TWELFTH NIGHT

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Retold by Helen Street

Language Comparison

In this language comparison, you can see the Real Reads retelling of *Twelfth Night* with William Shakespeare's original lines highlighted in bold italic.



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TWELFTH NIGHT

ACT ONE, SCENE ONE THE DUKE ORSINO'S PALACE

Orsino

If music be the food of love, play on
Till I have had enough and want no more.
That tune again! It had such soft sad notes.

O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet sound
That breathes upon a bank of violets.

O, when mine eyes did see Olivia first,
My heart became tormented with my love.
How now, what news from her?

Messenger

So please my lord, she would not let me in. Her maid gave me this message in reply: The lady shall, for her dead brother's sake, In mourning stay for all of seven years.

Orsino

O she that hath a heart so fine to make
This sacrifice, should have abundant love
For me when I have won her precious heart.
Away before me to sweet beds of flowers:
Love-thoughts lie rich when canopied with bowers.

ACT ONE, SCENE TWO THE SEA COAST

Viola

What country, friend, is this?

Captain

This is Illyria, lady.

Viola

And what should I do in Illyria?

My brother is in heaven.

Perhaps he is not drowned: what think you, sailor?

Captain

'Twas only chance that you yourself were saved.

Viola

O my poor brother! Would he were alive.

Captain

When you and those poor number saved with you

Hung on our rescue boat, I saw your brother

Cling to a mast that floated on the waves

So long as I could see.

Viola

I thank thee for that hope. Who governs here?

Captain

A noble duke, in nature as in name,

Orsino, is he.

Viola

Orsino – I have heard my father name him.

He was a bachelor then.

Captain

There was a rumour but a month ago *That he did seek the love of fair Olivia.*

Viola

Who's she?

Captain

A virtuous maid, the daughter of a count That died some twelvemonth since.

Her brother, too,

Soon after died, and for his love, they say, She will avoid the company of men.

Viola

Till I am certain what to do, I shall Disguise myself and serve Orsino. For I can sing and entertain the Duke So he will think me worthy of his service. Come, dress me as a man and to his court We'll go.

ACT ONE, SCENE THREE COUNTESS OLIVIA'S HOUSE

Sir Toby

What a plague means my niece, to take the death of her brother thus? I am sure care's an enemy to life.

Maria

By my troth, Sir Toby, you must come in earlier of nights: your cousin, my lady, takes great exception to your late hours.

Sir Toby

Well, let her take exception.

Maria

And you must smarten yourself up.

Sir Toby

These clothes are good enough to drink in.

Maria

That quaffing and drinking will undo you:

I heard my lady talk of it yesterday, and of a foolish knight you brought in one night, to he her wooer.

Sir Toby

Who? Sir Andrew Aguecheek?

Maria

Ay, that's him. The man's a fool and a spendthrift. And he's a quarreller.

If he wasn't such a coward, he'd be dead by now with all the duels he says he'll fight.

Sir Toby

By this hand, they are scoundrels that say so of him.

Maria

And furthermore, he's drunk nightly in your company.

Sir Toby

With drinking healths to my niece:

I'll drink to her as long as there is a passage in my throat and drink in Illyria.

Sir Andrew

Sir Toby Belch! How now, Sir Toby?

Sir Toby

Sweet Sir Andrew!

Sir Andrew

Faith, I'll home tomorrow, Sir Toby. Your niece will not be seen; or if she be, it's four to one she'll none of me.

The count himself is wooing her.

Sir Toby

She'll have none of the count.

She won't have anyone older, richer or smarter than herself. So, there's hope for you yet.

Sir Andrew

I'll stay a month longer.

Sir Toby

Can you dance, good knight?

Sir Andrew

As well as any man in Illyria.

Sir Toby

Why, man, then let's see thee caper!

ACT ONE, SCENE FOUR DUKE ORSINO'S PALACE

Servant

If the Duke continue these favours towards you, Cesario, you are like to be much advanced.

He hath known you but three days, and already you are no stranger.

Orsino

Where is Cesario?

Viola

On your attendance, my lord. Here.

Orsino

Stand you awhile aloof.

