

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS

A line-by-line translation

Act 1, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Enter the DUKE, EGEON, JAILER, and other attendants

EGEON

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

DUKE

Merchant of Syracuse, plead no more.
I am not partial to infringe our laws.
5 The enmity and discord which of late
Sprung from the rancorous outrage of your duke
To merchants, our well-dealing countrymen,
Who, wanting guilders to redeem their lives,
Have seal'd his rigorous statutes with their bloods,
10 Excludes all pity from our threatening looks.
For, since the mortal and intestine jars
'Twixt thy seditious countrymen and us,
It hath in solemn synods been decreed
Both by the Syracusians and ourselves,
15 To admit no traffic to our adverse towns.
Nay, more, if any born at Ephesus
Be seen at any Syracusian marts and fairs;
Again, if any Syracusian born
Come to the bay of Ephesus, he dies,
20 His goods confiscate to the Duke's dispose,
Unless a thousand marks be levied
To quit the penalty and to ransom him.
Thy substance, valued at the highest rate,
Cannot amount unto a hundred marks;
25 Therefore by law thou art condemned to die.

EGEON

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

DUKE

Well, Syracusian, say in brief the cause
Why thou dep-artedst from thy native home
30 And for what cause thou camest to Ephesus.

Shakescleare Translation

The DUKE, EGEON, JAILER and other attendants enter.

EGEON

Go on, Solinus, sentence me to death.
That will put me out of my misery.

DUKE

Merchant ¹ of Syracuse, stop pleading. I'm not in the mood to violate our laws. All this recent hostility and chaos is your resentful duke's fault. When our honest merchants don't have the money ² to pay their ransoms, he's been using his own strict laws to execute our honest merchants. So, we're not going to show any pity. Ever since the fatal civil wars between your unruly countrymen and our people, it's been decreed in parliaments both by the people of Syracuse and by us that no one will be allowed to enter the opposing town. And, what's more, if anyone born in Ephesus is seen in any markets or fairs in Syracuse, or if anyone born in Syracuse comes to the bay of Ephesus, he dies. In addition, the Duke takes possession of his goods unless a thousand marks ³ are paid to lift the sentence and pay the ransom. Even at the highest rate, you can't be worth a hundred marks. So, by law, you are condemned to die ⁴.

EGEON

Still, I do have one comfort: when you stop speaking ⁵, my miseries will be gone like the setting sun.

DUKE

Well, Syracusian, quickly say what led you to leave your native home and why you came to Ephesus.

¹ "Merchant" at the time referred solely to someone who sold goods in a foreign country—a risky venture offering possible riches or loss of everything through shipwreck.

² The term "guilder" actually refers to specific types of coins used in the Netherlands and Germany during Shakespeare's time.

³ A "mark" was equal to 2/3 of a British pound (a unit of English money). 1000 marks is much more than an average person at the time could ever afford to pay.

⁴ In short, if citizens from Syracuse are found in Ephesus (or vice versa), they're condemned to death unless they can pay a thousand marks.

⁵ The implication of these words is, "When your sentence is carried out and I am killed."

EGEON

A heavier task could not have been imposed
 Than I to speak my griefs unspeakable;
 Yet, that the world may witness that my end
 Was wrought by nature, not by vile offense,
 35 I'll utter what my sorrow gives me leave.
 In Syracuse was I born, and wed
 Unto a woman happy but for me,
 And by me, had not our hap been bad.
 With her I lived in joy. Our wealth increased
 40 By prosperous voyages I often made
 To Epidamnum, till my factor's death
 And the great care of goods at random left
 Drew me from kind embracements of my spouse;
 From whom my absence was not six months old
 45 Before herself— almost at fainting under
 The pleasing punishment that women bear—
 Had made provision for her following me
 And soon and safe arrivèd where I was.
 There had she not been long but she became
 50 A joyful mother of two goodly sons,
 And, which was strange, the one so like the other
 As could not be distinguished but by names.
 That very hour, and in the selfsame inn,
 A meaner woman was deliverèd
 55 Of such a burden, male twins, both alike.
 Those, for their parents were exceeding poor,
 I bought and brought up to attend my sons.
 My wife, not meanly proud of two such boys,
 Made daily motions for our home return.
 60 Unwilling, I agreed. Alas, too soon
 We came aboard.
 A league from Epidamnum had we sailed
 Before the always-wind-obeying deep
 Gave any tragic instance of our harm;
 65 But longer did we not retain much hope;
 For what obscured light the heavens did grant
 Did but convey unto our fearful minds
 A doubtful warrant of immediate death,
 Which though myself would gladly have embraced,
 70 Yet the incessant weepings of my wife,
 Weeping before for what she saw must come,
 And piteous plainings of the pretty babes,
 That mourned for fashion, ignorant what to fear,
 Forced me to seek delays for them and me.
 75 And this it was, for other means was none:
 The sailors sought for safety by our boat
 And left the ship, then sinking-ripe, to us.
 My wife, more careful for the latter-born,
 Had fastened him unto a small spare mast,
 80 Such as seafaring men provide for storms.
 To him one of the other twins was bound,
 Whilst I had been like heedful of the other.
 The children thus disposed, my wife and I,
 Fixing our eyes on whom our care was fixed,
 85 Fastened ourselves at either end the mast
 And, floating straight, obedient to the stream,
 Was carried towards Corinth, as we thought.
 At length the sun, gazing upon the earth,
 Dispersed those vapors that offended us,
 90 And by the benefit of his wished light
 The seas waxed calm, and we discoverèd
 Two ships from far, making amain to us,
 Of Corinth that, of Epidaurus this.
 But ere they came,— O, let me say no more!
 95 Gather the sequel by that went before.

DUKE

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

EGEON

O, had the gods done so, I had not now
 Worthily termed them merciless to us.
 100 For, ere the ships could meet by twice five leagues,
 We were encountered by a mighty rock,

EGEON

There couldn't be a more severe punishment than making
 me speak my unspeakable sorrows. However, so that
 everyone knows that the end of my life was due to natural
 love for my son, not due to vile crime, I'll say as much as my
 pain allows me. I was born in Syracuse and I married a
 woman who I would have made happy if we hadn't had bad
 fortune. We lived together in joy. We got wealthier since I
 was frequently making prosperous trips to Epidamnum,
 but, when my agent died, I had to leave my wife's kind
 embraces to deal with all the goods left over. I hadn't been
 gone six months before my wife, almost fainting because of
 her pregnancy, had made plans to follow me and I soon
 safely joined me. She hadn't been there long before she
 became the happy mother of two wonderful sons, and,
 strangely, they were so similar that they couldn't be told
 apart except by their names. The same hour, in the same
 inn, a poorer woman gave birth to male identical twins. The
 parents were extremely poor, so I bought those twins to be
 my sons' servants. My wife, who was extremely proud of our
 kids, tried to convince me every day that we should go
 home. Reluctantly, I agreed. Unfortunately, we set sail too
 soon. We'd sailed a league ⁶ from Epidamnum before the
 waters, which always obey the wind, gave some sign of
 danger. Hope quickly faded because the stormy sky made
 us believe we were all doomed to die immediately. I would
 have gladly embraced death, but when I heard my wife's
 incessant weeping when she saw what was coming, and her
 compassionate laments for our beautiful babies who were
 sobbing in imitation of their mother although they didn't
 understand why they should be afraid, I looked for ways to
 delay our deaths. This was the only means I could come up
 with: the sailors took our boat to seek safety and left the
 sinking ship to us. My wife, taking more care of the younger
 twin, tied him to a small, extra mast, one of the ones sailors
 have ready in case of storms. One of the other twins was
 tied to him, while I was similarly watching over the other.
 Having taken care of the kids in this way, my wife and I,
 always watching the children, tied ourselves to either end
 of the mast and, floating straight, following the current,
 were carried towards what we thought was Corinth. Finally,
 the sun, looking down on the earth, cleared up the stormy
 winds that were assaulting us, and, thanks to the lucky
 sunlight, the seas calmed down, and we saw two faraway
 ships coming towards us, one from Corinth, one from
 Epidaurus. But before they came—oh, don't make me go
 on! Predict what comes next from what I've already told
 you.

DUKE

No, go on, old man. Don't stop here, for we might just pity
 you and not pardon you.

EGEON

Oh, if the gods had pitied us, I wouldn't have to call them
 merciless now. For, before the ships could get within ten
 leagues of each other, we ran into a huge rock which
 violently crashed into our ship, splitting it in the middle; so

⁶ A league is a nautical unit of
 measurement equal to about 3.5
 miles.

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

DUKE

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

EGEON

My youngest boy, and yet my eldest care,
 125 At eighteen years became inquisitive
 After his brother, and importuned me
 That his attendant— so his case was like,
 Reft of his brother, but retained his name—
 Might bear him company in the quest of him,
 130 Whom whilst I laboured of a love to see,
 I hazarded the loss of whom I loved.
 Five summers have I spent in farthest Greece,
 Roaming clean through the bounds of Asia,
 And, coasting homeward, came to Ephesus,
 135 Hopeless to find, yet loath to leave unsought
 Or that or any place that harbors men.
 But here must end the story of my life;
 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,
 145 My soul would sue as advocate for thee.
 But though thou art adjudgèd to the death,
 And passèd sentence may not be recalled
 But to our honour's great disparagement,
 Yet will I favor thee in what I can.
 150 Therefore, merchant, I'll limit thee this day
 To seek thy life by beneficial help.
 Try all the friends thou hast in Ephesus;
 Beg thou, or borrow, to make up the sum,
 And live. If no, then thou art doom'd to die.—
 155 Jailer, take him to thy custody.

JAILER

I will, my lord.

EGEON

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

Exeunt

you see, in this unjust splitting, fortune had given each of us equal delights and sorrows. My wife's half of the ship, poor woman, seemingly weighing less but not carrying less woe, was carried more quickly by the wind, and we saw the three of them taken up by fishermen of Corinth (or so we assumed). Eventually, another ship got to our half, and, knowing who they'd had the good fortune to save, gave us a big welcome. They would have robbed the Corinthian fishermen of their catches if their ship hadn't been so slow. Then they steered the ship for home. So, now you've heard how I was severed from my happiness and that misfortunes have kept me alive to tell sad stories of my own tragedies.

DUKE

And for the sake of those you cry for, do me the favor of telling us in detail what happened to them and you up till now.

EGEON

My last-born boy, who's also my first source of worry, started wondering about his brother when he was eighteen, and begged me that he and his servant (who had lost his brother, too, but kept his brother's name) could go in search of him. While I also desperately wanted to see him, I risked the loss of the son I loved. I've spent five summers in the far corners of Greece, roaming to the ends of Asia, and, traveling homeward, I came to Ephesus, knowing I should have no hope that I'd find my son here but unwilling not to search this or any place where men live. But my life story must end here, and I'd be happy to die now if all my travels could reassure me that my sons were still alive.

DUKE

Unlucky Egeon, you've been marked by the fates to endure the worst of misfortunes. Now, trust me, were it not illegal and against my duty as king, my vow, and my dignity, which princes can't violate even when they want to, I'd advocate on your behalf. But even though you're sentenced to death, and I can't take back the sentence without disgracing my honor, I'll do what I can to help you. Therefore, merchant, I'll give you just one day—today—to try to get help to save your life. Try all the friends you have in Ephesus. Beg or borrow to get the money you need, and, if you succeed, you'll live. If you fail, then you're doomed to die. Jailer, take him away.

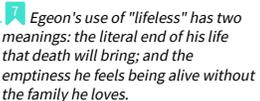
JAILER

I will, my lord.

EGEON

I wander hopeless and helpless,
 Only postponing my lifeless death.

All exit.

 Egeon's use of "lifeless" has two meanings: the literal end of his life that death will bring; and the emptiness he feels being alive without the family he loves.

Act 1, Scene 2

Shakespeare

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

FIRST MERCHANT

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

Exit DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

FIRST MERCHANT

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

FIRST MERCHANT

Sir, I commend you to your own content.

Exit FIRST MERCHANT exits.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

Enter DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Shakesclore Translation

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

FIRST MERCHANT

You'd better tell people you're from Epidamnum or your goods will be taken. This very day, a merchant from Syracuse was arrested for arriving here, and, since he can't pay his ransom, he will die at sundown according to the town's law. Here's your money I was keeping for you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Go bring it to the Centaur, where we're staying, and stay there, Dromio, till I come to you. It'll be lunchtime within the hour. Until then, I'll watch how people behave around town, look at the traders, gaze at the buildings, and then return and sleep within the inn, for I'm stiff and tired from traveling for so long. Get away, you.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Many men would take you literally and get away for good, having such an easy opportunity.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE exits.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

He's a trusty villain , sir, that often, when I'm feeling down, lightens my mood with his jokes. So, will you walk around town with me and then dine with me at my inn?

 "villain" is used playfully here.

FIRST MERCHANT

I've been invited, sir, to meet some merchants from whom I'm hoping to gain something. I hope you'll pardon me. Soon, at five o'clock if it pleases you, I'll meet you at the market and then accompany you until bedtime. I have to leave you now to take care of some business.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Goodbye till then. I'll let myself get lost in the streets as I wander up and down to see the city.

FIRST MERCHANT

Sir, I hope you do so to your heart's content.

FIRST MERCHANT exits.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

He who hopes I find my heart's content hopes for what I cannot have. In this huge world, I'm like a drop of water looking for another drop throughout the ocean. When the first drop doesn't find that second drop he's looking for, unseen, questioning, he loses track of himself. So I, in search of my mother and my brother, unhappily lose myself.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS enters.

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

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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 EPHEBUS

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

[To himself] Here comes the calendar that tells me exactly
how old I am .

[To DROMIO OF EPHEBUS] What now? How is it possible
you're back so soon?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Back so soon? More like came too late! The fish is burning,
the pig is falling off the spit, the clock has struck twelve. My
mistress made it one o'clock  by slapping me across the
cheek. She is so hot-tempered because the meat is cold.
The meat is cold because you don't come home. You don't
come home because you have no appetite. You have no
appetite because you already ate, but we who have been
fasting and praying  are still fasting as if we're being
remorseful for your sin of staying away from home.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Stop your long-windedness, sir. Tell me this, I pray :
where have you left the money that I gave you?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Oh, the sixpence that you gave me last Wednesday to pay
the saddler for my mistress's saddle strap? The saddler took it,
sir. I didn't keep it.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I'm not in a joking mood now. Tell me and don't beat
around the bush: where's the money? We're strangers
here—how dare you take the risk of not keeping the money
with you?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Please, sir, make jokes while you sit at lunch. I've been
running from my mistress post-haste . If I go back, she'll
treat me like a post indeed, for she'll take out her anger at
you on my head. I think your appetite, like mine, should be
your clock, and let you know when to come home without
needing a messenger.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Come, Dromio, come, these jokes aren't appropriate right
now. Save them for a happier time than this. Where's the
gold I gave you to keep safe?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Come on, you rascal, quit this foolishness, and tell me how
you've done what I commanded you to do.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

My only command was to fetch you from the market and
bring you back to your house, the Phoenix, sir, for lunch. My
mistress and her sister are waiting for you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Now, as I am a Christian, answer me in what safe place you
have left my money, or I will break that chattering head of
yours that's playing tricks on me when I'm unwell. Where is
the thousand marks  you got from me?

