

Twelfth Night Book Notes

Twelfth Night by William Shakespeare

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Contents

Twelfth Night Book Notes.....	1
Contents.....	2
Author/Context.....	4
Plot Summary.....	6
Major Characters.....	8
Objects/Places.....	10
Quotes.....	11
Topic Tracking: Disguise.....	13
Topic Tracking: Jokes.....	15
Topic Tracking: Romance.....	17
Act 1, Scene 1.....	19
Act 1, Scene 2.....	20
Act 1, Scene 3.....	21
Act 1, Scene 4.....	22
Act 1, Scene 5.....	23
Act 2, Scene 1.....	25
Act 2, Scene 2.....	26
Act 2, Scene 3.....	27
Act 2, Scene 4.....	28
Act 2, Scene 5.....	29
Act 3, Scene 1.....	30
Act 3, Scene 2.....	31
Act 3, Scene 3.....	32
Act 3, Scene 4.....	33
Act 4, Scene 1.....	35



Act 4, Scene 2..... 36

Act 4, Scene 3..... 37

Act 5, Scene 1..... 38



Author/Context

William Shakespeare was born in Stratford, England in late April of 1564. He had several years of education, though the exact number is unknown. He was taught in Latin, and his teachers were constrained by the moral and political climate of the time, which was mainly dictated by the beliefs of the current ruler, Queen Elizabeth. The time between Shakespeare's departure from school and his adult life is murky, but we know that in the late 1580's he emerged as a respected actor. The troupe he most often worked with, Pembroke's Men, regularly performed for the Queen and Shakespeare was a success. His acting ability was praised in books and newspapers at the time, and his plays were performed fairly consistently in the troupe. In 1582 the eighteen-year-old Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway, who was twenty-six and several months pregnant. There has been much speculation about why the marriage occurred, and some historians have suggested that Shakespeare was in love with someone else but was obliged to provide a father for Hathaway's baby. The details of the situation are probably unknowable.

In the early 1590's, most theatres closed because of an outbreak of the plague. Shakespeare used the time to work on his poetry, including some of his most famous sonnets. These must have appealed to the wealthy Earl of Southhampton, because in 1593 the Earl offered to be a patron to Shakespeare, supporting him financially so he could write. Though this time in Shakespeare's life was mainly marked by success (in 1597 he bought the second-largest house in Stratford) he was not free from tragedy. In 1596, his son Hamnet died at the age of eleven.

Twelfth Night, one of Shakespeare's most famous comedies, is generally considered to be relatively free of the editorial errors that often occurred in the printing Shakespeare's works. Like many of his plays, *Twelfth Night* was inspired by another play. Shakespeare was both an actor and an avid theatergoer, and he apparently looked to an Italian play called *Gl'Ingannati* (The Deceived Ones) for parts of the plot of *Twelfth Night*. He combined this play with a more sentimental Italian play to get the mixture of comedy and romance the reader finds in *Twelfth Night*. This practice of "borrowing", particularly in reference to Italian plays, was not uncommon for several centuries of English theatre.

The songs in the play, which keep the action light-hearted and boisterous, were also most likely either inspired by or directly taken from popular songs of the day. Though many of Shakespeare's themes, especially in the tragedies, are universal, often specific jokes or comments are so tied to Shakespeare's cultural moment that they are difficult for today's critic to decipher. The content of the play, and especially the jokes, also assumed a certain level of education for the audience. For example, Maria describes Malvolio's smiling face as like a map of the recently discovered Indies. It is unclear whether all of Shakespeare's audience would get these jokes, though usually his cultural references were well-known, at least for a short time.

It is unclear just how much of Shakespeare's fiction is derived from the facts of his life. His plays range in subject from royal scandal (*Macbeth*, *Richard III*) to simplistic tragic



love stories (*Romeo and Juliet*) to studies of individual psychology (*Hamlet*, *King Lear*) to social and political issues (*The Merchant of Venice*) to witty pranks (*Twelfth Night*). The striking variety of his plays is part of what makes him one of the most important English playwrights.

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Plot Summary

Orsino, the Duke of Illyria, is in love with Olivia, a countess. She has refused his love for a long time, because she is still mourning the death of her brother. Viola, a young woman, comes to Illyria after her own brother, Sebastian, drowns. When she hears that Olivia has withdrawn from the world, she decides to do the same, and dresses like a man, calling herself Cesario, to disguise herself. She finds work as a page for the Duke, who quickly comes to favor her above all other servants and friends. Meanwhile, Olivia's courtiers and her relative, Sir Toby Belch, get drunk and have long parties. He and her maid Maria are especially well-educated, and enjoy making jokes together. Sir Andrew Aguecheek is a fool, but they keep him around because he is rich. The Duke asks Cesario to woo Olivia on his behalf, but Cesario finds that "he" has fallen in love with the Duke! Olivia's clown, Feste, sometimes plays the part of a fool but often reveals himself to be quite intelligent. He makes complicated, cynical jokes that Olivia, in her melancholy state, can appreciate, but Malvolio, her servant, is too self-important to enjoy the clown's humor. Cesario comes to court on behalf of Orsino, and though Olivia rejects Orsino's love, she suddenly falls in love with Cesario. She gives Cesario a ring. When Cesario realizes that Olivia loves him, he has no idea what to do--his master loves Olivia, and "he" is a woman!

Sebastian is, in fact, still alive: he was rescued by Antonio, who has been his closest friend ever since. Sebastian prepares to go to Illyria, and Antonio follows him, even though he was once at war with the town and thus has many enemies there.

Andrew, Toby and Maria love to drink and have fun, so when Malvolio tries to get them in trouble with Olivia over their parties, they decide to punish him. Maria decides to write a letter in Olivia's handwriting and leave it where Malvolio will find it. The letter will make Malvolio believe Olivia loves him. She will instruct him to dress and act in a way that will annoy Olivia. The men go off to watch Malvolio discover the letter. While Cesario/Viola tries to keep her love for the Duke a secret, the pranksters meanwhile gather to watch Malvolio with another friend, Fabian. Malvolio falls for the trick, and the men laugh uncontrollably. They go with Maria to see Malvolio make a fool of himself in front of Olivia. Meanwhile, Olivia tries to convince Cesario to love her, but he says he cannot. Sebastian and Antonio arrive in town, and Antonio gives Sebastian his money and tells him to meet him at their inn later. When Olivia sees how strangely Malvolio is acting, she tells Toby, Fabian and Maria to deal with him. They put him in a prison, and everyone assumes he has lost his mind. Andrew wants to challenge Cesario to a duel (he loves Olivia, so he sees Cesario as a rival.) Fabian and Toby talk separately with Cesario and Andrew, making each of them absolutely terrified of each other--when, in fact, Andrew is a coward and Cesario, being a woman, doesn't know how to fight. Antonio comes upon the impending duel and tries to rescue Cesario, believing him to be Sebastian. Cesario, of course, has no idea who Antonio is, so when Antonio asks for his money back, Cesario ignores him. Antonio is arrested and taken away, believing Sebastian has betrayed him. Meanwhile, Sebastian is discovered by the clown, who believes he is Cesario and tries to take him to Olivia. Just then, Andrew and Toby arrive too, and begin beating Sebastian, also thinking he is Cesario. Olivia arrives and rescues



her "lover," and Sebastian, though confused, falls in love with her and agrees to marry her. Olivia is overjoyed that "Cesario" has changed his mind about her. They marry in a secret ceremony. Meanwhile, the jokers tease Malvolio. Furious and afraid, he writes a letter to Olivia and gives it to the clown to take to her. Everyone arrives at court at once. Olivia is angry with Cesario for breaking the promise of marriage that Sebastian made. The Duke angrily realizes that Olivia loves Cesario. Cesario admits that "he" loves the Duke. Finally, Sebastian comes in, and everyone is shocked at the identical twins. Cesario reveals that he is actually Viola dressed like a man. Olivia agrees to marry Sebastian, and Orsino agrees to marry Viola. When the clown brings Malvolio's letter to Olivia, Olivia realizes that he is not crazy, and summons him. When he gives her the letter he thought she wrote, she sees it was written by Maria. Furious, Malvolio storms out. Everyone else, however, is overjoyed at the way things have turned out.



