TWELFTH NIGHT

Translated

William Shakespeare

translated by

SJ Hills

Faithfully Translated
into Performable Modern English
Side by Side with Original Text

Includes Stage Directions

TWELFTH NIGHT,
or What You Will

Book 27 in a series of 42

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"*From an ardent love of literature, a profound admiration of the men who have left us legacies of thought and beauty, and, I suppose, from that feature in man that induces us to strive to follow those we most admire, and looking upon the pursuit of literature as one of the noblest in which no labour should be deemed too great, I have sought to add a few thoughts to the store already bequeathed to the world. If they are approved, I shall have gained my desire; if not, I shall hope to receive any hints in the spirit of one who loves his work and desires to progress*."

R. Hilton. 1869

PREFACE

When we studied Shakespeare at school we had to flick back and forth to the notes at the back of the book to understand a confusing line, words we were not familiar with, expressions lost in time, or even current or political references of Shakespeare's time.

What if the text was rewritten to make each line clear without looking up anything?

There are plenty of modern translations just for this. But they are cumbersome to read, no flow, matter of fact translations (and most this author has found are of varying inaccuracy, despite being approved by exam boards).

As a writer and producer of drama, I wanted not only to translate the play faithfully line by line, but also to include the innuendos, the political satire, the puns and the bawdy humour in a way which would flow and bring the work to life for students, actors prepping for a performance or lovers of the work to enjoy today, faithful to the feel and meaning of the original script and language without going into lengthy explanations for a modern day audience.

A faithful line-by-line translation into modern phrasing that flows, along with additional staging directions making the play interesting to read, easy to understand, and very importantly, an invaluable study aid.

For me it all started at about eight or nine years of age. I was reading a comic which contained the story of Macbeth serialized in simple comic strip form. I could not wait to see what happened next so I rushed out to the public library to get a copy of the book. Of course, when I got it home I didn't even recognise it as being the same story. It made no sense to me, being written in 'Olde English' and often using 'flowery' language. I remember thinking at the time that one day I should write my version of the story for others to understand.

Years went by and I had pretty much forgotten my idea. Then quite by chance I was approached by Encyclopaedia Britannica to produce a series of dramatised classic dramas as educational aids for children learning English as a second language. Included in the selection was Romeo And Juliet which I was to condense down to fifty minutes using modern English.

This brought flooding back the memories of being eight years old again, reading my comic and planning my modern version of Shakespeare. In turn it also led me to the realisation that even if a reader could understand English well, this did not mean they could fully understand and enjoy Shakespeare. I could understand English, yet I did not fully understand some of Shakespeare's text without serious research. So what hope did a person whose first language was not English have?

After some investigation, I discovered there was a great desire around the world to understand the text fully without the inconvenience of referring to footnotes or side-lines, or worse still, the internet. How can one enjoy the wonderful drama with constant interruption? I was also surprised to discover the desire was equally as great in English speaking countries as ones whose first language was not English.

The final kick to get me started was meeting fans of Shakespeare's works who knew scripts off by heart but secretly admitted to me that they did have trouble fully understanding the meaning of some lines. Although they knew the storyline well they could miss some of the subtlety and innuendo Shakespeare was renowned for. It is hardly surprising in this day and age as many of the influences, trends, rumours, beliefs and current affairs of Shakespeare's time are not valid today.

I do not pretend my work is any match for the great master, but I do believe in the greater enjoyment for all. These great works deserve to be understood by all, Shakespeare himself wrote for all levels of audience, he would even aim his work to suit a particular audience at times – for example changing historical facts if he knew a member of royalty would be seeing his play and it would cause them any embarrassment, or of course to curry favour with a monarch by the use of flattery.

I have been as faithful as possible with my version, but the original, iambic pentameter, (the tempo and pace the lines were written for), and other Elizabethan tricks of the trade that Shakespeare was so brilliant at are not included unless vital to the text and meaning. For example, rhyming couplets to signify the end of a scene, for in Shakespeare's day there were no curtains, no lights and mostly static scenery, so scene changes were not so obvious, these couplets, though not strictly necessary, are included to maintain the feel of the original.

This makes for a play that sounds fresh to today's listening audience. It is also a valuable educational tool; English Literature courses often include a section on translating Shakespeare. I am often asked the meaning of a particular line, sometimes scholars argue over the meaning of particular lines. I have taken the most widely agreed version and the one which flows best with the story line where there is dispute, and if you read this translation before reading the original work or going to see a stage version, you will find the play takes on a whole new meaning, making it infinitely more enjoyable.

SJ Hills. London. 2018

AUTHOR'S NOTE

This version contains stage directions. These are included purely as a guide to help understand the script better. Any director staging the play would have their own interpretation of the play and decide their own directions. These directions are my own personal interpretation and not those of Shakespeare. You may change these directions to your own choosing or ignore them completely. For exam purposes these should be only regarded as guidance to the dialogue and for accuracy should not be quoted in any studies or examinations.

Current published editions are a mix of the early published editions. Although modern editions largely agree there will be some differences between current versions, so line numbers between two different editions of Twelfth Night will not match. For this reason there are no line numbers included in this edition.

To aid in understanding speeches and for learning lines, where possible, speeches by any character are not broken over two pages unless they have a natural break. As a result of this, gaps will be noticeable at the bottom of pages where the next speech will not fully fit onto the page. This was intentional. A speech cannot be fully appreciated if one has to turn the page back and forth when studying or learning lines.

Shakespeare's use of pre-existing material was not considered a lack of originality. In Elizabethan times copyright law did not exist, copying whole passages of text was frequently practiced and not considered theft as it is today. Nowadays, stage and movie productions are frequently 'adaptations' from other sources, the only difference being the need to obtain permission or rights to do so, unless the work is out of copyright.

The real skill Shakespeare displays is in how he adapts his sources in new ways, displaying a remarkable understanding of human psyche and emotion, and including a talent at building characters, adding characters for effect, dramatic pacing, tension building, interspersed by short bouts of relief before building the tension even further, and above all of course, his extraordinary ability to use and miss-use language to his and dramatic, bawdy or playful advantage.

It has been said Shakespeare almost wrote screenplays, predating modern cinema by over 400 years, however you view it, he wrote a powerful story and understood how to play on human emotions and weaknesses.

This play was written during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. As Shakespeare often referred to the reigning monarch in his plays indirectly and often performed his plays before the monarch this is useful to know.

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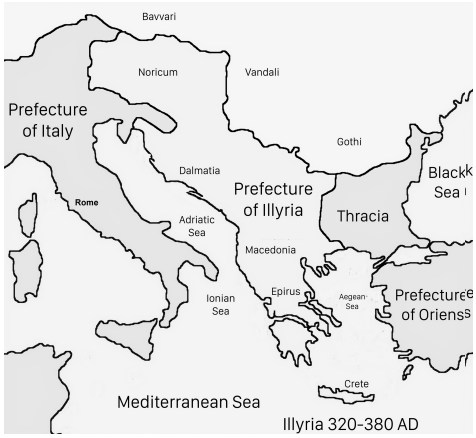
HISTORIC NOTES

Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* is set in Illyria which was an area in antiquity made up of united prefectures (regions) each ruled by a prefect. It was situated on the opposite side of the Adriatic sea to Italy in the region now referred to as The Balkans. It has a remarkably complex history of invasions and boundary changes and even in Shakespeare's time was no longer known as Illyria, which had by then become a mythical 'country' from the public perspective, and is probably why Shakespeare chose it; the public could view it as an exotic far-flung land where everything was very different from life in England.