 Since the Dromio twins and the Antipholus twins were born on the same day, Dromio's age will always be the same as Antipholus's age.

 There are thirteen strikes: the clock strikes twelve and Adriana strikes Dromio of Ephesus once.

 To "fast and pray" is an important part of the Judeo-Christian tradition. By doing so, one shows penitence (sorrow for having sinned) and humbles oneself before God. Dromio is saying that the entire household is having to "fast," or postpone dinner for Antipholus's sin of being late.

 Notice that Antipholus has picked up on Dromio's language. By using the word "pray," he extends the joke.

 In the original text, "in post" refers to traveling by post-horses. Doing so would mean traveling (by Renaissance standards) very quickly. Dromio is saying that he ran from the house as fast as he could. The joke comes in when he says that if he returns without his master, he "shall be post indeed." He will, in other words, be beaten by his mistress.

 How much money did Egeon need to avoid the death penalty? Oh, that's right—a thousand marks.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What, wilt thou flout me thus unto my face,
Being forbid? There, take you that, sir knave. [*beats*
DROMIO OF EPHEBUS]

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

What mean you, sir? For God's sake, hold your hands.
95 Nay, an you will not, sir, I'll take my heels.

Exit DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Upon my life, by some device or other
The villain is o'errought of all my money.
They say this town is full of cozenage,
As nimble jugglers that deceive the eye,
100 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.
105 I'll to the Centaur to go seek this slave.
I greatly fear my money is not safe.

Exit

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

I have some marks ⁸ of yours on my head, some of my
mistress's marks on my shoulders, but not a thousand
marks between the two of you. If I should pay you those
again ⁹, sir, you might not take it so well.

⁸ Dromio uses "marks" here to mean bruises from the beatings of Antipholus and Adriana.

⁹ Shakespeare continues the "mark" puns, suggesting that Antipholus would be unhappy if he paid him back the marks, i. e. gave Antipholus the bruises that he himself (Dromio) had received.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Your mistress's marks? What mistress, you rascal ¹⁰, do you have?

¹⁰ In the original text, the word "slave" means both "servant" and "rascal."

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Your wife, sir, my mistress at the Phoenix, she who's fasting
until you come home to lunch and prays you will hurry
home to lunch.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What, will you mock me to my face like this when I told you
not to? There, take that, you rascal. [*Beats DROMIO OF*
EPHEBUS]

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

What do you mean, sir? For God's sake, keep your hands off
me. And if you won't, sir, I'll run for it.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS exits.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I'll be damned! Somehow or other, the villain's been tricked
into giving up all my money. They say this town is full of
tricksters, like nimble jugglers that deceive people's eyes,
sorcerers that perform dark magic to control people's
minds, soul-killing witches that cast spells to deform
people's bodies, disguised cheaters, fast-talking quack
salesmen, and many similar freely sinning folk. If that's
proved to be true, I'll get out of here as soon as I can. I'll go
the Centaur to find this rascal. I greatly fear my money is
not safe.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE exits.

Act 2, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Enter ADRIANA and LUCIANA

ADRIANA

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

LUCIANA

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

ADRIANA

10 Why should their liberty than ours be more?

Shakesclare Translation

ADRIANA and LUCIANA enter.

ADRIANA

Neither my husband nor my servant who I sent running to
find his master have returned? Luciana, it's already two
o'clock.

LUCIANA

Perhaps some merchant has invited him, and he's gone to
lunch somewhere from the market. Remember that men
are masters of their own freedom. Time is their only master,
and when they think it's the right time they come and go as
they wish. Let's eat and not fret.

ADRIANA

Why should men have more freedom than women?

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

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

ADRIANA

This servitude makes you to keep unwed.

LUCIANA

Not this, but troubles of the marriage bed.

ADRIANA

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

LUCIANA

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

ADRIANA

- 30 How if your husband start some otherwhere?

LUCIANA

Till he come home again, I would forbear.

ADRIANA

- Patience unmoved! No marvel though she pause;
They can be meek that have no other cause.
A wretched soul, bruised with adversity
- 35 We bid be quiet when we hear it cry,
But were we burdened with like weight of pain,
As much or more we should ourselves complain.
So thou, that hast no unkind mate to grieve thee,
With urging helpless patience would relieve me;
- 40 But, if thou live to see like right bereft,
This fool-begged patience in thee will be left.

LUCIANA

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

Enter DROMIO OF EPHESUS

ADRIANA

Say, is your tardy master now at hand?

LUCIANA

Because their work takes place outside the house.

ADRIANA

When I treat him like this, he takes it badly.

LUCIANA

Oh, you should know that he restrains your will like a bridle   This play contains many references to lost or transformed identity. Metaphors involving animals (especially donkeys) are often used to emphasize the theme. In this exchange, Luciana tells her sister to accept her husband's dominance over her. Adriana should, in effect, be like an obedient animal. Adriana fights back, saying that ONLY donkeys--not wives--should accept such treatment.

ADRIANA

Only donkeys would be controlled like this.

LUCIANA

Well, being headstrong in your desire for freedom leads only to woe. There's nothing under heaven—whether on land, in sea, or in sky—that isn't bound in some way. The beasts, fish, and birds, are all subject to the control of the males of their species. Man is more godly and is master of all these creatures. Man is lord of the whole world and wild, watery seas. Man has intellectual ability and a soul greater than any fish or birds. Men are masters of women, and lords to their ladies. For those reasons, let yourself be ruled by men's wishes.

ADRIANA

With that servant-like attitude, you'll never get married.

LUCIANA

It's not that. It's just that I don't want to deal with what happens in the marriage bed.

ADRIANA

But, if you were married, you would have some power.

LUCIANA

Before I fall in love, I'll learn to obey.

ADRIANA

What if your husband strayed elsewhere?

LUCIANA

Till he came home, I'd hold out for him.

ADRIANA

What amazing patience! I'm not amazed you hesitate to marry: it's easy to be meek when you have no reason not to be. We tell miserable people who have been mistreated to be quiet when we hear them cry, but if we had the same pain, or more, we should complain just like them. So you, who have no cruel husband to cause you grief, would stop telling me to be patient if you had a man. But, if you lose your rights in the same way that I have, you'll give up this insistence on being patient.

LUCIANA

Well, I will marry one day, if only to try it out. Here comes your servant. Now your husband's on his way.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS enters.

ADRIANA

Tell me, is your tardy master coming soon?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

ADRIANA

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

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

LUCIANA

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

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

ADRIANA

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

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Why, mistress, sure my master is horn mad.

ADRIANA

Horn mad, thou villain!

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

I mean not cuckold mad,
60 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 dinnertime," quoth I. "My gold," quoth he.
"Your meat doth burn," quoth I. "My gold," quoth he.
65 "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

70 Quoth who?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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,
75 For, in conclusion, he did beat me there.

ADRIANA

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

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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 EPHEBUS

No, he's used both hands ² on me, as you can see from my two ears.

ADRIANA

Tell me, did you speak with him? Do you know what he's planning to do?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Yes, yes, he told me his plans by beating me on the my ear.
Curse his hand, I could hardly understand it.

LUCIANA

He spoke so unclearly you couldn't get a feeling for what he meant?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

No, he struck so clearly I could easily feel his blows, and yet he was so confusing that I could hardly understand what was happening.

ADRIANA

But, tell me, please, is he coming home? It seems like he would take great care to please his wife ³.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Why, mistress, surely my master is horn mad ⁴.

ADRIANA

Horn mad, you villain!

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

I don't mean he's a cuckold ⁵, but surely he's stark raving mad. When I asked him to come home to dinner, he asked me for a thousand marks in gold. "It's lunch time," said I. "My gold," said he. "Your meat is burning," said I. "My gold," said he. "Will you come?" said I. "My gold," said he. "Where is the thousand marks I gave you, villain?" "The pig," said I, "is burned." "My gold," said he. "My mistress, sir," said I. "Who cares about your mistress! I don't know your mistress. Damn your mistress!"

LUCIANA

Who said that?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Said my master. "I have," said he, "no house, no wife, no mistress." So I carry this message to you on my shoulders instead of on my tongue, since, in conclusion, he beat me there.

ADRIANA

Go back again, you slave, and bring him home.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Go back again and be beaten home again? For God's sake, send another messenger.

ADRIANA

Go back, slave, or I'll break your head.

² Dromio of Ephesus puns on Adriana's "at hand" (meaning "close by"), referring to Antipholus of Syracuse striking Dromio's ears with his hands.

³ Adriana says this with all the saucy, sarcastic irony in the world

⁴ Dromio means only that his master is as angry (and crazy) as a bull. Adriana hears something different, though. Men whose wives cheated on them were thought to grow horns. These men were called cuckolds. Adriana certainly doesn't want anyone accusing her of cheating on Antipholus.

⁵ Remember that a cuckold is a man whose wife has cheated on him.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

ADRIANA

Hence, prating peasant! Fetch thy master home.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

Exit DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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.
90 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.
95 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 decayèd fair
100 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 stале.

LUCIANA

Self-harming jealousy, fie, beat it hence.

ADRIANA

Unfeeling fools can with such wrongs dispense.
105 I know his eye doth homage otherwhere,
Or else what lets it but he would be here?
Sister, you know he promised me a chain.
Would that alone o' love he would detain,
So he would keep fair quarter with his bed.
110 I see the jewel best enamèled
Will lose his beauty. Yet the gold bides still
That others touch, and often touching will
Wear gold; yet no man that hath a name
By falsehood and corruption doth it shame.
115 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

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

And he'll beat me on the head so that it makes a cross with
the beating you've given me. Between the two of you, I'll
have a holy head.

ADRIANA

Get out, chattering peasant! Bring your master home.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Am I so disrespectful to you as you are to me that you
would throw me about like a football? You throw me out
from here, and he'll throw me out from there. If I can
survive this work, you must cover me in leather like a
football.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS exits.

LUCIANA

Come on now, your face looks so impatient.

ADRIANA

He must be spending time in the company of other women
while I wait at home wishing for his smile. Has my
advancing age taken my alluring beauty from my poor
cheek? Then he's wasted it. Are my speeches boring? Is my
wit bland? If sharp, witty conversation falls apart,
unkindness worsens it more than marble would blunt
something equally sharp. Do these women's bright colors
seduce him? That's not my fault. He's master over all of my
fortunes. What sorrows have I felt that aren't due to him?
He's the cause of everything that's gone wrong with me. His
sunny smile would quickly fix my decaying face. But, like an
unruly deer, he runs from me and eats outside our home.
I'm nothing but his washed-up mistress.

LUCIANA

This jealousy is just harmful to yourself. Come on, get rid of
it.

ADRIANA

Only fools without feelings can move on from such
mistreatment. I know he's been unfaithful to me, or else
why wouldn't he be here? Sister, you know he promised me
a chain. I'd give up the chain if he'd come back to our
marriage and our bed. Even the most beautiful jewel will
lose its beauty. Gold can sometimes last when others put
their dirty fingers on it, and it only sometimes gets worn
down. It's me, and not my husband, who will feel shame
and it's only my reputation that will be ruined by his
falsehood and unfaithfulness. Since my beauty can't
please his eye, I'll weep what's left of my face off, and die
weeping.

LUCIANA

There are so many fools in love at the mercy of their own
jealousy!

All exit.

6 Editors have long struggled with disentangling the imagery and meaning of this passage. The best interpretation is probably that Adriana imagines both herself and her husband as precious jewelry. Even if Antipholus's virtues have been partially worn away through unfaithfulness (tarnishing their relationship and her honor as if it were gold and jewels), he is still precious to her and she wants him to return.

Act 2, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Enter ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Shakespeare Translation

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE enters.

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,
5 I could not speak with Dromio since at first
I sent him from the mart. See, here he comes.

Enter DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

25 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
30 And make a common of my serious hours.
When the sun shines, let foolish gnats make sport,
But creep in crannies when he hides his beams.
If you will jest with me, know my aspect,
And fashion your demeanor to my looks,
35 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 ensconce it
too, or else I shall seek my wit in my shoulders. But I
40 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?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

The gold that I gave to Dromio is safely hidden at the
Centaur, and according to the inn host, Dromio has left
there in order to find me. Given my calculations and what
the host told me, there's no way I could have spoken to
Dromio since I first sent him on his errands from the
market. See, here he comes.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE enters.

How's it going, sir? Are you still in your funny mood? Don't
joke with me again unless you want a beating. You don't
know the Centaur? You received no gold? Your mistress sent
you to bring me home to lunch? My house was at the
Phoenix? Were you crazy that you so insanely answered me
like this?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

What answer, sir? When did I say anything like that?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Just now, right here, less than half an hour ago.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Villain, you just denied having received the gold from me
and told me of a wife and a lunch. I hope you felt that I was
displeased by that.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I'm glad to see you in this merry mood. What does this
joking mean? I ask you, master, tell me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Oh, do you mock me to my face? Do you think I joke? Okay,
then, take that and that. *[Beats DROMIO OF SYRACUSE]*

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Stop, sir, for God's sake! Now your jokes are in earnest. How
have I earned this beating?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Just because sometimes I make jokes with you and chat
with you, you think you can use our friendship as an excuse
to mock me and make fun of me when I'm serious. When
I'm kind to you, it's like the sun's out, and you can joke with
me like bugs out playing, but when the sun goes down, and
I'm in a bad mood, creep back into your hole. If you're going
to joke with me, look at my face and behave accordingly, or
I'll beat this lesson into your sconce .

 "Sconce" is another word for "head," but it can also mean a small fort, a meaning that Dromio takes up in the next line.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

You call it my "sconce"? If it will make you stop battering at
it, I'd rather you call it my "head." And if you keep beating
me a while, I'd better get a protective screen for my head
and cover it too , or else my brains will be beaten into my
shoulders. But, tell me, sir, why do you beat me?

 In the original text, Dromio continues the wordplay by using the word "sconce" to mean "a protective covering," and the word "ensconce" to mean "to cover."

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Do you not know?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I only know that I'm beaten.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Should I tell you why?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

45 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

50 Was there ever any man thus beaten out of season, When in the "why" and the "wherefore" is neither rhyme nor reason? Well, sir, I thank you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Thank me, sir, for what?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

In good time, sir, what's that?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Basting.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

60 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

65 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

Yes, sir, and for what reason, for they say that every "why" has a reason behind it.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

First, "why": for mocking me. Then, "for what reason": for mocking me again the second time.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Was any man in history so wrongly beaten, when neither the "why" or the "for what reason" have any truth or logic in them? Well, sir, I thank you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Thank me for what, sir?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Well, sir, for giving me something for nothing .