Cesario, the secrets of my soul
I have revealed to thee. *Therefore, good youth,*Unfold the passion of my love to her.
Go to her gate, *be not denied access*But stand thy ground *till thou have audience*.

Viola

If she be so abandoned to her sorrow, As it is spoke, she never will admit me.

Orsino

Do what thou must to win her heart for me.

Viola

I'll do my best ... but oh, upon my life, Whoe'er I woo, myself would be his wife.

ACT ONE, SCENE FIVE OLIVIA'S HOUSE

Feste

Good madonna, why mourn'st thou?

Olivia

Good fool, for my brother's death.

Feste

I think his soul is in hell, madonna.

Olivia

I know his soul is in heaven, fool.

Feste

The more fool are you, madonna, to mourn for your brother's soul, being in heaven.

Olivia

What think you of this fool, Malvolio?

Malvolio

I marvel your ladyship takes delight in such a harren rascal:

I saw him put down the other day by an ordinary fool that has no more brain than a stone.

Olivia

O, you are sick of self-love, Malvolio, and see unworthiness in all.

There's no harm in a fool.

Maria

Madam, there is at the gate a young gentleman much desires to speak with you.

Olivia

If he is from the Duke, tell him I shall not speak with him.

Maria

He has been told, madam, yet he insists he will.

Olivia

What kind of man is he?

Maria

Not yet old enough for a man, nor young enough for a boy.

He's handsome, my lady, and speaks well.

Olivia

Let him approach.

Give me my veil: come throw it o'er my face – We'll once more hear Orsino's messenger.

Viola

Most radiant, exquisite, and unmatchable beauty!

Olivia

Come to what is important in your message.

Viola

Alas, I took great pains to study it, and 'tis poetical.

Olivia

'Tis more likely to be false. But your message: be brief.

Viola

Good madam, let me see your face.

Olivia

I doubt that is your brief, but we will draw the curtain, and show you the picture.

Is it not well done?

Viola

Excellently done, if God did all.

Olivia

'Tis natural, sir, the wind and weather will not wash it off.

Viola

'Tis beauty truly made by Nature's hand.

My lord and master loves you, oh, with tears,

With groans that thunder love, with sighs of fire.

Olivia

Your lord does know my mind, I cannot love him. Get you to your lord. Let him send no more, Unless, perchance, you come to me again, To tell me how he takes it. Fare you well.

Viola

Farewell, fair cruelty.

Olivia

Thy voice, thy face, thy spirit. Oh, how now, Even so quickly may one catch the plague!

Methinks I feel this youth's perfections

Creep in my heart. Well, let it be.

Malvolio!

Run after him. He left this ring behind.

Tell him I'll none of it so he may tellHis lord I'm not for him. But you may sayThe youth should come again this way tomorrow

To hear my reasons. Quick, Malvolio.

ACT TWO, SCENE ONE SOMEWHERE IN ILLYRIA

Antonio

Will you stay no longer? Nor will you not that I go with you?

Sebastian

By your patience, no: my stars shine darkly over me and I would bear my sorrows alone.

Antonio

What sorrows are these?

Sebastian

Antonio, I had a sister, born in the same hour as myself. *If the heavens had been pleased*, we would have ended so.

But you, sir, altered that.

For an hour before you plucked me from the sea, my sister was drowned.

Antonio

Alas, the day!

Sebastian

A lady, sir, though it was said she much resembled me.

She is drowned already with salt water, though I seem to drown her remembrance again with more.

Antonio

Sir, let me come with you, even as your servant.

Sebastian

No, you have done enough for me, Antonio.

I am bound for the Count Orsino's court. Farewell!

Antonio

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

ACT TWO, SCENE TWO A ROOM IN OLIVIA'S HOUSE

Sir Toby

Sit down, Sir Andrew!

To be up after midnight is to be up early in the morn!

And, therefore, to go to bed then is to go to bed early!

Sir Andrew

That I know not.

All I know is to be up late is to be up late.

Sir Toby

Maria! More wine!

Sir Andrew

Look, here comes the fool!

Sir Toby

Welcome! Now let's have a song.

Maria

What a caterwauling do you keep here?

'Twould not surprise me if my lady have not called up her steward Malvolio and bid him turn you out of doors.

