Short Shakespeare Tale

Viola is washed up on the shore of Illyria after a terrible shipwreck after which she becomes separated from her twin brother Sebastian (1). In order to protect herself, she decides to dress up as a boy named Cesario, and manages to get a job working for Count Orsino. As they grow closer, Viola begins to fall in love with Orsino; but the count is in love with a noblewoman named Olivia. Lady Olivia is devastated after the death of her brother and has sworn to avoid all company for seven years. Orsino persists in sending love messgaes to Olivia, even though she is not interested (2).

One day, Orsino sends Cesario (Viola) to woo Olivia, and instead of falling in love with the Count, she ends up fancying the messenger! (3) Viola (still in disguise) tells Orsino that Olivia isn't interested in marrying him, but he insists on sending her love messages.

Olivia's servant, Malvolio, helps her to send all the messengers away; but he is very strict and unkind to the others in the house. Olivia's cousin, Sir Toby Belch, and his friend, Sir Andrew Aguecheek team up with the maid, called Maria, to play a practical joke on Malvolio. They make him believe that Olivia is in love with him and that she only ever wants to see him smiling and wearing bright yellow stockings with funny black garters tied around them. Malvolio falls for the trick, and starts to run around the house in silly clothes, whilst the rest of the household, including the court fool Festa, makes fun of him (4).

In the meantime, Sebastian has been rescued from the shipwreck by a man named Antonio who is wanted in Illyria for being a pirate. When Sebastian arrives in Illyria, he is mistaken for Cesario and accidentally ends up in a fight with Sir Toby Belch. Olivia whisks Sebastian away to a church and marries him (she still thinks he's Cesario) (5). Viola takes Orsino to see Olivia who insists on calling Cesario her husband. Orsino gets very cross and Olivia becomes confused.



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Twelfth Night
General

When Antonio is arrested for being a pirate, he asks Cesario for help (believing that it is his friend Sebastian). When Cesario claims not to know Antonio , everyone is even more confused than before!

Suddenly, Sebastian arrives and everyone realises that there are two people who look identical (6). Brother and sister are reunited and Orsino offers to marry Viola, now that Olivia is married to Sebastian. Sir Toby runs away to marry the maid, Maria, and before everyone is about to go off for a wedding dance, Malvolio swears that he will take revenge against all of his bullies for having humiliated him in front of Lady Olivia (7).

(1) 'What should I do in Illyria? My brother, he is in Elysium!'

(2) 'Your lord does know my mind; I cannot love him.'

(3) 'Cesario, by the roses of the spring,
by maidhood, honour, truth and every thing,
I love thee.'

(4) 'I will be strange, stout, in yellow stockings, and cross gartered, even with the swiftness of putting on.'

(5) 'If you mean well, Now go with me and with this holy man into the chantry by'

(6) 'How have you made division of yourself? An apple, cleft in two, is not more twin than these two creatures.

(7) 'I'll be revenged on the whole pack of you.'



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