

Act 1 Scene 1

*Enter the **DUKE**, **EGEON**, **JAILER**, and other attendants*

EGEON

Proceed, Solinus, to procure my fall,
And by the doom of death end woes and all.

DUKE

Merchant of Syracuse, plead no more.
I am not partial to infringe our laws.
5 The enmity and discord which of late
Sprung from the rancorous outrage of your duke
To merchants, our well-dealing countrymen,
Who, wanting guilders to redeem their lives,
Have seal'd his rigorous statutes with their bloods,
10 Excludes all pity from our threatening 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,
15 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 Syracusian born
Come to the bay of Ephesus, he dies,
20 His goods confiscate to the Duke's dispose,

*The **DUKE**, **EGEON**, and the **JAILER** enter, with other attendants.*

EGEON

Continue, Solinus, and bring on my downfall. Give me the
death sentence and end all my troubles.

DUKE

Merchant of Syracuse, stop your begging: I'm not inclined to
bend our laws. The hatred and discord between our two cities
is the result of the bitter offenses your duke has perpetrated
against the merchants of Ephesus, our well-behaved
countrymen. Lacking the money to ransom themselves, these
merchants were executed under your duke's harsh laws, and
this has erased all looks of pity from my face. Ever since these
deadly conflicts erupted between your violent countrymen
and ours, both you Syracusians and we Ephesians have held
serious councils and decided not to permit any travel between
our two hostile towns. No—the law goes further: if anyone born
in Ephesus is seen in Syracuse's marketplaces or if anyone
born in Syracuse comes to Ephesus, that man dies, and his
possessions will be confiscated by the Duke, unless he can
raise a thousand marks to pay the penalty and ransom himself.
Your possessions, even if we calculate their worth very
generously, don't even add up to a hundred marks. Therefore,
by law, you are condemned to die.

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;
25 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, Syracusian, say in brief the cause
Why thou dep-artedst from thy native home
30 And for what cause thou camest 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,
35 I'll utter what my sorrow gives me leave.
In Syracuse 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
40 By prosperous voyages I often made
To Epidamnum, till my factor's death

EGEON

At least I have this comfort: when you finish speaking, my
troubles will also end, at sundown.

DUKE

Well, Syracusian, tell us—briefly—why you left your hometown
and came to Ephesus.

EGEON

Asking me to speak of my unspeakable griefs—that's the
hardest task you could impose on me. But I'll do it so that the
world can see that it was natural emotion, and not a desire to
break the law, that brought me to this fate. I'll tell you whatever
my sorrow permits me to say. I was born in Syracuse, and I
married a woman—a fortunate woman, except for having been
married to me. And yet I would have made her happy had our
luck not been so bad. I lived with her in joy, and our wealth
increased from the prosperous journeys I frequently made to
Epidamnum. Then my agent died and, obligated to care for my
now untended goods abroad, I was drawn away from my wife's

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
45 Before herself—almost at fainting under
The pleasing punishment that women bear—
Had made provision for her following me
And soon and safe arrivèd where I was.
There had she not been long but she became
50 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 meaner woman was deliverèd
55 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.
60 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;
65 But longer did we not retain much hope;
For what obscured light the heavens did grant

fond embraces. I hadn't been gone for six months when my wife, almost fainting with the pains of pregnancy, made arrangements to follow me, and she soon arrived safely where I was. She hadn't been there very long before she became the joyful mother of twin boys. It was strange: they looked so much alike that the only way to tell them apart was by their names. In the same hour, and in the same inn, a poor woman also delivered identical twin boys. Their parents had very little, so I bought the boys and raised them as companions and servants for our twin sons. My wife was more than a little proud of our two boys, and every day she would press me to return home. Reluctantly, I agreed—alas! Too quickly, we boarded a ship.

We had sailed a [league](#) away from Epidamnum before the sea, which always obeys the winds' commands, gave any indication of danger.

We didn't stay hopeful much longer: soon, the sky grew so dark that we were convinced we were going to die

Did but convey unto our fearful minds
A doubtful warrant of immediate death,
Which though myself would gladly have embraced,
70 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.
75 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,
80 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,
85 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,
90 And by the benefit of his wished light
The seas waxed calm, and we discovered
Two ships from far, making amain to us,

immediately. I could have accepted that, but I was forced by my wife's incessant weeping—she wept in advance for the things that she saw ahead—and the piteous complaints of the sweet infants—who cried in imitation of the adults, without understanding why—to find a way to save us. Here's the best I could do: the crew of our ship had fled for safety in the lifeboats and left us to sink with the ship. My wife, who was very concerned about the younger of our twins, tied him to a spare mast—the kind that sailors use for just such a purpose. She tied one of the other twins to him. I did the same with the remaining two boys. With the children taken care of, my wife and I tied ourselves to opposite ends of the mast and floated off, obedient to the current. It carried us toward Corinth—or so we thought. Eventually the sun, looking down upon the earth, burned off the threatening storm clouds. By the power of the sun's wished-for light, the seas became calm. We saw two ships sailing toward us, one from Corinth, the other from Epidaurus. But before they reached us—let me say no more! You'll have to imagine what came next, based on what had already happened.

Of Corinth that, of Epidaurus this.

But ere they came,—O, let me say no more!

95 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.

EGEON

O, had the gods done so, I had not now

Worthily termed them merciless to us.

100 For, ere the ships could meet by twice five leagues,

We were encounterd 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,

105 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,

110 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,

115 And would have reft the fishers of their prey

DUKE

No, keep going, old man; don't stop like that. For we may take

pity on you, even if we can't pardon you.

EGEON

Had the gods taken pity on us, I wouldn't be here calling them

merciless. The two ships hadn't come within ten leagues of us

when our ship hit a huge rock and split down the middle. As

we were unjustly separated from each other, both my wife and

I were left with something to delight in and something to

sorrow over. For her part—the poor soul! Her half of the mast

weighed less, but she was no luckier than I was: the wind

carried her away more quickly. I saw them rescued by

fishermen from Corinth—or so I thought. After a while, another

ship rescued me and the two boys who were with me. The

sailors knew me, so they took good care of us. Our ship would

have caught up with the other ship and taken back my wife

and the children, but we sailed too slowly and their ship sped

toward their home. So now you've heard how I was separated

from everything I love. It's been my bad luck to remain alive

long enough to be able to tell the sad stories of my own

misfortunes.

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

120 To tell sad stories of my own mishaps.

DUKE

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

EGEON

My youngest boy, and yet my eldest care,
125 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,
130 Whom whilst I laboured 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,
135 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;

DUKE

And for the sake of those you grieve for, do me a favor: tell me
the full story of what has happened to you and them, up to this
point.

EGEON

My youngest son, whom I care about the most, turned
eighteen and started to wonder about his twin brother. He
asked me to let him take his attendant—who had also lost a
brother, though he had kept his brother's

name for himself—and go in search of him. I wanted to see my
lost son as well, so I risked losing the one I loved in order to
find the other. I've spent five years in the remotest parts of
Greece and roaming all over Asia. On my way home, I came to
Ephesus. I have no hope of finding my boys here, but I will
check every place that is inhabited by men. But that is where
the story of my life must end. I'd be happy to die if, in all my
travels, I could prove that they are alive.

And happy were I in my timely death
Could all my travels warrant me they live.

DUKE

140 Hapless Egeon, whom the fates have marked
To bear the extremity of dire mishap,
Now, trust me, were it not against our laws,
Against my crown, my oath, my dignity,
Which princes, would they, may not disannul,
145 My soul would sue as advocate for thee.
But though thou art adjudgèd to the death,
And passèd sentence may not be recalled
But to our honour's great disparagement,
Yet will I favor thee in what I can.
150 Therefore, merchant, I'll limit thee this day
To seek thy life 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 doom'd to die.–
155 Jailer, take him to thy custody.

JAILER

I will, my lord.

EGEON

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

DUKE

Poor Egeon! Fate has decreed that you must endure the extremes of terrible misfortune. Believe me, if it weren't against the law, my crown, my duty, and my position (which princes cannot disobey, not matter how they feel), my very soul would argue your case. But you are sentenced to death, and changing a sentence that's already been passed would dishonor my title. However, I'll do what I can for you. I will allow you one day to look for help in Ephesus. Call any friends you have. Beg or borrow to come up with the ransom. If you can, you live. If not, you are doomed to die. Jailer, take him into custody.

JAILER

I will.

EGEON

Hopeless and helpless, I go my way, merely putting off my fatal end.

Exeunt

They exit.

Act 1 Scene 2

Enter ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE, DROMIO OF SYRACUSE, and FIRST MERCHANT

FIRST MERCHANT

Therefore give out you are of Epidamnum,
Lest that your goods too soon be confiscate.
This very day a Syracusian merchant
Is apprehended for arrival here
5 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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Go bear it to the Centaur, where we host,
10 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,
15 For with long travel I am stiff and weary.
Get thee away.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE, DROMIO OF SYRACUSE, and FIRST MERCHANT enter.

FIRST MERCHANT

So, tell people that you're from Epidamnum—otherwise all your goods will be confiscated. Just today, a merchant from Syracuse was arrested for coming here. He couldn't afford the ransom, so by law, he'll be put to death before the sun sets. Here's the money you asked me to hold.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Dromio, bring this money to the Centaur Inn, where we're lodging, and wait there until I come. It'll be lunchtime within an hour. Until then, I'll walk around town, peruse the markets, and gaze upon the buildings, and then I'll return and sleep at the inn. I'm stiff and weary from all this travel. Get going now.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

Exit DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

A trusty villain, sir, that very oft,
20 When I am dull with care and melancholy,
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,
25 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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

30 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.

Many men would take you literally and take off with all this
money.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE exists.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

He's a trustworthy servant. Often, when I'm dulled by worry
and melancholy, he lightens my mood with his merry pranks.
Listen, will you walk with me around the town and then dine
with me at the inn?

FIRST MERCHANT

Begging your pardon, but I've been invited to see some
merchants, who I'm hoping to see a profit from. But if

it pleases you, I'll meet you in the marketplace at five and will
keep you company until bedtime. Right now, my pressing
business calls me away.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Farewell till then. I will go lose myself, wandering up and down
throughout the city.

FIRST MERCHANT

Sir, I leave you to your own contentment.

Exit FIRST MERCHANT exits.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

He that commends me to mine own content

Commends me to the thing I cannot get.

35 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,

40 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?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Returned so soon? Rather approach'd too late!

The capon burns; the pig falls from the spit;

45 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;

50 You have no stomach, having broke your fast;

But we that know what 'tis to fast and pray

FIRST MERCHANT exits.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

He leaves me to my own contentment, but that's the one thing

I cannot find. Out in the world, I'm like a drop of water, trying to

find a drop that matches in the whole wide ocean. When that

drop fails its task—unnoticed, inquisitive—it dissipates into the

ocean and destroys itself. In order to find a mother and a

brother, I too have lost myself, unhappily.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS enters.

Here comes the man who shares my birthday. What is it? How

is it that you've come back so soon?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Back so soon? Too late is more like it. The chicken is burning,

the pig is overcooked, the clock has already struck twelve, and

my mistress has clocked me one on the cheek. She's hot

because lunch is cold; lunch is cold because you're not home;

you're not home because you're not hungry; you're not hungry

because you've eaten already. But we servants—who know

how to properly fast and pray—are being punished for your

offenses today.

Are penitent for your default today.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

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,
65 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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Come, Dromio, come, these jests are out of season.
Reserve them till a merrier hour than this.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Hold on a second. Answer me this, please: where's the money I
gave you?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Oh, the sixpence you gave me last Wednesday to buy leather
goods for my mistress? The saddle maker has it, sir—I didn't
keep it.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I'm not in a joking mood. Tell me right now and stop fooling:
where's the money? We're strangers here. How dare you let
such a large amount escape your keeping?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Please, sir; crack jokes over lunch. My mistress made me hurry
here. If I go back without you, she'll punish your faults by
breaking my head open. I should think that your appetite
would act like a clock (as mine does) and bring you home on
its own, without the need for a messenger.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

That's enough, Dromio, please. This isn't a good moment for
jokes—save them till a happier time. Where's the gold I gave

70 Where is the gold I gave in charge to thee?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

To me, sir? Why, you gave no gold to me!

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

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.
85 If I should pay your worship those again,
Perchance you will not bear them patiently.

you?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Gave me, sir? You didn't give me any gold.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Come on, you rogue. Quit joking. Tell me what you've done
with the money I entrusted to you.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

The only thing that I've been entrusted with was getting you
from the market and bringing you to your house, the Phoenix,
for lunch. My mistress and her sister are waiting for you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Tell me where you've stowed away my money, or I swear I'll
break that comical head of yours for goofing when I'm not in
the mood. Where are the thousand [marks](#) you had from me?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

I have some marks from you on my head and some of my
mistress's marks on my body. But between the both of you, I
don't have a thousand marks. If I gave those marks back to
you, chances are you wouldn't take them as patiently as I did.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Thy mistress' marks? what mistress, slave, hast thou?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Your worship's wife, my mistress at the Phoenix,

She that doth fast till you come home to dinner

90 And prays that you will hie you home to dinner.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What, wilt thou flout me thus unto my face,

Being forbid? There, take you that, sir knave. (*beats DROMIO OF EPHESUS*)

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

What mean you, sir? For God's sake, hold your hands.

Nay, an you will not, sir, I'll take my heels.

Exit DROMIO OF EPHESUS

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

95 Upon my life, by some device or other

The villain is o'erraught of all my money.

They say this town is full of cozenage,

As nimble jugglers that deceive the eye,

Dark-working sorcerers that change the mind,

100 Soul-killing witches that deform the body,

Disguised cheaters, prating mountebanks,

And many suchlike liberties of sin.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Your mistress's marks? What mistress do you have?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Your wife, sir. My mistress. At the Phoenix. The one who's

waiting for you to come home for lunch and praying that you'll get home quickly.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What, are you going to mock me to my face when I told you not to? There, take that, you scoundrel! (*beats DROMIO OF EPHESUS*)

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

What are you doing? Stop, for God's sake! Well, if you don't, then I'm out of here.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS exits.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I swear, somehow the fool has been cheated out of all my money. They say that this town is full of deception—illusionists that can fool the eye, dark sorcerers who can bewitch your mind, soul-killing witches who can disfigure your body, disguised swindlers, fast-talking fakers, and all kinds of other unchecked sins. If this is true, then I'll be leaving all the sooner. I'll go to the Centaur to find this servant of mine—I fear that my money isn't safe.

If it prove so, I will be gone the sooner.
I'll to the Centaur to go seek this slave.
105 I greatly fear my money is not safe.

Exit

Enter ADRIANA and LUCIANA

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,
5 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

10 Why should their liberty than ours be more?

LUCIANA

Because their business still lies out o' door.

He exits.

Act 2 Scene 1

ADRIANA and LUCIANA enter.

ADRIANA

Neither my husband nor the slave has returned, even though I
sent the slave off running. Surely, Luciana, it's already two
o'clock.