Major Characters

Orsino, Duke of Illyria: A rich duke in love with the countess Olivia. He lets his passions control him: he refuses to believe that Olivia could not love him, since he loves her so much. He tries to force her to love him, ignoring her requests to be left alone. However, like most of the other characters, he does not seem to truly be in love, but only infatuated. He is happy to marry Viola, when only a moment before he thought she was a man. Though his central characteristic may be his love for Olivia, this love does not seem to be based on anything--he is not even allowed to speak with her during most of the play!

Olivia: An intelligent and solitary woman, who has devoted herself to her dead brother. She jokes expertly with the clown. She stands firm against the Duke, even when he tries to force her to love him. However, as soon as she meets 'Cesario' she falls hopelessly in love. She rashly sends her ring after him. Like Orsino, she does not really seem to love too deeply: once she finds out 'Cesario' is a woman, she quickly falls in love with 'his' twin brother.

Viola: Independent and strong like Olivia, Viola decides she would enjoy pretending to be a man ('Cesario') for a time, and without any hesitation, dresses up as one. She is intelligent and warm: she thoughtfully considers whether her beloved brother could still be alive. However, like most of the other characters, she falls in love easily, and as soon as she is in love she is dependent on the Duke. Nevertheless, she bravely persists in pretending to be Cesario, even when she is forced to woo a woman for the man she loves, or even fight a duel.

Sir Toby Belch: The most intelligent prankster of the group. Toby loves to stay up late and drink, but he is more of a con man than a fool: he drinks with Andrew's money, not his own. He is uncontrollable: he does not heed Olivia's wishes, ignores Malvolio's warnings, and almost gets himself and Andrew killed. He enjoys nothing more than a good joke, and particularly likes clever ones. Thus, when Maria comes up with the elaborate plan of writing a letter to make Malvolio think Olivia is in love with him, Toby is thrilled. He loves the idea of cleverly impersonating someone else in a letter. He even marries Maria, apparently because of this trick.

Maria : Olivia's maid. Just as intelligent as Olivia but far less serious. Maria loves jokes as much as Toby, but sometimes scorns his drunken parties. She likes to punish people who deserve it. She gets annoyed with Malvolio's superior attitude, so she decides to teach him a lesson. She can be as cruel as the others--she sits by as Malvolio is institutionalized--but she is not a fool.

Sir Andrew Aguecheek: The most foolish character in the play, despite what people might call the clown. He spends his money freely on people who are obviously taking advantage of him, believes Olivia loves him when there is absolutely no evidence of this, and only wants to fight with people as weak and cowardly as he is. He is constantly



trying to appear wise and gentlemanly and is constantly failing: his confused speeches are a major source of comedy for the play.

Feste the Clown: Though his job is to entertain the court, he is much more intelligent than he at first appears. Everyone clearly respects him for it: they do not generally treat him as a fool. They talk seriously with him, sometimes ask for his advice, enlist him in their pranks, give him money, and compliment him. Though usually his philosophical speeches are comical and light-hearted, he sometimes makes coherent points. For example, he tells Olivia to stop pining over her brother and get married while she is still young.

Malvolio: Olivia's servant. A pompous, holier-than-thou Puritan, Malvolio is disliked by nearly everyone. Sir Toby and his friends hate him for disdaining their drunken parties. Maria hates him for being so arrogant. Olivia likes him, if only because his solemn, stuffy attitude appeals to her melancholy mood. He cannot take a joke, and believes himself to be above his station. He is vain: he assumes Olivia must be in love with him. He falls for a ridiculous trick, thinking that Olivia wants to see him smiling like a fool and wearing garish clothing.

Sebastian: Viola's brother. He looks exactly like her, and she thought he drowned during a storm. In fact, he was rescued by Antonio and became friends with him. When he comes to court, Sebastian causes great confusion, because everyone thinks he is Cesario (Viola disguised as a man). Olivia assumes he is Cesario, who she loves, and though he doesn't understand why she is treating him as if she knows him, he loves her too, and agrees to marry her.

Minor Characters

Captain: Viola's servant. He disguises Viola as Cesario, and agrees to keep quiet about it. Later, it is discovered that Malvolio has done something with him, though exactly what is never revealed.

Antonio: Friend of Sebastian, who rescued him from the storm. He was Sebastian's closest friend for three months, and when Sebastian left for Orsino's court, Antonio could not help but follow him, even though he was, in the past, an enemy of Orsino and was therefore taking a risk by going. He gives Sebastian his money, and when he meets Cesario and, mistaking him for Sebastian, asks for his money back, he is shocked that Cesario acts as if he doesn't know him. Antonio clearly loves Sebastian dearly, and is deeply hurt by this 'betrayal.'

Fabian : Member of Olivia's court, and friend of Sir Toby. He participates in the joke on Malvolio, and finally tells the truth about the joke to Olivia and the others at the end. He explains that although their joke was cruel, they were injured because of it also, so they should not be further punished.



Objects/Places

Illyria: A town where Orsino is a Duke and Olivia is a countess. Viola comes there after her brother Sebastian apparently drowns, and Sebastian comes there after he is rescued from a storm.

Antonio's money: Antonio gives Sebastian his money out of love and trust. Thus, when Antonio asks for the money back, he is shocked and betrayed when Cesario (who Antonio has mistaken for Sebastian) seems to not even know him.

letter: Maria, angry with Malvolio because he spoils their fun, decides to write a letter that will make him think Olivia is in love with him. The letter tells Malvolio dress and act in a way that will infuriate Olivia. Malvolio takes the letter's advice so far that he appears insane, and Maria and her friends happily commit him.



