

TWELFTH NIGHT



WILLIAM
SHAKESPEARE

Twelfth Night

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Twelfth Night

William Shakespeare

PERSONS REPRESENTED



ORSINO, Duke of Illyria.

SEBASTIAN, a young Gentleman, brother to Viola.

ANTONIO, a Sea Captain, friend to Sebastian.

A SEA CAPTAIN, friend to Viola

VALENTINE, Gentleman attending on the Duke

CURIO, Gentleman attending on the Duke

SIR TOBY BELCH, Uncle of Olivia.

SIR ANDREW AGUE-CHEEK.

MALVOLIO, Steward to Olivia.

FABIAN, Servant to Olivia.

CLOWN, Servant to Olivia.

OLIVIA, a rich Countess.

VIOLA, in love with the Duke.

MARIA, Olivia's Woman.

Lords, Priests, Sailors, Officers, Musicians, and other Attendants.

SCENE: A City in Illyria; and the Sea-coast near it.

ACT I.



SCENE I. An Apartment in the DUKE'S Palace.

[Enter DUKE, CURIO, Lords; Musicians attending.]

DUKE.

If music be the food of love, play on,
Give me excess of it; that, surfeiting,
The appetite may sicken and so die.—
That strain again;—it had a dying fall;
O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet south,
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour.—Enough; no more;
'Tis not so sweet now as it was before.
O spirit of love, how quick and fresh art thou!
That, notwithstanding thy capacity
Receiveth as the sea, nought enters there,
Of what validity and pitch soever,
But falls into abatement and low price
Even in a minute! so full of shapes is fancy,
That it alone is high fantastical.

CURIO.

Will you go hunt, my lord?

DUKE.
What, Curio?

CURIO.
The hart.

DUKE.
Why, so I do, the noblest that I have:
O, when mine eyes did see Olivia first,
Methought she purg'd the air of pestilence;
That instant was I turn'd into a hart;
And my desires, like fell and cruel hounds,
E'er since pursue me.—How now! what news from her?

[Enter VALENTINE.]

VALENTINE.
So please my lord, I might not be admitted,
But from her handmaid do return this answer:
The element itself, till seven years' heat,
Shall not behold her face at ample view;
But like a cloistress she will veiled walk,
And water once a-day her chamber round
With eye-offending brine: all this to season
A brother's dead love, which she would keep fresh
And lasting in her sad remembrance.

DUKE.

O, she that hath a heart of that fine frame
To pay this debt of love but to a brother,
How will she love when the rich golden shaft
Hath kill'd the flock of all affections else
That live in her; when liver, brain, and heart,
These sovereign thrones, are all supplied and fill'd,—
Her sweet perfections,—with one self king!—
Away before me to sweet beds of flowers:
Love-thoughts lie rich when canopied with bowers.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II. The sea-coast.

[Enter VIOLA, CAPTAIN, and Sailors.]

VIOLA.

What country, friends, is this?

CAPTAIN.

This is Illyria, lady.

VIOLA.

And what should I do in Illyria?

My brother he is in Elysium.

Perchance he is not drown'd—What think you, sailors?

CAPTAIN.

It is perchance that you yourself were sav'd.

VIOLA.

O my poor brother! and so perchance may he be.

CAPTAIN.

True, madam; and, to comfort you with chance,
Assure yourself, after our ship did split,
When you, and those poor number sav'd with you,
Hung on our driving boat, I saw your brother,
Most provident in peril, bind himself,—
Courage and hope both teaching him the practice,—
To a strong mast that liv'd upon the sea;
Where, like Arion on the dolphin's back,
I saw him hold acquaintance with the waves
So long as I could see.

VIOLA.

For saying so, there's gold!
Mine own escape unfoldeth to my hope,
Whereto thy speech serves for authority,
The like of him. Know'st thou this country?

CAPTAIN.

Ay, madam, well; for I was bred and born
Not three hours' travel from this very place.

VIOLA.

Who governs here?

