

Adriana and Luciana and Dromio

- **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,
Indued with intellectual sense and souls,
Of more preeminence than fish and fowls,
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.

[Enter DROMIO of Ephesus]

Adriana and Luciana and Dromio

- **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!'
- **Luciana.** Quoth who?
- **Dromio of Ephesus.** 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.
- **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, 355
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.