

# THE COMEDY OF ERRORS

By William Shakespeare

## CAST

DUKE Solinus of Ephesus  
EGEON, a merchant of Syracuse

Twins, sons to Egeon and Emilia but unknown to each other

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS  
ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Twins, attending the Antipholus twins, also unknown to each other

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS  
DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

BALTHASAR, a merchant  
ANGELO, a goldsmith  
1st MERCHANT, friend to Antipholus of Syracuse  
2nd MERCHANT, to whom Angelo is in debt

PINCH, schoolmaster and conjurer  
EMILIA, lost wife to Egeon; an abbess at Ephesus  
ADRIANA, wife to Antipholus of Ephesus  
LUCIANA, her sister  
LUCE, also called Nell, servant to Luciana  
COURTESAN  
GAOLER  
MESSENGER  
OFFICER  
Assistants to the Officer. Gaoler and Duke's attendants

Scene: Ephesus.

An open mart with three houses:  
`The Porpentine', the home of the Courtesan;  
`The Phoenix', the home of Antipholus of Ephesus;  
`The Priory', where Emilia is abbess.

# ACT 1.

## Scene 1.

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

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

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

Egeon                    A heavier task could not have been imposed  
Than I to speak my griefs unspeakable.  
Yet, that the world may witness that my end  
Was wrought by nature, not by vile offence,  
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  
By prosperous voyages I often made  
To Epidamnum, till my factor's death,  
And the great care of goods at random left,  
Drew me from kind embracements of my spouse,  
From whom my absence was not six months old  
Before herself, almost at fainting under  
The pleasing punishment that women bear,  
Had made provision for her following me,  
And soon and safe arrived where I was.  
There she had not been long but she became  
A joyful mother of two goodly sons;  
And, which was strange, the one so like the other  
As could not be distinguished but by names.  
That very hour, and in the selfsame inn,  
A mean woman was delivered

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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

Duke                    Nay, forward, old man, do not break off so;  
For we may pity though not pardon thee.

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

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Duke                   And for the sake of them thou sorrow'st for,  
Do me the favour to dilate at full  
What hath befallen of them and thee till now.

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

Duke                   Hapless Egeon, whom the fates have marked  
To bear the extremity of dire mishap!  
Now, trust me, were it not against our laws,  
Against my crown, my oath, my dignity,  
Which princes, would they, may not disannul,  
My soul should sue as advocate for thee;  
But though thou art adjudged to the death,  
And passed sentence may not be recalled  
But to our honour's great disparagement,  
Yet will I favour thee in what I can.  
Therefore, merchant, I'll limit thee this day  
To seek thy health by beneficial help.  
Try all the friends thou hast in Ephesus;  
Beg thou, or borrow, to make up the sum,  
And live. If no, then thou art doomed to die.  
Gaoler, take him to thy custody.

Gaoler                   I will, my lord.

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

**Exeunt**

## Scene 2.

**Enter** ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE, 1st MERCHANT, and DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

1st 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,  
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   [To DROMIO] Go, bear it to the Centaur, where we host,  
And stay there, Dromio, till I come to thee.  
Within this hour it will be dinner-time;  
Till that I'll view the manners of the town,  
Peruse the traders, gaze upon the buildings,  
And then return and sleep within mine inn;  
For with long travel I am stiff and weary.  
Get thee away.

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Dromio

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

**Exit**

Antipholus

of Syracuse A trusty villain, sir, that very oft,  
When I am dull with care and melancholy,  
Lightens my humour with his merry jests.  
What, will you walk with me about the town,  
And then go to my inn and dine with me?

1st Merchant

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

Antipholus

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

1st Merchant

Sir, I commend you to your own content.

**Exit**

Antipholus

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

**Enter DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.**

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

Dromio

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

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 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

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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

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

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,  
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]

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**

Antipholus of Syracuse 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,  
Soul-killing witches that deform the body,  
Disguised cheaters, prating mountebanks,  
And many suchlike liberties of sin.  
If it prove so, I will be gone the sooner.

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

I'll to the Centaur to go seek this slave;  
I greatly fear my money is not safe.

**Exit**

## ACT 2.

### Scene 1. Before `The Phoenix`

**Enter** ADRIANA, wife to Antipholus of Ephesus, with LUCIANA, her sister.

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

Luciana            Perhaps some merchant hath invited him,  
And from the mart he's somewhere gone to dinner.  
Good sister, let us dine, and never fret;  
A man is master of his liberty.  
Time is their master, and when they see time  
They'll go or come. If so, be patient, sister.

Adriana            Why should their liberty than ours be more?

Luciana            Because their business still lies out o'door.

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

Luciana            O, know he is the bridle of your will.