 Dromio of Syracuse jokes that Antipholus has given him "something" (the beating) for "nothing" (Dromio didn't do the things he's accused of doing).

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Next time, I'll do the reverse and give you nothing for something. But, tell me, sir, is it lunchtime?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

No, sir, I think the meat still needs the thing that I've gotten .

 Dromio is playing on the double meaning of the verb "to baste": it can mean either 1) to pour juices or liquid fat onto meat during cooking to keep it moist 2) to thrash or beat someone. So, Dromio is saying that lunch isn't ready because the meat hasn't been basted, whereas Dromio himself has been "basted" by his master.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Quickly, sir, what's that thing?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Basting.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Well, sir, then the meat will be dry.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

If it is, sir, I hope you'll eat none of it.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Your reason?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

It might make you choleric  and then you'll give me another painful beating.

 The four humors were moods associated with food, weather, and bodily fluids. A "choleric" temperament ("choleric" is used in the original text) was associated with anger, heat and dryness, so eating dry food could cause a person to become choleric, and, therefore, angry.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Well, sir, you'll find a good time to joke eventually. There's a right time for everything.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I would have denied that before you were so angry.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

How would you have denied that, sir?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

70 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

75 May he not do it by fine and recovery?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

80 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

85 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

90 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

95 Certain ones, then.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Name them.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Well, sir, by a logic as plain and simple as the plain bald
head of Father Time himself. ⁶

⁶ Time was personified as an old, bald man.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Let's hear it.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

There's no time for a man to recover his hair when he's
naturally become bald.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Can't he do it by fine and recovery ⁷?

⁷ "Fine and recovery" was a legal process in the period.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Yes, he could pay a fine to buy a wig and recover the hair
that another man had lost.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Why is Time so stingy about hair when there's so much of it
to go around?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Because it's also shared by beasts, and he made up for
taking people's hair from them by giving them brains.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Well, there are many men with more hair than brains.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

But all of those men have enough brains to lose their hair.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Ah, you just concluded that hairy men deal plainly and have
no brains.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

The plainer they deal, the sooner they lose their hair. ⁸ Yet
they're happy to lose it.

⁸ Dromio uses a bawdy meaning of "plain-dealing" here, which suggests that men who have straightforward sexual relations with women are more likely to lose their hair from venereal disease.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

For what reason?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

For two reasons, and sound ones too.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

No, not sound reasons, please.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Sure reasons, then.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

No, not sure, in such an unreliable context.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Certain reasons, 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

100 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

105 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

110 Ay, ay, Antipholus, look strange and frown.
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,
115 That never object pleasing in thine eye,
That never touch well welcome to thy hand,
That never meat sweet-savored in thy taste,
Unless I spake, or looked, or touched, or carved to
thee.
120 How comes it now, my husband, O, how comes it
That thou art thus estranged from thyself?
Thy "self" I call it, being strange to me,
That, undividable, incorporate,
Am better than thy dear self's better part.
125 Ah, do not tear away thyself from me!
For know, my love, as easy mayest thou fall
A drop of water in the breaking gulf,
And take unmingled thence that drop again
Without addition or diminishing,
130 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!
135 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?
140 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,
145 Being strumpeted by thy contagion.
Keep then fair league and truce with thy true bed,
I live disstained, thou undishonorèd.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

First, they save the money spent to keep their hair looking
nice. Second, at dinner they won't get their hair in the
soup.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

You meant to spend this whole time proving that it's not
true that there's a time for all things.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Well, and I did it, sir. Namely, there's not time to recover
hair that's naturally lost.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

But your reasoning did not convince me why there is no
time to recover hair.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I'll try again like this: Time himself is bald, and therefore,
until the world ends, he will have people following him who
are bald.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I knew you would end with an argument as empty as a bald
head. But hush, who's gesturing to us over there?

ADRIANA and LUCIANA enter.

ADRIANA

Yes, yes, Antipholus, look confused and frown. Some other
woman has gotten your affection. Apparently I am not
Adriana, nor your wife. There was once a time when,
without prompting, you would vow that no words could be
music to your ear, no object could please your eye, no touch
could be welcome to your hand, no meat could taste sweet
to your mouth, unless I spoke, or looked, or touched, or
carved the meat for you. How has it happened, my
husband, oh, how has it happened that you are such a
stranger to yourself? Your "self," I call it, a stranger to me,
when I am indivisible, united as one with you, no better
than the best part of you. Oh, don't tear yourself away from
me! Just know, my love, that you can separate me from you
without separating me from myself too as easily as you can
splash a drop of water into the sea, and then take the drop
back from the sea without gaining or losing water. How
much it would pain you if you only heard a whisper that I
was unfaithful, and that this body, so sacred to you, had
been contaminated by lust! Wouldn't you spit at me and
turn on me, and remind me that you were my husband, and
tear the skin off my cheating forehead, and cut the wedding
ring from my false hand, and break that ring with a vow to
divorce me? I know you could, and therefore I want to see
you do that. Now I'm filled with adulterous blood that's
mingled with lustful crimes. If we two are one, and you act
falsely to me, the poison of your flesh enters mine, and your
sin is contagious. You'd better stay true to me, for I am
ruined when you are dishonored.

 Adriana's getting a little wordy here. In this particular metaphor, she tells Antipholus that because they are married (and therefore one body, according to marriage rites in Christian belief), they can't be separated. It would be easier, she says, to separate a single drop of water from the vast ocean.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Are you pleading with me, fair lady? I don't know you. I've
been in Ephesus for only two hours. I'm as much a stranger
to the town as to the subject you're talking with, which, as
hard as I'm trying to follow your words, I have absolutely no
ability to understand.

LUCIANA

Fie, brother, how the world is changed with you!
When were you wont to use my sister thus?
155 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,
160 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 OF SYRACUSE

Villain, thou liest; for even her very words
165 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
170 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.
175 Thou art an elm, my husband, I a vine,
Whose weakness, married to thy stronger state,
Makes me with thy strength to communicate.
If aught possess thee from me, it is dross,
Usurping ivy, brier, or idle moss,
180 Who, all for want of pruning, with intrusion
Infect thy sap and live on thy confusion.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

To me she speaks; she moves me for her theme.
What, was I married to her in my dream?
Or sleep I now and think I hear all this?
185 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

O, for my beads! I cross me for a sinner.
190 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?
195 Dromio—thou, Dromio—thou snail, thou slug, thou sot.

LUCIANA

For shame, brother, you've changed so much! When would
you ever abuse my sister like this? She sent Dromio to bring
you home to lunch.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Dromio?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Me?

ADRIANA

You, and this is the report you brought back from him: that
he struck you and, in his blows, denied that you live in my
house or that I am your wife.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Did you talk to this lady, sir? What's the nature of your
conspiracy?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Me, sir? I never saw her until right now.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Villain, you lie. In the market, you said to me the very words
she just spoke.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I never spoke with her in my whole life.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

How can she call us by our names then unless she's divinely
inspired?

ADRIANA

It's not a good look for your dignity to play-act this stupidly
with your slave, maddening me in my angry mood. Even if
it's my fault that you've turned away from me, don't react
to that fault by treating me with worse contempt. Come, I'll
cling to your sleeve. You're an elm tree, my husband, and
I'm a weak vine who, when I cling to you, get strength from
you to express myself. Anything that is trying to steal you
from me is garbage, just creeping ivy, or brambles, or
invasive moss, all of which haven't been pruned so they
infect the sap of your tree and flourish in your sickness.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

She's speaking to me. Her story's moving. Well, was I
married to her in a dream? Or am I asleep now and
dreaming this? What's the cause of the confusion of our
eyes and ears? Until I know what's caused this clear
misunderstanding, I'll go along with it.

LUCIANA

Dromio, go tell the servants to prepare for dinner.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

[To himself] Oh, where are my rosary beads? I'll cross
myself since I must be a sinner. This is a fairy land. Oh,
horrible fate! We've been talking with goblins, owls, and
spirits. If we don't obey them, they'll suck our breath out of
us, or pinch us till we're black and blue.

LUCIANA

Why are you muttering to yourself and not answering?
Dromio—you, Dromio—you snail, you slug, you fool.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I am transformèd, master, am I not?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Thou hast thine own form.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

200 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
But I should know her as well as she knows me.

ADRIANA

205 Come, come, no longer will I be a fool,
To put the finger in the eye and weep
Whilst man and master laugh my woes to scorn.
Come, sir, to dinner.—Dromio, keep the gate.—
Husband, I'll dine above with you today,
210 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

215 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

220 Ay; and let none enter, lest I break your pate.

LUCIANA

Come, come, Antipholus, we dine too late.

Exeunt

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I think your mind has been, and so has mine.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

No, master, both my mind and my appearance.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

You have your own appearance.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

No, I'm an ape.

LUCIANA

If you've been changed to anything, it's into a [donkey](#) ¹⁰.

¹⁰ Any time you read the word "donkey" in this translation, you're likely to see the word "ass" in the Shakespearean text. Almost every time, Shakespeare plays on the double meaning of "ass": donkey, or rude and stupid human.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

It's true. She rides me like a donkey, and I long to [eat grass](#) ¹¹.
. It's the truth. I am a donkey. Otherwise, there's no way
that she could know me so well and I don't know her at all.

¹¹ Dromio of Syracuse longs for grass because grass represents freedom for animals.

ADRIANA

Come along now. I won't be a fool anymore to make myself
cry while my husband and his servant mock my sorrows.
Come, sir, to lunch. Dromio, watch over the gate. Husband,
I'll dine with you today, and you can confess all of your silly
pranks to me. Servant, if anyone asks to see your master,
tell them he's dining out, and don't let anyone in. Come,
sister. Dromio, play the role of the porter well.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

[To himself] Am I in earth, heaven, or hell? Sleeping or
waking, mad or sane? I'm known to these women and not
to myself! I'll do what they tell me and go along with them
through this mental mist.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Master, should I be the porter at the gate?

ADRIANA

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

LUCIANA

Come, come, Antipholus, it's already late to eat.

All exit.

Act 3, Scene 1

Shakespeare

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Good Signior Angelo, you must excuse us all;
My wife is shrewish when I keep not hours.
Say that I lingered with you at your shop

Shakescleare Translation

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Good sir Angelo, you must let us all go. My wife gets in a bad mood when I don't come home on time. Let's say that I was waiting at your shop to see her necklace made, and that

To see the making of her carcanet,
 5 And that tomorrow you will bring it home.
 But here's a villain that would face me down
 He met me on the mart, and that I beat him
 And charged him with a thousand marks in gold,
 And that I did deny my wife and house.—
 10 Thou drunkard, thou, what didst thou mean by this?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Say what you will, sir, but I know what I know.
 That you beat me at the mart I have your hand to show;
 If the skin were parchment and the blows you gave were
 ink,
 15 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,
 20 You would keep from my heels and beware of an ass.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

You're sad, Signior 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 Signior Balthasar, either at flesh or fish
 25 A table full of welcome make 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.
 30 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 lock'd. [To DROMIO] Go, bid them
 let us in.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

[within] Mome, malt-horse, capon, coxcomb, idiot,
 patch!
 Either get thee from the door or sit down at the hatch.
 Dost thou conjure for wenches, that thou call'st for
 such store
 40 When one is one too many? Go, get thee from the door.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

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

you'll bring it to my house tomorrow. But this man's a
 villain that insists that he met me at the market, and claims
 that I beat him, asked him for a thousand gold marks, and
 told him I didn't have any wife or house.

[To DROMIO OF EPHESUS] You drunkard, you, what did you
 mean by that?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Say what you want, sir, but I know what happened to me. I
 can prove you beat me at the market because of the mark
 of your hand on me. It's like my skin was parchment, and
 the blows you gave me in the beating were ink: anyone can
 read the marks on me in your own handwriting and know
 what happened.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

I think you're an ass .

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Well, it looks like it, given how I suffer and how much I'm
 beaten up. I should kick back when I'm kicked. If I did that,
 you'd keep away from my heels just like you'd keep away
 from the legs of an ass.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

You look very serious, Balthasar, sir. I hope our food will
 show my friendliness and how much you're welcome here.

BALTHASAR

I care less about the food you serve and more about the
 warm welcome you give.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Oh, Balthasar, whether you want meat or fish, all the
 welcome in the world doesn't cook the meals.

BALTHASAR

Good meat, sir, is cheap. Even the poorest can buy that.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Welcome's cheap, too. It's only words.

BALTHASAR

A little celebration and a warm welcome make for a merry
 feast.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Sure, to a stingy host and an easygoing guest. Well, even
 though my food's not much, eat your fill. I hope you'll be
 cheerier, but you couldn't be warmer. But wait! My door is
 locked.

[To DROMIO] Go, tell them to let us in.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

[From inside the house] Fool, horse, eunuch, simpleton,
 idiot, clown! Either get away from the door or sit down at
 the gate. Are you summoning young women by magic, or
 why else do you call for so many when one is already too
 many for you? Go, get away from the door.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

How has our porter become a clown? My master's waiting in
 the street.

 Remember that this word is usually involved in word play on its two meanings: donkey, or idiot.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

[within] Right, sir, I'll tell you when an you tell me wherefore.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

50 *[within]* Nor today here you must not. Come again when you may.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

[within] The porter for this time, sir, and my name is Dromio.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

LUCE

[within] What a coil is there, Dromio! Who are those at the gate?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Let my master in, Luce.

LUCE

65 *[within]* Faith, no, he comes too late,
And so tell your master.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

LUCE

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

70 *[within]* If thy name be called "Luce," Luce, thou hast answered him well.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

LUCE

[within] I thought to have asked you.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

[within] And you said no.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

[From inside] He can go back where he came from so he doesn't catch cold.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Who's talking from inside there? Hey, open the door.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

[From inside] Sure, sir, I'll tell you when if you tell me why.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Why? For my dinner. I haven't dined today.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

[From inside] Well, you won't dine here today. Come again when you're free.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

[From inside] I'm the porter for now, sir, and my name is Dromio.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Oh, villain, you've stolen both my job and my name! My name's never had a great reputation, but I never fell short of my responsibilities in my job. If you had been Dromio today instead of me, you would have traded your job for a reputation, or your name for an ass.

LUCE

[From inside] What a ruckus, Dromio! Who are those people at the gate?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Let my master in, Luce.

LUCE

[From inside] God, no, he comes too late, and tell your master that.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Oh Lord, I must laugh. Here's a proverb for you: shall I plant my staff here and wait?

LUCE

[From inside] Here's another proverb: When, can you tell? ²

² Apparently, another proverb (a fairly random one) from the period.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

[From inside] If your name is "Luce," Luce, you've answered him cleverly.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

LUCE

[From inside] I thought that was a question for you.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

[From inside] Well, you said no already.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Come bang at the door. Just like that! That was one blow on the door for every blow they aimed at us with their words.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Thou baggage, let me in.

LUCE

[within] Can you tell for whose sake?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Master, knock the door hard.

LUCE

[within] Let him knock till it ache.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

LUCE

[within] What needs all that, and a pair of stocks in the town?