Sir Toby

Fie! What do I care about 'my lady'?

Am I not of her blood? As for Malvolio!

Malvolio

My masters, are you mad? Or what are you? Have you no manners, to gabble like tinkers at this time of night?

Do you make an alehouse of my lady's house? Is there no respect of place, persons, nor time in you?

Sir Toby

We did keep time – in our song!

Malvolio

Sir Toby, if you do not separate yourself from your misdemeanours, my lady is very willing to bid you farewell.

Sir Toby

You are nothing more than a servant!

Go, sir, polish your brass.

Maria, more wine!

Malvolio

Maria, *if you prized my lady's favour*, you'd not encourage them.

She shall know of it, I promise you!

Maria

Go shake your ears.

Sir Andrew

I shall challenge him to a duel and not turn up. That will make a fool of him.

Sir Toby

Do it, knight. I'll write thee a challenge.

Maria

Sweet, Sir Toby, be patient.

As for Malvolio, that pompous fool, leave him

to me, for if I can't catch him out no one can.

Sir Toby

What wilt thou do?

Maria

I'll write him a love-letter. *I can write very like my lady,* and he is sure to think it is from her.

Sir Andrew

O, 'twill be admirable.

Maria

Now, off to bed with you.

Sir Toby

Another drink, sir knight, 'tis too late to go to hed now.

ACT TWO, SCENE THREE THE GARDEN OF OLIVIA'S HOUSE

Sir Toby

Hurry, master Fabian!

Fabian

If I should miss a moment of this sport, *let me* be boiled to death with melancholy!

Maria

Get ye all three into the box-tree:

Malvolio's coming down this walk.

Quick, for here comes

the trout that must be caught with tickling.

Malvolio

'Tis but fate.

Maria once told me my lady did like me.

She treats me better than her other servants. What should a man think?

Sir Toby

I should think he is a rogue!

Fabian

Peace! He's like a strutting peacock.

Malvolio

To be Count Malvolio!

Sir Andrew

Beat him!

Malvolio

If I were married to her ...

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Sir Toby
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O, for a catapult, to hit him in the eye!

Malvolio

I'd put Sir Toby in his place. 'Amend your drunkenness' I'd say.

Sir Toby

Bolts and shackles!

Fabian

Peace now!

Malvolio

'Besides, you waste the treasure of your time with a foolish knight.'

Sir Andrew

That's me, for many do call me fool.

Malvolio

What have we here?

Fabian

Now is the woodcock near the trap.

Malvolio

By my life, this is my lady's hand.

'To the unknown beloved, this, and my good wishes.'

If this should be thee, Malvolio!

'I may command where I adore.'

Why, she may command me, I serve her, she is my lady.

'In my stars I am above thee, but be not afraid of greatness. Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness

thrust upon them. Prepare thyself for what's to come. Remember who admired thy yellow stockings and wished to see thee ever crossgartered. If thou lovest me, smile when in my presence. She thus advises thee that sighs for thee.'

Ha! My lady loves me! I shall be bold, in yellow stockings and cross-gartered, and I will smile. *Jove, I thank thee!*

Maria

Nay, but say true, did it work upon him?

Sir Toby

Why, thou hast put him in such a dream, that when he learns the truth, he must go mad.

Maria

Then, go see him when he does approach my lady.

He will come to her in yellow stockings, a colour that she hates, and cross-gartered, a fashion she detests.

And he will smile upon her which will not suit her melancholy mood.

If you will see it, follow me.

Sir Toby

To the ends of the earth, my excellent wench!

Sir Andrew

And me!

ACT THREE, SCENE ONE OLIVIA'S GARDEN

Viola

God save thee, friend, and thy music.

Here's a coin for thee.

Feste

May Jove send thee a beard.

Viola

In truth, I am sick for one but *I would* not have it grow on my chin.

Feste

My lady is within. I shall tell her you are here.

Sir Toby

God save you, gentleman.

Viola

And you, sir.

Most excellent lady, may the heavens rain perfumes on you.

Sir Andrew

That youth has quite a tongue.

Olivia

Leave us and let the garden door be shut.

What is your name?

Viola

Cesario is your servant's name, fair princess.

