

Twelfth Night

by William Shakespeare

Presented by Paul W. Collins

© *Copyright 2005 by Paul W. Collins*

Twelfth Night

By William Shakespeare

Presented by Paul W. Collins

All rights reserved under the International and Pan-American Copyright Conventions. Except as permitted under the U.S. Copyright Act of 1976, no part of this work may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, or stored in a database or retrieval system, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, audio or video recording, or other, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

Contact: paul@wsrightnow.com

Note: Spoken lines from Shakespeare's drama are in the public domain, as is the Globe (1864) edition of his plays, which provided the basic text of the speeches in this new version of *Twelfth Night*. But *Twelfth Night, by William Shakespeare: Presented by Paul W. Collins*, is a copyrighted work, and is made available *for your personal use only*, in reading and study.

Student, beware: This is a *presentation* of *Twelfth Night*, not a scholarly work, so you should be sure your teacher, instructor or professor considers it acceptable as a reference before quoting characters' comments or thoughts from it in your report or term paper.

Chapter One Hearts Adrift

If music be the food of love, play on!” the nobleman tells his court musicians. “Give me *excess* of it, so that, surfeiting, the appetite may sicken, and *die!*”

Duke Orsino closes his eyes, letting the piquant tones of the lute pluck at his heart-strings, the wind instruments’ lilting melodies lift his spirits—briefly—and the deep, bowed stirrings of the bass viol, the *viola di gamba*, bring resonance to his soul.

“That strain again!—it had a dying fall—oh, it came o’er my ear like the sweet sound that breathes upon a bank of violets, stealing and giving scent!”

Attended by several of his realm’s lords, the heartsick duke, handsome and healthy at thirty, languishes in a sunny room of his palace, high at the rocky point of a peninsula on Illyria’s western shore, across the sea from mid-16th century Italy.

He motions languidly. “Enough—no more; ’tis not so sweet now as it was before,” he moans, never satisfied these days, ever listless. “O spirit of love, how quick and fresh art thou, that, thy capacity notwithstanding, receiveth as the *sea*, so full of shape’s fancy that it alone is high fantastical!—nought enters there, of what validity and pitch soe’er, but falls into abatement and low price, even in a minute!”

“Will you go *hunt*, my lord?” asks a bored gentleman.

“What, Curio...?”

“The hart.”

The *heart* is central to Duke Orsino’s thought: “Why, so I do!—the *noblest!*”

“That I *have!* Oh, when mine eyes did see Olivia first, 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!”

He sees another of his courtiers, Valentine, enter the hall. “How now? What news from her?”

“So please my lord, I might not be admitted,” Valentine reports, bowing, “but from her handmaid do return this answer: the *element itself*”—the sky—“till seven years’ hence shall not behold her face at ample view; but, like a cloistress, she will *veilèd* walk, and water once a day her chamber round with eye-offending brine—all this to season a dead brother’s love, which she would keep fresh and lasting in her sad remembrance.”

As evening approaches, Duke Orsino gazes out the tall windows overlooking the ocean. Sunset’s warm beams slant through pink arrays of bright-edged clouds, and across the silver-crested waves shimmering on water of deepest blue.

“Oh, she that hath a heart of such fine frame to pay this debt of love to but a *brother*, how will she love when the rich, golden shaft”—he means Cupid’s arrow—“hath killed the flock of all affections *else* that live in her?—when desire, mind, and heart, those sovereign thrones, are *all* supplied, and fill her sweet perfections with one sole *king!*”

“Away before me to sweet beds of flowers!” he tells the courtiers, waving toward the formal garden. “Love-thoughts lie rich, when canopied with bowers!”

Far below, dark, jagged rocks jut from the windy coast through a narrow stretch of drab, kelp-strewn sand. A noble lady out peers over the sea, her once-elegant gown still dripping salt water. A hand held flat to shield her aching eyes salutes, sadly, the dimming red sun as it sinks toward the horizon. Again she searches the uninterrupted, steel-gray surface of the Adriatic.

Beside her stands a venerable sea captain, wet and shivering on the shore; around them are bedrabbled members of the crew from the wooden ship he commanded—which, within the hour, has sunk.

Viola turns to the downcast captain. “What country, friend, is this?”

“This is Illyria, lady.”

“And what should I do in *Illyria*?” she wonders aloud. “My *brother*, he is in *Elysium*,” she murmurs, imagining her twin in the fields of heaven. “Perchance he is *not* drowned. What think you, sailors?” she pleads. But the seamen look away, certain that the passenger is lost to the deep, along with their missing shipmates.

“It is per *chance* that you *yourself* were saved!” says the old captain, savoring, himself, the luck of survival.

“Oh, my poor brother! And so perchance may *he* be,” she says, again in tears.

“*True*, madam. And, to comfort you with the chance, assure yourself that, after our ship did split, when you and those poor number saved with you hung upon our driven boat, I *saw* your brother, most provident in peril, bind himself—courage and hope both teaching him the practise—to a strong mast that lived upon the sea—where I saw him hold acquaintance with the waves, like Arion on the dolphin’s back,”—stay afloat, “so long as I could see!”

“For saying so, there’s gold,” says Viola gratefully, giving him ducats. “Mine own escape unfoldeth to my *hope*—whereto thy speech serves for authority—of the like for *him*.” She looks around at the bleak coast, and up between the steep ravines of the cape.

“Know’st thou this country?”

“Aye, madam, *well*, for I was bred and born not three hours’ travel from this very place.”

“Who governs here?”

“A duke, noble in nature as in name.”

“What is the name?”

“Orsino.”

“Orsino... I have heard my father name him,” Viola remembers. “He was a bachelor then.”

“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.”

“What’s she?”

“A virtuous maid, the daughter of a count that died some twelve months 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, now a lonely castaway, needs refuge—and peaceful solace. “Oh, that I served that lady, and might not be delivered to the world till I had made mine own occasion mellow as to what my estate is....”

“That were hard to compass,” the grizzled mariner tells her, “because she will admit no kind of suit.” He shakes his head. “No,” he adds, definitively, “not even the *duke’s*.”

Standing in a crag’s darkening shadow, she ponders, watching as the glum sailors tread along the shore in a forlorn, desultory search for anything washed from their ship. But Viola is not one to be lost for long.

“There is a fair behavior in thee, captain,” she says, “and though 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 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 shall present me as an eunuch to him; it may be very worthy thy pains, for I can *sing*, and speak to him of music in many sorts that will avow me for his service.

“What else may hap to *time* I will commit; only shape thou thy silence to my wit.”

The kindly captain smiles, surprised at her ingenuity—and relieved to be able to help. “*Be* you his eunuch, and your *mute* I’ll be!—when my tongue blabs, then let mine eyes not see!”

“I thank thee,” says Viola. She turns from the sea. “Lead me forward.”

The captain signals his boatswain to take charge of their men, and begins picking his way up among the rocks toward the road leading into town. The young noblewoman follows.

As the shadows deepen, Viola glances back from the dusky path toward the palace atop the headland, home of the Duke of Illyria. She climbs the hill, deep in thought.

Inland, on an estate just east of the promontory, lamps and candles are being lighted in the ancestral home of Duke Orsino's neighbor, Countess Olivia—a wealthy lady of twenty-nine, and the one he longs to court.

In her mansion this evening, the corpulent brother of Olivia's late father complains to Mary, the lady's waiting-gentlewoman. "What the plague *means* my niece, to take the death of her brother thus?" grumbles Sir Toby, much annoyed; her mourning continues to interfere with his carousing—although he is already inebriated this evening. "I am sure *care* is an enemy to *life!*"

"By my troth, Sir Toby, you must come in *earlier* o' nights!" says Mary. "My lady, takes great exceptions to your ill hours."

Sir Toby, long inured to harsh judgment, waves a hand imperiously. "Why, *let* her except—all *before* is excepted!"—a lawyerly term for *not punished*.

"Aye, but you must confine yourself within the modest limits of *order*."

"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!"

"This quaffing and drinking will *undo* you!" Mary warns. "I heard my lady talk of it yesterday—and of the foolish *knight* that you brought in one night, here to be her *wooer*."

"Who, Sir Andrew *Ague-cheek?*"

"Aye, he."

"He's as tall a man as any's in Illyria!"

"What's *that* to the purpose?"

Sir Toby clarifies: "Why, he has *three thousand gold ducats* a year!"

Mary scoffs. "Aye, but despite all those ducats he'll have only the *year*; he's a very *fool*, and a *prodigal* one."

"*Fie* that you'll say so! He plays o' the viol-de-gamboys, and speaks three or four languages, word by word *beyond* their *books*"—ones unsuitable for printing, "and hath all the good gifts of nature."

"He hath the *need*: he's almost a *natural!*"—a dunce. "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 gusto he hath in quarrelling, 'tis thought among the prudent he would quickly have the gift of a *grave!*"

"By this hand, they are scoundrels and *subtractors* that say so of him," growls Sir Toby. "Who are they?"

Mary's eyes narrow; she's chief detractor. "They that *add*, moreover, he's *drunk* nightly in your company!"

"From drinking healths to my niece," counters the knight indignantly. "I'll drink to her as long as there is a passage in my throat and drink in Illyria!" he vows. "He's a coward and a coystrill that will not drink to my niece till his brains turn o' the toe like a parish top!"

But now the aging gallant hears the unsteady footsteps of his wealthy companion. "*What*, wench? *Castiliano, vulgo*"—speak elegantly, coarse one, "for here *comes* Sir Andrew Ague-face!"

Slender Andrew greets his portly, dissolute friend heartily: "Sir Toby!—*belch!*" The gentleman accommodates him roundly, to his delight. "How *now*, Sir Toby?"

"Sweet Sir Andrew!"

The knight, who is past sixty, turns a game smile to Mary—who is not. "Bless you, fair shrew!"

"And you, too, sir."

Toby whispers, "*Accost*, Sir Andrew, *accost!*"

Among Andrew's many failings is hearing. "What's that?"

Another whisper: "My niece's chambermaid...."

“Good Mistress Accost,” says Sir Andrew, now in pursuit, “I desire better acquaintance!”

“My name is *Mary*, sir.” The gentlewoman’s tone makes clear—it would to anyone but Andrew—that she is *not* a chambermaid.

Sir Andrew bows. “Good Mistress Mary Accost—”

“You *mistake*, knight,” hisses Sir Toby; “‘accost’ is *front* her, *board* her, *woo* her!—*assail* her!”

Andrew is nonplussed. “By my troth, I would not thus undertake her in *company*! Is that the meaning of ‘accost’?”

Mary flashes a glare at Toby, “Fare you well, *gentlemen*,” she tells the provocative rascal and his companion, and turns to leave.

Toby goads, from behind him, “An thou let her part *so*, Sir Andrew, would thou mightst never draw ‘sword’ again!”

Andrew heeds the prompt. “An you part *so*, mistress,” he tells her, “I would I might never draw sword again! Fair lady, do you think you have *fools* in hand?”

“Sir, I have not *you* by the hand.”

“Marry, but you *shall* have,” says Andrew, “and here’s my hand!”

Mary makes a face. “Now, sir, ‘thought is free’”—think as you like. But he moves closer and grasps her hand. “I pray you, move your hand to the buttery bar, and let it drink!”—a ribald *gratify yourself*.

Andrew blinks, puzzled. “Wherefore, sweet heart? What’s your metaphor?”

“It’s *dry*, sir,” she tells the wizened old man.

“Why, I think *so*,” nods dim Andrew, examining his other palm. “I am not such an ass but I can keep my hand dry. But what’s your *jest*?”

Mary laughs. “A *dry* jest, sir!”

“Are you full of them?” he asks, a bit piqued.

“*Aye*, sir,” says she, “I have them at my fingers’ ends! Marry, now that I *let go* your hand, I am barren!” With that, she takes her leave.

Toby quickly commiserates with the crestfallen Andrew. “Ah, knight, thou lackest a cup of *canary*!”—wine. “When did I ever see thee so *put down*?”

“Never in your life, I think—unless when you’ve seen canary put me down,” says dejected Sir Andrew, of his favorite sweetened drink. He shakes his head. “Methinks sometimes I have no more wit than a Christian or an ordinary man has. But I am a great eater of *beef*,” he confesses, “and I believe that does harm to my *wit*”—a common belief among Englishmen.

“No question.”

“An I thought that, I’d forswear it,” claims Andrew; but he’d hardly consider renouncing the roast. The disconsolate visitor looks down at his shoes; the wear they show is not from dancing. “I’ll ride home tomorrow, Sir Toby.”

Toby is genuinely concerned. “*Pourquoi*, my dear knight?”—*Why*?

“What is *pourquoi*—*do* or *not* do? I would I had bestowed that time on the *tongues* that I have on fencing, dancing and bear-baiting! *Oh*, had I but followed the *arts*!”

Toby nods; but he has heard *tongs*—curling irons. “Then hadst thou had an excellent head of hair.”

“Why? Would they have mended my *hair*?”

“Past question; for thou seest it will not curl by *nature*.”

“But it *becomes* me well enough, does’t not?”

“*Excellently*: it hangs like flax on a distaff!”—like thin threads, ready to wind into yarn. Toby leans forward for a lewd jest. “And I hope to see a housewife take thee between her legs and *spin it off*!”

Sir Andrew, however, is now nearing sobriety. “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 duke himself, here hard by, woos her.”

“She’ll none o’ the *duke*,” Toby assures him. “She’ll not match above her degree, neither in estate, years, nor wit—I have heard her swear’t!” Toby’s saturnalia has been paid for by Andrew’s hopes; the visitor’s intention to woo must not be abandoned. “There’s *life* in’t, man!”

Sir Andrew, otherwise purposeless, yields. “I’ll stay a month longer.

“I am a fellow o’ the strangest mind i’ the world,” he admits, happily anticipating further joint merriment. “I delight in masques and revels, sometimes, altogether.”

“Art thou good at these kickshawses, knight?”

Andrew considers himself a fine dancer. “As any man in Illyria, whatsoever he be—under the degree of my *betters*; and I will not compare with a *bold man*.”

“What is thy excellence in a *galliard*, knight?”—in steps fast but brief.

“Faith, I *can* cut a *caper*!”

“And I can cut the *mutton* to’t!”—the meat before the garnish, for rotund Sir Toby.

“And I think I have the *back-trick* simply as strong as any man in Illyria!” boasts Andrew—although the dance term also suggests a prostitute’s skill.

“Wherefore are these things *hid*?” demands Toby, affecting dismay. “Wherefore have these gifts a curtain before ’em? Are they likely to take *dust*, like Mistress Nell’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*”—piss—“but in a sink *apace*!”—a jest on the *cinque-pace* step.

Toby persists warmly: “What dost thou *mean*? Is it a world to *hide* virtues in? I did think, by the excellent constitution of thy leg, it was *formèd* under the star of a galliard!”

“Aye, ’tis strong,” Andrew allows, angling up and regarding a knobby, stick-like limb. “And it does indifferent well in a flame-coloured stocking.” His expression brightens. “Shall we set about some revels?”

“What shall we do *else*? Were we not born under Taurus?”

Sir Andrew pauses. “Taurus—that’s sides and heart....”

“No, sir!” says Sir Toby the linguist and classical scholar, “it is *legs* and *thighs*!

“Let me see thee caper! *Ha! Higher!*” He laughs heartily, clapping as spindleshanks hops and flails. “*Excellent!*”

Chapter Two Courtship Assigned

Valentine smiles. “If the duke continue these favours towards you, Cesario, you are likely to be much advanced—he hath known you but three days, and already you are no stranger!”

He and Cesario—a sensitive young gentleman brought to the palace by a local sea-captain after they were cast ashore in a shipwreck—stand among the other courtiers waiting in the grand hall for Duke Orsino.

“You fear either *his* mood or *my* negligence, that you call in question the continuance of his love,” says Cesario/Viola. “Is he *inconstant*, sir, in his favours?”

“No, believe me!”

“I thank you. Here comes the duke....”

Orsino returns from visiting his orchards with Curio and several servants. “Who saw *Cesario*, *ho*?” he calls from the double doors.

“On your attendance, my lord, *here!*”

The duke hands his walking cane—merely an accessory—to a serving-man. “Stand you a while aloof, Cesario,” he says, taking the charming newcomer by the arm and moving aside for privacy. The nobleman has an assignment in mind.

“Thou know’st no less than *all*,” says Orsino. “I have unclasped to thee the book even of my secret *soul*! Therefore, good youth, address thy gait unto her! *Be not denied access!*—stand at her doors, and tell them *there thy fixèd foot shall grow* till thou have audience!”

“Surely, my noble lord, if she be so abandoned to her sorrow as it is spoken, she never will admit me.”

“Be *clamorous*, and leap all civil bounds rather than make unprofited return!” the duke tells him.

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

“Oh, then unfold the *passion* of my *love!*—surprise her with discourse of my dear faith!” He admires the young gentleman’s wholesome, rosy-cheeked healthiness. “It shall become *thee* well to act my woes; she will attend it better from thy youth than a nuncio’s more-grave aspect.”

“I think not so, my lord—”

“Dear lad, *believe* it! For they still yet belie thy happy years who say thou art a *man*. *Diana’s* lip is not more smooth and rubious; thy small pipe”—he means *voice*—“is as the *maiden’s* organ, shrill in sound; and all is semblative of a *woman’s* parts. I know thy constellation is right apt for this affair!”

Orsino motions to the court. “Some four or five attend him—*all*, if you will; for I myself am best when least in company.” Nobody laughs; at least not aloud. “Prosper well in this,” he tells Cesario, “and thou shalt live as freely as thy lord, to call *his* fortunes *thine!*”

“I’ll do my best to woo your lady,” promises Cesario.

But Viola thinks, dismayed, *Yet a fearful strife!—whome’er I woo, myself would be his wife!*

At Olivia’s tall mansion, Mary confronts the countess’s court fool, Feste, as they wait for the lady.

“Nay, either tell me where thou hast *been*, or I will not open my lips so wide as a bristle may enter, by way of thy excuse!” she warns. “My lady will *hang* thee for thy absence!”

“Let her hang me.” The young man’s smile is mischievous. “He that is well hung in this world need fear no colours!”

Mary frowns at the crudeness. “Make that *good*,” she demands.

So the clown evokes the noose: “He shall *see* none to fear!”

“A good *Lenten* answer!” she laughs. “And I can tell thee where the saying ‘I fear no *colours*’ was born of...”

“Where, good Mistress Mary?”

“In the *wars*.” Soldiers don’t fear banners—they fear those attacking under them. “And *that* you may be told to say in your foolery!”

Feste is unrepentant. “Well, God gives them wisdom that *have* it—but those that are *fools*, let them use their *talents!*”

“You will *yet* be hanged for being so long absent—or be *turned away!*”—dismissed. “Is not that as good as a hanging to you?”

