

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS

Character Notes

Antipholus of Ephesus

The son of a nobleman, separated from his twin brother, Antipholus of Syracuse, at birth. He lives at The Phoenix in Ephesus with his wife Adriana and his servant, Dromio of Ephesus. He is a merchant well respected by the people of Ephesus. Locked out of his house by Adriana, he fraternizes with a courtesan, to whom he promises the gold chain he's commissioned from the goldsmith, Angelo, for his wife. Since it's such a valuable chain he takes the courtesan's ring in exchange. Angelo (who has mistakenly given the gold chain to Antipholus of Syracuse) demands payment from Antipholus of Ephesus. Antipholus denies receipt of the gold chain and naturally refuses to pay. This means that the merchant, to whom Angelo owes money, is unable to set sail. Angelo orders the arrest of Antipholus who sends for his wife to pay his bail. She arrives with Doctor Pinch who declares him mad and has him bound, along with his equally mad servant, Dromio of Ephesus, and taken home for their own safe-keeping. Eventually they both escape and Antipholus of Ephesus tells the Duke of his misfortune.

Antipholus of Syracuse

The son of a nobleman, separated from his twin brother, Antipholus of Ephesus, at birth. He has been travelling the world with his servant Dromio of Syracuse, looking for his long, lost twin. He is mistaken for Antipholus of Ephesus by Dromio of Ephesus and his brother's wife, Adriana, who believes him to be her husband. He falls for Adriana's sister, Luciana, and is tempted to stay until he is spooked by the strange behaviour of the people of Ephesus – who appear to know him. He asks his servant, Dromio of Syracuse, to find a boat so that they can leave the island. Mistaking, him for Antipholus of Ephesus, Angelo gives Antipholus of Syracuse the gold chain, which he accepts gladly and puts around his neck. When the courtesan sees the chain and demands it from him, he refuses and draws his sword on her. When Angelo, and a merchant to whom he owes money, find Antipholus of Syracuse wearing the gold chain they demand to know why he denied being in receipt of it. He says he never denied it. They accuse him of lying and draw their swords on him. With Dromio of Syracuse, he flees to the priory.

Dromio of Ephesus

Antipholus of Ephesus' life-long servant. He was separated from his twin brother, Dromio of Syracuse, at birth. He is a light-hearted and comic character, despite suffering repeated blows at the hands of Antipholus. He is married to a maid who works in the kitchen, whom we never see but who terrifies Dromio of Syracuse when he visits the house.

Dromio of Syracuse

Antipholus of Syracuse's life-long servant. He was separated from his twin brother Dromio of Ephesus at birth. He is a light-hearted and comic character, despite suffering repeated blows at the hands of Antipholus. He is terrified by the woman in the kitchen who, confusing him with Dromio of Ephesus, believes he's married to her.

Adriana

She lives in Ephesus at The Phoenix with her husband, Antipholus of Ephesus. Adriana is a fiery lady, initially quick to suspect her husband of infidelity, she soon prefers to assume that his strange behaviour is a sure sign of madness.

Luciana

Sister of Adriana, she becomes the object of Antipholus of Syracuse's attention. Less hot-headed than her sister, her speech is less impassioned and more reasoned.

Angelo

A goldsmith who makes a chain for Antipholus of Ephesus, but gives the chain to Antipholus of Syracuse by mistake. He's arrested for not being able to pay a sum of money to a foreign merchant. It is the same sum of money that Antipholus of Ephesus owes him for the chain. He orders Antipholus of Ephesus to be apprehended by the officer when he refuses to pay Angelo and denies having received the chain.

Dr Pinch

A quack, exorcist and school master who apprehends Antipholus of Ephesus and declares him to be possessed.

Courtesan

Well known to Antipholus of Ephesus, the courtesan is the object of his affections. He chooses to lunch with her after being locked out of his house by his wife. To exact further revenge on his wife, he promises the courtesan the precious chain he commissioned for his wife. Because of the high value of the chain, Antipholus of Ephesus demands a ring from her in exchange. When she sees Antipholus of

Syracuse wearing the chain she assumes he is Antipholus of Ephesus and demands he give her the chain, as promised. When he does not, she assumes he is mad and goes to find his wife, Adriana. Loath to explain how she 'lost' her ring to Antipholus of Ephesus, she chooses to tell his wife that he just ran in and grabbed it off her in his crazed state.

The Abbess

She resides in the priory where she shelters Antipholus and Dromio of Syracuse.

The Duke

Duke of Ephesus. He was responsible for marrying Antipholus of Ephesus to Adriana and is keen to resolve the confusion and restore order at the end of the play.

Balthasar

A merchant and friend of Antipholus of Ephesus.