

1.1 At his court, Orsino, sick with love for the Lady Olivia, learns from his messenger that she is grieving for her dead brother and refuses to be seen for seven years.

0 SD. *Illyria*: an ancient country in southern Europe, on the Adriatic Sea

2-3. *that . . . appetite*: i.e., so that my passion, gluttoned

4. *fall*: cadence (i.e., a sequence of chords ending the *strain* of music)

9-14. *O spirit . . . minute*: Love is described here as so hungry that it can devour everything and destroy the value of even the most precious things. *quick and fresh*: keen and eager (to devour) *validity*: worth *pitch*: i.e., excellence (The pitch is the highest point in a falcon's flight.)

14-15. *fancy, high fantastical*: *Fancy* is both "love" and "imagination"; *high fantastical* carries the sense both of "highly imaginative, most able to create powerful images," and "extremely passionate." Orsino seems to be playing with the double meanings of these related words as he tries to describe the intensity of his lovesickness.

18. *hart*: stag (Orsino, in the following line, plays on the fact that *hart* sounds like *heart*.)

ACT 1

Scene 1

Enter Orsino, Duke of Illyria, Curio, and other Lords, with Musicians playing.

ORSINO

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 sound 5
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odor. 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 10
Receiveth as the sea, naught enters there,
Of what validity and pitch soe'er,
But falls into abatement and low price
Even in a minute. So full of shapes is fancy
That it alone is high fantastical. 15

CURIO

Will you go hunt, my lord?

ORSINO

What, Curio?

CURIO

The hart.

ORSINO

Why, so I do, the noblest that I have.

O, when mine eyes did see Olivia first,

20

21. **Methought**: it seemed to me; **purged** . . . **pestilence**: i.e., purified the air of everything infectious

22-24. **That instant . . . pursue me**: Orsino compares himself to the mythological figure Acteon, who, having seen the goddess Diana bathing, was turned into a hart and destroyed by his own hounds. (See page 44.) **fell**: fierce, deadly

26. **So please my lord**: a polite phrase addressed to one's superior; **might not be**: i.e., was not

28. **element itself**: i.e., the very sky; **seven years' heat**: i.e., until seven summers have passed

30. **cloistress**: a nun in a cloister

32. **eye-offending brine**: i.e., tears; **season**: preserve, keep fresh (Brine is salt water used for preserving food.)

33. **brother's . . . love**: i.e., love for her dead brother

36. **but to a**: i.e., to a mere

37. **golden shaft**: In the mythology of romantic love, anyone struck by Cupid's arrow with the golden head falls desperately in love. (See page 100.)

38. **affections else**: other feelings or desires

40. **thrones**: The liver was considered the seat of the passions, the brain the seat of reason, and the heart the seat of feeling.

40-41. **and . . . perfections**: i.e., and her sweet perfections filled

41. **one self king**: a single monarch

1.2 On the Adriatic seacoast, Viola, who has been saved from a shipwreck in which her brother may

(continued)

8

Twelfth Night

ACT 1. SC. 2

Methought she purged the air of pestilence.
That instant was I turned into a hart,
And my desires, like fell and cruel hounds,
E'er since pursue me.

Enter Valentine.

How now, what news from her? 25

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, 30
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.

ORSINO

O, she that hath a heart of that fine frame 35
To pay this debt of love but to a brother,
How will she love when the rich golden shaft
Hath killed the flock of all affections else
That live in her; when liver, brain, and heart,
These sovereign thrones, are all supplied, and filled 40
Her sweet perfections with one self king!
Away before me to sweet beds of flowers!
Love thoughts lie rich when canopied with bowers.
They exit.

Scene 2

Enter Viola, a Captain, and Sailors.

VIOLA What country, friends, is this?

CAPTAIN This is Illyria, lady.

VIOLA

And what should I do in Illyria?

have drowned, hears about Orsino and Olivia. She wishes to join Olivia's household, but is told that Olivia will admit no one into her presence. Viola decides to disguise herself as a boy so that she can join Orsino's male retinue.

4. **Elysium:** in Greek mythology, where the blessed go after death
5. **Perchance:** perhaps, possibly
7. **perchance:** i.e., by chance, through good luck
12. **driving:** i.e., drifting
15. **lived:** i.e., floated
16. **Arion . . . back:** Arion, a Greek poet and musician, so charmed the dolphins with his music that one saved him from drowning. (See page 188.)
- 20-22. **Mine . . . him:** i.e., my escape makes me hope that my brother escaped too, and your speech encourages that hope
31. **late:** recently

10

My brother he is in Elysium.
Perchance he is not drowned.—What think you, sailors? 5

CAPTAIN

It is perchance that you yourself were saved.

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, 10
When you and those poor number saved 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 lived upon the sea, 15
Where, like 'Arion' on the dolphin's back,
I saw him hold acquaintance with the waves
So long as I could see.

VIOLA, 'giving him money' For saying so, there's gold.
Mine own escape unfoldeth to my hope, 20
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? 25

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. 30

CAPTAIN

And so is now, or was so very late;
For but a month ago I went from hence,

34. **the less:** i.e., those of lower rank
 38. **some twelvemonth since:** i.e., about a year ago
 44. **delivered:** revealed
 45. **mellow:** ripe
 46. **estate:** social rank, position
 47. **compass:** achieve, accomplish
 48. **suit:** petition, formal request
 51–52. **though . . . pollution:** i.e., although natural beauty often hides inner corruption
 53–54. **suits / With:** corresponds with, matches
 54. **character:** i.e., personal appearance and behavior
 56. **Conceal me:** i.e., conceal, keep secret
 57. **become:** be suitable to
 59. **eunuch:** a male soprano or castrato
 62. **allow . . . worth:** i.e., commend me as worthy to be in
 64. **wit:** plan
 65. **mute:** a person unable to speak

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.

