

I-1

The Mart.

Enter ANTIPHOLUS of Syracuse, DROMIO of Syracuse, and First Merchant

First Merchant

Therefore give out you are of Epidamnum,
Lest that your goods too soon be confiscate.
This very day a Syracusian merchant
Is apprehended for arrival here;
And 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,
And stay there, Dromio, till I come to thee.
Within this hour it will be dinner-time:
Till that, I'll view the manners of the town,
Peruse the traders, gaze upon the buildings,
And then return and sleep within mine inn,
For with long travel I am stiff and weary.
Get thee away.

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

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

Exit

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

First Merchant

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

I-2

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

He that commends me to mine own content
Commends me to the thing I cannot get.
I to the world am like a drop of water
That in the ocean seeks another drop.
So I, to find a mother and a brother,
In quest of them, unhappy, lose myself.

Enter DROMIO of Ephesus

Here comes the almanac of my true date.
What now? how chance thou art return'd so soon?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS

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

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

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

I-3

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

To me, sir? why, you gave no gold to me.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

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

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Where is the thousand marks thou hadst of me?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

I have some marks of yours upon my pate,
Some of my mistress' marks upon my shoulders,
But not a thousand marks between you both.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

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

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Your worship's wife, my mistress at the Phoenix;
She that doth fast till you come home to dinner.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

What, wilt thou flout me thus unto my face,
Being forbid? There, take you that, sir knave.

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

What mean you, sir? for God's sake, hold your hands!
Nay, and you will not, sir, I'll take my heels.

Exit

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE

Upon my life, by some device or other
The villain is o'er-raught of all my money.
They say this town is full of cozenage,
As, nimble jugglers that deceive the eye,
Dark-working sorcerers that change the mind,
Soul-killing witches that deform the body,
Disguised cheaters, prating mountebanks,
And many such-like liberties of sin:
If it prove so, I will be gone the sooner.
I'll to the Centaur, to go seek this slave:
I greatly fear my money is not safe.
Exit

II-1

The house of ANTIPHOLUS of Ephesus.

Enter ADRIANA and LUCIANA

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.

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.
The beasts, the fishes, and the winged fowls,
Are their males' subjects and at their controls:
Men, more divine, the masters of all these,
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.

II-2

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.

III-1

ADRIANA

Say, is your tardy master now at hand?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

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

ADRIANA

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

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

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

LUCIANA

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

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

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

ADRIANA

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

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

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

ADRIANA

Horn-mad, thou villain!

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

I mean not cuckold-mad;
But, sure, he is stark mad.
When I desired him to come home to dinner,
He 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!'

III-2

LUCIANA
Quoth who?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS
Quoth my master:
'I know,' quoth he, 'no house, no wife, no mistress.'

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

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

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

DROMIO OF EPHESUS
And he will bless that cross with other beating:
Between you I shall have a holy head.

ADRIANA
Hence, prating peasant! fetch thy master home.

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

Exit