LUCIANA

Maybe some merchant at the marketplace invited him home
for lunch. Sister, let's eat and stop worrying. A man is master of
his own freedom: time is his only master, and when the right
moment comes along, he'll come or go as he pleases. If this is
so, be patient, sister.

ADRIANA

Why should men be more free than women?

LUCIANA

Because their business lies outside the home.

ADRIANA

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

LUCIANA

O, know he is the bridle of your will.

ADRIANA

There's none but asses will be bridled so.

LUCIANA

15 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.
20 Man, more divine, the masters 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.

25 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

Listen, when I behave this way toward him, he hates it.

LUCIANA

Oh, you should know that he's the [bridle](#) to your will.

ADRIANA

Only a mule would agree to that.

LUCIANA

Why, too much freedom leads to woe. There's nothing under
heaven that doesn't have its limits. The beasts on the earth, the
fish in the sea, and the birds in the sky are all subject to the
males of their species and under their control. Men, who are
nearest to God, are the masters of all these creatures. And men
—the lords of the wide

world and the wild watery seas, gifted with intellectual sense
and souls, greater than the fish and the birds—are the masters
of women and their lords. Therefore, you should obey their
wishes.

ADRIANA

It's this servantlike mentality that's keeping you unmarried.

LUCIANA

ADRIANA

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

LUCIANA

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

ADRIANA

30 How if your husband start some otherwhere?

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.

A wretched soul, bruised with adversity

35 We bid be quiet when we hear it cry,

But were we burdened with like weight of pain,

As much or more we should ourselves complain.

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,

This fool-begged patience in thee will be left.

LUCIANA

No, that's not it—it's because of what happens in the marriage bed.

ADRIANA

But if you were married, you'd wield some influence.

LUCIANA

Before I learn how to love, I'll learn how to follow orders.

ADRIANA

What if your husband strays elsewhere?

LUCIANA

I'd endure it until he came home again.

ADRIANA

Now that's patience! No wonder she's waiting to get married.

It's easy to preach meekness when you have no reason to act otherwise. When we're faced with a wretched person, bruised and crying with hardship, we try to get them to shush up. And yet, if we were suffering the same kind of pain, we'd complain just as much—if not more! So you, who have no husband causing you problems, want to comfort me by preaching the virtue of feeble patience. But if you live to see yourself similarly denied your rights, this foolish patience will abandon you.

LUCIANA

Well, I will marry one day, but to try.
Here comes your man. Now is your husband nigh.

*Enter **DROMIO OF EPHESUS***

ADRIANA

Say, is your tardy master now at hand?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

45 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?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

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

LUCIANA

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

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

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

ADRIANA

But say, I prithee, is he coming home?

Well, I'll get married one day, just to see. Here comes your
servant—your husband must be coming soon.

***DROMIO OF EPHESUS** enters.*

ADRIANA

Tell me, is your tardy master close at hand?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

No; but he came at me with two hands—just ask my [ears](#) .

ADRIANA

Did you talk to him? Do you know his plans?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Yes, yes, he told me his plans on my ears. Damn his hands—I
could barely [understand](#) it.

LUCIANA

Did he speak so ambiguously that you couldn't get a feeling
for what he meant?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

No; he hit me very clearly and I felt his punches perfectly well.
They were so dreadful, I could barely stand up under them.

ADRIANA

It seems he hath great care to please his wife.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

55 Why, mistress, sure my master is horn mad.

ADRIANA

Horn mad, thou villain!

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

I mean not cuckold mad,

But sure he is stark mad.

When I desired him to come home to dinner,

He asked me for a thousand marks in gold.

60 "Tis dinnertime," quoth I. "My gold," quoth he.

"Your meat doth burn," quoth I. "My gold," quoth he.

"Will you come?" 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.

65 "My mistress, sir," quoth I. "Hang up thy mistress!

I know not thy mistress. Out on thy mistress!"

LUCIANA

Quoth who?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Quoth my master.

But please, tell me: is he coming home? It seems he has taken great care to please his wife.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Why, mistress, my master is as angry as a bull with horns.

ADRIANA

Horns? You bastard!

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

I don't mean he's [cuckold](#) mad. But he sure is angry. When I asked him to come home to lunch, he asked me for a thousand marks. "It's lunchtime," I said. "My gold," he said. "The meat's burning," I said. "My gold," he said. "Will you come home?" I said.

"My gold," he said. "Where's the thousand marks I gave you, scoundrel?" "The pig," I said, "is burned." "My gold," he said. "My mistress," I said. "Damn your mistress! I don't know your mistress, the hell with your mistress!"

LUCIANA

Who said that?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

"I know," quoth he, "no house, no wife, no mistress."

70 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.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

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

ADRIANA

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

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

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.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

80 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.

My master said it. "I don't know," he said, "any house, wife, or mistress." My message, which was supposed to be delivered with my mouth, ended up being carried back home by my shoulders. Because at the end of it all, that's where he beat me.

ADRIANA

Go back again, slave, and bring him home.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Go back again, to be beaten home again? For God's sake, send somebody else.

ADRIANA

Go back, slave, or I'll knock you one across the head.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

And he'll add another knock across. With all these crosses, I'll have a holy head.

ADRIANA

Get out of here, you blathering peasant! Bring your master home.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Do I treat you this roundly? You're kicking me around like I'm a football. You kick me out, he kicks me back. If I keep working for you, I'm going to end up wrapped in leather, like a football.

If I last in this service, you must case me in leather.

Exit DROMIO OF EPHEsus

LUCIANA

Fie, how impatience loureth in your face.

ADRIANA

85 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?
90 If voluble 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
95 By him not ruined? Then is he the ground
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

100 Self-harming jealousy, fie, beat it hence.

ADRIANA

DROMIO OF EPHEsus exits.

LUCIANA

Look at you! You have impatience all over your face.

ADRIANA

He feels the need to grace all his other tramps with his presence while I sit at home starving for a smile from him. Has homely old age taken the alluring beauty from my poor cheeks? That's because he has squandered my beauty. Am I boring? Have I lost my wit? If my conversation is no longer free and clever, that's because he's dulled it—I'm like a sharp tool he's blunted with a hard piece of marble. Is he charmed by their pretty clothes? Well, that's not my fault—he's the one in charge of my spending. What faults can you find in me that weren't first caused by him? One smile from him would repair my decayed beauty. But like an unruly deer, he's always trespassing past the park borders and straying away from home to feed in new pastures. I am nothing but a poor, used fool.

LUCIANA

This jealousy is harming only you! Drive it out of you.

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.
105 Would that alone o' love he would detain,
So he would keep fair quarter with his bed.
I see the jewel best enameled
Will lose his beauty. Yet the gold bides still
That others touch, and often touching will
110 Wear gold; yet 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

Enter ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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,

Only someone who doesn't feel this pain could tell me to
ignore it. I know his eyes are worshiping some other woman, or
why wouldn't he be here? Sister, you know he promised to give
me a necklace. I would gladly do without that if he would only
stay faithful to me. Even the best jewel can be tarnished. Gold,
however, can't be corrupted—though it can be worn down if it's
touched too often. And no man with a reputation will tarnish
that name with lies and bad behavior. Since my beauty no
longer pleases my husband, I'll weep away what's left and
then die with weeping.

LUCIANA

How many infatuated people go mad with jealousy!

They exit.

Act 2 Scene 2

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE enters.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

The gold I gave Dromio is safe and sound at the Centaur, and
the inn host says that Dromio has left and is looking for me. I
haven't spoken to him since I sent him away from the
marketplace earlier. Here he comes.

5 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?
10 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?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

What answer, sir? When spake I such a word?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Even now, even here, not half an hour since.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

15 I did not see you since you sent me hence,
Home to the Centaur with the gold you gave me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

***DROMIO OF SYRACUSE** enters.*

So, sir. Are you over your ridiculous mood? If you like being hit,
crack some more jokes. You never heard of the Centaur? You
weren't given any gold? Your mistress sent for me to come to
dinner? The Phoenix is my house? Were you mad when you
spoke to me so madly?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Said what, sir? When did I say all that?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Just now. Right here. Less than half an hour ago.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I haven't seen you since you sent me to the Centaur with the
gold you gave me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

You moron, you denied having any gold, and you told me
about a mistress and a lunch. And I hope you realized I wasn't
very happy about it.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Yea, dost thou jeer and flout me in the teeth?
Think'st thou I jest? Hold, take thou that and that. (*beats*
DROMIO OF SYRACUSE)

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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.
30 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.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

35 "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 enscone it too, or else I shall
seek my wit in my shoulders. But I pray, sir, why am I beaten?

I'm glad to see you in such a merry mood. But what's the joke?
Please, master, tell me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What, are you mocking me to my face? You think I'm joking?
Here. Take that, and that! (*beats* DROMIO OF SYRACUSE)

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Stop, sir, for God's sake! Now this joke has turned serious. Why
are you doing this?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Just because I act familiar with you sometimes and let you fool
around and joke with me, you try to take advantage of my
affection. You pull pranks when I'm in a serious mood. You
know, foolish gnats come out in the sunshine, but they creep
back into their holes when it's dark. If you want to crack jokes,
first check what kind of mood I'm in and then adjust your
behavior to suit me. If you don't learn this rule, I'll have to beat
it into your scone.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

You call it my " [scone](#) "? I'd rather call it my "head" so you'd
stop battering it. If you keep pounding me, I'll need a scone to
wrap my head with, or else I'll have to keep my brain in my
chest. But sir, why are you beating me?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

40 Dost thou not know?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Nothing, sir, but that I am beaten.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Shall I tell you why?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

45 "Why" first: for flouting me; and then "wherefore": for urging it the second time to me.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

50 Thank me, sir, for what?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Don't you know?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

All I know is that I'm being beaten.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Should I tell you why?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Yes, and wherefore. You know the old saying: "Every 'why' has a 'wherefore.'"

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

"Why" first: for defying me. And then "wherefore": for doing it a second time.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I don't think any man's ever been beaten for a "why" and "wherefore" that made so little sense. Well, thank you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Thank me? For what?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Because you gave me something for nothing.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

No, sir, I think the meat wants that I have.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

55 In good time, sir, what's that?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Basting.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Well, sir, then 'twill be dry.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Your reason?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

60 Lest it make you choleric and purchase me another dry
basting.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Next time I'll give you nothing for something. Is it lunchtime?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

No. The meat lacks something that I have.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What would that be?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

A basting.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Well, then it will be dry.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

If it is, I suggest you don't eat it.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Why not?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Because it will make you angry, and that will get me another
beating.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Well, learn to make jokes at the appropriate time. There's a
time for all things.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I durst have denied that before you were so choleric.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

65 By what rule, sir?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Let's hear it.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

May he not do it by fine and recovery?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Before you got so angry, I never would have thought that.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Why not?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I'll tell you: it's because of a law as plain as Father Time's bald head.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Let's hear it.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

There may be a time for everything, but no man who has gone bald naturally can get his hair back.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Can't he get it by [fine and recovery](#) ?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Yes, he can pay a fine for a wig and then recover another man's lost hair.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Why is Time so cheap about giving out hair? After all, it's plentiful in its growth.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

For what reason?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

85 For two, and sound ones too.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Nay, not sound, I pray you.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Because animals are blessed with hair. With men, he's been stingy with hair, but he makes up for it by giving them intelligence.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

But a lot of men have more hair than intelligence.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

And not one of them is smart enough to stop himself from going bald.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

So then, you must think that hairy men are honest and simpleminded.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

The more simpleminded they are, the sooner they [lose their hair](#) . But they have a good time doing so.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Why?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Two reasons. And good ones, too.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Not good ones, please.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Sure ones, then.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Nay, not sure, in a thing falsing.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Certain ones, then.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

90 Name them.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

95 Marry, and did, sir: namely, e'en no time to recover hair lost by nature.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

But your reason was not substantial why there is no time to recover.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Then sure ones.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

No, not sure ones when we're talking about something unsure.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Then certain ones.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Name them.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

One, so they can save the money they spent on hairstyling, and two, so that when their hair falls out it doesn't land in their dinner.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

You were supposed to be proving that there isn't time for everything.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Right, and I did, sir. There's no time to get back hair that's fallen out.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

You didn't come up with a very good proof.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Thus I mend it: Time himself is bald and therefore, to the world's end, will have bald followers.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I knew 'twould be a bald conclusion:
But soft, who wafts us yonder?

Enter ADRIANA and LUCIANA

ADRIANA

Ay, ay, Antipholus, look strange and frown.
Some other mistress hath thy sweet aspects.

105 I am not Adriana, nor thy wife.

The time was once when thou unurged wouldst vow
That never words were music to thine ear,
That never object pleasing in thine eye,
That never touch well welcome to thy hand,
110 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, O, how comes it
That thou art thus estranged from thyself?

"Thyself" I call it, being strange to me,

115 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 mayest thou fall
A drop of water in the breaking gulf,

Then I'll change it to this: Father Time himself is bald, so for all time there will be bald men.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I knew you'd come up with a **bald** conclusion. But wait—who's that waving to us?

ADRIANA and LUCIANA enter.

ADRIANA

Yes, yes, Antipholus: look bewildered and frown at me. You've given away all your sweet looks to some other woman—I am not Adriana nor your wife. There was a time when you'd freely tell me that words were never music to your ear unless I said them, that objects never pleased your eye unless I showed them to you, that touches never pleased your hands unless they were my touches, and that food never tasted sweet to you unless I had prepared it. How is it, my husband—oh, how is it—that you have become a stranger to yourself? I say yourself because you are a stranger to me now, but when we are indivisible and united in one body, I am better than the best part of you. Ah, don't tear yourself away from me! For you should know, my love, that it would be as easy to let a drop of water fall into the churning sea and then fish it out again, unmingled and undiminished, as it would be to take yourself from me without taking me out of myself as well. How deeply would it cut you if you heard that I had been cheating on you

120 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
125 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,
130 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;
135 For if we too be one, and thou play false,
I do digest the poison of thy flesh,
Being strumpeted by thy contagion.
Keep then fair league and truce with thy true bed,
I live disstained, thou undishonored.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

140 Plead you to me, fair dame? I know you not.
In Ephesus I am but two hours old,
As strange unto your town as to your talk,
Who, every word by all my wit being scanned,

and that my body—which is sworn for you only—had been
contaminated by vile lust?

Wouldn't you spit at me, and spurn me, and throw our
marriage vows in my face? Wouldn't you tear the mark off my
[whorish forehead](#) , cut the wedding ring off my finger, and
swear to divorce me? I know you would, so go ahead. For I
have, in fact, committed adultery, and my blood has been
contaminated by lust. Because if marriage has made us one,
then when you cheat, you poison my flesh as well—your
contagion makes me a prostitute. So stay faithful to me and
return to your marriage bed. That way, my reputation will be
protected and your honor will be intact.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Are you talking to me, fair woman? I don't know you. I've only
been in Ephesus for two hours. Your talk is as strange to me as
your town. I'm trying with all my wits to figure out what you
mean, but I can't understand a word of it.

Want wit in all one word to understand.