Adriana            There's none but asses will be bridled so.

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

Adriana            This servitude makes you to keep unwed.

Luciana            Not this, but troubles of the marriage-bed.

Adriana            But were you wedded you would bear some sway.

Luciana            Ere I learn love I'll practise to obey.

Adriana            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  
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.  
But if thou live to see like right bereft,  
This fool-begged patience in thee will be left.

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

**Enter** DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

Adriana            Say, is your tardy master now at hand?

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Dromio  
of Ephesus                    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                        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?  
It seems he hath great care to please his wife.

Dromio  
of Ephesus                    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.  
"Tis dinner-time" quoth I, "My gold" quoth he.  
"Your meat will 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.  
"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;  
"I know" quoth he "no house, no wife, no mistress";  
So that my errand due unto my tongue,  
I thank him, I bare home upon my shoulders;  
For, in conclusion, he did beat me there.

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

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

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

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.  
[Beats DROMIO]

Dromio  
of Ephesus                    Am I so round with you as you with me,  
That, like a football, you do spurn me thus?  
You spurn me hence, and he will spurn me hither;  
If I last in this service you must case me in leather.

**Exit**

Luciana Fie, how impatience loureth in your face!

Adriana His company must do his minions grace  
 Whilst I at home starve for a merry look.  
 Hath homely age th' alluring beauty took  
 From my poor cheek? - Then he hath wasted it.  
 Are my discourses dull? Barren my wit?  
 If 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  
 By him not ruined? Then is he the ground  
 Of my defeatures. My decayed fair  
 A sunny look of his would soon repair.  
 But, too unruly deer, he breaks the pale  
 And feeds from home; poor I am but his stale.

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

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

Luciana How many fond fools serve mad jealousy!

**Exeunt**

**Scene 2.**

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

Dromio

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

Antipholus

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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

Dromio

of Syracuse 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 displeas'd.

Dromio

of Syracuse 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]

Dromio

of Syracuse Hold, sir, for God's sake! Now your jest is earnest.  
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.  
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 demeanour to my looks;  
Or I will beat this method in your sconce.

Dromio

of Syracuse `Sconce' 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 sconce for my head, and insconce it  
too, or else I shall seek my wit in my shoulders. But I pray, sir, why am I beaten?

Antipholus

of Syracuse 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 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

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

of Syracuse Thank me, sir, for what?  
Dromio  
of Syracuse Marry, sir, for this something that you gave me for nothing.  
Antipholus  
of Syracuse I'll make you amends next, to give you nothing for something. But say, sir, is it dinner-time?  
Dromio  
of Syracuse No, sir, I think the meat wants that I have.  
Antipholus  
of Syracuse 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 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.  
Dromio  
of Syracuse I durst have denied that before you were so choleric.  
Antipholus  
of Syracuse 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 periwig, and recover 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

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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            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            For two, and sound ones too.

Antipholus

of Syracuse            Nay, not sound, I pray you.

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            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            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            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.

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Some other mistress hath thy sweet aspects:  
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,  
That never meat sweet-savoured 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 then estranged from thyself?  
Thyself I call it, being strange to me,  
That, undividable, incorporate,  
Am better than thy dear self's better part.  
Ah, do not tear away thyself from me;  
For know, my love, as easy mayst thou fall  
A drop of water in the breaking gulf,  
And take unmingled thence that drop again  
Without addition or diminishing,  
As take from me thyself, and not me too.  
How dearly would it touch thee to the quick  
Shouldst thou but hear I were licentious,  
And that this body, consecrate to thee,  
By ruffian lust should be contaminate?  
Wouldst thou not spit at me, and spurn at me,  
And hurl the name of husband in my face,  
And tear the stained skin off my harlot brow,  
And from my false hand cut the wedding-ring  
And break it with a deep-divorcing vow?  
I know thou canst; and therefore see thou do it!  
I am possessed with an adulterate blot;  
My blood is mingled with the crime of lust;  
For if we two be one, and thou play false,  
I do digest the poison of thy flesh,  
Being strumpeted by thy contagion.  
Keep then fair league and truce with thy true bed,  
I live unstained, thou undishonoured.

Antipholus

of Syracuse

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,  
Wants wit in all one word to understand.

Luciana

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

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

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

Antipholus

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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

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,  
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,  
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.  
If aught possess thee from me, it is dross,  
Usurping ivy, briar, or idle moss,  
Who all for want of pruning, with intrusion,  
Infect thy sap, and live on thy confusion.

Antipholus

of Syracuse [Aside] To me she speaks, she moves me for her theme.  
What, was I married to her in my dream?  
Or sleep I now, and think I hear all this?  
What error drives our eyes and ears amiss?  
Until I know this sure uncertainty,  
I'll entertain the offered fallacy,

Luciana Dromio, go bid the servants spread for dinner.

