayed his affection in unlawful love—
 A sin prevailing much in youthful men,
 Who give their eyes the liberty of gazing?
 Which of these sorrows is he subject to?
 ADRIANA To none of these, except it be the last,
 Namely, some love that drew him oft from home.
 ABBESS You should for that have reprehended him.
 ADRIANA Why, so I did.
 ABBESS Ay, but not rough enough.
 ADRIANA As roughly as my modesty would let me.
 ABBESS Haply in private.
 ADRIANA And in assemblies too.
 ABBESS Ay, but not enough.
 ADRIANA It was the copy of our conference.
 In bed he slept not for my urging it;
 At board he fed not for my urging it;
 Alone, it was the subject of my theme;
 In company I often glanc'd it;
 Still did I tell him it was vile and bad.
 ABBESS And thereof came it that the man was mad.
 The venom clamors of a jealous woman
 Poisons more deadly than a mad dog's tooth.
 It seems his sleeps were hindered by thy railing,
 And thereof comes it that his head is light.
 Thou say'st his meat was sauced with thy upbraiding.
 Unquiet meals make ill digestions;
 Thereof the raging fire of fever bred,
 And what's a fever but a fit of madness?
 Thou sayest his sports were hindered by thy brawls.
 Sweet recreation barred, what doth ensue
 But moody and dull melancholy,
 Kinsman to grim and comfortless despair,
 And at her heels a huge infectious troop
 Of pale distempers and foes to life?
 In food, in sport, and life-preserving rest
 To be disturbed would mad or man or beast.
 The consequence is, then, thy jealous fits
 Hath scared thy husband from the use of wits.
 LUCIANA She never reprehended him but mildly,
 When he demeaned himself rough, rude, and wildly.
 [To Adriana] Why bear you these rebukes and
 answer not?

48 brake broke. rage madness. 49 wreck of shipwreck at
 51 Strayed led astray 57 reprehended rebuked 60 Haply Perhaps
 62 copy topic, theme. conference conversation. 63 for because of
 66 glanced alluded to 67 Still continually 69 venom venomous
 82 distempers physical disorder, illness 84 mad or madden
 either 88 demeaned behaved, conducted

48 ADRIANA She did betray me to my own reproof.—
 Good people, enter and lay hold on him.
 49 ABBESS No, not a creature enters in my house.
 51 ADRIANA Then let your servants bring my husband forth.
 ABBESS Neither. He took this place for sanctuary,
 And it shall privilege him from your hands
 Till I have brought him to his wits again
 Or lose my labor in assaying it.
 57 ADRIANA I will attend my husband, be his nurse,
 Diet his sickness, for it is my office,
 And will have no attorney but myself;
 And therefore let me have him home with me.
 ABBESS Be patient, for I will not let him stir
 Till I have used the approved means I have,
 With wholesome syrups, drugs, and holy prayers,
 To make of him a formal man again.
 60 It is a branch and parcel of mine oath,
 A charitable duty of my order.
 Therefore depart and leave him here with me.
 ADRIANA I will not hence and leave my husband here;
 And ill it doth beseem your holiness
 To separate the husband and the wife.
 ABBESS Be quiet and depart. Thou shalt not have him. [Exit.]
 69 LUCIANA [to Adriana]
 Complain unto the Duke of this indignity.
 ADRIANA Come, go. I will fall prostrate at his feet
 And never rise until my tears and prayers
 Have won His Grace to come in person hither
 And take perforce my husband from the Abbess.
 SECOND MERCHANT By this, I think, the dial points at five.
 Anon, I'm sure, the Duke himself in person
 Comes this way to the melancholy vale,
 The place of death and sorry execution
 Behind the ditches of the abbey here.
 82 ANGELO Upon what cause?
 SECOND MERCHANT To see a reverend Syracusan merchant,
 Who put unluckily into this bay
 Against the laws and statutes of this town,
 Beheaded publicly for his offense.
 ANGELO See where they come. We will behold his death.
 LUCIANA Kneel to the Duke before he pass the abbey.