Quotes

Quote 1: "O, when mine eyes did see Olivia first, methought she purg'd the air of pestilence...and my desires, like fell and cruel hounds, e'er since pursue me." Act 1, Scene 1, line 20

Quote 2: "What else may hap, to time I will commit; only shape thou thy silence to my wit." Act 1, Scene 2, line 64

Quote 3: "I'll confine myself no finer than I am." Act 1, Scene 3, line 10

Quote 4: "Methinks sometimes I have no more wit than a Christian or an ordinary man has." Act 1, Scene 3, line 82

Quote 5: "Whoe'er I woo, myself would be his wife." Act 1, Scene 4, line 42

Quote 6: "Many a good hanging prevents a bad marriage; and for turning away, let summer bear it out." Act 1, Scene 5, line 19

Quote 7: "Do you not hear, fellows? Take away the lady." Act 1, Scene 5, line 37

Quote 8: "Infirmity, that decays the wise, doth ever make the better fool." Act 1, Scene 5, line 74

Quote 9: "The fool shall look after the madman." Act 1, Scene 5, line 139

Quote 10: "How now? Even so quickly may one catch the plague?" Act 1, Scene 5, line 298

Quote 11: "I am the man: if it be so, as 'tis, poor lady, she were better love a dream." Act 2, Scene 2, line 25

Quote 12: "I know not: but I know, to be up late, is to be up late." Act 2, Scene 3, line 3

Quote 13: "I shall never begin if I hold my peace." Act 2, Scene 3, line 69

Quote 14: "Dost thou think because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?" Act 2, Scene 3, line 115

Quote 15: "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." Act 2, Scene 4, line 16

Quote 16: "make no compare between that love a woman can bear me and that I owe Olivia." Act 2, Scene 4, line 103

Quote 17: "Now is the woodcock near the gin" Act 2, Scene 5, line 84



Quote 18: "Jove knows I love; but who? Lips, do not move, No man must know." Act 2, Scene 5, line 98

Quote 19: "I could marry this wench [Maria] for this device." Act 2, Scene 5, line 182

Quote 20: "I do live by the church, for I do live at my house, and my house doth stand by the church." Act 3, Scene 1, line 5

Quote 21: "This fellow is wise enough to play the fool, and to do that well, craves a kind of wit..." Act 3, Scene 1, line 61

Quote 22: "You do think you are not what you are." Act 3, Scene 1, line 141

Quote 23: "Why, this is very midsummer madness." Act 3, Scene 4, line 55

Quote 24: "Youth, whatsoever thou art, thou art but a scurvy fellow." Act 3, Scene 4, line 149

Quote 25: "This will so fright them both that they will kill each other by the look." Act 3, Scene 4, line 196

Quote 26: "I'll ride your horse as well as I ride you." Act 3, Scene 4, line 295

Quote 27: "I am as well in my wits, fool as thou art." Act 4, Scene 2, line 91

Quote 28: "no: though it please you to be one of my friends." Act 5, Scene 1, line 24

Quote 29: "And I...to do you rest, a thousand deaths would die." Act 5, Scene 1, line 130

Quote 30: "Since you called me master for so long, here is my hand; you shall from this time be your master's mistress." Act 5, Scene 1, line 322

Quote 31: "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." Act 5, Scene 1, line 403



Topic Tracking: Disguise

Act 1, Scene 1

Disguise 1: Olivia seems to want to disguise herself to the point of disappearing: her pain is that great. She, like Viola, lost a brother, and she wants to devote her entire being to his memory. She tries to use her body to mourn for him ("watering" his memory with her tears) and almost seems to be punishing herself by covering her face and staying away from other men.

Act 1, Scene 2

Disguise 2: Viola, for unexplained reasons, wants to escape from the world, so she decides to pretend to be a lowly male servant. Interestingly, she takes on this new, very different identity partly because she identifies strongly with Olivia, who is a woman with a similar temperament to her own.

Act 1, Scene 5

Disguise 3: The clown disguises himself as an idiot, but no one is entirely fooled. He seems to enjoy countering a seemingly ridiculous statement with one that appears profound. He is thus able to live as a fool while entertaining intelligent people like Olivia and Maria.

Disguise 4: The clown disguises his real and reasonable advice to Olivia in a speech that seems to make no sense. He effortlessly combines puns and wordplay with true wisdom, and plays the clown while also commanding respect from Olivia (he is supposed to be her lowliest servant, but he is giving her advice.) She tries to send him away, but she also calls him "sir."

Disguise 5: Olivia wishes to disguise her love for Cesario, so she tells Malvolio that Cesario left the ring with her, when she is in fact giving Cesario her own ring as a token of love. She assumes that Cesario will understand what she is doing and come back to woo her in secret, even though his job is to woo her on behalf of the Duke. Though she is unafraid to be honest about her feelings for the Duke, she is apparently uncomfortable with proclaiming her new feelings for Cesario.

Act 2, Scene 1

Disguise 6: Sebastian says that he and his sister looked remarkably similar, and since Viola has disguised herself as a man, she now (unbeknownst to any of them) looks exactly like him. This will account for much of the comedy later in the play. Mistaken identity and gender confusion are, of course, integral to the way the play develops.

Act 2, Scene 4



Disguise 7: Because of her disguise as Cesario, Viola is able to make a poignant speech about love and the nature of women. Orsino, a man, claims to understand women, saying that they are incapable of loving someone as deeply as men are. Viola knows this isn't true, because she has listened to Orsino complain about his love for days, while suffering silently herself. She tells Orsino that men might be more vocal in their declarations of love, but women are just as affected by love as men are. Her speech is all the more effective because Orsino doesn't know who she is, but the audience does.

Act 3, Scene 1

Disguise 8: Cesario sees that the clown, who plays a fool though he is surely wise in some ways, has more freedom than most people at court. A wise man who falls into foolishness is easy to criticize, but a fool who is sometimes wise is looked upon as very entertaining and even admirable. Thus the clown, who is probably just a normal man, acts like a fool and gets respect for it that he might never have had otherwise.

Act 3, Scene 4

Disguise 9: Viola's disguise has made her look exactly like her brother. Interestingly, the one who reveals this fact (thus unraveling both Viola's disguise and her separation from her brother, as well as Olivia's love for her and her love for Orsino) is Antonio. Antonio is perhaps the most constant, honest character in the play. While most of the characters treat their friends and lovers as means to an end or as part of a joke, Antonio loves Sebastian, and feels deeply betrayed when he thinks Sebastian has used him. His feelings are perhaps the deepest and most true of all the characters, (he never hides them) so it is no surprise that he ends all of the jokes and disguises.

Act 4, Scene 2

Disguise 10: While the other characters have disguised themselves for some purpose, both Malvolio and Sebastian have become "disguised" against their will. Malvolio has made himself appear to be a madman, and he acted the part so well that now he cannot convince anyone that he's sane. Sebastian, because he looks so much like Viola/Cesario, has been beaten, and has gotten Antonio sent to prison without any money. Both men are unable to change their situations or even understand what is going on, because they do not even realize they are disguised.



Topic Tracking: Jokes

Act 1, Scene 3

Jokes 1: Shakespeare enjoys wordplay, and jokes that hinge on word meanings are common in the play. They often indicate which characters are intelligent and which are fools: Andrew misunderstands the meaning of "accost," for example, while Maria, and even Toby the drunk, do not.

Jokes 2: Sir Andrew often takes seriously what others would joke about, with humorous results. He wishes, for example, that he had not spent so much time bear-baiting. His wish is so earnest and heart-felt, and yet so ridiculous (bear-baiting is an extremely foolish pastime) that the audience cannot help but laugh at him. In contrast, Toby, who is just as much of a drunk, seems to at least have a minimal education.

Jokes 3: Sometimes it is unclear whether Sir Toby likes Andrew, or whether he just keeps him around to make fun of him. He leads Andrew to brag about his talents, and then asks him to display those talents so that he can watch and laugh. Toby is entertained, and Andrew has no idea he is being laughed at.

Act 1, Scene 5

Jokes 4: The clown's jokes, like those of Toby, reveal him to be more intelligent than he seems to be. While Toby and Maria seem to enjoy exposing others (especially Sir Andrew) as fools, the clown turns his humorous criticism on the whole world. He suggests that wisdom is sometimes mistaken for foolishness, and vice versa. In fact, he even suggests that wisdom and foolishness might, at times, be the same thing.