Dromio

of Syracuse [Aside] 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:  
They'll suck our breath, or pinch us black and blue.

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

Dromio

of Syracuse I am transformed, master, am I not?

Antipholus

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

Dromio

of Syracuse Nay, master, both in mind and in my shape.

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

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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 laughs my woes to scorn.  
Come, sir, to dinner; Dromio, keep the gate.  
Husband, I'll dine above with you today,  
And shrive you of a thousand idle pranks.  
Sirrah, if any ask you for your master  
Say he dines forth, and let no creature enter.  
Come, sister. Dromio, play the porter well.

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

Dromio  
of Syracuse  
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**

## ACT 3.

### Scene 1. Before `The Phoenix`

**Enter** ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS, his man DROMIO, ANGELO the goldsmith, and BALTHASAR the merchant.

Antipholus

of Ephesus            Good signor 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,  
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,  
And that I did deny my wife and house.  
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            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, signor Balthasar. Pray God our cheer  
May answer my good will, and your good welcome here.

Balthasar

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

Antipholus

of Ephesus            O, signor Balthasar, either at flesh or fish  
A table full of welcome makes scarce one dainty dish.

Balthasar

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

Antipholus

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

Balthasar

Small cheer and great welcome makes a merry feast.

Antipholus

of Ephesus            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.  
But soft, my door is locked. Go bid them let us in.

Dromio

of Ephesus            Maud, Bridget, Marian, Cicely, Gillian, Ginn!

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

**Enter** DROMIO OF SYRACUSE, within.

Dromio

of Syracuse            Mome, malthorse, 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 too many? Go, get thee from the door.

Dromio

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

Dromio

of Syracuse            Let him walk from whence he came, lest he catch cold on's feet.

Antipholus

of Ephesus            Who talks within there? Ho! Open the door!

Dromio

of Syracuse            Right, sir, I'll tell you when an you'll tell me wherefore.

Antipholus

of Ephesus            Wherefore? For my dinner; I have not dined today.

Dromio

of Syracuse            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            The porter for this time, sir, 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 an aim, or thy name for an ass.

**Enter** LUCE within.

Luce                    What coil is there, Dromio! Who are those at the gate?

Dromio

of Ephesus            Let my master in, Luce.

Luce                    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                    Have at you with another, that's - 'When? Can you tell?'

Dromio

of Syracuse            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 trow?

Luce                    I thought to have asked you.

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Dromio  
of Syracuse                   And you said no.

Dromio  
of Ephesus                    So come, help. Well struck! There was blow for blow.

Antipholus  
of Ephesus                    Thou baggage, let me in.

Luce  
                                      Can you tell for whose sake?

Dromio  
of Ephesus                    Master, knock the door hard.

Luce  
                                      Let him knock till it ache.

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

Luce  
                                      What needs all that, and a pair of stocks in the town?

**Enter** ADRIANA, within.

Adriana                        Who is that at the door that keeps all this noise?

Dromio  
of Syracuse                    By my troth, your town is troubled with unruly boys.

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

Adriana                        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  
                                      Here is neither cheer, sir, nor welcome; we would fain have either.

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

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.  
Your cake here 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                    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.

Dromio

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

of Syracuse           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           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;  
If a crow help us in, sirrah, we'll pluck a crow together.

Antipholus

of Ephesus           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 honour of your wife.  
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.  
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  
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 ungalled estimation,  
That may with foul intrusion enter in  
And dwell upon your grave when you are dead;  
For slander lives upon succession,  
For e'er housed where it gets possession.

Antipholus

of Ephesus           You have prevailed; I will depart in quiet,  
And in despite of mirth mean to be merry.  
I know a wench of excellent discourse,  
Pretty and witty, wild, and yet, too, gentle;  
There will we dine. This woman that I mean,  
My wife - but, I protest, without desert -  
Hath oftentimes upbraided me withal.  
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,  
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**

**Scene 2. Before `The Phoenix`.**

**Enter** LUCIANA with ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.

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

Antipholus  
 of Syracuse               Sweet mistress, what your name is else I know not,  
 Nor by what wonder you do hit of mine.  
 Less in your knowledge and your grace you show not  
 Than our earth's wonder, more than earth divine.  
 Teach me, dear creature, how to think and speak;  
 Lay open to my earthy gross conceit,  
 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?  
 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.  
 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 thee, and there lie,  
 And in that glorious supposition think  
 He gains by death that hath such means to die.  
 Let love, being light, be drowned if she sink.

Luciana                   What, are you mad that you do reason so?

