

Twelfth Night, or What You Will

By William Shakespeare



TWELFTH NIGHT

A Shakespeare in The Ruins (SIR) Study Guide
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Twelfth Night; or What You Will

Background Notes (Kenneth Clark)

Shakespeare's comedy, *Twelfth Night*, appears to have been written to be performed on the Twelfth Night of Christmas in 1601 before Queen Elizabeth I or 1602 depending on which scholarly source we consult. It is the "most festive" of Shakespeare's comedies according to David Bevington:

The carnival atmosphere is appropriate to the season . . . January 6, the Feast of the Epiphany . . . the last day of Christmas revels. Over a twelve-day period, from Christmas until January 6 noble households sponsored numerous performances of plays, masks, banquets, and every kind of festivity. Students left schools for vacations, celebrating release from study with plays and revels of their own. The stern rigors of a rule bound society gave way temporarily to playful inversions of authority (190).

In his introduction to *Twelfth Night*, David Bevington links these Renaissance customs back to the Roman Saturnalia, a pagan celebration which included "satirical hostility to those who would curb merriment" (190). In the play much humour is derived from a complex scheme to expose the vanity of the Puritan Malvolio who tries to put an end to merry-making. Malvolio ends up being humiliated by the lady's maid Maria with the help of Sir Toby. Shakespeare would have taken some pleasure in holding the Puritan character up to ridicule. Puritans in Shakespeare's time were campaigning (sometimes successfully) to have the theatres closed down.

Much of the plot is tied to the problem of achieving upward social mobility in a society where one's status is defined more by birth than by attainment. Indeed, in his own life Shakespeare struggled to be recognized as a gentleman and applied to have a

Shakespeare Coat of Arms officially recognized. Shakespeare succeeded in reclaiming this status for his family in 1599 (Greenblatt, *Will in the World*, 86). Unlike Malvolio's case, Shakespeare did not dream of marrying up to become a count so that he could take pleasure in ordering other people around, yet he did seek recognition for his family name and heritage. Meanwhile Viola poses throughout the play as a boy in the role of the servant/messenger Cesario. Only in the end when she casts off her disguise is she restored to her rightful status as a lady when she marries Count Orsino. And her brother Sebastian likewise regains status by marrying the wealthy Olivia. He is no longer a shipwrecked wanderer, but a leading gentleman in Illyria. They are rewarded and achieve the status they deserve in the end. Malvolio's self-love and vanity make him vulnerable to the cruel trick that is played upon him. He, too, gets what he deserves.

Four Hundredth Anniversary of the First Folio (*The Complete Works* first publication):

The year 2023 is very special to Shakespeare enthusiasts. Four hundred years ago in 1623 the First Folio of Shakespeare's plays was published by two of his actor friends, seven years after his death. Roughly half of the thirty-six plays in the First Folio had been published in the form of small texts or quarto editions during Shakespeare's lifetime, but the other half were published for the first time in the 1623 First Folio. *Twelfth Night* was among the plays that had never been published before. Below is a facsimile image of *Twelfth Night* in its original 1623 First Folio publication. The source is *Internet Shakespeare Editions* made available by many universities, notably University of Victoria in Canada.

https://internetshakespeare.uvic.ca/doc/TN_F1/complete/index.html

[Twelfth Night \(Folio 1, 1623\) :: Internet Shakespeare ...](#)

Twelfth Night, Or what you will.

Actus Primus, Scena Prima.

Enter Orsino Duke of Illyria, Curio, and other Lords.

Duke.

Musicke be the food of Loue, play on,
Giue me excessiue of it: that fursetting,
The appetite may sicken, and so dye.
That straine agen, it had a dying fall:
O, it came ore my care, like the sweet sound
That breathes vpon a banke of Violets;
Stealing, and giuing Odour. Enough, no more,
'Tis not so sweet now, as it was before.
O spirit of Loue, how quicke and fresh art thou,
That notwithstanding thy capacitie,
Recciuest as the Sea, Nought enters there,
Of what validity, and pitch so ere,
But falls into abatement, and low price.
Euen in a minute; so full of shapes is fancie,
That it alone, is high fantasticall.
Cu. Will you go hunt my Lord?
Du. What Curio?
Cu. The Hart.
Du. Why so I do, the Noblest that I haue:
O when mine eyes did see *Olinia* first,
Me thought she purg'd the ayre of pestilence;
That instant was I turn'd into a Hart,
And my desires like fell and cruell hounds,
Ere since pursue me. How now what newes from her?