ADRIANA

[within] Who is that at the door that keeps all this noise?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

85 *[within]* By my troth, your town is troubled with unruly boys.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

ADRIANA

[within] Your wife, sir knave? Go, get you from the door.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

90 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 EPHEBUS

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

You would say so, master, if your garments were thin. Your cake there is warm within; you stand here in the cold.

100 It would make a man mad as a buck to be so bought and sold.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

You riff-raff, let me in.

LUCE

[From inside] Can you say for whose sake we should let you in?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Master, knock on the door hard.

LUCE

[From inside] Let him knock until his hand aches.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

You'll be sorry for this, woman, if I knock down the door.

LUCE

[From inside] Why should I feel threatened when you'll be put in the stocks in town?

ADRIANA

[From inside] Who is that at the door making all this noise?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

[From inside] It seems to me that a gang of unruly boys has come to town.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Wife, are you there? You could have come sooner.

ADRIANA

[From inside] Your wife, you villain? Go, get away from the door.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

If you leave angrily, master, this servant will be beaten sore for it.

ANGELO

There's neither cheer nor welcome here, sir. It would be great to have either.

BALTHASAR

We were debating which was best, but we'll leave having had neither.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

They're waiting at the door, master. Tell them they're welcome here.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

There's something in the wind preventing us from getting in.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

If your clothes were thin, you'd be right to say there was something in the wind , master. Your cake is warm inside and you're out here standing in the cold. It would make a man as angry as a bull to be toyed with like this.

 *Antipholus of Ephesus uses "something in the wind" as an expression meaning "something weird going on," but Dromio thinks he literally refers to the wind.*

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Go, get me something and I'll break open the gate.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

[From inside] If you break anything, I'll break your foolish head.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

105 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 OF SYRACUSE

110 *[within]* It seems thou want'st breaking. Out upon thee,
hind!

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

[within] Ay, when fowls have no feathers and fish have
no fin.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

A crow without feather? Master, mean you so?
For a fish without a fin, there's a fowl without a
feather.—

120 *[To DROMIO OF SYRACUSE]* If a crow help us in, sirrah,
we'll pluck a crow together.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

125 Th' unviolated honor 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
130 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.

135 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 ungalld estimation
140 That may with foul intrusion enter in
And dwell upon your grave when you are dead;
For slander lives upon succession,
Forever housèd where it gets possession.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

You have prevailed. I will depart in quiet
145 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—
150 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—
155 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.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

I could break a word  with you, sir, and words are only
wind. Yeah, I'd break a word in your face, or otherwise I'd
break wind from my backside.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

[From inside] Oh, well. now you're asking for someone to
break you. Get out of here, servant!

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Enough with your "get out of here!" I beg of you, let me in.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

[From inside] Sure, when birds have no feathers and fish
have no fins.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

A crow without feathers? Master, is that what you mean? We
don't have a fish without a fin, but that's a bird without
feathers.

[To DROMIO OF SYRACUSE] If a crowbar helps us in, sir, we'll
get this settled once and for all.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Go, get out of here. Fetch me an iron crowbar.

BALTHASAR

Have patience, sir. Oh, don't let it come to this. You're
putting your reputation at risk and your wife's pure honor
will be the subject of suspicion and gossip. Here's what I
think: you know her wisdom, clear-minded virtue, age, and
modesty well, and you should give her the benefit of the
doubt that there's some cause you don't know about. I'm
sure that she will have a good excuse for why she's locked
the doors on you at this time. Listen to me, leave patiently,
and let's all go to the Tiger for lunch. In the evening, come
alone and find out the reason for this strange behavior. If
you try to break in by force in the busy streets in the middle
of the day, it will be talked about. Whatever the common
people say about you, ruining your good reputation, might
well stick around until after you're dead and be your legacy.
Slander and gossip grows and grows and never dies.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

You've persuaded me. I'll leave quietly, and, even though I
have nothing to make me happy, I'll try to be cheerful. I
know a girl who's a great conversationalist, pretty and witty,
wild and gentle at the same time. We'll dine with her. My
wife has often complained to me about this woman when I
didn't deserve it. Now we'll go to her place for dinner.

[To ANGELO] Go home and get the chain. That way I'll know
you've finished it. Bring it, please, to the Porpentine, since
that's where the house is. That chain I'll give—only to spite
my wife—to my hostess there. Good sir, hurry. Since I can't
be entertained within my own doors, I'll knock at other
doors and see if they're locked against me too.

 *Dromio of Ephesus puns on various meanings of "break." Here, "break a word" simply means "speak," but he then uses it as an expression of flatulence: "so he break it not behind" refers to "breaking wind."*

ANGELO

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

160 Do so. This jest shall cost me some expense.

Exeunt

ANGELO

I'll meet you there in about an hour.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

We'll see you there. This prank will be costly to me.

All exit.

Act 3, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Enter LUCIANA and ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

LUCIANA

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Sweet mistress—what your name is else I know not,
30 Nor by what wonder you do hit of mine,—
Less in your knowledge and your grace you show not
Than our earth's wonder, more than earth divine.
Teach me, dear creature, how to think and speak.
Lay open to my earthy gross conceit,
35 Smothered in errors, feeble, shallow, weak,
The folded meaning of your words' deceit.
Against my soul's pure truth why labour you
To make it wander in an unknown field?
Are you a god? would you create me new?
40 Transform me, then, and to your power I'll yield.
But if that I am I, then well I know
Your weeping sister is no wife of mine,
Nor to her bed no homage do I owe.
Far more, far more, to you do I decline.
45 O, train me not, sweet mermaid, with thy note
To drown me in thy sister's flood of tears.
Sing, Siren, for thyself, and I will do.
Spread o'er the silver waves thy golden hairs,
And as a bed I'll take them and there lie,
50 And in that glorious supposition think
He gains by death that hath such means to die.
Let Love, being light, be drownèd if she sink.

Shakesclore Translation

LUCIANA and ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE enter.

LUCIANA

Is it possible you've forgotten your duty as a husband? Will you let your love rot when it's just started flourishing? In the process of building this love, will you turn it into a ruin? If you married my sister for her money, then for the sake of her money, be kinder to her. Or if you're going to cheat on her, do it sneakily. Hide your true feelings so that my sister can't see it in your eyes. Don't talk about your shamelessness. Look loving, be warm, mask your disloyalty in kindness. Dress your sins as if they were virtues. Just present yourself sweetly, even if your heart is poisoned. Carry your evil thoughts like you were a holy saint. Just keep it to yourself. Why does she need to know? What kind of thief brags about what he's stolen? It's doubly wrong to stray from her in bed and then let her see it in your face at breakfast. Your shame doesn't need to be public if you do it right. Your hateful actions are doubled if you talk about them. Oh, poor women, just make us believe, since we're so blindly trusting, that you love us. Even if you're really in love with other women, make it look like you're still attached to us. We're totally dependent on you, and you can control us. So, dear brother, go to her again. Comfort my sister, cheer her up, call her your wife. It's not a sin to tell a white lie since your sweet flattery will vanquish her misery.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Sweet mistress—I don't know your name and I can't figure out how you miraculously know mine,—your wisdom and your presence are more wondrous and divine than the earth itself. Explain to me (just a lowly, earth-bound fellow, prone to errors, feeble, shallow, weak) the complex meaning of your words. When my soul moves toward another, why are you trying so hard to send me to love some woman I don't know? Are you a god? Do you want to make me into a new man? Transform me, then, and I'll give in to your powers. But if I'm still myself, then I know well that your weeping sister's not my wife, and I haven't made any vows to her. I'm much, much more interested in you. Oh, don't steer me with your song, sweet mermaid, to drown in your sister's endless tears and succumb to her. Sing, instead, Siren , on your own behalf, and I'll be devoted to you. Spread your golden hair over the ocean and I'll lie in it like it's a bed. In that glorious position, I'll think that death would be good if you could die like that. Love is usually lightweight, but when it's weighty enough to sink, it's worth it to drown.

 *Antipholus of Syracuse imagines Luciana as one of the seductively singing sirens depicted in The Odyssey. Greek mythology describes sirens as creatures resembling beautiful women, but with a dangerous twist. Siren song was said to be so beautiful that it lured many men to shipwreck along the shores of the creatures' island home. With that in mind, note that Antipholus mentions the sea, love, and death in this monologue.*

LUCIANA

What, are you mad that you do reason so?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

LUCIANA

55 It is a fault that springeth from your eye.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

LUCIANA

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

LUCIANA

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

60 Thy sister's sister.

LUCIANA

That's my sister.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

No,
It is thyself, mine own self's better part,
Mine eye's clear eye, my dear heart's dearer heart,
65 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;
70 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 goodwill.

Exit LUCIANA

Enter DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

75 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.

LUCIANA

Are you crazy enough to reason like this?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Not crazy but in love—I don't know how.

LUCIANA

It's a sin that's come from your wandering eye.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I fell in love by gazing at your beams, you beautiful sun,
since you were right there.

LUCIANA

Gaze where you're supposed to, and that will make you see straight.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I'd just as soon close my eyes, my sweet love, as look at darkness .

 *Antipholus of Syracuse casts Adriana and Luciana as night and day. In the original text, Adriana is "night" and Luciana is the "fair sun."*

LUCIANA

Why do you call me "love?" Call my sister that name.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Your sister's sister.

LUCIANA

That's my sister.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

No, it's you yourself, my better half, the apple of my eye, the heart within my heart, my sustenance, my wealth, and the aim of all my hopes, the only heaven on earth, and the only hope I have to get into heaven.

LUCIANA

You mean to say all this about my sister, or, at least, you should.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Call yourself "sister," sweetheart, for I am yours. I will love you and live my life with you. You have no husband yet and I have no wife. Give me your hand.

LUCIANA

Oh, wait, sir! Don't move. I'm going to my sister and we'll see what she says about this.

LUCIANA exits.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE enters.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Oh, what's happening, Dromio? Where are you running so fast?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

You are Dromio, you're my servant, you're yourself.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I'm an ass, I belong to a woman, and I'm beside myself.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What woman's man? And how besides thyself?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

80 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

85 Marry, sir, such claim as you would lay to your horse; and she would have me as a beast; not that I being a beast she would have me, but that she, being a very beastly creature, lays claim to me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What is she?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

How dost thou mean a "fat marriage"?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

95 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

100 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 overshoes in the grime of it.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

That's a fault that water will mend.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

105 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

110 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

Belong to what woman? Why are you beside yourself?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Well, sir, I'm being pursued by a woman who claims me, haunts me, and insists that she'll have me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What claim does she say she has over you?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Well, sir, the same claim you'd have over your horse. She wants to have me as if I were a beast. Not that she'd want me if I were a beast, except that she, since she's a very beastly creature, says she has a claim over me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What is she?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

A very pardonable body, yes, such that a man can't talk of her without saying, "I beg your pardon." There's a thin chance of me being happy with her, but it would be an incredibly fat marriage.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What do you mean a "fat marriage"?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Well, sir, she's the kitchen maid, and she's made of grease, and I don't know how I would use her except to make her into a lamp and run away from her in the light that she gives off. I bet the rags she wears and the fat inside them are enough to burn for a whole winter in Poland. If she lives until the end of the world, she'll still be burning a week after the whole world's in ashes.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What's her face like?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Dark like my shoe, but her face is not kept as clean as my shoe. Why, you ask? She sweats so much that her perspiration might come up to a man's ankles.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

She could wash off the sweat with water.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

No, sir, it's undefeatable. Noah's flood couldn't wash it off.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What's her name?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Nell, sir, but her name and three quarters—I mean, an ell and three quarters of an ell—wouldn't even be enough to measure her from hip to hip.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Then she's pretty wide?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

She's as long from side to side as head to toe. She's spherical, like a globe. I could find countries on her.

Dromio of Syracuse suggests that simply talking about Luce might be offensive so one has to offer an apology before speaking about her.

Since Nell's name is Nell (even though it's actually Luce in earlier scenes!), Dromio of Syracuse makes a pun on "a Nell" and "an ell," a measurement of more than a yard. Her "name and three quarters" is therefore 1.75 ells (or about six and a half feet!).

Dromio of Syracuse now goes on to make a series of silly (and often rude) puns, describing different parts

of Luce's (or Nell's) body as geographical and political elements of different countries.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

In what part of her body stands Ireland?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

115 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

120 Where France?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Where England?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

125 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

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Where stood Belgia, the Netherlands?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

135 O, sir, I did not look so low. To conclude: this drudge or diviner laid claim to me, call'd me Dromio, swore I was assured to her, told me what privy marks I had about me, as the mark of my shoulder, the mole in my neck, the great wart on my left arm, that I, amazed, ran from her as a witch. And, I think, if my breast had not been made of faith, and my heart of steel, She had transformed me to a curtail dog and made me turn i' th' wheel.

140

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

145 Go, hie thee presently. Post to the road. An if the wind blow any way from shore, I will not harbor in this town tonight.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Where on her body is Ireland?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Well, sir, in her buttocks. I knew it was Ireland from the spongy marshes.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Where on her body is Scotland?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

The palm of her hand: I knew it was Scotland from the dryness.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What about France?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

In her forehead: slowly expanding and warring against her heir ⁶.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What about England?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I looked for the white cliffs in her teeth, but I couldn't find any whiteness in them. I guess England must have been in her chin, given the salty saliva that ran between her forehead France and her chin.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What about Spain?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What about America, the Indies ⁷?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Oh, sir, India's on her nose, since it's all covered in rubies, jewels, sapphires ⁸, which are delivered to the hot breath of Spain, who sent fleets of ships to aim at her nose.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What about Belgium and the Netherlands ⁹?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Oh, sir, I didn't look so low down. In conclusion, this slave or witch said she had a claim over me, called me Dromio, swore that I was pledged to her, told me what private marks I had on my body, like a mark on my shoulder, the mole on my neck, the big wart on my left art. So I, astonished, ran away from her as if she were a witch. And, I think, if my soul had not been so faithful and my heart had not been made of steel, she might have transformed me into a dog with no tail and put me to work.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Go, get moving now. Run to the road. If the wind is blowing any direction from the shore, I won't stay in this town tonight. If any ship is leaving, come to the market, where I'll

⁶ A pun on "hair": probably a reference to battles over the heir to the French throne at the time.

⁷ Another term for America at the time -- Europeans, of course, originally believed that they had sailed to India when they landed in the "New World."

⁸ Pimples, probably, in Dromio's metaphor.

⁹ Known as the "Low Countries"

If any bark put forth, come to the mart,
Where I will walk till thou return to me.
If every one knows us, and we know none,
150 '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 DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

There's none but witches do inhabit here,
And therefore 'tis high time that I were hence.
155 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.
160 But lest myself be guilty to self wrong,
I'll stop mine ears against the mermaid's song.

Enter ANGELO with the chain

ANGELO

Master Antipholus.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Ay, that's my name.

