

DUKE SOLINUS

Merchant of Syracuse, plead no more;
I am not partial to infringe our laws:
For, since the mortal and intestine jars
'Twixt thy seditious countrymen and us,
It hath in solemn synods been decreed
Both by the Syracusians and ourselves,
To admit no traffic to our adverse towns.
Nay, more, if any born at Ephesus
Be seen at any Syracusian marts and fairs;
Again: if any Syracusian born
Come to the bay of Ephesus, he dies,
His goods confiscate to the duke's dispose,
Unless a thousand marks be levied,
To quit the penalty and to ransom him.
Thy substance, valued at the highest rate,
Cannot amount unto a hundred marks;
Therefore by law thou art condemned to die.

EGEON

A league from Epidamnum had we sail'd,
Before the always wind-obeying deep
Gave any tragic instance of our harm:
But longer did we not retain much hope;
For what obscured light the heavens did grant
Did but convey unto our fearful minds
A doubtful warrant of immediate death;
Which though myself would gladly have embraced,
Yet the incessant weepings of my wife,
Weeping before for what she saw must come,
And piteous plainings of the pretty babes,
That mourn'd for fashion, ignorant what to fear,
Forced me to seek delays for them and me.
And this it was (for other means was none)
The sailors sought for safety by our boat,
And left the ship then sinking ripe to us:
My wife, more careful for the latter-born,
Had fasten'd him unto a small spare mast,
Such as seafaring men provide for storms;
To him one of the other twins was bound,
Whilst I had been like heedful of the other.
The children thus disposed, my wife and I,
Fixing our eyes on whom our care was fix'd,
Fasten'd ourselves at either end the mast.

DR PINCH

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

ADRIANA

Ah, do not tear away thy self from me!
For know my love: as easy mayest thou fall
A drop of water in the breaking gulf,
And take unmingled that same drop again
Without addition or diminishing,
As take from me thy self and not me too.
How dearly would it touch thee to the quick,
Shouldst thou but hear I were licentious?
And that this body, consecrate to thee,
By ruffian lust should be contaminate?
Wouldst thou not spit at me, and spurn at me,
And hurl the name of husband in my face,
And tear the stain'd skin off my harlot brow,
And from my false hand cut the wedding ring,
And break it with a deep-divorcing vow?
I know thou canst; and therefore see thou do it.
I am possess'd with an adulterate blot;
My blood is mingled with the crime of lust:
For if we two be one, and thou play false,
I do digest the poison of thy flesh,
Being strumpeted by thy contagion:
Keep then fair league and truce with thy true bed,
I live unstain'd, thou undishonoured.

LUCIANA

And may it be that you have quite forgot
A husband's office? shall, Antipholus.
Even in the spring of love, thy love-springs rot?
Shall love, in building, grow so ruinous?
If you did wed my sister for her wealth,
Then for her wealth's sake use her with more kindness:
Or if you like elsewhere, do it by stealth;
Muffle your false love with some show of blindness:
Let not my sister read it in your eye;
Be not thy tongue thy own shame's orator;
Look sweet, 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;
Be secret-false: what need she be acquainted?
What simple thief brags of his own attainment?
'Tis double wrong, to truant with your bed
And let her read it in thy looks at board:
Shame hath a bastard fame, well managed;
Ill deeds are doubled with an evil word.
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.

ANGELO

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;
And, not without some scandal to yourself,
With circumstance and oaths so to deny
This chain which now you wear so openly:
Beside the charge, the shame, imprisonment,
You have done wrong to this my honest friend,
Who, but for staying on our controversy,
Had hoisted sail and put to sea to-day:
This chain you had of me; can you deny it?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

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

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Why, mistress, sure my master is horn-mad.
I mean not cuckold-mad;
But sure he is stark mad:
When I desired him to come home to dinner,
He ask'd me for a thousand marks in gold:
'Tis dinner-time,' quoth I; 'My gold!' quoth he;
'Your meat doth burn,' quoth I; 'My gold!' quoth he:
'Will you come?' quoth I; 'My gold!' quoth he.
'Where is the thousand marks I gave thee, villain?'
'The pig,' quoth I, 'is burn'd;' 'My gold!' quoth he:
'My mistress, sir' quoth I; 'Hang up thy mistress!
I know not thy mistress; out on thy mistress!'
'I know,' quoth he, 'no house, no wife, no mistress.'
So that my errand, due unto my tongue,
I thank him, I bare home upon my shoulders;
For, in conclusion, he did beat me there.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

COURTEZAN

Now, out of doubt Antipholus is mad,
Else would he never so demean himself.
A ring he hath of mine worth forty ducats,
And for the same he promised me a chain:
Both one and other he denies me now.
The reason that I gather he is mad,
Besides this present instance of his rage,
Is a mad tale he told to-day at dinner,
Of his own doors being shut against his entrance.
Belike his wife, acquainted with his fits,
On purpose shut the doors against his way.
My way is now to hie home to his house,
And tell his wife that, being lunatic,
He rush'd into my house and took perforce
My ring away. This course I fittest choose;
For forty ducats is too much to lose.

SERVANT

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

Dialogue Side for *The Comedy of Errors*

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

But I pray sir, why am I beaten?

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Dost thou not know?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Nothing sir, but that I am beaten.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Shall I tell you why?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Why first for flouting me, and then wherefore, for urging it the second time to me.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Thank me sir, for what?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

In good time sir: what's that?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Basting.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Well sir, then 'twill be dry.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Your reason?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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