CAPTAIN.

A noble duke, in nature
As in name.

VIOLA.

What is his name?

CAPTAIN.

Orsino.

VIOLA.

Orsino! I have heard my father name him.
He was a bachelor then.

CAPTAIN.

And so is now,
Or was so very late; for but a month
Ago I went from hence; and then 'twas fresh
In murmur,—as, you know, what great ones do,
The less will prattle of,—that he did seek
The love of fair Olivia.

VIOLA.

What's she?

CAPTAIN.

A virtuous maid, the daughter of a count
That died some twelvemonth since; then leaving her
In the protection of his son, her brother,
Who shortly also died; for whose dear love,
They say, she hath abjured the company
And sight of men.

VIOLA.

O that I served that lady!
And might not be delivered to the world,
Till I had made mine own occasion mellow,
What my estate is.

CAPTAIN.

That were hard to compass:
Because she will admit no kind of suit,
No, not the duke's.

VIOLA.

There is a fair behaviour in thee, captain;
And though that nature with a beauteous wall
Doth oft close in pollution, yet of thee
I will believe thou hast a mind that suits
With this thy fair and outward character.
I pray thee, and I'll pay thee bounteously,

Conceal me what I am; and be my aid
For such disguise as, haply, shall become
The form of my intent. I'll serve this duke;
Thou shalt present me as an eunuch to him;
It may be worth thy pains, for I can sing,
And speak to him in many sorts of music,
That will allow me very worth his service.
What else may hap to time I will commit;
Only shape thou silence to my wit.

CAPTAIN.

Be you his eunuch and your mute I'll be;
When my tongue blabs, then let mine eyes not see.

VIOLA.

I thank thee. Lead me on.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE III. A Room in OLIVIA'S House.

[Enter SIR TOBY BELCH and MARIA.]

SIR TOBY. What a plague means my niece, to take the
death of her brother thus? I am sure care's an enemy to
life.

MARIA. By my troth, Sir Toby, you must come in earlier o'
nights; your cousin, my lady, takes great exceptions to your
ill hours.

SIR TOBY.

Why, let her except, before excepted.

MARIA. Ay, but you must confine yourself within the modest limits of order.

SIR TOBY. Confine? I'll confine myself no finer than I am: these clothes are good enough to drink in, and so be these boots too; an they be not, let them hang themselves in their own straps.

MARIA. That quaffing and drinking will undo you: I heard my lady talk of it yesterday; and of a foolish knight that you brought in one night here to be her wooer.

SIR TOBY.

Who? Sir Andrew Ague-cheek?

MARIA.

Ay, he.

SIR TOBY.

He's as tall a man as any's in Illyria.

MARIA.

What's that to the purpose?

SIR TOBY.

Why, he has three thousand ducats a year.

MARIA. Ay, but he'll have but a year in all these ducats;

he's a very fool, and a prodigal.

SIR TOBY. Fye that you'll say so! he plays o' the viol-de-gambo, and speaks three or four languages word for word without book, and hath all the good gifts of nature.

MARIA. He hath indeed,—almost natural: for, besides that he's a fool, he's a great quarreller; and, but that he hath the gift of a coward to allay the gust he hath in quarrelling, 'tis thought among the prudent he would quickly have the gift of a grave.

SIR TOBY. By this hand, they are scoundrels and subtractors that say so of him. Who are they?

MARIA.

They that add, moreover, he's drunk nightly in your company.

SIR TOBY. With drinking healths to my niece; I'll drink to her as long as there is a passage in my throat and drink in Illyria. He's a coward and a coystril that will not drink to my niece till his brains turn o' the toe like a parish-top. What, wench! Castiliano-vulgo! for here comes Sir Andrew Ague-face.

[Enter SIR ANDREW AGUE-CHEEK.]

AGUE-CHEEK.

Sir Toby Belch! how now, Sir Toby Belch!

SIR TOBY.

Sweet Sir Andrew?

SIR ANDREW.

Bless you, fair shrew.