ANGELO

I know it well, sir. Lo, here's the chain.
165 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

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

ANGELO

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

Exit ANGELO

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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.
180 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

walk until you return to me. If everyone knows us, and we
don't know anybody, I think it's time to get up, pack up, and
get out of here.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Just like a man would run for his life from a bear, I'll flee
that woman who wants to be my wife.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE exits.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

The only people who live here are witches, so it's time we
get out of here. I would hate to have that woman who calls
me husband for a wife. But her beautiful sister, who has
such a gentle, divine grace, such an enchanting presence
and skill at conversation, has almost made me forget
myself. But to make sure I'm not guilty of doing harm to
myself, I'll stop listening to this mermaid's song ¹⁰.

¹⁰ Antipholus of Syracuse again
imagines Luciana as one of the
dangerous, seductively singing sirens
of *The Odyssey*.

ANGELO enters with the chain.

ANGELO

Master Antipholus.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Yes, that's my name.

ANGELO

I know it well, sir. Look, here's the chain. I meant to take it
to you at the Porpentine. The chain took me until now to
finish.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What do you want me to do with this?

ANGELO

Whatever you want, sir. I made it for you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Made it for me, sir? I never asked for it.

ANGELO

Not once or twice, you've asked me twenty times for it. Take
it home and please your wife with it, and I'll visit you at
supper time to get my money for the chain then.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Please, sir, take the money now, for fear you'll never see the
chain or the money again.

ANGELO

You're a goofy man, sir. Goodbye.

ANGELO exits.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I have no idea what to make of this, but I do know one
thing: there's no one so stupid that wouldn't take a chain
that's offered to him. I guess men here don't need to work
for things when they get golden gifts in the streets. I'll go to
the market and wait for Dromio there. If any ship is leaving,
I'll be on it immediately.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE exits.

Act 4, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Enter SECOND MERCHANT, ANGELO and an OFFICER

SECOND MERCHANT

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

ANGELO

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

Enter ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS and DROMIO OF EPHEBUS from the
COURTESAN'S house

COURTESAN'S OFFICER

That labor may you save. See where he comes.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

Exit DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

ANGELO

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

ANGELO

40 Then you will bring the chain to her yourself.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

Shakescleare Translation

SECOND MERCHANT, ANGELO, and an OFFICER enter.

SECOND MERCHANT

You know the fee has been due since Pentecost. I haven't nagged you that much about it since then, and I don't want to now, but I'm leaving for Persia and I need the money for my voyage. Therefore, give me the money now, or I'll have you arrested by this officer.

ANGELO

Antipholus owes me exactly the amount that I owe you. Right before I met you today, he bought a chain from me. At five o'clock, I'll get the money for that. If you care to walk with me down to his house, I'll pay you what I owe you and give you thanks.

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

COURTESAN'S OFFICER

You don't have to go far. Look, he's coming now.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

[To DROMIO OF EPHEBUS] While I go to the goldsmith's house, you go and buy a rope. I'll beat my wife and her accomplices with it for locking me out of my own house. But hush. I see the goldsmith. Get out of here. Buy the rope, and bring it back to me.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

First a thousand marks and now a rope!

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS exits.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

[To ANGELO] A man is in good hands when he trusts you! I expected you to come with the chain, but I didn't see either you or the chain. Maybe you thought we'd be too inseparable if we were chained together so you didn't bother to come.

ANGELO

I'm glad you're in such a jolly mood, and here's the bill for how much your chain weighs down to the last carat, the quality of the gold, and the cost, which comes to three and a bit ducats more than I owe this gentleman. Please, pay up, for he's going to sea and is only waiting for the money.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

I don't have the money right now. Besides, I have business to attend to in town. Good man, take the stranger to my house along with the chain, and ask my wife to pay the amount listed on the bill. Maybe I'll get there at the same time.

ANGELO

Then you will bring the chain to her yourself.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

No, you bring it in case I don't get there in time.

ANGELO

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

ANGELO

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

50 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.

SECOND MERCHANT

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

ANGELO

You hear how he importunes me. The chain!

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

ANGELO

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

SECOND MERCHANT

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

I answer you? What should I answer you?

ANGELO

The money that you owe me for the chain.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

65 I owe you none till I receive the chain.

ANGELO

You know I gave it you half an hour since.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

ANGELO

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

SECOND MERCHANT

70 Well, officer, arrest him at my suit.

OFFICER

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

ANGELO

Well, sir, I will. Do you have the chain with you?

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

If I don't sir, I hope you do, or else you're not getting paid.

ANGELO

No, come on, please, sir, give me the chain. The wind and
the tide are on hold for this gentleman, and I've kept him
here too long.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Good Lord! You're stalling to make me forget that you didn't
show up at the Porpentine as you'd promised. I should have
laid into you for not bringing it, but, like a whiny brat, you
start to fight first.

SECOND MERCHANT

The clock is ticking. Please, sir, let's get moving.

ANGELO

You hear how he begs me! The chain!

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Just give it to my wife and get your money.

ANGELO

Come on now. You know I just gave it to you. Either give me
the chain, or give me something of yours to let your wife
know to pay me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Really, now you're running this joke into the ground. Come
on, where's the chain? I'm asking you, let me see it.

SECOND MERCHANT

I really don't have time for this dilly-dallying.

[To ANTIPHOLUS] Good sir, tell me whether you'll pay me or
not. If not, I'll have Angelo arrested.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

I pay you? What should I pay you?

ANGELO

The money that you owe me for the chain.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

I owe you nothing until I receive the chain.

ANGELO

You know I gave it to you half an hour ago.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

You gave me nothing. You do me wrong to say that.

ANGELO

You do me more wrong, sir, in lying about it. Think about
what this does to my reputation.

SECOND MERCHANT

Well, officer, arrest him on my accusation.

OFFICER

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

ANGELO

This touches me in reputation.
 Either consent to pay this sum for me,
 75 Or I attach you by this officer.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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
 80 If he should scorn me so apparently.

OFFICER

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

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

Enter DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Master, there is a bark of Epidamnus
 That stays but till her owner comes aboard,
 And then, sir, she bears away. Our fraughtage, sir,
 90 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 naught at all
 But for their owner, master, and yourself.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

A ship you sent me to, to hire waftage.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

I will debate this matter at more leisure
 And teach your ears to list me with more heed.
 To Adriana, villain, hie thee straight.
 105 Give her this key, and tell her in the desk
 That's cover'd o'er with Turkish tapestry
 There is a purse of ducats. Let her send it.
 Tell her I am arrested in the street,
 And that shall bail me. Hie thee, slave. Begone.—
 110 On, officer, to prison till it come.

Exeunt SECOND MERCHANT, ANGELO, OFFICER, and ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

To Adriana. That is where we dined,
 Where Dowsabel did claim me for her husband.

ANGELO

[To ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS] This damages my
 reputation. Either agree to pay me the money you owe, or
 I'll have you arrested by this officer.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Agree to pay you for something I never got?

[To OFFICER] Arrest me, foolish fellow, if you dare.

ANGELO

Here's money to do it. Arrest him, officer. I'd have my
 brother arrested too, if he'd wronged me as obviously as
 this man has.

OFFICER

I do arrest you, sir. You've heard the accusation.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

I will obey you till I pay you bail.

[To ANGELO] But, sir, you'll pay for this, and it will cost you
 all the metal in your shop.

ANGELO

Sir, I'll make sure I have justice and keep my rights in
 Ephesus, even if it means you'll be humiliated and shamed.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE enters.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Master, there's a ship from Epidamnus that's just waiting
 until her owners comes aboard, and then, sir, she sails
 away. All of our stuff, sir, I've brought on board, and I've
 bought the oil, the juice, and the alcohol. The ship's ready
 to go, and the wind is blowing away from land. They're
 waiting only for their owner and yourself, master.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Huh? Are you a madman? You silly animal, what ship from
 Epidamnus is waiting for me?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

The ship you sent me to, to book our passage.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

You drunken slave, I sent you for a rope and told you what I
 wanted to use it for and for what purpose.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

That's as true as saying you sent me to get a beating with a
 rope. You sent me to the bay, sir, to find a ship.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

I'll argue you about this with you when we have more time,
 and I'll teach your ears to listen to me with greater care.
 Villain, get to Adriana, go immediately. Give her this key,
 and tell her that there's a bag of money in the desk that's
 covered with Turkish tapestry. Have her send it. Tell her I've
 been arrested in the street, and that the money will bail me
 out. Get going, slave. Move it.

[To OFFICER] Onwards, officer, to the prison until the
 money arrives.

SECOND MERCHANT, ANGELO, OFFICER, and ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS exit.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

To Adriana? That's where we ate, where that lady said I was
 her husband. She's more than I can handle. I must go there,

She is too big, I hope, for me to compass.
Thither I must, although against my will,
115 For servants must their masters' minds fulfill.

Exit

even though I'd rather not, for servants must do whatever
they're commanded.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE exits.

Act 4, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Enter ADRIANA and LUCIANA

ADRIANA

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

LUCIANA

First he denied you had in him no right.

ADRIANA

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

LUCIANA

Then swore he that he was a stranger here.

ADRIANA

10 And true he swore, though yet forsworn he were.

LUCIANA

Then pleaded I for you.

ADRIANA

And what said he?

LUCIANA

That love I begged for you he begged of me.

ADRIANA

With what persuasion did he tempt thy love?

LUCIANA

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

ADRIANA

Did'st speak him fair?

LUCIANA

Have patience, I beseech.

ADRIANA

I cannot, nor I will not hold me still;
20 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

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

Shakescleare Translation

ADRIANA and LUCIANA enter.

ADRIANA

Oh, Luciana, did he really attempt to seduce you like that?
Could you tell from his face whether he was serious, yes or
no? Did he look red or pale or sad or happy? What
observation did you make in his face of what his heart
might really feel?

LUCIANA

First he denied that you had any right to him.

ADRIANA

He meant he didn't do right by me, which makes me all the
more miserable.

LUCIANA

Then he swore that he was a stranger here.

ADRIANA

He's definitely acting stranger, so that's true, even though
he's lying.

LUCIANA

Then I pleaded on your behalf.

ADRIANA

And what did he say?

LUCIANA

The love that I begged him to give you he begged me to give
to him.

ADRIANA

What methods did he use to tempt your love?

LUCIANA

He used words that might have moved me if they were
honest. First, he praised my beauty, then my voice.

ADRIANA

Did you encourage him?

LUCIANA

Calm down, I beg you.

ADRIANA

I cannot and I will not hold still. Even though my heart still
loves him, listen to what I have to say: he's deformed,
crooked, old, and withered, with an ugly face and a worse
body, shapeless all over. He's vicious, ungentle, foolish,
stupid, unkind. His body is awful, but his mind is worse.

LUCIANA

Who would be jealous over someone like that, then? No one
cries over something evil when it's 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.
 30 My heart prays for him, though my tongue do curse.

Enter DROMIO OF SYRACUSE, running

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

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

35 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 fury, pitiless and rough;
 A wolf, nay, worse, a fellow all in buff;
 40 A back-friend, a shoulder clapper, one that
 countermands
 The passages of alleys, creeks, and narrow lands;
 A hound that runs counter and yet draws dryfoot well,
 One that before the judgment carries poor souls to
 45 hell.

ADRIANA

Why, man, what is the matter?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ADRIANA

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ADRIANA

55 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 bond?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ADRIANA

Ah, but I think better of him than I say, and still wish other
 women saw him as ugly. Just like the lapwing flies far away
 from her nest so no one knows where it is located, I'm
 hiding how much my heart loves him in my angry words.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE enters, running.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

[To himself] Here, go—the desk, the purse! Come on now,
 move fast.

LUCIANA

How have you lost your breath?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

By running fast.

ADRIANA

Where's your master, Dromio? Is he well?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

No he's in limbo in Tartarus, that's worse than hell. A devil
 in a prison officer uniform has got him, a devil whose hard
 heart is closed and steely. He's a demon, evil, pitiless, and
 rough. He's a wolf; no, it's worse, he's wearing the
 uniform. He's a back-stabber, he arrests you by the
 shoulder, he forbids you to walk through alleys, and creeks,
 and narrow paths. He's a dog that flees from the prey but
 also tracks the prey by the smell of its foot. On Judgment
 Day, he'll be carrying the damned to hell.

ADRIANA

Why, man, what is the matter?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I don't know the matter ¹. He's arrested on the case ².

¹ Dromio puns twice. Adriana asks what the "matter" is (meaning, "What's wrong?") and Dromio responds as if she means, "What is the dispute that has led to Antipholus' arrest?"

² Being arrested "on the case" meant being arrested for an offense that wasn't specifically covered by any other law.

ADRIANA

What, is he arrested? Tell me who's had him arrested.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I don't know who's had him arrested, but the man who
 arrested him is in prison-keeper uniform, that I can tell you.
 Will you send him his redemption, mistress—I mean the
 money in his desk?

ADRIANA

Go get the money, sister.

LUCIANA exits.

I'm shocked that, unknown to me, he could be in debt. Tell
 me, was he arrested for failing to pay a bond ³?

³ Bond = loan

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Not on a bond but something stronger: a chain, a chain.
 Don't you 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

65 The hours come back. That did I never hear.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ADRIANA

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

Re-enter LUCIANA with a purse

ADRIANA

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

Exeunt

ADRIANA

Hear what, the chain?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

No, no, the bell. It's time that I left. I parted with him at two
and now the clock strikes one .

 This may be a pun on "one" and "on" if the two words were pronounced similarly in Elizabethan England. In other words, he may be saying, "the clock strikes on" = "the clock keeps ticking."

ADRIANA

The hours go backwards. I've never heard of that
happening before.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Oh, yes, if any hour runs into a cop, he goes backwards out
of fear.

ADRIANA

As if time owed debts. How crazy your reasoning is!

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Time always owes major debt—he's always running out.
He's a thief too. Haven't you heard men say that times
steals on by night and day? If he's in debt and a thief, and
there's a cop coming, doesn't he have good reason to turn
back an hour?

LUCIANA re-enters with a purse.

ADRIANA

Go, Dromio. There's the money. Bring it right away, and
bring your master home immediately. Come, sister, my
imagination weighs on me: imagination, it both comforts
me and hurts me.

LUCIANA and ADRIANA exit.

Act 4, Scene 3

Shakespeare

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 every one doth call me by my name.
Some tender money to me; some invite me;
5 Some other give me thanks for kindnesses;
Some offer me commodities to buy.
Even now a tailor called me in his shop
And showed me silks that he had bought for me,
And therewithal took measure of my body.
10 Sure, these are but imaginary wiles,
And lapland sorcerers inhabit here.

Enter DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

15 What gold is this? What Adam dost thou mean?

Shakescleare Translation

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE enters.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Every man I meet salutes me as if I were a good friend, and
everyone calls me by my name. Some offer me money,
some invite me over, some thank me for things I've done,
some offer me things to buy. Just now a tailor called me
into his shop and showed me silks that he had bought for
me, and then took my measurements. These must all be
deceitful tricks and all the residents must be sorcerers, like
those from Lapland .