Illyria in antiquity

Modern day Balkans

Twelfth Night, or What You Will is a romantic comedy by William Shakespeare, believed to have been written around 1601–1602 as entertainment for the close of the Christmas season and first performed on the Twelfth Night in 1602 before Elizabeth I, Queen of England.

It was an immediate success and is still performed regularly. While it is a light-hearted play involving mistaken identity, love triangles, and comedic characters, it also has a serious side, exploring themes of identity, gender, love and greed.

The play is believed to be based on two Italian sources: the story of Viola and Sebastian from Matteo Bandello's *Novelle* (1565) and the story of the Countess Olivia from *Il Pecorone* (1565) by Giovanni Fiorentino. Other lesser sources, include Plautus's *Menaechmi* and Terence's *Andria*. However, Shakespeare took these sources and transformed them into something new and original, something he was a master of.

Twelfth Night reflects the religious tensions of the time, England was a Protestant country, Catholicism – the practice of which carried severe penalties, including death – was banned, and the Puritans, who were extremely anti-Catholicism, were rising in popularity, though they were not to everyone's taste. Shakespeare makes some derogatory references to their pious behaviour and their bigotry, suggesting he was not in favour of them. The play also reflects the social and political standings of England at the time.

It is suggested that Shakespeare was a Catholic sympathiser, we know his father was loosely connected with the Catholic Gunpowder Plot to blow up parliament along with King James in 1605 which would occur three years after this play was first performed, and it is possible that Shakespeare based so many plays in Italy, not only because it was considered an exotic location, but also because it was the most Catholic country in Europe, so mentioning Catholic practises could be excused.

The play's title refers to the twelfth night after Christmas, the date of the Christian religious ceremony of Epiphany, which in Shakespeare's time was a time of feasting and merrymaking, and his play, *Twelfth Night,* is generally assumed to have been performed as festive entertainment before the Queen on this actual day - or was it.

For here lies the complication. We have to remember that in Shakespeare's lifetime, on the order of Pope Gregory XIII, the calendar was changed to overcome the slight inaccuracies of the previous Julian calendar.

Although the church in Europe had adopted the new calendar, Queen Elizabeth, who was head of the Church of England (after her father Henry VIII had done a middle-ages Brexit and split from the Catholic church) resisted the change, causing much confusion in England. People had to carry an almanac with both calendars printed side by side.

The Twelfth Night was celebrated on January 6th, a day when people sang songs, made merry drinking alcohol, danced, and ate '*Twelfth Night Cake*' in which a pea and a bean were hidden. The man who discovered the bean would be proclaimed Lord or King of Misrule for the day, while the lady who found the pea would be Lady or Queen of Misrule. The Lord of Misrule was usually a servant who then led the drinking and debauchery, as Twelfth Night was traditionally a day where servants were allowed to swap roles with their masters.

Within the play, Feste the Fool, Sir Toby Belch, and Sir Andrew Aguecheek can all be considered versions of the Lord of Misrule, with Maria being the Lady of Misrule. Feste's song at the end of the play suggests the festivities are over and debauchery is once again frowned upon.

THE CALENDARS.

The Gregorian Calendar was introduced in October 1582, twenty years before this play was first performed, but Elizabeth I resisted this change. As a result future scholars studying Shakespeare failed to notice that Sunday 27 December 1601 in the old Julian calendar was, according to the new Gregorian calendar, Sunday 6 January 1602, the date of the Twelfth Night.

We know from records that the performance before the queen on 6th Jan 1602 was not by Shakespeare's company – but they did perform on December 27th 1601 – so it was possibly recorded using the old calendar date, the one Elizabeth I recognised.

This also partly explains the tag line to the play – "Or As You Wish". It was Elizabeth's wish that the calendar remained as it was, and what the queen said everyone obeyed, if she wished to celebrate Twelfth Night on the old date, so be it.

This is unimportant to the plot but explains the confusion about dates and performances.

Twelfth Night was the religious festival of Epiphany which falls twelve days after Christmas Day and marks the end of Christmas celebrations. You can imagine the confusion of the change of date in the days when there was no mass communication among the general public, a lot of whom were illiterate. People carried almanacs - printed sheets showing moon phases, notable religious dates and the two calendars side by side.

Old Julian Date		New Gregorian Date		
Dec 24th	Fasting	Jan 3rd		
Dec 25th	Christmas Day	Jan 4th	New Moon	
Dec 26th	Feast of Steven the martyr	Jan 5th		
Dec 27th	John Evangelist day	Jan 6th	Epiphany	
Dec 28th	Innocents day.	Jan 7th		

A reproduction of an almanac showing both calendars side by side.

Anagrams.

In the play Shakespeare uses anagrams, a popular craze of the time, and it is known that Elizabeth I was a big fan of them.

They are explained as they appear in the text, but it should be known that this has led to confusion through the centuries, and has only recently been adopted as the meaning behind confusing words such as the unknown philosopher '*Quinopolus*'.

M.O.A.I.

Again, scholars have argued what M.O.A.I. could mean for centuries. We now know that it referred to an incident before Queen Elizabeth I where a nobleman, outrageously dressed, kissed the Queen's hand. This gentleman was a source for the character of Malvolio and his outrageous yellow tights and cross-garters.

This is all explained in the text at the relevant point. Elizabeth I would have recognised the meaning behind this – a private joke between Shakespeare and Elizabeth and her close social circle.

Order Of Scenes.

Originally, the second scene of the play was performed as the opening scene, and this makes a lot of sense. The play here is written in the order established today, beginning with the famous opening line "If music be the food of love…", but that's not the way it would have started when performed to Elizabeth I.

If you would like to experience the play as originally performed, start from Act I, Scene II (page 19), and jump back to Scene I (page 16) when it ends. Then skip forward to Scene III (page 23).

"What You Will"

'*What you will*' had two meanings, one being the expression meaning 'whatever you like' or 'do what you want to do', or simply in modern language 'whatever'. The other being for the benefit of Queen Elizabeth I, 'what you wish/desire/order'.

As stated earlier, the queen's version of which calendar to use and therefore which date to celebrate Twelfth Night was entirely up to her, regardless of and in defiance with the head of the Catholic church, the Pope. The queen would have recognised the significance of this title and probably have been flattered.

Asides.

Actors of this play often involve the audience by speaking their asides (thoughts) directly to the audience, sometimes for comedic effect. While it is unusual to 'break the fourth wall' in drama, *Twelfth Night* is a comedy not meant to be taken seriously, and in comedy this can be acceptable.

A comedy in Elizabethan times meant a light-hearted play with a happy ending. What we call comedians today, they called clowns.

Twins.

Finally, the inclusion of twins coming back from the dead and being re-united. There are personal implications here, Shakespeare had lost his son Hamnet, but Hamnet's twin sister had survived. We know through his writing that this affected Shakespeare deeply, Hamnet was his only son, and he dreamed of Hamnet being re-united with his twin sister.

Trivia.

The two lead female characters' names are anagrams of each other under Elizabethan rules – Olivia and Viola.