Act 2, Scene 3

Jokes 5: Toby is a drunk, but he is not a fool. He thus is able to make fun of himself and Andrew by pretending that their all-night drinking binges are noble and wise activities. Andrew, on the other hand, does not understand this kind of joke. He explains that what they do is actually pretty simple: they have all-night drinking binges. The audience thus laughs both at Toby's overly complex speeches and Andrew's overly simple ones.

Jokes 6: One of the most common types of joke in the play is the confusion of a compliment with an insult. Andrew does this more often than anyone else, and Toby sometimes leads him to it. Toby, for example, calls a song "contagious," (perhaps meaning "catchy") and Andrew heartily agrees, calling it "sweet and contagious." Toby, who is educated and understands subtle meanings of words, is teasing Andrew, but simple Andrew doesn't see that.

Jokes 7: Maria's ability to play a good joke on Malvolio earns her the respect of Toby and Andrew. Toby, whose entire purpose in life seems to be to have fun and make fun of



people, admires the special brand of cleverness it takes to play a trick. Andrew finds it even more impressive: he tends to think of practical joking as a form of wisdom.

Act 2, Scene 5

Jokes 8: Maria decides to play a joke on Malvolio because she is fed up with his holy, pompous, superior attitude. She wants to teach him a lesson, and knows that there is no better way to do it than to make Malvolio himself reveal what a fool he is. Since he acts so superior, she wants to bring him down to their level, and tells him to act like a clown, wearing yellow stockings and smiling like an idiot.

Act 3, Scene 2

Jokes 9: Toby has been able to live off of Andrew's stupidity for some time now, while entertaining himself by playing jokes on Andrew. Toby and Fabian do not feel guilty about playing even the most extravagant trick: they incite him to fight in a duel, for example, even though he may get injured or killed. Maria feels the same way about Malvolio: he is such a fool that he deserves to be exposed as one. The group enjoys exposing people for what they really are: Malvolio is a lovesick idiot who pretends to be a wise nobleman, and Andrew is a foolish coward who pretends to be a brave gentleman.

Act 5, Scene 1

Jokes 10: The joke on Malvolio is finally explained by Fabian, who reasons that since the pranksters were all injured by the trick as well, there is no reason to punish them: they have already been punished. Olivia understands that, no matter what happened to Toby, Fabian and Andrew, Malvolio was "notoriously abused." The audience would have to agree--Malvolio was kept imprisoned in darkness for some time. However, since Malvolio cannot see the humor in the situation, and remains at the end of the play the only bitter and angry character (everyone else has something to be joyful about) the audience cannot feel too sorry for him. When he runs away, swearing revenge, his rage is merely comical.



Topic Tracking: Romance

Act 1, Scene 1

Romance 1: Orsino loves Olivia so much that he cannot imagine she doesn't love him back. Thus even when he hears that she is mourning her brother and will not see any man, he doesn't give up. Clearly, he has been rejected many times, but he is deaf to her protests. He sees romance as just another intense emotion, and believes that her grief could easily turn into love for him.

Act 1, Scene 4

Romance 2: Viola, who has disguised herself in order to get away from people, has fallen in love with the Duke only three days after meeting him. She now finds herself in the comical position of having to court Olivia, the woman the Duke loves, because she is (for some reason) unwilling to reveal she is a woman.

Act 1, Scene 5

Romance 3: Olivia falls in love just as easily as the Duke and Viola did. While she, like the others, is disturbed and pained at first, she quickly decides that since it has happened, she must accept it. It seems that she has never been in love, because she is surprised at how quickly it happened to her, and wonders, "Even so quickly may one catch the plague?"

Act 2, Scene 1

Romance 4: Antonio loves Sebastian in a very different way than most of the other characters love. While his affection is presumably not romantic, Antonio cares deeply for Sebastian, and even wants to be his servant. His affection is not based on beauty, infatuation or typical "romantic" behavior: he simply wants to be with Sebastian, and to help him in any way he can.

Act 2, Scene 2

Romance 5: Viola ponders the silliness of love. Like Olivia and the Duke, she sees love as a kind of painful mess, and almost wishes she could be rid of it. She believes that their gender has something to do with her and Olivia's troubled lives: it is the nature of women, she says, to fall in love easily.

Act 2, Scene 4

Romance 6: Viola painfully hides her love for the Duke, even when he asks her directly if she has ever been in love. Her discomfort and efforts to be vague are comical: she will not lie, so she ends up saying that she loved someone a lot like the Duke. The Duke assumes this person was a woman, and reasons that any woman who looked like him was not worth Cesario's (Viola's) love.



Romance 7: Orsino offers his advice on romance to Cesario. His advice is amusing both because he doesn't realize he's talking to someone who loves him, and because he himself is such a failure at love. Earlier, Viola's captain told her that Orsino has been unmarried for many years, and has been in love with Olivia for a long time, though she has consistently told him that she cannot love him and will never marry him.

Romance 8: Viola, pretending to be Cesario, claims that women love just as deeply as men do. She disagrees with Orsino, which turns out to be significant because, while he has a change of heart at the end of the play, falling in love with Viola, and Olivia, too, substitutes Sebastian for Viola, Viola herself remains constant. She falls in love with Orsino the moment she meets him, and stays in love for the remainder of the play.

Act 2, Scene 5

Romance 9: Maria anticipates what kind of romance will appeal to Malvolio, and her letter suits him perfectly. Since he is so vain that he assumes Olivia must be in love with him anyway, Maria only has to write a few romantic clichés in order to make him sure of it. He enjoys her intentionally silly babbling, because it flatters him and allows him to think of himself as a nobleman. He is enchanted with this idea, and fantasizes in a comical way about his romantic life with Olivia.

Act 5, Scene 1

Romance 10: As with most romantic comedies, the romance, which was at the beginning of the play the cause of so much pain, ends up the cause of great joy. No love is thwarted in this play--except, perhaps, for that of Malvolio, but his interest in Olivia always seemed to stem more from her wealth and position than anything else. Orsino's long-lasting affection for Olivia is quickly replaced by love for Viola, and Olivia easily transfers her love from Cesario/Viola to Sebastian. The play is therefore not so much about love as it is about romance: infatuation, courtship, marriage, etc.



Act 1, Scene 1

Orsino, the Duke of Illyria (what is now Yugoslavia), is talking with his servants. He wants to hear music, because he believes it will cure him of his lovesickness. A moment later, however, he no longer wants to hear the music, and he is amazed at how changeable love makes him. He is in love with the countess Olivia: "O, when mine eyes did see Olivia first, methought she purg'd the air of pestilence...And my desires, like fell and cruel hounds, E'er since pursue me." Act 1, Scene 1, line 20 His servant Valentine comes back from visiting Olivia, and Orsino eagerly asks him what Olivia said to him. Valentine says that Olivia would not see him, but she sent her servant to tell Valentine that she will mourn for her dead brother for seven years, and see no one. The Duke hopes that she will transfer her devotion and love from her brother to himself. In the meantime, his love for her seems even stronger.