 Lapland was a region known for its relationship to witchcraft.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE enters.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Master, here's the gold you sent me for. Oh, have you got
free of the freshly-dressed old Adam .

 Adam appears to be the name of the Officer

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What gold are you talking about? What Adam do you 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 meanest an officer?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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 OF SYRACUSE

It is the devil.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Not Adam who lived in the Garden of Eden, but Adam who runs the prison; he that wears the prison uniform that looks like the skin of the calf that was killed as a tribute to the Prodigal Son. The Adam who came behind you, sir, like an evil angel following you around, telling you to give up your freedom.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I don't understand you.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

You don't? Why, it's a straightforward case: this guy is like a big stringed instrument in a leather case. This man, sir, when gentlemen are tired, lets them pause and then arrests them. This man, sir, takes pity on ruined men and offers them long prison sentences. This man schedules his day, and he arrests people with his official mace rather than with a violent weapon.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Huh? You mean an officer?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Yes, sir, the sergeant of the police squad. He's the guy who brings anyone to explain himself in the event of an unpaid debt. He thinks that men always go to bed and say, "I hope God delivers a good night's rest."

³ "A good night's rest" is probably also a pun on "a good night's arrest."

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Well, sir, stop being silly right there. Are there any ships leaving tonight? Can we get out of here?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Well, sir, I brought you news an hour ago that the ship *Expedition* left tonight, and then you were stopped by the sergeant before you could make it to the vessel called *Delay*. Here are the coins with the angel Michael's picture on them that you asked me to bring to you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

The man is going nutty, and I am too, while we're wandering here surrounded by illusions. I hope some heavenly power gets us out of here.

A COURTESAN enters.

⁴ courtesan = prostitute

COURTESAN

Hey, hey, Master Antipholus. I see, sir, that you've found the goldsmith now. Is that the chain you promised me today?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Satan, get away from me! I command you, don't tempt me.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Master, is this Mistress Satan?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

She's the devil.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

No, she's worse; she's the devil's mother, and she comes dressed as a loose woman. And that's why the women say "God damn me" which means "God make me a loose woman." It's written that these women look like angels of light when they appear to men. Light comes from fire, and fire burns: therefore, loose women will burn. Don't go near her.

⁵ Dromio of Syracuse puns on "damn" and "dam": the "devil's dam" is the devil's mother.

COURTESAN

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Why, Dromio?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

[*to COURTESAN*] Avoid then, fiend! What tell'st thou me of supping?

Thou art, as you are all, a sorceress.

65 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

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

COURTESAN

I pray you, sir, my ring or else the chain.

75 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 OF SYRACUSE and DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

COURTESAN

Now, out of doubt Antipholus is mad;
Else would he never so demean himself.

80 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,
85 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
90 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

COURTESAN

You and your servant are very jolly, sir. Will you go with me?
We'll finish our dinner here.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Master, if you do, she'll feed you meat meant for a baby on a spoon; you'd better ask for a long spoon.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Why, Dromio?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Oh, he who must eat with the devil must have a long spoon.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

[*To COURTESAN*] Get away then, demon! What are you saying to me about eating dinner? You are, as you all are here, a sorceress. I command you to leave me and vanish.

COURTESAN

Give me the ring I gave you at dinner, or, in exchange for it, the chain you promised me, and I'll vanish, sir, and not bother you any more.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Some devils only ask for nail clippings, some straw, a hair, a drop of blood, a pin, a nut, a cherry pit, but she's more greedy and wants a chain. Master, be wise. If you give it to her, the devil will shake her chain and frighten us with it.

COURTESAN

I beg of you, sir, bring me my ring or otherwise bring the chain. I hope you don't mean to cheat me out of what I'm owed.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Get away, you witch!

[*To DROMIO OF SYRACUSE*] Come, Dromio, let's go.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

"Stop being prideful," says the peacock. Mistress, you know all about creatures calling people out for their own sins.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE and DROMIO OF SYRACUSE exit.

COURTESAN

Now, there's no question Antipholus is mad. There's no other reason he would humiliate himself like this. He took a ring of mine that was worth forty ducats, and he promised he'd give me a chain in exchange. He's denying me both of them now. What's led me to think he is mad, besides seeing his rage just now, is the crazy story he told me today at dinner of how his own doors were shut when he tried to enter. It's possible his wife, knowing his fits well, purposefully locked the door on him. Now I'm going to hurry to his house and tell his wife that he's become a lunatic and rushed into my house and stole my ring. This is the best course I can take, since forty ducats is too much to lose.

The COURTESAN exits.

Act 4, Scene 4

Shakespeare

Enter ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS and the OFFICER

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

Enter DROMIO OF 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 EPHEBUS

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

But where's the money?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Five hundred ducats, villain, for a rope?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

And to that end, sir, I will welcome you. [*beats DROMIO OF EPHEBUS*]

OFFICER

Good sir, be patient.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

OFFICER

Good now, hold thy tongue.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Nay, rather persuade him to hold his hands.

Shakescleare Translation

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS and the OFFICER enter.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Don't be afraid of me, man. I won't try to flee: I'll give you, before I go, as much money as you've arrested me for, I assure you. My wife is not in a good mood today and she won't calmly accept the messenger's news that I've been arrested in Ephesus. I'm telling you, it will be upsetting news for her to hear.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS enters with a rope.

Here comes my servant. I think he has the money. And how are you, sir? Do you have what I sent you to get?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Here's enough, I promise you, to [make them pay](#) .

 Shakespeare's original "will pay them all" more clearly retains the wordplay here: Dromio of Ephesus comes with a rope for Antipholus of Ephesus to use in beating Adriana ("pay" in the sense of "making her pay"), but Antipholus expects him to come with money to "pay" his alleged debts.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

But where's the money?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

You paid five hundred ducats, you villain, for a rope?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

I'll get you five hundred ropes for five hundred ducats, sir.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

To [what end](#)  did I order you to go to my house?

 "To what end" means "with what purpose." Shakespeare here offers a three-line extended pun on "end," which means both "purpose" or "goal" and also the literal end of a rope (as Dromio uses the word in the next line).

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

To bring you a rope's end, sir, and, with that end in mind, I've returned.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Well, to make an end of it, sir, I'll welcome you. [*Beats DROMIO OF EPHEBUS*]

OFFICER

Good sir, be patient.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

I'm the one who needs to be patient. I'm being attacked.

OFFICER

All right, all right, hold your tongue.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

No, tell him to hold his hands instead.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Thou whoreson, senseless villain.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

30 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,
35 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.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Come, go along. My wife is coming yonder.

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

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Wilt thou still talk? [*beats DROMIO OF EPHEBUS*]

COURTESAN

How say you now? Is not your husband mad?

ADRIANA

His incivility confirms no less.—
45 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

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

There is my hand, and let it feel your ear. [*strikes
PINCH*]

PINCH

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

You scumbag villain with no sense!

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

I wish I had no senses, sir, so I didn't have to feel this
beating.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

You're not smart enough to feel anything but beating, just
like an ass.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

I'm an ass, indeed. You can prove that from my long ears  —I have served my master from the hour I was born until
this moment, and I've had no reward from him but
beatings. When I'm cold, he heats me with beating. When I
am warm, he cools me with beating. I'm woken up by
beatings when I go to sleep, stood up by beatings when I sit
down, thrown out the door with beatings when I'm leaving
the house, and welcomed back home with beatings when I
return. No, I carry beatings on my shoulders like a beggar
carries her baby, and I think when he's crippled me, I'll beg
just like that from door to door.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Come on, let's go. My wife is approaching.

*ADRIANA, LUCIANA, the COURTESAN, and PINCH the
Schoolmaster enter.*

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Mistress, *respice finem*, respect your end , or, I should
say, like a parrot that's learned to make prophecies,
"Beware the rope's end."

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Are you going to go on talking? [*Beats DROMIO OF
EPHEBUS*]

COURTESAN

What do you say now? Is your husband not crazy?

ADRIANA

His wild behavior makes me think so. Good Doctor Pinch,
you are a magician. Put him back to normal, and I'll give
you anything you ask for.

LUCIANA

Oh no, how angry and nasty he looks!

COURTESAN

Notice how he shakes in his fit.

PINCH

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Here is my hand, and now feel it on your ear. [*Hits PINCH on
the ear*]

PINCH

Satan, you are possessing this man's spirit, and I command
you to be defeated by my prayers and get back to hell. I
summon you out of this man's body by all the saints in
heaven.

 Dromio probably puns here on
"long years" since he goes on to talk
about all the time he's spent in service
of Antipholus.

 Here, Dromio continues the series
of "end" puns from above. The Latin
"*respice finem*" refers to the end of
one's life (it's a saying that instructs
individuals to live with awareness of,
in preparation for, their deaths), but
the line also literally mentions the end
of the rope and probably includes a
naughty reference to Adriana's end (or
"backside") which the rope might
threaten.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

ADRIANA

O, that thou wert not, poor distressed soul!

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

60 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

65 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 EPHEBUS

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

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Were not my doors locked up and I shut out?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

And did not she herself revile me there?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Sans fable, she herself reviled you there.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Certes, she did; the kitchen vestal scorned you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

75 And did not I in rage depart from thence?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

ADRIANA

[To PINCH] Is't good to soothe him in these contraries?

PINCH

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

[to ADRIANA] Thou hast suborned the goldsmith to arrest

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Calm down, you loony wizard, calm down. I am not crazy.

ADRIANA

Oh, if only you weren't, poor, distressed man!

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

[To ADRIANA] You wicked woman, you, did you bring these people? Did this man here with the orange face feast at my house yesterday while the doors were shut on me and I was barred from entering my own house?

ADRIANA

Oh, husband, God knows you ate at home, where I wish you still were, free from these accusations and this public humiliation.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

"Ate at home"?

[To DROMIO OF EPHEBUS] You villain, what do you say to that?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Sir, what you say is true, you did not eat at home.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Weren't my doors locked up and wasn't I shut out?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

I swear, your doors were locked and you were shut out.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

And didn't my wife herself attack me there?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

It's not a fiction, she herself attacked you there.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Didn't her kitchen maid yell, taunt, and mock me?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Certainly, she did; the kitchen maid mocked you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

And didn't I depart in rage from there?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

In truth, you did.

[To others] My bruised bones are proof of that, since they felt the violence of his rage.

ADRIANA

[To PINCH] Is it healthy to go along with his falsehoods?

PINCH

It's not a problem. The man knows your husband is making up crazy stories and is playing along to humor  him.

 In Elizabethan medicine, the four humors were four bodily fluids (blood, yellow bile, black bile, and phlegm) that were thought to correspond to, and influence, different temperaments, or moods. Pinch puns on "humor" in the original text when he suggests that Dromio "finds his [Antipholus'] vein," which implies that Dromio has accessed the humoral fluids running through his master's veins which cause this "frenzy."

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

[To ADRIANA] You have hired the goldsmith to arrest me.

me.

ADRIANA

Alas, I sent you money to redeem you
By Dromio here, who came in haste for it.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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 EPHEBUS

90 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 EPHEBUS

95 *[to ADRIANA]* Say wherefore didst thou lock me forth
today.
[to DROMIO OF EPHEBUS] And why dost thou deny the bag
of gold?

ADRIANA

I did not, gentle husband, lock thee forth.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

100 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 EPHEBUS

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

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

ADRIANA

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

PINCH

More company! The fiend is strong within him.

LUCIANA

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

What, will you murder me?—Thou jailer, thou,
I am thy prisoner. Wilt thou suffer them
To make a rescue?

ADRIANA

No, I only sent you bail money with Dromio, who had come
running for it.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Money from me! Thoughts and prayers maybe.

[To ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS] But, I swear, master, not a
piece of money.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Did you not go to her for a bag of ducats?

ADRIANA

He came to me and I gave the money to him.

LUCIANA

And I was there and saw her give it.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

God and the rope-maker alone know that I was sent to get
nothing but a rope.

PINCH

[To ADRIANA] Dear lady, both this man and his master are
possessed. I know that from their pale and angry looks.
They must be tied up and left in a dark room somewhere.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

[To ADRIANA] Tell me why you locked me out today.

[To DROMIO OF EPHEBUS] And why do you deny having the
bag of gold?

ADRIANA

I did not, gentle husband, lock you out.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

And, gentle master, I received no gold. But I admit, sir, that
we were locked out.

ADRIANA

Deceitful villain, both of these are lies.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Deceitful woman, all you've said is lies, and you're in
cahoots with a cursed mob to make a disgraced mockery of
me. But I'll use my nails to pluck out your lying eyes that
want to see me humiliated.

*Three or four people enter and offer to tie up ANTIPHOLUS
OF EPHEBUS. He resists.*

ADRIANA

Oh, tie him up, tie him up! Don't let him come near me.

PINCH

We need backup! The demon is strong inside him.

LUCIANA

Oh, God, poor man, how pale and weak he looks!

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

What, will you murder me?

[To OFFICER] You jailer, you, I'm already your prisoner. Will
you allow them to steal me away?

OFFICER

Masters, let him go.

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

PINCH

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

They bind DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

ADRIANA

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

OFFICER

120 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.—
125 Good Master Doctor, see him safe conveyed
Home to my house. O most unhappy day!

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

O most unhappy strumpet!

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Master, I am here entered in bond for you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

LUCIANA

God help poor souls! How idly do they talk!

ADRIANA

Go bear him hence. Sister, go you with me.

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

Remain OFFICER, ADRIANA, LUCIANA, COURTESAN

Say now whose suit is he arrested at.

OFFICER

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

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

140 He did bespeak a chain for me but had it not.

OFFICER

Gentlemen, let him go. He's my prisoner, and you shall not have him.

PINCH

Go, tie up this man, for he is crazy too.

They tie up DROMIO OF EPHEBUS.

ADRIANA

What will you do, you obstinate officer? Do you take pleasure in seeing a disgraced man harm and embarrass himself?

OFFICER

He's my prisoner. If I let him go, I'll have to pay the debt that he owes.

ADRIANA

I will pay you that debt before I leave you. Bring me immediately to the person he owes, and, when I hear how much the debt is, I'll pay it.

[To PINCH] Good Doctor, make sure he's conveyed safely home to my house. Oh, what an awful day!

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Oh, what an awful woman!

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Master, I'm tied up here because of you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Shut up, villain! Why do you keep annoying me?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Will you be tied up and not resist? Be crazy, master. Cry, "The devil!"

LUCIANA

God help poor souls! They talk a lot of nothing!

ADRIANA

Go bring him to my house. Sister, come with me.

PINCH and the men exit, along with ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS and DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

The OFFICER, ADRIANA, LUCIANA, and the COURTESAN stay behind.

Tell me now who's had him arrested.

OFFICER

A man named Angelo, a goldsmith. Do you know him?

ADRIANA

I know the man. How much does he owe?

OFFICER

Two hundred ducats.

ADRIANA

What does he owe it for?

OFFICER

It's for a chain your husband bought from him.

