

# #2 Malvolio, Olivia, Viola "Twelfth Night"

TWELFTH NIGHT \* 5

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OLIVIA

I know his soul is in heaven, fool.

FESTE

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

*FESTE stands, puts the fool's cap on OLIVIA'S head, pauses, and puts it on MALVOLIO'S head instead. He begins to lead MALVOLIO out, stage right, but the latter realizes what is happening and indignantly pushes FESTE away. FESTE tumbles over backward, spins around the stage right pole, and finishes leaning against the pole, smiling. MALVOLIO stiffly assumes his position at OLIVIA'S right, and she cracks a small smile at this foolery.*

OLIVIA

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

MALVOLIO

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

FESTE

God send you, sir, a speedy infirmity, for the better increasing your folly! *(begins to balance the broom on his chin again)*

OLIVIA

How say you to that, Malvolio?

MALVOLIO

I marvel your ladyship takes delight in such a barren rascal.

*MALVOLIO crosses to FESTE and casts the broom across the room with his cane, knocking FESTE to the ground in the process. FESTE shoots him a dirty look.*

Look you now, he's out of his guard already.

*ATTENDANT picks up the broom, casually sweeping a little dust toward MALVOLIO, places it at the side of the table, and resumes her position.*

OLIVIA

O, you are sick of self-love, Malvolio.

*Exit MALVOLIO stage right, cocking his ear as if hearing a knock at the door.*

*(calling after the departing MALVOLIO)* There is no slander in an allow'd fool, though he do nothing but rail.

*FESTE (regains his composure and grasps the broom once more, dancing around the room)*  
Now Mercury endue thee with leasing, for thou speak'st well of fools!

*Exit FESTE stage right, still dancing with the broom. Enter MALVOLIO stage right, passing the dancing FESTE and giving him a dirty look. FESTE sweeps the feet and pants of MALVOLIO, who hurries away, indignant, and takes his place at OLIVIA'S right.*

START  
MALVOLIO

Madam, there is at the gate a young gentleman much desires to speak with you. What is to be said to him, lady? He's fortified against any denial.

**OLIVIA**

Tell him he shall not speak with me.

**MALVOLIO**

Has been told so.

**OLIVIA**

What kind o' man is he?

**MALVOLIO**

Why, of mankind.

**OLIVIA**

Of what personage and years is he?

**MALVOLIO**

Not yet old enough for a man, nor young enough for a boy; one would think his mother's milk were scarce out of him.

**OLIVIA**

Let him approach: call in my gentlewoman.

**MALVOLIO** *(calling toward curtain)*

Gentlewoman, my lady calls.

*Exit MALVOLIO stage right.*

*Enter MARIA from curtain.*

*OLIVIA stands and crosses to table, facing the audience. ATTENDANTS brush her hair and hold the mirror as she applies her lipstick.*

**OLIVIA**

Give me my veil: come, throw it o'er my face.  
We'll once more hear Orsino's embassy.

*MARIA places OLIVIA'S veil over her face and then dons her own, as do the ATTENDANTS. They all stand in a line in front of the chair.*

*Enter VIOLA, clutching in her hand a rolled up scroll of paper tied with a ribbon. She is confused by the ladies, approaches them, sits on the bench, stands, and tentatively approaches them again.*

**VIOLA**

The honourable lady of the house, which is she?

**OLIVIA**

Speak to me; I shall answer for her. Your will?

**VIOLA** *(reading from her paper)*

Most radiant, exquisite, and unmatchable beauty,  
*(stops reading)* I pray you, tell me if this be the lady of the house, for I never saw her: I would be loathe to cast away my speech.

**OLIVIA**

What are you? What would you?

**VIOLA**

What I am, and what I would, are as secret as maidenhead: to your ears, divinity; to any other's, profanation. *(looks at ATTENDANTS and motions with her head for them to leave)*

**OLIVIA**

Give us the place alone: we will hear this divinity.

*Exit MARIA and ATTENDANTS stage rear.*

**VIOLA**

Good madam, let me see your face.

**OLIVIA** (*moves toward the table and takes a quick peek at the mirror*)

You are now out of your text: but we will draw the curtain, and show you the picture. (*removes her veil*)  
Look you, sir, such a one I was, this present: is't not well done?

**VIOLA** (*with a look of admiration, and perhaps some envy or disappointment*)

Excellently done, if God did all.

**OLIVIA**

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

**VIOLA**

My lord and master loves you.

**OLIVIA**

How does he love me?

**VIOLA**

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

**OLIVIA**

Your lord does know my mind; I cannot love him.  
(*returns to her chair, and sits*)

**VIOLA**

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.

**OLIVIA**

Why, what would you?

**VIOLA** (*strolls to the stage right pole, leans against it, and gazes out toward the audience*)

Make me a willow cabin at your gate,  
And call upon my soul within the house;  
Write loyal cantons of contemned 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!"

**OLIVIA** (*stands up from chair and moves slowly and somewhat seductively toward VIOLA, backing her into the stage right pole*)

You might do much. What is your parentage?

**VIOLA**

Above my fortunes, yet my state is well: (*clears her throat and tries to speak in a lower, more masculine voice*)

I am a gentleman.

**OLIVIA**

Get you to your lord;  
I cannot love him: let him send no more;  
Unless, perchance, you come to me again,  
To tell me how he takes it. Fare you well:  
I thank you for your pains: spend this for me.  
(*gives her a large coin*)

**VIOLA**

I am no fee'd post, lady; keep your purse: *(starts to leave stage right, stops, and turns back)*  
 My master, not myself, lacks recompense.  
 Farewell, fair cruelty.

**STOP***Exit VIOLA stage right.***OLIVIA** *(walking excitedly in a semicircle toward the table, stopping to inspect herself in the mirror)*

Thy tongue, thy face, thy limbs, actions, and spirit,  
 Do give thee fivefold blazon: not too fast;  
*(stops center stage to keep herself in check)*

Soft, soft!

Even so quickly may one catch the plague?

*(catches her breath, leaning against the table for support; takes a sip of wine, fans herself, looks at the wine glass, then drains it in one gulp)*

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

*Enter MALVOLIO stage right.***MALVOLIO**

Here, madam, at your service.

**OLIVIA**

Run after that same peevish messenger,  
 The county's man: he left this ring behind him,  
 If that the youth will come this way to-morrow,  
 I'll give him reasons for't. *(hands him the ring)*  
 Hie thee, Malvolio.

**MALVOLIO**

Madam, I will.

*Exit MALVOLIO stage right.***OLIVIA** *(facing front)*

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

*Exit OLIVIA, quickly, stage left.*

**STAGEHANDS** *remove bench, place chair stage right, bring on throne and place it to the right of chair, and place table stage left, setting it with wine bottle, glasses, and a plate of fruit.*

*Enter NARRATOR from stage rear.*