

**ACT 3**

**Scene 1**

As the garden door closed, leaving the two alone, Viola turned to Olivia.

“Madam...” she stopped. Olivia was staring at her in a way that made her feel very peculiar. She knew that look from somewhere. Where? And why was it making her feel so uncomfortable? Hmmmm...

Oh, no. She got it. Wide eyes? Check. Red cheeks? Check. Breathing hard? Check. This was exactly how she herself had stared at Orsino. And, if she didn’t do something about it quickly, Olivia was going to tell her that she loved her! Oh no! Oh yes! For even now Olivia was stretching out her hand.

“Give me your hand sir...”

Viola stared at the hand for a moment, uncertain what to do. Then, she swiftly reached out, grasped it and shook it vigorously. After that she bowed, bowed again and shook the hand once more.

“My duty madam and most humble service. Madam, I come to whet your gentle thoughts on Orsino’s behalf.”

Thinking that this was a pretty successful attempt to make things seem more business-like, Viola tried to withdraw her hand. Olivia would not let go.

Viola tugged.

Olivia tugged back.

Viola tugged harder.

Olivia tugged harder still, a look of fierce determination on her face.

“O, by your leave, I pray you, I bade you never speak again of him!”

“Dear lady,” Viola began, pulling ever more forcefully until, without warning, Olivia let go, only to fling herself at Viola’s legs, grasping them fervently.

“Cesario, by the roses of the spring, by maidenhood, honour, truth and everything, I love thee so, that maugre all thy pride, nor wit nor reason can my passion hide!”

Viola swayed from side to side, breaking out in a sweat at the effort to stay upright. She looked desperately at the door and started to try to edge herself towards it. Olivia, who was squeezing her legs like an Illyrian boa constrictor, was not making this easy.

Viola began.

“By innocence I swear and by my youth,” she paused, trying unsuccessfully to extricate her left leg from Olivia’s grasp,

“I have one heart, one bosom, and one truth, and that no woman has.”

Finally, and with a gigantic effort, Viola pogoed the two of them towards the garden door. With the handle in Viola's grasp, Olivia finally seemed to give up and released her. Seizing the opportunity, Viola flung the door wide and jumped through, saying, as she did so:

"And so adieu, good madam; never more will I my master's tears to you deplore."

## Scene 2

"Sir Toby, I'll not stay a jot longer!"

Sir Andrew had almost finished packing and was just trying to find space in his suitcase for his teddy bear. Holding the creature to his face, he breathed deeply - the smell of childhood and home. At least Mr Snufflekins loved him he thought, wiping away a tear. Sir Toby laid a friendly hand on his shoulder.

"Thy reason, dear venom, give thy reason."

"I saw your niece do more favours to the Count's serving-man than she ever bestowed upon me!"

Sir Toby and Fabian exchanged glances. 'We're your friends', their faces seemed to say. 'We're here to help.' They *were* there to help... themselves to Sir Andrew's money! All those parties, all that drink, all that food? All paid for by Sir Andrew. He might not be clever, but he *WAS* rich, and these two rogues would do anything to get him to stay.

"Did she see thee the while, old boy? Tell me that," said Fabian.

"As plain as I see you now," replied Sir Andrew.

"She did show favour to the youth only to exasperate you, to awake your dormouse valour!" Fabian went on to explain how Sir Andrew had failed a test – Olivia did care for him, but she wanted him to prove his manliness! Poor foolish Sir Andrew, he was immediately convinced.

"What should I do?"

"Challenge the Count's youth to fight. There is no way but this, Sir Andrew."

Sir Andrew took a deep breath and drew himself up to his full height. He wasn't beaten yet! He'd show this young servant what he was made of; he was Brave Sir Andrew, and he and Mr Snufflekins were going nowhere. He pulled a sheet of paper and a pen out of his suitcase.

"Will either of you bear me a challenge to him?"

Sir Toby's eyes glinted with pleasure.

“Go write it in a martial hand, be curst and brief. We’ll meet at the orchard-end. Go!”

### Scene 3

Sebastian was being followed; he was sure of it. Whenever he stopped, whenever he started, the footsteps behind him matched his. Sebastian walked on until he came level with a narrow alleyway, whereupon he abruptly disappeared.

Moments later a hooded figure passed the entrance to the alleyway and Sebastian leapt out, dragging the figure into the shadows, where he roughly pulled the hood back, exposing his follower’s face.