He looks thoughtful for a moment. “A good hanging prevents many a bad *marriage*. And as for turned away, let them who *are* bear it out.”

“You are *resolute*, then?” She still wants to know where he’s been.

“Not so, neither!” he laughs; marriage will entail many concerns. “But I am *resolved* on two points...”

Mary doesn’t want to discuss balls; and she, too, has a store of drollery. “That if one break, the other will hold; or if both break, your *gaskins* fall!” Two buttons’ loss would drop his trousers.

“*Apt*, in good faith,” laughs the clown, “*very apt!*” He has been away, again, up at Duke Orsino’s—working in a second position, as it were; the hopeful bachelor needs more income. “Well, go thy way!” He adds, regarding her own prospects, “If Sir Toby would leave *drinking*, *thou* wert as witty a piece of Eve’s flesh as any in Illyria!”

Mary protests the flattery: "*Peace*, you rogue, no more o' *that!*"

She hears the approaching rustle of silk. "Here comes my lady! Make your excuse wisely, you were best!" she advises her younger friend, and hurries away.

Feste readies himself: *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!" says the jester, bowing, as Olivia arrives with her stern steward, Malvolio, and several attendants.

"Take the fool away," she commands.

"Do you not *hear*, fellows?" says Feste imperiously. "Take *away* the lady!"

Olivia is peeved. "*Go to!*—you're a *dry* fool! I'll no more of you! Besides, you grow *dishonest.*"

The clown dismisses both allegations with a wave. "Two faults, madonna, that *drink* and good *counsel* will amend. For, give the dry fool a drink and the fool is *not* dry!"—no longer thirsty. "Bid the dishonest man *mend* himself. If he mend, he is no longer dishonest!

"If he cannot, let the *botcher*"—tinkerer, one who repairs—"mend him! Anything that's mended is but *patched*: virtue that transgresses is but patchèd *sin*, and sin that amends is but patched with *virtue*. If this simple syllogism will serve, *so*," he says, with complete assurance. "If it do not, what *can* remedy?"

"As there is no cuckold but in *true* calumny, so *beauty's* in a flower"—they exist only when recognized. He motions to the servants. "The lady bade take away the *fool*; therefore, I say again, take her away!"

Olivia, amused, still feigns anger; she tells Feste, "Sir, I bade them take away *you!*" Her attendants only watch, smiling.

"*Misprision* in the highest degree!" he cries—bells jingling on his fool's cap. "Lady, *cucullus non facit monachum!*"—a cowl doesn't make a monk. "That's as much as to say 'I wear not motley in my *brain!*' Good madam, give me leave to *prove* you a fool."

"Can you do it?"

"*Dexterously*, good madonna!"

"Make your proof."

"I must catechise you for it, madonna; my good mouse of virtue, answer me."

"Well, sir, for lack of *other* idleness, I'll abide your proof."

"Good madonna, why *mournest* thou?"

"Good fool, for my brother's death."

"I think his soul is in Hell, madonna," he says solemnly.

"I know his soul is in Heaven, Fool," she replies softly—and sadly.

"The more *fool*, madonna, to mourn for your brother's soul being in *Heaven!* Take away the fool, gentlemen!"

Olivia's eyes glisten. "What think you of this fool, Malvolio?" she asks. "Doth he not mend?"

"Yes—and shall *need to*, till the pangs of *death* shake him!" replies Malvolio sourly. He considers Feste an incorrigible miscreant. "Infirmity that decays the *wise* doth ever make the *better fool!*"

Feste raises an eyebrow. "God send you, sir, a *speedy* infirmity for the increasing of your folly! Sir Toby will be *sworn* that I am no *fox*—but he will not pass his word for two-pence that you are no *fool!*"

Olivia smiles in spite of herself. "How say you to that, Malvolio?"

He frowns. "I marvel Your Ladyship takes delight in such a barren rascal. I saw him put down the other day as an *ordinary* fool that has no more brain than a *stone!* Look you *now*—he's out of his ward already: unless you laugh, and minister *occasion* to him,"—offer openings for prepared retorts, "he is *gagged*."

“I protest that I take wise men who crow so at these ‘set’ kind of fools as no better than the fools’ *zanies!*”—their poor imitators.

Olivia only laughs. “Oh, *you* are sick with *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”—darts—“that *you* deem *cannon-bullets!*”

“There is no slander in an *allowed* fool, though he do nothing but rail,” she says—adding, kindly, touching the steward’s sleeve, “nor no railing in a man known *discreet*, though he do nothing but reprove!”

Laughs the clown; “Now *Mercury*”—god of quick changeability—“endues *thee* with pleasing, for thou speakest *well* of fools!”

Mary returns, and curtsies to Olivia. “Madam, there is at the gate a young gentleman who much desires to speak with you.”

“From the Duke Orsino, is he?”

“I know not, madam. ’Tis a *fair* young man!—and well attended.”

“Who of my people hold him in delay?”

“Your kinsman, madam—Sir Toby.”

The countess is alarmed. “*Fetch him off*, I pray you!—he speaks nothing but *madman!* *Fie* on him!” Mary hurries away, and Olivia frowns, annoyed. “Go *you*, Malvolio; if it be a suit from the duke, I am sick, or not at home—whatever you will to dismiss it.” The steward bows and heads toward the entrance.

Olivia shakes her head. “Now you see, sir, how *some* fooling grows old, and people *dislike* it!”

He protests being offered serious advice: “Thou hast spoken to *me*, madonna, as if to thine eldest *son* whose skull Jove *crammed with brains!*” He sees Sir Toby, extracted by Mary from his conversation at the door, ambling unsteadily toward them. “But here comes *one* of thy kin who has a most *weak pia mater!*”—mind.

“By mine honour, half *drunk*,” mutters Olivia. She asks Toby, “What is he at the gate, cousin?”

“A gentleman.”

“A gentleman. *What* gentleman?”

Toby thinks she disputes the description. He shrugs, “’Tis a gentle man *here*.” He releases a loud vocal emission. “A plague o’ these pickled herring!” He notices Feste. “How now, sot!”

“Good Sir Toby!”

“Cousin, *cousin*, how have you come so *early* by this... lethargy?” asks Olivia.

Sir Toby blinks. “Lechery? I *define* lechery!” He means *defy*. He attempts, futilely, to brush crumbs from the front of his doublet. “There’s one at the gate.”

“*Aye, marry!*—what *is* he?” demands Olivia.

“Let him be the *Devil* if he will, I care not!—give me *faith*, say I!” he mumbles, staggering off to find replenishment. “Well, it’s all one...”

The countess frowns. “What’s a drunken man *like*, Fool?”

“Like a fool, a madman, and a drownèd man,” says Feste. “*One* draught above’s head makes him a fool; the second mads him; and a third *drowns* him.”

Olivia takes up the analogy: “Go then and seek the coroner, and let him sit o’ my cozz,”—hold an inquest, “for he’s in the third degree of drink—he’s *drownèd!*” She shakes her head. “Go, look after him.”

Feste bows. “He is but *mad* yet, madonna; and a fool *shall* look to a madman...” He follows after Sir Toby.

Malvolio returns, much vexed, from the portico. “Madam, yond young fellow swears he *will* speak with you! I told him you were *sick*; he takes on him to *understand* as 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!”

Olivia has rarely seen her major-domo at a loss. “Tell him *he shall not speak with me.*”

“He *has* been told so!—and he says he’ll stand at your door like a *sheriff’s* post, or be the supporter of a *bench*, but he’ll *speak* with you!”

“What kind o’ man is he?”

Malvolio, distant and supercilious, is a poor judge of persons. “Why, of *mankind*,” he says—contemptuously.

“What *manner* of man?”

“Of very *ill* manner,” says Malvolio testily. “*He’ll* speak with you, will you or no!”

Olivia tries again: “Of what personage and years is he?”

“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-favoured, but he speaks very shrewishly; one would think his mother’s milk were scarce out of him.”

Olivia takes pity on the determined youth; she will let him say, upon returning to Orsino, that he succeeded in seeing her—but heard only another rejection. She smiles. “Let him approach. Call in my gentlewoman.”

Malvolio grits his teeth, further irked, and heads back to the entrance; passing the next room he speaks curtly: “*Gentle* woman, my lady calls.”

Mary returns to Olivia and curtseys.

“Give me my veil,” the countess tells her. Mary fetches it. “Come, throw it o’er my face.”

Olivia’s lovely features are soon hidden behind the sheer, dark mesh; the visitor is to take no hint of encouragement back to the duke.

“We’ll *once* more hear Orsino’s embassy,” she says wearily, as they step outside to wait.

Chapter Three Wood—and Won

Viola, disguised as Cesario, strides into the bright courtyard. “The honourable lady of the house, which is she?” asks the boyish gentleman.

“Speak to me,” a veiled woman replies coldly. “I shall answer for her. Your will?”

Cesario begins with formal elegance: “Most radiant, exquisite and unmatchable beauty....”

But the young man breaks from his recital and turns to Mary: “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 learn it!

“Good beauties, let me sustain no scorn; I am very sensitive, even to the least sinister usage....”

“Whence came you, sir?” asks Olivia.

“I can say little more than what I have *studied*, and that question’s outside my *part*. Good gentle one, give me modest assurance that you be the lady of the house, so I may proceed in my speech....”

The countess challenges: “Are you an *actor*?”

“No, by my profound heart!” laughs Cesario. Thinks Viola, *And yet, in the very fangs of Malice I swear, I am not what I play!* She asks again: “Are you the lady of the house?”

“If I do not usurp myself, I am.”

“Most certainly if you are she, you *do* usurp your *self*—for what is yours to *bestow* is not yours for *reserving!*” argues Cesario, annoyed by the veil; Viola wants to see the face Duke Orsino finds so attractive. “But this is apart from my commission.

“I will go on with my speech in your praise, and then show you the heart of my message.”

“Come to what is *important* in’t;” says Olivia briskly. “I forgive you the praise”—relinquish flattery.

“*Alas*, I took great pains to *study* it!—and ’tis *poetical!*”

“It is the more likely to be *feigned*; I pray you, keep it in.” The veil is implacable. “I heard you were *saucy* at my gates, and I allowed your approach rather to *wonder* at you than to hear you! If you be *mad*, be *gone*; if you have *reason*, be *brief!* ’Tis not that time of moon with me to take part in so skipping a dialogue.”

Mary steps before Cesario. “Will you *hoist sail*, sir?” She points toward the door. “*Here* lies *your way*....”

He is not so easily dissuaded by a female first mate. “*No*, good *swabber*; I am to hull here a little longer!” Seeing little Mary’s spirited glare, he addresses the countess: “Some mollification for your *giant*, sweet lady!

“Tell me your *mind*,” insists Cesario. “I am a *messenger*.”

Olivia frowns. “Surely you have some *hideous* matter to deliver, when the *courtesy* of it is so fearful! Speak your office.”

He moves past Mary. “It concerns *your* ear alone. I bring no overture of *war*, nor *taxation* of homage—I hold the *olive* in my hand; my words are as full of *peace*’s matter!”

“Yet you began *rudely!* What are you? What would you?”

“The rudeness that hath appeared in me I have learned from my *reception*,” retorts Cesario. “What I am and what I would are as secret as maidenhead—to *your* ears, *divinity*, to any other’s, profanation.”

Olivia nods to her gentlewoman. “Give us the place alone: we will hear this *divinity*.” Mary curtseys and leaves—still frowning. “Now, sir, what is your text?”

“Most sweet lady—”

Olivia interrupts the formality: “A comfortable doctrine, and much may be said of it; where lies your *text?*”

“In Orsino’s *bosom*.”

“In his bosom! In what *chapter* of his bosom?”

“To answer by that method: in the *first* of his *heart!*”

“Oh, I have *read* it; it is *heresy*. Have you no more to say?”

“Good madam, let me see your face.”

“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*.”

“Look you, sir; such a one I *was*,” she says, removing the veil—and adding, with a frown, “*this*, presently.” She asks, of the portrait, “Is’t not well done?”

“Excellently done,” says Cesario, “if *God* did it all.”

Olivia uses no cosmetics. “’Tis ingrained, sir; ’twill endure wind and weather.”

Viola cannot help but be impressed with the object of Orsino’s affection. *’Tis beauty truly blent, whose red and white Nature’s own sweet and cunning hand laid on!* “Lady, you are the cruell’st she alive, if you will lead these graces to the grave and leave the world no copy”—no offspring.

Pleading for such legacy is a common poetic conceit—too common, and the countess resents it. “Oh, sir, I will not be so hard-hearted,” Olivia replies with mock gravity. “I will give out divers *schedules* of my beauty; it shall be *inventoried*, and every particle and utensil labelled for my *will*—as: *item*, two lips, indifferent red; *item*, two grey eyes, with lids to them; *item*, one neck, one chin—and so forth.

“Were you sent hither to praise me?”

“I *see* you what you are: you are too *proud*,” Cesario says bluntly. “But even if you were the devil, you *are* fair, and my lord and master *loves* you. Oh, *such* love would be but *recompensed* though you were crowned the *nonpareil* of beauty!”

Suddenly realizing she has been staring at young Cesario's animated features, Olivia blushes; but she manages to veil her fascination. "How does he love me?" she asks, wanting to keep looking.

"With *adorations*, fertile *tears*—with groans that *thunder* love, with sighs of *fire!*"

But the countess has already heard too much of such rhetoric. "Your lord does know my mind; I cannot love him.

"I suppose him virtuous, know him noble, of great estate, of fresh and stainless youth; in voices well divulgèd, free, learned and valiant; and in dimension and the shape of nature a gracious person.

"But yet I cannot *love* him. He might have taken his answer long ago."

Cesario persists. "If *I* did love you in my master's flame—with such a *suffering*, such a *deadly life*—in your denial I would find no sense!—I would not *understand* it!"

"Why, what would you do?"

"Make me a shelter of willows at your gate, and *call out* to my *soul* within the house!—write loyal canons of contemnèd love, and *sing* them *loud*, even in the dead of night!—*halloo* your name to the reverberate hills, and make the babbling gossip of the *air* cry out, '*Olivia!*'

"Oh, you would not *rest* between the elements of air and earth unless you should *pity* me!"

Olivia watches the young man intently, entranced by his vivacity. "*You* might do *much*. What is your parentage?"

"Above my *fortunes*; yet my state is well: I am a gentleman."

"Get you to your lord. I cannot love him; let him send no more." Her eyes flash at the attractive visitor. "Unless, perchance, *you* come to me again—to tell me how he takes it. Fare you well. I thank you for your pains." She offers him a gold coin: "Spend this for me."

Cesario declines, frowning. "I am no *fee'd post*, lady; keep your purse! My *master*, not myself, lacks recompense!

"May Cupid make his heart of *flint* whom *you* shall love; and let *your* fervor, like my master's, be placed in contempt!

"Farewell, fair *cruelty!*" He stalks from the room.

Olivia is already pondering: '*What is your parentage?*' '*Above my fortunes; yet my state is well: I am a gentleman.*'

I'll be sworn thou art!—thy tongue, thy face, thy limbs, actions and spirit, do give thee five-fold blazon!

A thought occurs: *Not too fast... soft, soft.... What if the 'master' were this man!* She wonders: could Cesario be as entranced as she?—might be begin courting for himself?

How now! Even so quickly may one catch the plague! Methinks I feel this youth's perfections with an invisible and subtle stealth creeping in through mine eyes!

Well, let it be! "*What ho, Malvolio!*" The countess takes a silver ring from a drawer.

The steward returns. "Here, madam, at your service."

"Run after that same peevish messenger," Olivia tells him. "The duke's man—he left this ring behind him, would I or not! Tell him I'll none of it! Desire him not to flatter his *lord*, nor hold him up with hopes; I am not for *him*." She turns away. "If the youth will come this way tomorrow, I'll give him reasons for't," she adds, casually.

She frowns; he is examining the ring. "Hie thee, Malvolio!"

"Madam, I will." He bows and hurries away.

She muses. *I do I know not what I will!—and fear to find mine eye too great a flatterer of my mind!*

Fate, show thy force! Ourselves we do not own; what is decreed must be.

She smiles, picturing Cesario. *And be this so!*

Chapter Four

Cast Away, Entangled

Two handsome, well-dressed young men—one a sea-captain—walk along a bluff overlooking the coast of Illyria, about a mile south of Duke Orsino’s palace.

“Will you stay no longer?” asks the mariner, Antonio, plaintively. “Nor will you that I go *with you*?”

“By your patience, no. My stars shine darkly over me; the malignancy of *my* fate might perhaps distemper yours. Therefore I shall crave of you your leave that I may bear my evils alone. It were a bad recompense for your love to lay any of them on you!”

“Yet let me know of you *whither* you are bound,” pleads Antonio.

“No... in sooth, sir, my indeterminate voyage is mere extravagancy”—wandering. He regards his silent but crestfallen companion. “But I perceive in you so excellent a touch of modesty that you will not exhort from me what I wish to keep in; therefore it charges me, in manners, the rather to express myself.

“You must know of me then, Antonio, my name is *Sebastian*—whom I *callèd* Roderigo.” He had briefly assumed an alias.

“My father was that Sebastian of Messaline whom I know you have heard of. He left behind him myself and a sister, both born in the same hour. And, if the heavens had pleased, I would we had so *ended!* But *you*, sir, altered that!—for an hour before you took me from the breach of the sea was my sister *drowned!*”

“*Alas the day!*”

“A lady, sir, who, though it was said she much resembled *me*, was yet by many accounted beautiful! But, though I could not overfar *believe* such questionable wonder, yet *thus* far I will boldly publish her: she bore a *mind* that *Envy* could not but call fair!”

He looks down, tears in his eyes. “Though she is already drownèd with salt water, sir, I seem to drown her remembrance again with *more.*” He wipes his eyes.

Antonio’s buoyant friendship had been given without awareness of the castaway’s sorrow. “Pardon me, sir, your poor accommodation!”

Sebastian shakes his friend’s hand warmly. “O good Antonio, forgive me your trouble!”

“If you will not have my love *kill* me, let me be your servant!”

“If you will not *undo* what you have done—that is, murder him whom you have *recovered*—desire it not!

“Fare ye well at once! My bosom is full of thy kindness, and I am so near the manner of my *mother* that, upon the least occasion more, mine eyes will again tell tales of me!”

Sebastian looks northward, up the coast. “I am bound to the Duke Orsino’s court. Farewell!”

Antonio watches his admirable companion stride away along the dusty road. “The gentleness of all the gods go with thee!” *I have many enemies in Orsino’s court, else would I very shortly see thee there*, he thinks.

Forlorn, he heads toward home.

