

# **SHAKESPEARENCE!**

## Twelfth Night

### Synopsis

Once upon a time, in a beautiful land called **Illyria** (ill-leer-ia), there was an oh-so-cool Duke named **Orsino** (or-see-no). He was desperately in love with a lovely lass named **Olivia**...but, alas, she wasn't interested; mainly because her brother had just died and she was quite depressed...but also, Duke Orsino just wasn't her cup of tea, you know?

#### Meanwhile...

Off the coast, out at sea, there was a terrible storm which gobbled up a ship. Now on this ship, 2 of the passengers were twin sister and brother, **Viola & Sebastian**. They were well off, well educated, and very loyal to one another. But alas! They were separated in the storm....when she washes up on the shore of Illyria, she assumes that Sebastian is drowned. Poor Vi.

So, what's a girl to do? She talks to a local sea captain about where she can work, and hears about Duke Orsino's love for Olivia. Perhaps she can work for Olivia? No, that won't work because Olivia isn't really talking to anyone right now. Perhaps Orsino? No, that won't work because she'd have to be a guy...wait...what if she disguises herself as a boy? BRILLIANT!!!

And off she goes to work for Orsino, as a guy called **Cesario**. The Duke immediately sends Viola, now Cesario, to "woo" Olivia on his behalf. And by golly, she/he does...One little teensy-tiny problem...Olivia instantly falls in love with Cesario.

And to make things worse, Viola is falling for her employer...yes, that would be Duke Orsino. So, Orsino loves Olivia who loves Cesario who loves Orsino.

#### Meanwhile...

At Olivia's house, she has a staff of people who work for her: there's **Mariah**, who sort of runs things & is wickedly clever, **Feste** who is Olivia's "clown" or entertainer & confidant & sees EVERYTHING, and **Malvolio** who is the steward or keeper of the grounds & is very uptight & cranky.

Also, her uncle **Sir Toby Belch** lives there, and is usually drunk. His friend **Sir Andrew Aguecheek** who seems to be going through a bit of a roughpatch, is visiting. Sir Andrew decides that he loves Olivia...They all are pretty rowdy and party a lot. Malvolio doesn't like it and is constantly tattling on them.

So, Mariah designs a practical joke to rattle him: she forges a letter in Olivia's handwriting which says that she (as Olivia) is in love with him. Malvolio finds the letter and is filled with dreams of marrying Olivia. He begins acting very strangely (following the directions in said letter) and Olivia thinks he's gone round the bend.

#### Meanwhile...

**Sebastian** turns up in Illyria too! He was found after the shipwreck and cared for by a guy called **Antonio**. However, Antonio and Orsino were old enemies and Antonio was a little sketchy about being back in Illyria.

Sebastian stumbles upon Olivia's house with Sir Toby and Sir Andrew preparing for a duel. Sir Andrew has challenged Cesario/Viola to win the heart of Olivia, or so he thinks.

Now, if you recall, Sebastian and Viola are TWINS. She's now dressed as a guy. So now, no one would ever know the difference between them.

Back to Olivia's...Toby & Andrew are threatening Sebastian when Olivia comes out and sees him. Sebastian sees Olivia and instantly falls in love with her. She is still in love with Cesario/Viola, and she thinks Sebastian is him/her. She asks him to marry her...& he says YES!

Right at this time, Antonio gets arrested by Orsino's officers. He sees Cesario and thinks she is his dearest friend Sebastian, and asks her to bail him out. Well, naturally she denies knowing him because, well, she's never seen him in her life. He gets dragged away screaming about his friend Sebastian betraying him.

**Meanwhile...**

Malvolio is tormented by Mariah, Toby, & Andrew...they keep playing more tricks on him and he really is going a little crazy. Now this is all to get back at him for spoiling their fun and being soooooo uptight. But perhaps they go too far?

**Meanwhile...**

Duke Orsino & Cesario (who are now the tightest of friends, Vi COMPLETELY in love with him) make their way to Olivia's. When they arrive, she welcomes her "new husband"...Cesario, thinking she's Sebastian! Orsino is FURIOUS.

SUDDENLY Sebastian arrives...Viola and Sebastian are at last reunited!!! Orsino realizes that this new best friend of his is actually this very lovely lady, and he's actually very much in love with her. Olivia realizes that Cesario was a girl, not a boy, the whole time. Hmm. Well, whatever, she's got her man now.

Malvolio shows up, a very broken man. Olivia discovers the trickery of her uncle and the lot and is deeply upset, but...

In the end, the Duke has his Vi. Sebastian has his O. Toby has his Mariah. Andrew is disappointed. Malvolio has learned a terrible lesson. And Feste has of course seen it all and lives to tell...

*And the lovely and rather magical land of Illyria goes on being the perfect place to figure yourself out and perhaps-just perhaps- find a very special someone.*