

Twelfth Night, or What You Will

1.1

Music. Enter Orsino Duke of Illyria, Curio, and other lords

ORSINO

If music be the food of love, play on,
Give me excess of it that, surfeiting,
The appetite may sicken and so die.
That strain again, it had a dying fall.
O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet sound 5
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour. Enough, no more,
'Tis not so sweet now as it was before.

[Music ceases]

O spirit of love, how quick and fresh art thou
That, notwithstanding thy capacity 10
Receiveth as the sea, naught enters there,
Of what validity and pitch so e'er,
But falls into abatement and low price
Even in a minute! So full of shapes is fancy
That it alone is high fantastical. 15

CURIO

Will you go hunt, my lord?

ORSINO

What, Curio?

CURIO

The hart.

ORSINO

Why so I do, the noblest that I have.
O, when mine eyes did see Olivia first
Methought she purged the air of pestilence;
That instant was I turned into a hart, 20
And my desires, like fell and cruel hounds,
E'er since pursue me.

Enter Valentine

How now, what news from

her?

VALENTINE

So please my lord, I might not be admitted,
But from her handmaid do return this answer:

