

The Comedy of Errors abbreviated

Act 1, Scene 2

Introspection

Situation: Antipholus of Syracuse gives us some of his initial views of Ephesus. As we say, this Antipholus and his father had each arrived in Ephesus on the same day. We find, soon after Antipholus of Syracuse arrives in Ephesus, that he is about to experience the first of many instances of misidentification humor that Shakespeare offers relentlessly throughout the comedy.

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 dinnertime. Till that, I'll view the manners of the town.

Dromio of Syracuse exits with the money.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE TO THE MERCHANT: Will you walk with me about the town and the go to my inn and dine with me?

MERCHANT: My present business calls me from you now. Soon at five o'clock, please you, I'll meet with you upon the mart. Sir, I commend you to your own content.

He exits.

Antipholus of Syracuse to himself

He that commends me to my own content
Likens me to a drop of water lent
To the ocean seeking another drop.
That drop falling there to find its purpose
Finds itself unseen; the ocean doth crop
Its identify. So I to find us,
A mother and a brother, unhappy,
In quest of them. 'Tis full of trickery
This town; nimble as jugglers that deceive
The eye, dark sorcerers that change the mind,
Foul soul-killing witches that do receive
Charlatans with excessive sin; where find
Disguised cheaters that freely carry on.
If it prove so, I will be sooner gone.

Dromio of Ephesus enters.

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE: How chance thou art returned so soon?

DROMIO OF EPHEBUS: Returned so soon? Rather approached too late! The capon burns, the pig falls from the spit; my mistress is hot because you come not home.