35

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 sight
 And company of men.

40

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.

45

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

VIOLA

There is a fair behavior 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 prithee—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 thy silence to my wit.

50

55

60

CAPTAIN

Be you his eunuch, and your mute I'll be.

65

1.3 At the estate of Lady Olivia, Sir Toby Belch, Olivia's kinsman, has brought in Sir Andrew Aguecheek to be her suitor. Maria, Olivia's lady-in-waiting, says that Andrew is a fool, and Andrew himself doubts his ability to win Olivia, but Toby encourages him to woo her.

- 1, 5. **niece, cousin:** Both of these terms indicate close kinship; neither was as specific as it is today.
- 2. **care:** sorrow
- 4. **By my troth:** a mild oath
- 7. **except before excepted:** Toby's adaptation of the legal phrase *exceptis excipiendis* ("excepting those things which are to be excepted"), which he uses to dismiss Olivia's criticism
- 9. **modest:** moderate
- 10. **confine myself:** i.e., dress myself
- 12. **An:** if
- 14. **undo you:** ruin you; cause your downfall
- 20. **tall:** brave (Maria takes the word in its usual sense.)
- 22. **has . . . ducats:** i.e., has an income of three thousand gold coins
- 23. **have . . . ducats:** i.e., spend all his inheritance in a single year
- 24. **prodigal:** wastrel, spendthrift
- 25-26. **viol-de-gamboys:** i.e., viola da gamba, the predecessor of the modern cello (See page 60.)
- 27. **without book:** i.e., from memory

When my tongue blabs, then let mine eyes not see.
 VIOLA I thank thee. Lead me on.

They exit.

Scene 3

Enter Sir Toby and Maria.

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. 5

TOBY Why, let her except before excepted!

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

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! 10

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. 15

TOBY Who, Sir Andrew Aguecheek?

MARIA Ay, he.

TOBY He's as tall a man as any 's in Illyria. 20

MARIA What's that to th' purpose?

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.

TOBY Fie, that you'll say so! He plays o' th' viol-de-gamboys, and speaks three or four languages word for word without book, and hath all the good gifts of nature. 25

29. **natural**: i.e., like a "natural" or idiot
 30. **but that**: except for the fact that
 31–32. **gust . . . in**: i.e., taste . . . for
 34–35. **substractors**: i.e., detractors, slanderers
 40. **coistrel**: lowborn contemptible fellow
 42. **parish top**: a large public whipping-top (See page 186.); **Castiliano vulgo**: The meaning of this Spanish-sounding phrase (if it had one) is lost.
 43. **Agueface**: This misnaming of Sir Andrew calls attention to the meaning of "Aguecheek," i.e., the pale, thin cheek (or face) of someone suffering from a fever or ague.
 46. **shrew**: Andrew may be alluding to Maria's size (the shrew is among the smallest of mammals), or he may be using **shrew** (a word applied to a scolding or brawling woman) to mean simply "woman."
 48. **Accost**: i.e., approach her, **woo her** (line 56) (In nautical terms, one ship accosts another by going alongside. The nautical language continues in **front**—i.e., confront—and **board** [line 55] and perhaps in **undertake** [line 57].)
 60. **An . . . so**: i.e., if you let her leave so uncere-
 moniously

- MARIA He hath indeed, almost natural, for, besides
 that he's a fool, he's a great quarreler, and, but that 30
 he hath the gift of a coward to allay the gust he hath
 in quarreling, 'tis thought among the prudent he
 would quickly have the gift of a grave.
 TOBY By this hand, they are scoundrels and substract-
 tors that say so of him. Who are they? 35
 MARIA They that add, moreover, he's drunk nightly in
 your company.
 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 coistrel that 40
 will not drink to my niece till his brains turn o' th'
 toe like a parish top. What, wench! *Castiliano vulgo*,
 for here comes Sir Andrew Agueface.

Enter Sir Andrew.

- ANDREW Sir Toby Belch! How now, Sir Toby Belch?
 TOBY Sweet Sir Andrew! 45
 ANDREW, [to Maria] Bless you, fair shrew.
 MARIA And you too, sir.
 TOBY Accost, Sir Andrew, accost!
 ANDREW What's that?
 TOBY My niece's chambermaid. 50
 [ANDREW] Good Mistress Accost, I desire better ac-
 quaintance.
 MARIA My name is Mary, sir.
 ANDREW Good Mistress Mary Accost—
 TOBY You mistake, knight. "Accost" is front her, board 55
 her, woo her, assail her.
 ANDREW By my troth, I would not undertake her in
 this company. Is that the meaning of "accost"?
 MARIA Fare you well, gentlemen. [She begins to exit.]
 TOBY An thou let part so, Sir Andrew, would thou 60
 mightst never draw sword again.
 ANDREW An you part so, mistress, I would I might

64. **have fools in hand:** i.e., are dealing with fools
66. **Marry:** a mild oath, meaning "truly" or "indeed" (originally, an oath "by the Virgin Mary")
68. **thought is free:** a proverbial response to the question "Do you think I'm a fool?"
69. **butt'ry bar:** the ledge on top of the half door to the buttery, the storeroom for food and drink
71. **Wherefore:** i.e., why
73. **dry:** withered (indicating Andrew's lack of vigor, with a probable pun on **dry** as "thirsty")
76. **dry jest:** sarcastic or ironic joke
79. **barren:** i.e., no longer full of jests
80. **canary:** sweet wine
81. **put down:** snubbed, silenced
83. **put me down:** i.e., lay me out
84. **Christian:** often used, as here, to mean an ordinary human being
90. **Pourquoi:** French for "why"
92. **tongues:** i.e., foreign languages
93. **bearbaiting:** a blood sport in which dogs attack a bear chained to a stake (See page 98.)

never draw sword again. Fair lady, do you think you have fools in hand?