Topic Tracking: Romance 1

Topic Tracking: Disguise 1



Act 1, Scene 2

Viola comes to Illyria with a captain and a crew of sailors. She wonders why she should be here, when her brother, who drowned, is in heaven. She wonders if he might possibly still be alive, and the captain tells her that the last he saw of her brother during the storm where he was lost, the man was clinging to a piece of wood. It is possible, therefore, that her brother might have floated that way to shore. Viola talks about Illyria with the captain, who grew up near there. The captain reports that the Orsino is in love with Olivia, who has refused to see any men since her brother and father both died. Viola wishes she could be Olivia's servant, so she could be in hiding for a while, until she was ready to be herself again. The captain protests that that would be difficult, since Olivia won't even see the Duke, let alone an average person. Viola asks the captain to disguise her as man, so that she can serve Orsino. She says she will be a great servant, and tells him to keep her identity a secret. "What else may hap, to time I will commit; only shape thou thy silence to my wit." Act 1, Scene 2, line 64

Topic Tracking: Disguise 2



Act 1, Scene 3

Sir Toby Belch, Olivia's drunken relative, talks with Maria, her maid. He says that Olivia is overreacting to her brother's death: she should be enjoying life more. Maria ignores him, telling him that he has to stop staying out so late--Olivia doesn't like it. Toby brushes this off, teasing Maria and saying that he will do whatever he wants. He will not pretend to be better than he is: "I'll confine myself no finer than I am." Act 1, Scene 3, line 10 Maria says that Olivia has been talking about Sir Toby's foolishness and, particularly, Sir Andrew Aguecheek, the silly man he has brought to court, who has fallen in love with Olivia. Sir Toby protests that Sir Andrew is rich, but Maria retorts that he spends all his money so quickly that it doesn't matter how rich he is. Sir Toby claims that Sir Andrew is a good musician and speaks several languages well, but Maria isn't convinced: she says his only talents are arguing, being a coward, and generally being a fool. She adds that people say that Andrew gets drunk with Toby every night. Toby protests that they drink toasts to Olivia. Just then Andrew arrives, and he clearly is a complete fool. He tries to compliment Maria by calling her a shrew, and doesn't understand when Sir Toby tries to explain who she is. Fed up, Maria starts to leave, and Toby urges Andrew to try to keep her there. She teases him without him realizing it.

Topic Tracking: Jokes 1

Once Maria is gone, the men begin to talk about drinking. Sir Toby is surprised that Andrew doesn't have a cup of sweet wine. Sir Andrew jokes wittily about it, then says, "Methinks sometimes I have no more wit than a Christian or an ordinary man has." Act 1, Scene 3, line 82 He says he is going home, and when Toby asks him "Porquoi?" he doesn't even understand this simple French word ("why?") and makes himself look even sillier by wishing aloud he hadn't spent so much time doing foolish things instead of learning. Toby teases him about his hair, telling him that it would have curled if he had had a better education, and Andrew takes him seriously.

Topic Tracking: Jokes 2

Andrew says he is leaving because Olivia will never love him: he cannot compete with Orsino. Toby says that isn't true: Olivia will never love Orsino. Andrew abruptly decides he will stay another month, and comments on how strange his own mind is. Toby asks him if he is a good dancer, and he says he is. Toby wonders why he should keep his talents hidden, and they begin to dance.

Topic Tracking: Jokes 3



Act 1, Scene 4

Valentine and Viola (now dressed as a young man, "Cesario") talk. Valentine is amazed at how much the Duke likes "Cesario," though he has only known him three days. Orsino has no idea that Cesario is actually a woman. Orsino arrives and speaks to Cesario privately, telling him that since he already knows him better than anyone, Cesario should go to Olivia and try to get her to see the Duke. Cesario protests, saying that Olivia will never let him visit her, but the Duke tells him to be as rude as he has to be in order to get to see her. Plus, he says, Cesario's youth will make him more appealing to Olivia. In fact, Orsino muses, Cesario is so young that he almost looks more like a woman than a man. He tells Cesario to help him win Olivia, and promises him whatever he wants. Hearing this, Cesario says to himself, "Whoe'er I woo, myself would be his wife." Act 1, Scene 4, line 42 Cesario, or rather Viola, has fallen in love with the Duke.

Topic Tracking: Romance 2



Act 1, Scene 5

Maria enters with Feste the clown. Maria is trying to force the clown to tell her where he has been--otherwise, she says, she will not defend him when Olivia gets angry with him for being away. The clown says he doesn't care what happens to him: if she kills him, he won't have anything to fear, because he'll be dead. Maria seems pleased with this reasoning. She asks him what will happen if he is banished, and he says, "Many a good hanging prevents a bad marriage; and for turning away, let summer bear it out." Act 1, Scene 5, line 19 Maria and the clown joke back and forth, and he compliments her wit. Olivia arrives with Malvolio The clown suggests that sometimes people who seem wise are fools, and vice versa.

Topic Tracking: Jokes 4

Topic Tracking: Disguise 3

Olivia tells her servants to take the fool away, and the clown says, "Do you not hear, fellows? Take away the lady." Act 1, Scene 5, line 37 Olivia protests that she is not interested in his jokes, but the clown reasons with her. He says that no one is completely a fool or completely wise, just as no one is completely good or bad. He tells her, in a seemingly nonsensical speech, that she should give up mourning her brother and get married while she is still young.

Topic Tracking: Disguise 4

Olivia, now interested in the clown, allows him to prove that she is a fool. He tells her that since she believes her brother is in heaven, she is a fool for being sad about his death. Olivia, enjoying this, asks Malvolio if he likes it as well. Malvolio says the clown will keep improving as he gets older, because "Infirmity, that decays the wise, doth ever make the better fool." Act 1, Scene 5, line 74 The clown replies that while Sir Toby knows the clown is not wise, he will not say that Malvolio is not a fool. Annoyed, Malvolio wonders how Olivia could be entertained by such a boring idiot. Olivia says that it's silly to get angry at a fool--she thinks Malvolio takes himself too seriously. Maria enters, announcing that a young man is there to see Olivia, and Sir Toby is making him wait at the gate. Olivia instructs Malvolio to find out who the man is: if he is from Orsino, Malvolio should make him go away, no matter what it takes. As Malvolio leaves, the clown notices Toby coming, and comments on how weak his brain is. Toby is too drunk to even understand that Olivia wants to know who is at the gate, so when he leaves, she sends the clown to look after him. She is afraid he will "drown" himself. The clown leaves, commenting, "The fool shall look after the madman." Act 1, Scene 5, line 139 Malvolio returns, saying that the young man outside refuses to leave. Olivia asks what kind of man this is, and Malvolio says he is hardly a man at all--his voice is high, and he looks very young. Olivia tells him to let the man in, and calls for Maria, telling her to throw a veil over Olivia's face. Viola, dressed as Cesario, enters. Olivia will not say whether or not she is the lady of the house. Cesario wants to make his speech for the Duke and leave, but Olivia questions him. Cesario will not say who he is. Olivia is not interested in the speech, but Cesario protests that he can only recite it a certain way,



because he has it memorized. Olivia counters that this means the speech will probably be false. She let Cesario in because she was interested in him, not what he had to say. Cesario protests: he really has to make this speech, and he has to say it to Olivia privately. He begins his speech, and Olivia ridicules his tired cliches. He begs her to reveal her face, and she finally does. Cesario, trying to be polite, says she is beautiful, and then tries to steer the conversation back to how much Orsino loves her. Olivia merely says that Orsino already knows that she cannot love him, even though she knows he is a good man. Cesario says that if he loved Olivia the way Orsino does, he can't imagine how she could refuse him, since he would devote his life to his love of her. Interested, Olivia asks him about his background again. Cesario is vague. Olivia tells him to go, and tries to give him money, which he will not take. When he leaves, Olivia realizes that she has fallen in love with Cesario. She wonders, "How now? Even so quickly may one catch the plague?" Act 1, Scene 5, line 298

Topic Tracking: Romance 3

Olivia calls in Malvolio, and tells him to take a ring left by the Cesario on behalf of the Count back to Cesario: she doesn't want it. She says she will tell Cesario why if he comes back tomorrow.