Antonio! What was he doing here?

In a low voice, Antonio explained that he had followed his friend out of concern for his safety.

“I could not stay behind you, in these parts, which to a stranger such as you can prove rough and inhospitable.”

Now that the puzzle was solved, Sebastian was delighted to see his friend and suggested that they go and view the sights of the town together. Antonio shook his head, pointing at his hood.

“I do not without danger walk these streets. Once in a seafight against the Count his galleys I did some service.”

Antonio told Sebastian that, if he was spotted by Orsino’s guards, he could expect some rough treatment – a spell in prison at least. But that was no reason why Sebastian shouldn’t have a look around, though he’d need some money.

Antonio reached into his cloak.

“Here’s my purse. In the south suburbs, at the Elephant is best to lodge. I will bespeak our diet whiles you beguile the time and feed your knowledge with viewing of the town.”

They shook hands and parted company.

### Scene 4

Maria was not surprised to find her mistress weeping. This had been happening a lot over the last year or two and she had even had a new cupboard built to store all the handkerchiefs that were needed to mop up Olivia’s many floods of tears. It wasn’t that Maria was hard of heart; in fact she was quite a kindly soul underneath that rough, tough, brusque, rude, scheming, cross, irritable and intimidating exterior. It was just that.... well, it had started to get on her nerves a bit. I mean, first the dead dad: lots of weeping. Then the dead brother: more weeping. Now this unrequited love for a bloke who seemed unable to grow a beard and walked funny: hours of weeping, alternating with looking hot and bothered. When would it end?

She *was* surprised, however, to find her mistress sitting on the floor. Maria hoped that this wasn't going to become a regular thing as it would make sweeping and cleaning quite a lot more difficult.

Finding that the current bout of sobbing was - as she had suspected - to do with Cesario, who was, moaned Olivia, never, ever, ever, not in a million years, ever going to come and see Olivia ever, ever again, Maria did the most practical thing and sent a strongly worded message telling Cesario to get himself over to Olivia's house sharpish. Maria, as a servant herself, was pretty sure that Cesario - another servant - would do what he was told.

In the meantime, she managed to get her puddle of a mistress into a chair, whereupon the sobbing stopped and the wailing started.

"Where's Malvolio? He is sad and civil, and suits well for a servant with my fortunes."

There was a pause, and then a more extreme wail:

"Where is Malvolio?"

Somewhere in the distance, Maria could see two floating yellow columns, glowing like the sun, and hovering above them, a set of disembodied teeth. Gradually, as he approached, she was able to make out the form of Malvolio, his legs encased in stockings so brightly yellow that Maria feared she'd go blind just looking at them. Around the stockings were red ribbons arranged in a criss-cross pattern and his smile was as wide as a Halloween lantern.

He bowed low to Olivia and - though it seemed impossible - grinned even more widely. Olivia looked at him with alarm.

"How now, Malvolio?"

Malvolio winked roguishly.

"Sweet Lady, ho ho!"

"Smils't thou? I sent for thee upon a sad occasion."

"Sad, lady? I could be sad...."

But, instead of seeming sad, he twirled slowly on the spot, smiling all the time, pointing at his yellow legs and raising an eyebrow. Surely, thought Olivia, he must be ill! He needed to rest....

"Wilt thou go to bed, Malvolio?"

No one was prepared for what happened next, not even Maria. A look of astonished joy flashed across Malvolio's face whilst his arms opened wide as he attempted to take Olivia in his arms.

"To bed! Ay, sweet-heart, and I'll come to thee."

Well, thought Maria, at least her mistress wasn't crying anymore. Shrieking and jumping into the air, yes, but this had to be counted as an improvement surely? At this moment, news arrived that Cesario had returned and Olivia, seized the opportunity to see him, saying as she left,

"Good Maria, let this fellow be looked to. Where's my cousin Toby? Let some of my people have a special care of him: I would not have him miscarry for the half of my dowry."

Not bad, thought Malvolio - yes, things had gone pretty well. Granted, Olivia seemed to have run away from him, but he was sure this was all part of the game, after all...

"No worse man than Sir Toby to look to me! This concurs directly with the letter: she sends him on purpose, that I may appear stubborn to him!"