LUCIANA

145 Fie, brother, how the world is changed with you!
When were you wont to use my sister thus?
She sent for you by Dromio home to dinner.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

By Dromio?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

By me?

ADRIANA

150 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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Did you converse, sir, with this gentlewoman?
What is the course and drift of your compact?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

155 I, sir? I never saw her till this time.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Villain, thou liest; for even her very words
Didst thou deliver to me on the mart.

LUCIANA

Shame on you, brother-in-law! You've changed so much! Why
are you treating my sister like this? She sent Dromio to bring
you home for lunch.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Dromio?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Me?

ADRIANA

You. And this is what you told me he said: that he beat you and
pretended his house wasn't his and I wasn't his wife.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Did you talk with this woman? What kind of scheme do you
have going together?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Me, sir? I never saw her till now.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

You liar! You said those exact things to me back in the
marketplace.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I never spake with her in all my life.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

How can she thus then call us by our names—

160 Unless it be by inspiration?

ADRIANA

How ill agrees it with your gravity

To counterfeit thus grossly with your slave,

Abetting him to thwart me in my mood.

Be it my wrong you are from me exempt,

165 But wrong not that wrong with a more contempt.

Come, I will fasten on this sleeve of thine.

Thou art an elm, my husband, I a vine,

Whose weakness, married to thy stronger state,

Makes me with thy strength to communicate.

170 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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

To me she speaks; she moves me for her theme.

175 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?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I never talked with her in my life.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Then how does she know our names? By magic?

ADRIANA

How distasteful! That a man of your stature would scheme

with his servant to upset me like this. It may be my fault that

you've been avoiding me, but don't make things worse by

treating me with contempt as well. I'll hang on your sleeve:

you're an elm tree, my husband, and I'm a vine. My weakness is

enhanced by your strength, which gives me the strength to say

this: the things that take you away from me are worthless—just

overgrown weeds in need of a trimming. They get into your

system and infect you, feeding off your confusion.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

She's talking to me. She's talking about me. What, was I

married to her in a dream? Or am I asleep now and imagining

all this? What is making our eyes and ears act so strangely?

Until I know for sure, I'll humor her.

Until I know this sure uncertainty
I'll entertain the offered fallacy.

LUCIANA

180 Dromio, go bid the servants spread for dinner.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

O, for my beads! I cross me for a sinner.
This is the fairy land. O spite of spites!

We talk with goblins, owls, and sprites:
If we obey them not, this will ensue:

185 They'll suck our breath, or pinch us black and blue.

LUCIANA

Why prat'st thou to thyself and answer'st not?
Dromio—thou, Dromio—thou snail, thou slug, thou sot.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I am transformèd, master, am I not?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

190 Nay, master, both in mind and in my shape.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

LUCIANA

Dromio, tell the servants to prepare for lunch.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Oh, I wish I had my rosary! I'll cross myself. This must be some
kind of fairyland. Oh, spite of spites! We're

speaking with goblins, owls, and demons. If we don't obey
them, they'll suck the life out of us or pinch us black and blue.

LUCIANA

Why are you mumbling to yourself instead of answering the
order I gave you? Dromio, you drone, you snail, you slug, you
idiot!

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I've been transformed somehow, haven't I, master?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I think your mind has been altered, and mine too.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

No, master, I've been changed in both mind and body.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Thou hast thine own form.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

No, I am an ape.

LUCIANA

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

'Tis true. She rides me, and I long for grass.

'Tis so. I am an ass; else it could never be

195 But I should know her as well as she knows me.

ADRIANA

Come, come, no longer will I be a fool,

To put the finger in the eye and weep

Whilst man and master laugh my woes to scorn.

Come, sir, to dinner.—Dromio, keep the gate. —

200 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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

205 Am I in earth, in heaven, or in hell?

Sleeping or waking, mad or well-advised?

Your body looks the same.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

No, I'm an [ape](#) .

LUCIANA

If you've changed into anything, it's an ass.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

That's true. She's riding me hard, and all I want to do is get out of here. I must be as stupid as an ass—that's why I don't know her, but she knows me.

ADRIANA

All right, all right. I won't play the fool anymore and just cry while my husband and his man laugh at me. Come, husband, let's go to lunch. Dromio, guard the door. Husband, I'll eat with you in private today and hear your confession about all the pranks you've pulled. [Sirrah](#) , if anyone asks where your master is, say he's out to lunch, and don't let anyone come in. Come, sister. Dromio, do a good job as doorkeeper.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Am I on earth, in heaven, or in hell? Asleep or awake? Crazy or sane? These people know me, but I don't

Known unto these, and to myself disguised!
I'll say as they say, and persevere so,
And in this mist at all adventures go.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

210 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

know myself! I'll agree with them and keep with it, whatever happens.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Master, should I watch the door?

ADRIANA

Yes, and don't let anyone come in, or else I'll break your head.

LUCIANA

Come come, Antipholus. We're late for lunch.

They exit.

Act 3 Scene 1

Enter ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS, DROMIO OF EPHESUS, ANGELO, and BALTHASAR

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Good Signior Angelo, you must excuse us all;
My wife is shrewish when I keep not hours.
Say that I lingered with you at your shop
To see the making of her carcanet,
5 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,

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS, DROMIO OF EPHESUS, ANGELO, and BALTHASAR enter.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Signior Angelo, please excuse us. My wife gets angry when I'm late. Here's the story we'll tell her: that I was with you at your shop, watching you make her necklace, and that you're going to deliver it tomorrow. But here comes a scoundrel who says he saw me at the marketplace and that I beat on him, told him I'd given him a thousand marks in gold, and then lied about my wife and my house. You drunkard, what was that all about?

And that I did deny my wife and house.—

10 Thou drunkard, thou, what didst thou mean by this?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Say what you will, sir, but I know what I know.

That you beat me at the mart I have your hand to show;

If the skin were parchment and the blows you gave were ink,

Your own handwriting would tell you what I think.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

15 I think thou art an ass.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

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,

You would keep from my heels and beware of an ass.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

You're sad, Signior Balthasar. Pray God our cheer

20 May answer my good will and your good welcome here.

BALTHASAR

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Say what you want, but I know what I know. You beat me at the marketplace, and I have the bruises to prove it. If my skin were paper and your punches were ink, you could read the beating on my body.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

I think you're an ass.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Honestly, it sure looks that way, judging by all the beatings and the bad treatment I'm getting. Since I'm an ass, I ought to kick like one. Then you'd be scared of me and keep away.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Signior Balthasar, you look upset. I hope the good meal I'm going to give you will show the goodwill I bear you and how welcome you are.

BALTHASAR

Your delicacies aren't worth as much to me as your welcome is.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

O Signior Balthasar, either at flesh or fish
A table full of welcome make scarce one dainty dish.

BALTHASAR

Good meat, sir, is common; that every churl affords.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

25 And welcome more common, for that's nothing but words.

BALTHASAR

Small cheer and great welcome makes a merry feast.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Ay, to a niggardly host and more sparing guest.
But though my cates be mean, take them in good part.
Better cheer may you have, but not with better heart.

30 But soft! My door is lock'd. (*to DROMIO*) Go, bid them let us in.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Maud, Bridget, Marian, Ciceley, Gillian, Ginn!

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

(*within*) 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.

Signior Balthasar, all the welcome in the world can't compare
to a good meal, whatever kind of food it might be.

BALTHASAR

Good food's not a big deal—everyone can afford that.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

And everyone can say "welcome," which is just a word.

BALTHASAR

A little food and a huge welcome makes a joyous feast.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Sure, to a cheap host and an even cheaper guest. But look,
even if my dishes are poor, eat them with my best wishes. You
may come across better food, but not a warmer welcome.
What's this? My door is locked. (*to DROMIO*) Tell them to let us
in.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Maud, Bridget, Marian, Ciceley, Gillian, Ginn!

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

(*from offstage*) Dope, moron, eunuch, fool, idiot, clown! Either
get away from the door or sit yourself down there! What, are
you trying to summon women with your spells—is that why
you're calling out so many names? Isn't one enough for you?
Get away with you!

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

What patch is made our porter? My master stays in the street.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

(within) Let him walk from whence he came, lest he catch cold on 's feet.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

40 Who talks within there? Ho, open the door.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

(within) Right, sir, I'll tell you when an you tell me wherefore.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Wherefore? For my dinner. I have not dined today.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

(within) Nor today here you must not. Come again when you may.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

What art thou that keep'st me out from the house I owe?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

45 *(within)* The porter for this time, sir, and my name is Dromio.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS**DROMIO OF EPHESUS**

What clown did they hire as the new doorkeeper? My master is standing out in the street!

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

(from offstage) Then he should go back where he came from so he doesn't catch a cold.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Who's in there? Hey, open the door!

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

(from offstage) Right. Give me one good reason and I will.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

A reason? So I can eat lunch. I haven't eaten today.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

(from offstage) And you won't eat here today. Come again some other time.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Who do you think you are, keeping me out of my own house?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

(from offstage) I'm the doorkeeper for the moment, and my name is Dromio.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

O villain, thou hast stolen both mine office and my name!
The one ne'er got me credit, the other mickle blame.
If thou hadst been Dromio today in my place,
Thou wouldst have changed thy face for a name, or thy name
for an ass.

LUCE

50 *(within)* What a coil is there, Dromio! Who are those at the gate?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Let my master in, Luce.

LUCE

(within) Faith, no, he comes too late,
And so tell your master.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

O Lord, I must laugh.
Have at you with a proverb: shall I set in my staff?

LUCE

(within) Have at you with another: that's—When, can you tell?

You jerk! You've stolen both my job and my name! True, the job never did me much good, and my name only ever got me in trouble. If you were the Dromio in my shoes today, you would have felt like you traded your head for a target and your name for the name of "Ass."

LUCE

In a later printing of the play, the character of Luce was renamed "Nell."

LUCE

(from offstage) What's all the commotion, Dromio? Who's at the door?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Luce, let my master in.

LUCE

(from offstage) No way, he's too late. Tell your master that.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Oh, Lord, this makes me laugh! I'll come at you with the old proverb: "Should I make myself at home?"

LUCE

(from offstage) I'll come at you with another: "I'd like to see you try it!"

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

(within) If thy name be called "Luce," Luce, thou hast answered him well.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Do you hear, you minion? You'll let us in, I hope?

LUCE

(within) I thought to have asked you.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

(within) And you said no.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

60 So, come, help. Well struck! There was blow for blow.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Thou baggage, let me in.

LUCE

(within) Can you tell for whose sake?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Master, knock the door hard.

LUCE

(within) Let him knock till it ache.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

(from offstage) If your name's Luce, then I say: Luce, good answer!

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Listen up, you slave. Are you going to let us in?

LUCE

(from offstage) I was going to ask you that question.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

(from offstage) But you already answered no.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Come, help me bang on the door, master. Well done! We answered them, blow for blow.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

You good-for-nothing, let me in.

LUCE

(from offstage) Says who?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Master, knock hard upon the door.

LUCE

(from offstage) He can knock till it hurts.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

You'll cry for this, minion, if I beat the door down.

LUCE

(within) What needs all that, and a pair of stocks in the town?

ADRIANA

65 *(within)* Who is that at the door that keeps all this noise?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

(within) By my troth, your town is troubled with unruly boys.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Are you there, wife? You might have come before.

ADRIANA

(within) Your wife, sir knave? Go, get you from the door.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

If you went in pain, master, this knave would go sore.

ANGELO

70 Here is neither cheer, sir, nor welcome. We would
fain have either.

BALTHASAR

In debating which was best, we shall part with neither.

If I break the door down, slave, you'll be sorry for this.

LUCE

(from offstage) Why are we putting up with all this? The town's got a pair of [stocks](#) .

ADRIANA

(from offstage) Who's making such a ruckus at the door?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

(from offstage) I swear, this town's plagued by troublesome boys.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Is that you, wife? You could have come sooner.

ADRIANA

(from offstage) Your wife, you scoundrel? Get away from the door.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

If she punishes you, master, she's sure to punish me.

ANGELO

It looks like we're not going to get food or welcome here.

BALTHASAR

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

They stand at the door, master. Bid them welcome hither.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

There is something in the wind, that we cannot get in.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

You would say so, master, if your garments were thin.

75 Your cake there is warm within; you stand here in the cold.
It would make a man mad as a buck to be so bought and sold.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Go, fetch me something: I'll break ope the gate.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

(within) Break any breaking here, and I'll break your knave's pate.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

A man may break a word with you, sir, and words are but wind,
Ay, and break it in your face, so he break it not behind.

We argued about which was best, and now we won't get either one.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Master, your guests are just standing here. Tell them they're welcome.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

There's something strange in the air that's keeping us from getting in.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

And if your clothes were as thin as mine, you'd really feel the air. The food inside is warm, but you're out here freezing. It would make any man as mad as a bull to be betrayed like this.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Go get me something I can use to break down the door.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

(from offstage) Break anything here and I'll break your head.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

I'll break words with you, sir. And since words are just wind, I'll be breaking wind right in your face.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

(within) It seems thou want'st breaking. Out upon thee, hind!

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Here's too much "out upon thee!" I pray thee, let me in.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

(within) Ay, when fowls have no feathers and fish have no fin.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Well, I'll break in. Go, borrow me a crow.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

A crow without feather? Master, mean you so?

For a fish without a fin, there's a fowl without a feather.—

(to DROMIO OF SYRACUSE) If a crow help us in, sirrah, we'll pluck a crow together.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

⁹⁰ Go, get thee gone. Fetch me an iron crow.

BALTHASAR

Have patience, sir. O, let it not be so.

Herein you war against your reputation,

And draw within the compass of suspect

Th' unviolated honor of your wife.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

(from offstage) It seems you're the one who needs to be broken. Be off with you, you dog!

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

I've had enough of this "off with you!" Come on, let me in!

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

(from offstage) Of course—when birds have no feathers and fish have no fins.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Well, I'm going to break in. Go get me a crow.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

A crow without feathers? Master, do you really mean that? He said "when fish have no fins," and you came back with a bird with no feathers. *(to DROMIO OF SYRACUSE)* If a crow gets us in, sirrah, then you and I will have a [crow to pluck together](#).

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

I meant a crowbar. Get going already.

