

*Twelfth Night* is a **romantic comedy** written in England during the Elizabethan era. It was likely performed during the Twelfth Night festival, a Christmas celebration known for disguise and role reversal, reflecting the play's main themes. It is classified as a Shakespearean comedy because:

- It ends with marriages and reconciliation.
- It includes mistaken identity and disguise.
- It uses humour, wordplay, and festive atmosphere.
- Social disorder is restored to harmony at the end

### **Act 3**

#### **Scene 1 – Viola and Olivia**

Viola (as Cesario) interacts with Olivia. Olivia confesses her love to Cesario, but Viola gently refuses. The love triangle grows more complicated as Olivia persists, unaware Cesario is Viola in disguise. Feste is also present in this scene, exchanging witty dialogue with Viola, which highlights themes of wisdom, folly, and hidden truth.

#### **Scene 2 – Sir Toby and Sir Andrew**

Sir Andrew grows jealous of Cesario. Sir Toby manipulates him into challenging Cesario to a duel, building comic tension and rivalry. Sir Fabian supports Sir Toby's plan, encouraging Sir Andrew's foolish confidence and helping to arrange the duel through deception and exaggeration.

#### **Scene 3 – Sebastian and Antonio**

Antonio gives Sebastian money and promises to meet him later. Antonio risks arrest in Illyria, showing loyalty and devotion. He explains that he has enemies in Orsino's court due to past conflicts at sea, which increases the danger of his presence there.

#### **Scene 4 – Olivia's Garden**

Malvolio, wearing yellow stockings, behaves oddly, believing Olivia loves him. Olivia thinks he is mad. Sir Toby and Maria plan to lock him up. Meanwhile, the duel between Sir Andrew and Cesario begins. Antonio intervenes, mistaking Viola for Sebastian, and is arrested. Sir Toby frightens both Sir Andrew and Cesario by exaggerating each opponent's bravery, increasing the comic misunderstanding and tension.

#### **Important Speeches**

1. "I am not what I am" (Act 3, Scene 1)

Speaker: Viola

Addressee: Olivia

Analysis: Reveals her disguise and hidden identity; dramatic irony drives the romantic tension.

2. "Love sought is good, but given unsought is better." Act 3, Scene 1

Speaker: Olivia

Addressee: Viola (as Cesario)

Analysis: Olivia declares her love openly, valuing love freely given. The line strengthens dramatic irony because she is speaking to Viola in disguise.

## **Act 4**

### **Scene 1 – Sebastian and Olivia**

Sebastian, mistaken for Cesario, is proposed to by Olivia. Despite confusion, he agrees to marry, increasing the play's comedy and reinforcing the theme of mistaken identity. Sir Toby also mistakes Sebastian for Cesario and is beaten by him, further deepening the confusion and comic disorder.

### **Scene 2 – Malvolio Imprisoned**

Malvolio is locked in a dark room. Feste, disguised as Sir Topas, mocks him, adding cruelty and comic effect to the prank. Maria, Sir Toby, and Fabian observe the situation, enjoying the trick while Malvolio desperately insists on his sanity and requests writing materials.

### **Scene 3 – Sebastian's Acceptance**

Sebastian reflects on his sudden fortune and chooses to trust Olivia's sincerity, accepting the marriage. He wonders whether he is dreaming but concludes that the events are real and decides to embrace his unexpected good fortune.

### **Important Speeches**

1. "I am not mad, Sir Topas; I say to you, this house is dark." (Act 4, Scene 2)

Speaker: Malvolio

Addressee: Sir Topas (Feste in disguise)

Analysis: Highlights dramatic irony; audience knows Malvolio is sane, increasing humour.

## **Act 5**

### **Scene 1 – Resolution**

All characters gather. Confusion increases when Sebastian appears. The twins reunite, revealing the truth. Orsino recognizes Viola's loyalty and proposes marriage. Olivia realizes she married Sebastian. Malvolio is released but vows revenge. Order and identity are restored.

### **Important Speeches**

1. "One face, one voice, one habit, and two persons!" (Act 5, Scene 1)

Speaker: Orsino

Addressee: All present

Analysis: Expresses amazement at the twins and resolves identity confusion.

2. "Cesario, come; for so you shall be, while you are a man; but when in other habits you are seen..."

Speaker: Orsino

Addressee: Viola

Analysis: Orsino accepts Viola's true identity and shifts his love from Olivia to her. The line resolves the theme of disguise and marks the restoration of order, love, and proper identity at the end of the play.

### **Major Themes**

#### **\*Identity and Disguise**

Disguise drives the central conflict of Twelfth Night. Viola's transformation into Cesario creates mistaken identity, romantic confusion, and dramatic irony. Characters respond to outward appearances rather than inner truth. When Viola

and Sebastian reunite, hidden identities are revealed and harmony is restored. Shakespeare suggests that identity can be flexible, yet truth must ultimately emerge for social stability.

### **\*Social Class and Ambition**

In *Twelfth Night*, social hierarchy shapes behaviour and comic tension. Malvolio's ambition to marry Olivia and rise above his status leads to humiliation. The forged letter exploits his pride and desire for advancement. Shakespeare appears to question rigid class structures, suggesting that ambition without humility results in foolishness, while social mobility becomes both comic and problematic.

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### **Literary devices**

#### **The use of irony in *Twelfth Night***

1- 🎭 **Dramatic Irony:** The audience knows something that the characters do not know.

#### **A. Viola's Disguise**

- Viola disguises herself as Cesario.
- The audience knows she is a woman.
- Orsino and Olivia believe she is a man.
- This creates romantic confusion and humour.

#### **B. Antonio's Mistake**

- Antonio thinks Viola is Sebastian.
- He defends her and is arrested.
- The audience knows the twins are different people.

- Antonio feels betrayed because Viola does not recognize him.

### **C. Malvolio and the Forged Letter**

- The audience knows Maria wrote the letter as a trick.
- Malvolio believes Olivia loves him.
- He behaves foolishly (yellow stockings, smiling).
- The audience understands the joke while Malvolio does not.

## **2- 🗨️ Situational Irony: What happens is the opposite of what is expected.**

### **A. Olivia Marries Sebastian**

- Olivia intends to marry Cesario.
- Instead, she unknowingly marries Sebastian.
- The outcome is unexpected but happy.

### **B. Orsino's Love**

- Orsino claims he deeply loves Olivia.
- In the end, he quickly shifts his love to Viola.
- The audience sees that his "love" was less constant than expected.

## **3- Symbolism:**

### **A. 💎 Jewellery**

- Jewellery symbolizes love and social status.
- Olivia sends a ring to Cesario as a symbol of her love.
- Malvolio's desire for rich accessories shows his ambition to rise socially.

### **B. 👗 Clothing: Clothing symbolizes identity and disguise:**

- Olivia's veil shows emotional distance.
- Malvolio's yellow stockings reveal his foolish pride.

**C. The Dark Room:** Malvolio's imprisonment in darkness symbolizes:

- Ignorance and social punishment

**D. The Sea:** The sea represents:

- Separation and fate
- The beginning of new identities

#### **4- Metaphor**

“If music be the food of love, play on.” Love is metaphorically compared to hunger or appetite. This suggests that love can consume a person and become excessive or unhealthy.