Then he pauses, and turns back. *But, come what may, I do adore thee so that danger shall seem sport—and I will go!*

Viola vacillates, troubled that her courtship of the countess on behalf of Duke Orsino is failing, but pleased that—despite her best efforts—he remains free to find happiness with another.

As she—or, rather, Cesario—walks up the hill from Olivia’s mansion, he is hailed by Malvolio.

The steward, dabbing his forehead with a kerchief after the brief trot in pursuit, knows very well whom he has stopped; still, he asks—with rude abruptness, “Were not you with the Countess Olivia?”

“Even now, sir; on a moderate pace I have since arrived but hither.”

“She *returns* this ring to you, sir! You might have saved me my pains by taking it away *yourself*,” complains Malvolio haughtily. “She *adds*, moreover, that you should put your lord into a desperate assurance she will *none* of him!

“And one thing *more*—that you be never so hardy as to come *again* on his affairs, unless it be to report your lord’s taking of this.” He holds out the ring, disdainfully. “Receive it so.”

Viola is puzzled. “She took no ring of me; I’ll none of it.”

Malvolio will waste no more time on a trivial errand. “Come, sir, you peevishly threw it to her, and her will is it should be so returned!” But he is servant; he drops the ring to the ground. “If it be worth stooping for, there it lies in your eye; if not, be it his that finds it!” And with that he returns forthwith to the mansion.

Cesario picks up the shiny token. *I left no ring with her! What means this lady?*

An unwelcome idea rises: *Fortune forbid that my outside has charmed her! She made good view of me—indeed, so much methought that surely her eyes had lost her tongue, for she did speak in starts, distractedly!*

She loves me, for sure! The cunning of her passion invites me by this churlish messenger! None of my lord’s ring—why, he sent her none! I am the man!

If it be so—as ‘tis!—poor lady, she were better to love a dream!

Disguise, I see thou art a wickedness wherein the fecund Enemy does much! How easy is it for thee, properly false, in women’s hearts to set thy waxen form! Alas, our frailty is the cause, not we—for such as we are made of, such we be!

How will this match? My master loves her dearly; and I, poor mixture, am fond as much of him; and she, mistaken, seems to dote on me! What will come of this?

As I am man, my state must despair of my master’s love; as I am woman—now alas the day!—what shiftless sighs shall poor Olivia breathe!

O Time, thou must untangle this, not I; ‘tis too hard a knot for me to untie!

Through mullioned windows, shafts of pale moonlight pattern the long corridor floor, as Sir Toby clomps clumsily, trailed by Sir Andrew, through Olivia’s stately home after a long evening spent with much wine at Orsino’s.

“*Approach*, Sir Andrew,” says the knight of the house, lighting a lamp. “After midnight, not to be a-bed is to be *up betimes!*—and *diluculo surgere*, thou know’st!”

The Latin grammar’s maxim that lauds early rising eludes old Andrew; and he’s tired. “Nay, by my troth, I know not; but I know to be up late is to be *up late.*”

“A false conclusion!—I hate it as an *unfilled can!*” cries Toby, who has drained several tankards. He is exuberant, ready to bolster the argument. “Does not our life consist of the four elements?”

“Faith, so they say; but I think it rather consists of eating and drinking.”

“Thou’rt a *scholar!*” cries Sir Toby, heartily commending the more-germane assessment. “Let us therefore eat and *drink!*”

“*Marian*, I say!” he calls, “*a stoup of wine!*”

Feste, too, keeps late hours. “Here comes the fool, i’ faith,” says Sir Andrew.

Just back from the duke’s palace himself, Feste joins the sodden pair. “How now, my hearts! Did you ever see the picture of ‘We Three’?” The innkeeper’s sign shows two long-eared brown asses—the viewer becoming a third.

Sir Toby nods and laughs. “*Welcome*, ass! Now let’s have a *catch!*”

Sir Andrew seconds: “By my troth, the fool has an excellent voice! I had rather than *forty shillings* I had such a leg, and so sweet a breath to sing, as the fool has!

“In sooth, thou wast in very precious fooling tonight,” he tells Feste, “when thou spokest of Pigrogromitus of the Vapians passing the equinoctial of Queubus! ’Twas very good, i’ faith!” he says, of the clown’s specious, satirical citations. “I sent thee sixpence for thy leman; hadst it?”

Andrew’s paltry reward was for the woman in the Orsino household whom Feste hopes to marry.

“I did *impetico* thy gratillity,” says the clown grandly. “For Malvolio’s nose is no whipstock, my lady has a white hand, and the Myrmidons’ are no *bottle-ale* houses!”—a fluently flippant reply: *I gave your gratuity to the petticoat; the prying major-domo is powerless; Olivia is gracious; and you valiant knights consume by the flagon!*

“Excellent!” cries Andrew. “Why, this is the *best* fooling, when all is done! Now, a *song!*”

“Come on, there is sixpence for you,” Sir Toby tells the clown, handing him money. “Let’s have a song!”

“There’s a testril of me, too,” says Andrew; “if one might give away so much!” The little coin’s name reminds him of *testicle*.

Feste regards Olivia’s graying would-be suitor. “Would you have a love song—or a song of *good life?*”

“A love song, a love song!” cries Sir Toby.

“Aye, aye,” nods Sir Andrew. “I care not about good life.”

Feste entertains them with a ballad:

“*O mistress mine, where are you roaming?
Oh, stay and hear: your true love’s coming,
That can ‘sing’ both high and low!
Trip no further, pretty sweetening;
Journeys end in lovers’ meeting,
Every wise man’s son doth know!*”

“Excellent good, i’ faith!” says Andrew.

Toby nods. “Good, good.”

“*What is love? ’Tis not hereafter—
Present mirth hath present laughter!
What’s to come is still unsure—
In delay there lies no plenty!
Then come kiss me, sweet-and-twenty!
Youth’s a stuff will not endure!*”

“A *mellifluous* voice, as I am true knight,” sighs Andrew.

“A *contagious* breath!” says Toby, moved to sing.

Andrew nods. “Very sweet and contagious, i’ faith.”

But Toby craves the boisterous. “Hearing but *his* voice, it *is* dulcet in contagion. But shall we make the welkin dance indeed?”—stir up the firmament. “Shall we rouse the *night-owl* in a catch that will draw *three souls* out of one *weaver?* Shall we *do* that?”

Sir Andrew is enthusiastic: “An you love me, let’s *do it!* I am a *dog* at a catch!”

The clown laughs at the boast. “By’r lady, sir!—*some dogs will catch well!*”

Sir Andrew nods. “Most certain! Let our catch be ‘Thou Knave!’”

Feste sings, “*Hold thy peace—*” He stops. “‘Thou Knave,’ knight? I shall be constrained in’t to call *thee* knave, knight,” he cautions, given the song’s lyric.

Sir Andrew is unconcerned. “’Tis not the first time I have constrained one to call me knave. *Begin, Fool!* It begins, ‘Hold thy peace—’”

“I shall never begin if I hold my peace!”

Sir Andrew chuckles. “*Good, i’ faith! Come, begin!*”

The fool sings, and the knights howl along—occasionally in time, seldom in tune.

But then Mary bursts into the room from the corridor, a thick brown robe covering her night clothes. “What a *caterwauling* do you keep here!” she cries. “If my lady have not called up her steward, Malvolio, and bid him *turn you out of doors*, never trust me!”

Sir Toby does not falter. “*Malvolio’s a ‘Peg-a-Ramsey’*”—a dildo, the song’s title suggests. “My lady’s a *captain*; we her *politicians*! And ‘*Three merry men be we!*’” he sings. “Am not I *consanguineous?*—am I not of her *blood?*” he demands. “*Tillyvally!*” he cries, snapping his fingers to settle the matter.

The word *lady* has inspired him; he sings—loudly: “‘*There dwelt a man in Babylon, lady, lady....*’”

The clown shakes his head, grinning. “Beshrew me, the *knight’s* in admirable fooling!”

“Aye, he does well enough if he be so disposed; and so do I too!” says Andrew. “He does it with a better grace, but I do it more natural.”

Sir Toby sings, “‘*On the twelfth day of December—*’”

“For the love o’ God, *peace!*” cries Mary—just as Malvolio arrives.

“My masters, are you *mad?*” he yells, halting Toby’s tune. “Or what *are* you? Have ye no *wit*, manners nor honesty, but to jabber like *tinkers* at this time of night?” The steward glares fiercely at the knights. “Do ye make an *alehouse* of my lady’s house, that ye squeak out your cobblers’ catches without any mitigation or remorse of voice? Is there no respect of place, persons, nor *time* in you?”

“We did *keep* time, sir, in our *catches*,” counters Toby. “*Sneck up!*”

Despite his anger over the nocturnal commotion, Malvolio is relishing the moment. “Sir Toby, I must be *round* with you! My lady bade me tell you that, though she harbours you as her kinsman, she’s nothing allied to your *disorders*! If you can separate yourself and your *misdemeanors*, you are welcome to the house; if not, an it would please you to take *leave* of her, she is very willing to *bid you farewell!*”

Sir Toby sings out, “‘*Farewell, dear heart, since I must needs be gone!*’”

Mary tries to intervene: “Nay, good Sir Toby!—”

Sings the clown, “‘*His eyes do show his days are almost done!*’”

Malvolio is disgusted. “Is’t even so?”

Sir Toby wails, “‘*But I will never die!*’”

“*Sir Toby, there you lie,*” sings the clown.

Malvolio’s sarcasm is bitter. “This is *much* credit to you!” he tells Toby.

“‘*Shall I bid him go?*’” sings Toby.

“*What an if you do?*” the jester replies.

“‘*Shall I bid him go!*’—and spare not?”

“*Oh, no, no, no; no, you dare not!*”

Sir Toby challenges Malvolio. “*Out o’ tune*, sir, ye lie!

“Art any more than a *steward*? Dost thou think because *thou* art virtuous there shall be no more *cakes* and *ale*?”

Adds Feste, “Yes, by Saint Anne! And, too, that *ginger*”—fare for children—“shall be i’ the mouth?”

Toby enjoys the support. “Thou’rt i’ the right!” He tells the strict steward, “*Go*, sir!—*rub your beard with crumbs!* A stoup of *wine*, Maria!”

Malvolio glares, and turns to her, staring sternly down his nose. “Mistress Mary, if you prized my lady’s favour at anything more than *contempt*, you would not give *means* for this uncivil rule! She shall *know* of it, by this hand!” He stalks away angrily.

“*Go shake your ears!*” she calls after him, annoyed that he assumes she has encouraged the clamor.

“’Twere as good a deed as *drink* when the man’s a-*hungry!*”—too weak; Andrew demands greater retaliation—in his own fashion. “*Challenge him to the field,*”—to a duel, “and then do *break promise* with him, and make a *fool* of him!”

Toby is delighted. “*Do it, knight!* I’ll write thee a challenge!” But—having difficulty just now even staying upright—he revises the offer: “Or I’ll deliver thy indignation to him by word of mouth.”

“Sweet Sir Toby, be *patient* for tonight!” says Mary. “Since that youth of the *duke’s* was today with thy lady, she is much out of quiet!

“As for Monsieur Malvolio, let *me* alone with him! If I do not gull him into being *wayward*, and make him a common *recreation*, do not think I have wit enough to lie straight in my bed! I know I can do it!”

Toby wants details. “Possess us, possess us; tell us something of this!”

“Marry, sir, sometimes he is a kind of *puritan*—”

“Oh, if I thought *that* I’d beat him like a dog!” claims Andrew, growing bolder the longer Malvolio is gone.

“What, for being a puritan?” asks Toby. “Thy exquisite reason, dear knight?”

Andrew blinks, stumped—as he would be, this drunk, even if he’d heard *explicit*. “I have no *exquisite* reason for’t, but I have reason good enough,” he says doggedly.

Mary has a scheme. “The *devil!* A puritan, that he is, if anything!—constantly but a time-pleaser; an affectioned ass that studies speaking without book,”—practices to sound unrehearsed, “then utters it by great swarths! Though best persuaded by *himself*—so crammed, as he thinks, with *excellencies*—it is his ground of faith that all who look on him *love* him!

“And on *that* vice in him will my revenge find notable cause to work!”

Sir Toby rubs his hands together, smiling in anticipation. “What wilt thou do?”

“I will drop in his way some obscure”—anonymous—“*epistles of love*, wherein—by the colour of his beard, the shape of his leg, the manner of his gait, the expreasure of his eye, forehead, and complexion—he shall find himself most *feelingly* personated!

“I can write very like my lady your niece; on a forgotten matter we can hardly make distinction of our hands—”

“*Excellent!*” Sir Toby is gleeful. “I smell the device!”

“I have’t in my nose too!” says Sir Andrew.

Toby lifts a forefinger and reveals his deduction: “He shall think, by the letters that thou wilt drop, that they come from my *niece*—and that she’s in love with him!”

Says Mary dryly, “My purpose is indeed a horse of that colour”—that obvious.

“And your *horse*, now, would make him an *ass!*” laughs Andrew.

Mary nods. “Ass, I doubt it not!”

Andrew, oblivious to the dig, is delighted with the plot. “Oh, ’twill be *admirable!*”

“Sport *royal*, I warrant you!” she assures the knights. “I know my *physic*”—medicine—“will work with him! I will plant you two—and let the fool make a third—where he shall find the letter! Observe his construing of it.

“As for *this* night, to *bed*, and dream on the event,” says Mary, heading toward her room. “Farewell!”

“Good night, Penthesilea!” says Sir Toby—styling the plump, gray-wisped gentlewoman as the Amazons’ queen.

Sir Andrew, too, admires her panache. “Before me, she’s a good wench!”

“She’s a beagle, true-bred,”—Toby’s highest compliment, “and one that adores me!” Still, he adds, casually, “But what o’ that?”

Sir Andrew again turns melancholy. “*I* was adored once, too.”

“Let’s to bed, knight.” He clasps the slender man around the shoulders encouragingly. “Thou hadst need send for more money.”

Sir Andrew has been worried about that. "If I cannot recover your niece, I am a foul way out."

"Send for *money*, knight! If thou hast her not i' the end, call me *cut!*"—a lewd term for female.

Valorous Sir Andrew nods. "If I do *not*, never trust me!—take it how you will!"

"Come, come, I'll burn some *sack!*—'tis too late to go to bed now," Toby decides.

"Come, knight!" he says, as they stumble off for the kitchen, and white wine, heated and spiced—the cure for every concern. "Come, knight!"

After his long day of performing in two households, Feste pads off, cap-bells jingling, to get some sleep.

Chapter Five Labors of Love

Orsino is in a thoughtful mood. "Give me some music," he tells the lutenist, as courtiers begin to assemble this morning.

"Good morrow, friends," says the duke, passing among the gathering lords and guests.

He approaches the attractive young newcomer. "Know, good Cesario, the peace of but a *song*—that old, antique song we heard last night. Methought it did *relieve* my passion—much more than light airs and recollected terms of *these* most brisk and giddy-pacèd times.

"Come," he urges the musician, "but one verse."

"He is not here, so please Your Lordship, that could sing it," Curio reports.

"Who was it?"

"Feste, the jester, my lord—the fool Lady Olivia's father took much delight in. He is about the house...."

"Seek him out; and play the tune the while." Curio bows, and goes to find the singer.

The soft music flows, and the courtiers converse quietly. "Come hither, boy," Duke Orsino tells Cesario, taking him aside. "If ever thou shalt *love*, in the sweet pangs of it remember *me*; for such as I am, all true lovers are—unstaid and skittish in all motions else, save in the constant image of the creature that is beloved!

"How dost thou like this tune?"

Cesario, newly susceptible to the effects of romance, smiles. "It gives a very *echo* from the seat where love is thronèd!"—the heart, he replies; and Viola's cheeks glow.

"Thou dost speak masterly," says the duke. He notes the response. "My life upon 't—young though thou art, thine eye hath stayed upon some favour that it *loves!* Hath it *not*, boy?"

"A little, by your favour...."

"What kind of woman is 't?"

"Of your complexion."

The duke laughs. "She is not worth thee, then! What years, i' faith?"

"About your years, my lord."

"*Too old*, by heaven! Let ever the *woman* take one older than herself: so wears she to *him*; so stays she level with her husband's heart. For, boy, however we do praise ourselves, *our* fancies are more giddy and unfirm, more longing, wavering—sooner worn and lost than women's are."

In this instance, Viola hopes so. "I think it well, my lord."

"Then let thy love be *younger* than thyself, or thy affection cannot hold thy *bent*"—resist urges to seek elsewhere. "For women are as roses whose fair flower, being once displayed, doth fall that very hour."

"If so they are," says the youth, "*alas* that they are so!—to die even when they to perfection grow"—attain full maturity.

Curio returns, bringing Feste.

Duke Orsino welcomes the fool. “Oh, fellow, come!—the *song* we had last night!

“*Mark* it, Cesario! It is old and plain; the spinsters and the knitters in the sun, and the free maids that weave their thread with bone do use to chant it.” But Viola thinks of *three* maids: the Fates, spinning, measuring, and cutting the thread of life.

“It is simple sooth,” says the duke, “and dallies with the *innocence* of love—like the old in their age.”

“Are you ready, sir?” asks the clown.

“Aye; prithee sing!”

The lutenist accompanies Feste’s song:

*“Come away, come hither, Death,
And in a sad casket let me be laid;
Fly away, fly away breath—
I am slain by a fair, cruel maid!
My shroud of white, stuck all with yew, go prepare it;
My part of death, no one so true as did share it.
Not a flower, not one flower sweet,
On my black coffin let there be strewn;
Not a friend, not a friend greet
My poor stone where my bones shall be thrown!
A thousand thousand sighs to save, oh lay me where
Sad, true lovers never find my grave to weep there!”*

Duke Orsino gives Feste a gold coin. “There’s for thy pains.”

“No pains, sir,” says the jester, not wanting to be dismissed with only one tip. “I take *pleasure* in singing, sir.”

“I pay thy pleasure, then.”

“Truly, sir—and pleasure *will* be paid for, one time or another.”

Orsino waves him away. “Give me now leave to leave thee.”

“Now the *mercurial* god protect thee, and the tailor make *thy* doublet of changeable taffeta!—for thy mind is a very *opal*! I would have men of such constancy put to *sea*, so that their business might be *everything* and their intent *everywhere*—for that always makes a good voyage of *nothing*.” Feste bows as he leaves. “Farewell.”

Orsino has private matters to discuss. “Let all the rest give place,” he tells the courtiers, who go out and stroll down into the garden.

Alone with Cesario, the duke speaks urgently. “Once more, Cesario, get thee to yond same sovereign cruelty! Tell her my love, more noble than this world’s, prizes not the quantity of dirty *lands*!—parts that *Fortune* hath bestowed upon her, tell her, I hold as *giddily* as Fortune does!