MARIA Sir, I have not you by th' hand. 65

ANDREW Marry, but you shall have, and here's my hand. ^[He offers his hand.]

MARIA, ^[taking his hand] Now, sir, thought is free. I pray you, bring your hand to th' butt'ry bar and let it drink. 70

ANDREW Wherefore, sweetheart? What's your metaphor?

MARIA It's dry, sir.

ANDREW Why, I think so. I am not such an ass but I can keep my hand dry. But what's your jest? 75

MARIA A dry jest, sir.

ANDREW Are you full of them?

MARIA Ay, sir, I have them at my fingers' ends. Marry, now I let go your hand, I am barren. *Maria exits.*
TOBY O knight, thou lack'st a cup of canary! When did I see thee so put down? 80

ANDREW Never in your life, I think, unless you see canary put me down. Methinks sometimes I have no more wit than a Christian or an ordinary man has. But I am a great eater of beef, and I believe that does harm to my wit. 85

TOBY No question.

ANDREW An I thought that, I'd forswear it. I'll ride home tomorrow, Sir Toby.

TOBY *Pourquoi*, my dear knight? 90

ANDREW What is "*pourquoi*"? Do, or not do? I would I had bestowed that time in the tongues that I have in fencing, dancing, and bearbaiting. O, had I but followed the arts!

TOBY Then hadst thou had an excellent head of hair. 95

ANDREW Why, would that have mended my hair?

TOBY Past question, for thou seest it will not ^[curl by] nature.

100. **distaff**: staff used in spinning thread from wool or flax (See page 166.)
101. **huswife**: housewife (**Huswife**, pronounced "hussif," also had the sense of "hussy.")
103. **Faith**: a mild oath
105. **she'll . . . me**: i.e., she does not want me;
Count: i.e., Orsino, referred to as a duke in the first two scenes, but referred to hereafter in the dialogue as a count; **hard by**: nearby
108. **degree**: position; **estate**: fortune
- 111-12. **masques and revels**: entertainments, plays, dances
113. **kickshawses**: kickshaws, trifles (French: *quelque chose*)
117. **galliard**: a popular dance (See page 156)
118. **caper**: leap (A **caper** is also a condiment used in sauces. Toby plays on this sense when he mentions mutton.)
120. **back-trick**: probably, a backward leap or caper
123. **like**: i.e., likely
124. **take . . . picture**: i.e., get dusty, and therefore need a curtain to protect them (It is unclear who "Mistress Mall" might be.)
- 126-27. **coranto, jig, sink-a-pace**: names for various dances
128. **virtues**: accomplishments
130. **star of a galliard**: a dancing star; or, a star propitious for dancing
132. **dun-colored stock**: i.e., brown stocking

ANDREW But it becomes 'me' well enough, does 't not?

TOBY Excellent! It hangs like flax on a distaff, and I hope to see a huswife take thee between her legs and spin it off. 100

ANDREW Faith, I'll home tomorrow, Sir Toby. Your niece will not be seen, or if she be, it's four to one she'll none of me. The Count himself here hard by woos her. 105

TOBY She'll none o' th' Count. She'll not match above her degree, neither in estate, years, nor wit. I have heard her swear 't. Tut, there's life in 't, man.

ANDREW I'll stay a month longer. I am a fellow o' th' strangest mind i' th' world. I delight in masques and revels sometimes altogether. 110

TOBY Art thou good at these kickshawses, knight?

ANDREW As any man in Illyria, whatsoever he be, under the degree of my betters, and yet I will not compare with an old man. 115

TOBY What is thy excellence in a galliard, knight?

ANDREW Faith, I can cut a caper.

TOBY And I can cut the mutton to 't.

ANDREW And I think I have the back-trick simply as strong as any man in Illyria. 120

TOBY Wherefore are these things hid? Wherefore have these gifts a curtain before 'em? Are they like to take dust, like Mistress Mall's picture? Why dost thou not go to church in a galliard and come home in a coranto? My very walk should be a jig. I would not so much as make water but in a sink-a-pace. What dost thou mean? Is it a world to hide virtues in? I did think, by the excellent constitution of thy leg, it was formed under the star of a galliard. 125 130

ANDREW Ay, 'tis strong, and it does indifferent well in a 'dun-colored' stock. Shall we 'set' about some revels?

135. **Taurus:** one of the twelve signs of the zodiac, which, at least according to Chaucer, governed the neck and the throat (See pages 64 and 136.)

1.4 At Orsino's court, Viola, disguised as a page and calling herself Cesario, has gained the trust of Orsino, who decides to send her to woo Olivia for him. Viola confides to the audience that she loves Orsino herself.