90 She . . . reproof i.e., She led me to see my own faults. 97 assaying
 attempting 99 office duty 100 attorney agent, deputy
 103 approved proved, tested 105 formal normal, made in proper
 form 106 parcel integral part 118 By this By this time. dial sun-
 dial or watch dial 121 sorry sad

Enter the Duke of Ephesus and [Egeon] the
 merchant of Syracuse, barehead [and bound], with
 the Headsman and other officers.

DUKE Yet once again proclaim it publicly,
 If any friend will pay the sum for him,
 He shall not die; so much we tender him.
 132 ADRIANA [kneeling]
 Justice, most sacred Duke, against the Abbess!

DUKE She is a virtuous and a reverend lady.
 It cannot be that she hath done thee wrong.

ADRIANA May it please Your Grace, Antipholus my husband,
 Who I made lord of me and all I had,
 At your important letters, this ill day
 A most outrageous fit of madness took him,
 That desperately he hurried through the street—
 With him his bondman, all as mad as he—
 Doing displeasure to the citizens
 By rushing in their houses, bearing thence
 Rings, jewels, anything his rage did like.
 Once did I get him bound and sent him home,
 Whilst to take order for the wrongs I went
 That here and there his fury had committed.
 Anon, I wot not by what strong escape,
 He broke from those that had the guard of him,
 And with his mad attendant and himself,
 Each one with ireful passion, with drawn swords,
 Met us again and, madly bent on us,
 Chased us away, till raising of more aid
 We came again to bind them. Then they fled
 Into this abbey, whither we pursued them;
 And here the Abbess shuts the gates on us
 And will not suffer us to fetch him out,
 Nor send him forth that we may bear him hence.
 Therefore, most gracious Duke, with thy command
 Let him be brought forth and borne hence for help.

DUKE [raising Adriana]
 Long since, thy husband served me in my wars,
 And I to thee engaged a prince's word,
 When thou didst make him master of thy bed,
 To do him all the grace and good I could.—
 Go, some of you, knock at the abbey gate
 And bid the Lady Abbess come to me.
 I will determine this before I stir.

Enter a [Servant as] messenger.

SERVANT Oh, mistress, mistress, shift and save yourself!
 My master and his man are both broke loose,

132 so . . . him so much consideration we grant him. (With suggestion
 also of "value" and "have pity on.") 138 important impudent,
 pressing. letters (Adriana would seem to have been ward to the
 Duke and married at his impudent urging.) 140 That desperately
 so that recklessly 141 all totally 142 displeasure wrong, injury
 144 rage madness, insanity 146 take order settle, make reparation
 148 wot know. strong violent 152 bent turned 160 help cure.
 162 engaged pledged 167 determine settle 168 shift escape, depart

Beaten the maids a-row, and bound the doctor,
 Whose beard they have singed off with brands of fire,
 And ever as it blazed they threw on him
 Great pails of puddled mire to quench the hair.
 My master preaches patience to him, and the while
 His man with scissors nicks him like a fool;
 And sure, unless you send some present help,
 Between them they will kill the conjurer.

ADRIANA Peace, fool! Thy master and his man are here,
 And that is false thou dost report to us.

SERVANT Mistress, upon my life, I tell you true.
 I have not breathed almost since I did see it.
 He cries for you, and vows, if he can take you,
 To scorch your face and to disfigure you.

Cry within.

Hark, hark! I hear him, mistress. Fly, begone!

DUKE Come, stand by me. Fear nothing.—Guard with
 halberds!

ADRIANA Ay me, it is my husband! Witness you
 That he is borne about invisible.
 Even now we housed him in the abbey here,
 And now he's there, past thought of human reason.

Enter Antipholus and Dromio of Ephesus.