BALTHASAR

Be patient, sir! Don't do this! This will hurt your reputation and make your wife, who's innocent, look suspicious. Look, you've known her a long time. She's wise, serious, mature, and modest. All this suggests that she has a good reason for doing

95 Once this: your long experience of her wisdom,
Her sober virtue, years, and modesty
Plead on her part some cause to you unknown.
And doubt not, sir, but she will well excuse
Why at this time the doors are made against you.
100 Be ruled by me; depart in patience,
And let us to the Tiger all to dinner,
And about evening come yourself alone
To know the reason of this strange restraint.
If by strong hand you offer to break in
105 Now in the stirring passage of the day,
A vulgar comment will be made of it;
And that supposed by the common rout
Against your yet ungallèd estimation
That may with foul intrusion enter in
110 And dwell upon your grave when you are dead;
For slander lives upon succession,
Forever housèd where it gets possession.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

You have prevailed. I will depart in quiet
And, in despite of mirth, mean to be merry.
115 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—

this to you. Let's assume that she has a reason, which you don't know yet: have faith that she'll eventually explain why she shut the doors on you today. Listen to me. Be patient and leave, and we'll all go to the Tiger for lunch. In the evening, come back alone and figure out this strange resistance. If you get violent and break in now, in broad daylight, people will talk about it. The common mob will presume things, and your untarnished reputation will be damaged—and that damage will last long after you're dead. Slander passes from generation to generation, and once it sticks to a family, it's there forever.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

You're right—I'll go quietly. And even though I'm in a distasteful mood, I'll work on being happy. I know a terrific wench. She's beautiful and charming—a little wild, but also gentle. We'll eat at her place. My wife has accused me more than once of misbehaving with this woman. I swear to her that I haven't, but it doesn't change anything. We'll go to her place for lunch. *(to*

Hath oftentimes upbraided me withal;
120 To her will we to dinner. (to ANGELO) Get you home
And fetch the chain; by this I know 'tis made.
Bring it, I pray you, to the Porpentine,
For there's the house. That chain will I bestow—
Be it for nothing but to spite my wife—
125 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.

ANGELO

I'll meet you at that place some hour hence.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Do so. This jest shall cost me some expense.

Exeunt

Enter LUCIANA and 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?
5 If you did wed my sister for her wealth,
Then for her wealth's sake use her with more kindness.

ANGELO) Go get the necklace, which I'm sure is done by now.
Bring it to the Porcupine, where this woman is. I'll to give it to
her, just to spite my wife. Hurry, good sir. Since my own doors
refuse to admit me, I'll knock somewhere else and see if they
turn me away as well.

ANGELO

I'll meet you there in an hour.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Do that. This little prank of hers is going to cost me.

They exit.

Act 3 Scene 2

LUCIANA and ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE enter.

LUCIANA

Have you completely forgotten your duty as a husband?
Antipholus, your marriage is still fresh and new, like the
springtime—have the young shoots of your love already
started to wither? Is the building of your love already in ruins? If
you married my sister for her wealth, then for her wealth's
sake, treat her with more kindness. Or if your affection has

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;
10 Be not thy tongue thy own shame's orator;
Look sweet, be 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.
15 Be secret-false. What need she be acquainted?
What simple thief brags of his own attainment?
'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;
20 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.
25 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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Sweet mistress—what your name is else I know not,
30 Nor by what wonder you do hit of mine,—

already strayed to another woman, at least be stealthy about it.
Hide your false love, blindfold yourself so my sister cannot
read your faithlessness in your eyes. Watch what you say, and
don't let your own words give away your shame. Look sweet
and act kindly—be attractive in your disloyalty. Disguise your
misbehavior as integrity, and behave properly even if your
heart is tainted. Though you are sinful, carry yourself like a holy
saint. Be false in secret: why does she need to know? What
foolish thief brags about his crimes? It's doubly wrong to cheat
on your wife and then let her see the offense in your eyes.
When you do something shameful, it's possible to put a good
spin on it, but bad deeds are made worse by speaking of them.
Alas, poor women! We're so gullible, we believe it when you
say you love us. Even if you love someone else in your heart,
make it appear as if you love us. We follow in your orbit, and
you have the power to move us. So, my sweet brother-in-law,
go inside. Comfort my sister, cheer her up, call her "wife." It's a
holy thing to lie a little when sweet flattery can smooth over
trouble.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Sweet mistress—I don't know what other name to give you, or
how you've figured out mine—you seem as

Less in your knowledge and your grace you show not
Than our earth's wonder, more than earth divine.
Teach me, dear creature, how to think and speak.
Lay open to my earthy gross conceit,
35 Smothered in errors, feeble, shallow, weak,
The folded meaning of your words' deceit.
Against my soul's pure truth why labour you
To make it wander in an unknown field?
Are you a god? would you create me new?
40 Transform me, then, and to your power I'll yield.
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.
Far more, far more, to you do I decline.
45 O, train me not, sweet mermaid, with thy note
To drown me in thy sister's flood of tears.
Sing, Siren, for thyself, and I will dote.
Spread o'er the silver waves thy golden hairs,
And as a bed I'll take them and there lie,
50 And in that glorious supposition think
He gains by death that hath such means to die.
Let Love, being light, be drownèd if she sink.

LUCIANA

What, are you mad that you do reason so?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

wise and graceful as the earth is wonderful and divine. Teach me how I should think and speak. My understanding is clumsy and human, riddled with errors—it is feeble, shallow, and weak. Reveal to me the hidden meaning of your words. Why would you have me betray the truth of my emotions and make my love wander in some other direction? Are you a god? Are you trying to remake me? Go ahead, I'll yield to your power. But if I am myself, then I know for sure that your weeping sister is not my wife. I don't owe her any duty—it's you that I submit to. Oh, sweet mermaid, don't command me to drown myself in the flood of your sister's tears. [Siren](#), use your song to make me love you instead, and I will obey. Spread your golden hair over the silver waves, and I will lie down in it like a bed. If a man could [die](#) in that glorious fantasy, then I think he would benefit by dying. Love is light and therefore floats—if my love is false, let me sink!

LUCIANA

Are you insane, talking like this?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Not mad, but mated—how, I do not know.

LUCIANA

55 It is a fault that springeth from your eye.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

For gazing on your beams, fair sun, being by.

LUCIANA

Gaze where you should, and that will clear your sight.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

As good to wink, sweet love, as look on night.

LUCIANA

Why call you me "love"? Call my sister so.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

60 Thy sister's sister.

LUCIANA

That's my sister.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

No,

It is thyself, mine own self's better part,

Mine eye's clear eye, my dear heart's dearer heart,

Not insane, but amazed. I don't know how.

LUCIANA

Your eyes are playing tricks on you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

That's because you are near me, and you're as dazzling as the sun.

LUCIANA

Train your eye on what you should be looking at, and you'll see straight again.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Sweet love, I'd rather close my eyes than look at darkness.

LUCIANA

Why are you calling me "love"? Call my sister that.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Your sister's sister.

LUCIANA

That's my sister.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

No, it's you: my better half. My eye's clear vision, my heart's most precious desire. My food, my fortune, my sweetest hope, my heaven on earth, and my entrance to heaven.

My food, my fortune, and my sweet hope's aim,
My sole earth's heaven, and my heaven's claim.

LUCIANA

65 All this my sister is, or else should be.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Call thyself "sister," sweet, for I am thee.
Thee will I love and with thee lead my life;
Thou hast no husband yet, nor I no wife.
Give me thy hand.

LUCIANA

O soft, sir! Hold you still.
70 I'll fetch my sister to get her goodwill.

Exit LUCIANA

Enter DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Why, how now, Dromio. Where runn'st thou so fast?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Do you know me, sir? Am I Dromio? Am I your man? Am I myself?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Thou art Dromio, thou art my man, thou art thyself.

LUCIANA

My sister is all those things, or else she should be.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Call yourself your own sister, because I want you. I will love you, and with you I'll spend my life. You have no husband yet, and I have no wife. Give me your hand.

LUCIANA

Oh, wait, sir. Stay here. I'll go get my sister and see what she thinks.

LUCIANA exits.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE enters.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What's going on, Dromio? Where are you running so fast?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Do you know me? Am I Dromio? Am I your servant? Am I myself?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

You are Dromio, you are my servant, and you are yourself.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

75 I am an ass, I am a woman's man, and besides myself.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What woman's man? And how besides thyself?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Marry, sir, besides myself I am due to a woman, one that claims me, one that haunts me, one that will have me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What claim lays she to thee?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

80 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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What is she?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

85 A very reverent body, ay, such a one as a man may not speak of without he say "sir-reverence." I have but lean luck in the match, and yet is she a wondrous fat marriage.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I'm an ass, I'm a woman's servant, and I'm beside myself.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What woman's servant? What do you mean, beside yourself?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I'll tell you. Besides belonging to myself, I belong to a woman. A woman who says she owns me, who won't leave me alone, and who wants me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

How does she claim to own you?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

The same way a person would claim to own his horse. And she wants me as a beast. I don't mean that she wants me because *I'm* a beast, but that she, who is a beast, says I belong to her.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What's she like?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

She has a very significant body. You couldn't even talk about it without saying, "[I beg your pardon.](#)" My luck would be running thin if I ended up with her, although she'd make it a fat marriage.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

How dost thou mean a "fat marriage"?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Marry, sir, she's the kitchen wench, and all grease, and I know not what use to put her to but to 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 Poland winter. If she lives till doomsday, she'll burn a week longer than the whole world.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What complexion is she of?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

⁹⁵ Swart like my shoe, but her face nothing like so clean kept.
For why? She sweats. A man may go overshoes in the grime of it.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

That's a fault that water will mend.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

No, sir, 'tis in grain; Noah's flood could not do it.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

¹⁰⁰ What's her name?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What do you mean, a fat marriage?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Sir, she works in the kitchen, so she's oily. The only thing I could do with her is to use all that oil as fuel in a lamp and then use that light to run away by. Her

clothes are so oily, they'd burn through the longest winter. Even if she lives till the end of the world, she'd keep burning an additional week.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What's her skin like?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

It's dark, like my shoe. But it's not as clean. You'd be up to your ankles in how filthy it is.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Some water will fix that.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

No, it's permanent. Noah's flood wouldn't be enough water to clean it.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What's her name?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Nell, sir, but her name and three quarters—that's an ell and three quarters—will not measure her from hip to hip.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Then she bears some breadth?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

No longer from head to foot than from hip to hip. She is spherical, like a globe. I could find out countries in her.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

In what part of her body stands Ireland?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Marry, sir, in her buttocks. I found it out by the bogs.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Where Scotland?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I found it by the barrenness; hard in the palm of the hand.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

¹¹⁰ Where France?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Nell. But an [ell](#) and three-quarters wouldn't be long enough to measure her waist.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

So she's wide?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Her hips are as wide as she is tall. She's round, like a globe. I could use her like a map to find out where countries are.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What part of her body is Ireland?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Her bottom. It's near the [bogs](#) .

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Where's Scotland?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

In the palm of her hand, which is covered in [calluses](#) .

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Where's France?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

In her forehead, armed and reverted, making war against her heir.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Where England?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I looked for the chalky cliffs, but I could find no whiteness in them. But I guess it stood in her chin, by the salt rheum that ran between France and it.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Where Spain?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Faith, I saw it not, but I felt it hot in her breath.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Where America, the Indies?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

¹²⁰ O, sir, upon her nose, all o'er-embellished with rubies, carbuncles, sapphires, declining their rich aspect to the hot breath of Spain, who sent whole armadas of caracks to be ballast at her nose.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Where stood Belgia, the Netherlands?

In her [forehead](#) , which is enormous because of her receding hairline.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Where's England?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I thought her teeth might be like the [white cliffs](#) , but they're dark and stained. So I guess it's her chin, which is separated from her forehead by all the sweat on her face.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Where's Spain?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Honestly, I didn't see it, but I felt it in her hot breath.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Where's America and the West Indies?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Oh, sir, on her nose, which is covered with pimples, sores, and red welts. It points straight down at her mouth, which catches everything that drips from it.
[exotic jewels](#)

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Where's Belgium and the [Netherlands](#) ?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

125 O, sir, I did not look so low. To conclude: this drudge or diviner laid claim to me, call'd me Dromio, swore I was assured to her, told me what privy marks I had about me, as the mark of my 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 curtal dog and made me turn i' th' wheel.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Go, hie thee presently. Post to the road.
An if the wind blow any way from shore,
135 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 every one knows us, and we know none,
'Tis time, I think, to trudge, pack, and be gone.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

Exit DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

There's none but witches do inhabit here,
And therefore 'tis high time that I were hence.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Oh, sir, I didn't look down there. In conclusion, this witch said I was hers. She called me Dromio and swore I'd promised to marry her. She knew private things about my body, like the birthmark on my shoulder, the mole on my neck, and the huge wart on my left arm. I was terrified, and I ran away from her as if she were a witch. And I think that if I hadn't been brave and strong, she would have turned me into a dog and made me her slave.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Get going—hustle over to the port. If there's enough wind for a ship to sail out tonight, I won't spend tonight in this town. If a ship's leaving, come to the marketplace. I'll wait there for you. If everyone here knows us but we don't know anybody, it's time, I think, for us to pack our bags and take off.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I'll run from this woman who claims to be my wife as fast as I'd run from a bear.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE exits.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Everyone who lives here is a witch. That means it's high time for me to go. That woman who claims I am her husband—I

She that doth call me husband, even my soul
145 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,
150 I'll stop mine ears against the mermaid's song.

Enter ANGELO with the chain

ANGELO

Master Antipholus.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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 Porpentine;
The chain unfinished made me stay thus long.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

155 What is your will that I shall do with this?

ANGELO

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

loathe her in my soul. But her gorgeous sister, who's so lovely
and gracious, who's so charming and who speaks so well,

almost makes me want to stay here against my better
judgment. I'd better stop up my ears against this siren's song.

ANGELO enters, with the necklace.

ANGELO

Master Antipholus—

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Yes, that's my name.

ANGELO

I know that, sir. Look, here's the necklace.
I was on my way to take it to you at the Porcupine, but it took a
little longer to finish than I thought it would.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What do you want me to do with this?

ANGELO

Whatever you want—I made it for you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Made it for me, sir? I bespoke it not.

ANGELO

Not once, nor twice, but twenty times you have.

Go home with it and please your wife withal,

160 And soon at supper time I'll visit you

And then receive my money for the chain.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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.

Exit ANGELO

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

165 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.

170 I'll to the mart, and there for Dromio stay.

If any ship put out, then straight away.

Exit

Made it for me? I didn't order it.

ANGELO

You did—not just once or twice, but twenty times. Take it home

and make your wife happy. I'll come over at suppertime and

you can pay me for it then.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

You should take the money now. If you don't, you might never

see the money or the necklace ever again.

ANGELO

You're a funny man, sir. Take care.

ANGELO exits.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I don't know what to think about this. But what I do think is that

nobody in his right mind would refuse to accept such a

beautiful necklace when somebody offers it. I

guess there's no need to be a thief in Ephesus.

People come up to you in the street and hand you gold. I'll go

wait for Dromio at the marketplace. If any ships are sailing, I'll

get right on one.

He exits.

Act 4 Scene 1

*Enter **SECOND MERCHANT, ANGELO** and an **OFFICER***

SECOND MERCHANT

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.

5 Therefore make present satisfaction,
Or I'll attach you by this officer.

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,
10 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.

*Enter **ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS** and **DROMIO OF EPHESUS**
from the **COURTESAN'S** house*

COURTESAN'S OFFICER

That labor may you save. See where he comes.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

*The **SECOND MERCHANT, ANGELO**, and an **OFFICER** enter.*

SECOND MERCHANT

You've owed me this money since the Pentecost holiday. I
haven't pressed you for it, and I wouldn't now except that I'm
going to Persia and I need money for the trip. So pay me now,
or I'll have this officer arrest you.