Identical twins are only ever the same sex, but since females could not act in Shakespeare's time male twins could play the two parts convincingly.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

DUKE ORSINO,	Duke of Illyria.
VALENTINE,	} Gentlemen attending the Duke.
CURIO,	}
OLIVIA,	A Wealthy Countess.
SIR TOBY BELCH,	Uncle to Olivia.
SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK,	Friend to Sir Toby.
MALVOLIO,	Steward to Olivia.
MARIA,	Maid to Olivia.
FABIAN,	Servant to Olivia.
FESTE THE CLOWN,	Jester to Olivia.
VIOLA,	Shipwrecked twin sister to Sebastian, sometimes disguised as a man named Cesario.
A CAPTAIN,	Friend to Viola.
SEBASTIAN,	Shipwrecked twin brother to Viola.
ANTONIO,	A Sea Captain, friend to Sebastian.

1st Officer, 2nd Officer, Lords, Priest, Sailors,
Musicians, Servants and other Attendants.

CONTENTS

Scene.
A city in Illyria,
and a seacoast near it.
16th Century.

ACT I

ILLYRIA

WHERE OUR PLAY IS SET

"IF MUSIC BE THE FOOD OF LOVE PLAY ON"

ACT I

ACT I SCENE I

THE PALACE OF DUKE ORSINO IN ILLYRIA.

Note: Duke Orsino is deeply infatuated with the absent, wealthy countess, Olivia. Musicians are playing romantic music which makes Orsino feel even more love-sick. As the music is making his feelings of love painfully swell, feeding his love, he asks the musicians to play more so he'll have so much of the "food of love" his desire for the music will be overwhelmed and he'll sicken of it, he hopes it will have the same effect on his feelings of love.

To show characters are comedic or to vary the overall structure of the play, Shakespeare sometimes writes lines in prose rather than the usual blank verse (a form of poetry which doesn't rhyme except for dramatic effect). He moves between prose and verse to give his characters depth and variety by breaking the rhythm. Deliberate bawdy use of words is underlined, rhymed lines are in italics.

NB: If you are reading this play in its original scene order, start at Scene II, page 19. (see Historic Notes at start of book, page 10).

MUSICIANS PLAY MUSIC BEFORE A GLOOMY LOOKING DUKE ORSINO, CURIO HIS PERSONAL ATTENDANT, AND VARIOUS OTHER LORDS.

AS A SONG ENDS, DUKE ORSINO GESTURES THE MUSICIANS TO CONTINUE PLAYING, HE PINES FOR HIS UNREQUITED LOVE, THE WEALTHY COUNTESS OLIVIA, OPENING THE PLAY WITH ONE OF SHAKESPEARE'S FAMOUS LINES.

DUKE ORSINO
(*to musicians*) If music makes love grow fonder, then play on. Give me such excess of it that my fondness sickens and dies.

DUKE ORSINO
If music be the food of love, play on,
Give me excess of it, that, surfeiting,
The appetite may sicken and so die.

THE BAND PLAY AGAIN.

DUKE ORSINO (CONT'D)
(*to self, groaning*) Oh, that passage of music again! It has such a sad final cadence. Oh, to my ear it was the sweet sound of the wind as it breathes upon a bank of violets, stealing their scent and bringing a new one to them.

DUKE ORSINO
That strain again! - it had a dying fall.
O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet sound
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour.

HE CONTINUES LISTENING TO THE MUSIC IN ANGST.

HE THEN DECIDES THE MUSIC IS NO LONGER HAVING THE DESIRED EFFECT.

DUKE ORSINO (CONT'D)
(*ordering the band*) Enough, no more. It's no longer so sweet sounding.

DUKE ORSINO
Enough, no more;
'Tis not so sweet now as it was before.

THE BAND STOP PLAYING

DUKE ORSINO (CONT'D)
(*to self*, *sighing*) Oh, spirit of love, how strong and insatiable you are! As hungry as the sea, and as large an appetite. But nothing that love consumes, however perfect, lasts. It quickly loses its value, diminishing by the minute. Love is as changeable as the wind and takes on as many forms.

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

**Note: 'Pitch' – height. A falconry term meaning the bird's highest point of flight. Shakespeare used falconry terms often in his writings, a subject he was very familiar with.*

CURIO
Will you go hunting, my lord?

DUKE ORSINO
For what, Curio?

CURIO
The hart.

DUKE ORSINO
I do already.

CURIO
Will you go hunt, my lord?

DUKE ORSINO
What, Curio?

CURIO
The hart.

DUKE ORSINO
Why, so I do,

HE PLACES HIS HAND UPON HIS HEART.

DUKE ORSINO (CONT'D)
The dearest part of me. Oh, when I first laid eyes on Olivia I thought she cleansed the air of all ills. That instant I was turned into a hart, and my desires, like savage, cruel hounds, have pursued me ever since.

DUKE ORSINO
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,
And my desires, like fell* and cruel hounds,
E'er since pursue me.*

**Note: 'Fell' – terrible ferocity. A meaning not in common use today. The saying 'One fell swoop' (originally from Macbeth, see Macbeth Translated by SJ Hills for further information) which then described a bird of prey attacking all the young in a nest in one savage swoop down from the sky, now has the meaning of 'everything at once, all in one go'. The word 'felon' derives from the original meaning.*

'Cruel hounds pursue me' – from Ovid's 'Metamorphoses'. Actaeon is transformed into a hart (stag) by the goddess Diana after he sees her bathing naked and falls in love with her. He is then pursued and savagely torn apart by his own dogs.

ENTER VALENTINE ANOTHER ATTENDANT TO THE DUKE.

DUKE ORSINO (CONT'D)
Well then? What news from her?

DUKE ORSINO
How now, what news from her?

VALENTINE ANSWERS AS IF IT IS NOT THE FIRST TIME HE'S BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL IN MEETING THE DUKE'S LOVE INTEREST, OLIVIA.

VALENTINE SPEAKS PRETENTIOUSLY.

VALENTINE
If it so pleases my lord, I was again refused admittance. But her maid did give me this answer for you – her lady's face shall not be revealed to the sky for seven summers, like a nun she'll be veiled while out walking, and will water her chamber with tears every day to preserve in salty water the love she held for her dead brother. She wishes to keep her sad memories alive and fresh.

DUKE ORSINO
Oh, she owns such a sensitive, tender heart in that fine body, but uses it all up on the love of a mere brother. How can she love when Cupid's rich golden arrow has killed all other affections that live within her. When she is once again filled with love, desire and emotion, she will find the sweet perfection of passion ruling over her.
Lead me away to sweet beds of flowers.
Where love's thoughts lie rich and pass by the hours.

VALENTINE
So please my lord, I might not be admitted;
But from her handmaid do return this answer:
The element itself, till seven years' heat,
Shall not behold her face at ample view;
But like a cloistress she will veiled walk,
And water once a day her chamber round
With eye-offending brine: all this to season
A brother's dead love, which she would keep fresh
And lasting in her sad remembrance.

DUKE ORSINO
O, she that hath a heart of that fine frame
To pay this debt of love but to a brother,
How will she love when the rich golden shaft*
Hath killed the flock of all affections else
That live in her; when liver, brain, and heart,*
These sovereign thrones*, are all supplied and filled,
Her sweet perfections, with one self king!
Away before me to sweet beds of flowers;
Love-thoughts lie rich when canopied with bowers.