And when, moments later, Sir Toby and Fabian appeared, Malvolio made sure that he was indeed very stubborn. Never mind, thought Sir Toby, with Malvolio seeming so mad, it was only a matter of time before he and Fabian had him tied up and locked in a dark, dark dungeon. Sir Toby sighed happily.

But first there was another matter to be taken care of. Spying young Cesario exiting Olivia's chambers, Sir Toby stepped out in front of him and held up a hand. When Viola halted uncertainly, the knight reached into his doublet and produced a glove. With the face of a judge delivering a death sentence, he hurled the gauntlet to the ground.

"That defence thou hast, betake thee to't. Of what nature the wrongs are thou hast done him, I know not; but Sir Andrew attends thee at the orchard end. Thy assailant is quick, skilful and deadly."

Viola turned pale at this demand for a duel and stuttered:

"You mistake sir. I am sure no man hath any quarrel to me."

"You'll find it otherwise, I assure you. Therefore, take you to your guard."

Her legs turned to jelly - what was she to do? She had never held a sword in her life!

"I pray you sir, what is he?"

Sir Toby paused, savouring the sound of chattering teeth, and choosing with care the exact words to inspire the most terror.

"He is a devil in private brawl. Souls and bodies hath he divorced three. Satisfaction can be none but by pangs of death."

Sir Toby had seen people turn pale with fear, but this was the first time he'd seen anyone go green. He almost felt sorry, but it was too good a joke not to continue.

Viola started to back away.

“I will return again into the house and desire some conduct of the lady. I am no fighter. I beseech you; do me this courteous office, as to know of the knight what my offence to him is.”

Leaving Fabian with instructions to guard Cesario, Sir Toby bowed and turned away, saying over his shoulder.

“I will do so.”

He hugged himself with glee. This was wonderful - and yet it was only half the trick. As he approached the orchard, Sir Andrew, his sword sheathed at his side, popped his head out from behind an apple tree. Sir Toby shook his head sorrowfully, his brow creased with worry.

“Why man, he’s a very devil. I have not seen such a firago. They say he has been fencer to the Sophy.”

Sir Andrew swallowed and looked ready to run.

“Plague on’t! An I thought he had been so valiant, I’d have seen him damned ere I’d have challenged him. Let him let the matter slip, and I’ll give him my horse.”

“I’ll make the motion.”

Sir Toby recrossed the grass towards Cesario and Fabian, who whispered in his ear,

“He pants and looks pale as if a bear were at his heels!”

With some difficulty, Sir Toby kept a straight face and turned again to Cesario.

“There’s no remedy sir, he will fight with you for oath’s sake.”

‘Pray God defend me!’ thought Viola ‘A little thing would make me tell them how much I lack of a man.’

Fabian led the reluctant youth to one corner of a square of grass, thrust a sword into his hand and proceeded to give his advice.

“Give ground if you see him furious!”

Sir Toby, likewise took Sir Andrew by the arm and guided him to the opposite corner.

“Come, Sir Andrew, there’s no remedy. The gentleman will have one bout with you. Come on, to’t!”

The two warriors faced each other, keeping as far apart as possible: knees knocked, hands trembled, swords wiggled and waggled, but no blow had yet been landed when a voice rang out.

“Put up your sword!” A hooded figure stepped between the wobbling blades and addressed Sir Andrew.

“If this young gentleman, have done offence, I take the fault on me!”

Neither Sir Andrew nor Viola had time to reply before two of Orsino’s guards appeared and seized the man.

“Antonio, I arrest thee at the suit of Count Orsino.”

Throwing back the hood that had concealed his face, Antonio turned to Viola.

“This comes with seeking you! I must entreat of you some of that money.”

Viola was astonished, she’d never seen this man before, what could he mean?

“What money sir?” she asked.

The look of betrayal on Antonio’s face was clear.

“Will you deny me now? Thou hast, Sebastian, done good feature shame!”

Sebastian! Suddenly, it was clear to her - this man knew her brother! Sebastian was alive! As Viola ran after the guards, Fabian turned to Sir Andrew.

“A coward, a most devout coward!”

Sir Andrew, all fear - and all memory of the last few minutes - forgotten, waved his sword triumphantly,

“Slid! I’ll after him again and beat him!”

Sir Toby and Fabian giggled as Sir Andrew - a twig holding a knitting needle - ran off after Viola.