Antipholus  
 of Syracuse               Not mad, but mated - how, I do not know.

Luciana                   It is a fault that springeth from your eye.

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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

Luciana 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;  
I'll fetch my sister to get her good will.

**Exit**

**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.

Dromio  
of Syracuse 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 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.

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Antipholus  
of Syracuse           What is she?

Dromio  
of Syracuse           A very reverend 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.

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           Swart like my shoe, but her face nothing like so clean kept; for why? - she  
sweats a man may go over shoes 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           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           Where France?

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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 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 armadoes of carracks to be ballast at her nose.

Antipholus  
of Syracuse Where stood Belgia, the Netherlands?

Dromio  
of Syracuse O, sir, I did not look so low. To conclude, this drudge or diviner laid claim to me, called me Dromio, swore I was assured to her, told me what I 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  
I will not harbour in this town tonight.  
If any bark put forth, come to the mart,  
Where I will walk till thou return to me.  
If everyone knows us and we know none,  
'Tis time I think to trudge, pack, and be gone.

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

**Exit**

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

**Enter** ANGELO, with the chain.

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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 What is your will that I shall do with this?

Angelo What please yourself, sir; I have 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,  
And soon at suppertime 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**

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

**Exit**

## ACT 4.

### Scene 1. The Mart.

**Enter** 2nd MERCHANT, ANGELO the goldsmith, and an OFFICER.

2nd 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.  
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  
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 EPHEBUS and DROMIO OF EPHEBUS, from the Courtesan's.

Officer                That labour may you save; see where he comes.

Antipholus

of Ephesus            While I go to the goldsmith's house, go thou  
And buy a rope's end; that will I bestow  
Among my wife and her confederates  
For locking me out of my doors by day.  
But soft, I see the goldsmith. Get thee gone;  
Buy thou a rope and bring it home to me.

Dromio

of Ephesus            I buy a thousand pound a year, I buy a rope.

**Exit**

Antipholus

of Ephesus            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.  
Belike you thought our love would last too long  
If it were chained together, and therefore came not.

Angelo

Saving your merry humour, here's the note  
How much your chain weighs to the utmost carat,  
The fineness of the gold, and chargeful fashion,  
Which doth amount to three odd ducats more  
Than I stand debted to this gentleman.  
I pray you see him presently discharged,  
For he is bound to sea, and stays but for it.

Antipholus

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

Angelo

Then you will bring the chain to her yourself.

Antipholus

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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

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

Antipholus

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

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

Antipholus

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

2nd Merchant The hour steals on; I pray you, sir, dispatch.

Angelo You hear how he importunes me. - The chain!

Antipholus

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

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

Antipholus

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

2nd Merchant My business cannot brook this dalliance.  
Good sir, say whe'er you'll answer me or no;  
If not, I'll leave him to the officer.

Antipholus

of Ephesus I answer you? What should I answer you?

Angelo The money that you owe me for the chain.

Antipholus

of Ephesus I owe you none till I receive the chain.

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

Antipholus

of Ephesus 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.

2nd Merchant Well, officer, arrest him at my suit.

Officer I do,  
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,  
Or I attach you by this officer.

Antipholus

of Ephesus Consent to pay thee that I never had?  
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

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

If he should scorn me so apparently.

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

Antipholus

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

**Enter** DROMIO OF SYRACUSE, from the bay.

Dromio

of Syracuse Master, there's a bark of Epidamnum  
That stays but till her owner comes aboard,  
And then she bears away. Our fraughtage, sir,  
I have conveyed aboard, and I have bought  
The oil, the balsamum, and aqua-vitae.  
The ship is in her trim, the merry wind  
Blows fair from land; they stay for nought 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 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 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 covered o'er with Turkish tapestry  
There is a purse of ducats. Let her send it.  
Tell her I am arrested in the street,  
And that shall bail me. Hie thee, slave, be gone!  
On, officer, to prison till it come.

**Exeunt** all but DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

Dromio

of Syracuse To Adriana! - that is where we dined,  
Where Dowsabel did claim me for her husband.  
She is too big, I hope, for me to compass.  
Thither I must, although against my will;  
For servants must their masters' minds fulfil.

**Exit**

**Scene 2. Before `The Phoenix`.**

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

**Enter** ADRIANA and LUCIANA.

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

Luciana            First he denied you had in him no right.

Adriana            He meant he did me none, the more my spite.

Luciana            Then swore he that he was a stranger here.

Adriana            And true he swore, though yet 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.  
                      First he did praise my beauty, then my speech.

Adriana            Didst speak him fair?

Luciana            Have patience, I beseech.