Enter Valentine.

Val. So please my Lord, I might not be admitted,
But from her handmaid do returne this answer:
The Element it selfe, till seuen yeares heate,
Shall not behold her face at ample view:
But like a Cloystresse she will vailed walke,
And water once a day her Chamber round
With eye-offending brine: all this to season
A brothers dead loue, which she would keepe fresh
And lasting, in her sad remembrance.
Du. O she that hath a heart of that fine frame
To pay this debt of loue but to a brother,
How will she loue, when the rich golden shaft
Hath kill'd the flocke of all affections else
That liue in her? When Liuer, Braine, and Heart,
These soueraigne thrones, are all supply'd and fill'd
Her sweete perfections with one selfe king:
Away before me, to sweet beds of Flowres;
Loue-thoughts lyerich, when canopy'd with bowres.

Exeunt

Scena Secunda.

Enter Viola, a Captaine, and Saylor.

Vio. What Country (Friends) is this?

Cap. This is Illyria Ladie.

Vio. And what should I do in Illyria?

My brother he is in *Elizium*;
Perchance he is not drown'd: What thinke you saylers?

Cap. It is perchance that you your selfe were saued.

Vio. O my poore brother, and so perchance may he be.

Cap. True Madam, and to comfort you with chance,
Assure your selfe, after our ship did split,
When you, and those poore number saued with you,
Hung on our driuing boate: I saw your brother
Most prouident in perill, binde himselfe
(Courage and hope both teaching him the practise)
To a strong Masse, that liu'd vpon the sea:
Where like *Orion* on the Dolphines backe,
I saw him hold acquaintance with the waues,
So long as I could see.

Vio. For saying so, there's Gold:
Mine owne escape vsfoldeth to my hope,
Whereto thy speech seizes for authoritie.
The like of him. Know'st thou this Countrey?

Cap. I Madam well, for I was bred and borne
Not three houres trauaile from this very place.

Vio. Who gouernes heere?

Cap. A noble Duke in nature, as in name.

Vio. What is his name?

Cap. Orsino.

Vio. Orsino: I haue heard my father name him.
He was a Batchellor then.

Cap. And so is now, or was so very late:
For but a month ago I went from hence,
And then 'twas fresh in murmure (as you know
What great ones do, the lesse will prattle of)
That he did seeke the loue of faire *Olinia*.

Vio. What's shee?

Cap. A vertuous maid, the daughter of a Count
That did some tweluemonth since, then leauing her
In the protection of his sonne, her brother,
Who shortly also did: for whose deere loue
(They say) she hath abiur'd the sight
And company of men.

Vio. O that I seru'd that Lady,
And might not be deliuered to the world

Y 2

Till

Internet Shakespeare Editions is a great source for teachers. You may choose to project images of the First Folio for students to take a closer look at the antique spellings and printing conventions such as the S's that look more like f's some of the time and of course there are the Latin names for acts and scenes. It is always interesting to see what the First Edition looked like before generations of editors took to "correcting" and modernizing the script. *Internet Shakespeare Editions* has plenty of useful information, not only access to the First Folio editions.

Gender Ambiguity in Twelfth Night

All actors on Shakespeare's stage were male unless there were exceptional tricks played as in the film *Shakespeare in Love* or Geoffrey Trease's novel, *Cue for Treason*. This was not true throughout Europe, but persisted on the English stage until 1661. So naturally boys whose voices had not changed were cast in female roles. A change of clothing would indicate a change of gender. Shakespeare repeatedly adopted the plot device of having one of his female characters pretend to be a man only to have her female identity revealed at the end of the play. This is true of Rosalind in *As You Like It* who poses as Ganymede throughout much of the play and of course in *Twelfth Night* where the heroine Viola takes on the role of Cesario.

