

IDENTITY CRISIS: VIVIEN WILSON

Back in England a few years ago, someone tapped me on the shoulder. 'Fancy seeing you here!'. A familiar face beamed at me. I recognised her instantly - she'd been at my school. After kissing me on the cheek, she indicated The Kings Arms. 'I'm meeting my husband here for a drink. How about you keep me company while I wait, I do so hate going into a pub on my own!'

It was just starting to rain, so the cosy pub seemed very inviting. She insisted on buying me a drink. I studied her as she walked up to the bar. I remembered her from the school play. She'd played Malvolio in Twelfth Night. She was hilarious. The only problem was, I couldn't for the life of me remember her name. *Was it Geraldine or Gillian, or maybe Grace?*

She returned and set the drinks on the table. A crackling fire was burning in the grate.

'So, what are you doing in Oxford?', she asked.

'My husband and I have been here for the past two years, but we're returning to Sydney soon.'

'Sydney? Goodness'.

'And you? I suppose you're here for The Oxford Playhouse's production?'

'No, no time, I'm here for a physiotherapy conference, with my husband. He should be here any minute'.

When he arrived, he hurried to join her. 'I see you've already made a friend', he said giving her a quick kiss.

'Darling, this is Amanda. We were at school together', my friend announced.

Amanda! I obviously wasn't the only one with a bad memory!

'It's Vivien actually', I corrected. She looked embarrassed.

'Sorry, yes, er ... Vivien'.

I was still no closer to discovering *her* name ... *Gina? No ... Judith?* Then, in a flash, it came to me ... *Gwendoline!*

'Gwendoline', I exclaimed, feeling pleased with myself. 'I remember your Malvolio. You were hilarious ... all that cross gartered stuff!'

My friend looked at me. 'I don't know what you're talking about ... Malvolio?'

'You were in Twelfth Night at school at St Cuthbert's!'

'St. Cuthbert's? I was at St. Margaret's and my name's Susan and you were in my hockey team!'

'Me? Hockey? No way - I've never touched a hockey stick in my life!'

I stared at her and she stared back. Then, as realisation dawned, we both burst out laughing.