Topic Tracking: Disguise 5



Act 2, Scene 1

Antonio and Sebastian talk. Sebastian is leaving, and Antonio asks him to stay or allow him to come with. Sebastian protests that he must go on his voyage alone, and will not say where he is going. He explains that when Antonio rescued him from a shipwreck, his sister (Viola) drowned. Sebastian praises his sister: she was said to look just like him, and was very intelligent. He says he is going to Orsino's court, and after he leaves, Antonio says to himself that if he did not have enemies there, he would follow him. Then he decides his love is so strong that he will follow Sebastian anyway.

Topic Tracking: Disguise 6

Topic Tracking: Romance 4



Act 2, Scene 2

Malvolio approaches Cesario to give him the ring. Cesario, seeing what Olivia is trying to do, pretends that he did give Olivia the ring, and refuses to take it back. Malvolio throws the ring down, saying that if Cesario wants it, there it is. Left alone, Cesario (now speaking without disguise, as Viola) slowly realizes that Olivia is in love with him. "I am the man: if it be so, as 'tis, poor lady, she were better love a dream." Act 2, Scene 2, line 25 Disturbed, Cesario wonders what will become of this mess: the Duke loves Olivia, Olivia loves Cesario/Viola, and Cesario/Viola loves the Duke.

Topic Tracking: Romance 5



Act 2, Scene 3

Andrew and Toby talk. Toby says that staying up late is really getting up early, and getting up early is healthy. Andrew, who doesn't understand this joke, replies, "I know not: but I know, to be up late, is to be up late." Act 2, Scene 3, line 3 Toby jokes that what they do is wise and healthy, and Andrew, taking him seriously, points out the obvious: they stay up late and spend their time eating and drinking.

Topic Tracking: Jokes 5

The clown enters, and Andrew says that the clown sings very well. Andrew recalls the clown's speech from the night before: the clown made up the names of several "philosophers" and then made up fake quotes for them. Andrew, not realizing that the names and quotes were fake, thinks that the clown is very intelligent. The clown answers with another non-sensical speech. Toby and Andrew request a song, and the clown obliges. He sings about how fleeting love is, and how important it is to catch love while one is young. Toby and Andrew agree that the song is lovely, and ask him to sing again: this time, they want to hear the song, "Thou knave," which begins, "Hold thy peace, thou knave." The clown quips, "I shall never begin if I hold my peace." Act 2, Scene 3, line 69

Topic Tracking: Jokes 6

Maria comes in, complaining about how loud the men are. Toby ignores her, yelling happy nonsense. Andrew compliments Toby, while unconsciously insulting himself (he says he sings "natural," which is a synonym for "fool.") Malvolio rushes in, demanding how they could have so little respect as to be so loud in the middle of the night. He tells Toby that, even though he is related to Olivia, she will be forced to throw him out if he continues to behave this way. Toby ignores him, and he and the clown sing together. Toby asks Malvolio, "Dost thou think because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?" Act 2, Scene 3, line 115 Malvolio tells Maria that if she serves the men any more wine, he will tell Olivia. After he leaves, Maria waves his threat away. Toby tries to get Andrew to challenge Malvolio to a duel, but Maria protests: she will put Malvolio in his place. She explains that he is sometimes a Puritan, and is often arrogant and pretentious. She says she will write a letter that she will leave for Malvolio to find secretly. In the letter, which she will have written in Olivia's handwriting (their script looks nearly identical) she will describe how much she loves a certain person, and then make it clear that the person is Malvolio. Maria invites Andrew, the clown and Toby to watch Malvolio's reaction when he finds the letter. Maria leaves, and Andrew and Toby praise her. Andrew says he will be in trouble if Olivia does not fall in love with him soon, but Toby tells him not to worry: she will love him soon enough, and in the mean time, Andrew should send for more money. They continue drinking.

Topic Tracking: Jokes 7



Act 2, Scene 4

Orsino wants to hear music. He asks to hear a certain song, and sends for Feste to sing it. He tells Cesario to remember him whenever he falls in love: "For such as I am, all true lovers are, unstead and skittish in all motions else, save in the constant image of the creature that is beloved." Act 2, Scene 4, line 16 When Cesario says that the song the musicians are playing reminds him of love, the Duke asks if Cesario has ever been in love. He says he has: with someone who looked rather like the Duke, and was about the same age. The Duke protests that such a manly woman was not worthy of Cesario.

Topic Tracking: Romance 6

The Duke says that men should be older than the women they love, because female beauty is so short-lived, and because men cannot commit to stable relationships until they are older.

Topic Tracking: Romance 7

The clown enters and sings a song about a man who died from love. The clown leaves, telling Orsino that he is so moody he should be sent to live at sea, because the ocean is just as inconstant. Orsino tells Cesario to go again to Olivia, telling her that she must love him--he will not take no for an answer. Cesario protests that if a woman loved Orsino as much as Orsino loves Olivia, Orsino would nevertheless have to tell this woman he could not love her: shouldn't Olivia be able to do the same thing? Orsino protests, saying, "make no compare between that love a woman can bear me and that I owe Olivia." Act 2, Scene 4, line 103 Cesario says that women's love is indeed comparable to men's love. He knows because his sister loved a man so deeply that she became ill and died. Cesario finally agrees to go to Olivia again.

Topic Tracking: Romance 8

Topic Tracking: Disguise 7



Act 2, Scene 5

Toby and Andrew enter with Fabian, a member of Olivia's household. Fabian says he wouldn't miss the joke on Malvolio for the world: Malvolio, a pious Puritan, got Fabian into trouble with Olivia over bear-baiting. Maria comes in, and tells them to hide because Malvolio is coming down the path. Malvolio comes in, thinking about whether Olivia might not love him: she treats him differently from the rest of the servants, after all. He considers that other noblewomen have married servants like himself, and thinks about what it would be like to be her husband. Listening to this, Andrew, Fabian and Toby are so amazed and hysterical that they can hardly keep quiet. Malvolio imagines how wonderful it would be to treat Sir Toby as below him, instructing him to stop drinking, and Toby almost jumps out of hiding to attack him. Malvolio imagines himself able to forbid Toby from seeing Andrew anymore. Malvolio then sees the letter Maria has dropped there for him to find, and picks it up. The hidden men watch expectantly, and Fabian whispers, "Now is the woodcock near the gin" Act 2, Scene 5, line 84 Malvolio sees that the letter is written in handwriting similar to Olivia's, and he assumes the letter is from her. Amazed, he reads the beginning: "Jove knows I love; but who? Lips, do not move, No man must know." Act 2, Scene 5, line 98 Malvolio reads that the writer loves someone called "M.O.A.I," and to the delight of his hidden observers, begins to puzzle out what those letters might mean. He reasons that "M" is the first letter of his name, and the other letters, though out of order, are also in his name. Toby and his friends can hardly contain their laughter. The letter tells Malvolio to act better than those around him, and treat them rudely. He should also, it says, wear yellow stockings in the cross-gartered style. Overjoyed, Malvolio reads the end of the letter, which tells him to smile constantly. Malvolio runs off to change his stockings, and Sir Toby emerges with his friends, saying, "I could marry this wench [Maria] for this device." Act 2, Scene 5, line 182 Maria comes in, eager to know whether the trick worked. They tell her it went off perfectly, and she explains that Olivia hates yellow stockings, and since she is so depressed, she hates people who smile a lot. Malvolio will try to make her like him, and his actions will only make her dislike him.