2. **Cesario:** the name chosen by Viola for her male disguise, which she will wear for the rest of the play;
be much advanced: i.e., achieve advancement, promotion

5. **either . . . negligence:** i.e., are concerned either that he is whimsical or that I cannot serve him well
fear: distrust, suspect
humor: disposition, whim

12. **On your attendance:** i.e., at your service

13. **aloof:** i.e., aside, apart

14. **no less but all:** i.e., everything

16. **address . . . unto:** i.e., go to

18. **them:** i.e., Olivia's servants

19. **have audience:** i.e., are admitted to speak with her

TOBY What shall we do else? Were we not born under Taurus? 135

ANDREW Taurus? 'That's' sides and heart.

TOBY No, sir, it is legs and thighs. Let me see thee caper. 'Sir Andrew dances.' Ha, higher! Ha, ha, excellent!

They exit.

Scene 4

Enter Valentine, and Viola in man's attire 'as Cesario.'

VALENTINE If the Duke continue these favors towards you, Cesario, you are like to be much advanced. He hath known you but three days, and already you are no stranger.

VIOLA You either fear his humor or my negligence, that you call in question the continuance of his love. Is he inconstant, sir, in his favors? 5

VALENTINE No, believe me.

VIOLA I thank you.

Enter 'Orsino,' Curio, and Attendants.

Here comes the Count. 10

ORSINO Who saw Cesario, ho?

VIOLA On your attendance, my lord, here.

ORSINO, 'to Curio and Attendants'

Stand you awhile aloof.—Cesario,

Thou know'st no less but all. I have unclasped

To thee the book even of my secret soul. 15

Therefore, good youth, address thy gait unto her.

Be not denied access. Stand at her doors

And tell them, there thy fixed foot shall grow

Till thou have audience.

VIOLA Sure, my noble lord, 20

If she be so abandoned to her sorrow

As it is spoke, she never will admit me.

23. **leap . . . bounds:** i.e., go beyond the limits of courtesy
24. **unprofited:** i.e., unsuccessful
26. **unfold:** reveal, disclose
27. **Surprise:** overcome, capture (a military term)
28. **become thee well:** be appropriate for you
29. **attend:** pay attention to
30. **nuncio's:** messenger's; **grave aspect:** i.e., older or more serious face
34. **Diana:** the virgin goddess, here the personification of youth and beauty (See page 34.)
35. **rublous:** ruby red; **pipe:** i.e., voice
36. **organ:** i.e., voice (literally, vocal chords, larynx); **sound:** i.e., not cracked
37. **is semblative . . . part:** i.e., is like a woman (**Part** may be a theatrical term. In Shakespeare's theater, boys played women's parts.)
38. **thy constellation:** i.e., the stars that govern your success (or, that have shaped you)
39. **attend:** i.e., go along with
45. **barful strife:** i.e., an undertaking full of obstacles or "bars" (barriers)

1.5 Viola, in her disguise as Cesario, appears at Olivia's estate. Olivia allows Cesario to speak with her privately about Orsino's love. As Cesario presents Orsino's love-suit, Olivia falls in love with Cesario. She sends her steward, Malvolio, after Cesario with a ring.

0 SD. **Feste, the Fool:** In the Folio, this character,
(continued)

24

ORSINO

Be clamorous and leap all civil bounds
Rather than make unprofited return.

VIOLA

Say I do speak with her, my lord, what then?

25

ORSINO

O, then unfold the passion of my love.
Surprise her with discourse of my dear faith.
It shall become thee well to act my woes.
She will attend it better in thy youth
Than in a nuncio's of more grave aspect.

30

VIOLA

I think not so, my lord.

ORSINO

Dear lad, believe it;
For they shall yet belie thy happy years
That say thou art a man. Diana's lip
Is not more smooth and rubious, thy small pipe
Is as the maiden's organ, shrill and sound,
And all is semblative a woman's part.
I know thy constellation is right apt
For this affair.—Some four or five attend him,
All, if you will, for I myself am best
When least in company.—Prosper well in this
And thou shalt live as freely as thy lord,
To call his fortunes thine.

35

40

VIOLA

I'll do my best
To woo your lady. *Aside.* Yet a barful strife!
Whoe'er I woo, myself would be his wife.

45

They exit.

Scene 5

Enter Maria and Feste, the Fool.

MARIA Nay, either tell me where thou hast been, or I
will not open my lips so wide as a bristle may enter

in stage directions and speech prefixes, is simply called "Clown" (an indication that the role was played by the troupe's comic actor). In dialogue, he is always called "Fool." He is at one point (in 2.4) referred to as "Feste, the jester," which leads some editors to name him "Feste" in speech prefixes and stage directions.

3. **in . . . excuse:** i.e., to defend you
6. **fear no colors:** proverbial for "fear nothing"
7. **Make . . . good:** i.e., prove that; explain that
9. **Lenten:** i.e., weak, poor (good enough only for Lent, a time of fasting)
12. **In the wars:** Military flags were called **colors**.
13. **foolery:** Feste is a professional fool; i.e., he makes his living by entertaining his aristocratic patron and by amusing others in the household, who reward him for his **foolery**. Feste's foolery depends primarily on the way he uses words.
17. **turned away:** i.e., dismissed
20. **for:** i.e., as for; **let . . . out:** i.e., may the warm weather of summer make it bearable
23. **If one break:** Maria plays on **points** as meaning the laces that hold up a man's breeches.
24. **gaskins:** breeches or hose
27. **piece of Eve's flesh:** i.e., woman
29. **you were best:** We would say: "If you know what's good for you."
30. **Wit:** i.e., intelligence, brain; **an 't:** i.e., if it
31. **wits:** clever people
33. **Quinapalus:** a philosopher invented by Feste
34. **witty:** clever

in way of thy excuse. My lady will hang thee for thy absence.