E. ANTIPHOLUS Justice, most gracious Duke, oh, grant me justice!
 Even for the service that long since I did thee,
 When I bestrid thee in the wars and took
 Deep scars to save thy life; even for the blood
 That then I lost for thee, now grant me justice.

E. ANTIPHOLUS Unless the fear of death doth make me dote,
 I see my son Antipholus and Dromio.

E. ANTIPHOLUS Justice, sweet prince, against that woman there!
 She whom thou gav'st to me to be my wife,
 That hath abusèd and dishonored me
 Even in the strength and height of injury!
 Beyond imagination is the wrong
 That she this day hath shameless thrown on me.

DUKE Discover how, and thou shalt find me just.

E. ANTIPHOLUS This day, great Duke, she shut the doors upon me
 While she with harlots feasted in my house.

DUKE A grievous fault. Say, woman, didst thou so?

170 a-row one after another 173 puddled from filthy puddles
 175 nicks . . . fool gives him a fantastic haircut in the short fashion of
 the court fool 183 scorch (Compare the singeing of Pinch's beard at
 line 171; also, score, slash.) 185 halberds long-handled spears with
 blades. 188 housed him in i.e., drove him into 192 bestrid stood
 over (to defend when fallen in battle) 199 abusèd maltreated
 203 Discover Reveal 205 harlots rascals, vile companions

ADRIANA
No, my good lord. Myself, he, and my sister
Today did dine together. So befall my soul
As this is false he burdens me withal.

LUCIANA
Ne'er may I look on day nor sleep on night
But she tells to Your Highness simple truth.

ANGELO
Oh, perjured woman!—They are both forsworn.
In this the madman justly chageth them.

E. ANTIPHOLUS
My liege, I am advised what I say,
Neither disturbed with the effect of wine,
Nor heady-rash provoked with raging ire,
Albeit my wrongs might make one wiser mad.
This woman locked me out this day from dinner.
That goldsmith there, were he not packed with her,
Could witness it, for he was with me then;
Who parted with me to go fetch a chain,
Promising to bring it to the Porcupine,
Where Balthasar and I did dine together.
Our dinner done, and he not coming thither,
I went to seek him. In the street I met him,
And in his company that gentleman.
[Indicating the Second Merchant.]

There did this perjured goldsmith swear me down
That I this day of him received the chain,
Which, God he knows, I saw not; for the which
He did arrest me with an officer.
I did obey, and sent my peasant home
For certain ducats. He with none returned.
Then fairly I bespoke the officer
To go in person with me to my house.
By th' way we met
My wife, her sister, and a rabble more
Of vile confederates. Along with them
They brought one Pinch, a hungry, lean-faced villain,
A mere anatomy, a mountebank,
A threadbare juggler and a fortune-teller,
A needy, hollow-eyed, sharp-looking wretch,
A living dead man. This pernicious slave,
Forsooth, took on him as a conjurer
And, gazing in mine eyes, feeling my pulse,
And with no face, as 'twere, out-facing me,
Cries out I was possessed. Then all together
They fell upon me, bound me, bore me thence,
And in a dark and dankish vault at home
There left me and my man, both bound together,
Till, gnawing with my teeth my bonds in sunder,
I gained my freedom and immediately
Ran hither to Your Grace, whom I beseech
To give me ample satisfaction

208 So . . . soul i.e., As I hope to be saved 209 he . . . withal he charges
me with. 210 on at 214 am advised know very well 219 packed in
conspiracy 221 parted with departed from 227 swear me down
swear in the face of my denials 233 fairly civilly. bespoke requested
239 mere anatomy absolute skeleton. mountebank quack, charlatan
240 juggler sorcerer 243 took . . . as pretended to be 245 And . . . me
246 possessed mad.

For these deep shames and great indignities.

ANGELO
My lord, in truth, thus far I witness with him,
That he dined not at home but was locked out.

DUKE
But had he such a chain of thee, or no?

ANGELO
He had, my lord, and when he ran in here
These people saw the chain about his neck.

