

“The Comedy of Errors”  
by William Shakespeare

When they came to the gates of a convent near her home, there they saw Antipholus and Dromio, as they thought, being again deceived by the likeness of the twin brothers.

Antipholus of Syracuse was still beset with the perplexities this likeness had brought upon him. The chain which the goldsmith had given him was about his neck. The goldsmith was reproaching him for denying that he had it and refusing to pay for it. Antipholus was protesting that the goldsmith freely gave him the chain in the morning and that, from that hour, he had never seen the goldsmith again.

Now Adriana came up to him and claimed him as her lunatic husband who had escaped from his keepers. The men she brought with her were going to lay violent hands on Antipholus and Dromio. They ran into the convent, and Antipholus begged the abbess to give him shelter in her house.

Now came out the abbess herself to inquire into the cause of this disturbance. She was a grave and venerable lady, and wise to judge of what she saw. She would not too hastily give up the man who had sought protection in her house. She questioned the wife about the story she told of her husband's madness and said:

“What is the cause of this sudden distemper of your husband's? Has he lost

his wealth at sea? Is it the death of some dear friend that has disturbed his mind?”

Adriana replied that no such things as these had been the cause.

“Perhaps,” said the abbess, “he has fixed his affections on another lady than you and that has driven him to this state.”

Adriana said she had long thought the love of some other lady was the cause of his frequent absences from home.

Now it was not his love for another, but the teasing jealousy of his wife’s temper that often obliged Antipholus to leave his home. The abbess, suspecting this from the vehemence of Adriana’s manner, to learn the truth, said, “You should have reprehended him for this.”

“Why, so I did,” replied Adriana.

“Aye,” said the abbess, “but perhaps not enough.”

To convince the abbess she had said enough to Antipholus on this subject, Adrianna replied, “It was the constant subject of our conversation. I would not let him sleep for speaking of it. At table I would not let him eat for speaking of it. When I was alone with him, I talked of nothing else. In company I gave him frequent hints of it. Still all my talk was how vile and bad it was in him to love any lady better than me.”