FOOL Let her hang me. He that is well hanged in this world needs to fear no colors. 5

MARIA Make that good.

FOOL He shall see none to fear.

MARIA A good Lenten answer. I can tell thee where that saying was born, of "I fear no colors." 10

FOOL Where, good Mistress Mary?

MARIA In the wars; and that may you be bold to say in your foolery.

FOOL Well, God give them wisdom that have it, and those that are Fools, let them use their talents. 15

MARIA Yet you will be hanged for being so long absent. Or to be turned away, is not that as good as a hanging to you?

FOOL Many a good hanging prevents a bad marriage, and, for turning away, let summer bear it out. 20

MARIA You are resolute, then?

FOOL Not so, neither, but I am resolved on two points.

MARIA That if one break, the other will hold, or, if both break, your gaskins fall.

FOOL Apt, in good faith, very apt. Well, go thy way. If Sir Toby would leave drinking, thou wert as witty a piece of Eve's flesh as any in Illyria. 25

MARIA Peace, you rogue. No more o' that. Here comes my lady. Make your excuse wisely, you were best.

[*She exits.*]

Enter Lady Olivia with Malvolio and Attendants.

FOOL [*aside*] Wit, an 't be thy will, put me into good fooling! Those wits that think they have thee do very oft prove fools, and I that am sure I lack thee may pass for a wise man. For what says Quinapalus? "Better a witty Fool than a foolish wit."—God bless thee, lady! 30

38. **Go to:** an expression of impatience; **dry:** i.e., dull, not amusing
39. **dishonest:** dishonorable (i.e., unreliable)
40. **madonna:** my lady, madam (an Italian form of address)
42. **dry:** thirsty; **mend:** (1) reform; (2) repair
44. **botcher:** a tailor who repairs clothing
45. **is but:** is merely
49. **cuckold:** a man whose wife is unfaithful; **calamity:** i.e., one whom Fortune has deserted
50. **bade:** commanded (**Bade** is the past tense of "bid.")
53. **Misprision:** a mistake, an error
- 53-54. **cucullus . . . monachum:** Proverbial: "A cowl does not make a monk."
55. **motley:** multicolored garments worn by professional fools
58. **Dexteriously:** i.e., dexterously, easily
60. **catechize:** question rigorously
- 60-61. **Good . . . virtue:** i.e., my good, virtuous mouse (as if addressed to a young girl being catechized by the priest)
62. **want . . . idleness:** lack of other pastime; **bide:** abide, listen to
72. **mend:** improve

OLIVIA Take the Fool away.

FOOL Do you not hear, fellows? Take away the Lady.

OLIVIA Go to, you're a dry Fool. I'll no more of you. Besides, you grow dishonest.

FOOL Two faults, madonna, that drink and good counsel will amend. For give the dry Fool drink, then is the Fool not dry. Bid the dishonest man mend himself; if he mend; he is no longer dishonest; if he cannot, let the botcher mend him. Anything that's mended is but patched; virtue that transgresses is but patched with sin, and sin that amends is but patched with virtue. If that this simple syllogism will serve, so; if it will not, what remedy? As there is no true cuckold but calamity, so beauty's a flower. The Lady bade take away the Fool. Therefore, I say again, take her away. 40 45 50

OLIVIA Sir, I bade them take away you.

FOOL Misprision in the highest degree! Lady, *cucullus non facit monachum*. That's as much to say as, I wear not motley in my brain. Good madonna, give me leave to prove you a fool. 55

OLIVIA Can you do it?

FOOL Dexteriously, good madonna.

OLIVIA Make your proof.

FOOL I must catechize you for it, madonna. Good my mouse of virtue, answer me. 60

OLIVIA Well, sir, for want of other idleness, I'll bide your proof.

FOOL Good madonna, why mourn'st thou?

OLIVIA Good Fool, for my brother's death. 65

FOOL I think his soul is in hell, madonna.

OLIVIA I know his soul is in heaven, Fool.

FOOL The more fool, madonna, to mourn for your brother's soul, being in heaven. Take away the fool, gentlemen. 70

OLIVIA What think you of this Fool, Malvolio? Doth he not mend?

78. **no fox**: i.e., not clever
 78-79. **pass . . . twopence**: i.e., **bet** tuppence
 82-83. **put down . . . with**: i.e., **defeated** (in a battle of wits) by
 83. **ordinary fool**: perhaps, a simpleton; or, perhaps, a Fool without an aristocratic patron
 84. **out of his guard**: defenseless, without an answer (a fencing metaphor)
 85-86. **minister . . . him**: give him opportunities
 87. **crow**: cry out in pleasure; **set . . . Fools**: i.e., professional fools **set**: deliberate, intentional
 88. **zanies**: (1) subordinate fools in comedies, whose function is to imitate the main comic character; (2) assistants, flatterers
 90. **distempered**: diseased, disturbed; **generous**: high-minded
 91. **free**: magnanimous
 92. **bird-bolts**: blunt arrows
 93. **allowed Fool**: i.e., a Fool who has been given permission always to speak freely
 94-95. **known discreet man**: i.e., a man known to be judicious, wise
 96. **Mercury . . . leasing**: i.e., **may** Mercury, god of trickery, endow you with the gift of lying
 106. **madman**: i.e., nonsense
 107. **suit**: love-plea

MALVOLIO Yes, and shall do till the pangs of death shake him. Infirmity, that decays the wise, doth ever make the better Fool. 75

FOOL God send you, sir, a speedy infirmity, for the better increasing your folly! Sir Toby will be sworn that I am no fox, but he will not pass his word for twopence that you are no fool.

