

The Comedy of Errors

Act II, sc. 2

ADRIANA

Ay, ay, Antipholus, look strange and frown:

Some other mistress hath thy sweet aspects;

I am not Adriana nor thy wife.

The time was once when thou unurged wouldst vow

That never words were music to thine ear,

That never object pleasing in thine eye,

That never touch well welcome to thy hand,

That never meat sweet-savor'd in thy taste,

Unless I spake, or look'd, or touch'd, or carved to thee.

How comes it now, my husband, O, how comes it,

That thou art thus estranged from thyself?

Thyself I call it, being strange to me,

That, undividable, incorporate,

Am better than thy dear self's better part.

Ah, do not tear away thyself from me!

For know, my love, as easy mayest thou fall

A drop of water in the breaking gulf,

And take unmingled that same drop again,

Without addition or diminishing,

As take from me thyself and not me too.

How dearly would it touch me to the quick,

Shouldst thou but hear I were licentious
And that this body, consecrate to thee,
By ruffian lust should be contaminate!
Wouldst thou not spit at me and spurn at me
And hurl the name of husband in my face
And tear the stain'd skin off my harlot-brow
And from my false hand cut the wedding-ring
And break it with a deep-divorcing vow?
I know thou canst; and therefore see thou do it.
I am possess'd with an adulterate blot;
My blood is mingled with the crime of lust:
For if we too be one and thou play false,
I do digest the poison of thy flesh,
Being strumpeted by thy contagion.
Keep then far league and truce with thy true bed;
I live unstain'd, thou undishonoured.