“But ’tis that miracle and queen of gems that *Nature* ranks in her which attracts my soul!”

Orsino, Viola can see, takes it for granted Olivia’s heart will be his, and that she need only be persuaded he’s sincere. “But if *she* cannot love *you*, sir?” asks Cesario.

“I cannot be so answered.”

“Sooth, but you *must*! Say that some lady, as perhaps there *is*, hath for *your* love as great a pang of heart as you have for Olivia’s. You cannot love her; you *tell* her so—must *she* not then be answered?”

Orsino scoffs. “There is no *woman* whose sides can abide the beating of so strong a passion as love doth give *my* heart!—no woman’s heart so big as to *hold* so much! They lack *retention*: alas, *their* love may be called *appetite*—no motion of the *pith*, only the palate, that suffers surfeit, cloyment and revolt.

“But *mine* is all as hungry as the *sea*!—and can digest as much!” he claims. “Make no compare between that love a woman can bear me and that which I owe Olivia!”

“Aye, but I know—“

“*What dost thou know?*” demands the duke of young Cesario.

“—too *well* what love women to men may owe! In faith, they are as true of heart as we!”

She looks down sadly. “My father had a daughter who loved a man—as it might be, perhaps, were I a *woman*, that I should Your Lordship....”

“And what’s her history?”

“A *blank*, my lord. She never *told* her love, but let concealment, like a worm in the bud, feed on her damask cheek. She pined in *thought*, and with a green and yellow melancholy she sat like Patience on a monument, *smiling* at grief. Was not that love indeed?”

“We men may *say* more, *swear* more—but in deed our *shows* are more than our will: for we ever prove to be much in our *vows*, but little in our love.”

“But *died* thy sister of her love, my boy?”

The shipwrecked twin’s smile is bittersweet. “Of the daughter of my father’s house—and of her brother, too—as yet I know not.”

Pulling on gloves in resignation, she asks, “Sir, shall I go to this lady?”

Duke Orsino is eager for progress. “*Aye*, that’s the theme! *To her* in haste!—give her this jewel! Say my love can give no place, abide no deny!”

Cesario bows.

And so, with a burdened heart, Viola sets off to woo a woman for the man she loves.

Chapter Six Jovial Revelations

C ountess Olivia’s quiet garden, facing into the orchard, is formal and orderly; its elegant arbors and the rows of carefully tended shrubs, vines and blooms have been skillfully arranged to encourage visitors’ reflection, to nurture meditation.

But today, mischief flourishes here.

“Come thy ways, Signior Fabian,” Sir Toby tells one of the lady’s household servants—one who works for Malvolio.

“*Aye*, I’ll come!” says Fabian merrily. “If I lose a *bit* of *this* sport, let me be boiled to death with melancholy!”

“Wouldst thou not be glad to have the niggardly, rascally sheep-biter come by some notable shame?”

“I would *exult*, man!” cries Fabian. “You know he brought me out o’ favour with my lady about a bear-baiting here.”

“To anger him we’ll have a ‘bear’ *again!*” promises Toby, “and we will fool him *black and blue!* Shall we not, Sir Andrew?”

“An we do not, it is pity of our lives!” says the tall old knight.

Toby nods toward an arbor, as Mary hurries toward them from the house. “Here comes the little villain!”

“How now, my metal of India!”—brazen one.

“Get ye all three into the box-tree! Malvolio’s coming down this walk,” she tells them, and they conceal themselves behind a high, thick hedge of square-trimmed evergreen. “He has been yonder i’ the sun, practising behavior to his own shadow this half hour.

“*Observe* him, for the love of mockery!—for I know this letter will make a *contemplative idiot* of him!” She motions for them to duck down. “*Close*, in the name of jesting!”

Mary drops a sealed letter onto the stone walk. “*Lie* thou there!—for here comes a trout that must be caught with *tricking!*” She steals away through a trellised bower, and returns to the house.

Malvolio sometimes resorts to pacing in the garden as a respite from the impertinent household servants who pester him with questions and requests. Here, the priggish popinjay can

prepare for confrontations, by posturing while practicing his ready speeches, sharpened with cutting phrases. He savors the sound of his disdainful delivery—intended, partly, to impress Olivia.

He stops, thinking of her. "'Tis but Fortune; all is *Fortune!*

"Mary once told me she *did* affect me!—and I have heard herself come thus near: that, *should* she fancy, it should be one of my complexion!" The lady had meant, dryly, *male*.

"Further, she uses *me* with a more exalted respect than any one else that follows her. What should I think of't?"

- Behind the shrubs, the listeners are attentive. "Here's an overweening rogue!" says Toby, keeping his voice low.

- "Oh, *peace!*" whispers Fabian. "Contemplation makes a rare turkey-cock of him! How he jets under his advanced plumes!"

- "'Slight, I could so *beat* the rogue!" says Andrew.

- Sir Toby hushes the others: "Peace, I say..."

Malvolio, gazing out at the fruit trees, revisits a fond notion: "To be *Count* Malvolio!"

- "*Ah, rogue!*" mutters Toby.

- "*Pistol* him, *pistol* him!" says Andrew.

- "Peace, peace!" Toby tells him.

"There is *example* for it: the Lady of the Strachy married the yeoman of the wardrobe," Malvolio recalls. He had eagerly accepted as *news* an overheard tale from Feste's stock of ribald lyrics: how a lady whose key had strayed coupled in her closet with an unfaltering gent.

- "*Fie* on him, *Jezebel!*" chuckles Toby.

- "Oh, *peace!*" says Fabian. "Now he's *deeply* in—look how imagination blows him!"

Malvolio struts as his pleasant fantasy flows. "Having been three months married to her, sitting in my *state*—"

- "Oh, for a *stone*-bow, to hit him in the eye!" says Toby.

"—calling my officers about me, in my branchèd-velvet gown, having come from a day-bed, where I have left Olivia sleeping—"

- "*Fire and brimstone!*" gasps Toby.

- "Oh, *peace, peace!*" insists Fabian.

Malvolio continues: "—then, in the demeanor of state, after a demure travel of regard"—a contemptuous glance over the servants, "and telling them I know my *place*—as I would they should do *theirs*—to ask for my *kinsman* Toby."

- "*Bolts and shackles!*" sputters that knight.

- Fabian restrains Sir Toby, who seems about to rise. "Oh peace, peace, *peace!* Now, now..."

"With an obedient start, seven of my people, make off for him," says Malvolio, savoring his conception. "I frown the while; and perchance wind up my watch, or play with my— some rich jewel.

"Toby approaches; curtsies there to me. "

- The knight is fulminating. "Shall this fellow *live?*"

- Fabian seizes his sleeve. "Though our silence be *driven* from us by *wildcats*, yet *peace!*"

Malvolio, in his triumph, is gracious but dignified as he patronizes: "I extend my hand to him thus, quenching my familiar smile with an austere regard of *control*,—"

- "And does not Toby give you a *blow upon the lips* then?" wheezes the knight.

"—saying, 'Cousin Toby, my fortunes, having cast me on your niece, give me this prerogative of speech...'"

- "What, *what?*" Toby strains forward.

"You must *amend* your *drunkenness!*" says Malvolio.

- "*Out, scab!*" chokes the incensed knight.

- "*Nay, patience,*" pleads Fabian, "or we break the sinews of our *plot!*"

Malvolio adds: "'Besides, you waste the treasure of your time with a foolish knight—'"

- “That’s *me*, I warrant you,” says Andrew.
 “—one Sir Andrew.”

- Andrew nods. “I knew ’twas I, for many do call me fool.”
 Malvolio spots the letter. “What business have we here?” He picks it up.

- “Now is the woodcock near the trap,” says Fabian.
 - “Oh, *peace*,” whispers Sir Toby. “And may the spirit of Humour suggest *reading aloud* to him!”

Malvolio examines the back of the folded missive: “To the unknowing beloved, this and my good wishes’—her very phrases! *Soft!*—and the impressure is her Lucrece,”—the image, atop a signet ring, of a fabled suicide, “which she uses to seal! ’Tis *my lady’s!* By your leave, wax!” He breaks the seal.

“To whom should this be?”
 - “This wins him, liver and all!” crows Fabian—quietly.
 “By my life, this *is* my lady’s hand!—these be her very C’s, her U’s and her T’s—and thus makes she her great P’s,” says Malvolio. “It is, in contempt of question, *in her hand!*”
 - Tears stream down earthy Toby’s red cheeks as he quakes, struggling to contain a fit of laughter.
 - “Her C’s, her U’s and her T’s—why that?” asks Sir Andrew. Fabian waves away the questioning without mention of what *cut* can mean—or *pees*.
 Malvolio reads: “‘Jove knows I *love!* But *whom?* Lips, do not *move!*—no man must know!’
 “‘No man must know!’ What follows from that? ‘No *man* must know....’” A hope grips him: “If this should be *thee*, Malvolio!”
 - Toby nods furiously. “Marry, *hang thee, brach!*”—bitch.
 Malvolio reads the rhyme: “‘I may command where I adore; but silence, like a Lucrece knife with *bloodless* stroke, my heart doth gore! M.O.A.I. doth sway my life!’”
 - “A fustian *riddle!*” whispers Fabian.
 - Toby, too, is impressed with Mary’s work. “*Excellent* wench, say I!”
 Malvolio ponders. “‘M.O.A.I. doth sway my life!’ Nay, but first, let me see, let me see, let me see....”
 - Fabian laughs. “What a dish o’ *poison* has she garnished for him!”
 - “And with what wings the falcon *flies* at it!” observes Toby.
 Malvolio reads again: “‘I may *command* where I *adore.*’ Why, she may command *me!*—I serve her; she is my lady! Why, this is evident to *any* form of capacity; there is no obstruction in *this!* But the *end*—what should that alphabetical positioning portend? If I could make that resemble something in *me!* Soft... M, O, A, I—”
 - “Oh, aye!—make up *that,*” mumbles Toby. “He is now at a cold scent.”
 - “For all that, Sowter”—a hound’s name—“*will* cry upon’t as though it be as rank as a *fox!*” says Fabian.
 “*M—Malvolio!* *M*—why, that begins *my* name!”
 - “Did not I say he would work it out?” laughs Fabian. “The cur is excellent at *vaulting!*”
 “*M.* But then there is no consonance in the sequel; that suffers under probation. *A* should follow, but *O* does.”
 - “And *Oh!* shall *end*, I hope!” says Fabian.
 - Toby shakes his head. “‘*I!*’” he argues, “for *I* will cudgel him and make him *cry* ‘Oh!’”
 Malvolio thinks. “And then *I* comes behind....”
 - “*Aye?*—if you had any *eye* *behind* you, you might see more *detraction* at your heels than fortunes *before* you!” murmurs Fabian.
 Malvolio continues trying to explicate. “M, O, A, I; this simulation is not as the form—and yet, to crush this a *little*, it *would* bow to me, for every one of these letters is in my name!” The gentlewoman’s capital whimsy—*Mary only am I*—is serving its purpose in her prank.
 “Soft.... Here follows prose.” He reads: “‘If this fall into thy hand, *resolve!*”

“By my stars, I am above thee,”—of a higher station by birth, “but be not afraid of greatness! Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon ’em!

“*Thy Fates open their hands!*—let thy blood and spirit *clasp* them!

“And, to ensure thyself of what thou art *likely* to be, cast off thy *humble* slough and appear *brash!*—be *opposite* with a kinsman, *surlly* with servants!—let thy tongue *tang* in arguments of *state!* Put thyself into the trick of *singularity!*

“She thus advises thee that *sighs* for thee! Remember who commended thy yellow stockings, and wished to see thee *ever* cross-gartered? I say, *remember!*

“Go to it; thou art *made*, if thou desirest to be so! If *not*, let me see thee as *steward* still—the fellow of *servants*, and not worthy to touch Fortune’s *fingers!*

“Fare well!

“She that would switch services with thee,”—become his servant, “The Fortunate Unhappy.”

Malvolio has deciphered the letter. “*Daylight* in a *field* reveals not more!—this is *open!*” he concludes.

And now, ready to receive the rewards of his destiny, the steward stands resolute. “I will be *proud!*” he vows: “I will read *politic* authors! I will *baffle* Sir Toby!”—suspend him by the heels. “I will wash off gross acquaintance!—I will be point-devise *the very man!*”

Malvolio confirms his own conclusion: “I do not now fool myself, nor let imagination jade me; for every *reason* excites to *this*: that my lady *loves* me! She *did* commend my yellow stockings of late—she *did* praise my legs’ being cross-gartered.” He taps the letter. “And in this she *manifests* herself to my love!—and with a kind injunction, drives me to these habits of her liking!

“I thank my stars I am so lucky!

“I *will* be different—starting with yellow *stockings*—and *cross-gartered*, even with the swiftness of *putting-on!* Jove and my stars be *praised!*”

He looks happily down the list. “Here is yet a postscript.” He reads: “Thou canst not choose but know who I am! If thou entertainest my love, let it appear in thy *smiling!* Thy smiles become thee *well*; therefore in my presence ever *smile*, dear my sweet, I prithee!”

“*O Jove, I thank thee!*” cries Malvolio, clasping the letter over his heart. “I *will* smile!—I will do *everything* that thou wilt have me!” He bolts into the house—where he soon finds those yellow stockings.

The rascals emerge from the bush, their sides sore from suppressing laughter.

“I will not give *my part* of this sport,” says Fabian, “for a pension of *thousands* to be paid from the Sophy!”—the emperor of Persia.

Sir Toby has new respect for the ingenious Mary. “I could *marry* this wench for this device!”

“So could *I* too!” says Sir Andrew.

“And ask no other dowry of her but such another jest!”

“Nor I neither!”

Fabian points toward the house. “Here comes my noble gull-catcher!” Mary has seen Malvolio rushing toward his room.

“Wilt thou set thy foot o’ my neck?” asks Sir Toby, kneeling and bowing his head deeply, in acknowledgment of her victory, as she joins them.

“Or o’ mine either?” asks Andrew.

“Shall I toss my *freedom* with the dice, and become thy *bond-slave?*” asks Toby.

“I’ faith, or I either?” asks Andrew

Toby shakes, laughing again. “Why, thou hast put him in such a *dream* that, when the image of it leaves him, he must *run mad!*”

Mary enjoys the admiration, but craves a report: “Nay, but say true—does it work upon him?”

“Like *aqua-vitae*—spirituous liquor—“with a *midwife!*”

Mary now delivers: “If you will then see the *fruits* of the sport, mark his first approach before my lady! He will come to her in yellow stockings—and ’tis a colour she *abhors!*—and cross-gartered—a fashion she *detests!*” Kind-hearted Olivia, amused by the infelicity of the awkward steward’s dress, had indeed smiled at him—commenting, with a wryly raised eyebrow, in the hope that he would reform it.

Mary laughs. “And he will *smile* upon her—which will now be so unsuitable to her disposition, being addicted to a melancholy as she is, that it cannot but turn him unto a notable *contempt!*”

“If you will see it, follow me!”

“To the gates of *Hell*, thou most excellent devil of *wit!*” pledges Sir Toby.

“*I’ll* come along, too!” says his follower.

Chapter Seven Garden Encounters

Cesario has returned to Olivia’s home, and has been shown into the garden. As the young nobleman waits to speak with her, Feste passes, his tabour hanging at his side, pipe in hand.

“Save thee, friend, and thy music,” says disguised Viola amiably. “Dost thou live by thy tabour?”

The jester pauses. “No, sir, I live by the church.”

She is surprised; he’s wearing motley. “Art *thou* a churchman?”

“No such matter, sir! But I *do* live by the church—for I do live at my house, and my house doth stand by the church.”

Cesario laughs. “*So* thou mayst say the *king* lies beside a *beggar*, if a beggar dwell near him!—or the Church stands *by thy taper*, if thy taper stand near a church!”

The clown smiles. “You have *said*, sir!” But he shakes his head in mock dismay. “To see this age!—a sentence is but a cheveril glove to a good wit! How quickly the wrong side may be turned outward!”

“Aye, that’s certain,” says Cesario. “They that dally cleverly with words may quickly make them wanton.”

“I would, therefore, my sister had had no *name*, sir.”

“Why, man?”

“Why, sir, her name’s a *word*—and to dally with that word might make my *sister* wanton! But indeed, words are very rascals since bonds”—promises—“*disgraced* them.”

“Thy reasoning, man?”

But Feste spreads his arms in seeming frustration. “Troth, sir, I can yield you none without *words*—and words are grown so *false* I am loath to bring Reason to trial with them!”

Cesario smiles. “I warrant thou art a merry fellow, and carest about nothing!”

“Not *so*, sir,” says Feste, prickly by profession. “I do care for *something*; but in my conscience, sir, I do not care for *you!* If I *did* care about nothing, sir, I would make *you invisible.*”

Cesario laughs again. “Art not thou the Lady Olivia’s fool?”

“No indeed, sir! The Lady Olivia *has* no folly; she will keep no fool, sir—till she be *married.* And *fools* are like *husbands* as sardines are to herrings: the husband’s the *bigger!*”

“I am in deed not her fool, but her corrupter of words.”

“I saw thee of late at the Duke Orsino’s,” notes Cesario.

“Foolery, sir, does not walk about this orb like the sun—it shines *everywhere!* It would be a sorry state if the fool were not as oft with your master as with my mistress!” He looks at the youth. “I think I saw Your Wisdom there—”

Cesario raises a palm, anticipating a gibe. “Nay, an thou pass upon *me* I’ll *no more* with thee!” he chuckles. “Hold,” he says, untying a purse and giving the jester a coin, “there’s ‘expenses’ for thee.”

“Now may Jove, in his next commodity of hair, send thee a *beard!*” the fool tells the somewhat effeminate young nobleman, bowing gratefully.

“By my troth, I’ll tell thee I am almost *sick* for one!” confesses Viola—picturing Orsino’s. *Though I would not have it grow on my chin!* she thinks. “Is thy lady within?”

Feste lifts his hand, sliding the coin between thumb and forefinger. “Would not a *pair* of these have *bred*, sir?”

“Yes, being kept *together*,”—one not given away, she says dryly, “and put to *use*”—loaned at interest.

“I would play Lord Pandarus of Phrygia, sir, to bring a Cressida to this Troilus!”

She knows of the legendary panderer and the Trojan lovers. “I understand you, sir; ’tis well begged,” says she, fishing in the pouch for another coin.

“The matter I hope for is not *great*, sir, begging but a *beggar*: Cressida was a beggar.” He pockets both coins. “My lady is within, sir. I will construe to them whence you come; who you *are*, and what you *would* are out of my welkin—I might say ‘element,’ but the word is over-worn.” He proceeds into the house.

