

The Comedy of Errors abbreviated

Act 5, Scene 1.1

Pleading

Situation: Adriana begs the duke to intervene on her behalf, interrupting the duke as he is leading Egeon to the gallows. Adriana is outraged that the Abbess is shielding her husband from her, keeping him sequestered in the Abbey.

DUKE: Yet once again proclaim it publicly, if any friend will pay the sum for him, he shall not die; so much we tender him.

ADRIANA: Justice, most sacred duke, against the Abbess.

DUKE: She is a virtuous and a reverend lady. It cannot be that she hath done thee wrong.

Adriana to the Duke

May it please your Grace, this ill day a rathe
Madman in a most outrageous fit hath
O'ertaken my husband, who desp'rately
Rushed to citizens houses bearing thence
Rings and what he did like. When once bound, we
Sought calm to the fury, to bring law hence
These wrongs, when he broke from those that had guard
Of him, and with his mad attendant barred
Us, with drawn swords, madly bent on us, when
They fled into this abbey, whither we
Pursued them, and when here the Abbess then
Shuts the gates on us, disallowing me
To fetch him out. Therefore, most gracious duke,
Bring him forth; I will help without rebuke.

DUKE: Go, some of you, knock at the abbey gate, and bid the Lady Abbess come to me. I will determine this before I stir.