Adriana            I cannot, nor I will not, hold me still.  
                      My tongue, though not my heart, shall have his will.  
                      He is deformed, crooked, old, and sere,  
                      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            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.

Dromio  
of Syracuse        Here, go - the desk, the purse; sweat now, make haste.

Luciana            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;  
                      A fiend, a fairy, 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 dry-foot well,  
                      One that, before the judgment, carries poor souls to hell.

Adriana            Why, man, what is the matter?

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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?

Dromio  
of Syracuse I know not at whose suit he is arrested well;  
But is in a suit of buff which 'rested him, that can I tell.  
Will you send him, mistress, redemption, the money in his desk?

Adriana Go fetch it, sister.

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

Dromio  
of Syracuse 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 O yes, if any hour meet a sergeant, a' turns back for very fear.

Adriana As if time were in debt - how fondly dost thou reason!

Dromio  
of Syracuse Time is a very bankrupt, and owes more than he's worth to season.  
Nay, he's a thief too: - have you not heard men say  
That time comes stealing on by night and day?  
If a' be in debt and theft, and a sergeant in the way,  
Hath he not reason to turn back an hour in a day?

Re-enter LUCIANA, with the money.

Adriana Go, Dromio, there's the money. Bear it straight,  
And bring thy master home immediately.  
Come, sister, I am pressed down with conceit -  
Conceit, my comfort and my injury.

**Exeunt**

**Scene 3. Before 'The Porpentine'.**

**Enter ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE.**

Antipholus  
of Syracuse There's not a man I meet but doth salute me  
As if I were their well-acquainted friend,  
And everyone doth call me by my name.  
Some tender money to me, some invite me,  
Some other give me thanks for kindnesses,  
Some offer me commodities to buy;  
Even now a tailor called me in his shop

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

And showed me silks that he had bought for me,  
And therewithal took measure of my body.  
Sure, these are but imaginary wiles,  
And Lapland sorcerers inhabit here.

**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-apparelled?

Antipholus

of Syracuse            What gold is this? What Adam dost thou mean?

Dromio

of Syracuse            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            I understand thee not.

Dromio

of Syracuse            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            What, thou mean'st 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 puts 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            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:  
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

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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 as to say `God make me a light wench'. It is written they appear to men like angels of light: light is an effect of fire, and fire will burn; ergo, light wenches will burn. Come not near her.

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

Dromio

of Syracuse           Master, if you do, expect spoonmeat, or bespeak a long spoon.

Antipholus

of Syracuse           Why, Dromio?

Dromio

of Syracuse           Marry, he must have along spoon that must eat with the devil.

Antipholus

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

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

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 cherry-stone;  
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           `Fly pride' says the peacock. Mistress, that you know.

**Exeunt** ANTIPHOLUS and DROMIO.

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;  
Both one and other he denies me now.  
The reason that I gather he is mad,  
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.  
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  
My ring away. This course I fittest choose,  
For forty ducats is too much to lose.

Exit

### Scene 4. The Mart.

**Enter** ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS with 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,  
                             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 EPHEBUS, with a rope's end.

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

Dromio

of Ephesus            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            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]

Officer

                             Good sir, be patient.

Dromio

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

Officer

                             Good now, hold thy tongue.

Dromio

of Ephesus            Nay, rather persuade him to hold his hands.

Antipholus

of Ephesus            Thou whoreson, senseless villain!

Dromio

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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

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

Antipholus  
of Ephesus Come, go along; my wife is coming yonder.  
Dromio  
of Ephesus Mistress, respice finem - `respect your end'; or rather, to prophesy like the parrot, `beware the rope's end'.  
Antipholus  
of Ephesus [Beating DROMIO] Wilt thou still talk?  
Courtesan How say you now? Is not your husband mad?  
Adriana His incivility confirms no less.  
Good Doctor Pinch, you are a conjurer;  
Establish him in his true sense again,  
And I will please you what you will demand.  
Luciana Alas, how fiery and how sharp he looks!  
Courtesan Mark how he trembles in his ecstasy.  
Pinch Give me your hand, and let me feel your pulse.  
Antipholus  
of Ephesus 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.  
I conjure thee by all the saints in heaven.  
Antipholus  
of Ephesus Peace, doting wizard, peace! I am not mad.  
Adriana O that thou wert not, poor distressed soul!  
Antipholus  
of Ephesus You minion, you, are these your customers?  
Did this companion with the saffron face  
Revel and feast it at my house today,  
Whilst upon me the guilty doors were shut,  
And I denied to enter in my house?  
Adriana O husband, God doth know you dined at home,  
Where would you had remained until this time,  
Free from these slanders and this open shame.  
Antipholus  
of Ephesus Dined at home! [To DROMIO] Thou villain, what sayst thou?