Thinks Viola, *This fellow is wise enough to play the fool! And to do that well craves a kind of wit: he must observe their mood on whom he jests, the quality of persons, and the time—and, like the hawk, check on every feather that comes before his eye!*

Feste must, she knows, appraise each courtier and his mood—and the potential for a tip.

This is a practise as full of labour as a wise man’s art, for the folly that he shows is wisely fit! She thinks of the infatuated duke. *But wise men, into folly fall’n, quite taint their wit....*

The countess is so eager to see Cesario that she has permitted Sir Toby and Sir Andrew to go to the door for him. “Save you, gentleman,” says Toby.

“And you, sir.”

Andrew pronounces, haughtily, a French phrase. “*Dieu vous garde, monsieur!*”—God protect you.

“*Et vous aussi*”—and you as well. Cesario bows. “*Votre serviteur*”—your servant.

“I hope, sir, you *are*,” says the jealous knight. But, seeing a flicker of frown, he hastily adds, “And I am yours.”

“Will you encounter the housh?” asks tipsy Toby. “My niece is desirous you should enter, if *your* trade be to her.”

Cesario nods. “I am bound to your niece, sir.” He amends, to avoid misunderstanding: “I mean, she is the aim of my voyage.”

Mumbles Toby, “Test your legs, sir: put them to *motion*.”

The emissary is affronted. “My legs do better understand me, sir,”—a play on *stand under*, “than I understand what you mean by bidding me *test* my legs.”

Toby blinks and frowns. “I mean, to *go*, sir—to *enter*.”

Cesario strides past him. “I will answer you by *gait* at *entrance*,” he says, playing on *entrance gate*. He sees the countess, who has been unable to wait any longer. “But we are prevented....”

Olivia and Mary join the men.

Says Cesario, with a glance at the drunken gentlemen, “Most excellent, accomplished lady, may the heavens rain *order* upon you.”

Sir Andrew eyes the rival malevolently. *That youth’s a rare courter! ‘Rain ordure!’—well!*

Cesario tells Olivia, “My matter hath no voice, lady, but to your *own* most regnant and vouchsafèd ear....”

Andrew intends to retort. *‘Ordure!’ ‘Pregnant’ and ‘much-chafèd!’—I’ll get ’em all three ready!*

But Olivia, too, wants privacy. “Let the garden door be shut, and leave me to my hearing.” Mary curtsies and leads the knights back into the house, closing the door behind them.

“Give me your hand, sir.” Olivia draws Cesario into the arbor.

He bows. “My duty, madam, and most humble service.”

“What is your *name*?”

“Cesario is your servant’s name, fair princess.”

“My servant, sir? ’Twas never a merry world since lowly *feigning* was called *compliment*! You’re servant to the Duke Orsino, youth.”

“And he is *yours*, and his must needs be yours: your servant’s servant is *your* servant, madam.”

“As for him,” says Olivia, “I think not about him. As for his *thoughts*, I would they were *blanks*, rather than filled with *me!*”

“Madam, I come to whet *your* gentle thoughts, on his behalf—”

“Oh, by your leave, pray you, I bid you never speak *again* of him!” Her tone softens: “But, would you undertake *another’s* suit, I had rather hear *you* soliciting *that* than music from the spheres!”—celestial harmony.

“Dear lady—”

“Give me *leave*, beseech you. I did send, after the last enchantment you did here, a *ring* in chase of you; thus did I abuse myself, my servant, and, I fear me, *you!* Under your hard construction I must be, to have forced on you, by a shameful cunning, that which you knew was none of yours.

“What might you think? Have you not set mine honour at the *stake*, and *baited* it with all the unmuzzled thoughts that tyrannous heart can think?”

She blushes. “To one of your receiving,”—perception, “enough is *shown!* A linen, not a bosom, hideth my heart!

“So, let me hear *you* speak.”

Cesario regards her. “I pity you.”

Says Olivia softly, “That’s a *degree* toward love...”

“*No, not* ‘a grize’”—*step*, playing on *degrees*, “for ’tis a common proof that very oft we pity *enemies.*”

For a moment, Olivia closes her eyes, aware of the apparent hopelessness of her love. She looks up. “Why, then, methinks ’tis time to *smile* again!”—make light of it. But her unsteady voice belies the cheerful words.

The wealthy lady regards the disdainful young nobleman whose features have so enthralled her. *O world, how apt the poor are to be proud!* She is even more attracted to him. *If one is to be a prey, how much the better to fall before the lion than the wolf!*

They hear bells, sounding from a distant church tower in town. Olivia smiles. “The clock upbraids me for the waste of time. Be not afraid, good youth; *I* will not have you,” she concedes. “And yet, when wit and youth is come to harvest, your wife is likely to reap a proper man!”

As Viola reflects on the irony of that notion, Olivia motions toward the duke’s palace, up along the promontory. “*There* lies your way, due west.”

“Then westward-ho,” says Cesario, starting away. “Grace and good disposition attend Your Ladyship.” He pauses. “You’ll say nothing, madam, to my lord by me?”

Olivia touches his sleeve. “*Stay!*... I prithee, tell me what thou thinkest of me.”

He must continue to insist that her love be for the duke. “That you do *think* you are not what you *are!*”

“If I think *so*, I think the same of *you!*” She regards him hopefully.

Cesario/Viola shrugs. “Then you think *right*: I am not what I am.”

The lady’s look is longing. “I would you were as I would *have* you be!”

“Would it be *better*, madam, than I am?” asks Cesario, annoyed. “I wish it *might*—for *now* I am your *fool!*”

Thinks Olivia, watching him: *Oh, how a deal of scorn looks beautiful in the contempt and anger of his lip!*

And she senses that his distress reveals pangs of love. *A murderous guilt shows itself not more soon than love that would seem hid: love's night is noon!*

She is emboldened. "Cesario, by the roses of the spring, by maidenhood, honour, truth and *everything*, I love thee *so* that, despite all thy pride, not wit nor reason can my passion hide!"

Olivia sees his dutiful distress. "Do not extort thy reason beyond this clause: for that *I* woo, thou hast given thereto no cause. But rather *season* thus, with reason fettered: 'Love *sought* is good—but *given* unsought is *better!*'"

Cesario is adamant. "By innocence I swear, and by my youth: I have one *heart*, in one bosom and one truth!—and no *woman* has been—nor ever *shall* be—mistress of it save I alone!

"And so *adieu*, good madam! Never more will I my master's tears to you deplore."

"Yet come *again*," urges the desperate lady, "for thou perhaps *mayst* move that heart, which now abhors, to *like* his love...."

Chapter Eight Dare and Daring

No, 'faith, I'll not stay a jot longer," insists Sir Andrew, upstairs in Olivia's house.

"Thy *reason*, dear venery, give thy *reason!*" pleads Sir Toby.

Fabian concurs. "You *must* needs yield your reason, Sir Andrew!"

The tall knight complains, sadly, "Marry, I saw your niece do more favours to the duke's *serv*ing-man than ever she bestowed upon *me!* I saw't i' the orchard."

Toby's eyes narrow. "Did she see *thee* the while, old boy? Tell me that!"

"Plain as I see *you* now."

Both are plain, but Toby ignores it. "That was a great argument of *love* in her toward you!"

Andrew scoffs: "'Slight!—will you make an *ass* o' me?"

Fabian promises, "I will *prove* it legitimate, sir, upon the oaths of Judgment and Reason!"

"And they have been grand-jury men since before Noah was a *sailor*," Toby points out.

Andrew assumes they mean to confirm her love, not his being an ass.

Fabian proceeds with both: "She did show *favour* to the youth, in your sight, only to *exasperate* you, to awaken your dormouse *valour*,"—Andrew hears *dormant*, "to put *fire* in your heart, and *brimstone* in your liver! You should then have *accosted* her!—and with some excellent *jests*, fired as new from the mint, you should have banged the youth into silence!

"This was *looked for* at your hand, but this was *balked!* The double gilt of this opportunity you let time *wash off*, and you are now sailed into the North of my lady's opinion!—where you will hang like an icicle on a Dutchman's beard unless you do *redeem* it by some laudable attempt, either of valour or policy."

Andrew ponders. "An't be any way, it must be with valour, for policy I *hate*; I had as lief be a puritan as a *politician!*"

"Why, then *build* thy fortunes upon the basis of valour!" says Sir Toby. "*Challenge* the duke's youth!—*fight* with him!—*hurt him in eleven places!* My niece shall take note of it—and, assure thyself, there is no love-broker in the world can more prevail in man's commendation with woman than report of *valour!*"

Fabian affirms it: "There is no way but this, Sir Andrew!"

"Will either of you bear me a challenge to him?"

Toby nods. "Go, write it in a *martial* hand!" he says firmly. "Be curst and brief—it is no matter how witty, so it be *eloquent* and full of *invention!* *Taunt him*, with the licence of ink—if thou *thou'st* him"—use that impertinent form of address—"some *thrice* it shall not be amiss!—

and with as many *lies* as will lie on thy sheet of paper, although the sheet were big enough for the bed of *Ware* in England!”—reputed to be more than ten feet square. “Set ’em *down!*”

“Go!—*about* it! Let there be *gall* enough in thy ink!” *Though thou write with a goose’s pen, no matter!* he thinks, contemptuously; while a goose has quills, the *pen*—a term for penis—is the gander’s. “*About* it!”

“Where shall I find you?”

“We’ll call thee at thy cubiculo,” Toby assures him. “Go!”

Andrew goes to his small bedchamber, eager to lay venom on paper.

After the old knight is safely out of earshot, Fabian laughs. “This is a high-cost *manikin* for you, Sir Toby!”

The puppet master laughs. “I have been costly to *him*, lad!—some *two thousand* strong, or so!”—in gold ducats.

“We shall have a rare letter from him!” Fabian wonders how far Toby will go. “But you’ll not *deliver* it...”

“Never *trust* me, then! And by all means I’ll stir on the *youth* to an *answer!*” But he has no intention of inciting bloodshed: “I think oxen and wainropes could not haul *them* together! As for *Andrew*: if he were opened, and you find so much blood in his liver as will clog the foot of a *flea*, I’ll *eat* the rest of the anatomy!”

“And his opposite, the youth, bears in his visage no great presage of *cruelty*,” says Fabian dryly.

“Look where the youngest wren of mine comes!” says Toby fondly, as the diminutive gentlewoman hurries in from the corridor.

Mary is excited. “If you crave excitement and will laugh yourself into *stitches*, *follow me!* Yond gull Malvolio is turned *heathen!*—a very *renegado!*—for there is no *Christian* that means to be saved by believing *rightly* who could ever believe such impossible passages of *grossness!*”

“He’s in *yellow stockings!*”

As Fabian bursts out laughing, Sir Toby asks, delighted, “And *cross-gartered?*”

“Most *villainously*—like a *pedant* that keeps a school i’ the *church!*”—with utmost preciseness.

“I have dogged him like his murderer; he does obey every point of the letter that I dropped to betray him! He does smile his face into more lines than is in the new map with the augmentation of the *Indies!*”

“You have not *seen* such a thing as ’tis! I can hardly forbear *hurling* things at him! I know my lady will strike him! If she *do*, he’ll *smile* and take’t for a great *favour!*”

“*Come,*” cries Toby, “bring us, bring us where he is!”

Antonio has caught up with his friend on a road outside town, just east of Duke Orsino’s palace.

“I would not by my will have troubled you, but, since you make your pleasure of your *pains*, I will no further chide you,” laughs Sebastian.

“I could not stay behind you!” says the seaman. “My desire, more sharp than filed steel, did spur me forth—and not all for love of seeing you, though so much as might have drawn one to a *longer* voyage, but for *worry* about what might befall you in travel, being skillless in these parts, which to a stranger, unguided and unfriended, often prove rough and inhospitable.

“But my willing love, the rather by these arguments of fear, set forth in your pursuit.”

Sebastian smiles. “My kind Antonio, I can no other answer make but *thanks*, and thanks, and *ever* thanks! Oft good turns are shuffled off with such uncurrent pay,”—unspendable reward, “but were my *worth* as firm as my *conscience*, you should find better dealing!

“What’s to do? Shall we go see the relics of this town?”

“Tomorrow, sir. Best first to seek your lodging.”

“I am not weary, and ’tis long till night,” says Sebastian. “I pray you, let us satisfy our eyes with the memorials and the things of fame that do renown this city.”

“I would you’d pardon me,” says Antonio. “I do not without danger walk these streets....” His discomfiture is apparent as he explains. “Once, in a sea-fight ’gainst the duke’s galleys, I did some service—of such note, indeed, that were I ta’en here it could scarce be answered!”

Sebastian has heard reports of noble merchants’ competitors—some would say freebooters—harrying the shipping along Illyria’s southern coast. “Belike you slew *great number* of his people!” he says—wryly, and trying to picture his gentle and generous companion as a fierce pirate.

Antonio laughs. “The offence is not of such a bloody nature, albeit the quality of the time and quarrel might well have *given* us bloody argument!

“It might have since been answered by repaying what we took from them—which, for traffic’s sake, most of our city *did*. Only myself held out; for which, if I be attached in this place, I shall pay dearly.”

Sebastian nods. “Do not then walk too openly.”

“It doth not befit me. Hold, sir, here’s my purse,” says Antonio, handing Sebastian a leather pouch of gold coins. “In the south suburbs, at the Elephant is best to lodge; I will bespeak our diet, whiles you beguile the time, and feed your knowledge with viewing of the town. There shall you find me.”

“Why I your purse?”

“Haply your eye shall light upon some toy you have desire to purchase; and your store, I think, is not for idle markets, sir.”

Sebastian salutes his friend. “I’ll be your purse-bearer, and leave you for an hour.”

“To the Elephant!” says Antonio, heading there.

“I do remember,” Sebastian assures him, turning to walk into the town.

C ountess Olivia is keyed up as she paces in the garden with Mary; Cesario is expected. “I have sent after him; he says he’ll come! How shall I *feast* him? What *bestow* on him?—for youth is bought more oft than begged or borrowed....

“I speak too loud,” she frets, hoping to exude dignity. “Where is Malvolio?—he is stern and civil, and suits well, for a servant, with my fortunes. Where is Malvolio?”

“He’s coming, madam, but in very *strange* manner!—he is surely *possessed*, madam!”

“Why, what’s the matter? Does he rave?”

“No, madam, he does nothing but *smile*! Your Ladyship were best to have some guard about you, if he come—for surely the man is tainted in’s wits!”

“Go call him hither.” Mary runs to fetch the steward. Thinks Olivia, *I am as mad as he, if sad and merry madness equal be!*

Malvolio fairly dances up to her, followed by Mary.

“How now, Malvolio?” asks Olivia.

He laughs happily: “Sweet lady, *ho ho!*”

“Smilest thou? I sent for thee upon a serious occasion.”

“*Serious*, lady? I *could* be staid.” He looks at his legs. “This does make some obstruction in the blood, this cross-gartering; but what of that? If it please the eye of *one*,” he says obsequiously, “it is with me as the very true sonnet says: ‘Please *one*, and please *all!*’”

“Why, how *dost* thou, man? What is the *matter* with thee?”

“Not black in my *mind*, though yellow in my *legs*,” smiles Malvolio, with a wink. “It *did* come to his hands!—and *commands* shall be *executed!* I think we do know thy sweet Roman hand!” he purrs.

Olivia thinks he’s delirious. “Wilt thou go to bed, Malvolio?”

To bed! Aye, sweetheart!—and there I’ll come to thee! thinks the major-domo, hugging himself.

“God comfort thee! Why dost thou *smile* so, and kiss thy hand so oft?”
 Mary asks, “How *do* you, Malvolio?”
 He stares down at her. “At *your* request?” he sniffs. “Yes, *nightingales* answer *daws!*” he says scornfully.
 “Why appear you with this ridiculous boldness before my lady?” demands Mary.
 He eyes Olivia with an arch smile: “Be not afraid of *greatness* ’—’twas well writ!”
 “What meanest thou by *that*, Malvolio?” asks the countess.
 “Some are born great, ’—” he begins.
 She frowns.
 “—some achieve greatness, ’—”
 “What *sayest* thou?”
 “—and some have greatness *thrust upon them!*”
 “Heaven *restore* thee!” murmurs Olivia.
 “Remember who commended thy yellow stockings....”
 “Thy *yellow* stockings?”
 “And wished to see thee cross-gartered.”
 “*Cross-gartered?*”
 “Go *to*: thou art *made*, if thou desirest to be so...”
 “Am I *made?*” Olivia is thoroughly puzzled.
 “If not, let me see thee a *servant* still!” concludes Malvolio, raising an eyebrow.
 Lady Olivia is dismayed. “Why, this is very midsummer *madness!*”
 A domestic has come to the garden. “Madam, the young gentleman of the Duke Orsino’s is returned. I could hardly entreat him back!—he attends Your Ladyship’s pleasure....”
 “I’ll come to him,” Olivia quickly tells the man, who returns to the front doors. The countess is concerned about Malvolio—still beaming with enthusiasm. “Good Mary, let this fellow be looked to!” Mary nods—with satisfaction; the word *fellow* is disparaging.
 “Where’s my cousin *Toby?*” asks Olivia as they return to the house; she warns Mary to keep the inebriate away from Cesario: “Let some of my people have a special care of him; I would not have *him* miscarry for the half of my dowry!”
 Malvolio, hearing that, is in ecstasy. *Oh-ho! Do you come near me now? No worse man than Sir Toby to look after me!*
This concurs directly with the letter: she sends him on purpose so that I may appear stubborn to him! For she incites me to that in the letter: ‘Cast thy humble slough,’ says she; ‘be opposite with a kinsman, surly with servants; let thy tongue tang with arguments of state; put thyself into the trick of singularity!’—and consequently sets down the manner how: as, a sad face, a reverend carriage, a slow tongue, in the habit of some sir of note, and so forth.
I have captured her!
 He pauses in piety. *But it is God’s doing, and God makes me thankful.*
And when she went away now! ‘Let this fellow be looked to.’ Fellow!—not ‘Malvolio,’ nor after my degree, but fellow!
Why, everything adheres together such that no dram of a caviel, no quibble on a quibble, no obstacle, no incredulous or unsafe circumstance—what can be said?—nothing that can be can come between me and the full prospect of my hopes!
Well, God, not I, is the doer of this, and heaven is to be thanked! Malvolio stands looking at the sky, hands clasped behind him, lost in reverie—an outlandish statue in the conventional garden.
 But the steward’s musing is short-lived; Mary and Sir Toby have come looking for him, along with Fabian.
 Toby the exorcist demands—loudly, “Which way is he, in the name of sanctity? If all the devils of *Hell* be drawn in little, and Legion *himself* possessed him, yet I’ll speak to him!”