Shakespeare in The Ruins production of Twelfth Night (2023)

If Shakespeare created gender ambiguity In *Twelfth Night*, Christopher Brauer, the director of the play for Shakespeare in the Ruins has raised it to new heights. Multiple characters are played by women. Antonio for example is now Antonia and Sir Toby is being played by a woman. We shouldn't be surprised as Shakespeare in the Ruins has introduced us to a female Hamlet and female Lear in the past. So, invite your students to "go with the flow" in the casting. Not everyone is a white male as all of the

actors were in Shakespeare's time. This is a modern production for 2023 without the racial and gender limitations that were imposed four hundred years ago.

To set up the premise for the play I cannot do better than the words of Artistic Director Rodrigo Beilfuss:

The incredibly popular *Twelfth Night*, which hasn't been performed at the Ruins since 1997, is arguably Shakespeare's finest comedy, filled with revelry and longing. The play, directed by Christopher Brauer . . . reimagines the players as 'rogue youths' who occupy the Ruins and throw huge, delightful dance parties around the park . . . but things get serious when love, a deep desire for belonging and the pursuit of justice get in the way -- a coming of age tale for our times. (SIR Website, SIR 30, *Twelfth Night*)



TWELFTH NIGHT or WHAT YOU WILL

Dramatis Personae (characters)

Viola – Pronounced variously **Vi-o-la** (3 syllables) and **Vi-ola** (2 syllables).

Disguised as **Cesario** pronounced variously Se-**sar**-ee-o (4 syllables) or Se-**sar**-io (3 syllables)

Captain – of the wrecked ship

Sebastian – Pronounced Se-**bas**-tian (3 syllables)

Antonia – A merchant sailor from another country - Pronounced variously An-**ton**-ia (3 syllables) or An-**ton**-ee-a

Orsino – Duke of Illyria - Pronounced Or-**see**-no

Valentine – servant to Orsino

Olivia – a Countess – pronounced variously O-**liv**-ee-a (4 syllables) or O-**liv**-ia (3 syllables)

Maria – Olivia's waiting gentlewoman - Pronounced Mar-**eye**-ah

Sir Toby Belch – Olivia's Aunt

Sir Andrew Aguecheek – a knight and companion of Sir Toby's – Pronounced **A**-gew-cheek (3 syllables)

Malvolio – Olivia's Steward – Pronounced variously Mal-**voh**-lee-oh (4 syllables) or Mal-**vohl**-ioh (3 syllables)

Feste – Olivia's jester – Pronounced **Fess**-tee

Fabian – a household cook – Pronounced **Fay**-bee-an (3 syllables)

Priest

Officer 1

Officer 2

Before the Play...

1. Here are some issues and motifs related to the play and performance that you can talk about in pairs or small groups, or write about in a journal and then share in class if you're comfortable:

Self discovery – What does it mean to discover oneself? How well do you think you know yourself? Have you ever experienced a time when someone seemed to know you better than you know yourself? Have you ever discovered something about yourself because of what another person said to you?

Being seen – What does it mean to be seen? Do you think this is something we all want for ourselves? Can you think of a time you felt unseen? Can you think of a time you wanted to be seen and you did something about it? What did you do? What were the results?

Gender fluidity – In this play, as in some other Shakespeare comedies, at least one female character dresses and tries to behave more like a male to hide that she is a woman. Also, in this production, at least one traditional male role is played by a woman actor. What do you think about this? Come back to this discussion after your attendance at the performance and compare your thoughts on the subject.

Self righteousness – When a person makes it clear that they think they are better than you, how do you react? What can you do to let that person know that none of us is better than another?

Madness – What is madness? How might a person know if they are mad or just imagining they are mad? Do you think it is possible for one person to convince another that they are mad?

Love – What is love? Are there any rules about who can fall in love or with whom? Who makes these rules? For what imagined purpose might someone make rules about love?