Olivia

My servant, sir? You are the servant of the Count Orsino.

Viola

Madam, I come to whet your gentle thoughts on his behalf.

Olivia

I bade you never speak again of him Yet I would rather hear your voice Than all the music of the spheres.

Viola

Dear lady ...

Olivia

Cesario, by the roses of the spring,

I love thee so, in spite of all thy pride,

Nor wit nor reason can my passion hide.

Viola

Upon my innocence, I swear to you
No woman shall be mistress of my heart.

And so adieu, good madam, never more
To bring my master's pleading to your door.

Olivia

Yet come again: for thou, perhaps, may'st move That heart, which now abhors, to like his love.

ACT THREE, SCENE TWO OLIVIA'S HOUSE

Sir Andrew

No, I'll not stay a jot longer.

Sir Toby

Thy reason, dear sir.

Sir Andrew

Marry, I saw your niece do more favours to the count's serving man than ever she bestowed on me.

I saw it in the orchard.

Fabian

She did show favour to the youth in your sight, only to exasperate you, to put fire in your heart, and brimstone in your liver.

But you did nothing, and you are now sailed into the north of my lady's opinion, where you will hang like an icicle on a Dutchman's beard.

Sir Andrew

What must I do?

Sir Toby

Challenge the count's youth and fight with him.

Your bravery will impress my niece.

Fabian

There is no way but this, Sir Andrew.

Sir Andrew

You will deliver my challenge to him?

Sir Toby

Go, write it in a warrior's hand! We'll do our part.

Fabian

He's a dear little puppet, Sir Toby.

Sir Toby

I have been dear to him, lad – to the tune of two thousand ducats or so!

Fabian

It will be a fine letter from such a fool.

But you'll not deliver it?

Sir Toby

Most certainly. And you must get an answer from the youth. But I think oxen and ropes could not pull these two together.

Maria

If you desire to *laugh yourself into stitches*, follow me.

Malvolio is in yellow stockings!

Sir Toby

And cross-gartered?

Maria

Most villainously!

He does smile his face into more lines than is

in the new map with the addition of the Indies. You have never seen such a thing.

I know my lady will strike him.

If she do, he'll smile and take it for a compliment.

ACT THREE, SCENE THREE A STREET

Sebastian

I will not chide you for pursuing me.

Antonio

I could not stay behind. I know you are a stranger to this place and so would be your guide.

Sebastian

My kind Antonio, I can no other answer give but thanks since I have no money to reward you.

What's to do? Shall we go see the relics of this town?

Antonio

Pardon me, but I do not without danger walk these streets.

Once in a sea-fight against the Count, I did some damage

And were I taken here, I would be punished.

Sebastian

Do not then walk too open.

Antonio

I will not. Here's my purse.

Perchance you will have need of money whilst you wander round the town. *In the south suburbs,* at the Elephant, is best to lodge.

I will await you there.

Sebastian

I'll be your purse-bearer and leave you for an hour.

ACT THREE, SCENE FOUR OLIVIA'S GARDEN

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Where's Malvolio? He is sad and civil.

His sombreness will suit my troubled mood.

Maria

He's coming, madam, but in very strange manner.

Olivia

Why, what's the matter? Does he rave?

Maria

No, madam, he does nothing but smile.

Olivia

Why, how dost thou, man?

What is the matter with thee?

Malvolio

'Be not afraid of greatness.'

Olivia

What mean'st thou by that, Malvolio?

Malvolio

'Some are born great, some achieve greatness ... '

Olivia

What say'st thou?

Malvolio

'And some have greatness thrust upon them.'

Olivia

Heaven restore thee!

Malvolio

'Remember who admired thy yellow stockings.'

Olivia

Thy yellow stockings?

Malvolio

'And wished to see thee cross-gartered.'

Olivia

Why, this is very midsummer madness.

Servant

Madam, the young gentleman of the Count Orsino's is here.

'Twas hard to persuade him back but he waits for you inside.

Olivia

I'll come to him.

Good Maria, let this fellow be looked after.

Where's my uncle Toby? I should not want anything to happen to him.

Malvolio

Ah ha! No less a man than Sir Toby to look after me. See how well she thinks of me.

