

Twelfth Night, or What You Will

4.2

Enter Maria carrying a gown and false beard, and Feste, the clown

MARIA Nay, I prithee put on this gown and this beard, make him believe thou art Sir Topas the curate. Do it quickly. I'll call Sir Toby the whilst.

Exit

FESTE Well, I'll put it on, and I will dissemble myself in't, and I would I were the first that ever dissembled in such a gown. 5

He disguises himself

I am not tall enough to become the function well, nor lean enough to be thought a good student, but to be said 'an honest man and a good housekeeper' goes as fairly as to say 'a careful man and a great scholar'. 10
The competitors enter.

Enter Sir Toby and Maria

SIR TOBY Jove bless thee, Master Parson.

FESTE *Bonos dies*, Sir Toby, for, as the old hermit of Prague, that never saw pen and ink, very wittily said to a niece of King Gorboduc, 'That that is, is.' So I, 15
being Master Parson, am Master Parson; for what is 'that' but 'that', and 'is' but 'is'?

SIR TOBY To him, Sir Topas.

FESTE What ho, I say, peace in this prison.

SIR TOBY The knave counterfeits well±±a good knave. 20

Malvolio within

MALVOLIO Who calls there?

FESTE Sir Topas the curate, who comes to visit Malvolio the lunatic.

MALVOLIO Sir Topas, Sir Topas, good Sir Topas, go to my lady. 25

FESTE Out, hyperbolical fiend, how vexest thou this man! Talkest thou nothing but of ladies?

SIR TOBY Well said, Master Parson.

MALVOLIO Sir Topas, never was man thus wronged. Good Sir Topas, do not think I am mad. They have laid me 30

here in hideous darkness.

FESTE Fie, thou dishonest Satan! I call thee by the most modest terms, for I am one of those gentle ones that will use the devil himself with courtesy. Sayst thou that house is dark? 35

MALVOLIO As hell, Sir Topas.

FESTE Why, it hath bay windows transparent as barricadoes, and the clerestories toward the south-north are as lustrous as ebony, and yet complainest thou of obstruction? 40

MALVOLIO I am not mad, Sir Topas; I say to you this house is dark.

FESTE Madman, thou errest. I say there is no darkness but ignorance, in which thou art more puzzled than the Egyptians in their fog. 45

MALVOLIO I say this house is as dark as ignorance, though ignorance were as dark as hell; and I say there was never man thus abused. I am no more mad than you are. Make the trial of it in any constant question.

FESTE What is the opinion of Pythagoras concerning wildfowl? 50

MALVOLIO That the soul of our grandam might haply inhabit a bird.

FESTE What thinkest thou of his opinion?

MALVOLIO I think nobly of the soul, and no way approve his opinion. 55

FESTE Fare thee well. Remain thou still in darkness. Thou shalt hold th'opinion of Pythagoras ere I will allow of thy wits, and fear to kill a woodcock lest thou dispossess the soul of thy grandam. Fare thee well. 60

MALVOLIO Sir Topas, Sir Topas!

SIR TOBY My most exquisite Sir Topas.

FESTE Nay, I am for all waters.

MARIA Thou mightst have done this without thy beard and gown, he sees thee not. 65

SIR TOBY *(to Feste)* To him in thine own voice, and bring me word how thou findest him. I would we were well rid of this knavery. If he may be conveniently delivered, I would he were, for I am now so far in offence with my niece that I cannot pursue with any safety this 70

sport to the upshot. *[To Maria]* Come by and by to my chamber.

Exit [with Maria]

FESTE *(sings)*

 `Hey Robin, jolly Robin,
 Tell me how thy lady does.'

MALVOLIO Fool!

75

FESTE

 `My lady is unkind, pardie.'

MALVOLIO Fool!

FESTE

 `Alas, why is she so?'

MALVOLIO Fool, I say!

FESTE

 `She loves another.'

80

Who calls, ha?

MALVOLIO Good fool, as ever thou wilt deserve well at my hand, help me to a candle and pen, ink, and paper. As I am a gentleman, I will live to be thankful to thee for't.

85

FESTE Master Malvolio?

MALVOLIO Ay, good fool.

FESTE Alas, sir, how fell you besides your five wits?

MALVOLIO Fool, there was never man so notoriously abused. I am as well in my wits, fool, as thou art.

90

FESTE But as well? Then you are mad indeed, if you be no better in your wits than a fool.

MALVOLIO They have here propertied me, keep me in darkness, send ministers to me, asses, and do all they can to face me out of my wits.

95

FESTE Advise you what you say, the minister is here. *(As Sir Topas)* Malvolio, Malvolio, thy wits the heavens restore. Endeavour thyself to sleep, and leave thy vain bibble-babble.

MALVOLIO Sir Topas.

100

FESTE *(as Sir Topas)* Maintain no words with him, good fellow. *(As himself)* Who I, sir? Not I, sir. God b'wi' you, good Sir Topas. *(As Sir Topas)* Marry, amen. *(As himself)* I will, sir, I will.

MALVOLIO Fool, fool, fool, I say.

105

FESTE Alas, sir, be patient. What say you, sir? I am shent
for speaking to you.

MALVOLIO Good fool, help me to some light and some
paper. I tell thee I am as well in my wits as any man
in Illyria. 110

FESTE Well-a-day that you were, sir.

MALVOLIO By this hand, I am. Good fool, some ink, paper,
and light, and convey what I will set down to my lady.
It shall advantage thee more than ever the bearing of
letter did. 115

FESTE I will help you to't. But tell me true, are you not
mad indeed, or do you but counterfeit?

MALVOLIO Believe me, I am not, I tell thee true.

FESTE Nay, I'll ne'er believe a madman till I see his brains.
I will fetch you light, and paper, and ink. 120

MALVOLIO Fool, I'll requite it in the highest degree. I
prithee, be gone.

FESTE

I am gone, sir,
And anon, sir,
I'll be with you again, 125
In a trice,
Like to the old Vice,
Your need to sustain,
Who with dagger of lath
In his rage and his wrath 130
Cries 'Aha,' to the devil,
Like a mad lad,
'Pare thy nails, dad,
Adieu, goodman devil.'

Exit