



## *The Comedy of Errors*

The play opens with Aegeon, a merchant of Syracuse, being arrested in Ephesus because of enmity between Ephesus and Syracuse. Aegeon tells Solinus, the Duke of Ephesus, his tale: he was shipwrecked many years ago while sailing with his wife, Aemilia, and two pairs of identical twins—their twin sons, both named Antipholus, and twin servants, both named Dromio. In the course of the storm, his wife, one of their sons, and one their servants, were lost. At eighteen, Aegeon had allowed the remaining Antipholus and Dromio to leave Syracuse for Ephesus to search for their long-lost twins, at which point both of them had disappeared as well. After five years, Aegeon had come to Ephesus to find them.

Solinus, moved by the old man's tale, postpones Aegeon's sentence; Aegeon has until nightfall to produce a ransom, or he will be put to death. At this point in the action, Antipholus of Syracuse arrives in Ephesus, and the farce commences as everyone—including the twins themselves—confuses the identities of the twins. Antipholus of Syracuse ends up invited to dinner at the home of Antipholus of Ephesus and dines with his twin's wife, Adriana. Meanwhile, Angelo, a merchant, gives a gold chain commissioned by Antipholus of Ephesus to Antipholus of Syracuse by mistake, telling him he'll come back later for payment. When Antipholus of Ephesus refuses to pay later on, Angelo has him arrested. All this time, Adriana and her sister, Luciana, are convinced that Antipholus and Dromio (of Ephesus) have gone mad, which leads them to forcibly restrain them and take them to a doctor.

Of course, when Adriana later encounters Antipholus and Dromio of Syracuse, she thinks they've escaped from the doctor. The pair from Syracuse are forced to flee into a nearby abbey for refuge. In the meantime, Antipholus and Dromio of Ephesus do escape from the doctor, and arrive to petition the Duke as Aegeon is being led to his death. In the midst of everyone trying to tell their varying accounts of the day, Antipholus and Dromio of Syracuse arrive with the abbess—who turns out to be Aemilia, Aegeon's long-lost wife. The twins all sort out their stories in the presence of the Duke. In the end, Aegeon is released from his death sentence and reunited with his wife and sons, Antipholus of Syracuse is set to marry Luciana, and all has been put to right.

### *Dramatis Personae*

*Solinus*, Duke of Ephesus  
*Aegeon*, a merchant of Syracuse  
*Antipholus of Ephesus*, *Antipholus of Syracuse*, twin brothers  
*Dromio of Ephesus*, *Dromio of Syracuse*, twin brothers and servants  
*Balthasar*, a merchant  
*Angelo*, a goldsmith  
*Dr. Pinch*, schoolmaster  
*Aemilia*, Abbess of Ephesus and Aegeon's wife  
*Adriana*, wife of Antipholus of Ephesus  
*Luce*, her maid  
*Luciana*, sister of Adriana  
*Two merchants*  
*Courtesan*  
*Jailer*  
*Officers*  
*Headsmen*  
*Attendants*