OLIVIA How say you to that, Malvolio? 80

MALVOLIO I marvel your Ladyship takes delight in such a barren rascal. I saw him put down the other day with an ordinary fool that has no more brain than a stone. Look you now, he's out of his guard already. Unless you laugh and minister occasion to him, he is gagged. I protest I take these wise men that crow so at these set kind of Fools no better than the Fools' zanies. 85

OLIVIA O, you are sick of self-love, Malvolio, and taste with a distempered appetite. To be generous, guiltless, and of free disposition is to take those things for bird-bolts that you deem cannon bullets. There is no slander in an allowed Fool, though he do nothing but rail; nor no railing in a known discreet man, though he do nothing but reprove. 90

FOOL Now Mercury endue thee with leasing, for thou speak'st well of Fools! 95

Enter Maria.

MARIA Madam, there is at the gate a young gentleman much desires to speak with you.

OLIVIA From the Count Orsino, is it? 100

MARIA I know not, madam. 'Tis a fair young man, and well attended.

OLIVIA Who of my people hold him in delay?

MARIA Sir Toby, madam, your kinsman.

OLIVIA Fetch him off, I pray you. He speaks nothing but madman. Fie on him! *[Maria exits.]* Go you, Malvolio. If it be a suit from the Count, I am sick, 1

112. **Jove:** king of the Roman gods
 114. **pia mater:** i.e., brain
 115. **What:** i.e., who
 119–20. **a plague . . . herring:** perhaps Toby's explanation for his having belched or hiccupped
 120. **sot:** fool
 126. **an he will:** if he wants to
 127. **It's all one:** i.e., it doesn't matter
 130. **draught:** i.e., cup of wine; **above heat:** Wine was thought to warm the liver.
 132. **crowner:** i.e., coroner; **sit o':** i.e., hold an inquest on



Jove. (1.5.112)
 From Vincenzo Cartari, *Le vere e noue Imagini . . .* (1615).

or not at home; what you will, to dismiss it. (*Malvolio exits.*) Now you see, sir, how your fooling grows old, and people dislike it.

110

FOOL Thou hast spoke for us, madonna, as if thy eldest son should be a Fool, whose skull Jove cram with brains, for—here he comes—one of thy kin has a most weak *pia mater*.

Enter Sir Toby.

OLIVIA By mine honor, half drunk!—What is he at the gate, cousin? 115

TOBY A gentleman.

OLIVIA A gentleman? What gentleman?

TOBY 'Tis a gentleman here—a plague o' these pickle herring!—How now, sot? 120

FOOL Good Sir Toby.

OLIVIA Cousin, cousin, how have you come so early by this lethargy?

TOBY Lechery? I defy lechery. There's one at the gate.

OLIVIA Ay, marry, what is he? 125

TOBY Let him be the devil an he will, I care not. Give me faith, say I. Well, it's all one. *He exits.*

OLIVIA What's a drunken man like, Fool?

FOOL Like a drowned man, a fool, and a madman. One draught above heat makes him a fool, the second mads him, and a third drowns him. 130

OLIVIA Go thou and seek the crowner and let him sit o' my coz, for he's in the third degree of drink: he's drowned. Go look after him.

FOOL He is but mad yet, madonna, and the Fool shall look to the madman. *He exits.* 135

Enter Malvolio.

MALVOLIO Madam, yond young fellow swears he will speak with you. I told him you were sick; he takes

147. **sheriff's post**: a large carved post
 147–48. **the . . . bench**: i.e., a bench-support
 153. **will . . . no**: i.e., whether you want to or not
 154. **personage**: appearance
 156. **squash**: unripe **peascod** (pea pod)
 157. **codling**: unripe apple
 158. **in standing . . . man**: i.e., halfway between boy and man, like a tide between ebb and flow
 159–60. **shrewishly**: This word usually means "like a bad-tempered woman," but here it seems to mean merely "like a woman."



Diana. (1.4.34)
 From Robert Whitcombe, *Janua diuorum* (1678).

on him to understand so much, and therefore comes to speak with you. I told him you were asleep; he seems to have a foreknowledge of that too, and therefore comes to speak with you. What is to be said to him, lady? He's fortified against any denial. 140

OLIVIA Tell him he shall not speak with me. 145

MALVOLIO Has been told so, and he says he'll stand at your door like a sheriff's post and be the supporter to a bench, but he'll speak with you.

OLIVIA What kind o' man is he?

MALVOLIO Why, of mankind. 150

OLIVIA What manner of man?

MALVOLIO Of very ill manner. He'll speak with you, will you or no.

OLIVIA Of what personage and years is he?

MALVOLIO Not yet old enough for a man, nor young enough for a boy—as a squash is before 'tis a peascod, or a codling when 'tis almost an apple. 'Tis with him in standing water, between boy and man. He is very well-favored, and he speaks very shrewishly. One would think his mother's milk were scarce out of him. 160

OLIVIA

Let him approach. Call in my gentlewoman.

MALVOLIO Gentlewoman, my lady calls. *He exits.*

Enter Maria.

OLIVIA

Give me my veil. Come, throw it o'er my face.

[Olivia veils.]

We'll once more hear Orsino's embassy. 165

Enter [Viola.]