ANGELO

Antipholus owes me the exact amount that I owe you. Just
before I ran into you, I gave him a necklace. At five o'clock he's
going to pay me for it. Please, come to his house with me. I'll
pay what I owe you then and say thank you as well.

***ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS** and **DROMIO OF EPHESUS** enter
from the **COURTESAN'S** house.*

OFFICER

He saves you the trouble: look, here he comes.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

15 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.
20 Buy thou a rope, and bring it home to me.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

I buy a thousand pound a year! I buy a rope!

Exit DROMIO OF EPHESUS

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

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

ANGELO

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,
30 Which doth amount to three-odd ducats more
Than I stand debted to this gentleman.
I pray you, see him presently discharged,
For he is bound to sea, and stays but for it.

(to DROMIO) I'm going to the jeweler's house. You go buy a
piece of rope—I'll whip my wife and her cohorts for locking me
out of my own house. Wait a minute! I see the jeweler. Go, be
gone with you. Buy a rope and bring it to me.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

I buy myself a thousand beatings a year if I buy a rope.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS exits.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

(to ANGELO) Good luck to any man who trusts you. I swore that
you would come with the necklace, but neither you nor the
necklace showed up. Perhaps you were concerned about
being chained to me and so decided not to come.

ANGELO

All joking aside, here's an invoice spelling out exactly how
many carats the necklace weighs as well as the quality of the
gold and the workmanship. The total due is about three ducats
more than I owe this gentleman. Please, pay him immediately.
He's about to leave on a trip and he's waiting for the money.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

I am not furnished with the present money.

35 Besides, I have some business in the town.

Good signior, 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

40 Then you will bring the chain to her yourself.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

ANGELO

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

ANGELO

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Good Lord! You use this dalliance to excuse

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

I don't have the cash right now. Besides, I have some business
to take care of in town. Good signior, take this stranger to my
house. Bring the necklace with you, and tell my wife to pay you
the amount due. I might make it back in time to meet you.

ANGELO

So you'll bring the necklace to her yourself?

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

No. You bring it in case I can't make it.

ANGELO

All right, sir, I will. Do you have it with you?

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

If I don't, I hope you do. Or else you'll leave without your
money.

ANGELO

Listen, please, give me the necklace. This gentleman's ready
to go. The wind is right and it's high tide, and I've delayed him a
long time already.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Your breach of promise to the Porpentine.
50 I should have chid you for not bringing it,
But, like a shrew, you first begin to brawl.

SECOND MERCHANT

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

ANGELO

You hear how he importunes me. The chain!

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

ANGELO

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

SECOND MERCHANT

My business cannot brook this dalliance.
60 (to ANTIPHOLUS) Good sir, say whe'er you'll answer me or no.
If not, I'll leave him to the Officer.

Good Lord! You're using this as an excuse for not showing up at the Porcupine like you promised. I should have reprimanded you then for not bringing it, but you started fighting with me first.

SECOND MERCHANT

It's getting late. Please, sir, hurry up.

ANGELO

Antipholus, you hear how the man pleads with me. Give me the necklace!

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Give it to my wife, and get your money.

ANGELO

Come, come. You know I gave it to you just now. Send the necklace to her, or send me with a token that will authorize her to pay me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Damn it, this isn't funny. Where's the necklace? Let me see it.

SECOND MERCHANT

My business cannot wait for this delay. (to ANTIPHOLUS) Good sir, tell me if you're going to pay me. If not, I'll turn this man over to the officer.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

I answer you? What should I answer you?

ANGELO

The money that you owe me for the chain.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

I owe you none till I receive the chain.

ANGELO

65 You know I gave it you half an hour since.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

ANGELO

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

SECOND MERCHANT

Well, officer, arrest him at my suit.

OFFICER

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

ANGELO

This touches me in reputation.
Either consent to pay this sum for me,

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Pay you? What should I pay you?

ANGELO

The money you owe me for the necklace.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

I owe you nothing until I receive the necklace.

ANGELO

You know that I gave it to you a half hour ago.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

You gave me nothing, and you wrong me by saying you did.

ANGELO

You wrong me even more, sir, by denying it. Consider how poorly this reflects on me.

SECOND MERCHANT

Well, officer, I charge you to arrest him.

OFFICER

I will. (to ANGELO) And I order you to obey me, in the name of the duke.

ANGELO

This harms my reputation. Either pay this sum, Antipholus, or I'll have this officer arrest you.

Or I attach you by this officer.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Consent to pay thee that I never had?—

75 Arrest me, foolish fellow, if thou dar'st.

ANGELO

Here is thy fee. Arrest him, officer.

I would not spare my brother in this case

If he should scorn me so apparently.

OFFICER

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

80 I do obey thee till I give thee bail.

But, sirrah, you shall buy this sport as dear

As all the metal in your shop will answer.

ANGELO

Sir, sir, I will have law in Ephesus,

To your notorious shame, I doubt it not.

Enter DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

85 Master, there is a bark of Epidamnum

That stays but till her owner comes aboard,

And then, sir, she bears away. Our fraughtage, sir,

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Pay for something I never got? Go ahead, you fool. Arrest me if you dare.

ANGELO

Officer, here's your fee—arrest him. I would have my own brother arrested if he treated me so terribly.

OFFICER

You're under arrest, sir. You hear the charges.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

I'll obey you until I can make bail. But Angelo, you'll pay for this, even if it costs all the precious metals in your jewelry shop.

ANGELO

Sir, the laws of Ephesus will be on my side, and you'll be embarrassed. I'm certain of it.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE enters.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Master, there's a ship from Epidamnum that's going to set sail as soon as its owner gets on board. I've left our luggage on the ship, and I bought the oil, balm, and liquor you wanted. The

I have conveyed aboard, and I have bought
The oil, the balsamum and aqua vitae.

90 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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

95 A ship you sent me to, to hire waftage.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

100 I will debate this matter at more leisure
And teach your ears to list me with more heed.
To Adriana, villain, hie thee straight.
Give her this key, and tell her in the desk
That's cover'd o'er with Turkish tapestry
105 There is a purse of ducats. Let her send it.

ship is ready, the wind is up, and the sailors are only waiting for
their owner and for you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

What are you, a madman? You annoying idiot, what
Epidamnum ship is waiting for me?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

A ship you sent me to find, to book passage out of here.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

You drunken slave, I sent you for a rope, and I told you what to
do with it.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Yeah, right—you sent me to get whipped. You sent me to the
port to find a ship.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

I'll debate this with you later, and then I'll teach you to listen
more carefully. Go to Adriana, you scoundrel, and quickly. Give
her this key, and tell her that there's money in the desk that's
covered with a Turkish tapestry. Have her send it to me. Tell her
that I've been arrested and the money will be my bail. Hurry,

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 **SECOND MERCHANT, ANGELO, OFFICER, and**
ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

To Adriana. That is where we dined,
110 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

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?
5 What observation mad'st thou in this case
Of his heart's meteors tilting in his face?

LUCIANA

you slave! Go! Officer, take me to prison until the money comes.

SECOND MERCHANT, ANGELO, OFFICER, and ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS *exit.*

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

To Adriana? That's where we had lunch. Where that
"sweetheart" said I was her husband! She's too much for me to
handle. But I must go there, against my will: servants must
fulfill their masters' wishes.

He exits.

Act 4 Scene 2

ADRIANA and LUCIANA *enter.*

ADRIANA

Oh, Luciana, did he tempt you like that? Could you tell from his
face if he was serious? Yes or no? Did he look flushed or pale?
Sad or happy? Could you tell from his looks what he was
feeling in his heart?

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

10 And true he swore, though yet forsworn 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.
15 First he did praise my beauty, then my speech.

First, he said you had no right to him.

ADRIANA

He meant he did nothing right for me—which is true,
unfortunately.

LUCIANA

Then he swore he was a stranger here.

ADRIANA

And that's true—he *is* being strange. And yet he lies as well, for
he's no stranger.

LUCIANA

Then I pleaded for you.

ADRIANA

And what did he say?

LUCIANA

That he felt for me the love that I begged him to feel for you.

ADRIANA

How did he try to persuade you to love him?

LUCIANA

With words that—if they were spoken honestly—might have
moved me. First, he praised my beauty, then my eloquence.

ADRIANA

Did'st speak him fair?

LUCIANA

Have patience, I beseech.

ADRIANA

I cannot, nor I will not hold me still;
My tongue, though not my heart, shall have his will.
He is deformèd, crooked, old, and sere,
20 Ill-faced, worse-bodied, shapeless everywhere,
Vicious, ungentle, foolish, blunt, unkind,
Stigmatical in making, worse in mind.

LUCIANA

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

ADRIANA

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

Enter DROMIO OF SYRACUSE, running

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ADRIANA

Did you praise him as well?

LUCIANA

Have some patience, please.

ADRIANA

I cannot and I will not keep quiet. My voice will have its way,
even if my heart can't. He is misshapen, crooked, old, and
withered. His face is ugly, and his body is even worse—all
shapeless, everywhere. He is vicious, mean, foolish, blunt,
unkind. His body is deformed, and his mind is worse.

LUCIANA

Then why be jealous of a person like that? When an evil thing
has been lost, no one cries.

ADRIANA

Oh, but I think of him more highly than I say I do—and I wish he
looked worse in other women's eyes. I'm like a lapwing,
creating a diversion in order to distract predators from my nest.
My heart adores him, even though my tongue curses him.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE enters, running.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Here! Go! The desk! Money! Come on, now! Hurry!

LUCIANA

30 How hast thou lost thy breath?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

By running fast.

ADRIANA

Where is thy master, Dromio? Is he well?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

No, he's in Tartar limbo, worse than hell.

A devil in an everlasting garment hath him,

One whose hard heart is buttoned up with steel;

35 A fiend, a fury, pitiless and rough;

A wolf, nay, worse, a fellow all in buff;

A back-friend, a shoulder clapper, one that countermands

The passages of alleys, creeks, and narrow lands;

A hound that runs counter and yet draws dryfoot well,

40 One that before the judgment carries poor souls to hell.

ADRIANA

Why, man, what is the matter?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ADRIANA

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

LUCIANA

How did you lose your breath?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

By running fast.

ADRIANA

Where's your master, Dromio? Is he all right?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

No, he's in a place worse than hell. A devil in a tough uniform has him—a man whose heart is as hard as steel. A fiend and a goblin, pitiless and rough. A wolf—no, even worse—a man all in tough leather. A backbiting friend, one who grabs people, who patrols the streets and passageways. A hunting dog that runs in

the opposite direction of its prey, yet can follow the scent of the hunt. A man who puts people away before the verdict is announced.

ADRIANA

Speak, man, what's the matter?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I don't know what the matter is, but he's been arrested for it.

ADRIANA

What? He's been arrested? Tell me, who had him arrested?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I know not at whose suit he is arrested well,

45 But he's 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?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

50 Not on a band, but on a stronger thing:
A chain, a chain. Do you not hear it ring?

ADRIANA

What, the chain?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I don't know who had him arrested, but the man that arrested
him was in a suit of leather. Mistress, will you send him bail?
The money in the desk?

ADRIANA

Get it, sister.

LUCIANA exits.

I don't understand it. How could he be in debt without me
knowing it? Tell me, was he arrested because of a [band](#) ?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Not for a band, but for something stronger: a necklace, a
necklace! Don't you hear it ring?

ADRIANA

What, the necklace?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

No, no, the bell. It's time for me to go. It was two o'clock when I
left him, and now it's one.

ADRIANA

Time's running backward? I've never heard of that.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

55 O yes, if any hour meet a sergeant, he turns back for
very fear.

ADRIANA

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Time is a very bankrout 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?

60 If he be in debt and theft, and a sergeant in the way,
Hath he not reason to turn back an hour in a day?

Re-enter LUCIANA with a purse

ADRIANA

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

Come, sister, I am pressed down with conceit:

65 Conceit, my comfort and my injury.

Exeunt

Enter ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Oh, sure. When an hour meets a cop, it turns and runs in fear.

ADRIANA

Time's not the one in debt. Your logic is so foolish.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Time is always bankrupt: it owes more than it can ever pay
back in a season. And Time's a thief, too—don't you know the
old saying, "Time steals along"? So if Time is in debt and also a
thief, and a cop comes, don't you think Time would turn back
an hour?

LUCIANA returns with a purse full of money.

ADRIANA

Here's the money, Dromio. Take it to your master and bring him
home immediately. Come, sister, my imagination is too much
for me: it both comforts me and depresses me.

They exit.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE enters.

Act 4 Scene 3

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

There's not a man I meet but doth salute me

As if I were their well-acquainted friend,

And every one doth call me by my name.

Some tender money to me; some invite me;

5 Some other give me thanks for kindnesses;

Some offer me commodities to buy.

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.

10 Sure, these are but imaginary wiles,

And lapland sorcerers inhabit here.

Enter DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What gold is this? What Adam dost thou mean?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

15 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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Every person I meet greets me like an old friend, and every one of them knows my name. Some of them give me money, some invite me places, some thank me for the kind things I've done for them, some try to sell me things. Just now a tailor showed me fabrics he bought especially for me and then started to take my measurements. These are tricks of the imagination, and this place is filled with magicians.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE enters.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Here's the money you wanted, master. Hey, have you gotten rid of that [Adam](#) ?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What gold is this? Who's this Adam you speak of?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Not the Adam from the garden of Eden, but the Adam from the jailhouse. The one that wears leather clothes. The one that grabbed you and arrested you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I understand thee not.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

20 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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

25 What, thou meanest an officer?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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."

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Well, sir, there rest in your foolery. Is there any ships put forth tonight? May we be gone?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I don't know what you're talking about.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

No? It's plain enough. The Adam who looks like a cello, in a big leather case. The one who gives tired people "arrest." The one who gives ruined men new suits—law suits. The one who's determined to do more damage with his nightstick than a soldier does with his pike.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

You mean an officer?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Yes, the leader of the team; the one that gets you if you can't pay a debt; the one who assumes people are always going to bed and says to them, "Have arrest."

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Well, sir, stop your joking there. Are any ships leaving tonight? Can we go?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Why, sir, I told you an hour ago that the good ship *Expedition* was leaving tonight, but then the officer got you, and you decided to wait for the little rowboat *Delay*. Here's the bail money you sent me to get.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

35 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 Antipholus.
I see, sir, you have found the goldsmith now.
40 Is that the chain you promised me today?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Master, is this Mistress Satan?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

It is the devil.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

This fellow's gone mad, and so have I. We're in some kind of dream world. Please, somebody, get us out of here!

A COURTESAN enters.

COURTESAN

Good to see you, Master Antipholus. I see you've met with the jeweler. Is that chain you're wearing the one you promised to give to me?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Get away from me, Satan! Don't try to tempt me!

