

Twelfth Night, or What You Will

1.3

Enter Sir Toby Belch and Maria

SIR TOBY What a plague means my niece to take the death
of her brother thus? I am sure care's an enemy to life.

MARIA By my troth, Sir Toby, you must come in earlier
o' nights. Your cousin, my lady, takes great exceptions
to your ill hours. 5

SIR TOBY Why, let her except, before excepted.

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

SIR TOBY Confine? I'll confine myself no finer than I am.
These clothes are good enough to drink in, and so be 10
these boots too; an they be not, let them hang
themselves in their own straps.

MARIA That quaffing and drinking will undo you. I heard
my lady talk of it yesterday, and of a foolish knight
that you brought in one night here to be her wooer. 15

SIR TOBY Who, Sir Andrew Aguecheek?

MARIA Ay, he.

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

MARIA What's that to th' purpose?

SIR TOBY Why, he has three thousand ducats a year. 20

MARIA Ay, but he'll have but a year in all these ducats.
He's a very fool, and a prodigal.

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

MARIA He hath indeed, almost natural, 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 gust he hath in
quarrelling, 'tis thought among the prudent he would 30
quickly have the gift of a grave.

SIR TOBY By this hand, they are scoundrels and sub-
stractors that say so of him. Who are they?

MARIA They that add, moreover, he's drunk nightly in
your company. 35

SIR TOBY With drinking healths to my niece. I'll drink to her as long as there is a passage in my throat and drink in Illyria. He's a coward and a coistrel that will not drink to my niece till his brains turn o'th' toe, like a parish top. What wench, *Castiliano*, *vulgo*, for here 40 comes Sir Andrew Agueface.

Enter Sir Andrew Aguecheek

SIR ANDREW Sir Toby Belch! How now, Sir Toby Belch?

SIR TOBY Sweet Sir Andrew.

SIR ANDREW (*to Maria*) Bless you, fair shrew.

MARIA And you too, sir. 45

SIR TOBY Accost, Sir Andrew, accost.

SIR ANDREW What's that?

SIR TOBY My niece's chambermaid.

SIR ANDREW Good Mistress Accost, I desire better acquaintance. 50

MARIA My name is Mary, sir.

SIR ANDREW Good Mistress Mary Accost.

SIR TOBY You mistake, knight. `Accost' is front her, board her, woo her, assail her.

SIR ANDREW By my troth, I would not undertake her in 55 this company. Is that the meaning of `accost'?

MARIA Fare you well, gentlemen.

SIR TOBY An thou let part so, Sir Andrew, would thou mightst never draw sword again.

SIR ANDREW An you part so, mistress, I would I might 60 never draw sword again. Fair lady, do you think you have fools in hand?

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

SIR ANDREW Marry, but you shall have, and here's my hand. 65

MARIA (*taking his hand*) Now sir, thought is free. I pray you, bring your hand to th' buttery-bar, and let it drink.

SIR ANDREW Wherefore, sweetheart? What's your metaphor? 70

MARIA It's dry, sir.

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

MARIA A dry jest, sir.

SIR ANDREW Are you full of them? 75

MARIA Ay, sir, I have them at my fingers' ends. Marry,
now I let go your hand I am barren.

Exit

SIR TOBY O knight, thou lackest a cup of canary. When
did I see thee so put down?

SIR ANDREW Never in your life, I think, unless you see 80
canary put me down. Methinks sometimes I have no
more wit than a Christian or an ordinary man has;
but I am a great eater of beef, and I believe that does
harm to my wit.

SIR TOBY No question. 85

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

SIR TOBY *Pourquoi*, my dear knight?

SIR ANDREW What is `Pourquoi'? Do, or not do? I would
I had bestowed that time in the tongues that I have 90
in fencing, dancing, and bear-baiting. O, had I but
followed the arts!

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

SIR ANDREW Why, would that have mended my hair?

SIR TOBY Past question, for thou seest it will not curl by 95
nature.

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

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

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

SIR TOBY She'll none o'th' Count. She'll not match above 105
her degree, neither in estate, years, nor wit, I have
heard her swear't. Tut, there's life in't, man.

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

SIR TOBY Art thou good at these kickshawses, knight?

SIR ANDREW As any man in Illyria, whatsoever he be,
under the degree of my betters; and yet I will not

compare with an old man.

SIR TOBY What is thy excellence in a galliard, knight? 115

SIR ANDREW Faith, I can cut a caper.

SIR TOBY And I can cut the mutton to't.

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

SIR TOBY Wherefore are these things hid? Wherefore have 120
these gifts a curtain before 'em? Are they like to take
dust, like Mistress Mall's picture? Why dost thou not
go to church in a galliard, and come home in a coranto?
My very walk should be a jig. I would not so much as
make water but in a cinquepace. What dost thou mean? 125
Is it a world to hide virtues in? I did think by the
excellent constitution of thy leg it was formed under
the star of a galliard.

SIR ANDREW Ay, 'tis strong, and it does indifferent well
in a divers-coloured stock. Shall we set about some 130
revels?

SIR TOBY What shall we do else±±were we not born under
Taurus?

SIR ANDREW Taurus? That's sides and heart.

SIR TOBY No, sir, it is legs and thighs: let me see thee 135
caper.

[Sir Andrew capers]

Ha, higher! Ha ha, excellent.

Exeunt