Money/paying for help, favours – How important is money? How important should it be? Is offering money a good way to get a favour or something a little sketchy done?

Clown/fool – Often in Shakespeare’s plays, a clown or fool appears to be, at first, a silly distraction from something serious that is happening in the scene. Oftentimes, however, this same clown or fool turns out to be one of the wisest characters within the play. They often help another character, and sometimes the audience, understand more about what is happening. Have you ever played a clown or fool to help out a friend? Or vice versa?

Purpose and place of theatre – The last two lines of this play, like in some other of Shakespeare’s plays, remind us that this is theatre, not reality.

But that’s all one, our play is done, And we’ll strive to please you every day

In your opinion, what is the purpose of theatre? Why do you attend a live performance? How do you feel before going to the theatre? Describe your anticipation just before the lights go down, the curtains go up, or, in the case of Shakespeare in the Ruins, just before the Prologue says the first words from the stage area?

2. TWELFTH NIGHT: THE DIRECTOR’S CHAT

Director Christopher Brauer and SIR’s own Rodrigo Beilfuss nerd out on Twelfth Night, Shakespeare and Promenade Theatre. **LISTEN TO THIS AUDIO CHAT FOR FREE:**

<https://www.patreon.com/posts/twelfth-night-81759174>

3. Twelfth Night Playlist

SIR General Manager, Sara Malabar, former Toronto DJ and music programmer curates a playlist inspired by the themes and characters of Twelfth Night. **LISTEN FOR FREE:**

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/3Nt6qNIWy2DYeEoCgFTYSO>

4. Scenes from the Play

If you don't have time to read the whole play before attending a performance, reading these key scenes (from the Director's cut) aloud in class might be helpful.

4.1 This is the opening scene.

Duke If Musicke be the food of Love, play on,
Give me excesse of it: that surfeitting,
The appetite may sicken, and so dye.
That straine agen, it had a dying fall:
O, it came ore my eare, like the sweet sound
That breathes upon a banke of Violets;
Stealing, and giving Odour. ***Insert storm and shipwreck scene 1.2***
Enough, no more,
'Tis not so sweet now, as it was before.
O when mine eyes did see *Olivia* first,
Me thought she purg'd the ayre of pestilence;
That instant was I turn'd into a Hart,
And my desires like fell and cruell hounds,
Ere since pursue me.
How now what newes from her?

Valentine So please my Lord, I might not be admitted,
But from her handmaid do returne this answer:
The Element it selfe, till seven yeare's heate,
Shall not behold her face at ample view:
But like a Cloystresse she will vailéd walke,
And water once a day her Chamber round
With eye-offending brine: all this to season
A brother's dead love, which she would keepe fresh
And lasting, in her sad remembrance.

Duke. 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 kill'd the flocke of all affections else
That live in her.
When Liver, Braine, and Heart,
These soveraigne thrones, are all supply'd and fill'd
Her sweete perfections with one selfe king:

Away before me, to sweet beds of Flowres,
Love-thoughts lye rich, when canopy'd with bowres.

4.2 This scene, also from Act 1, provides more backstory.

Enter Viola, a Captaine, and Saylors.

Viola What Country (Friends) is this?

Captaine This is Illyria Ladie.

Vio And what should I do in Illyria?
My brother he is in Elisivm.
Perchance he is not drown'd: what thinke you saylor?

Cap It is perchance that you your selfe were saved.

Vio O my poore brother, and so perchance may he be.

Cap True Madam, and to comfort you with chance,
Assure your selfe, after our ship did split,
When you, and those poore number saved with you,
Hung on our driving boate: I saw your brother
Most provident in perill, binde himselfe,
To a strong Maste, that liv'd upon the sea:
Where like *Orion* on the Dolphines backe,
I saw him hold acquaintance with the waves,
So long as I could see.

Vio For saying so, there's Gold:
Mine owne escape unfoldeth to my hope,
The like of him.

Know'st thou this Countrey?

Cap Aye Madam well, for I was bred and borne
Not three houres travel from this very place:

Vio Who governes heere?

