

The Comedy of Errors  
Act 1, Scene 1

**ROLE: Egeon/Duke Solinus**

*Egeon, a Syracusan merchant, has arrived in Ephesus in search of his long-lost twin sons. But Ephesus and Syracuse are at war, and by law, Syracusans who trespass in Ephesus are to be put to death unless they can pay a ransom. Here Egeon, who has been apprehended by the Duke, explains the events that led him to Ephesus, and the Duke, sympathetic, gives him until sundown to raise the ransom.*

EGEON

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

DUKE SOLINUS

Hapless Egeon, whom the fates have mark'd  
To bear the extremity of dire mishap!  
Now, trust me, were it not against our laws,  
Against my crown, my oath, my dignity,  
Which princes, would they, may not disannul,  
My soul would sue as advocate for thee.  
But, though thou art adjudged to the death  
And passed sentence may not be recall'd  
But to our honour's great disparagement,  
Yet I will favour thee in what I can.  
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.

The Comedy of Errors  
Act 2, Scene 1

**ROLE: Luciana/Adriana**

*Luciana and her sister Adriana are awaiting the appearance of Adriana's husband, who is late for dinner.*

ADRIANA

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

LUCIANA

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

ADRIANA

Why should their liberty than ours be more?

LUCIANA

Because their business still lies out o' door.

ADRIANA

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

LUCIANA

O, know he is the bridle of your will.

ADRIANA

There's none but asses will be bridled so.

LUCIANA

Why, headstrong liberty is lash'd 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:  
Men, more divine, the masters of all these,  
Lords of the wide world and wild watery seas,  
Are masters to their females, and their lords:  
Then let your will attend on their accords.

ADRIANA

This servitude makes you to keep unwed.

LUCIANA

Not this, but troubles of the marriage-bed.

ADRIANA

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

LUCIANA

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

ADRIANA

How if your husband start some other where?

LUCIANA

Till he come home again, I would forbear.

ADRIANA

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

The Comedy of Errors  
Act 2, Scene 1

**ROLE: Dromio of Ephesus**

*Adriana and Luciana are looking for Adriana's husband Antipholus of Ephesus, who is late for dinner. They have sent his servant Dromio of Ephesus to find him. But Dromio encounters his master's long-lost twin brother, Antipholus of Syracuse. Believing this Antipholus to be his master, Dromio summons him to dinner. But this Antipholus of Syracuse also has a servant Dromio, who is the twin to the Ephesian Dromio, and has likewise mistaken his identity! Here Dromio reports his confusing encounter to Adriana and Luciana.*

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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 home?' 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!'

LUCIANA

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

The Comedy of Errors  
Act 2, Scene 2

**ROLE: Adriana**

*Adriana is the wife of Antipholus of Ephesus. Antipholus, who is a bit of a rake, is late for dinner. Here she upbraids him for his lack of attentiveness. She has no idea that she is actually not talking to her husband, but to his long-lost twin brother, Antipholus of Syracuse, who has arrived in Ephesus to search for his family. This Antipholus, having never laid eyes on Adriana, is predictably baffled.*

ADRIANA

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,  
That never object pleasing in thine eye,  
That never touch well welcome to thy hand,  
That never meat sweet-savor'd in thy taste,  
Unless I spake, or look'd, or touch'd, or carved to thee.  
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 that same drop again,  
Without addition or diminishing,  
As take from me thyself and not me too.  
How dearly would it touch me 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?

The Comedy of Errors  
Act 3, Scene 1

**ROLE: Balthazar**

*Antipholus of Ephesus has invited his friend Balthazar, a merchant, home to dinner at his house. But inexplicably, Antipholus is locked out, and his cries for entry are met with rude denials from those inside. Enraged, he is about to force his way inside. In this speech, Balthazar counsels restraint.*

BALTHAZAR

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

The Comedy of Errors  
Act 3, Scene 1

**ROLE: Antipholus of Ephesus**

*Antipholus of Ephesus has been locked out of his own house. He thinks this is because his wife is punishing him for his supposedly wayward behavior. After his friend Balthazar talks him out of breaking down the door to gain entry, he decides to dine where he will be more warmly welcomed, and invites his friend to come along.*

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS

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

*To Angelo*

Get you home  
And fetch the chain; by this I know 'tis made:  
Bring it, I pray you, to the Porpentine;  
For there's the house: that chain will I bestow--  
Be it for nothing but to spite my wife--  
Upon mine hostess there: good sir, make haste.  
Since mine own doors refuse to entertain me,  
I'll knock elsewhere, to see if they'll disdain me.

The Comedy of Errors  
Act 3, Scene 2

**ROLE: Luciana/Antipholus of Syracuse**

*Antipholus of Syracuse is at the house of his long-lost twin brother, and has just dined with his brother's wife Adriana and sister Luciana, neither of whom realize he is the wrong Antipholus. In the process the Syracusan Antipholus falls in love with Luciana, and here he sets about wooing her. She is startled by this, believing him to be the other Antipholus, who is married to her sister.*

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Sweet mistress--what your name is else, I know not,  
Nor by what wonder you do hit of mine,--  
Less in your knowledge and your grace you show not  
Than our earth's wonder, more than earth divine.  
Are you a god? would you create me new?  
Transform me then, and to your power I'll yield.  
But if that I am I, then well I know  
Your weeping sister is no wife of mine,  
Nor to her bed no homage do I owe  
Far more, far more to you do I decline.  
Sing, siren, for thyself and I will dote:  
Spread o'er the silver waves thy golden hairs,  
And as a bed I'll take them and there lie,  
And in that glorious supposition think  
He gains by death that hath such means to die:  
Let Love, being light, be drowned if she sink!