“Here he is, *here* he is!” cries Fabian. He peers at the steward. “How *is ’t* with you, sir? How *is ’t* with you, man?”

Malvolio deigns to wave him away. “Go off; I *discard* you! Let me enjoy my privacy. Go off!”

But the miscreants circle warily around him. Mary seems to be appalled: “*Lo!*—how *hollow* the fiend speaks within him!” she cries. “Did not I *tell* you? Sir Toby, my lady prays you to have a *care* of him!”

“*Ah-ha!* Does she so?” says Malvolio, triumphant.

“Go to, *go to*; peace, *peace!*” Toby tells Mary. “We must deal *gently* with him! Let me alone.” He speaks very soothingly: “How do you, Malvolio?... how *is ’t* with you...?”

“*What, man!*” he shouts suddenly. “*Defy the Devil! Consider: he’s an enemy to mankind!*”

Malvolio frowns. “Do you know what you say?”

“If you speak *ill* of the Devil, look you how he takes it to *heart!*” says Mary, backing away. “Pray God he be not *bewitched!*”

“Carry his water to the wise woman!” advises Fabian; crones can divine much from urine.

“Marry, and it shall be done tomorrow morning, if I *live!*” vows Mary. “My lady would not lose *him* for more than I’ll say!”

Malvolio, indignant, will not contribute a sample—now or in the morning. He glares. “*How now, mistress!*”

Mary starts, apparently terrified. “*Oh, Lord!*”

“Prithee, hold thy *peace*; this is not the way!” warns Sir Toby. “Do you not see you *move* him? Let me alone with him....”

Fabian, too, would soothe. “No way but *gentleness!*—gently, *gently!*—the fiend is rough, but will not be roughly *used.*”

Sir Toby approaches Malvolio kindly. “Why, how *now*, my bawcock! How *dost* thou, chuck?”

The steward stares, hearing the tender names for familiars. “*Sir?*”

Toby says softly “*Aye*, biddy, come with me....”

“*What, man!*” he yells. “’Tis not for *your* gravity to play at *cherry-pit* with *Satan!*”—toy with the demon. “*Hang* him, foul *collier!*”—furnace-feeder.

“Get him to say his *prayers*, good Sir Toby,” pleads Mary, “get him to *pray!*”

“My *prayers*, minx?” cries Malvolio, incensed.

She sees that his case is beyond hope. “No,” she tells the others, “I warrant you he will not *hear of godliness!*”

“*Go hang yourselves, all!*” cries Malvolio. “You are *idle, shallow* things! I am not of *your* element!”

“You shall know more *hereafter!*” he mutters, leaving them.

Chapter Nine Swords Are Drawn

Sir Toby, his head wagging, shakes with laughter as Malvolio strides angrily into the house. “*Is ’t possible?*”

“If this were played upon a stage now,” laughs Fabian, “I could condemn it as an *improbable fiction!*”

“His very *propensity* hath taken infection of the device, man!” cries Toby.

Mary spurs them on. “*Aye, pursue* him now, lest the device take air and taint!”

“Why, we shall make him mad *indeed!*” says Fabian.

Mary has suffered under many imperious harangues from Malvolio. “The house will be the quieter!”

“Come,” says Toby, “we’ll have him in a dark room and bound!”—the customary treatment for the insane. “My niece is already in the belief that he’s mad; thus we may carry it, for our pleasure and his penance, till our very *pastime*, tired out of breath, prompt us to have mercy on him!

“At which time,” he tells Mary, “we will bring the device to the bar, and crown thee”—*hail her in open court*—“as an arraigner of madmen!

“But, see—but *see!*” says Toby gleefully, as his own work progresses: red-faced Sir Andrew comes toward them, clutching paper in a quavering fist.

“*More* matter for a May morning!” says Fabian gleefully.

“Here’s the challenge! Read it,” demands Andrew. “I warrant there’s *vinegar and pepper* in’t!”

“Is’t so saucy?” asks Fabian.

“*Aye*, is’t, I warrant!” Andrew tells Toby. “Do but read.”

“Give me,” says the plump knight. He reads aloud: “‘Youth, whatsoever thou art, thou art but a *scurvy fellow!*’”

“Good, and valiant,” Fabian judges.

“‘Wonder not, nor admire not in thy mind, why I do call thee so, for I will show thee *no reason* for’t!’”

Fabian nods. “A good note. That keeps you from the blow of the law.”

“‘Thou comest to the Lady Olivia, and in my sight she uses thee kindly. But—*thou liest in thy throat!*—that is not the matter I challenge thee for!’”

“Very brief—and, *exceeding* good, *senseless!*” says Fabian dryly; the irrational is unarguable.

“‘I will waylay thee going home; where if it be thy chance to kill me’—”

“Good,” interjects Fabian.

“—‘thou killest me like a rogue and a *villain!*’”

Fabian approves. “Still you keep o’ the windy side of the law; *good.*”

“‘Fare thee well; and God have mercy upon *one* of our souls! He *may* have mercy upon thine, but my *hope* is better—and so look to *thyself!*’

“‘Thy friend, as thou *usest* him, but thy sworn *enemy*, Andrew Aguecheek.’”

Toby folds the paper. “If this letter move him not, his *legs* cannot! I’ll give’t him!”

“You may have very fit occasion for’t,” Mary tells him. “He is now in some commerce with my lady, and will by and by depart.”

“*Go*, Sir Andrew!” says Toby. “Scout for him at the corner of the orchard like a *bum-baily!*”—stealthy butt-catcher; bailiff. “Soon ever as thou seest him, *draw!*—and as thou drawest *swear horrible!*—for oft it comes to pass that a terrible oath, with a swaggering accent sharply twanged off, gives manhood more approbation than ever *proof itself* would have earned him! *Away!*”

Sir Andrew is sure he’s up to the task: “*Aye*, let me alone for *swearing!*” He goes to wait, hidden, at his post by the orchard’s gate onto the road.

Sir Toby’s stratagems are flexible. “Now will I *not* deliver his letter; for the behavior of the young gentleman gives him out to be of good capacity and breeding—his employment between his lord and my niece confirms no less. Therefore this letter, being so excellently *ignorant*, would breed no terror in the youth: he’d find it comes from a *clodpoll!*”

“But, sir, I *will* deliver his challenge by *word of mouth*—and set upon Aguecheek a notable *report* of *valour*—drive the gentleman, as I know his *youth* will aptly receive it, into a *most hideous* opinion of his rage and skill, *fury* and *impetuosity!*”

“This will so *fright them both* that they will kill one another by the very *look*, like cockatrices!”

“Here he comes with your niece,” says Fabian, as Olivia enters the garden, engaged in polite greetings with Cesario. “Give them way, till he take leave; then immediately *after* him!”

Sir Toby nods. "I will meditate the while upon some horrid message for a *challenge!*" The blithe plotters quickly steal away, the men, unseen, into a bower, Mary to her duties in the house.

Countess Olivia is distraught. "I have said too much unto a heart of *stone*, and too unchary laid mine *honour* out! There's something in me that reproves my fault—but such a headstrong, *potent* fault it is that it but *mocks* reproof!"

Cesario remains constant: "With the same 'havior that your *passion* bears goes on my master's *grief.*"

Olivia offers him a cameo on a necklace. "Here, wear this jewel for me; 'tis my picture. Refuse it not—*it* hath no tongue to vex you!

"*And*, I beseech you, come again tomorrow!"

She watches him, longingly, as they amble together toward the apple trees. "What shall you ask of me that I'll deny, which—honour saved—I may upon asking *give?*"

"Nothing but this: your true love for my *master.*"

"How, with mine *honour*, may I give him that which I have given to you?"

"I will acquit you."

"Well, come again tomorrow. Fare thee well!"

He bows and kisses her hand.

As she walks back into the house, she glances back. *A fiend like thee might bear my soul to hell!*

"Gentleman, God *save* thee!" cries Sir Toby. Fabian comes with him as they approach Cesario in apparent alarm.

"And you, sir."

Toby affects grave concern: "What *defence* thou hast, *betake* thee to 't! Of what nature the *wrongs* are that thou hast done him, I know not, but thy interceptor—full of *despite*, *bloody* as the *hunter*—attends thee at the orchard-end!

"*Dismount* thy *tuck!*" he says, pointing urgently to Cesario's rapier. "Be *yare* in thy preparation," he warns direly, "for thy assailant is *quick*, *skilful* and *deadly!*"

"You *mistake*, sir!" protests Cesario. "I am sure no man hath any quarrel with *me*; my remembrance is very free and clear from any image of offence done to any man!"

"You'll find it *otherwise*, I assure you!" Toby tells him. "Therefore, if you hold your *life* at any price, *betake* you to your *guard!* For your opposite hath in him what *youth*, *strength*, *skill* and *wrath* can furnish a man withal!"

"I pray you, sir, what is he?"

"He is a *knight!* Dubbed with *unhatched* rapier, and on *carpet* consideration,"—a courtier, says Toby affecting a soldier's disdain, "but he is a *devil* in *private* brawl!—souls from bodies hath he *divorcèd* *three!* And his incensement at this moment is so implacable that satisfaction can be none but by pangs of *death*, and *sepulchre!*" he utters fiercely. "*'Hob, nob!*' is *his* word: give't—or *take*'t!"

Cesario is concerned. "I will return again into the house and desire safe conduct from the lady! I am no fighter! I have heard of some kind of men that put quarrels purposely on others, to test their valour; belike this is a man of that quirk...."

"Sir, *no!*" says Toby, grasping his arm. "His indignation derives itself out of a very competent *injury!* Therefore get you on, and give him his desire!" He touches the hilt of his sword. "Back you shall not to the house, unless you undertake that with *me* which with as much safety you might answer *him!*"

"Therefore, *on!*—strip your sword stark *naked!*" he demands, "for meddle you must, that's certain—or forswear to wear iron about you!"

“This is as *uncivil* as *strange!*” cries Cesario, now stricken with fright. “I beseech you do me *this* courteous office: to know of the knight what my *offence* to him is! It is something of my negligence, nothing of my *purpose!*”

Sir Toby nods. “I will do so. Signior Fabian, stay you by this gentleman till my return.” He strides through the trees to find Andrew, that formidable firebrand.

Cesario asks Fabian, “Pray you, sir, do *you* know of this matter?”

“I know the knight is incensed against you, even to a *mortal* arbitrement; but nothing of the circumstance more.”

“I beseech you, what manner of man is he?”

“To read him by his *form*, nothing of that wonderful promise as you are like to find in him upon the *proof* of his valour!” Fabian leans closer. “He is, indeed, sir, the most skilful, bloody and *fatal* opposite that you could possibly have found in any part of Illyria!”

Fabian shakes his head in seeming sympathy. “Will you walk towards him? I will make your *peace* with him, if I can,” he offers, clearly doubtful.

“I shall be much bound to you for’t! I am one that had rather go with Sir *Priest* than Sir Knight!—and I care not who *knows* as much of my mettle!”

Sir Toby, meanwhile, is busy distressing Sir Andrew. “Why, man, he’s a very *devil!*—I have not *seen* such a virago! I had a pass with him, rapier, scabbard and all, and he gives me the *stuck!*—*in* with such a *mortal* motion that it is *inevitable!* And on the answer, he pays you as surely as your feet hit the ground they step on! They say he has been fencer to the *Sophy!*”

Andrew, wide-eyed, is convinced. “*Pox* on’t! I’ll not meddle with *him!*”

“Aye, but he will not not be *pacified!* Fabian can scarce *hold him yonder!*”

“*Plague* on’t!” cries Andrew. “An I thought he had been *valiant*, and so cunning in fence, I’d have seen him damned ere I’d have *challenged* him!” He paces—fearful, but thinking. “Let him let the matter slip, and I’ll give him my *horse*, grey Capilet!”

“I’ll make the motion,” Toby offers helpfully. “Stand here; make a good *show* of’t, and this should end without the perdition of souls....” As he waves Fabian and Cesario forward, he thinks, eagerly, about a new dividend in the scheme. *Marry, I’ll ride your horse as well as I ride you!*

As frail old Sir Andrew and beardless young Cesario regard each other—tremulously, keeping as far apart as they can—Toby confers quietly with his cohort. “I’ll have his *horse* for taking away the quarrel! I have persuaded him the youth’s a devil!”

Fabian reports on Cesario: “He is as horribly conceited of *him*, and pants and looks pale—as if a *bear* were at his heels!”

Sir Toby approaches Cesario. “There’s no remedy, sir,” he says. “He *will* fight with you, for’s oath sake.”

Then he turns so only Cesario can hear. “Marry, he hath better bethought him of his quarrel, and he finds that now scarce to be worth *talking* of. Therefore draw, but only for the supportance of his vow; he protests he will not hurt you.”

Thinks Viola: *Pray God defend me! A little thing would make me tell them how much I lack of a man!*

As Toby goes to Andrew, Fabian warns Cesario: “*Give ground*, if you see him *furious!*”

“Come, Sir Andrew,” Toby declaims, “there’s no remedy—the gentleman will, for his honour’s sake, have one bout with you. He cannot, under the *duello*, avoid it.” He lowers his voice to confide: “But he has promised me, as he is a gentleman and a soldier, he will not hurt you.”

Sir Toby steps from between the wary combatants. “Come on; *to’t!*” he orders.

Pray God, he keep his oath! thinks Sir Andrew, trembling.

Says Cesario, as they slowly draw their rapiers, “I do assure you, ’tis against my will!”

But just at that moment a stranger arrives—and leaps between Cesario and the knight.

“*Put up your sword!*” he cries to Andrew. “If this young gentleman have done offence, I take the fault on *me!* If you offend him, I for him *defy* you!”

“*You, sir? Why, what are you?*” demands Toby.

“One, sir,” says Antonio, “that for his love dares yet *do* more than you have heard him *brag* to you he will!”

Bluster aside, Sir Toby resents interference—and defiance. “Nay, if you be an *undertaker*, I am for you!”

They draw their swords, as Andrew and Cesario edge away.

Chapter Ten Two Are Captured

Oh, good Sir Toby, *hold!*” cries Fabian. “Here come three *officers!*”

The steel blades are lowered, and Andrew totters back.

Unknown to Antonio, he was spotted in town while looking for Sebastian, and he has been followed here; three officers from the quarters at the duke’s constabulary now approach.

“I’ll be with *you* anon!” growls Sir Toby to the bold mariner.

Cesario urges Andrew, “Pray, sir, put your sword up, if you please!”

“Marry, *will* I, sir!” gasps the much-relieved knight, “and, for that which I promised you, I’ll be as good as my word! He will bear you easily, and reins well.”

The constable points to Antonio. “*This* is the man; do thy office!” he tells his men.

“Antonio, I arrest thee at the suit of Duke Orsino!” says a deputy.

“You do *mistake* me, sir!” claims Antonio.

“*No*, sir, no jot! I know your face well, though now you have no sea-cap on your head! Take him away; he knows I know him well.”

Antonio yields his sword to an officer. “I must obey.” He turns to Cesario—believing him to be Sebastian. “This comes from seeking you; but there’s no remedy; I shall answer to it.

“What will *you* do,” he frets, “now that my necessity makes me to ask you for my purse? It grieves me much more for what I cannot do for you, than what befalls *myself!*”

He reads the bafflement on Cesario’s face as consternation. “You stand amazed, but be of comfort.”

The constable takes hold of Antonio’s arm. “Come, sir, away.”

“I must entreat from you *some* of that money,” Antonio tells the young man.

“*What* money, sir?” asks Cesario/Viola. “For the fair kindness you have shown me here, and in part being prompted by your present trouble, out of my lean and low ability I’ll lend you something. My having is not much; I’ll make division of my present with you. Hold—there’s half my coffer!” She holds out the money—which is not taken.

Antonio is stunned. “Will you *deny* me now? Is’t possible that *my* deserving can lack persuasion with you? Do not taunt my misery, lest that it make me so unsound a man as to upbraid you with those kindnesses that I have done for you!”

Cesario is perplexed. “I know of *none!*—nor know I *you*, by voice or any feature! I *hate* ingratitude more in a man than lying, vainness, babbling, drunkenness, or any taint of vice whose strong corruption inhabits our frail blood.”

“Oh, *heavens themselves!*” cries Antonio.

“Come, sir, I pray you go,” says the impatient deputy.

“Let me *speak* a little! This youth that you see here I snatched one-half out of *the jaws of death!*—relieved him with much-sanctified love, and to his image, which methought did promise most venerable worth, did I *devotion!*”

“What’s that to us?” asks the constable. “The time goes by. Away!” He pulls the captive along.

“But, *oh* how vile an idol proves *this* god!” cries Antonio angrily. “Thou hast, Sebastian, done *good* feature *shame!* In Nature there’s no blemish but the *mind!*—none can be called deformed but the unkind! Virtue *is* beauty—but the *beauteous evil* are *empty trunks*, o’erflourished by the *Devil!*”

“The man grows mad,” the officer tells the constable. “Away with him! Come, *come*, sir!”

Antonio, glaring at Cesario, shakes his head in disgust at the betrayal. “Lead me on!” He is taken away, a very perturbed prisoner.

Methinks his words do from such passion fly that he himself believes! thinks Viola, watching. *So do not I...*

But suddenly a wonderful possibility strikes her. *Prove true, imagination!*—*oh, prove true, that I, dear brother, be now ta’en for you!*

The knights talk with Fabian as she pursues her thoughts. *He named Sebastian! I my brother know, yet living, in my glass!*—in her mirror. *Even such and so in favour was my brother—and he went often in this fashion, colour, ornament, for him I imitate!* Hope rises in her heart. *Oh, if it so prove, tempests are kind and salt waves fresh—in love!*

Her concern about arrested Antonio leaves Viola oblivious to the others. She heads toward the palace of Duke Orsino.

Sir Toby sees Cesario hurrying away. “A very *dishonest*, paltry boy!—and more a *coward* than a *hare!*” he tells Andrew. “His dishonesty appears in leaving his friend here in necessity, and denying him! And as for his *cowardship*, ask Fabian.”

“A *coward*, a most *devout* coward—religious in it!” the man confirms.

“Slid, I’ll *after* him again and *beat* him!” vows emboldened Andrew.

“*Do!* Cuff him *soundly*—but never draw thy sword,” advises Toby.

Andrew strides away. “If I do *not*...”

“Come, let’s see the *event!*” says Fabian eagerly.

Toby tells him, as they follow, “I dare lay any money ’twill be nothing less!”

Sebastian’s meandering tour of the old seaside town has brought him back west, and he now stands in the street beside the well trimmed lawn at the front of Countess Olivia’s mansion, arguing with a fool.

“Would you have me believe that I am *not* sent for you?” demands Feste, unaccustomed to being the one unable to get a reasonable response.