Cap A noble Duke in nature, as in name.

Vio What is his name?

Cap Orsino.

Vio Orsino: I have heard my father name him.
He was a Batchellor then.

Cap And so is now, or was so very late:
For but a month ago I went from hence,
And then 'twas fresh in murmure (as you know
What great ones do, the lesse will prattle of)
That he did seeke the love of faire *Olivia*.

Vio What's shee?

Cap A virtuous maid, the daughter of a Count
That died some twelvemonth since, then leaving her
In the protection of his sonne, her brother,
Who shortly also died: for whose deere love
(They say) she hath abjur'd the sight
And company of men.

Vio O that I serv'd that Lady,
And might not be delivered to the world
Till I had made mine owne occasion mellow
What my estate is.

Cap That were hard to compasse,
Because she will admit no kinde of suite,
No, not the Duke's.

Vio There is a faire behaviour in thee Captaine.
I prethee (and Ile pay thee bounteously)
Conceale me what I am, and be my ayde,
For such disguise as haply shall become
The forme of my intent.
Ile serve this Duke,
Thou shalt present me as an Eunuch to him,
It may be worth thy paines: for I can sing,
And speake to him in many sorts of Musicke,
That will allow me very worth his service.
What else may hap, to time I will commit,
Onely shape thou thy silence to my wit.

Cap Be you his Eunuch, and your Mute Ile bee,
When my tongue blabs, then let mine eyes not see.

Vio I thanke thee: Lead me on.
Exeunt

4.3 This segment from Act 2 Scene 1 introduces Sebastian and Antonia. In more traditional performances, it would be Antonio.

Enter Antonia & Sebastian

Antonia Will you stay no longer: nor will you not that I go with you.

Sebastian By your patience, no: my starres shine darkely
over me; the malignancie of my fate, might perhaps di-
stemper yours; therefore I shall crave of you your leave,
that I may beare my evils alone.

Andrew Let me yet know of you, whither you are bound.

Seb No sooth friend: *(false exit and return)*
and yet you must know of mee then *Antonia*,
my name is *Sebastian* (which I call'd *Rodorigo*)
my father was that *Sebastian* of *Messaline*, whom I
know you have heard of.
He left behinde him, my selfe,
and a sister, both borne in an houre: if the Heavens had
beene pleas'd, would we had so ended.
But you friend, al-
ter'd that, for some houre before you tooke me from the
breach of the sea, was my sister drown'd.

Ant Alas the day.

Seb A Lady, though it was said shee much resem-
bled me, was yet of many accounted beautiful:
Shee – shee is drown'd already sir with salt water, though I seeme to
drowne her remembrance againe with more.

Ant Pardon me sir, your bad entertainment.

Seb O good *Antonia*, forgive me your trouble.

Ant If you will not murder me for my love, let me be your servant.

Seb If you will not undo what you have done, that is kill him, whom you have recovered, desire it not.
Fare ye well at once, my bosom is full of kindness, and I am yet so near the manners of my mother, that upon the least occasion more, mine eyes will tell tales of me: I am bound to the Count Orsino's Court, farewell. *Exit*

Ant The gentleness of all the gods go with thee:
I have many enemies in Orsino's Court,
Else would I very shortly see thee there:
But come what may, I do adore thee so,
That danger shall seeme sport, and I will go.

4.4 This excerpt, also from Act 2 Scene 1, presents one of the major conflicts of the play.

Viola I left no Ring with her: what means this Lady?
Fortune forbid my out-side have not charm'd her:
She made good view of me, indeed so much,
That me thought her eyes had lost her tongue,
For she did speake in starts distractedly.
She loves me sure, the cunning of her passion
Invites me in this churlish messenger:
None of my Lord's Ring?
Why he sent her none;
I am the man, if it be so, as tis,
Poore Lady, she were better love a dreame:
Disguise, I see thou art a wickednesse,
Wherein the pregnant enemy does much.
How will this fadge? My master loves her deerely,
And I (poore monster) fond as much on him:
And she (mistaken) seemes to dote on me:
What will become of this?
As I am man,
My state is desperate for my maisters love:
As I am woman (now alas the day)
What thriftlesse sighes shall poore *Olivia* breath?