LUCIANA

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

LUCIANA

It is a fault that springeth from your eye.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

LUCIANA

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

LUCIANA

Why call you me love? call my sister so.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Thy sister's sister.

LUCIANA

That's my sister.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

No;

It is thyself, mine own self's better part,  
Mine eye's clear eye, my dear heart's dearer heart,  
My food, my fortune and my sweet hope's aim,  
My sole earth's heaven and my heaven's claim.

LUCIANA

All this my sister is, or else should be.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

LUCIANA

O, soft, air! hold you still:  
I'll fetch my sister, to get her good will.

The Comedy of Errors  
Act 3, Scene 2

**ROLE: Dromio of Syracuse/Antipholus of Syracuse**

*Antipholus of Syracuse and his servant Dromio, searching for their long-lost twin brothers, have arrived in Ephesus where, unbeknownst to them, their brothers live. Nell, a local servant girl, intends to marry the Ephesian Dromio, but she encounters the Syracusan Dromio instead, and mistakenly plights her troth to him. Here Dromio describes Nell to Antipholus.*

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE  
What complexion is she of?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE  
Swart, like my shoe, but her face nothing half so clean kept: for why, she sweats; a man may go over shoes in the grime of it.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE  
What's her name?

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE  
Then she bears some breadth?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE  
No longer from head to foot than from hip to hip: she is spherical, like a globe; I could find out countries in her.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE  
In what part of her body stands Ireland?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE  
Marry, in her buttocks: I found it out by the bogs.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE  
Where Scotland?

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Where France?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Where England?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Where Spain?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Where America, the Indies?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Where stood Belgia, the Netherlands?

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

Oh, sir, I did not look so low.

The Comedy of Errors  
Act 3, Scene 2

**ROLE: Antipholus of Syracuse/Angelo**

*Antipholus has been searching for his lost twin brother, and is now in Ephesus where, unbeknownst to him, his brother is a prominent citizen. To his bewilderment, he has been repeatedly mistaken for his brother, including by his brother's wife, and furthermore has fallen in love with her sister. He concludes that Ephesus is bewitched and determines to leave as soon as his servant can procure passage on a ship. Then, in yet another case of mistaken identity, the goldsmith Angelo, who has made a gold chain at the request of the Ephesian Antipholus, attempts to deliver it to the wrong brother.*

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Go hie thee presently, post to the road:  
An if the wind blow any way from shore,  
I will not harbour in this town to-night:  
If any bark put forth, come to the mart,  
Where I will walk till thou return to me.  
If every one knows us and we know none,  
'Tis time, I think, to trudge, pack and be gone.

~~DROMIO OF SYRACUSE~~

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

*Exit*

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

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*Enter ANGELO with the chain*

ANGELO

Master Antipholus,--

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Ay, that's my name.

ANGELO

I know it well, sir, lo, here is the chain.

I thought to have ta'en you at the Porpentine:

The chain unfinish'd made me stay thus long.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What is your will that I shall do with this?

ANGELO

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

ANGELO

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

Go home with it and please your wife withal;

And soon at supper-time I'll visit you

And then receive my money for the chain.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

I pray you, sir, receive the money now,

For fear you ne'er see chain nor money more.

ANGELO

You are a merry man, sir: fare you well.

The Comedy of Errors  
Act 5, Scene 1

**ROLE: Aemilia/Adriana**

*Adriana's husband Antipholus, at wit's end because of the chaos unleashed by the arrival of his long-lost twin brother, has fled into the abbey in Ephesus. Adriana attempts to retrieve him, but the Abbess Aemilia is having none of it, insisting that Adriana's shewishness has driven her husband to distraction.*

AEMELIA

Be quiet, people. Wherefore throng you hither?

ADRIANA

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

AEMELIA

How long hath this possession held the man?

ADRIANA

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

AEMELIA

Hath he not lost much wealth by wreck of sea?  
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

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

AEMELIA

You should for that have reprehended him.

ADRIANA

Why, so I did.

AEMELIA

Ay, but not rough enough.

ADRIANA

As roughly as my modesty would let me.

AEMELIA

Haply, in private.

ADRIANA

And in assemblies too.

AEMELIA

Ay, but not enough.

ADRIANA

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

AEMELIA

And thereof came it that the man was mad.  
The venom clamours of a jealous woman  
Poisons more deadly than a mad dog's tooth.  
It seems his sleeps were hinder'd by thy railing,  
And therefore comes it that his head is light.  
Thou say'st his meat was sauced with thy upbraidings:  
Unquiet meals make ill digestions;  
In food, in sport and life-preserving rest  
To be disturb'd, would mad or man or beast:  
The consequence is then thy jealous fits  
Have scared thy husband from the use of wits.