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Master, is this Satan's mistress?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

She's the devil.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

No, she's worse: she's the devil's mother, and she comes to us disguised as an easy wench. And that's why some women say, "God damn me," which is the same thing as saying, "God make me an easy wench." The Bible says the devil looks like an angel of light. But fire also gives off light, and fire will burn you. In

COURTESAN

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Why, Dromio?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

(to 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

60 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.

other words, easy wenches will burn you. Keep away from this one.

COURTESAN

You and your servant are very funny, sir. Will you come with me? Can we finish our lunch?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Master, if you eat with her, bring really long silverware.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Why, Dromio?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Because of the old saying: "He who eats with the devil needs a very long spoon." You need to keep far away from them.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

(to COURTESAN) Get away, you demon! You talk about eating? You're a sorceress, like everyone else here. I'll conjure you, like a spell: get away from me.

COURTESAN

Give me back the ring I gave you at lunch, or give me the necklace you promised in exchange. Then I'll be gone, sir, and stop troubling you.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Avaunt, thou witch!—Come, Dromio, let us go.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

70 "Fly pride," says the peacock. Mistress, that you know.

Exeunt ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE and DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

COURTESAN

Now, out of doubt Antipholus is mad;
Else would he never so demean himself.
A ring he hath of mine worth forty ducats,
And for the same he promised me a chain.
75 Both one and other he denies me now.
The reason that I gather he is mad,

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Some devils ask for nothing more than nail clippings, a hair, a drop of blood, a pin, a nut, or a cherry pit. But this one's greedy: she wants a necklace. Be wise, master. If you give it to her, she'll shake the chain and frighten us, like the angel in the Bible.

COURTESAN

Now listen, either give me my ring or give me the necklace. I hope you're not trying to cheat me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Be gone, witch! Come, Dromio, let's go.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Accusing us of cheating is like the proud peacock accusing someone else of pride. Mistress, you know about that.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE and DROMIO OF SYRACUSE exit.

COURTESAN

Antipholus has gone insane, no question about it. If not, he'd never behave like this. He has a ring of mine, worth forty ducats, and he promised to give me a necklace in exchange for it. Now he won't give me either. The reason I think he's insane, besides the way he just acted, is that he told a senseless story over lunch about being locked out of his own

Besides this present instance of his rage,
Is a mad tale he told today at dinner
Of his own doors being shut against his entrance.
80 Belike his wife, acquainted with his fits,
On purpose shut the doors against his way.
My way is now to hie home to his house
And tell his wife that, being lunatic,
He rushed into my house and took perforce
85 My ring away. This course I fittest choose,
For forty ducats is too much to lose.

Exit

house. His wife probably did it on purpose because she knows what kind of fits he's having. I must go to his house and tell his wife that he came bursting into my place like a lunatic and stole my ring. It's my best option: I can't afford to lose forty ducats.

She exits.

Act 4 Scene 4

Enter ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS and the OFFICER

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Fear me not, man. I will not break away:
I'll give thee, ere I leave thee, so much money,
To warrant thee, as I am 'rested for.
My wife is in a wayward mood today
5 And will not lightly trust the messenger
That I should be attached in Ephesus.
I tell you, 'twill sound harshly in her ears.

Enter DROMIO OF EPHESUS with a rope's end

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS enters with the OFFICER.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Don't worry, man, I won't try to escape. When it's time for me to be freed, I'll pay you the fee you're entitled to for arresting me. My wife's in a perverse mood today. She'll be suspicious when the messenger tells her that I was arrested. I tell you, this will make her angry when she hears about it.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS enters, holding a length of rope.

Here comes my man. I think he brings the money.
How now, sir? Have you that I sent you for?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

10 Here's that, I warrant you, will pay them all.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

But where's the money?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Why, sir, I gave the money for the rope.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Five hundred ducats, villain, for a rope?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

I'll serve you, sir, five hundred at the rate.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

15 To what end did I bid thee hie thee home?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

To a rope's end, sir, and to that end am I returned.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

And to that end, sir, I will welcome you. *(beats DROMIO OF EPHESUS)*

OFFICER

Here's my servant. I think he's got the money. Hello there, sir!
Do you have what I told you to get?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Yes. And this rope will take care of everybody, I guarantee it.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

But where's the money?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Why, sir, I spent it on this rope.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

You idiot! Five hundred ducats for a rope?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

I can get you five hundred ropes for that price.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Why did I just send you home?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

To get a piece of rope. And here I am, with that piece.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

And I'll use that piece of rope to welcome you with. *(beats DROMIO OF EPHESUS)*

OFFICER

Good sir, be patient.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Nay, 'tis for me to be patient. I am in adversity.

OFFICER

20 Good now, hold thy tongue.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Nay, rather persuade him to hold his hands.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Thou whoreson, senseless villain.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

I would I were senseless, sir, that I might not feel your blows.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

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

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

25 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

Good sir, calm down.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

You should tell me to calm down—I'm the one who's suffering here.

OFFICER

Hold your tongue.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

No, you should tell him to hold his hands!

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

You son of a bitch, senseless villain!

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

I wish I were senseless, sir, so that I wouldn't feel your punches!

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

The only thing you can sense are punches—just like an ass.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

I am an ass, indeed: you can tell by my long ears. I've served this man from the moment I was born until this very instant, and all I've ever gotten from him are bruises. When I'm cold, his beatings keep me warm. When I'm hot, they keep me cool. He wakes me up by beating me, makes me stand by beating me, sends me out of the house and welcomes me back by

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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

35 Come, go along. My wife is coming yonder.

*Enter **ADRIANA**, **LUCIANA**, the **COURTESAN** and a schoolmaster called **PINCH***

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Mistress, *respice finem*, respect your end, or rather, the prophecy like the parrot, "Beware the rope's end."

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Wilt thou still talk? (*beats* DROMIO OF EPHESUS)

COURTESAN

How say you now? Is not your husband mad?

ADRIANA

His incivility confirms no less.—

40 Good Doctor Pinch, you are a conjurer;
Establish him in his true sense again,
And I will please you what you will demand.

LUCIANA

beating me. Seriously, I carry beatings around with me like a beggar woman carries her baby. I figure that once he's crippled me, I'll beg by showing off my beatings.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

That's enough. My wife's coming.

***ADRIANA**, **LUCIANA**, the **COURTESAN**, and **PINCH**, a schoolmaster, enter.*

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Mistress, think about your end—beware of your death! Or as the parrot says: "Beware of the *rope's* end," and watch out for a hanging.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Are you going to keep talking? (*beats* DROMIO OF EPHESUS)

COURTESAN

Now what do you think? Your husband's mad, isn't he?

ADRIANA

This terrible behavior proves it. Doctor Pinch, you're an exorcist. If you can bring him back to his senses, I'll pay you whatever you demand.

LUCIANA

Alas, how fiery and how sharp he looks!

COURTESAN

Mark how he trembles in his ecstasy.

PINCH

45 Give me your hand, and let me feel your pulse.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

There is my hand, and let it feel your ear. (*strikes PINCH*)

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.

50 I conjure thee by all the saints in heaven.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Peace, doting wizard, peace. I am not mad.

ADRIANA

O, that thou wert not, poor distressed soul!

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

Alas, how passionate and angry he looks!

COURTESAN

Look! He's trembling in his fit!

PINCH

Give me your hand. Let me take your pulse.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Here's my hand. Let it feel your ear. (*he strikes PINCH*)

PINCH

Satan! You are living inside this man! I order you to release him
through my prayers and to return immediately to the darkness
you came from. I demand this in the name of all the saints in
heaven.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Shut up, you doddering old wizard! I'm not possessed!

ADRIANA

Oh, I wish you weren't, you poor, frightened soul.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Listen, hussy—is this man one of your customers? Did this fool
with the yellow face feast and celebrate in my house today
while the guilty doors shut in my face and locked me out of my
own house?

ADRIANA

O husband, God doth know you dined at home,
Where would you had remained until this time,
60 Free from these slanders and this open shame.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

"Dined at home"? Thou villain, what sayest thou?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Were not my doors locked up and I shut out?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Perdie, your doors were locked, and you shut out.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

65 And did not she herself revile me there?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Sans fable, she herself reviled you there.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

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

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Certes, she did; the kitchen vestal scorned you.

ADRIANA

Oh, husband, God himself knows you ate at home. I wish you
had stayed there, avoiding these scandals and this public
embarrassment!

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Ate at home? You there, rogue, what do you have to say about
that?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

I swear, sir, you did not eat at home.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

My doors were locked and I was shut out, right?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

By God, your doors were locked and you were shut out.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

And she screamed at me, right?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

No lie—she screamed at you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

And her cook yelled, mocked, and teased me, right?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

She sure did. The kitchen girl mocked you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

And did not I in rage depart from thence?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

70 In verity you did.—My bones bear witness,
That since have felt the vigour of his rage.

ADRIANA

(to PINCH) 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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

75 (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.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Money by me! heart and goodwill you might,
But surely, master, not a rag of money.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

80 Went'st not thou to her for a purse of ducats?

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

And I departed in a rage, right?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

You truly did. My body can prove it because it felt the power of
your anger.

ADRIANA

(to PINCH) Should I try to soothe him by pretending to agree
with his lies?

PINCH

Good idea. His servant here has figured out that agreeing is a
good way to cope with his anger.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

(to ADRIANA) You convinced the jeweler to arrest me.

ADRIANA

For goodness sake, I sent money to bail you out. I gave it to
Dromio, who rushed in for it.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

You gave money to me? She might have given me her best
wishes, master, but she didn't give me one scrap of money.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Didn't you go to her for a purse full of ducats?

ADRIANA

He came to me, and I delivered it.

LUCIANA

And I am witness with her that she did.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

God and the rope-maker bear me witness
That I was sent for nothing but a rope.

PINCH

85 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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

(to ADRIANA) Say wherefore didst thou lock me forth today.
(to DROMIO OF EPHESUS) And why dost thou deny the bag
of gold?

ADRIANA

90 I did not, gentle husband, lock thee forth.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

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.

ADRIANA

He did, and I gave it to him.

LUCIANA

And I saw her do it.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

I was sent for a rope! God and the rope maker are my
witnesses!

PINCH

Mistress, both the man and his master are possessed. I can tell
by how pale and deathlike they look. We must tie them up and
leave them in some dark room.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

(to ADRIANA) Tell me! Why did you lock me out today? (to
DROMIO OF EPHESUS) And why are you denying that you
received the gold?

ADRIANA

My sweet husband, I did not lock you out.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

And my sweet master, I received no gold. But I agree, sir, that
we were locked out.

ADRIANA

You lying villain! Both those statements are false.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Dissembling harlot, thou art false in all,
95 And art confederate with a damnèd pack
To make a loathsome abject scorn of me.
But with these nails I'll pluck out these false eyes
That would behold in me this shameful sport.

Enter three or four, and offer to bind him. He strives.

ADRIANA

O bind him, bind him! Let him not come near me.

PINCH

100 More company! The fiend is strong within him.

LUCIANA

Ay me, poor man, how pale and wan he looks!

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

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.
105 He is my prisoner, and you shall not have him.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

You lying slut, everything you say is false. You're scheming with
some damned gang, trying to make a fool of me. With my own
bare hands, I'll scratch out your eyes, which want to see me
humiliated.

*Three or four men enter and try to restrain ANTIPHOLUS OF
EPHESUS. He struggles with them.*

ADRIANA

Tie him up! Tie him up! Keep him away from me!

PINCH

We need more help! The devil in him is strong!

LUCIANA

Oh, my, poor man! How pale and listless he looks!

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Are you trying to kill me? jailer, i'm your prisoner. are you going
to let them break me out of jail?

OFFICER

Gentlemen, let go of him. He's my prisoner and you can't have
him.

PINCH

Go, bind this man, for he is frantic too.

*They bind **DROMIO OF EPHEBUS***

ADRIANA

What wilt thou do, thou peevish officer?
Hast thou delight to see a wretched man
Do outrage and displeasure to himself?

OFFICER

110 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.—
115 Good Master Doctor, see him safe conveyed
Home to my house. O most unhappy day!

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

O most unhappy strumpet!

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Master, I am here entered in bond for you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Out on thee, villain! Wherefore dost thou mad me?

PINCH

Tie up the servant, for he is mad as well.

*The men tie up **DROMIO OF EPHEBUS**.*

ADRIANA

What are you doing, you stupid officer? Do you take some kind
of pleasure in seeing a sick man harm himself?

OFFICER

He's my prisoner. If I let him go, I'll have to pay his bail fees
myself.

ADRIANA

I'll pay you. Take me to the man my husband is in debt to. Once
I find out what the debt is for, I'll pay it. Doctor Pinch, please
have him brought to my house. What a horrible day!

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

What a horrible slut!

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Master, I'm all tied up for you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

120 Will you be bound for nothing? Be mad, good master.
Cry "The devil!"

LUCIANA

God help poor souls! How idly do they talk!

ADRIANA

Go bear him hence Sister, go you with me.

*Exeunt **PINCH** and the men, with **ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS**
and **DROMIO OF EPHESUS***

*Manent **OFFICER, ADRIANA, LUCIANA, COURTESAN***

Say now whose suit is he arrested at.

OFFICER

125 One Angelo, a goldsmith. Do you know him?

ADRIANA

I know the man. What is the sum he owes?

OFFICER

Two hundred ducats.

Shut up already, you scoundrel! Why are you trying to provoke me?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

You'd rather be tied up for nothing? Act insane, good master:
scream out, "The devil!"

LUCIANA

Oh my God! The poor souls—how strangely they talk!

ADRIANA

Get him out of here. Sister, come with me.

***PINCH** and the men lead **ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS** and
DROMIO OF EPHESUS offstage.*

*The **OFFICER, ADRIANA, LUCIANA,** and the **COURTESAN** remain
onstage.*

Now tell me. Who had him arrested?

OFFICER

Angelo, the jeweler. Do you know him?

ADRIANA

I know him. How much does my husband owe?

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.

COURTESAN

130 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.—

135 Come, jailer, bring me where the goldsmith is.
I long to know the truth hereof at large.

*Enter **ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE** with his rapier drawn and
DROMIO OF SYRACUSE*

LUCIANA

God for Thy mercy, they are loose again!

ADRIANA

And come with naked swords. Let's call more help
To have them bound again.

ADRIANA

For what?

OFFICER

For a necklace your husband had him make.

ADRIANA

He said he was going to buy me a necklace, but I never saw it.

COURTESAN

Today your husband came to my place, completely furious. He
took my ring, which I just saw on his finger, by the way. Right
after that, I saw him with a necklace.

ADRIANA

Maybe so, but I never saw it. Jailer, bring me to the jeweler. I
need to hear the truth about all this.

***ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE** enters with his sword drawn,
followed by **DROMIO OF SYRACUSE***

LUCIANA

God have mercy on us! They broke loose!

ADRIANA

And they've got their swords unsheathed! Let's call for help
and get them tied up again!

OFFICER

Away! They'll kill us.

Run all out as fast as may be, frightened.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

140 I see these witches are afraid of swords.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

She that would be your wife now ran from you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Come to the Centaur. Fetch our stuff from thence.