O time, thou must untangle this, not I,
It is too hard a knot for me t'untie.

4.5 In Act 2 Scene 3, we become privy to the plot to expose Malvolio as a hypocrite.

Maria Go shake your eares.

Andrew 'Twere as good a deede as to drink when a man's
a hungrie, to challenge him the field, and then to breake
promise with him, and make a foole of him.

Toby Doo't knight, Ile write thee a Challenge: or Ile
deliver thy indignation to him by word of mouth.

Ma Sweet Sir Toby be patient for to night: Since
the youth of the Count's was today with my Lady, she is
much out of quiet.
For Monsieur Malvolio, let me alone
with him: he is a kinde of Puritane so cram'd (as he thinkes)
with excellencies, that it is his grounds of faith, that all
that looke on him, love him: and on that vice in him, will
my revenge finde notable cause to worke.

To What wilt thou do?

Ma I will drop in his way some obscure Epistles of
love, wherein by the colour of his beard, the shape of his
legge, the manner of his gate, the expresseure of his eye,
forehead, and complection, he shall finde himselfe most
feelingly personated.
I can write very like my Ladie
your Neece.

To Excellent, I smell a device.

And I hav't in my nose too.

To He shall thinke by the Letters that thou wilt drop
that they come from my Neece, and that shee's in love
with him.

Ma My purpose is indeed a horse of that colour.

And And your horse now would make him an Asse.

Ma Asse, I doubt not.

And O twill be admirable.

Ma Sport royall I warrant you: For this night to bed, and dreame on the event: Farewell. *Exit carting Fabian*

To Good night *Amazonian*.

4.6 In this explanation (2.4), Viola comes close to giving away the masquerade.

Duke. Once more *Cesario*,
Get thee to yond same soveraigne crueltie:
Tell her my love, more noble then the world
Prizes not quantitie of dirtie lands,
The parts that fortune hath bestow'd upon her:
Tell her I hold as giddily as Fortune:
But 'tis that miracle, and Queene of gems
That nature pranks her in, attracts my soule.

Viola But if she cannot love you sir.

Duke. It cannot be so answer'd.

Vio Sooth but you must.
Say that some Lady, as perhappes there is,
Hath for your love as great a pang of heart
As you have for *Olivia*: you cannot love her:
You tel her so: Must she not then be answer'd?

Duke. There is no woman's sides
Can bide the beating of so strong a passion,
As love doth give my heart: no woman's heart
So bigge, to hold so much.
But mine is all as hungry as the Sea,

And can digest as much, make no compare
Betweene that love a woman can beare me,
And that I owe *Olivia*.

Vio Aye but I know.

Duke. What dost thou knowe?

Vio Too well what love women to men may owe:
In faith they are as true of heart, as we.
My Father had a daughter lov'd a man
As it might be perhaps, were I a woman
I should your Lordship.

Duke. And what's her history?

Vio A blanke my Lord: she never told her love,
But let concealment like a worme i'th budde
Feede on her damaske cheeke: she pin'd in thought,
And with a greene and yellow melancholly,
She sat like Patience on a Monument,
Smiling at greefe.
Was not this love indeede?
We men may say more, sweare more, but indeed
Our shewes are more than will: for still we prove
Much in our vowes, but little in our love.

Duke. But died thy sister of her love my Boy?

Vio I am all the daughters of my Father's house,
And all the brothers too: and yet I know not.
Sir, shall I to this Lady?

Duke. I that's the Theme,
To her in haste: give her this Jewell: say,
My love can give no place, bide no denay.

4.7 This excerpt from Act 3 relates to the motifs of masks and being seen. (There is some great discussion of this in “The Director’s Chat”)

Olivia Why then me thinkes 'tis time to smile again:
O world, how apt the poore are to be proud?
If one should be a prey, how much the better
To fall before the Lion, then the Wolfe?
Clocke strikes.