SECOND MERCHANT [to E. Antipholus]
Besides, I will be sworn these ears of mine
Heard you confess you had the chain of him
After you first forswore it on the mart,
And thereupon I drew my sword on you;
And then you fled into this abbey here,
From whence, I think, you are come by miracle.

E. ANTIPHOLUS
I never came within these abbey walls,
Nor ever didst thou draw thy sword on me.
I never saw the chain, so help me heaven!
And this is false you burden me withal.

DUKE
Why, what an intricate impeach is this!
I think you all have drunk of Circe's cup.
If here you housed him, here he would have been.
If he were mad, he would not plead so coldly.
[To Adriana] You say he dined at home; the goldsmith
here
Denies that saying. [To E. Dromio] Sirrah, what say you?

E. DROMIO
Sir, he dined with her there, at the Porcupine.

COURTESAN
He did, and from my finger snatched that ring.

E. ANTIPHOLUS
'Tis true, my liege. This ring I had of her.

DUKE [to the Courtesan]
Saw'st thou him enter at the abbey here?

COURTESAN
As sure, my liege, as I do see Your Grace.

DUKE
Why, this is strange. Go call the Abbess hither.
I think you are all mated or stark mad.
Exit one to the Abbess.

E. EGEON
Most mighty Duke, vouchsafe me speak a word.
Haply I see a friend will save my life
And pay the sum that may deliver me.

DUKE
Speak freely, Syracusian, what thou wilt.

E. EGEON [to E. Antipholus]
Is not your name, sir, called Antipholus?
And is not that your bondman, Dromio?

E. DROMIO
Within this hour I was his bondman, sir,
But he, I thank him, gnawed in two my cords.
Now am I Dromio and his man, unbound.

270 intricate impeach involved accusation 271 Circe's cup the
charmed cup, a draft of which turned men into beasts (as told in
Homer's *Odyssey*). 273 coldly calmly, rationally. 282 mated stupefied

EGEON
I am sure you both of you remember me.

E. DROMIO
Ourselves we do remember, sir, by you;
For lately we were bound, as you are now.
You are not Pinch's patient, are you, sir?

EGEON
Why look you strange on me? You know me well.

E. ANTIPHOLUS
I never saw you in my life till now.

EGEON
Oh, grief hath changed me since you saw me last,
And careful hours with Time's deformed hand
Have written strange defeatures in my face.
But tell me yet, dost thou not know my voice?

E. ANTIPHOLUS
Neither.

EGEON
Dromio, nor thou?

E. DROMIO
No, trust me, sir, nor I.

EGEON
I am sure thou dost.

E. DROMIO
Ay, sir, but I am sure I do not; and whatsoever
ever a man denies, you are now bound to believe him.

EGEON
Not know my voice! O time's extremity,
Hast thou so cracked and splitted my poor tongue
In seven short years, that here my only son
Knows not my feeble key of untuned cares?
Though now this grainèd face of mine be hid
In sap-consuming winter's drizzled snow
And all the conduits of my blood froze up,
Yet hath my night of life some memory,
My wasting lamps some fading glimmer left,
My dull deaf ears a little use to hear.
All these old witnesses—I cannot err—
Tell me thou art my son Antipholus.

E. ANTIPHOLUS
I never saw my father in my life.

EGEON
But seven years since, in Syracuse, boy,
Thou know'st we parted. But perhaps, my son,
Thou sham'st to acknowledge me in misery.

E. ANTIPHOLUS
The Duke and all that know me in the city
Can witness with me that it is not so.
I ne'er saw Syracuse in my life.

DUKE
I tell thee, Syracusian, twenty years
Have I been patron to Antipholus,
During which time he ne'er saw Syracuse.
I see thy age and dangers make thee dote.

Enter the Abbess, with Antipholus and Dromio of
Syracuse.

ABBESS
Most mighty Duke, behold a man much wronged.
All gather to see them.