I long that we were safe and sound aboard.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Faith, stay here this night. They will surely do us no harm. You saw they speak us fair, give us 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 witch.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I will not stay tonight for all the town.

150 Therefore away, to get our stuff aboard.

OFFICER

Let's get out of here! They'll kill us!

*Frightened, **ADRIANA**, **LUCIANA**, the **OFFICER**, and the **COURTESAN** run offstage as fast as they can.*

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

It looks like these witches are scared of swords.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

The one who claims to be your wife just ran away from you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Go to the Centaur and get our stuff. I wish we were safely on board our ship already.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Look, let's stay here tonight. Nobody will hurt us. You see how kind everyone is to us, how they just hand us gold. I think this country is so kind that if it weren't for

that mountain of insanity that wants to marry me, I could find it in my heart to stay here and become a witch myself.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I wouldn't stay here tonight for the entire town. Go and get our stuff onto the ship.

Exeunt

They exit.

Act 5 Scene 1

*Enter **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

5 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.

***ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE** and **DROMIO OF SYRACUSE**
again*

ANGELO

10 'Tis so; and that self chain about his neck
Which he forswore most monstrously to have.

*The **SECOND MERCHANT** and **ANGELO** enter.*

ANGELO

I'm sorry that I delayed you, sir. But even though he denies it, I swear he got the necklace from me.

SECOND MERCHANT

What's this man's reputation like here in the city?

ANGELO

People think very highly of him. The merchants give him unlimited credit. He's well beloved, second to none in the city. I'd trust him with everything I own.

SECOND MERCHANT

Speak more quietly: I think he's coming this way.

***ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE** and **DROMIO OF SYRACUSE** enter.*

ANGELO

You're right. And that necklace around his neck is the very one he swore he didn't have! Good sir, stay close to me. I'll speak to

Good sir, draw near to me. I'll speak to him.—
Signior Antipholus, I wonder much
That you would put me to this shame and trouble,
15 And not without some scandal to yourself,
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,
20 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?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I think I had. I never did deny it.

SECOND MERCHANT

Yes, that you did, sir, and forswore it too.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

25 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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Thou art a villain to impeach me thus.

him. Signior Antipholus, I can't believe you'd put me to this kind
of shame and trouble—not to mention the scandal you've
brought on yourself. You swore I never gave you the necklace,
but now you're wearing it openly. Not only has your lie cost
you money, shame, and imprisonment, but you've also
mistreated this honest friend of mine. If it hadn't been for this
dispute, he would have already hoisted sail and left for sea.
You got that necklace from me: can you deny that?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I got it from you—I never said I didn't.

SECOND MERCHANT

Yes, you did, sir. In fact, you swore it.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Who heard me do that?

SECOND MERCHANT

My own ears heard it, and you know it. To hell with you! It's a
shame that you walk the streets with all the honest men.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

30 I'll prove mine honor and mine honesty
Against thee presently if thou dar'st stand.

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's sake. He is mad.—
Some get within him; take his sword away.

35 Bind dromio too, and bear them to my house!

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Run, master, run. For God's sake, take a house.
This is some priory. In, or we are spoiled.

*Exeunt **ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE** and **DROMIO OF SYRACUSE** to the priory*

*Enter the Lady **ABBESS***

ABBESS

Be quiet, people. Wherefore throng you hither?

ADRIANA

To fetch my poor distracted husband hence.

40 Let us come in, that we may bind him fast

You're a villain to say this about me. I'll prove that I'm an honest man and a man of honor if you dare defend yourself.

SECOND MERCHANT

I do dare, and I say that you are the villain.

*They draw their swords. **ADRIANA**, **LUCIANA**, the **COURTESAN**, and others enter.*

ADRIANA

(to SECOND MERCHANT) Wait! Don't hurt him, for God's sake!
He's crazy! Somebody approach him and take away his sword.
Tie up Dromio, too, and take them to my house.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Run, master, run. For God's sake, find a house to duck into. This looks like an abbey. Go in, or we're done for.

***ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE** and **DROMIO OF SYRACUSE** exit into the abbey.*

*The **ABBESS** enters.*

ABBESS

Be quiet, people! Why have you come here in such a mob?

ADRIANA

To get my poor, mad husband out from inside there. Let us in so we can tie him up tight and bring him home to recover.

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

45 This week he hath been heavy, sour, sad,
And much different from the man he was.
But till this afternoon his passion
Ne'er brake into extremity of rage.

ABBESS

Hath he not lost much wealth by wrack of sea?
50 Buried some dear friend? Hath not else his eye
Stray'd 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

55 To none of these, except it be the last,

ANGELO

(to SECOND MERCHANT) I knew he wasn't quite in his right mind.

SECOND MERCHANT

(to ANGELO) Now I'm sorry I raised my sword against him.

ABBESS

How long has he been possessed like this?

ADRIANA

This week he was sad, moody, and depressed and very different from his usual self. But it wasn't until this afternoon that he broke out into violence.

ABBESS

Did he lose a lot of money in a shipwreck? Has a close friend of his died? Has he fallen in love with another woman? That's a sin young men often commit because they allow their eyes to wander. Which of these bad things happened to him?

ADRIANA

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

60 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.

65 Alone, it was the subject of my theme;

None of them, except the last one. He fell in love, and that made him leave home often.

ABBESS

You should have reprimanded him for that.

ADRIANA

I did.

ABBESS

Fine, but you weren't harsh enough.

ADRIANA

I was as harsh as I could be while still being a lady.

ABBESS

You scolded him in private?

ADRIANA

And in public too.

ABBESS

Fine, but not enough.

ADRIANA

It was all we talked about. I kept him awake at night talking about it. He couldn't eat without me talking about it. When we were alone, it was the only thing I talked about, and when we

In company I often glanced 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
70 Poisons more deadly than a mad dog's tooth.
It seems his sleeps were hinder'd by thy railing,
And therefore comes it that his head is light.
Thou sayst his meat was sauced with thy upbraidings.
Unquiet meals make ill digestions.
75 Thereof the raging fire of fever bred,
And what's a fever but a fit of madness?
Thou sayest his sports were hinderd by thy brawls.
Sweet recreation barred, what doth ensue
But moody and dull melancholy,
80 Kinsman to grim and comfortless despair,
And at her heels a huge infectious troop
Of pale distemperatures and foes to life?
In food, in sport, and life-preserving rest
To be disturbed, would mad or man or beast.
85 The consequence is, then, thy jealous fits
Have scared thy husband from the use of wits.

LUCIANA

She never reprehended him but mildly
When he demeaned himself rough, rude, and wildly.—

were with other people, I often found a way to mention it. All I ever did was tell him how hurtful and bad it was.

ABBESS

And that's why he went crazy. A jealous woman's poisonous ranting is worse than the bite of a rabid dog. You disturbed his sleep with your complaining, which is why he's disoriented. You seasoned his food with screams. Stress during mealtime ruins the digestion, and that gave him a raging fever. Fever, as we know, is a kind of madness. You spoiled his fun by fighting with him, and when people can't enjoy themselves, they grow moody and dull with melancholy—they come very close to being grim and cheerlessly depressed. Next thing you know, all kinds of terrible illnesses break out. Ruining his meals, his enjoyment, and his sleep would drive any man or beast mad. What I'm saying is, your jealousy has pushed your husband away from his sanity.

LUCIANA

She was always gentle when she scolded him, even when he behaved in the worst and wildest ways. (to ADRIANA) Why

(to ADRIANA) Why bear you these rebukes and answer not?

ADRIANA

90 She did betray me to my own reproof.
Good people, enter and lay hold on him.

ABBESS

No, not a creature enters in my house.

ADRIANA

Then let your servants bring my husband forth.

ABBESS

Neither: he took this place for sanctuary,
95 And it shall privilege him from your hands
Till I have brought him to his wits again
Or lose my labor in assaying it.

ADRIANA

I will attend my husband, be his nurse,
Diet his sickness, for it is my office
100 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 approv'd means I have,
With wholesome syrups, drugs, and holy prayers,

won't you defend yourself against this woman?

ADRIANA

She has tricked me into seeing my own faults. Gentlemen, go
in there and grab him.

ABBESS

Nobody goes into my house!

ADRIANA

Then have your servants bring him out.

ABBESS

No: he came here for [sanctuary](#) , and that will protect him from
you. I'll try to bring him back to his right mind and work to the
end of my abilities to do so.

ADRIANA

It's my place to take care of my husband and nurse him back
to health. It is my duty and mine alone. So let me take him
home.

ABBESS

Be patient. I'm not going to let him leave until I've tried every
means to cure him. With my healthful potions, drugs, and holy
prayers, I'll make him a complete man again. Healing is part

105 To make of him a formal man again.
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;
110 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 ABBESS

LUCIANA

Complain unto the Duke of this indignity.

ADRIANA

Come, go. I will fall prostrate at his feet
115 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
120 Comes this way to the melancholy vale,

and parcel of my religious vows; it is a charitable duty my order
performs. Therefore, depart, and leave him here with me.

ADRIANA

I will not depart and leave my husband here. It doesn't suit
your holiness to separate a husband and his wife.

ABBESS

Be quiet and depart. You're not going to take him.

The ABBESS exits.

LUCIANA

Go lodge a complaint about this with the duke.

ADRIANA

Come with me. I'll fall at his feet and lie there until my pleading
and crying convinces the duke to come here and force my
husband to leave this abbey.

SECOND MERCHANT

It's almost five o'clock. The duke will pass by here soon. He
always passes here on his way to that melancholy place where
criminals are put to death. It's just behind this abbey.

The place of death and sorry execution
Behind the ditches of the abbey here.

ANGELO

Upon what cause?

SECOND MERCHANT

To see a reverend Syracusan merchant,
125 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.

*Enter the **DUKE OF EPHESUS** and **EGEON** the merchant of
Syracuse, bare head, with the headsman and other officers*

DUKE

130 Yet once again proclaim it publicly,
If any friend will pay the sum for him,
He shall not die; so much we tender him.

ADRIANA

Justice, most sacred duke, against the Abbess.

ANGELO

Why is he going there today?

SECOND MERCHANT

To see an elderly, unlucky merchant from Syracuse publicly
beheaded for breaking the law and coming here to Ephesus.

ANGELO

Here they come. We will watch the execution.

LUCIANA

Kneel down to the duke before he passes by the abbey.

*The **DUKE** enters with **EGEON**, who is bareheaded. The
executioner and other officers follow.*

DUKE

One more time, we proclaim this publicly: If anyone will pay
this man's bail, he will not be put to death. This is how well we
regard him.

ADRIANA

Duke, the abbess has wronged me and I seek justice.

DUKE

She is a virtuous and a reverend lady.

135 It cannot be that she hath done thee wrong.

ADRIANA

May it please your Grace, Antipholus my husband,

Whom I made lord of me and all I had

At your important letters, this ill day

A most outrageous fit of madness took him,

140 That desp'rately 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, any thing his rage did like.

145 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,

150 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

155 Into this abbey, whither we pursued them,

And here the Abbess shuts the gates on us

DUKE

She's a virtuous and holy lady. She can't possibly have done you any wrong.

ADRIANA

Your Highness, you were the one who introduced me to my

husband, Antipholus, and suggested I marry him. On this

terrible day, a most outrageous fit of madness possessed him.

It made him run desperately through the streets with his

servant, who is just as mad. He angered all the citizens by

rushing into their houses and taking rings, jewels, and anything

else he felt like. At one point I managed to get him tied up and

sent home so that I could make some order out of all the

trouble he caused. But somehow, he broke free from his

guards. Then he and his crazy servant found us and chased us

away with swords. We got more help and came back to

capture them, but then they fled into this abbey. We tried to go

in, but the abbess stopped us. She wouldn't let us get him and

she wouldn't send him out. So please, most gracious duke,

order her to bring him out so we can get him some help.

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
160 Let him be brought forth and borne hence for help.

DUKE

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.

165 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 MESSENGER

MESSENGER

O mistress, mistress, shift and save yourself.
My master and his man are both broke loose,
170 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
175 His man with scissors nicks him like a fool;
And sure, unless you send some present help,

DUKE

A long time ago your husband was a soldier in the wars I led.
And when you married him and made him the master of your
bed, I gave you my word that I would do everything I possibly
could for him.

(to his followers) Go, knock on the gate and bid the abbess
come out here and speak to me. I'll settle this before I go

A MESSENGER enters.

MESSENGER

Mistress! Run and save yourself. My master and his servant
broke loose. They've beaten the maids and tied up Doctor
Pinch. Then they set fire to his beard and threw sewage to put
out the flames. My master keeps telling the doctor to relax,
while his servant cuts the doctor's hair in a ridiculous fashion. If
you don't send some help, they'll kill Doctor Pinch.

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.

MESSENGER

180 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

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

Enter ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS and DROMIO OF EPHESUS

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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

ADRIANA

Shut up, fool! Your master and his servant are here. You're
telling a lie.

MESSENGER

Mistress, I swear on my life that it's true. It was just moments
ago. He's crying out for you and swears he'll burn your face
and disfigure you if he can get ahold of you.

Shouts are heard from offstage.

Listen, listen! I hear him, mistress. Run, get out of here!

DUKE

(to ADRIANA) Stand with me. Don't be scared. (to his men)
Guards, get your weapons!

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS and DROMIO OF EPHESUS enter.

ADRIANA

Oh, my, it's my husband. Look, he can become invisible. Just
now we put him in the abbey over here, and now he's over
there. It's impossible to understand.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

190 Justice, most gracious duke, O, 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.

EGEON

195 *(aside)* Unless the fear of death doth make me dote,
I see my son Antipholus and Dromio.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Justice, sweet prince, against that woman there,
She whom thou gav'st to me to be my wife,
That hath abusèd and dishonored me
200 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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

This day, great duke, she shut the doors upon me
205 While she with harlots feasted in my house.

DUKE

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

Justice, gracious duke. Please bring me justice! A long time
ago I did good service to you. I fought in your wars and took
deep wounds to save your life. In exchange for the blood I
shed for you then, I ask you for justice now.

EGEON

(to himself) The fear of death might be making me senile, but I
think I see my son Antipholus, and Dromio.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Sweet prince, I want justice from that woman there. This
woman that you urged me to marry has abused me and
dishonored me, doing the most injury possible. The things she
has shamelessly hurled on me are beyond imagination.

DUKE

Tell me the details. You know I'll be fair.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Today, great duke, she locked me out of my house and feasted
there with whores.

DUKE

That's terrible! *(to ADRIANA)* Tell us, woman, did you do that?

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

210 Ne'er may I look on day, nor sleep on night
But she tells to your Highness simple truth.

ANGELO

O perjured woman! —They are both forsworn.
In this the madman justly chargeth them.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

My liege, I am advisèd what I say,
215 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,
220 Could witness it, for he was with me then,
Who parted with me to go fetch a chain,
Promising to bring it to the Porpentine,
Where Balthasar and I did dine together.
Our dinner done and he not coming thither,
225 I went to seek him. In the street I met him,

ADRIANA

No, my good lord. I ate with him and my sister. Damn my soul if
these accusations are true!