VIOLA The honorable lady of the house, which is she?

167. **Your will?**: i.e., what do you want?
 172. **con**: memorize
 173–74. **comptible** . . . **usage**: sensitive to even the smallest slight
 178. **modest**: moderate
 180. **comedian**: actor
 182. **that I play**: i.e., that which I act
 184. **usurp myself**: i.e., hold possession of myself wrongfully (Olivia's joking way of admitting that she is herself)
 185–86. **usurp yourself**: i.e., wrongfully hold possession of yourself (in that you are refusing to marry and reproduce)
 187. **reserve**: keep for yourself; **from**: i.e., not part of
 190. **forgive you**: i.e., excuse you from reciting
 194. **like**: i.e., likely
 197. **be not mad**: This odd phrase may represent a scribal or printing error. Some editors omit the word **not**; others interpret "not" to mean "not entirely."
 198. **'Tis . . . me**: i.e., I am not myself lunatic—under the influence of Luna, the moon (See page 134.)
 199. **make one**: i.e., take part
 201. **swabber**: a sailor who swabs the decks; **hull**: remain, like a ship with furled sails

OLIVIA Speak to me. I shall answer for her. Your will?
 VIOLA Most radiant, exquisite, and unmatchable beauty—I pray you, tell me if this be the lady of the house, for I never saw her. I would be loath to cast away my speech, for, besides that it is excellently well penned, I have taken great pains to con it. Good beauties, let me sustain no scorn. I am very comptible, even to the least sinister usage. 170
 OLIVIA Whence came you, sir? 175
 VIOLA I can say little more than I have studied, and that question's out of my part. Good gentle one, give me modest assurance if you be the lady of the house, that I may proceed in my speech.
 OLIVIA Are you a comedian? 180
 VIOLA No, my profound heart. And yet, by the very fangs of malice, I swear I am not that I play. Are you the lady of the house?
 OLIVIA If I do not usurp myself, I am.
 VIOLA Most certain, if you are she, you do usurp yourself, for what is yours to bestow is not yours to reserve. But this is from my commission. I will on with my speech in your praise and then show you the heart of my message. 185
 OLIVIA Come to what is important in 't. I forgive you the praise. 190
 VIOLA Alas, I took great pains to study it, and 'tis poetical.
 OLIVIA It is the more like to be feigned. I pray you, keep it in. I heard you were saucy at my gates, and allowed your approach rather to wonder at you than to hear you. If you be not mad, begone; if you have reason, be brief. 'Tis not that time of moon with me to make one in so skipping a dialogue. 195
 MARIA Will you hoist sail, sir? Here lies your way. 200
 VIOLA No, good swabber, I am to hull here a little

202. **giant**: perhaps a sarcastic reference to Maria's size
 208. **office**: i.e., what you have been ordered to say
 209. **alone . . . ear**: i.e., concerns no one but you
 210. **taxation of**: i.e., demand that you pay; **olive**: olive branch, a symbol of peace and goodwill
 212–13. **What would you?**: i.e., what do you want?
 215. **my entertainment**: the way I was received
 217. **divinity**: i.e., religious truth, theology; **profanation**: a violation of something sacred
 220. **your text**: the scriptural passage on which you are to expound
 222. **comfortable**: comforting
 226. **by the method**: according to the division of the text in the table of contents
 233–34. **such . . . present**: i.e., this is a portrait of me as I am at this moment
 236. **in grain**: indelible (*Grain* was a “fast” or permanent dye.)



“I hold the olive in my hand.” (1.5.210–11)
 From Gilles Corrozet, *Hecatongraphie* . . . (1543).

longer.—Some mollification for your giant, sweet lady.

「OLIVIA」 Tell me your mind.

「VIOLA」 I am a messenger.

205

OLIVIA Sure you have some hideous matter to deliver when the courtesy of it is so fearful. Speak your office.

VIOLA It alone concerns your ear. I bring no overture of war, no taxation of homage. I hold the olive in my hand. My words are as full of peace as matter.

210

OLIVIA Yet you began rudely. What are you? What would you?

VIOLA The rudeness that hath appeared in me have I learned from my entertainment. What I am and what I would are as secret as maidenhead: to your ears, divinity; to any other's, profanation.

215

OLIVIA Give us the place alone. We will hear this divinity. 「*Maria and Attendants exit.*」 Now, sir, what is your text?

220

VIOLA Most sweet lady—

OLIVIA A comfortable doctrine, and much may be said of it. Where lies your text?

VIOLA In Orsino's bosom.

OLIVIA In his bosom? In what chapter of his bosom?

225

VIOLA To answer by the method, in the first of his heart.

OLIVIA O, I have read it; it is heresy. Have you no more to say?

VIOLA Good madam, let me see your face.

OLIVIA Have you any commission from your lord to negotiate with my face? You are now out of your text. But we will draw the curtain and show you the picture. 「*She removes her veil.*」 Look you, sir, such a one I was this present. Is 't not well done?

230

VIOLA Excellently done, if God did all.

235

OLIVIA 'Tis in grain, sir; 'twill endure wind and weather.