**Note: 'Golden shaft' – Cupid's arrow. A gold tipped arrow made a person fall in love, a lead tipped arrow had the opposite effect.*

The liver, brain, and heart are the 'sovereign thrones' which control the three attributes of love. The liver is the throne of desire, the brain is the throne of reasoning, and the heart is the throne of emotion. Orsino means that when Olivia finally falls in love she will be complete. "A woman receiveth completion by the man [through marriage]" said Aristotle.

NB: If you are reading this play in the original scene order, now jump forward to page 23.

ACT I SCENE II

A Sea Coast Of Illyria.

Note: Illyria was an area in antiquity situated on the opposite side of the Adriatic sea to Italy in the region now referred to as The Balkans. In Shakespeare's time Illyria no longer existed, which is probably why Shakespeare chose it; the public could view it as an exotic far-flung land where everything was very different from life in England.

Important Note: This scene was originally the opening scene, and this makes a lot of sense. The famous opening line "If music be the food of love…" was not the way it started when performed to Elizabeth I in 1601 or 1602, depending on whether you use the Julian or Gregorian calendar. (see historic notes at front of book).

NB: If you wish to experience the play as originally performed, start here from Act I Scene II and jump back to Scene I (page 16) when it ends. Then skip forward to Scene III (page 23).

A small boat containing Viola (a young woman), a sea Captain, and some Sailors comes ashore on the coastline of a warm exotic country.

They walk up the shore, wet and exhausted.

VIOLA
Friends, what country is this?

CAPTAIN
This is Illyria, my lady.

VIOLA
(*upset*) What am I doing in Illyria? My brother is in heaven.
(*she pauses, weighing things up in her mind*) Perhaps with any luck he didn't drown - what do you think, sailors?

VIOLA
What country, friends, is this?

CAPTAIN
This is Illyria, lady.

VIOLA
And what should I do in Illyria?
My brother he is in Elysium.*
Perchance* he is not drowned - what think you, sailors?

**Note: 'Elysium' – In Greek mythology, the place at the ends of the earth to which heroes were taken by the gods after death. The classical version of heaven.*

'Perchance' – used in wordplay four times in as many lines with different meanings. The translation uses the word 'luck' to retain the word play.
1. 'Perchance' – Perhaps.
2. 'Perchance' – By chance.
3. 'Perchance' – Perhaps and by chance.
4. 'Chance' – Luck.

CAPTAIN
It was with luck that you yourself were saved.

CAPTAIN
It is perchance* that you yourself were saved.

VIOLA
(*upset*) Oh, my poor brother!
(*pulling herself together*) So by that same luck he may also be saved.

CAPTAIN
True, madam, and to comfort you with further tales of luck, I can assure you that after our ship was wrecked, when you and the few saved with you clung to our drifting lifeboat, I saw your brother, wisely in such perilous circumstances, tying himself to a strong ship's mast floating in the sea – courage and the will to survive guiding him – and like Arion, who was saved by riding on a dolphin's back, I saw him riding the waves until he disappeared from sight.

VIOLA
O my poor brother! - and so perchance* may he be.

CAPTAIN
True, madam; and, to comfort you with chance*,
Assure yourself, after our ship did split,
When you and those poor number saved with you
Hung on our driving boat, I saw your brother,
Most provident in peril, bind himself
- Courage and hope both teaching him the practice -
To a strong mast that lived* upon the sea;
Where, like Arion* on the dolphin's back,
I saw him hold acquaintance with the waves
So long as I could see.

**Note: 'Lived' – floating. A nautical term for a buoyant ship or object. There is a number of nautical terms used throughout the play.*

Arion, c. 700 BC, was an ancient Greek poet credited with inventing the dithyramb (a circular chorus). Apart from his musical inventions, Arion is famed for the myth of being captured by pirates and miraculously rescued by dolphins, Not to be confused with the Arion of Greek mythology, a divinely-bred, black-maned horse that Heracles rode into battle and which later saved the life of Adrastus when all other leaders were killed.

VIOLA, MORE HOPEFUL NOW, HANDS THE CAPTAIN A GOLD COIN.

VIOLA
For telling me this, here's a gold coin. My own escape gives me hope, and your words serve to strengthen the likelihood of a similar outcome for him.

VIOLA
For saying so, there's gold.*
Mine own escape unfoldeth to my hope,
Whereto thy speech serves for authority,
The like of him.

**Note: 'Gold' – a valuable coin or jewellery. To give silver would be less valuable.*

VIOLA LOOKS ABOUT HER AT THE UNFAMILIAR LANDSCAPE.

VIOLA (CONT'D)
Do you know this country?

CAPTAIN
Aye, madam, I know it well. I was born and bred less than three hours journey from this very spot.

VIOLA
Know'st thou this country?

CAPTAIN
Ay*, madam, well, for I was bred and born
Not three hours' travel from this very place.

**Note: 'Ay' – Yes. Old spelling of aye, and a nautical word for 'yes'. Aye, aye, captain.*

VIOLA
Who rules this place?

CAPTAIN
A noble duke, both in name and by nature.

VIOLA
What is his name?

CAPTAIN
Orsino.

VIOLA
Orsino? I have heard my father mention him. He was unmarried then.

CAPTAIN
And he is now, or he was very recently. About a month ago when I left from here there were fresh rumours – you know how commoners gossip about the ruling classes – that he pursued the love of the beautiful Olivia.

VIOLA
Who governs here?

CAPTAIN
A noble duke, in nature as in name.

VIOLA
What is his name?

CAPTAIN
Orsino.

VIOLA
Orsino! I have heard my father name him.
He was a bachelor then.

CAPTAIN
And so is now, or was so very late;
For but a month ago I went from hence,
And then 'twas fresh in murmur -as, you know,
What great ones do, the less will prattle of *-
That he did seek the love of fair Olivia.

Note: 'What great ones do, the less will prattle of' – commoners gossiping about the upper classes. This was for the benefit (and egos) of the upper classes and royalty who would come to see the play and would have raised a laugh among them.

VIOLA
Who's she?

CAPTAIN
A chaste maiden, the daughter of a count who died some twelve months ago leaving her under the protection of his son, her brother. But he also died shortly after his father. Her dear love for him, so they say, causes her to shun the company and sight of all men.

VIOLA
What's she?

CAPTAIN
A virtuous maid*, the daughter of a count
That died some twelvemonth since, then leaving her
In the protection of his son, her brother,
Who shortly also died; for whose dear love,
They say, she hath abjured the company
And sight of men.

Note: 'Virtuous maid' - unmarried and still a virgin. Viola has a lot to sympathise with Olivia, being unmarried and having possibly lost her own brother.

Viola's age is never revealed but it is generally assumed to be in her early twenties.

VIOLA
Oh, I wish I served that lady, and might be kept hidden from the world till I had put my mind to rest by knowing the position of my own inheritance.

VIOLA
O that I served that lady,
And might not be delivered to the world,
Till I had made mine own occasion mellow,
What my estate* is.

Note: 'Estate' – property, which she will inherit if her brother is no longer living.

CAPTAIN
That will be hard to achieve, as she will not allow any visits, none at all, not even the Duke's.