Sebastian is annoyed at having been stopped by a stranger—especially a very insistent man in motley. “Go *to*, go *to*, thou *art* a foolish fellow! Let me be *clear* of thee!”

“Well held out, i’ faith,” says the clown, but he renews his argument—with sarcasm: “No, I do *not* know you; no, I am *not* sent to you by my lady to bid you come speak with her; no, your name is *not* Master Cesario!—nor this is not my *nose*, neither! Nothing that *is* so is *so!*”

Sebastian wants only to proceed. “I prithee, vent thy folly somewhere else! Thou know’st not *me.*”

“*Vent* my folly!” snorts Feste. “He has heard that word from some *great* man, and now applies it to a *fool!* *Vent* my folly!” He shakes his head. “I am afraid this great lubber, the *world*, is proving feeble-minded!” But he knows that Olivia is waiting impatiently to hear from him. “I prithee now, ungird thy *strangeness*, and tell me what I shall *vent* to my lady! Shall I *vent* to her that thou art coming?”

“I prithee, foolish *Greek*,”—speaker of the incomprehensible, “*depart* from me!” Sebastian hands the clown coins. “There’s *money* for thee!—but if you tarry *longer* I shall give *worse* payment!” he warns.

“By my troth, thou hast an open hand!” admits Feste. “These wise men that give *fools* money do get themselves a good report—after fourteen years.” He looks up to see the reprobate knights approaching.

Andrew has finally found, in Cesario, someone even more pusillanimous than he. “Now, sir, have I met you *again?*” He strikes Sebastian. “*There’s for you!*”

The nobleman has had enough of Illyrian fools. “Why, *there’s for thee!*” he says, smacking the startled knight with the butt end of his knife, “and there, and *there!*” He glances warily around him. “Are all the people *mad?*”

Sir Toby grabs for his hand. “*Hold*, sir, or I’ll throw your dagger o’er the house!”

Feste heads inside. “This will I tell my lady straight! I would not be in *some* of your coats for two-pence!” he calls, glancing back at the turmoil.

“Come *on*, sir; *hold!*” insists Sir Toby, seizing the arm of—he thinks—mild young Cesario.

Andrew is unhurt, but for pride. “Nay, let him alone! I’ll go *another* way to work with *him*: I’ll have an action of *battery* against him, if there be any law in Illyria! Though I struck him first, yet it’s no matter for that...”

“Let go thy hand!” demands Sebastian.

“Come, sir, I will *not* let you go,” says Sir Toby. “Come, my young soldier, put up your iron; you are well fleshed”—avenged. “Come on!”

But Sebastian is not to be manhandled. “I *will* be free from thee!” he cries, wrenching out of Toby’s grasp. “What wouldst thou *now?* If thou darest tempt me further, *draw thy sword!*”

Sir Toby is affronted, “*What, what?* Nay, then I must have an ounce or two of this malapert *blood* from you!” He is stepping back, starting to draw, when Countess Olivia storms from the doorway and rushes across the portico.

“*Hold*, Toby!—on thy *life* I charge thee, *hold!*”

“Madam,” says he, with a bow.

Olivia is furious. “Will it be ever *thus?* Ungracious *wretch*, fit for the *mountains* and the barbarous *caves*, where manners ne’er were preached! *Out of my sight!*”

“Be not offended, dear Cesario!” she tells Sebastian.

She shouts at Toby: “*Rudesby, be gone!*” The rebuked knight stamps sullenly into the building, followed uneasily by Andrew and Fabian.

“I prithee, gentle friend, let thy fair *wisdom*, not thy passion, sway,” she begs of Sebastian—who watches the lovely lady intently, fascinated, “in this *uncivil* and *unjust* extent against thy peace!

“Go with me into my house, and hear thou there how *many* fruitless pranks this ruffian hath botched up, so that thou thereby mayst *smile* at this!

“Thou shalt not choose but go,” she says, firmly taking his hand. “Do not *deny*,” she pleads. “*Beshrew* his soul!—he startled *one* poor heart of mine in *thee!*”

Sebastian is delighted with the surprising change in local hospitality: a beautiful lady is inviting him to come into her stately home.

What relish is in this! he thinks happily. *How runs the stream? Either I am mad, or else this is a dream!* He feels Olivia’s warm hand squeeze his. *Let fancy still my sense in Lethe’s deep; if it be thus to dream, ever let me sleep!*

The countess implores softly. “Nay, *come*, I prithee! I would thou’ldst be ruled by me...”

Sebastian’s eyes are already ruled: they cannot leave her. “Madam,” he smiles, “I will!”

Oh, thinks Olivia, *so say, and so be!*

Chapter Eleven In Darkness and Light

Mary and Feste meet at the back of Olivia’s mansion, beyond the pantry and down the stairs, standing just outside the door to the cellar.

“Nay, I prithee, put on this gown and this beard,” she whispers. “Make him believe thou art Sir Topas, the curate! Do it quickly! I’ll call Sir Toby the whilst,” she adds, going to the stairs.

The jester picks up the priestly garb. *Well, I'll put it on, and I will dissemble myself in 't—and I would I were the first that ever dissembled in such a gown!*

Feste looks down at the cassock as he struggles to button it closed. *I am not tall enough to become the function well—tall also means “upstanding”—nor lean enough to be thought a good student!* he thinks wryly. He shrugs. *But to be said an honest man and keeper of a good house goes as fairly as saying ‘a praying man’ and ‘a great scholar.’*

Adjusting the false beard, he hears footsteps. *The conspirators enter!* He goes silently to meet Mary and Sir Toby as they come down the steps.

The knight eyes the disguise. “Jove *bless* thee, Master *Parson!*”

“*Bones dice*, Sir Toby! For, as the old hermit of Prague, who never saw pen and ink, very wittily said to a niece of King Gorboduc, ‘That that is, *is!*’ So I, being Master Parson, *am* Master Parson! For, what is ‘that’ but ‘*that,*’ and ‘is’ but ‘*is!*’?”

Toby waves aside glib tautology. “*To him*, Sir Topas!”

The clown opens the creaking door and slowly moves into the dark chamber, feeling his way along a damp wall. “*What ho*, I say! *Peace* in this prison!”

- Toby admires Feste’s assumed voice—that of a dogmatic local cleric. “The knave counterfeits *well,*” he says, his voice hushed. “*A good knave!*”

“Who calls there?” cries Malvolio.

“Sir Topas the curate, who comes to visit Malvolio the lunatic.”

The steward is locked in a small cell, unused during the life of Olivia’s forgiving father, and long forgotten by her. In a frenzy, he grasps the iron bars of the heavy door’s narrow window, pressing his face against them. “*Sir Topas*, Sir Topas, good *Sir Topas*—go to my *lady!*”

But the exorcist exhorts the demon within: “*Out*, hyperbolic *fiend!* How vexest thou this man?—talkest thou nothing but of *ladies?*”

- Toby, listening with Mary, chuckles softly. “*Well said*, Master Parson!”

“Sir Topas, never was man thus *wronged,*” Malvolio moans. “Good Sir Topas, do not think I am *mad!* They have laid me here in hideous darkness!”

“*Fie*, thou *dishonest Satan!*” cries Sir Topas. He adds, quietly, “I call thee by the most modest terms, for I am one of those gentle ones that will use the Devil himself with *courtesy.*”

“Sayest thou that house is *dark?*”

“As *Hell*, Sir Topas!”

“Why, it hath bay windows transparent as *barricadoes*, and the clear *stones* toward the southern *north* are as light as *ebony!*—and yet complainest thou of *obscuratation?*” demands the curate.

“I am not *mad*, Sir Topas! I say to you this house is *dark!*”

“Madman, thou *errest!* I say there is no darkness but *ignorance!*—in which *thou* art more puzzled than the Englishmen in their fog!”

Malvolio grows frantic. “I say this house *is* as dark as ignorance, though ignorance were as dark as Hell! *And* I say, there was never man thus *abused!* I am no more mad than *you* are! Make the trial of it in any constant question....”

Sir Topas thinks. “What is the opinion of Pythagoras concerning souls upon the world?”

“That the soul of our grandam might perhaps inhabit a bird,” says the steward, of a transmigration doctrine.

“What thinkest thou of his opinion?”

“I think *nobly* of the soul, and no way *approve* his opinion!”

“Fare thee well,” says the impostor, leaving. “*Remain* thou still in darkness. Thou shalt *hold* the opinion of Pythagoras ere I will allow of thy *wits!*—and fear to *kill a woodcock*, lest thou dispossess the soul of thy *grandam!* Fare thee well.”

Malvolio cries out in desperation, “Sir Topas, *Sir Topas!*”

As Feste comes out, past the door into the light, he removes the itchy whiskers. Toby greets him: “My most *exquisite* Sir Topas!”

The pretend priest smiles. “Aye, I am for *all* waters!”—even the font’s.

Mary laughs, with a sparkle in her eyes; she has tricked one of the trickiest. “Thou mightst have done this without thy beard and gown!—he *sees* thee not!”

But Sir Toby now urges, quietly, “*To* him in *thine own* voice, and bring me word how thou findest him.” He frowns, worried. “I would we were well *rid* of this knavery! If he may be conveniently delivered, I would he *were*, for I am now so far in offence with my niece that I cannot pursue, with any *safety*, this sport t’ the upshot.

“Come by and by to my chamber.” He and Mary go back up the stairs.

Feste returns to the cellar, singing: “*Hey, Robin, jolly Robin, tell me how thy lady does’—*”

“Fool!” calls Malvolio.

“—‘*My lady is unkind, perdy!*’—”

“Fool!”

“—‘*Alas, why is she so?*’—”

Malvolio shouts, “*Fool*, I say!”

“—‘*She loves another...*’ Who calls?”

“Good Fool, as ever thou wilt deserve well at my hand, help me to a candle, and pen, ink and *paper!*” pleads Malvolio loudly. “As I am a gentleman, I will live to be *thankful* to thee for’t!”

“Master *Malvolio?*”

“*Aye*, good Fool!”

“Alas, sir, how *fell* you from your five wits?”

“Fool, there was never a man so notoriously *abused!*” cries the steward in the dark, his voice straining. “I am as well in my wits, Fool, as *thou* art!”

“Only *that* well?—then you are mad indeed, if you be no better in your wits than a *fool!*”

Malvolio cries out in fury: “They have here *propertied* me!—keep me in *darkness*, send *ministers* to me—*asses!*—and do all they can to force me out of my wits!”

“Advise you what you *say*: the minister is here!” warns Feste.

Now comes the voice of Sir Topas: “Malvolio, *Malvolio*, may the heavens *restore* thy wits! Endeavour thyself to *sleep*, and *leave* thy vain bibble-babble!”

“Sir Topas!” croaks Malvolio.

Sir Topas warns the clown, “Maintain no words with *him*, good fellow.”

“Who, *I*, sir? Not *I*, sir! God be wi’ you, good Sir Topas.”

“*Marry, amen!*” says the curate’s voice.

Says the clown, thinking happily of his affianced, “*I will*, sir, *I will!*”

Malvolio calls: “Fool, Fool—*Fool*, I say!”

Feste replies: “Alas, sir, be *patient!* What say you, sir? I am *chided* for *speaking* to you!”

“Good Fool, help me to some light and some paper! I tell thee, I am as well in my wits as any man in Illyria!”

“Well-a-day that you *were*, sir!”

“By this hand, I *am!*” screams Malvolio, his voice cracking. But now he appeals more calmly: “Good Fool, some ink, paper and light; and convey what I will set down to my lady. It shall *advantage* thee more than *ever* the bearing of a letter did!”

“I will help you to’t,” says Feste. “But tell me true: are you not mad, indeed—or do you but *counterfeit?*”—as his daily demeanor suggests.

Malvolio is exhausted. “Believe me, I am not; I tell thee true.”

“Nay, I’ll ne’er believe a madman till I *see his brains*. But I will fetch you light and paper and ink.”

Malvolio is relieved and grateful—but very eager. “Fool, I’ll requite it in the highest degree! I prithee, be gone!”

Feste leaves him, singing as he goes:

*“I am gone, sir!
 And anon, sir,
 I’ll be with you again,
 Your needs to sustain.
 In a trice,
 Like old Vice,
 Who, with dagger of lath
 In his rage and his wrath,
 Cries ‘Oh, hell!’
 To the Devil!
 Says like a mad lad,
 ‘Pare thy nails, Dad!’”*
“Adieu, Goodman devil, adieu!”

Sebastian ambles through Countess Olivia’s garden—and, in a pleasant daze, finds his good fortune difficult to comprehend.

This is the air; that is the glorious sun! This pearl she gave me, I do feel’t and see’t! And though ’tis wonder that enwraps me thus, yet ’tis not madness!

Where’s Antonio, then? I could not find him at the Elephant. Yet there he had been—there I found it credited that he did range the town to seek me out.

His counsel now might do me golden service! For though my soul disputes well with my sense that this may be some error, but no madness, yet doth this accident and flood of fortune so far exceed all instance, all discourse, that I am ready to distrust mine eyes, and wrangle with my reason that persuades me to any other trust but that I am mad!

Or else the lady’s mad! Yet, if ’twere so, she could not sway her house, command her followers, take and give back affairs in their dispatch with such a smooth, discreet and stable bearing as I perceive she does.

He frowns. *There’s something in’t that is imperceivable....*

But here the lady comes.

Olivia brings with her the parish priest. For the first time, Sebastian sees her ill at ease. “Blame not this haste of mine,” she pleads, her eyes searching his face. “If you mean well, now go with me and with this holy man into the chantry nearby.

“There, before him, and underneath that consecrated roof,” she says, “plight me the full assurance of your faith,”—promise marriage, “so that my most jealous and too-doubtful soul may live at *peace!*”

“He shall conceal it until you are willing it shall come to note—at which time we will our celebration keep, according with my birth.

“What do you say?”

Sebastian’s glowing smile has already answered. He takes her hand. “I’ll follow this good man,” he says, “and go with you!—and, having *sworn* truth, ever will *be* true!”

“Then lead the way, good father,” Olivia tells the priest, eyes glistening. She looks to the wide span of azure above. “And heavens so shine that they may fairly note this act of mine!”

Chapter Twelve Pirate, Husband and Husband

On the portico before Olivia’s mansion, Feste and Fabian stand by the open white doors, gazing out over the sunny lawn.

“Now, as thou lovest me, let me see his letter!” pleads the servant.

“Good Master Fabian, grant me *another* request....”

“Anything!”

“Do not desire to see this letter.”

Fabian protests, “This is to give a dog—and as *recompense* desire the *dog* again!”

They are surprised to see, coming up the walk, a large party led by Duke Orsino himself.

With him at the front is Cesario.

“Belong you to the Lady Olivia, friends?” asks the duke, at the porch’s wide stone steps.

“Aye, sir; we are some of her *trappings*,” says the clown; his expression suggests *ensnared game*.

“I know *thee* well,” laughs Orsino. “How dost thou, my good fellow?”

“Truly, sir, the better for my foes, and the worse for my friends.”

The duke takes the bait. “Just the contrary: the better for thy *friends!*”

“No, sir, the *worse*.”

“How can that be?”

“Marry, sir, they praise me and make an *ass* of me! Now, my foes tell me plainly I am an ass; by my foes, sir, I profit in the knowledge of myself, but by my friends I am *abused!*”

“So, conclusions being as kisses, if your four negatives make your two affirmatives”—reversal as in logic, “why then the worse for my *friends* and the better for my foes!”

Duke Orsino always enjoys Feste’s cleverness. “Why, this is excellent!”

“By my troth, sir, no,” the contrarian counters, “though it please you to be one of my *friends*...” He holds out a hand for a gratuity.

“Thou shalt not be the worse for *me!*” says Orsino, giving him a ducat. “There’s gold.”

The clown holds up the shiny coin. “But that it would be *double-dealing*, sir, I would you could make it *another*...”

The duke pretends to challenge proposed dishonesty: “Oh, you give me ill counsel!”

“Put your *grace* into your *pocket*, sir, for this once, and let your flesh and blood obey it!”

Orsino smiles. “Well, I will be so much a sinner as to be a double-dealer—there’s another.”

“*Primo, secundo... tertio* is a good play!”—at dice. “And the old saying is, ‘the *third* pays for all!’ The *triplex*,”—a musical timing, “sir, is a good, tripping measure; or the bells of Saint Bennet, sir, may put you in mind—one, two, *three!*” He slides the two coins between finger and thumb, and with an elegant twist of the wrist he displays them side by side before a huge smile.

Duke Orsino laughs again. “You can fool no more money out of me at *this* throw,” he says. But, he adds, “If you will let your lady know I am here to speak with her, and bring her along with you, it may *awake* my bounty further...”

“Marry, sir, *lullaby* to your bounty till I come again! I go, sir!” He pauses. “I would not have you think that my desire of *having* is the sin of *covetousness*,” says the clown, facetiously unctuous, “but, as you stay, sir, let your bounty take a nap; I will awake it *anon!*” He goes inside to inform the countess of her neighbor’s visit.

While the duke waits, Cesario touches his sleeve. “Here comes the man, sir, that did *rescue* me!” As the youth has requested, Antonio is being brought before Orsino by deputies.

The duke frowns. “That face of his I do *remember well!*—yet when I saw it last, it was besmeared as black as Vulcan in the smoke of war! A *bawbling* vessel was he captain of, for shallow draught and bulk unprizable—with which he did make such scathful *grapple* against the most noble hull of our *fleet*,”—its heaviest merchant ship, “such that, in the tongue of *loss*, *disdain itself* cried fame and *honour* upon him!

“What’s the substance?” he asks the constable.

“Orsino, this is that Antonio that took the *Phoenix*, and her fraught from Candia!”—its load of merchandise from Crete. “And this is he that did the *Tiger* board, when your young nephew Titus lost his leg! Here in the streets, desperate of state, in shame of private brabble did we apprehend him.”

“He did me *kindness*, sir!—drew on *my* side,” says Cesario, “but in conclusion put strange speech upon me—I know not what ’twas but distraction...”

Duke Orsino glowers at Antonio. “Notable *pirate!* Thou salt-water *thief!* What foolish boldness brought thee to their mercies whom thou, in terms so bloody and so costly, hast made thine *enemies?*”

“Orsino, noble sir,” says Antonio, “be pleased that I *shake off* these names you give me! Antonio never yet was *thief* or *pirate!*—though, I confess, Orsino’s enemy, on base and ground enough.

“A *witchcraft* drew me hither!—that most ingrateful boy there by your side, from the rude sea’s enraged and foamy mouth did I *redeem!* A wreck past hope he was; his *life* I gave him, and did thereto add my love, without retention or restraint—all his in dedication!