Topic Tracking: Romance 9

Topic Tracking: Jokes 8



Act 3, Scene 1

Viola, disguised as Cesario, questions the clown, and he answers her comically. When he asks if he is a "churchman," he tells him, "I do live by the church, for I do live at my house, and my house doth stand by the church." Act 3, Scene 1, line 5 The clown puns expertly, then says that words are so easy to manipulate, so easy to use for bad purposes, that he is afraid to use them. When asked if he is Olivia's fool, he says that Olivia will have no fool until she has a husband. Cesario gives him money, and the clown tells him he hopes he grows a beard. (Cesario, of course, looks like a very womanish man, since he is actually a woman.) Cesario sends the clown to ask if Olivia will see him, and then thinks to himself about the clown. "This fellow is wise enough to play the fool, and to do that well, craves a kind of wit..." Act 3, Scene 1, line 61

Topic Tracking: Disguise 8

Toby and Andrew appear, and speak with foolish politeness to Cesario. They go in to see Olivia together. Cesario speaks poetically to Olivia, and Andrew notes each fancy word he speaks, memorizing them so he can use them later. Then Olivia and Cesario are left alone. Olivia worries that she was too forward with him, and that he is now judging her because of it. Cesario simply tells her that he pities her. She grasps at this, saying that pity is like love, but he protests, telling her that people sometimes pity even their enemies. Olivia tries to accept this as cheerfully as she can, and tells him to go and find happiness elsewhere. She then asks him what he thinks of her, and he tells her, "You do think you are not what you are." Act 3, Scene 1, line 141 Olivia counters that she believes this to be true of him too, and he agrees. Olivia realizes she loves Cesario and there is nothing she can do about that--she can't conceal it. She tries to convince him to love her back, but he says that his heart belongs to no woman. He starts to leave, and she tells him to come back again--maybe she can convince him to love her.

Act 3, Scene 2

Andrew tells Toby and Fabian that he is leaving. He knows that Olivia will never love him--he has seen her with Cesario, and knows she is in love with him. Toby and Fabian protests that Olivia was only nice to Cesario to make Andrew jealous. Toby suggests that Andrew fight Cesario to show how much he loves Olivia. Andrew follows their advice, and runs off to write a challenge to Cesario. Toby and Fabian laugh about how much money Andrew has spent on Toby. Toby laughingly says that Andrew is such a coward that it will be amusing to see how this duel goes. Maria comes in laughing about how ridiculous Malvolio is acting: he is wearing the yellow stockings, and smiling like a maniac. Maria leads Toby and Fabian to where Malvolio is.

Topic Tracking: Jokes 9



Act 3, Scene 3

Sebastian and Antonio talk. Antonio has followed Sebastian to Illyria, and though Sebastian at first felt like he was troubling Antonio, he now sees that Antonio enjoys being with him. Sebastian suggests sightseeing in the town, but Antonio tells him that he has many enemies there. He and his own townspeople took goods from Illyria, and Antonio's specific part in this is well known in Illyria. Antonio gives Sebastian his money in case he wants to buy a souvenir, and tells him he will meet him later at their inn.



Act 3, Scene 4

Olivia asks for Malvolio, saying his solemn attitude suits her depressed mood, and Maria says he is coming, but is acting very strangely. Indeed, Malvolio comes in and smiles happily in his ridiculous clothing. Olivia tells him she is sad, and he ignores her, responding with suggestive comments. Maria asks him what is wrong with him, and he insults her (as the letter instructed him to do.) He quotes from the letter, and Olivia of course has no idea what he is talking about. She murmurs, "Why, this is very midsummer madness." Act 3, Scene 4, line 55 Just then, a servant reports that Cesario is back. Olivia goes off to meet him, telling Maria to tell Toby to take care of Malvolio. Left alone for a moment, Malvolio muses about how well everything is turning out. He believes that Olivia's concern for his health means that she loves him (she merely worries that he is insane.) Toby, Fabian, and Maria come in. They try to speak with Malvolio, but he haughtily refuses. Malvolio acts so strange that they wonder if he is possessed. Toby desperately tries to control him, saying that the others are just making him more excited. Malvolio gets angry and runs away, leaving the others to marvel at how well their trick has worked. They agree to continue the game until they get sick of it, at which time they'll explain what they've done. Just then, Andrew comes in. He is very proud of the letter he has written to Cesario, which is full of nonsense and unintentional meanings. It begins, "Youth, whatsoever thou art, thou art but a scurvy fellow." Act 3, Scene 4, line 149

Sir Toby and the others compliment this ridiculous and clumsy sentence, then make fun of him behind his back. Toby offers to give the letter to Cesario, and tells Andrew to swear at Cesario whenever he sees him, in order to scare him. After Andrew leaves, Toby tells the others that he will have to rewrite the letter from Andrew. Toby can tell that Cesario is an educated gentleman, and if he were to receive Andrew's letter, he would recognize that it was from an idiot, and would ignore it. He will write a truly frightening letter, and then report back to Andrew that Cesario is a terrifying warrior. Toby says, "This will so fright them both that they will kill each other by the look." Act 3, Scene 4, line 196 Olivia and Cesario arrive, and Toby decides to hide, thinking about what he will say to Cesario once Olivia's gone. Olivia says that she knows she should not speak about her love to Cesario, since he cannot love her back, but she can't help herself. Her love is so strong, it's out of her control. Cesario only comments that the Duke loves Olivia in much the same way. Though Cesario will not be moved by Olivia's pleas for him to love her, he agrees to return again the next day. Olivia leaves, and Toby and Fabian approach Cesario. Toby says that he has no idea why, but Andrew hates him, so he should be prepared to fight. Cesario is sure there must be a mistake. Toby says there's no mistake, and describes in great detail what a deadly, terrifying man Andrew is. Cesario begs Toby to find out why Andrew hates him so much, and Toby agrees, leaving Cesario with Fabian for a moment. Cesario asks Fabian about Andrew, but Fabian only echoes Sir Toby--Andrew is very dangerous, and Fabian has no idea why he is angry at Cesario. Fabian agrees to help Cesario make peace with Andrew. They walk off, and Andrew and Toby come in. Toby tells Andrew that Cesario is brave and vicious. Andrew tries to back out of the fight, but Toby tells him that now Cesario will not



let him. Andrew asks Toby to tell Cesario that if he gives up the fight, he will give Cesario his horse. Toby agrees, then says to himself, "I'll ride your horse as well as I ride you." Act 3, Scene 4, line 295

Fabian and Toby speak privately about how terrified Cesario and Andrew are of each other. They each tell one of the men that the other man does not want to hurt him, but has to fight him for honor's sake. Just as Cesario and Andrew draw their swords, Antonio arrives. He sees Cesario and mistakes him for Sebastian (as Sebastian said, Viola and he look exactly alike, so when Viola is dressed as a man, she appears to be Sebastian). Antonio swears to defend Sebastian. Suddenly two officers from Duke Orsino's court arrive to arrest Antonio, presumably because he is still an enemy of the town. Antonio asks Cesario (believing him to be Sebastian) for his purse back, and of course Cesario has no idea what he is talking about. Antonio is outraged that his friend could treat him this way. Furious, he describes how he saved Sebastian's life, and when he says the name "Sebastian," Viola (Cesario) realizes that Antonio is talking about her brother. Viola runs off to find her brother. Toby and Fabian tell Andrew that Cesario is running away as a coward, and Andrew vows to beat Cesario for it.

