

Twelfth Night, or What You Will

2.4

Enter the Duke, Viola as Cesario, Curio, and others

ORSINO

Give me some music. Now good morrow, friends.
Now good Cesario, but that piece of song,
That old and antic song we heard last night.
Methought it did relieve my passion much,
More than light airs and recollected terms 5
Of these most brisk and giddy-paced times.
Come, but one verse.

CURIO He is not here, so please your lordship, that should sing it.

ORSINO Who was it? 10

CURIO Feste the jester, my lord, a fool that the lady Olivia's father took much delight in. He is about the house.

ORSINO

Seek him out, and play the tune the while.
Exit Curio
Music plays
(*To Viola*) Come hither, boy. If ever thou shalt love,
In the sweet pangs of it remember me; 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. How dost thou like this tune?

VIOLA

It gives a very echo to the seat 20
Where love is throned.

ORSINO Thou dost speak masterly.
My life upon't, young though thou art thine eye
Hath stayed upon some favour that it loves.
Hath it not, boy?

VIOLA A little, by your favour.

ORSINO

What kind of woman is't?

VIOLA Of your complexion. 25

ORSINO

She is not worth thee then. What years, i'faith?

VIOLA About your years, my lord.

ORSINO
 Too old, by heaven. Let still the woman take
 An elder than herself. So wears she to him;
 So sways she level in her husband's heart. 30
 For, boy, however we do praise ourselves,
 Our fancies are more giddy and unfirm,
 More longing, wavering, sooner lost and worn,
 Than women's are.

VIOLA I think it well, my lord.

ORSINO
 Then let thy love be younger than thyself, 35
 Or thy affection cannot hold the bent;
 For women are as roses, whose fair flower
 Being once displayed, doth fall that very hour.

VIOLA
 And so they are. Alas that they are so:
 To die even when they to perfection grow. 40
Enter Curio and Feste the clown

ORSINO (to Feste)
 O 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
 bones,
 Do use to chant it. It is silly sooth, 45
 And dallies with the innocence of love,
 Like the old age.

FESTE Are you ready, sir?

ORSINO I prithee, sing.
Music

FESTE (sings)
 Come away, come away death, 50
 And in sad cypress let me be laid.
 Fie away, fie away breath,
 I am slain by a fair cruel maid.
 My shroud of white, stuck all with yew,
 O prepare it. 55
 My part of death no one so true

Did share it.
Not a flower, not a flower sweet
On my black coffin let there be strewn.
Not a friend, not a friend greet 60
My poor corpse, where my bones shall be thrown.
A thousand thousand sighs to save,
Lay me O where
Sad true lover never find my grave,
To weep there. 65

DUKE (*giving money*) There's for thy pains.

FESTE No pains, sir. I take pleasure in singing, sir.

ORSINO I'll pay thy pleasure then.

FESTE Truly, sir, and pleasure will be paid, one time or
another. 70

ORSINO Give me now leave to leave thee.

FESTE Now the melancholy 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, that their business might be everything, 75
and their intent everywhere, for that's it that always
makes a good voyage of nothing. Farewell.

Exit

ORSINO

Let all the rest give place:

Exeunt Curio and others

Once more,

Cesario,

Get thee to yon same sovereign cruelty.
Tell her my love, more noble than the world, 80
Prizes not quantity of dirty lands.
The parts that fortune hath bestowed upon her
Tell her I hold as giddily as fortune;
But 'tis that miracle and queen of gems
That nature pranks her in attracts my soul. 85

VIOLA

But if she cannot love you, sir?

ORSINO

I cannot be so answered.

VIOLA

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. You cannot love her. 90
You tell her so. Must she not then be answered?

ORSINO There is no woman's sides
Can bide the beating of so strong a passion
As love doth give my heart; no woman's heart
So big, to hold so much. They lack retention. 95
Alas, their love may be called appetite,
No motion of the liver, but the palate,
That suffer surfeit, cloyment, and revolt.
But mine is all as hungry as the sea,
And can digest as much. Make no compare 100
Between that love a woman can bear me
And that I owe Olivia.

VIOLA Ay, but I know±±

ORSINO What dost thou know?

Too well what love women to men may owe. 105
In faith, they are as true of heart as we.
My father had a daughter loved a man
As it might be, perhaps, were I a woman
I should your lordship.

ORSINO And what's her history?

A blank, my lord. She never told her love,
But let concealment, like a worm i'th' 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 this love indeed?
We men may say more, swear more, but indeed
Our shows are more than will; for still we prove
Much in our vows, but little in our love.

ORSINO
But died thy sister of her love, my boy?

VIOLA
I am all the daughters of my father's house,
And all the brothers too; and yet I know not.
Sir, shall I to this lady?

ORSINO Ay, that's the theme,

To her in haste. Give her this jewel. Say
My love can give no place, bide no denay.
Exeunt severally