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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

Antipholus  
of Ephesus And did she not 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.

Antipholus  
of Ephesus And did not I in rage depart from thence?

Dromio  
of Ephesus In verity you did; my bones bears witness,  
That since have felt the vigour of his rage.

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

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

Antipholus  
of Ephesus 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 Ephesus Money by me! Heart and good will you might,  
But surely, master, not a rag of money.

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

Adriana He came to me, and I delivered it.

Luciana And I am witness with her that she did.

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

Pinch 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] And why dost thou deny the bag of gold?

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Adriana 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.

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

Adriana O bind him, bind him, let him not come near me!

**Enter** THREE or FOUR and offer to bind him. He strives.

Pinch More company! The fiend is strong within him.

Luciana Ay me, poor man, how pale and wan he looks.

Antipholus  
of Ephesus What, will you murder me? Thou, gaoler, thou,  
I am thy prisoner; wilt thou suffer them  
To make a rescue?

Officer Masters, let him go.  
He is my prisoner, and you shall not have him.

Pinch Go bind this man, for he is frantic too.  
[DROMIO OF EPHEBUS is bound]

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

Officer 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.  
Good master doctor, see him safe conveyed  
Home to my house. O most unhappy day!

Antipholus  
of Ephesus O most unhappy strumpet!

Dromio  
of Ephesus Master, I am here entered in bond for you.

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

Dromio  
of Ephesus 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 his ASSISTANTS carrying off ANTIPHOLUS and DROMIO.

Say now, whose suit is he arrested at?

Officer One Angelo, a goldsmith; do you know him?

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Adriana I know the man. What is the sum he owes?  
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 Whenas your husband all in rage today  
Came to my house and took away my ring -  
The ring I saw upon his finger now -  
Straight after did I meet him with a chain.  
Adriana It may be so, but I did never see it.  
Come, gaoler, bring me where the goldsmith is;  
I long to know the truth hereof at large.

**Enter** ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE and DROMIO OF SYRACUSE, with their rapiers drawn.

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.  
Officer Away, they'll kill us!  
[Run all out as fast as may be, frightened]  
Antipholus  
of Syracuse 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;  
Therefore away, to get our stuff aboard.

**Exeunt**

## ACT 5

### Scene 1. Before `The Priory`.

**Enter** 2nd 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.

2nd Merchant            How is the man esteemed here in the city?

Angelo                    Of very reverend reputation, sir,  
Of credit infinite, highly beloved,  
Second to none that lives here in the city.  
His word might bear my wealth at any time.

2nd Merchant            Speak softly; yonder, as I think, he walks.

**Enter** ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE and DROMIO OF SYRACUSE again.

Angelo                    'Tis so; and that self chain about his neck  
Which he forswore most monstrously to have.  
Good sir, draw near to me; I'll speak to him.  
Signor Antipholus, I wonder much  
That you would put me to this shame and trouble,  
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,  
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.

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

Antipholus  
of Syracuse            Who heard me to deny it or forswear it?

2nd 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.  
I'll prove mine honour and mine honesty  
Against thee presently, if thou dar'st stand.

2nd Merchant            I dare, and do defy thee for a villain.  
[They draw]  
Enter ADRIANA, LUCIANA, COURTESAN, and OTHERS.

Adriana                    Hold, hurt him not for God's sake; he is mad.  
Some get within him, take his sword away.  
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.

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

**Exeunt** ANTIPHOLUS and DROMIO to the priory.

**Enter** Emilia, the Lady ABBESS.

Abbess                    Be quiet, people! Wherefore throng you hither?

Adriana                  To fetch my poor distracted husband hence.  
Let us come in, that we may bind him fast  
And bear him home for his recovery.

Angelo                    I knew he was not in his perfect wits.

2nd Merchant            I am sorry now that I did draw on him.

Abbess                    How long hath this possession held the man?

Adriana                  This week he hath been heavy, sour, sad,  
And much 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?  
Buried some dear friend? Hath not else his eye  
Strayed his affection in unlawful love,  
A sin prevailing much in youthful men,  
Who give their eyes the liberty of gazing?  
Which of these sorrows is he subject to?

Adriana                  To none of these, except it be the last;  
Namely, some love that drew him oft from home.

Abbess                    You should for that have reprehended him.

Adriana                  Why, so I did.

Abbess                    Ay, but not rough enough.

Adriana                  As roughly as my modesty would let me.

Abbess                    Haply in private.

Adriana                  And in assemblies too.

Abbess                    Ay, but not enough.

Adriana                  It was the copy of our conference.  
In bed, he slept not for my urging it,  
At board, he fed not for my urging it,  
Alone, it was the subject of my theme,  
In company I often glanced at it;  
Still did I tell him it was vile and bad.