Topic Tracking: Disguise 9



Act 4, Scene 1

The clown is trying to get Sebastian, who he thinks is Cesario, to visit Olivia. Sebastian, of course, has no idea what the clown is talking about, and is annoyed. Andrew, Fabian and Toby arrive, and Andrew attacks Sebastian, thinking he is Cesario. Sebastian fights back, wondering if everyone has gone crazy. Bewildered, the clown runs off to tell Olivia what has happened. Just as Sebastian and Toby draw their swords to fight, Olivia approaches. She throws Sir Toby out, desperate to protect her dear Cesario. The other men leave her alone with Sebastian. She tells him to forget Toby and come with her to her house. Completely confused yet attracted to Olivia, Sebastian follows her home.



Act 4, Scene 2

Maria is dressing up the clown as a wise holy man called Sir Topas. Sir Toby comes in and agrees that the clown does a good impression of such a man. The clown goes to the imprisoned Malvolio, who implores him to go to Olivia and tell her he is not insane. He begs to be let out of his dark prison. The clown tells him that the cell he is locked in is not dark, then proceeds to speak in nonsensical gibberish. Malvolio says that Sir Topas can ask him any question--he will answer it rationally and prove he is not insane. Sir Topas acts like a madman himself in order to confuse and frustrate Malvolio. When the clown rejoins Maria and Toby outside, Toby says that he wants to end the joke now, because Olivia is already very angry with him and he doesn't want to upset her more. Toby and Maria leave the clown with Malvolio, who hears the clown singing and calls to him. He asks him for paper and pen. The clown asks Malvolio how he became insane, and Malvolio cries that he is completely sane: "I am as well in my wits, fool as thou art." Act 4, Scene 2, line 91 He says that the courtiers have locked him up and are trying to drive him insane. The clown, hidden from Malvolio, speaks as Sir Topas, and forbids the clown to speak to Malvolio. The clown then reverts to his own voice, saying that even though he was forbidden to speak to him by Sir Topas, he will get a pen and paper for him. The clown goes off singing teasingly.

Topic Tracking: Disguise 10



Act 4, Scene 3

Sebastian wonders if his sense are deceiving him: does Olivia really love him? Is he insane, or is she? She does not seem to be crazy--she acts the part of a noblewoman well enough. He wishes he could talk to Antonio about this, but when he looked for Antonio earlier, he couldn't find him. Olivia comes in with a priest, asking Sebastian to prove he loves her by committing to her in secret. When he is ready to make it public, they can do so. She asks if he can agree to this, and he does.



Act 5, Scene 1

Fabian demands to see the letter Malvolio wrote, but the clown won't let him. Orsino arrives, and talks with the clown a moment. The clown tells him that his friends make a fool out of him by complimenting him all the time, while his enemies at least tell him the truth. Therefore, he likes his enemies better than his friends. The Duke admires this logic and compliments him, and the clown says, "no: though it please you to be one of my friends." Act 5, Scene 1, line 24 The clown makes such witty comments that the Duke keeps giving him money, until finally he gets tired of the game and tells the clown to send for Olivia. The clown goes, and just then Antonio and the officers arrive. Cesario points out Antonio to the Duke as the one who rescued him from the duel with Sir Andrew, and Orsino remembers Antonio. He says Antonio and his men fought Orsino in a tiny boat, but they still won, and Orsino had to admire their skill and bravery in spite of himself. Cesario explains that though Antonio saved him, he also spoke nonsense. Orsino asks Antonio for an explanation, and Antonio cries that Cesario (who he thinks is Sebastian) abandoned him, even though he saved his life during a storm, and then spent three months as his closest friend. Olivia arrives. She is angry with Cesario for not keeping his promise (the promise that Sebastian, not Cesario, in fact made.) Cesario of course does not know what she means, but Orsino figures out that Olivia loves Cesario. Enraged, he says he will kill Cesario, whom he cares for, to spite Olivia. Cesario responds, "And I...to do you rest, a thousand deaths would die." Act 5, Scene 1, line 130

When Cesario starts to go after Orsino, Olivia asks him what he's doing, and he tells her he loves Orsino. Horrified, Olivia asks him how he could forget the vows he made to a priest so recently. Now it is Orsino's turn to be shocked. He watches as the priest comes in and agrees with Olivia's story: Cesario and Olivia were married in secret two hours ago. Orsino says that Cesario may have Olivia, but he hopes to never see him again. Just then Andrew arrives, crying for a doctor: Sebastian has beaten both him and Toby. Andrew sees Cesario and, thinking he is Sebastian, confronts him angrily. Cesario is, of course, confused, and says he never hurt any of them. The clown, Andrew, and Fabian all help the furious Sir Toby away. Sebastian comes in, apologizing to Olivia for hurting her relative Sir Toby. Olivia stares at him, shocked, and he thinks it means she is angry. Then the Duke, Antonio and Olivia simply stand there marvelling at how similar Sebastian and Cesario look. Sebastian asks who Cesario is, and he says he is from Messaline, and had a father and brother named Sebastian, but the latter drowned. Viola explains how the captain dressed her as Cesario. Sebastian tells Olivia that, though she loved him by mistake, he still loves her. Orsino turns to Viola, finally realizing what she meant all those times she told him she would, if she were a woman, love a man just like him. The clown and Fabian come in with the letter from Malvolio, and the clown says that Malvolio is clearly insane. He begins reading the letter the way a madman would. Irritated, Olivia makes Fabian read the letter instead. The letter explains that Malvolio is not crazy at all. He says he was only doing what Olivia herself commanded him to do in a letter. Olivia, seeing that Malvolio does not sound insane, sends for him. She turns to Orsino and suggests that he accept her as a sister-in-law, and marry Viola. Orsino says



to Viola, "Since you called me master for so long, here is my hand; you shall from this time be your master's mistress." Act 5, Scene 1, line 322

Malvolio arrives with Fabian, and indignantly gives the letter written by Maria to Olivia. Olivia immediately sees that the letter was written by Maria. Fabian quickly comes forward and explains that Fabian and Toby thought of the trick, and since Maria carried it out, Toby has since married her. He suggests that, rather than punish them, Malvolio and Olivia simply laugh, because they were punished enough when they were beaten by Sebastian. Nevertheless, Malvolio is furious, and runs away yelling for revenge. Orsino happily announces that soon there will be a marriage ceremony, and everyone leaves except the clown. The clown sings about being a mischievous little boy who was charming when he was young, but unwelcome in society when he grew up, and finishes the play with the end of the song: "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." Act 5, Scene 1, line 403

Topic Tracking: Jokes 10

Topic Tracking: Romance 10