CAPTAIN
That were hard to compass,
Because she will admit no kind of suit*,
No, not the duke's.

**Note: 'Suit' – having the double meaning of making a request of someone or pursuing them romantically.*

VIOLA
There is a good nature in you, captain, and though a kind exterior often hides a malicious interior, I do believe you have a mind that matches your good, outward appearance. I implore you – and I'll pay you handsomely – conceal my identity, help me disguise myself in whatever way necessary to achieve my aims. I wish to serve this duke. You shall introduce me to him as a eunuch. It will be worth your while as I can sing and perform for him in many musical ways which will make me invaluable to his service.
Whatever else happens, plans I will make
Just keep them silent for both of our sake.

VIOLA
There is a fair behaviour in thee, captain,
And though that nature with a beauteous wall
Doth oft close in pollution, yet of thee
I will believe thou hast a mind that suits
With this thy fair and outward character.
I prithee - and I'll pay thee bounteously -
Conceal me what I am, and be my aid
For such disguise as haply shall become
The form of my intent. I'll serve this duke:
Thou shalt present me as an eunuch* to him.
It may be worth thy pains, for I can sing
And speak to him in many sorts of music
That will allow me very worth his service.
What else may hap to time I will commit;
*Only shape thou thy silence to my wit.**

**Note: Viola will not sing for Orsino, instead she becomes a page to him.*

CAPTAIN
I'll be your mute, if his eunuch you'll be,
And if my tongue blabs, take my eyes from me.

CAPTAIN
Be you his eunuch, and your mute* I'll be;*
*When my tongue blabs, then let mine eyes not see.**

**Note: 'Eunuch' – men castrated when they were young to keep their voice high for singing, and also attendants in Turkish harems where they could be trusted as they had no desire for the many wives of a sultan.*

'Mutes' were dumb servants who also served with Eunuchs in the Harem. Although mute now means unable to speak, then it meant a deaf person, and as a deaf person cannot hear speech they could not overhear any secrets. In the theatre world, a 'mute' has no speaking parts.

VIOLA
Thank you. Now, lead the way.

VIOLA
I thank thee. Lead me on.

**Important Note: The rhyming couplet (in italics) signified to the audience that the scene was ending at a time when there was little if any scenery on stage, no curtains and no lights to dim, but the audience would recognise the significance and know a scene was ending.*

NB: If you are reading the play in the original scene order, now jump back to page 16.

ACT I SCENE III

A ROOM IN OLIVIA'S HOUSE.

ENTER SIR TOBY BELCH WEARING RIDING BOOTS*,
AND MARIA CARRYING A LIGHT. (A LANTERN OR A CANDLE)*.

SIR TOBY, THE UNCLE OF THE WEALTHY COUNTESS OLIVIA, IS A LARGE, LOUD, DRUNK MAN, OVERFOND OF HIS FOOD AND DRINK.

MARIA IS A PETITE, YOUNG, PERSONAL MAID TO THE COUNTESS OLIVIA.

**Note: Sir Toby arrives in riding boots. This signifies he has just arrived at Olivia's house by horse. Maria carries a light signifying it is evening or night time.*

This scene is mostly written in prose, as opposed to the normal blank verse which is a form of poetry which doesn't rhyme except for effect. Prose is used to break the rhythm and for light-hearted and comedic characters.

The exchange between the characters is filled with sexual suggestion and innuendo, often hidden behind nautical terms.

SIR TOBY BELCH
What the devil does my niece mean in taking the death of her brother in this way? I am sure sorrow is an enemy to one's health.

MARIA
My goodness, Sir Toby, you must visit earlier at night. Your niece, my lady, takes great exception to your late hours.

SIR TOBY BELCH
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 a'nights. Your cousin*, my lady, takes great exceptions to your ill hours.

**Note: 'Cousin' – relative. Cousin then meant anyone closely related.*

SIR TOBY BELCH
Then let her accept it since it is now expected.

SIR TOBY BELCH
Why, let her except before excepted.

**Note: 'Except before excepted' – a legal phrase, Shakespeare often threw in legal phrases, it means exclude (allow) things previously ordered to be excluded. The translation has a slightly different play on words but the overall effect is of Sir Toby being what he thinks is clever with his wording.*

Sir Toby is quite drunk.

MARIA
But you must confine yourself within the limits of common decency.

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

SIR TOBY BELCH
Confine? I'll confine myself to the finery I am in. These clothes are good enough to drink in, and so are these boots too. If they are not, let them hang themselves by their own straps.

MARIA
This overindulgence of drink will be your undoing. I heard my lady talking about it yesterday, and about a foolish knight you brought here with you one night to woo her.

SIR TOBY BELCH
Who? Sir Andrew Aguecheek?

MARIA
Yes, him.

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

MARIA
And how is that useful?

SIR TOBY BELCH
Well, he earns three thousand ducats a year.

SIR TOBY BELCH
Confine? I'll confine myself no finer than I am. These clothes are good enough to drink in, and so be these boots too; and 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.

SIR TOBY BELCH
Who, Sir Andrew Aguecheek?

MARIA
Ay, he.

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

MARIA
What's that to th' purpose?

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

**Note: A Ducat was a gold coin used to trade between nations. Although each country had its own design the ducat was valid everywhere due to its value in precious metal.*

Ducats are still traded today, mostly as investments, similar to gold sovereigns or Krugerrands. Shakespeare used the word a lot in his works to the point where the word 'ducat' became slang for money.

MARIA
Yes, but he'll have spent all those ducats in a year. He's a wasteful, self-indulgent fool.

SIR TOBY BELCH
Shame on you for saying so! He plays the cello and speaks three of four languages fluently, and has been gifted with all the finer qualities to be found in nature.

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

SIR TOBY BELCH
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 nature.

**Note: 'Viol-de-gamboys' - an ancient instrument related to the cello. As it is held between the legs it is often used as a sexual metaphor by Shakespeare.*

We will shortly learn that despite Sir Toby's claim, Sir Andrew does not speak any foreign languages.

MARIA
He does indeed have "all" most finer qualities, but he's a fool. He's always arguing, and if not for the gift of cowardice to counteract the relish he has for quarrelling, it's thought by those more refined that he would quickly be gifted with a grave.

MARIA
He hath indeed "all" most* 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 quickly have the gift of a grave.

**Note: 'All most' – she plays on the words sounding like 'almost'. i.e. he almost has the finer qualities but he's an idiot. 'Natural' – an idiot.*

SIR TOBY BELCH
On my oath…

SIR TOBY BELCH
By this hand,

HE RAISES HIS HAND AS IF SWEARING AN OATH.

SIR TOBY BELCH (CONT'D)
…those that say so are scoundrels and 'subtractors'. Who are they?

SIR TOBY BELCH
they are scoundrels and substractors* that say so of him. Who are they?

**Note: 'Substractors' – Sir Toby drunkenly mispronounces 'detractors'.*

MARIA
Those, who in 'addition', say he's drunk with you every night.

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

**Note: 'Add' – playing on Sir Toby's previous mispronunciation 'substractors'.*

SIR TOBY BELCH
(*indignant*) With the drinking of toasts to my niece. I'll drink to her as long as my throat is able and there is still drink in Illyria. He might be a coward who brags, but he will drink a toast to my niece until his brains turn topsy-turvy like a merry-go-round. What are you saying, wench! Talk of the devil, here comes Sir Andrew Agueface now.