299 careful care-filled 300 defeatures disfigurements, blemishes
311 my . . . cares my voice enfeebled by discordant cares.
312 grainèd lined, furrowed 313 In . . . snow i.e., by my white hairs,
that have dried up the sap of my youth 316 wasting lamps i.e., dim-
ming eyes 321 But Only

333 genius attendant spirit 335 deciphers distinguishes 344 bur-
den birth 352 rude rough, simple 357 his morning story i.e., the
history Egeon related this morning 359 semblance appearance
360 urging urgent account

S. ANTIPOHOLUS
I, gentle mistress.
ADRIANA And are not you my husband?
E. ANTIPOHOLUS No, I say nay to that.
S. ANTIPOHOLUS
And so do I. Yet did she call me so,
And this fair gentlewoman, her sister here,
Did call me brother. [To Luciana] What I told you then
I hope I shall have leisure to make good,
If this be not a dream I see and hear.
ANGELO [pointing to the chain Antipholus of Syracuse wears]
That is the chain, sir, which you had of me.
S. ANTIPOHOLUS
I think it be, sir. I deny it not.
E. ANTIPOHOLUS [to Angelo]
And you, sir, for this chain arrested me.
ANGELO
I think I did, sir. I deny it not.
ADRIANA [to Antipholus of Ephesus]
I sent you money, sir, to be your bail,
By Dromio, but I think he brought it not.
E. DROMIO No, none by me.
S. ANTIPOHOLUS [showing his purse to Adriana]
This purse of ducats I received from you,
And Dromio my man did bring them me.
I see we still did meet each other's man,
And I was ta'en for him, and he for me,
And thereupon these errors are arose.
E. ANTIPOHOLUS [offering money]
These ducats pawn I for my father here.
DUKE
It shall not need. Thy father hath his life.
COURTESAN [to E. Antipholus]
Sir, I must have that diamond from you.
E. ANTIPOHOLUS [giving the ring]
There, take it, and much thanks for my good cheer.

ABBESS
Renowned Duke, vouchsafe to take the pains
To go with us into the abbey here
And hear at large discoursèd all our fortunes,
And all that are assembled in this place,
That by this sympathized one day's error
Have suffered wrong. Go, keep us company,

376 leisure opportunity 387 still continually 391 life pardon.
394 vouchsafe deign, agree 396 at large at length 398 sympathized
shared in by all equally

And we shall make full satisfaction.
Thirty-three years have I but gone in travail
Of you, my sons, and till this present hour
My heavy burden ne'er delivered.
The Duke, my husband, and my children both,
And you the calendars of their nativity,
Go to a gossips' feast, and joy with me;
After so long grief, such nativity!

DUKE
With all my heart I'll gossip at this feast.
405
Exeunt omnes. Manent the two Dromios and two
brothers [Antipholus].
406
408

S. DROMIO [to Antipholus of Ephesus]
Master, shall I fetch your stuff from shipboard?
E. ANTIPOHOLUS
Dromio, what stuff of mine hast thou embarked?
S. DROMIO
Your goods that lay at host, sir, in the Centaur.
411
S. ANTIPOHOLUS
He speaks to me.—I am your master, Dromio.
Come, go with us. We'll look to that anon.
Embrace thy brother there; rejoice with him.
Exeunt [the two brothers Antipholus].

S. DROMIO
There is a fat friend at your master's house
That kitchened me for you today at dinner.
She now shall be my sister, not my wife.
416
417
E. DROMIO
Methinks you are my glass and not my brother.
I see by you I am a sweet-faced youth.
Will you walk in to see their gossiping?
418
419
S. DROMIO Not I, sir, you are my elder.
E. DROMIO That's a question. How shall we try it?
S. DROMIO We'll draw cuts for the senior. Till then, lead
thou first.
E. DROMIO Nay, then, thus:
We came into the world like brother and brother,
And now let's go hand in hand, not one before
another. Exeunt.