ADRIANA

He did mention a chain for me, but he didn't have it.

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

145 It may be so, but I did never see it.—
Come, jailer, bring me where the goldsmith is.
I long to know the truth hereof at large.

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

LUCIANA

God for Thy mercy, they are loose again!

ADRIANA

150 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

155 Come to the Centaur. Fetch our stuff from thence.
I long that we were safe and sound aboard.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

160 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

COURTESAN

When your husband angrily today came to my house and
took away my ring, the ring I saw him wearing on his finger
now, I met him right after that and he had a chain.

ADRIANA

That may be true, but I never saw it.

[To OFFICER] Come, jailer, bring me to where the goldsmith
is. I'd love to know the truth of this story finally.

*ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE enters with his sword drawn,
along with DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.*

LUCIANA

Oh my God, they're loose again!

ADRIANA

And they've come with their swords drawn. Let's call for
reinforcements to tie them up again.

OFFICER

Get out of here! They'll kill us.

Everyone flees the stage in terror as fast as they can.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I see these [witches](#) ⁶ are afraid of swords.

⁶ Due to all the confusion, Antipholus of Syracuse believes that all the people of Ephesus must be mad, magical beings.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

The woman who claims she's your wife runs away from you
now.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Go to the Centaur. Get our stuff from there. I wish we were
safe and sound onboard the ship.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Please, stay here tonight. They surely won't hurt us. You
saw they said nice things to us and gave us gold. I think
they're such a nice people that, if it weren't for the
mountain of fat that says I'm supposed to marry her, I
would love to stay here longer, and become a witch myself.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I would not stay here tonight even if they gave me the
whole town. So go and get our stuff on the ship.

All exit.

Act 5, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Enter SECOND MERCHANT and ANGELO the goldsmith

ANGELO

I am sorry, sir, that I have hindered you,
But I protest he had the chain of me,
Though most dishonestly he doth deny it.

SECOND MERCHANT

How is the man esteemed here in the city?

Shakescleare Translation

SECOND MERCHANT and ANGELO, the goldsmith, enter.

ANGELO

I'm sorry, sir, to have delayed you, but I promise he took the
chain from me, even though he dishonestly denies it.

SECOND MERCHANT

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

ANGELO

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

SECOND MERCHANT

Speak softly. Yonder, as I think, he walks.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE and DROMIO OF SYRACUSE again

ANGELO

- 10 'Tis so; and that self chain about his neck
Which he forswore most monstrously to have.
Good sir, draw near to me. I'll speak to him.—
Signior Antipholus, I wonder much
That you would put me to this shame and trouble,
15 And not without some scandal to yourself,
With circumstance and oaths so to deny
This chain, which now you wear so openly.
Beside the charge, the shame, imprisonment,
You have done wrong to this my honest friend,
20 Who, but for staying on our controversy,
Had hoisted sail and put to sea today.
This chain you had of me. Can you deny it?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I think I had. I never did deny it.

SECOND MERCHANT

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

- 25 Who heard me to deny it or forswear it?

SECOND MERCHANT

These ears of mine, thou know'st did hear thee.
Fie on thee, wretch. 'Tis pity that thou liv'st
To walk where any honest men resort.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

- 30 Thou art a villain to impeach me thus.
I'll prove mine honor and mine honesty
Against thee presently if thou dar'st stand.

SECOND MERCHANT

I dare, and do defy thee for a villain.

They draw Enter ADRIANA, LUCIANA, the COURTESAN and others

ADRIANA

- Hold, hurt him not, for God's sake. He is mad.—
Some get within him; take his sword away.
35 Bind dromio too, and bear them to my house!

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

Exeunt ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE and DROMIO OF SYRACUSE to the priory

Enter the Lady ABBESS

ABBESS

Be quiet, people. Wherefore throng you hither?

ANGELO

He's very well respected, sir, and trusted and beloved by all.
He's second to none that lives here in the city. I'd bet all my
money on his telling the truth at any time.

SECOND MERCHANT

Speak softly. I think he's walking this way.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE and DROMIO OF SYRACUSE enter again

ANGELO

That's him. He's wearing the same chain around his neck
that he swore he didn't have, the villain. Good sir, come
close to me. I'll speak to him.

[To Antipholus of Syracuse] Antipholus, sir, I'm
dumbfounded that you would put me to all this shame and
trouble, and scandalize yourself in the process, swearing up
and down that you didn't have the chain which you're
wearing so openly. Besides the cost, the shame, and getting
sent to prison, you've done wrong to my honest friend here,
who was supposed to set sail today if it weren't for your
shenanigans. You got this chain from me. Can you deny it?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I think I got it from you. I never did deny it.

SECOND MERCHANT

Yes, you did deny it, sir, and swore you never had it, too.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Who heard me deny and swear it?

SECOND MERCHANT

You know my ears heard you. Damn you, wretch. You
shouldn't be allowed to walk in the same vicinity as honest
men.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

You're a villain to accuse me like this. I'll prove my honor
and my honesty against you right now, if you'll dare to fight
me.

SECOND MERCHANT

I dare, and I'll defeat you, you villain.

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

ADRIANA

Stop, don't hurt him, for God's sake. He's mad. Someone go
to him and take his sword away. Tie up Dromio too and
bring them to my house!

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Run, master run. For God's sake, enter some house. Here's a
nunnery. Get in, or we'll be ruined.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE and DROMIO OF SYRACUSE exit into the nunnery.

The ABBESS enters.

 An abbess is the nun in charge of an abbey or nunnery (the building or complex in which the nuns live).

ABBESS

Be quiet, people. What are you all doing here?

ADRIANA

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

ANGELO

I knew he was not in his perfect wits.

SECOND MERCHANT

I am sorry now that I did draw on him.

ABBESS

How long hath this possession held the man?

ADRIANA

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

ABBESS

Hath he not lost much wealth by wrack of sea?
50 Buried some dear friend? Hath not else his eye
Stray'd his affection in unlawful love,
A sin prevailing much in youthful men
Who give their eyes the liberty of gazing?
Which of these sorrows is he subject to?

ADRIANA

55 To none of these, except it be the last,
Namely, some love that drew him off from home.

ABBESS

You should for that have reprehended him.

ADRIANA

Why, so I did.

ABBESS

Ay, but not rough enough.

ADRIANA

60 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.
65 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 it.
Still did I tell him it was vile and bad.

ABBESS

70 And thereof came it that the man was mad.
The venom clamors of a jealous woman
Poisons more deadly than a mad dog's tooth.
It seems his sleeps were hinder'd by thy railing,
And therefore comes it that his head is light.
75 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 sayest his sports were hinderd by thy brawls.

80

ADRIANA

We're here to get my poor, mad husband. Let us come in, so
we can tie him up and bring him home where he can
recover.

ANGELO

I knew he wasn't in his right mind.

SECOND MERCHANT

I'm sorry now that I drew my sword on him.

ABBESS

How long has this man been mad?

ADRIANA

This week he's been moody, sour, sad, and very different
from the man he was. But until this afternoon his mood had
never turned into extreme rage.

ABBESS

Has he not lost a lot of money in a shipwreck? Buried a dear
friend? Has his eye not led him to think of infidelity? That's
a sin that a lot of youthful men commit when they allow
themselves to stare at women. Which of these sorrows is
weighing on him?

ADRIANA

None of them, unless it's the last. Namely, some love that
drew him often away from home.

ABBESS

You should have scolded him for that.

ADRIANA

I did.

ABBESS

Yes, but not roughly enough.

ADRIANA

As roughly as my modesty would let me.

ABBESS

Maybe in private.

ADRIANA

And publicly too.

ABBESS

Okay, but not enough.

ADRIANA

We had this conversation all the time. He wouldn't sleep in
our bed when I told him to. He wouldn't eat at our table
when I told him to. When we were alone, it was the only
thing I talked about. When we were with other people, I
referred to it in passing. I told him over and over it was vile
and bad.

ABBESS

And that's how the man went mad. The venom of a jealous
woman's nagging has more poison in it than a mad dog's
tooth. It sounds like he couldn't sleep because of your
railing at him, so he went crazy. You say you poured your
scoldings on his dinner like meat sauce. Meals accompanied
by fighting lead to bad digestion. That's how he got this
raging fever, and aren't fevers and fits of madness one and
the same? You say all his relaxation time was ruined by your
fights. Without time for sweet recreation, what's going to
happen but moody and dull melancholy, which leads to

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?
 85 In food, in sport, and life-preserving rest
 To be disturbed, would mad or man or beast.
 The consequence is, then, thy jealous fits
 Have scared thy husband from the use of wits.

LUCIANA

She never reprehended him but mildly
 90 When he demeaned himself rough, rude, and wildly.—
 [to ADRIANA] Why bear you these rebukes and answer not?

ADRIANA

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

ABBESS

No, not a creature enters in my house.

ADRIANA

95 Then let your servants bring my husband forth.

ABBESS

Neither: he took this place for sanctuary,
 And it shall privilege him from your hands
 Till I have brought him to his wits again
 Or lose my labor in assaying it.

ADRIANA

100 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
 105 Till I have used the approv'd 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.
 110 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 ABBESS

LUCIANA

115 Complain unto the Duke of this indignity.

ADRIANA

Come, go. I will fall prostrate at his feet
 And never rise until my tears and prayers
 Have won his grace to come in person hither
 And take perforce my husband from the Abbess.

SECOND MERCHANT

120 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.

grim and comfortless despair, and right after that a whole
 army of illnesses and humoral imbalances that put his life
 in danger. Any man or animal would go mad if he was
 disturbed while he was eating, sporting, and trying to get
 his much-needed sleep. The consequence is that your
 jealous fits have cost your husband his sanity.

LUCIANA

She only ever scolded him mildly when he behaved rough,
 rude, and wildly.

[To Adriana] Why aren't you responding to these insults?

ADRIANA

I think I deserved those reprimands. Good people, enter
 and get him.

ABBESS

No, no one enters my house.

ADRIANA

Then let your servants bring my husband out.

ABBESS

Not a chance. He chose my nunnery for sanctuary, and so
 he'll stay out of your hands until I restore his sanity or die
 trying.

ADRIANA

I'll take care of my husband, be his nurse, and treat his
 sickness, for it's my job, and no one will else can do it for
 me. Therefore, let me bring him home with me.

ABBESS

Be patient, for I won't let him stir until I've used the syrups,
 drugs, and holy prayers that I have to make him come to his
 senses. It's part of my oath as abbess. It's a charitable duty
 of my holy order. Therefore, depart and leave him here with
 me.

ADRIANA

I will not go and leave my husband here. It looks bad for an
 abbess to separate a husband and wife.

ABBESS

Be quite and depart. You shall not have him.

The ABBESS exits.

LUCIANA

Complain to the Duke about this rudeness.

ADRIANA

Come, let's go. I will fall at his feet and I won't get up until
 my tears and prayers have persuaded him to come in
 person here and take my husband from the Abbess by
 force.

SECOND MERCHANT

I think it's five o'clock. The Duke will surely come this way in
 person to the melancholy place where executions are
 carried out behind the abbey here.

ANGELO

125 Upon what cause?

SECOND MERCHANT

To see a reverend Syracusan merchant,
Who put unluckily into this bay
Against the laws and statutes of this town,
Beheaded publicly for his offense.

ANGELO

130 See where they come. We will behold his death.

LUCIANA

Kneel to the duke before he pass the abbey.

*Enter the DUKE OF EPHESUS and EGEON the merchant of Syracuse,
bare head, with the headsman and other officers*

DUKE

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

135 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,
Whom I made lord of me and all I had
140 At your important letters, this ill day
A most outrageous fit of madness took him,
That desperately he hurried through the street,
With him his bondman, all as mad as he,
Doing displeasure to the citizens
145 By rushing in their houses, bearing thence
Rings, jewels, any thing 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.
150 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,
155 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,
160 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,
165 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

170 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,

ANGELO

For what reason?

SECOND MERCHANT

To see an old merchant from Syracuse, who unluckily sailed
into this bay against the town laws, publicly beheaded for
this offense.

ANGELO

Look, they're coming. We'll watch his death.

LUCIANA

Kneel to the Duke before he passes the abbey.

*The DUKE OF EPHESUS enters with EGEON, the merchant of
Syracuse, bare-headed, and the executioner and other
officers.*

DUKE

Yet once again I'll say it publicly: if any friend will pay his
ransom, he shall not die. That's how much we care for him.

ADRIANA

Justice, most sacred Duke, against the Abbess.

DUKE

She's a virtuous and respected lady. It can't be true that
she's done you wrong.

ADRIANA

Your Grace, I married my husband Antipholus and gave
everything I had to him on your instructions, and, this sad
day, he's been overcome by a terrible fit of madness. He ran
desperately through the street, with his servant, equally
mad, upsetting all the citizens by rushing into their houses,
stealing rings, jewels, anything that caught his crazed fancy.
I had him tied up and sent home while I went to deal with
all the wrongs he'd committed in his fury. I don't know how
he then escaped, but he broke away from the men that
were guarding him, and he and his mad servant, both of
them furiously wielding swords, ran into us again and,
charging right at us, chased us away until we found
reinforcements and came back to tie them up. Then they
fled into this abbey, where we pursued them, and now the
Abbess has shut the gates on us and won't let us fetch him
out or send him out herself that we can take him away.
Therefore, most gracious Duke, command that he brought
out of the abbey and taken away for help.

DUKE

Long ago, your husband served me in my wars, and I gave
you a prince's word, when you married him, to do him all
the good I could. Go, some of you, knock at the abbey gate,
and tell the Lady Abbess to come to me. I won't move until
I've cleared this up.

A MESSENGER enters.

MESSENGER

Oh, mistress, mistress, do what you can to save yourself. My
master and his servant have broken free, beaten the maids
and tied up the doctor, whose beard they burned off, and,

Whose beard they have singed off with brands of fire,
 And ever as it blazed, they threw on him
 175 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

180 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,
 185 To scorch your face and to disfigure you.

Cry within

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

DUKE

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

Enter ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS and DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

ADRIANA

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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
 195 Deep scars to save thy life. Even for the blood
 That then I lost for thee, now grant me justice.

EGEON

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

DUKE

205 Discover how, and thou shalt find me just.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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
 210 Today did dine together. So befell 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.

while his beard was blazing, threw mud on him to put out
 the fire. My master urges him to be patient while his servant
 cuts the doctor's beard with scissors to make him look like
 a fool. Surely, unless you send someone to help, they'll kill
 the doctor between them.

ADRIANA

Calm down, fool. Your master and his servant are here, and
 what you've told us is false.

MESSENGER

Mistress, upon my life, I'm telling the truth. I've barely
 breathed since I saw it. He cries for you, and vows, if he can
 catch you, to burn your face and disfigure you.

A cry offstage

Listen, listen, I hear him, mistress. Run, escape!

DUKE

Come, stand by me. Fear nothing.

[To officers] Guard her with spears.

*ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS and DROMIO OF EPHEBUS
 enter.*

ADRIANA

Oh my God, it's my husband. Everyone see that he travels
 invisibly. We just saw him go into the abbey here, and now
 he's there. It's beyond reason.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Justice, most gracious Duke. Oh, grant me justice, if only for
 the service that I performed for you long ago when I fought
 for you in the wars and received deep wounds to save your
 life. If only for the blood that I lost for you then, grant me
 justice now.

EGEON

[Aside] Unless the fear of death has driven me mad, I see
 my son Antipholus and Dromio.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Give me justice, sweet prince, against that woman there,
 she whom you gave to me to be my wife. She has abused
 and dishonored me more than could be thought possible.
 It's beyond imagination how shamelessly she's wronged
 me.

DUKE

Explain what you mean, and you'll find me just.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Today, great Duke, she locked the doors on me while she
 feasted with ruffians in my house.

DUKE

That's very bad. *[To Adriana]* Say, woman, did you do that?

ADRIANA

No, my good lord. Myself, my husband, and my sister dined
 together today. I wager my soul that what he accuses me of
 is false.

LUCIANA

Never shall I see daylight again or sleep at night if what she
 tells your Highness isn't true.

ANGELO

O perjured woman! —They are both forsworn.
215 In this the madman justly chargeth them.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

My liege, I am advisèd 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.
220 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,
225 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. [*points to the
SECOND MERCHANT*]
230 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
235 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
240 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,
245 A living dead man. This pernicious slave,
Forsooth, took on him as a conjurer,
And, gazing in mine eyes, feeling my pulse,
And with no face (as 'twere) out-facing me,
Cries out I was possessed. Then all together
250 They fell upon me, bound me, bore me thence,
And in a dark and dankish vault at home
There left me and my man, both bound together,
Till gnawing with my teeth my bonds in sunder,
I gained my freedom and immediately
255 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

260 But had he such a chain of thee or no?

ANGELO

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

SECOND MERCHANT

Besides, I will be sworn these ears of mine
Heard you confess you had the chain of him
265 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 EPHEBUS

I never came within these abbey walls,
270 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.

ANGELO

Oh, slandering woman! They have both sworn falsely. The
madman's right in accusing them of that.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

My lord, I am sure in what I say, neither intoxicated nor
mad, provoked with fury, although what's been done to me
might make a wiser man go insane. This woman locked me
out today from dinner. That goldsmith there, if he wasn't in
cahoots with her, could attest to it, since he was with me
then. He parted with me to go fetch a chain, promising to
bring it to the Porpentine, where I dined with Balthasar.
After our dinner, the goldsmith hadn't come yet so I went to
seek him. In the street I met him, and he was with this
gentleman. [*Points to the SECOND MERCHANT*] There, this
lying goldsmith swore that I took the chain from him,
which, God knows, I never saw. With this accusation, he
arrested me with an officer. I obeyed and sent my servant
home for money. He came back with nothing. Then I calmly
told the officer to come with me to my house. On the way,
we met my wife, her sister, and a crowd of their vile friends.
Along with them they brought someone named Pinch, a
hungry, thin villain, a mere skeleton, a quack doctor, a poor
magician, and a fortune-teller, a hollow-eyed, gaunt wretch,
a living dead man. This awful rascal pretended to be a
conjurer, gazed in my eyes, felt my pulse, and, with his thin
face looking into mine, cried out I was possessed. Then all
together they fell upon me, tied me up, took me away, and
in a dark and foul cell at home left me and my servant, tied
together, till I'd gnawed the ropes apart with my teeth,
gaining my freedom. I immediately ran here to your Grace,
whom I plead will deliver justice to me for these deep
shames and great indignities.

ANGELO

My lord, in truth, I can back him up that he didn't dine at
home but was locked out.

DUKE

But did he have this chain from you or not?

ANGELO

He had, my lord, and when he ran in here, these people saw
the chain around his neck.

SECOND MERCHANT

Besides, I'll be sworn I heard you confess you had the chain
from him after you first denied it in the marketplace, and
then I drew my sword on you, and then you fled into this
abbey here. I think you've come from there by a miracle.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

I never went inside the abbey nor did you ever draw your
sword on me. I never saw the chain, I swear to God, and you
accuse me falsely.

DUKE

Why, what an intricate impeach is this!
I think you all have drunk of Circe's cup.
275 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. Sirrah, what say you?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

280 Sir, he dined with her there, at the Porpentine.

COURTESAN

He did, and from my finger snatched that ring.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

'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

285 Why, this is strange.—Go call the Abbess hither.
I think you are all mated or stark mad.

Exit one to ABBESS

EGEON

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

DUKE

290 Speak freely, Syracusian, what thou wilt.

EGEON

[to ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS] Is not your name, sir,
called
Antipholus?
And is not that your bondman Dromio?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

EGEON

I am sure you both of you remember me.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

EGEON

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

I never saw you in my life till now.

EGEON

305 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?

DUKE

Why, what a complex case this is! I think you've all drunk
some magical potion. If you saw him enter here, he would
be in here. If he were mad, he wouldn't plead so logically.

[To ADRIANA] You say he dined at home. The goldsmith
here denies that. Sir, what do you say?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Sir, he dined with her there, at the Porpentine.

COURTESAN

He did, and snatched that ring from my finger.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

That's true, my lord. I took this ring from her.

DUKE

Did you see him enter the abbey here?

COURTESAN

As sure, my Lord, as I see you now.

DUKE

Well, this is strange. Go tell the Abbess to come out. I think
you're all confused or totally crazy.

One officer exits into the priory to get the ABBESS.

EGEON

Most mighty Duke, allow me to say a word. Happily, I see a
friend who will save my life and pay the ransom to free me.

DUKE

Speek freely whatever you want to say, Syracusian.

EGEON

[To ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS] Sir, isn't your name
Antipholus? And is that not your [bondman](#) ² Dromio?

² Bondman = servant

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Within the past hour, I was his [bondman](#) ³, sir, but he, I
thank him, gnawed my cords in two. Now I'm Dromio, and
his servant, unbound.

³ Dromio puns on the double
meaning of "bond" -- he is bound to
Antipholus in servitude, but he was
also recently tied up and bound.

EGEON

I am sure both of you remember me.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

You remind us of ourselves, sir. Recently, we were bound as
you are now. You're not Doctor Pinch's patient, are you, sir?

EGEON

Why do you look at me like I'm a stranger? You know me
well.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

I never saw you in my life till now.

EGEON

Oh, I've been changed by grief since you last saw me. The
deforming hand of time, over many stressful hours, has
scarred my face with wrinkles. Tell me, though, do you not
know my voice?

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Neither.

EGEON

Dromio, nor thou?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

310 No, trust me, sir, nor I.

EGEON

I am sure thou dost.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

EGEON

Not know my voice! O time's extremity,
315 Hast thou so crack'd and splitted my poor tongue
In seven short years that here my only son
Knows not my feeble key of untuned cares?
Though now this grainèd face of mine be hid
In sap-consuming winter's drizzled snow,
320 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—
325 Tell me thou art my son Antipholus.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

I never saw my father in my life.

EGEON

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

330 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,
335 During which time he ne'er saw Syracuse.
I see thy age and dangers make thee dote.

Enter the ABBESS with ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE and DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

ABBESS

Most mighty duke, behold a man much wronged.

All gather to see them

ADRIANA

I see two husbands, or mine eyes deceive me.

DUKE

340 *[Looks at the ANTIPHOLUS twins]* One of these men is
genius to the other.
[Looks at the DROMIO twins] And so, of these, which is
the natural man
And which the spirit? Who deciphers them?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I, sir, am Dromio. Command him away.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Not your voice either.

EGEON

Dromio, you don't either?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

No trust me, sir, I don't either.

EGEON

I am sure you do.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

Yes, sir, but I am sure I do not, and whatever a man denies, you are now bound to believe him.

EGEON

Not know my voice! Oh, time's extremity, have you so
damaged and split my poor tongue in seven short years
that my only son here doesn't recognize my feeble voice
badly singing its woes? Though this wrinkled face of
mine is hidden in my white beard and all my veins have
frozen, even in my final days, I still have some memory, my
wavering eyes can still see a fading glimmer, and my dull,
320 deaf ears can still hear a little. All these old witnesses—
they don't deceive me—tell me the you are my son
Antipholus.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

I never saw my father in my life.

EGEON

But you know we parted seven years ago in Syracuse, boy.
But, perhaps, my son, you're ashamed to acknowledge me
in my misery.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

The Duke and everyone who knows me in this city can back
me up that this isn't true. I've never been to Syracuse in my
life.

DUKE

I can tell you, Syracusan, I've been Antipholus's patron for
twenty years, and he's never been to Syracuse in that time. I
suppose your age and the danger of your situation have
made you lose your marbles.

The ABBESS enters with ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE and DROMIO OF SYRACUSE.

ABBESS

Most mighty duke, behold a man who has been much
wronged.

All gather to see them.

ADRIANA

Either I see two husbands or my eyes deceive me.

DUKE

[Looks at the ANTIPHOLUS twins] One of these men is
genius to the other.

[Looks at the DROMIO twins] And so, of these two, which is
the real man and which is the spirit? Who can figure it out?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

I am Dromio, sir. Send the other one away.

4 Dromio of Ephesus continues punning on "bound" and "bond."

5 Egeon addresses the speech to the "extremity," or great length, of time. Speeches directed to a concept, rather than a person, are called "apostrophe."

6 Egeon's "feeble key of untuned cares" imagines his tongue as a musical instrument damaged by time. It has lost its tune and its song of misfortune is performed in a "feeble key."

7 The "old witnesses" are Egeon's memory, sight, and hearing.

8 In ancient pagan culture, individuals were thought to have their own "geniuses," spirits who looked identical to them and followed them around. The Duke suggests that one of each pair of twins must be a spirit.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

345 I, sir, am Dromio. Please, 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.—

350 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

355 Why, here begins his morning story right;
These two Antipholuses, these two so like,
And these two Dromios, one in semblance—
Besides his urging of her wreck at sea—
These are the parents to these children,
360 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
365 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;
370 I to this fortune that you see me in.

DUKE

[to ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE] Antipholus, thou cam'st
from
Corinth first.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

No, sir, not I. I came from Syracuse.

DUKE

375 Stay, stand apart. I know not which is which.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

I came from Corinth, my most gracious lord.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

And I with him.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

Brought to this town by that most famous warrior
Duke Menaphon, your most renownèd uncle.

ADRIANA

380 Which of you two did dine with me today?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I, gentle mistress.

ADRIANA

And are not you my husband?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

I am Dromio, sir. Please, let me stay.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Aren't you Egeon, or, if not, his ghost?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Oh, my old master. Who has tied him up here?

ABBESS

Whoever tied him up, I will free him, and gain a husband in
his freedom. Speak, old Egeon, if you are the man who once
had a wife named Emilia who gave birth to your two
beautiful twin sons. Oh, if you are the same Egeon, speak,
and speak to the same Emilia.

DUKE

Why, that was where his story from this morning began.
These two Antipholuses, who look so alike, and these two
Dromios, who are identical— just like when he told us about
the wreck at sea—these are the parents of those children.
They've found each other by chance.

EGEON

If I do not dream, you are Emilia. If you are she, tell me
where is our son who floated with you on that doomed
raft?

ABBESS

He and I and Dromio were saved by men of Epidamnum.
But eventually beastly fisherman from Corinth took Dromio
and my son by force and left me with the men from
Epidamnum. I do not know what happened to them next.
All I know is that I became what you see I am now.

DUKE

[To ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE] Antipholus, you came from
Corinth originally.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

No, sir, not me. I came from Syracuse.

DUKE

Hold on, stand apart from each other. I don't know which is
which.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

I came from Corinth, my most gracious lord.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

And I came with him.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

You were brought to this town by that very famous warrior,
Duke Menaphon, your celebrated uncle.

ADRIANA

Which of the two of you dined with me today?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I, gentle lady.

ADRIANA

And are you my husband?

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

No, I say nay to that.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

385 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

390 I think it be, sir. I deny it not.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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 EPHEBUS

395 No, none by me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

400 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 EPHEBUS

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 EPHEBUS

There, take it; and much thanks for my good cheer.

ABBESS

405 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
410 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 deliverèd.—
415 The Duke, my husband, and my children both,
And you, the calendars of their nativity,
Go to a gossips' feast, and go with me.
After so long grief, such nativity!

DUKE

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

Exeunt; the two DROMIOS and the two ANTIPHOLUS brothers remain behind.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

No, he's definitely not.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

And I agree, even though she called her husband, and this beautiful lady, her sister here, called me her brother.

[*To LUCIANA*] What I told you earlier, I hope I'll have the opportunity to follow through on, if this isn't all a dream that I see and hear.

ANGELO

Sir, that is the chain that you got from me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I think it is, sir. I don't deny it.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

And you, sir, arrested me for this chain.

ANGELO

I think I did, sir. I don't deny it.

ADRIANA

I sent Dromio with money, sir, to bail you out, but I think he didn't bring it.

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

No, I never was given any money.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I received this purse of money from you, and my servant Dromio brought them to me. It looks like each of us ran into the other's servant, and mine thought you were me and yours thought I was you, and this is where all these errors came from.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

I offer this money as ransom for my father.

DUKE

No need. Your father can live.

COURTESAN

Sir, I must have that diamond from you.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

There, take it, with many thanks for a good time.

ABBESS

Great duke, will you be so good as to go with us into the abbey and hear all our stories told, along with everyone assembled here that has suffered from the confusions today? Come, keep us company, and we'll figure out everything. Thirty-three years have I been grieving for you, my sons, and till this hour I never found freedom from that pain. The Duke, my husband, my two sons, and you, who share their birthday, come to a celebration, and come with me. After so long a grief, such rebirth!

DUKE

With all my heart, I'll celebrate at this feast.

All exit except for the two DROMIOS and the two ANTIPHOLUS brothers.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

420 [to ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS] Master, shall I fetch your stuff from shipboard?

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.

425 Come, go with us. We'll look to that anon.
Embrace thy brother there. Rejoice with him.

Exeunt ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE and ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

430 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

435 We'll draw cuts for the signior. Till then, lead thou first.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

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

Exeunt

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

[To ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS] Master, should I get your stuff from the ship?

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS

Dromio, what stuff of mine is on a ship?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Your goods that were being kept in the Centaur, sir.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

He speaks to me.—I'm your master, Dromio. Come, go with us.

We'll deal with that later. Embrace your brother there.
Rejoice with him.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE and ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS exit.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

There's a fat lady at your master's house that cornered me today at dinner, thinking it was you. She shall be my sister now, not my wife.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

I think you're my reflection and not my brother: I see in your face that I must be a good-looking guy. Will you go in to see their celebrations?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Not me first, sir. You're older than me.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

You bring up a good question. How can we figure it out?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

We'll draw straws to decide who's older. Until then, you lead first.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

No, let's do it this way: we came into the world as brother and brother, so let's walk hand in hand, not one ahead of the other.

All exit.

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