

Enter the Lady Abbess, AEMILIA

AEMELIA

Wherefore throng you hither?

ADRIAN

To fetch my poor distracted mad wife hence.
Let us come in, that we may bind her fast
And bear her home for her recovery.

AEMELIA

How long hath this possession held the girl?

ADRIAN

This week she hath been heavy, sour, sad,
And much different from the one she was;
But till this afternoon her passion
Ne'er brake into extremity of rage.

AEMELIA

Hath she not lost much wealth by wreck of sea?
Buried some dear friend? Hath not else her eye
Stray'd her affection in unlawful love?
A sin prevailing much in youthful girls,
Who give their eyes the liberty of gazing.
Which of these sorrows is she subject to?

ADRIAN

To none of these, except it be the last;
Namely, some love that drew her oft from home.

AEMELIA

You should for that have reprehended her.

ADRIAN

Why, so I did.

AEMELIA

Ay, but not rough enough.

ADRIAN

As roughly as my modesty would let me.

AEMELIA

Haply, in private.

ADRIAN

And in assemblies too.

AEMELIA

Ay, but not enough.

ADRIAN

It was the copy of our conference:
In bed she slept not for my urging it;
At board she fed not for my urging it;
Alone, it was the subject of my theme;
In company I often glanced it;
Still did I tell her it was vile and bad.

AEMELIA

And thereof came it that she became mad.
The venom clamours of a jealous husband
Poisons more deadly than a mad dog's tooth.
It seems her sleeps were hinder'd by thy railing,
And therefore comes it that her head is light.
Thou say'st her meat was sauced with thy upbraidings:
Unquiet meals make ill digestions;
Thereof the raging fire of fever bred;
And what's a fever but a fit of madness?
Thou say'st her sports were hinderd by thy brawls:
Sweet recreation barr'd, what doth ensue
But moody and dull melancholy,
Kinsman to grim and comfortless despair,
And at her heels a huge infectious troop
Of pale distemperatures and foes to life?
In food, in sport and life-preserving rest
To be disturb'd, would mad or man or beast:
The consequence is then thy jealous fits
Have scared thy dear wife from the use of wits.
No, not a creature enters in my house.

ADRIAN

Then let your servants bring my true wife forth.

AEMELIA

Neither: she took this place for sanctuary,
And it shall privilege her from your hands
Till I have brought her to her wits again,
Or lose my labour in assaying it.

ADRIAN

I will attend my mad wife, be her nurse,
Diet her sickness, for it is my office,
And will have no attorney but myself;
And therefore let me have her home with me.

AEMELIA

Be patient; for I will not let her stir
Till I have used the approved means I have,
With wholesome syrups, drugs and holy prayers,
To make of her a woman strong again:
It is a branch and parcel of mine oath,
A charitable duty of my order.
Therefore depart and leave her here with me.

ADRIAN

I will not hence and leave my own wife here:
And ill it doth beseem your holiness
To separate the husband and the wife.

AEMELIA

Be quiet and depart: thou shalt not have her.
Exit