SIR TOBY BELCH
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 comes Sir Andrew Agueface.*

**Note: 'Coistrel' – a man who carries the arms of barons and knights. Meaning here that he carries arms but is too much of a coward to use them. For show only.*

'Castiliano vulgo' – the meaning of this phrase is not known, it seems to be a warning to Maria that the man they are talking about is approaching.

'Agueface' – His name is Aguecheek. Whether this was a drunken error or he is insulting the man's name is not known.

ENTER SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK, THE MAN THEY ARE TALKING ABOUT.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
Sir Toby Belch! How are you, Sir Toby Belch?

SIR TOBY BELCH
Dearest Sir Andrew!

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

SIR TOBY BELCH
Sweet Sir Andrew!

THE TWO MEN EMBRACE. SIR TOBY IS FAT, SIR ANDREW IS THIN.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
(*to Maria*) Bless you, pretty mouse.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
Bless you, fair shrew*.

**Note: 'Shrew' – an ill-tempered woman. A shrew-mouse was probably the double-meaning here regarding Maria's petite stature, which is addressed later.*

MARIA
And you too, sir.

MARIA
And you too, sir.

SIR TOBY NUDGES SIR ANDREW SUGGESTIVELY.

SIR TOBY BELCH
Accost, Sir Andrew, accost her.

SIR TOBY BELCH
Accost, Sir Andrew, accost* her.

**Note: 'Accost' – a nautical term meaning to go alongside. It also means to approach someone forcefully.*

Sir Toby means that Sir Andrew should introduce himself to Maria properly with suggestive undertones. Sir Andrew mistakes 'accost' for her surname.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
Who's that?

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
What's that?

SIR TOBY DRUNKENLY WINKS AT SIR ANDREW
AND NODS IN MARIA'S DIRECTION..

SIR TOBY BELCH
My niece's chambermaid.

SIR TOBY BELCH
My niece's chambermaid.*

**Note: 'Chambermaid' – he demotes her to a lower position than she actually has.*

SIR TOBY ONCE AGAIN NUDGES SIR ANDREW.

SIR ANDREW MISUNDERSTANDS HIS MEANING, ASSUMING IT IS HER NAME.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
My good Mistress Accost, I desire to better make your acquaintance.

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

MARIA
(*indignant*) My name is Mary, sir.

MARIA
My name is Mary, sir.

*Note: 'Mary' – her name is Maria. There is a lot of confusion with names throughout the play, whether this is deliberate is not known, many essays have been written on the subject.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
My good Mistress Mary Accost…

SIR TOBY BELCH
(*interrupting*) You're mistaken, sir knight. "Accost' means, approach her, broadside her, woo her, launch an attack.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
Good Mistress Mary Accost -

SIR TOBY BELCH
You mistake, knight. "Accost" is front her*, board her*, woo* her, assail* her.

*Note: 'Front her' – approach or confront her. A series of nautical terms as metaphors for sexual advances to further the nautical meaning behind 'accost'.

'Board her' – come alongside or attack and forcefully board an enemy ship in nautical terms, as well as the more obvious climb on board.

'Woo' – win favour with, seduce. There seems to be no nautical use of the word woo, making this the odd one out.

'Assail' – assault or attempt to seduce

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
Upon my oath, I would not confront her in present company.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
By my troth, I would not undertake her in this company.

SIR ANDREW INDICATES THE AUDIENCE, COMICALLY.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK (CONT'D)
(*in confidence to Sir Toby*) Is that the meaning of "accost"?

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
Is that the meaning of "accost"?

MARIA TURNS TO LEAVE.

MARIA
I bid you farewell, gentlemen.

SIR TOBY BELCH
(*to Sir Andrew*) If you let her go without confronting her, Sir Andrew, may you never draw your sword again.

MARIA
Fare you well, gentlemen.

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

*Note: 'Draw sword' – a pun on not being a man and sword as an innuendo for penis.

HAVING BEEN CHALLENGED BY SIR TOBY TO SEDUCE MARIA,
SIR ANDREW CALLS TO MARIA TO PREVENT HER LEAVING.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
If you leave now, mistress, may I never draw my sword again. Beautiful lady, do you think you are handling fools?

MARIA
Sir, I am not handling you.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
Oh, but you shall. Here's my hand.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
And you part so, mistress, I would I might 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 AGUECHEEK
Marry, but you shall have; and here's my hand.

**Note: 'Marry' – by (the virgin) Mary, a mild expletive. All plays were vetted before they could be performed for obscenity, blasphemy and anti-royal content.*

SIR ANDREW HOLDS OUT HIS HAND TO MARIA WHO TAKES IT IN HERS.

MARIA
Well, sir, you can think what you like. I suggest you bring your hand to the buttery-bar, and let it drink.

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

**Note: 'Buttery-bar' – the ledge of a hatch through which drink is served – with the innuendo that her bosom also forms a ledge. A buttery is the place where butts (barrels) of ale and wine are kept.*

Shakespeare put in no stage direction at this point, but many productions emphasise the innuendoes by Maria placing his hand on her bosom.

The Buttery-Bar

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
Why, sweetheart? What are you suggesting?

MARIA
It's dry, sir.

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

MARIA
It's dry, sir.

MARIA LOOKS DOWN AT HIS HAND.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
I should think so. I am not such an ass that I can't keep my hand dry. What's your witticism?

MARIA
A dry wit, sir.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
Are you full of them?

MARIA
Yes, sir, I have them at my fingertips.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
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 AGUECHEEK
Are you full of them?

MARIA
Ay, sir, I have them at my fingers' ends.

SHE BACKS AWAY FROM HIM SO HE JUST HOLDS HER FINGER TIPS.
SHE PAUSES THEN PULLS HER HAND AWAY COMPLETELY.

MARIA
Goodness, now I release your hand, I am barren.

MARIA
Marry, now I let go your hand, I am barren.*

**Note: 'Barren' – empty, without. Triple meaning of no longer having his hand, no longer having any jests, and suggestive of being childless, therefore unmarried.*

MARIA TURNS AND LEAVES.

SIR TOBY TAKES PITY ON SIR ANDREW FOR FAILING IN HIS TASK.

SIR TOBY BELCH
(*sympathetically*) Oh, sir knight, you're in need of a glass of Madeira.

SIR TOBY BELCH
O knight, thou lack'st a cup of canary*.

**Note: 'Canary' – fortified sweet wine from the Canary Islands. Popular in Elizabethan England amongst aristocracy though production ceased suddenly in the 1680s. Madeira wine is made from the same grapes and is the closest we have today, its strength is 20% alcohol. It is also similar to sweet sherry.*

SIR TOBY POURS TWO GLASSES OF WINE. HE HANDS ONE TO SIR ANDREW.

SIR TOBY BELCH (CONT'D)
When did I ever see you put down like this?

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
Never in your life, I think, unless you've seen Madeira put me down on the floor. I think sometimes I have no more wits about me than a monk or a commoner. But I am a great eater of beef, and I believe that does harm to my wit.

SIR TOBY BELCH
Without question.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
If it does, I'll give it up.
– I'm riding home tomorrow, Sir Toby.

SIR TOBY BELCH
Pourquoi, my dear knight?