The clocke upbraides me with the waste of time:
Be not afraid good youth, I will not have you,
And yet when wit and youth is come to harvest,
your wife is like to reape a proper man:
There lies your way, due West.

Viola Then Westward hoe:
Grace and good disposition attend your Ladyship:
You'l nothing Madam to my Lord, by me?

Olivia Stay: I prethee tell me what thou thinkst of me?

Vio That you do thinke you are not what you are.

Olivia If I thinke so, I thinke the same of you.

Vio Then thinke you right: I am not what I am.

Olivia I would you were, as I would have you be.

Vio Would it be better Madam, then I am?
I wish it might, for now I am your foole.

Olivia O what a deale of scorne, lookes beautifull?
In the contempt and anger of his lip.
Cesario, by the Roses of the Spring,
By maid-hood, honor, truth, and every thing,
I love thee so, that despite all thy pride,
Nor wit, nor reason, can my passion hide:
Do not extort thy reasons from this clause,
For that I woo, thou therefore hast no cause:
But rather reason thus, with reason fetter;
Love sought, is good: but given unsought, is better.

Vio By innocence I sweare, and by my youth,

I have one heart, one bosome, and one truth,
And that no woman has, nor never none
Shall mistris be of it, save I alone.
And so adieu good Madam, never more,
Will I my Masters teares to you deplore.

Olivia Yet come againe: for thou perhaps mayst move
That heart which now abhorres, to like his love. *Exeunt*

4.8 This short Act 3 excerpt relates to the purpose of theatre (also discussed in “The Director’s Chat”)

Fabian If this were plaid upon a stage now, I could condemn it as an improbable fiction.

Maria Nay pursue him now, lest the device take ayre, and taint.

Fabian Why we shall make him mad indeede.

Maria The house will be the quieter.

Toby Come, wee'll have him in a darke room & bound.
My Neece is already in the beleefe that he's mad: we may carry it thus for our pleasure, and his pennance: but see, but see. *Sees Andrew coming*

4.9 Here in another short excerpt from Act 3, some of the sibling confusion is brought to light.

Officer 2 Come now, I pray you go.

Antonia Let me speake a little.
This youth that you see heere,
I snatch'd one halfe out of the jawes of death,
Releev'd him with such sanctitie of love;
And to his image, which me thought did promise
Most venerable worth, did I devotion.

Officer 1 What's that to us, the time goes by: Away.

Ant But oh, how vile an idoll proves this God:
Thou hast *Sebastian* done good feature shame.
In Nature, there's no blemish but the minde:
None can be call'd deform'd, but the unkinde.

Off 1 The woman growes mad, away with her: Come, come now.

Ant Leade me on. *Exit*

Vio Me thinkes her words do from such passion flye
That she beleeves herselfe, so do not I:
Prove true imagination, oh prove true,
That I deere brother, be now ta'en for you. *Exit Viola*

Feste and thus the whirlegigge
of time, brings in his revenges.

After the Play...

1. Reflect on the experience of the theatre production.

Was it what you expected?

Were the characters as you imagined they would be?

What do you think of some of the changes made by the director (ie, gender, time, and place)? Why do you think the director might have made these changes?

If you had a chance to act in this production, which character(s) would you have liked to play? Why?

In what ways does our setting of The Ruins impact your experience?

If you were directing, would you have done anything differently?

2. Some general topics for discussion:

- In real life we experience many different kinds of relationships. They might include siblings, friends, parents, religious, and others. Explore some of the different kinds of relationships in this play.
- What are some of the major issues with which Shakespeare confronts his audience? In what ways are these issues still relevant today?
- What do you think of the fool/clown? What purpose do they serve in the play?
- What do you think of the outcome for the two main couples (Duke Orsino and Viola, and Sebastian and Olivia)? If you had written this play, would either of these outcomes be different?

3. Write a review and send it to Shakespeare in the Ruins.

Email it to admin@sirmb.ca

Or snail mail it to them at 300-393 Portage Avenue, Unit Y, Winnipeg, MB R3B 3H6

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