

Two Gentlemen of Verona

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SCENE V. The same. A street.

Enter SPEED and LAUNCE severally

SPEED

Launce! by mine honesty, welcome to Milan!

LAUNCE

Forswear not thyself, sweet youth, for I am not welcome. I reckon this always, that a man is never undone till he be hanged, nor never welcome to a place till some certain shot be paid and the hostess say 'Welcome!'

SPEED

Come on, you madcap, I'll to the alehouse with you presently; where, for one shot of five pence, thou shalt have five thousand welcomes. But, sirrah, how did thy master part with Madam Julia?

LAUNCE

Marry, after they closed in earnest, they parted very fairly in jest.

SPEED

But shall she marry him?

LAUNCE

No.

SPEED

How then? shall he marry her?

LAUNCE

No, neither.

SPEED

What, are they broken?

LAUNCE

No, they are both as whole as a fish.

SPEED

Why, then, how stands the matter with them?

LAUNCE

Marry, thus: when it stands well with him, it stands well with her.

SPEED

What an ass art thou! I understand thee not.

LAUNCE

What a block art thou, that thou canst not! My staff understands me.

SPEED

What thou sayest?

LAUNCE

Ay, and what I do too: look thee, I'll but lean, and my staff understands me.

SPEED

It stands under thee, indeed.

LAUNCE

Why, stand-under and under-stand is all one.

SPEED

But tell me true, will't be a match?

LAUNCE

Ask my dog: if he say ay, it will! if he say no, it will; if he shake his tail and say nothing, it will.

SPEED

The conclusion is then that it will.

LAUNCE

Thou shalt never get such a secret from me but by a parable.

SPEED

'Tis well that I get it so. But, Launce, how sayest thou, that my master is become a notable lover?

LAUNCE

I never knew him otherwise.

SPEED

Than how?

LAUNCE

A notable lubber, as thou reportest him to be.

SPEED

Why, thou whoreson ass, thou mistakest me.

LAUNCE

Why, fool, I meant not thee; I meant thy master.

SPEED

I tell thee, my master is become a hot lover.

LAUNCE

Why, I tell thee, I care not though he burn himself in love. If thou wilt, go with me to the alehouse; if not, thou art an Hebrew, a Jew, and not worth the name of a Christian.

SPEED

Why?

LAUNCE

Because thou hast not so much charity in thee as to go to the ale with a Christian. Wilt thou go?

SPEED

At thy service.

Exeunt