405 calendars . . . nativity i.e., the Dromios, since the servants were
born at the same time as their masters. 406 a gossips' feast a christen-
ing feast, here to celebrate, belatedly, the start of life for the two sets of
twins, who were not truly born till now; also, a feast of companion-
ship. 408 gossip i.e., be a hearty companion, take part 411 lay at
host were put up at the inn 416 kitchened entertained in the kitchen
417 sister sister-in-law 418 glass mirror 420 gossiping merrymak-
ing. 423 cuts lots

Love's Labor's Lost



In much the same way that *The Comedy of Errors* is Shakespeare's apprenticeship to Plautus and neoclassical comedy, *Love's Labor's Lost* is his apprenticeship to John Lyly's courtly drama of the 1580s, to the court masque, and to conventions of Petrarchan lyric poetry. The play is word conscious and stylistically mannered to an extent that is unusual even for the pun-loving Shakespeare. The humor abounds in the pert repartee for which juvenile actors were especially fitted, and an extraordinarily high percentage of roles are assigned to boys: four women and a diminutive page (Mote) among seventeen named roles. The social setting is patrician and the entertainments aristocratic. In some ways, little seems to happen in *Love's Labor's Lost*. Fast-moving plot is replaced by a structure that includes a series of debates on courtly topics reminiscent of John Lyly: love versus honor, the flesh versus the spirit, pleasure versus instruction, art versus nature. The songs and sonnets composed by the courtiers for the ladies (4.3.23–116) gracefully caricature the excesses of the Petrarchan love convention (named for the influential Italian sonneteer, Francesco Petrarch): the lovers are "sick to death" with unrequited passion, they catalogue the charms of their proud mistresses, they express their exquisitely tortured emotions through elaborate poetical metaphors, and so on. Stage movements are often masquelike; characters group themselves and then pair off two by two, as in a formal dance. Actual masques and pageants, presented by the courtiers or devised for their amusement, are essential ingredients of the spectacle.

Yet beneath the brightly polished surfaces of this sophisticated comedy, we often catch glimpses of a candor and a simplicity that offset the tinsel and glitter. The wits ultimately disclaim (with some qualification) their wittiness, and the ladies confess they have tried too zealously to put down the men; both sides disavow the extreme postures they have striven so hard to maintain. The clowns, though deflated by mocking laughter for

their naiveté and pomposity, deflate the courtiers, in turn, for lack of compassion. From this interplay among various forms of courtly wit, Petrarchism, pedantry, and rustic speech emerges a recommended style that is witty but not irresponsibly so, courtly yet sincere, polished and yet free of affectation or empty verbal ornament. This new harmony is aptly expressed by Berowne and Rosaline, whose witty quest for self-understanding in love foreshadows that of Benedick and Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing*. The perfect expression of the true style is found in the song at the end of the play; taking the form of a medieval literary debate between Spring and Winter, it beautifully fuses the natural and the artificial into a concordant vision transcending the mundane.

Like *The Comedy of Errors*, *Love's Labor's Lost* is an early comedy that is hard to date with precision. It was published in quarto in 1598 "as it was presented before Her Highness this last Christmas" (1597). The text also purports to be "newly corrected and augmented," though we know of no earlier published version. Perhaps a play that was already several years old may have seemed in need of stylistic revision. Act 4 does, in fact, contain two long duplicitous passages, suggesting that a certain amount of rewriting did take place. The revisions alter the meaning only slightly, however, and give little support to the widely held notion that Shakespeare must have reworked the ending of his play. The unresolved ending, in which no marriages take place and in which the Princess's territorial claims to Aquitaine are left unsettled, should be regarded not as unfinished but as highly imaginative and indeed indispensable. The title, after all, assures us that "love's labors" will be lost, and the Princess affirms the principle of "form confounded."

Some stylistic tests suggest a date between 1592 and 1595, although these characteristics might point to an early play that had been "new corrected and augmented." Topical hypotheses arise from the quest for Shakespeare's sources. Since the plot of *Love's Labor's Lost*