SIR TOBY BELCH
When did I see thee so put down?

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
Never in your life, I think, unless you see 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 BELCH
No question.

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

SIR TOBY BELCH
Pourquoi,* my dear knight?

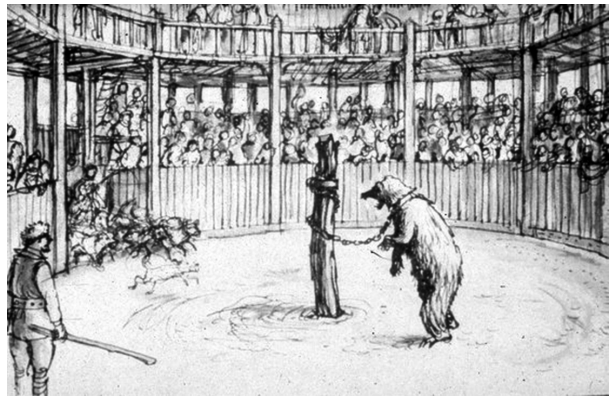
**Note: 'Pourquoi' – French for 'why'.*

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
What does “pourquoi” mean? Go, or not go? I wish I’d spent the time studying foreign tongues that I’ve spent fencing, dancing, and bear-baiting. Oh, if only I’d studied the arts.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
What is "pourquoi"? - do, or not do? I would I had bestowed that time in the tongues that I have in fencing*, dancing, and bear-baiting*. O, had I but followed the arts!

**Note: ‘Fencing’ – the sport of fighting with swords.*

**‘Bear-baiting’ was once a common blood sport. It is known there was a bear used for such purposes near the Globe Theatre and Shakespeare wrote the bear into plays. The ‘sport’ comprised a bear chained to a stake upon which dogs (usually Old English Bulldogs) were set loose to ‘bait’ it – attack it, forcing it to defend itself. A ‘course’ was a single session, like a ‘round’ in boxing, where the bear had no option but to fight or be killed. It was outlawed in 1835 under Parliament’s Cruelty To Animals Act .*



Bear Baiting With Dogs

SIR TOBY BELCH
And with those ‘tongs’ you’d have had a fine head of hair.

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

**Note: Sir Toby has twisted the word ‘tongues’ by Sir Andrew into ‘tongs’ used for curling hair. Back then the two words were pronounced the same way.*

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
Would they have fixed my hair?

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
Why, would that have mended my hair?

SIR ANDREW RUNS HIS FINGERS THROUGH HIS LONG, LANK HAIR, SELF-CONSCIOUSLY.

SIR TOBY BELCH
Beyond doubt. You can see it doesn’t curl naturally.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
It suits me well enough though, doesn’t it?

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

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

SIR TOBY BELCH
Very well, it hangs like unspun wool, and I wish a hussy would take you between her legs and spin it out.

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

**Note: 'Flax on a distaff' – women spun flax or wool to make clothing with. The 'distaff', also known as a spindle, was a long thin pole the raw wool was wound around. Before the spinning wheel replaced this method in 1850 (though versions of the spinning wheel had been around for centuries in other countries) women would spin (twist) the wool by hand, with the pole held between their legs.*

'Housewife' – until the 17th century the original meaning of housewife was an immoral woman. Hussy is a contraction of the word. Housewifery was attending to the duties of the household – housework.

'Spin it off' – there are suggestions this referred to catching syphilis from a prostitute, one of the symptoms being the hair falling out, or it could be a simple sexual innuendo.

Hand Spinning Wool

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
Anyway, I'm returning home tomorrow, Sir Toby. Your niece will not see me, or if she does, it's a good bet she'll have nothing to do with me. The neighbouring count himself tries his hardest to gain her affections.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
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 BELCH
She'll have nothing to do with the count. She won't marry above her rank, whether in wealth, age or intelligence, I've heard her swear to it. So, there's hope for you, man.

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

**Note: 'Count' – He refers to Duke Orsini who is not a count, however the second occurrence of the word can be delivered in such a way as if to sound like an expletive. The confusion in titles occurs frequently throughout the play. From what he says, we can deduce that the Duke is older than Olivia, and that Sir Andrew is roughly the same age.*

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
(*comedic change of mind*) I think I'll stay another month. I'm a fellow with the strangest quirks in behaviour. I adore masquerades and making merry, sometimes at the same time.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
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.

SIR TOBY BELCH
Are you proficient at these petit trifles, sir?

SIR TOBY BELCH
Art thou good at these kickshawses, knight?

**Note: 'Kickshawses' – trifles. Corruption of the French 'quelque chose' (something).*

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
As any man in Illyria of lesser standing than my superiors, whatever the man may be – though not so proficient as an old man.

SIR TOBY BELCH
How proficient are you at dancing, sir knight?

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
Truly, I can cut a merry caper.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
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 BELCH
What is thy excellence in a galliard*, knight?

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
Faith, I can cut a caper*.

**Note: 'Galliard' – a lively dance of four steps and a leap. The leap known as a 'caper'.*

Dances with frolicsome leaps (capers) were popular in Elizabethan England among the nobility. It is from this we get 'Ten lords a-leaping' in the Twelve Days Of Christmas song.

'Cut a caper' – perform the leap with confidence. Caper is also a pickled flower bud, which is the meaning Sir Toby assumes with his next line. Today we say cut the mustard, meaning good or with added spice/zest. 'Mutton' was also slang for a whore.

SIR TOBY BELCH
And I can cut the mutton to go with it.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
And I think I can do the backwards leap as well as any man in Illyria.

SIR TOBY BELCH
Why are these talents hidden? Why do these gifts have a veil around them? Are they likely to gather dust, like Mistress Mall's picture?

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

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

SIR TOBY BELCH
Wherefore are these things hid? Wherefore have these gifts a curtain* before 'em?* Are they like to take dust, like Mistress Mall's* picture?

**Note: 'Curtain' – valuable paintings had curtains in front of them to keep off dust and prevent fading.*

'Mistress Mall' – It has long been assumed that this was the notorious singing, dancing, lute playing, cross-dressing, pickpocket and criminal fence known as Moll Cutpurse. However she was only seventeen when Shakespeare wrote this play and had not yet reached her notoriety. It could be just a comparison to a curtained painting and Olivia now wearing a veil to hide her face, using a generic name, like Jane Doe, as the subject of the painting was covered and therefore unknown.

SIR TOBY BELCH (CONT'D)
Why don't you quick-step your way to church and come home with a waltz? If it was me my walk would be a jig. I would even pass water in a sink-at-pace. I ask you! Is this a world to hide your qualities in? By the excellent constitution of your leg I thought it must be born under a dancing star.

SIR TOBY BELCH
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? 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.

**Note: 'Cinquepace' – a five step lively dance, he phonetically says it as English words.*

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
Aye, it's sturdy, and it looks moderately good in a brightly coloured stocking.
– Shall we start some revelling?

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

**Note: 'Dam'd coloured' – as it was originally spelt in early texts. There have been endless arguments about what this means, going by the nature of Sir Andrew it was probably extravagantly coloured in some form. Some editions say 'flame coloured'.*

SIR TOBY BELCH
What else should we do? Weren't we born under the sign of Taurus?

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
Taurus? That's the sign for sides and hearts.

SIR TOBY BELCH
No, sir, it is for legs and thighs. Let me see you caper about.