And she called me 'fellow', not steward or Malvolio.

Sir Toby

Where is he? Ah, there you are.

How is it with you, man?

Malvolio

Be off with you. Leave me alone.

Fabian

He is possessed!

Maria

Get him to say his prayers, Sir Toby.

Malvolio

My prayers, you minx! Go, hang yourselves all!
You are idle shallow things not worthy of my presence!

Sir Toby

Come, let's follow.

We'll bind him and keep him in a dark room for our pleasure.

My niece is already in the belief that he's mad.

Sir Andrew

Here's the challenge, read it.

Sir Toby

'Youth, I will waylay thee going home, where if it be thy chance to kill me, thou kill'st me like a rogue and a villain. Fare thee well, thy friend and sworn enemy, Andrew Aguecheek.'

Maria

You may have the chance to deliver that soon.

The youth is with my lady and will by and by depart.

Sir Toby

Go, Sir Andrew, wait for him in the orchard and when you see him, draw your sword and swear horribly. That's sure to frighten him.

Sir Andrew

Never fear! I'm good at swearing.

Sir Toby

Now will not I deliver his letter.

The letter will only show the youth how foolish is our knight.

So I will deliver his challenge by word of mouth and paint Sir Andrew as a fierce and noble fighter. This will scare them both to death.

Olivia

I have said too much unto a heart of stone But I beseech you come again tomorrow.

Sir Toby

Sir, I must warn thee to defend thyself. In you orchard waits a man who would see thee die!

Viola

You mistake, sir. I am sure no man hath any quarrel with me. What is my offence? I am no fighter.

Sir Toby

I will ask the knight how you have offended him.

Signor Fabian, stay you by this gentleman till my return.

Viola

Pray sir, do you know of this matter?

Fabian

Sir, he says you have done him a grievous wrong and he must have justice.

Viola

I beseech you, what manner of man is he?

Fabian

He may not look it but he is the most skilful and fiercest swordsman in all of Illyria. Come, let's meet with him and *I will make your peace with him, if I can*.

Sir Toby

Why, man, he's a very devil!

He's sure to kill you if he gets the chance.

Sir Andrew

Then I'll not meddle with him.

Sir Toby

Ay, but he will not now be pacified.

Sir Andrew

Well, let him let the matter drop and I'll give him my horse.

Sir Toby

I'll make the offer.

Stand there and look brave.

This shall end, perchance, without the loss of life.

Sir Toby

This all goes well. Sir Andrew trembles.

Fabian

The youth does too, as if a bear were at his heels.

Sir Toby

There's no remedy, sir.

Though now he says he has thought better of the quarrel, he has sworn to fight with you and

must not break his vow.

Therefore, draw your sword for honour's sake. *He protests he will not hurt you.*

Sir Toby

Come, Sir Andrew, there's no remedy, the gentleman will for honour's sake have one bout with you.

He has promised me he will not hurt you.

Prepare yourself.

Antonio

Put up your sword!

If you have quarrel with this gentleman, I will defend him.

Fabian

Good Sir Toby, hold. Here come the officers.

Officer

Antonio, I arrest you on the orders of Count Orsino.

Antonio

You do mistake me, sir.

Officer

Take him away, he knows I know him well.

Antonio

I must entreat you for the money that I gave you.

I now have need of it.

Viola

What money, sir? I know you not.

Antonio

Will you deny me now? I snatched you from the jaws of death, Sebastian, and do you thus repay me?

Officer

The man grows mad; away with him.

Viola

Oh, do I dare believe this to be true, *That I, dear brother, be now taken for you.*

Sir Toby

After him, Sir Andrew, the youth's a coward after all.

ACT FOUR, SCENE ONE OUTSIDE OLIVIA'S HOUSE

Feste

So, I do not know you and I am not sent by my lady to fetch you?

Your name is not Master Cesario and this is not my nose!

Sebastian

Go to, foolish fellow, let me be clear of you!

Sir Andrew

Now, sir, have I met you again? That's for you!

Sebastian

And that's for thee, and that, and that!

Are all the people mad?

Sir Toby

Leave off, sir!

Sebastian

Let go thy hand. I will be free of thee!