LUCIANA

If she's lying, I pray that I never sleep again at night or wake up
during the day.

ANGELO

Oh, lying woman! Both of them are liars: the madman accuses
them justly.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

My lord, I know what I'm saying. I'm not drunk, and I haven't
gone mad from anger—even though the wrongs done to me
today would drive any man insane. This woman locked me out
of the house today at lunchtime, and if he weren't conspiring
with her, this jeweler could confirm my story since he was with
me at the time. He left to fetch a necklace and he promised to
bring it to the Porcupine, where I was dining with Balthasar. He
hadn't arrived by the time we finished eating, so I went out
looking for him. I met him in the street—he was there with that
man. (*points to the SECOND MERCHANT*)
That's when this lying jeweler swore that he had already given
me the necklace, which, God knows, he hadn't. He had me
arrested for it, and I went with the officer, sending my servant

And in his company that gentleman. (*points to 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

230 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.

235 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,

240 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,

245 And with no face (as 'twere) outfacing 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,

home to get money for the bail. When my servant returned empty-handed, I politely asked the officer to accompany me to my house. On the way, we came across my wife, her sister, and their gang of vile associates.

One of them was a man named Pinch: a hungry, narrow-faced villain; a skeleton; a fraud; a raggedy magician and fortune-teller; a needy, hollow-eyed, emaciated wretch; a walking corpse. He pretended to be some kind of sorcerer, and he gazed in my eyes and took my pulse. Then, with his thin face leering down at mine, he cried out that I was possessed.

Then they all pounced on me, tied me up, carried me away, and left me in a dark, dank cellar in my house. They left me and my servant there, tied together. Eventually I chewed through the ropes and freed myself, and I immediately ran to

250 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
For these deep shames and great indignities.

ANGELO

255 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

260 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,
265 From whence I think you are come by miracle.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

I never came within these abbey walls,
Nor ever didst thou draw thy sword on me.

find you, Your Grace. I beg you: grant me justice for the deep
shame I have suffered and the terrible wrongs done to me.

ANGELO

Your Highness, I can confirm this much: he was locked out of
his house and didn't eat at home.

DUKE

But did he receive a necklace from you?

ANGELO

He did, my lord. And when he ran in here, everyone could see
that he was wearing that necklace.

SECOND MERCHANT

Besides, I'll swear I heard you confess that you *did* receive the
necklace, even after you swore at the marketplace that you
hadn't. That's when I raised my sword against you, and you fled
into this abbey—which, I think, you must have escaped from
through some kind of trick.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

I was never inside this abbey, and you never raised your sword
against me. I never saw the necklace, so help me heaven!

I never saw the chain, so help me heaven,
And this is false you burden me withal.

DUKE

270 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.
(to ADRIANA) If he were mad, he would not plead so coldly.

You say he dined at home; the goldsmith here
275 Denies that saying. Sirrah, what say you?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Sir, he dined with her there, at the Porpentine.

COURTESAN

He did, and from my finger snatched that ring.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

'Tis true, my liege; this ring I had of her.

DUKE

Saw'st thou him enter at the abbey here?

COURTESAN

280 As sure, my liege, as I do see your Grace.

DUKE

Everything you charge me with is untrue.

DUKE

Why, what a complicated case this is! I think you all must have drunk some kind of potion that's turned you all into animals. (to ADRIANA) If you put him in the abbey, that's where he'd be. If he were insane, he wouldn't be pleading his case so sensibly. You say he

ate at home, but the jeweler says he didn't. [Sirrah](#), what do you have to say?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Sir, he ate with this woman at the Porcupine.

COURTESAN

He did, and he snatched my ring right off my finger.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

That's true, my lord: I did get this ring from her.

DUKE

Did you see him enter this abbey?

COURTESAN

As clearly as I see you, my lord.

DUKE

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

*Exit one to **ABBESS***

EGEON

Most mighty duke, vouchsafe me speak a word.

Haply I see a friend will save my life

285 And pay the sum that may deliver me.

DUKE

Speak freely, Syracusian, what thou wilt.

EGEON

(to ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS) Is not your name, sir, called
Antipholus?

And is not that your bondman Dromio?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

290 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.

EGEON

I am sure you both of you remember me.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Ourselves we do remember, sir, by you.

295 For lately we were bound as you are now.

This is very odd. Get the abbess out here. I think you're all
either bewildered or stark raving mad.

*Someone exits to get the **ABBESS***

EGEON

Mighty duke, please allow me to say something. I think I see a
friend who will pay my bail and save my life.

DUKE

Feel free to say what you wish, Syracusian.

EGEON

(to ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS) Isn't your name Antipholus?
And isn't that Dromio, the man bound to you?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

I was bound to him an hour ago, sir, but thankfully he chewed
through our ropes. Now I'm Dromio and no longer attached to
him.

EGEON

I'm sure you both remember me.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Actually, it's ourselves you bring to mind since just a few
moments ago we were tied up, as you are now. You're not one

You are not Pinch's patient, are you, sir?

EGEON

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

I never saw you in my life till now.

EGEON

O, grief hath changed me since you saw me last,

300 And careful hours with time's deformèd hand

Have written strange defeatures in my face.

But tell me yet, dost thou not know my voice?

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Neither.

EGEON

Dromio, nor thou?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

No, trust me, sir, nor I.

EGEON

305 I am sure thou dost.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

of Pinch's patients, are you, sir?

EGEON

Why are you looking at me so strangely? You know me well.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

I never saw you before in my life.

EGEON

Oh, grief has transformed me since the last time you saw me.

Time has the power to deform people, and the sorrowful hours

I have spent in his company have put these strange lines and
wrinkles on my face. But tell me this: don't you know my voice?

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

No.

EGEON

Don't you, Dromio?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

No sir, trust me, I do not.

EGEON

I am sure you do.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Fine, sir, but I'm sure I don't. And you're in no position to doubt
my word.

EGEON

Not know my voice! O time's extremity,
Hast thou so crack'd and splitted my poor tongue
310 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,
315 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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

320 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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

EGEON

You don't know my voice? Oh, severe Time! Have you mangled
my tongue so badly in these seven short years that my only
son can no longer recognize my weak, sorrow-ravaged voice?
It's true: this aged face of mine is hidden by a snow white
beard, and the blood is freezing in my veins. But I still have a
little memory left, and there's still some fire in my eyes; my
dull, deaf ears can still hear a little. All these aging faculties tell
me—and I cannot be wrong—that you are my son, Antipholus.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

I never saw my father in my life.

EGEON

You know that we parted only seven years ago, in Syracuse.
Maybe you're ashamed to admit that you know me because
I'm a prisoner now.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

The duke and everyone who knows me in this city can confirm
that's not true. I've never been to 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.

330 I see thy age and dangers make thee dote.

*Enter the **ABBESS** with **ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE** and
DROMIO OF SYRACUSE*

ABBESS

Most mighty duke, behold a man much wronged.

All gather to see them

ADRIANA

I see two husbands, or mine eyes deceive me.

DUKE

(looks at the ANTIPHOLUS twins) One of these men is genius
to the other.

335 *(looks at the DROMIO twins)* And so, of these, which is the
natural man

And which the spirit? Who deciphers them?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I, sir, am Dromio. Command him away.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

DUKE

I tell you, Syracusian. I've been looking after Antipholus for
twenty years, and during that time he's never been to
Syracuse. Your old age and the prospect of death are making
you imagine things.

*The **ABBESS** enters, along with **ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE** and
DROMIO OF SYRACUSE*

ABBESS

Mighty duke, look here and see a man who's been treated
most terribly!

Everyone gathers around to look.

ADRIANA

Either my eyes deceive me, or I see two husbands.

DUKE

(looks at the ANTIPHOLUS twins) One of these men is the
other's genius. *(looks at the DROMIO twins)* And the same with
these two. But which is the man and which is the [spirit](#) ? Can
anyone tell?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I, sir, am Dromio. Command this man to leave.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

I, sir, am Dromio. Please, let me stay.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

340 Egeon art thou not, or else his ghost?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

O, my old master.—Who hath bound him here?

ABBESS

Whoever bound him, I will loose his bonds

And gain a husband by his liberty.—

Speak, old Egeon, if thou be'st the man

345 That hadst a wife once called Emilia,

That bore thee at a burden two fair sons.

O, if thou be'st the same Egeon, speak,

And speak unto the same Emilia.

DUKE

Why, here begins his morning story right;

350 These two Antipholuses, these two so like,

And these two Dromios, one in semblance—

Besides her urging of her wreck at sea—

These are the parents to these children,

Which accidentally are met together.

EGEON

355 If I dream not, thou art Emilia.

If thou art she, tell me where is that son

I, sir, am Dromio. Pray, let me stay.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

You are Egeon, aren't you? Or are you his ghost?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Oh, my old master!—Who tied him up?

ABBESS

Whoever tied him up, I will loosen the ropes, and with his

freedom I will gain a husband. Tell us, old Egeon: are you the

man who once had a wife named Emilia, who gave birth to two

fair sons? Oh, if you are the same Egeon, speak now, and

speak to that same Emilia!

DUKE

Why, now the story the merchant told me this morning is

starting to make sense. These two Antipholuses, who look so

alike—and these two Dromios, who seem to have the same

face—and her story of being shipwrecked—why, these two are

the parents of these children and have been reunited by

accident.

EGEON

If I'm not dreaming, you are Emilia. If it's really you, tell me what

happened to our son, who floated away with you on that

That floated with thee on the fatal raft?

ABBESS

By men of Epidamnum he and I

And the twin Dromio all were taken up;

360 But by and by rude fishermen of Corinth

By force took Dromio and my son from them

And me they left with those of Epidamnum.

What then became of them I cannot tell;

I to this fortune that you see me in.

DUKE

365 (to ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE) Antipholus, thou cam'st
from

Corinth first.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

No, sir, not I. I came from Syracuse.

DUKE

Stay, stand apart. I know not which is which.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEsus

I came from Corinth, my most gracious lord.

DROMIO OF EPHEsus

370 And I with him.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEsus

deadly raft.

ABBESS

Some men from Epidamnum rescued me, our son, and

Dromio. But then a gang of violent fishermen from Corinth

kidnapped Dromio and my son and carried them away. I don't

know what became of them. You can see what became of me.

DUKE

Antipholus, aren't you originally from Corinth?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

No, sir. I came from Syracuse.

DUKE

Wait, don't stand next to each other. I can't tell who's who.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEsus

I came from Corinth, Your Highness.

DROMIO OF EPHEsus

And I came with him.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEsus

Brought to this town by that most famous warrior
Duke Menaphon, your most renowned uncle.

ADRIANA

Which of you two did dine with me today?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I, gentle mistress.

ADRIANA

And are not you my husband?

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

375 No, I say nay to that.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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,
380 If this be not a dream I see and hear.

ANGELO

That is the chain, sir, which you had of me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I think it be, sir. I deny it not.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Your renowned uncle, Duke Menaphon, the famous soldier,
brought me here.

ADRIANA

Which of you two ate lunch with me today?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I did, kind lady.

ADRIANA

And you're my husband, right?

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

No, he's not. I say no to that.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

So do I, although she called me her husband. And this
beautiful gentlewoman, her sister, called me brother. *(to*
LUCIANA) If all this is for real, I hope I'll get the chance to make
good on all the things I said to you today.

ANGELO

That's the necklace I gave you, sir.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I think it is, sir. I don't deny it.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

And you, sir, for this chain arrested me.

ANGELO

I think I did, sir. I deny it not.

ADRIANA

385 I sent you money, sir, to be your bail
By Dromio, but I think he brought it not.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

No, none by me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

This purse of ducats I received from you,
And Dromio my man did bring them me.
390 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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

These ducats pawn I for my father here.

DUKE

It shall not need. Thy father hath his life.

COURTESAN

395 Sir, I must have that diamond from you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

And you, sir, had me arrested over that necklace.

ANGELO

I think I did, sir. I don't deny it.

ADRIANA

I sent Dromio to you with money for bail, but I don't think he brought it to you.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

No, he didn't get any by me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I got this purse full of money from you, and my Dromio brought it to me. It seems that we kept running into each other's servants all day. And everyone thought I was him, and he was me, and that's how all these errors came about.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

I want to use this money to set my father free.

DUKE

That's not necessary. I'm going to let him live.

COURTESAN

Sir, I must get that diamond ring back from you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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 discoursed all our fortunes,

400 And all that are assembled in this place

That by this sympathizèd one day's error

Have suffered wrong. Go, keep us company,

And we shall make full satisfaction.—

Thirty-three years have I but gone in travail

405 Of you, my sons, and till this present hour

My heavy burden ne'er deliverèd.—

The Duke, my husband, and my children both,

And you, the calendars of their nativity,

Go to a gossips' feast, and go with me.

410 After so long grief, such nativity!

DUKE

With all my heart I'll gossip at this feast.

*Exeunt; the two **DROMIOS** and the two **ANTIPHOLUS** brothers remain behind.*

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

(to ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS) Master, shall I fetch your stuff from shipboard?

There, take it, and thanks for taking such good care of me.

ABBESS

Renowned duke, please join us in the abbey, where we will

discuss at length all that has happened to us. Everyone

assembled here who has been troubled by the day's events

join us as well, and we will straighten everything out. My sons,

waiting to hear news of you has been like a second childbirth:

this time, my labor lasted thirty-three years, and I am only now

delivered of my heavy burden. Duke Solinus, my husband, and

both my children—and you two Dromios, who marked the day

of my sons' births with your own—come into the abbey with

me for a new christening. After such a long period of grief, we

will have such a celebration!

DUKE

With all my heart, I'll join you.

*Everyone exits, except for the **DROMIO** twins and the **ANTIPHOLUS** twins.*

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

(to ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS) Master, should I go get your luggage off the ship?

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Dromio, what stuff of mine hast thou embarked?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

415 Your goods that lay at host, sir, in the Centaur.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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 ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE and ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

There is a fat friend at your master's house

420 That kitchened me for you today at dinner.

She now shall be my sister, not my wife.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

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?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

425 Not I, sir. You are my elder.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

That's a question. How shall we try it?

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Dromio, what stuff of mine did you put on a ship?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

The stuff you had at the Centaur, sir.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

He means me. I'm your master, Dromio. Come inside with us:

we'll deal with that later. Embrace your brother there, and

rejoice with him.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE and ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS exit.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

You have a fat friend at your master's house: she took care of

me in the kitchen today, thinking I was you. I guess now she's

going to be my sister-in-law and not my wife.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

I think you're my mirror, not my brother. And I can see by

looking at you that I'm a pretty good-looking fellow. Do you

want to go in and join the party?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

After you, sir. You're older than me.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

That's a good point. How can we tell which of us is the oldest?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

We'll draw cuts for the signior. Till then, lead thou first.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Nay, then, thus:

We came into the world like brother and brother,

430 And now let's go hand in hand, not one before another.

Exeunt

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

We'll draw straws. Meanwhile, after you.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

No, I'll tell you what. We came into the world as brother and brother, so now let's enter hand in hand—not one before the other.

They exit