SIR TOBY BELCH
What shall we do else? Were we not born under Taurus?

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK
Taurus?* - that's sides and heart.

SIR TOBY BELCH
No, sir, it is legs and thighs. Let me see thee caper.

**Note: 'Taurus' – they are both wrong, probably deliberately for comedic effect, Taurus is the sign for the neck and throat, appropriate for drinkers.*

SIR ANDREW LEAPS INTO THE AIR WITHOUT ANY ELEGANCE.

SIR TOBY BELCH (CONT'D)
Ha, higher!

SIR TOBY BELCH
Ha, higher!

SIR ANDREW LEAPS AGAIN ALMOST FALLING OVER AS HE LANDS.

SIR TOBY BELCH (CONT'D)
Ha, ha, excellent!

SIR TOBY BELCH
Ha, ha, excellent!

ACT I SCENE IV

A ROOM IN THE DUKE'S PALACE.

ENTER VALENTINE, A PRETENTIOUS PERSONAL ATTENDANT TO THE DUKE, AND VIOLA DISGUISED AND DRESSED AS A YOUNG MAN NOW CALLED CESARIO.

Note: Viola may have her hair cut short or she may tuck it under a cap.

VALENTINE
If the Duke '*continues'* to show you such favour, Cesario, you are likely to go far in his household. He has known you only three days and already you are close companions.

VIOLA (AS CESARIO)
If you call into question the '*continuation*' of his favour towards me I suspect you either fear his mood swings or that I'll be negligent in my duties. Is he inconstant in his moods, sir?

VALENTINE
(*sarcastic*) Believe me, no.

VALENTINE
If the duke continue these favours towards you, Cesario, you are like to be much advanced. He hath known you but three days, and already you are no stranger.

VIOLA
You either fear his humour or my negligence, that you call in question the continuance of his love. Is he inconstant, sir, in his favours?

VALENTINE
No, believe me.

ENTER DUKE ORSINO, ACCOMPANIED BY CURIO, WHO IS ANOTHER PERSONAL ATTENDANT TO THE DUKE, AND ATTENDANTS.

VIOLA (AS CESARIO)
I thank you. Here comes the count now.

VIOLA
I thank you. Here comes the count*.

**Note: Again the confusion between being a count or a duke.*

DUKE ORSINO
Has anyone seen Cesario, huh?

DUKE ORSINO
Who saw Cesario, ho?

VIOLA (AS CESARIO) STEPS FORWARD AND BOWS.

VIOLA (AS CESARIO)
Here, at your service, my lord.

VIOLA
On your attendance, my lord, here.

DUKE ORSINO INDICATES HIS ATTENDANTS AS HE GIVES AN ORDER FOR THEM TO STAND AWAY AT A DISTANCE.

DUKE ORSINO
(*to attendants*) Stand aside for a while.

DUKE ORSINO
Stand you awhile aloof.

CURIO AND ATTENDANTS STAND TO THE SIDE, JEALOUS OF THE ATTENTION VIOLA IS RECEIVING FROM THEIR MASTER.

DUKE ORSINO TAKES VIOLA (AS CESARIO) INTO HIS CONFIDENCE OUT OF EARSHOT OF THE OTHERS.

DUKE ORSINO (CONT'D)
(*to Viola alone*) You know everything about me, I have opened my heart and soul to you. Therefore, young man, go directly to her. Do not allow her to deny you access. Stand at her door and tell them you will take root there until you have spoken with her.

DUKE ORSINO
Thou know'st no less but all: I have unclasped
To thee the book even of my secret soul.
Therefore, good youth, address thy gait unto her;
Be not denied access, stand at her doors,
And tell them there thy fixed foot shall grow
Till thou have audience.

VIOLA (AS CESARIO)
Surely, my noble lord, if she is as lost in her sorrows as people say, she will never allow me admittance.

VIOLA
Sure, my noble lord,
If she be so abandoned to her sorrow
As it is spoke, she never will admit me.

DUKE ORSINO
Protest loudly, make a nuisance of yourself, don't come back unsatisfied.

DUKE ORSINO
Be clamorous, and leap all civil bounds,
Rather than make unprofited return.

VIOLA (AS CESARIO)
What if I do speak with her, my lord, what then?

VIOLA
Say I do speak with her, my lord, what then?

DUKE ORSINO
Oh, then you must reveal how passionate my love is. Surprise her with talk of my dear affection. It would be good if you could enact my sorrow. She will take better notice from a youth than from an aged messenger's solemn manner

DUKE ORSINO
O, then unfold the passion of my love,
Surprise her with discourse of my dear faith.
It shall become thee well to act my woes:
She will attend it better in thy youth
Than in a nuncio's of more grave aspect.

THE DUKE SCOWLS OVER AT VALENTINE, SHOWING WHO HE MEANT.

VALENTINE STICKS HIS NOSE UP IN THE AIR IN DISDAIN.

VIOLA (AS CESARIO)
I don't think so, my lord.

VIOLA
I think not so, my lord.

DUKE ORSINO

Dear boy, believe it, anyone who treats you as a man deprives you of the happiness of youth. The goddess Diana's lip is no more smooth and rosy than yours. Your small pipe is like a maiden's organ, shrill and unbroken, it resembles that of a woman. I know your character is right for this affair.

DUKE ORSINO

Dear lad, believe it;
For they shall yet belie thy happy years
That say thou art a man. Diana's* lip
Is not more smooth and rubious*; thy small pipe*
Is as the maiden's organ*, shrill and sound,
And all is semblative a woman's part*.
I know thy constellation is right apt
For this affair.

**Note: The Duke's speech is full of innuendo, and in humorous fashion he is saying Viola, being so young, resembles a woman, so will be received better by Olivia than one of his aged male attendants. The audience knows Viola is a woman, but Orsino doesn't.*

'Diana' - goddess of women and chastity, suggesting innocence.

'Rubious' – ruby-red.

'Small Pipe' – shrill voice, with the innuendo of small penis.
A small musical pipe was very high pitched and shrill.

'Maiden's organ' – a virgin's voice, with the innuendo of her sexual organ.

'Woman's part' – a female quality with again the innuendo on her genitals.

THE DUKE TURNS TO HIS ATTENDANTS WHO ARE STANDING ASIDE.

DUKE ORSINO (CONT'D)

(*to Attendants*) Four or five of you accompany him. – No, all of you would be better, I feel best when I'm alone.
(*to Viola*) Succeed in this and you will live as freely as I, your master, and share in his good fortune.

VIOLA (AS CESARIO)

I'll do my best to woo your lady.
(*aside as the Duke exits*)
This is a conflict full of woeful strife!
I woo for him, but wish I were his wife.

DUKE ORSINO

[*To Attendants.*] Some four or five attend him;
All, if you will; for I myself am best
When least in company. Prosper well in this
And thou shalt live as freely as thy lord
To call his fortunes thine.

VIOLA

I'll do my best
To woo your lady. [Aside.] Yet a barful strife!
*Whoe'er I woo, myself would be his wife.**

**Note: Did you spot the rhyming couplet to notify the end of a scene?*

A rhyming couplet could also be used in the middle of a scene when a major character was about to make an exit.

Rhyming couplets were not used at the end of every scene. If it was obvious there was a scene change they could be omitted.