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

Luciana                  She never reprehended him but mildly,

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

When he demeaned himself rough, rude, and wildly.  
Why bear you these rebukes and answer not?

- Adriana She did betray me to mine 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,  
And it shall privilege him from your hands  
Till I have brought him to his wits again,  
Or lose my labour in assaying it.
- Adriana I will attend my husband, be his nurse,  
Diet his sickness, for it is my office,  
And will have no attorney but myself;  
And therefore let me have him home with me.
- Abbess Be patient, for I will not let him stir  
Till I have used the approved means I have,  
With wholesome syrups, drugs, and holy prayers,  
To make of him a formal man again.  
It is a branch and parcel of mine oath,  
A charitable duty of my order.  
Therefore depart, and leave him here with me.
- Adriana I will not hence and leave my husband here;  
And ill it doth beseem your holiness  
To separate the husband and the wife.
- Abbess Be quiet, and depart; thou shalt not have him.
- Exit**
- Luciana Complain unto the duke of this indignity.
- Adriana Come, go; I will fall prostrate at his feet,  
And never rise until my tears and prayers  
Have won his grace to come in person hither  
And take perforce my husband from the abbess.
- 2nd Merchant By this I think the dial points at five.  
Anon, I'm sure, the duke himself in person  
Comes this way to the melancholy vale,  
The place of death and sorry execution  
Behind the ditches of the abbey here.
- Angelo Upon what cause?
- 2nd Merchant To see a reverend Syracusan merchant,  
Who put unluckily into this bay  
Against the laws and statutes of this town,  
Beheaded publicly for his offence.
- 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, barehead, with the HEADSMAN and other OFFICERS.
- Duke Yet once again proclaim it publicly,  
If any friend will pay the sum for him,  
He shall not die; so much we tender him.
- Adriana Justice, most sacred duke, against the abbess.
- Duke She is a virtuous and a reverend lady;  
It cannot be that she hath done thee wrong.
- Adriana May it please your grace, Antipholus my husband,

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Who I made lord of me and all I had  
At your important letters, this ill day  
A most outrageous fit of madness took him,  
That 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, anything his rage did like.  
Once did I get him bound, and sent him home,  
Whilst to take order for the wrongs I went,  
That here and there his fury had committed.  
Anon, I wot not by what strong escape,  
He broke from those that had the guard of him,  
And with his mad attendant and himself,  
Each one with ireful passion, with drawn swords  
Met us again, and, madly bent on us,  
Chased us away; till, raising of more aid,  
We came again to bind them. Then they fled  
Into this abbey, whither we pursued them,  
And here the abbess shuts the gates on us  
And will not suffer us to fetch him out,  
Nor send him forth that we may bear him hence.  
Therefore, most gracious duke, with thy command  
Let him be brought forth, and borne hence for help.

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

**Enter** a MESSENGER.

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

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

Messenger            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, be gone!

Duke                    Come, stand by me, fear nothing. Guard with halberds!

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

**Enter** ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS and DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

Antipholus

of Ephesus            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

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

That then I lost for thee, now grant me justice.

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

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

Duke Discover how, and thou shalt find me just.

Antipholus  
of Ephesus This day, great duke, she shut the doors upon me  
While she with harlots feasted in my house.

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

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

Luciana Ne'er may I look on day nor sleep on night  
But she tells to your highness simple truth.

Angelo [Aside] O perjured woman! They are both forsworn;  
In this the madman justly chargeth them.

Antipholus  
of Ephesus My liege, I am advised what I say,  
Neither disturbed with the effect of wine,  
Nor heady-rash provoked with raging ire,  
Albeit my wrongs might make one wiser mad.  
This woman locked me out this day from dinner;  
That goldsmith there, were he not packed with her,  
Could witness it, for he was with me then,  
Who parted with me to go fetch a chain,  
Promising to bring it to the Porpentine,  
Where Balthasar and I did dine together.  
Our dinner done, and he not coming thither,  
I went to seek him. In the street I met him,  
And in his company that gentleman.  
There did this perjured goldsmith swear me down  
That I this day of him received the chain,  
Which, God he knows, I saw not; for the which  
He did arrest me with an officer.  
I did obey, and sent my peasant home  
For certain ducats; he with none returned.  
Then fairly I bespoke the officer  
To go in person with me to my house.  
By th' way we met  
My wife, her sister, and a rabble more  
Of vile confederates; along with them  
They brought one Pinch, a hungry lean-faced villain,  
A mere anatomy, a mountebank,  
A threadbare juggler and a fortune-teller,  
A needy, hollow-eyed, sharp-looking wretch,  
A living dead man. This pernicious slave,  
Forsooth, took on him as a conjurer,  
And, gazing in mine eyes, feeling my pulse,  
And with no face, as 'twere, 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;