“For his sake did I expose myself into the danger of this adverse town; purely for his love drew to defend him when he was beset! Where, I being apprehended, and he not meaning to partake with me in *danger*, his false *cunning* taught him to face me out of his acquaintance, and become a twenty-years-removed thing while one would *blink!*—denied me *mine own purse*, which I had commended to his use not half an hour before!”

Cesario is thinking: *How could this be?*

“When came ye to this town?” asks the duke.

“Today, my lord,” Antonio replies. “And for *three weeks before*, no interim, not a minute’s vacancy, both day and night did we keep company!”

Orsino has no further questions, and Olivia is now emerging from the mansion with her attendants.

“Here comes the countess!” sighs the duke. “Now *heaven* walks on earth!”

He turns back to Antonio. “But as for *thee*, fellow—fellow, thy words are *madness!* Three weeks this youth hath *attended upon me!*”

“But more of that anon. Take him aside,” he tells the constable and deputy. They move back, each grasping an arm of the captive captain.

The countess is courteous but firm with Orsino. “What would my lord have—except for that which he may *not*—wherein Olivia may seem serviceable?” Then, spotting the young gentleman, she is startled. “Cesario, you do not keep *promise* with me!”

Cesario is again puzzled. “Madam?”

“Gracious Olivia—” the duke begins.

What do you *say*, Cesario?” she demands. “Good my lord—”

“My lord would speak!” says the young man, deferring to the duke. “My duty hushes me.”

Olivia speaks bluntly to Orsino, who is watching them both—and frowning. “If it be aught to the old tune, my lord, it is as flat and gutting to mine ear as *howling* after *music!*”

“Still so cruel?” says the duke sadly.

“Still so *constant*, lord.”

“What—to *perverseness?*” he demands. “You *uncivil* lady, to whose ingrateful and un auspicious altar *my soul* hath breathed out the faithfull’s offerings that e’er devotion tendered! What shall I do?”

“Even what it please my lord—and what shall *become* him,” says Olivia pointedly.

Duke Orsino, realizing, finally, his desire’s impossibility, is angry. “Why should I not, had I the heart to do it, like to the Egyptian thief at point of death, *kill* what I love?—a savage jealousy that sometimes savours *nobly!*”

But her neighbor *is*, in fact, a noble man, and he inspires no real fear; Olivia is silent, loath to provoke him further.

“But hear me this!” says the duke. “Since you to non-regardance cast my devotion—and because I partly know the *instrument* that bars me from my true place in your favour” he says, glaring at Cesario, “—*live* you, the marble-hearted tyrant still!

“But this your *minion*,” he says, gripping Cesario’s shoulder, “whom I know you love, and whom, by heaven I swear, I tender dearly—him will I *tear away* from that cruel eye where he sits crownèd in his master’s despite!

“Come, boy, with *me!*—my thoughts are *ripe* with *mischief!*”

“I’ll sacrifice the lamb that I do love,” he says, “to spite the *raven*’s heart within the dove!” He turns away.

Cesario follows him dutifully. “And I—most apt, jocund and willingly—to give you rest, a thousand deaths would die!”

Olivia is alarmed. “Where *goes* Cesario?”

“After him I *love* more than I love these *eyes*, more than my *life*, more by *all ‘mores’* than e’er I shall love a wife!” He looks up. “If I do feign, you witnesses above *punish* my life, for tainting of my *love!*”

Olivia is stunned. “*Ay me!—rejected!* How I am *beguiled!*”

Viola/Cesario, unwavering in Orsino’s behalf, is indignant. “Who does *beguile* you? Who does do you *wrong?*”

“Hast thou *forgot* thyself?” cries Olivia. “Is it so *long?*” She turns to Mary. “Call forth the holy father!” The gentlewoman runs to find the priest.

“Come, away!” commands the duke.

“Whither, my lord?” asks Olivia, touching the young man’s sleeve. “Cesario—*husband!*—stay!”

“*Husband!*” cries the duke.

“*Aye, husband!*” insists Olivia. “Can he that *deny?*”

Orsino stares at Cesario. “Her *husband*, sirrah!”

“*No*, my lord, not *I!*”

Olivia tries to encourage him. “Alas, it is the baseness of thy *fear* that makes thee strangle thy propriety! Fear *not*, Cesario! Take thy fortunes up!—*be* that thou know’st thou art, and then thou art as great as that thou fear’st!”

Mary has hastened the priest to them from the chapel.

“Oh, *welcome*, father!” says Olivia. “Father, I charge thee, by thy reverence, here to unfold—though lately we intended to keep in darkness what occasion now reveals before ’tis ripe—what thou dost know hath newly passed between this youth and me.”

“A contract of eternal bond of love,” says the white-haired holy man sweetly, “confirmed by mutual joinder of your hands, attested by the holy close of lips, strengthened by interchangement of your rings; and all the ceremony of this compact sealed in my function, by my testimony—since when, my watching hath told me, toward my grave I have travelled but two hours.”

Orsino confronts Cesario. “O thou *dissembling cub!* What wilt thou be when time hath sewed on thy case a *grizzle?*”—gray beard, “o’er which, unless thy *craft* as quickly grow, thine own tripping shall be thine *overthrow!*”

“Farewell, and *take* her!” he tells the youth angrily, “but direct thy feet where thou and I henceforth may never meet!”

“*My lord, I do protest!*” cries Viola, thoroughly distraught. “I—”

“Oh, do not swear!” the countess advises her new affianced. “Hold a little *faith*, though thou hast too much *fear!*”

Just then Sir Andrew staggers from the house, his wispy fringe of hair matted with scarlet on one side. “For the love of God, a *surgeon!* Send one presently to Sir Toby!” Mary again hurries away for help.

“What’s the matter?” cries Olivia.

“He has broke my head across!” moans Andrew, “and has given Sir *Toby* a bloody coxcomb, too!—for the love of God, your *help!*” He leans unsteadily against a portico column. “I had rather than forty pound I were at *home!*”

“Who has *done* this, Sir Andrew?” demands the countess.

“The *duke’s* gentleman, one *Cesario!* We took him for a coward—but he’s the very *devil incardinate!*”

Duke Orsino steps toward him, followed by Viola. “My gentleman *Cesario?*”

“’*Od’s* *lifelings*, here he *is!*” cries Andrew, backing away in fear. “You broke my head for *nothing!* As for that that I *did*, I was *set on* to do’t by Sir Toby!”

Viola vigorously denies any attack. “Why do you speak to *me?* I never hurt you! You *drew your sword* upon me without cause, but I bespoke you *fair*, and *hurt you not!*”

Sir Andrew touches his head. “If a *bloody coxcomb* be a hurt, you have *hurt* me! I think you set nothing by a bloody coxcomb!” he whines. “Here comes Sir Toby, limping. You shall hear *more!*—had he not been in *drink*, he would have tickled you otherwise than he did!”

Feste helps Sir Toby walk as he comes outside.

“How now, gentleman?” the duke asks Toby. “How is’t with you?”

“That’s all one,” mumbles the knight. “He has hurt me, and there’s the end on’t.” He turns, muddled, to Feste. “Sot, didst see Dick Surgeon, sot?”

“Oh, he’s *drunk*, Sir Toby—an hour ago!” the jester tells him. “His eyes were set”—he passed out—“at eight i’ the morning.”

“Then he’s a *rogue* and a *passy-measures pavin!*”—very slothful. “I *hate* a drunken rogue!” claims Toby—the words slurred by his perpetual palliative.

Olivia is disgusted. “*Away* with him! Who hath made this havoc with them?”

Sir Andrew takes the other knight’s elbow. “I’ll help you, Sir Toby, because we’ll be addressed together”—by the physician.

Sir Toby drunkenly pushes him away. “Will you help?—an *ass-head*, and a *coxcomb*, and a *knave*, a thin-faced *knave*—a *gull!*”

Olivia shakes her head. “Get him to bed, and let his hurt be looked to.”

As Feste and Fabian guide the knights, chastised if not chastened, inside, Sebastian emerges from the house, looking back at them.

He comes to Olivia and takes her hand. “I am sorry, madam, I have hurt your kinsman,” he tells her earnestly, “but, had it been a *brother* of thy blood, I *must* have done no less in wit and safety.”

He sees that Olivia is gaping, perplexed. “You throw a strange regard upon me, and by that I do perceive it hath offended you. *Pardon* me, sweet one, even for the *vows* we made each other but so late ago!”

Duke Orsino, too, is staggered by the sight of dual Cesarios: “One face, one voice, one habit, and *two persons!*—a natural illusion, that *is* and is *not!*”

Sebastian, turning from Olivia, now spots his friend, standing guarded behind the others, and rushes to him. “*Antonio!* *Oh*, my dear *Antonio!*—how have the hours racked and tortured me, since I have lost thee!”

The mariner blinks. “*Sebastian*, are you?”

Now Sebastian is puzzled. “*Doubt ’st* thou that, *Antonio?*”

“How have you made *division* of yourself?” cries Antonio. “An apple, cleft in two, is not more twin than these two creatures!” He looks to Cesario and back. “Which *is* Sebastian?”

“Most wondrous!” says Olivia.

Sebastian now sees Cesario. His eyes widen. “Do I stand *there?* I never had a *brother*—nor can there be that deity in *my* nature of *here* and *everywhere!*”

“I *had* a sister, whom the blind waves and surges have devoured.” He asks Cesario politely, “Of charity, what *countryman?*—what name? What *parentage?* What *kin* are you to *me?*”

“Of Messaline,” says Viola. “Sebastian was my father; such a Sebastian was my *brother*, too.” She motions to his clothes. “So went *he* suited to his watery tomb! If *spirits* can assume both form and *suit*, you come to *fright* us!”

“A spirit I *have*, indeed,” says Sebastian, “but am in that dimension grossly clad with that which from the *womb* I did precipitate.” He eyes Cesario. “Were you a *woman*, and the rest go even, I should my *tears* let fall upon your cheek, and say, ‘*Thrice-welcome, drownèd Viola!*’”

Cesario smiles, tears in her eyes. “My father had a mole upon his brow—”

“And so had mine!”

“And died that day when Viola from her birth had numbered thirteen years—”

“Oh, *that record* is lively in my *soul*,” says Sebastian. “He finished indeed his mortal act that day that made my *sister’s* years thirteen!”

“If nothing prevents our both being happy but this, my usurpèd masculine *attire*,” says Viola, “forego embracing me only till each circumstance of place, time and fortune do cohere and jump that *I am Viola!*—which to confirm, I’ll bring you to a *captain* in this town—where lie my *maiden’s* clothes—by whose gentle help I was preservèd to serve this noble duke!

“All the occurrence of my fortune since hath been between this lady and this lord.”

Sebastian, taking Olivia’s hand, smiles. “*So* comes it, lady, that you have been mistook! By Nature drawn in, through *her* bias you would have been contracted to a *maid!* Nor are you therein, by my life, *deceived*: you *are* betrothèd to both a maid and man!”—promised a sister-in-law as well as a husband.

Duke Orsino is relieved that his assessment of Cesario had been justified. “Be not amazed,” he tells Countess Olivia, “right *noble* is his blood!” He beams at the youth, whom he sees in quite a new way. “If this be so—as yet, the mirror seems true!—*I* shall have a share in this most happy wreck!

“Boy,” he teases Viola, “thou hast said to me a thousand times thou never shouldst love *woman* as much as *me!*”

She looks at him fondly. “And *all* those sayings will I *overswear!*—and *those* swearings keep as true in soul as doth that orbèd containment of fire that renders *day* out of night!”

“Give me thy hand,” says Orsino, “and let me see thee in thy woman’s clothes!”

“The captain who did bring me first on shore hath my maid’s garments,” Viola tells him. “He upon some action is now in *durance*”—imprisoned—“at *Malvolio’s* suit—a gentleman and follower of my lady’s.”

“He shall set him free!” promises Olivia. “Fetch Malvolio hither!” she tells an attendant, who bows and goes. “And yet, *alas*, now that I remember me, they say that he, poor gentleman, is much *distracted!* A most exacting frenzy of mine *own* from my remembrance cleanly banished his!

“How does he, sirrah?” she asks her fool.

Feste steps forward, with Fabian. “Truly, madam,” says the jester, “he holds *Belzebub* at the stave’s end as well as a man in his case may do. He has here writ a letter to you; I should have given’t you this morning, but as a *madman’s* epistles are no gospels, so it matters not much when they are delivered.”

“Open’t, and read it,” Olivia tells him.

“Look then to be *well* edified, when the *fool* delivers the *madman!*” says Feste wryly. He opens the letter, holds it up to read—and shrieks as Malvolio did: ‘*By the Lord, madam!*’”

She is startled. “How *mad?*”

“No, madam, I do but *read* madness. If Your Ladyship will have it as it *ought* to be, you must allow *vox*”—voice.

“Prithee, read i’ thy right wits!” Olivia tells him.

“So I *do*, madonna—but to read *his* right wits is to read *thus*; therefore perpend, my princess, and give ear!” He takes a deep breath....

She quickly tells Fabian, “Read it *you*, sirrah!”

He grabs the letter and reads: “‘By the Lord, madam, you *wrong* me, and the world shall know it! Though you have put me into darkness and given your drunken cousin rule over me, yet have I the benefit of my senses as well as Your Ladyship!

“I have *your own letter* that induced me to the semblance I put on!—with the which I doubt not but to do myself much *right*, ere you such shame!

“Think of me as you please; I leave my *duty* a little unthought of, but speak out of my *injury!* The madly *used* Malvolio.”

“Did *he* write this?” asks Olivia—sharply.

“Aye, madam,” says Feste sheepishly.

“This savours not much of *distraction*,” says Orsino of the letter.

Olivia nods. “See him freed, Fabian; bring him hither.” The man goes to fetch Malvolio.

She says to the duke, “My lord, these things further thought on, if it please you that a *wife* one day shall crown thine alliance, may it please you do’t here at *my house*, at my proper cost, and think me a *sister-in-law* as well!”

Orsino beams and bows. “Madam, I am most happy to embrace your offer!

“Your master acquits you,” he tells Viola, “for your service done him—so much against the mettle of your sex, so far beneath your soft and tender breeding!

“And since you *called* me master for so long—here is my *hand!* You shall from this time be your master’s *mistress!*”

Olivia smiles warmly at Viola. “A *sister-in-law!* You are *she!*”

Fabian brings out Malvolio, frayed after his ordeal—and livid.

“Is this the madman?” asks Orsino angrily; the sea captain who helped his intended is still being held by the constable—and still honoring his promise to Viola.

Olivia nods, “Aye, my lord, this same. How now, Malvolio?”

“Madam,” he says gravely, “you have done me *wrong*—notorious *wrong!*”

“Have *I*, Malvolio? *No!*”

“Lady, you *have!* Pray you, peruse this letter!” He hands her Mary’s work. “You must not now deny it is *your hand!*—write differently if you *can*, in hand or phrase!—or say ’tis not your *seal*, nor your *intention!*”

“You can say *none* of this!” he cries, as Olivia read the letter. “Well, *grant* it then, and tell me, in the modesty of honour, why you have given me such clear lights of favour, bade me come smiling and cross-gartered to you, to put on yellow stockings and to frown upon Sir Toby and the lighter people!

“And why have you suffered me, acting this in an obedient hope, to be *imprisoned*, kept in a dark house!—visited by the priest!—and made the most notorious *geck* and *gull* that e’er invention played on!

“Tell me *why!*”

“Alas, Malvolio,” says Olivia gently, “this is *not* my writing, though, I confess, much like the character—but out of question ’tis *Mary’s* hand.

“And now that I do bethink me, it was *she* first told me thou wast *mad*; then thou camest in smiling, and in such forms which here were imposed upon thee in the letter.

“Prithee, be *content*. This practise hath been most shrewdly passed upon thee; but when we know the grounds and authors of it, thou shalt be both the plaintiff and the judge of thine own cause.”

Fabian quickly—and wisely—steps forward. “Good madam, hear me speak,” he says humbly, hat in hand, “and let no quarrel nor no brawl *to come* taint the condition of this *present* hour, which I have wondered at!

“In hope it shall not, most freely I confess: myself and Toby set this device against Malvolio, here, upon some stubborn and uncourteous parts we had conceived against him.

“Mary writ the letter, at Sir Toby’s great importuning—in recompense whereof he hath *married* her!

“How it was followed, with a *sportful* malice, may rather pluck out *laughter* than revenge, if the injuries be justly weighed that have on *both* sides passed.”

Olivia regards Malvolio. “Alas, poor fool, how they have baffled thee!”

As if that were a cue for him, Feste steps forward, shrugging in apparent resignation. “Well, some are *born* great, some *achieve* greatness, and some have greatness *thrown* upon them.” He confesses to Malvolio, “I was one, sir, in this interlude—one *Sir Topas*, sir. But that’s all one.

“By the Lord, fool, I am not *mad!*” he cries, in response to Malvolio’s scowl. “But do you remember: ‘Madam, why laugh you at such a barren rascal? An you smile not, he’s gagged.’

“And thus the whirligig of time brings on its *revenges!*”

The disclosures hardly mollify Malvolio. “I’ll be revenged on the whole *pack* of you!” he cries as he storms away.

Olivia is sympathetic. “He *hath* been most *notoriously* abused!” His humiliation is now very public.

“Pursue him and entreat him to a *peace*,” Orsino tells Fabian. “He hath not told us about the *captain* yet,” he notes—suggesting an incentive for the severe steward to relent. “When that is known, and golden time convenes, a solemn combination shall be made of four dear souls!”

The duke now feels quite jovial, fully enjoying being—at last—*happily* in love. “Meantime, sweet sister,” Orsino says to Olivia, “we will not part from hence!

“*Cesario*, come,” he tells Viola, “for so you shall be, while you are a *man*.” He smiles. “But when in *other* habits you are seen—Orsino’s *mistress*, and his fancy’s *queen!*”

All but Feste go into the house, eager to share in the newfound happiness of the duke and his newly betrothed, the countess and her handsome husband-to-be.

The jester, who is contemplating another marriage between the two houses, tunes his lute. He sings happily—mindful of those of us who have always harkened to other fools:

“*When I was but a little tiny boy,*

With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,

‘*A foolish thing*’ was but a toy”—as opposed to *thing*’s adult meaning, *penis*.

“*For the rain it raineth every day.*

But when I came to man’s estate,

With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,

‘*Gainst knaves and thieves men shut their gate,*

For the rain it raineth every day.

And when I came unto my bed,

With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,

From tossèd pot had drunken head!

For the rain it raineth every day!

But when I came at last to wive,

With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,

By swaggering could I never thrive!

For the rain it raineth every day.

A great while ago the world begun,

With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,

But that’s all one—our play is done!—

And we’ll strive to please you every day!”