238. **blent**: blended
 242. **leave** . . . **copy**: i.e., leave no children to carry on your beauty (Olivia responds as if **copy** her meant a written record.)
 244. **divers schedules**: various lists
 245. **utensil**: i.e., part of my body; **labeled**: described on paper and attached as a codicil
 246. **item**: Latin for "likewise" (used to introduce each article in a formal inventory)
 248. **praise**: perhaps, appraise
 251. **if**: i.e., even if; **the devil**: perhaps a reference to Lucifer, the archangel who, through pride, led the revolt of the angels against God, and who, after his fall, was named Satan (Proverbial: "As proud as Lucifer.")
 253. **but recompensed**: i.e., no more than returned on equal terms
 255. **The nonpareil of beauty**: i.e., a beauty without equal
 257. **fertile**: abundant
 261. **estate**: fortune, status
 262. **voices**: public opinion; **divulged**: spoken of; **free**: noble
 263. **In dimension** . . . **nature**: i.e., in his physical shape
 264. **A gracious**: an attractive

VIOLA

'Tis beauty truly blent, whose red and white
 Nature's own sweet and cunning hand laid on.
 Lady, you are the cruel'st she alive 240
 If you will lead these graces to the grave
 And leave the world no copy.

OLIVIA O, sir, I will not be so hard-hearted! I will give
 out divers schedules of my beauty. It shall be
 inventoried and every particle and utensil labeled 245
 to my will: as, *item*, two lips indifferent red; *item*,
 two gray eyes, with lids to them; *item*, one neck, one
 chin, and so forth. Were you sent hither to praise
 me?

VIOLA

I see you what you are. You are too proud. 250
 But, if you were the devil, you are fair.
 My lord and master loves you. O, such love
 Could be but recompensed though you were
 crowned
 The nonpareil of beauty. 255

OLIVIA How does he love me?

VIOLA With adorations, fertile tears,
 With groans that thunder love, with sighs of fire.

OLIVIA

Your lord does know my mind. I cannot love him.
 Yet I suppose him virtuous, know him noble, 260
 Of great estate, of fresh and stainless youth;
 In voices well divulged, free, learned, and valiant,
 And in dimension and the shape of nature
 A gracious person. But yet I cannot love him.
 He might have took his answer long ago. 265

VIOLA

If I did love you in my master's flame,
 With such a suff'ring, such a deadly life,
 In your denial I would find no sense.
 I would not understand it.

271. **willow cabin:** a small shelter made of willow (The willow is the symbol of grief for unrequited love.)

272. **call . . . house:** i.e., call out to Olivia, outside of whose house the cabin is built

273. **cantons:** i.e., cantos, ballads; **contemnèd:** disdained, viewed with contempt

275. **Hallow:** shout

276. **babbling . . . air:** i.e., Echo (the nymph who, in Greek mythology, pined away for love until only her voice was left to "babble")

279. **But . . . me:** i.e., unless you took pity on me

282. **fortunes:** (current) situation; **state:** social standing; or, condition in life

289. **fee'd post:** hired messenger

291. **Love:** i.e., may the god of love (Cupid); **make . . . flint:** i.e., turn . . . into flint; **that . . . love:** i.e., the man you will one day love

298. **give . . . blazon:** i.e., proclaim your high rank five times over (A blazon is a coat of arms.); **Soft:** an exclamation meaning "wait a minute"

300. **man:** i.e., servant

OLIVIA Why, what would you? 270

VIOLA

Make me a willow cabin at your gate
And call upon my soul within the house,
Write loyal cantons of contemnèd love
And sing them loud even in the dead of night,
Hallow your name to the reverberate hills 275
And make the babbling gossip of the air
Cry out "Olivia!" O, you should not rest
Between the elements of air and earth
But you should pity me.

OLIVIA You might do much. 280

What is your parentage?

VIOLA

Above my fortunes, yet my state is well.
I am a gentleman.

OLIVIA Get you to your lord. 285

I cannot love him. Let him send no more—
Unless perchance you come to me again
To tell me how he takes it. Fare you well.

I thank you for your pains. Spend this for me.

[She offers money.]

VIOLA

I am no fee'd post, lady. Keep your purse.
My master, not myself, lacks recompense. 290
Love make his heart of flint that you shall love,
And let your fervor, like my master's, be
Placed in contempt. Farewell, fair cruelty. She exits.

OLIVIA "What is your parentage?"

"Above my fortunes, yet my state is well. 295

I am a gentleman," I'll be sworn thou art.
Thy tongue, thy face, thy limbs, actions, and spirit
Do give thee fivefold blazon. Not too fast! Soft,
soft!

Unless the master were the man. How now? 300

Even so quickly may one catch the plague?

308. **County's man:** count's servant
 309. **Would I:** i.e., whether I wanted it; I'll . . . it:
 i.e., I do not want it
 310. **flatter with:** i.e., encourage
 313. **Hie thee:** hurry
 317. **owe:** own



Acteon. (1.1.24)
 From Ovid, *Le metamorphosi* . . . (1538).

Methinks I feel this youth's perfections
 With an invisible and subtle stealth
 To creep in at mine eyes. Well, let it be.—
 What ho, Malvolio!

305

Enter Malvolio.

MALVOLIO Here, madam, at your service.

OLIVIA

Run after that same peevish messenger,
 The County's man. He left this ring behind him,
 Would I or not. Tell him I'll none of it.

She hands him a ring.

Desire him not to flatter with his lord,
 Nor hold him up with hopes. I am not for him.
 If that the youth will come this way tomorrow,
 I'll give him reasons for 't. Hie thee, Malvolio.

310

MALVOLIO Madam, I will.

He exits.

OLIVIA

I do I know not what, and fear to find
 Mine eye too great a flatterer for my mind.
 Fate, show thy force. Ourselves we do not owe.
 What is decreed must be, and be this so.

315

She exits.