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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 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.
- 2nd Merchant Besides, I will be sworn these ears of mine  
Heard you confess you had the chain of him  
After you first forswore it on the mart,  
And thereupon I drew my sword on you;  
And then you fled into this abbey here,  
From whence I think you are come by miracle.
- Antipholus  
of Ephesus I never came within these abbey walls,  
Nor ever didst thou draw thy sword on me.  
I never saw the chain, so help me heaven;  
And this is false you burden me withal.
- Duke Why, what an intricate impeach is this!  
I think you all have drunk of Circe's cup.  
If here you housed him, here he would have been;  
If he were mad, he would not plead so coldly.  
[To ADRIANA] You say he dined at home; the goldsmith here  
Denies that saying. [To DROMIO] 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 As sure, my liege, as I do see your grace.
- Duke Why, this is strange. Go, call the abbess hither.  
I think you are all mated, or stark mad.
- Exit ONE to the Abbess.**
- Egeon Most mighty duke, vouchsafe me speak a word;  
Haply I see a friend will save my life  
And pay the sum that may deliver me.
- Duke Speak freely, Syracusian, what thou wilt.
- Egeon Is not your name, sir, called Antipholus?  
And is not that your bondman Dromio?
- Dromio  
of Ephesus Within this hour I was his bondman, sir,  
But he, I thank him, gnawed in two my cords.  
Now I am 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.

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

For lately we were bound as you are now.  
You are not Pinch's patient are you, sir?

Egeon Why look you strange on me? - you know me well.

Antipholus

of Ephesus I never saw you in my life till now.

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

Antipholus

of Ephesus Neither.

Egeon Dromio, nor thou?

Dromio

of Ephesus No, trust me, sir, nor I.

Egeon I am sure thou dost?

Dromio

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

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

Antipholus

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

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

**Enter** Emilia 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 One of these men is genius to the other;  
And so of these. Which is the natural man,  
And which the spirit? Who deciphers them?

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Dromio  
of Syracuse I, sir, am Dromio; command him away.

Dromio  
of Ephesus I, sir, am Dromio; pray let me stay.

Antipholus  
of Syracuse 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  
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:  
These two Antipholus', these two so like,  
And these two Dromios, one in semblance -  
Besides his urging of her wrack at sea.  
These are the parents to these children,  
Which accidentally are met together.

Egeon  
If I dream not, thou art Emilia.  
If thou art she, tell me, where is that son  
That floated with thee on the fatal raft?

Abbess  
By men of Epidamnum he and I  
And the twin Dromio all were taken up;  
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  
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 And I 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 you not my husband?

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Antipholus  
of Ephesus 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,  
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 And you, sir, for this chain arrested me.

Angelo I think I did, sir; I deny it not.

Adriana I sent you money, sir, to be your bail  
By Dromio, but I think he brought it not.

Dromio  
of Ephesus No, none by me.

Antipholus  
of Syracuse This purse of ducats I received from you,  
And Dromio my man did bring them me.  
I see we still did meet each other's man,  
And I was ta'en for him, and he for me,  
And thereupon these errors are arose.

Antipholus  
of Ephesus These ducats pawn I for my father here.

Duke It shall not need; thy father hath his life.

Courtesan Sir, I must have that diamond from you.

Antipholus  
of Ephesus 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;  
And all that are assembled in this place,  
That by this sympathized 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  
Of you, my sons, and till this present hour  
My heavy burden ne'er delivered.  
The duke, my husband, and my children both,  
And you the calendars of their nativity,  
Go to a gossips' feast, and joy with me.  
After so long grief, such festivity!

Duke With all my heart I'll gossip at this feast.

**Exeunt** all but the two DROMIOS and the two brothers ANTIPHOLUS.

Dromio  
of Syracuse Master, shall I fetch your stuff from shipboard?

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Antipholus

of Ephesus

Dromio, what stuff of mine hast thou embarked?

Dromio

of Syracuse

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** the brothers ANTIPHOLUS.

Dromio

of Syracuse

There is a fat friend at your master's house,  
That kitchened me for you today at dinner.  
She now shall be my sister, not my wife.

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

Not I, sir; you are my elder.

Dromio

of Ephesus

That's a question! How shall we try it?

Dromio

of Syracuse

We'll draw cuts for the senior; till then, lead thou first.

Dromio

of Ephesus

Nay then, thus:  
We came into the world like brother and brother,  
And now let's go hand in hand, not one before another.

**Exeunt**

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