Olivia

Hold, Toby! On thy life, I charge thee, hold!
Ungracious wretch, out of my sight!
Be not offended, dear Cesario.
I prithee, gentle friend, come home with me.

Sebastian

Or I am mad, or else this is a dream.

If it be thus to dream, still let me sleep!

ACT FIVE, SCENE ONE OUTSIDE OLIVIA'S HOUSE

Orsino

Belong you to the Lady Olivia, friend?

Feste

Ay, sir, I am one of her possessions.

Orsino

Let your lady know I am here to speak with her.

Viola

Here comes the man, sir, that did rescue me.

Orsino

That face of his I do remember well,
Yet when I saw it last it was besmeared
As black as Vulcan in the smoke of war.
He was the captain of a ship that fought
Most valiantly against my own. What now?

Officer

Orsino, this is Antonio.

Here in the streets, we did arrest him.

Viola

He did me kindness, sir, drew on my side.

Orsino

What foolish boldness brought thee to our mercies?

Antonio

That most ungrateful boy there by your side From the rough seas, did I save from death, And for his sake, I did commit myself Unto the dangers of this town, and more, Defended him when he was set upon. Yet now he claims he knows me not.

Viola

How can this be?

Orsino

When came he to this town?

Antonio

To-day, my lord, and for three months before, Both day and night did we keep company.

Orsino

Here comes the Countess. Now heaven walks on earth. But for thee, fellow ... fellow, thy words are madness. Three months this youth hath tended upon me, But more of that anon. Take him aside.

Olivia

Cesario, you do not keep promise with me.

Viola

Madam?

Orsino

Gracious Olivia ...

Olivia

What would my lord, but what he cannot have?

Orsino

I see your love is kept for someone else.

You shall not have the lamb that I do love.

Come boy with me.

Olivia

Where goes Cesario?

Viola

After him I love,

More than I love these eyes, more than my life, More, by all vows, than e'er I shall love wife.

Orsino

Come, away.

Olivia

Cesario, husband, stay.

Orsino

Hushand?

Olivia

Ay, husband. Can he that deny? Call forth the holy father.

Olivia

Father, I charge thee, say what thou dost know Hath newly passed between this youth and me.

Priest

A contract of eternal bond of love
Was made before me in the holy church
Since when, my watch hath told me, toward my grave,
I have travelled but two hours.

Orsino

Farewell, and take her, but direct thy feet Where thou and I henceforth may never meet.

Viola

My lord, I do protest ...

Sir Andrew

A doctor, for pity's sake! A doctor!

Olivia

Who has done this, Sir Andrew?

Sir Andrew

The count's gentleman, one Cesario. We took him for a coward, but he's the very devil. And there he is!

Viola

Why do you speak to me? I never hurt you.

Olivia

Get him to bed, and let his hurt be looked to.

Who hath made this havoc with them?

Sebastian

I am sorry, madam, I have hurt your kinsman.

But had it been my brother, I should still

Have done as much defending my own life.

Orsino

One face, one voice, one habit, and two persons.

Sebastian

Antonio! O my dear Antonio!

Antonio

An apple cleft in two, is not more twin

Than these two creatures. Which is Sebastian?

Olivia

Most wonderful.

Sebastian

Do I stand there? I never had a brother. I had a sister once but she is drowned.

Viola

Sebastian, I am she in male disguise.

Sebastian

So comes it, lady, you have been mistook. You loved my sister yet you married me.

Orsino

Boy, thou hast said to me a thousand times
Thou never should'st love woman more than me.

Viola

I swear, my lord, 'tis true.

Orsino

Give me thy hand,
And let me see thee in thy woman's weeds.

Olivia

Where is Malvolio? *Alas, I now remember They say, poor gentleman,* he has grown mad.

Malvolio

Madam, you have done me wrong.
You must not now deny this is your hand.
Then tell me, in the modesty of honour,
Why you have led me on and made a fool
Of poor Malvolio!

Olivia

Alas, Malvolio, this is not my writing

But, out of question, 'tis Maria's hand.

Fabian

Good madam, hear me speak. I do confess Myself and Toby set this trick on him, To prick the traits of his pomposity.

Olivia

Alas, poor fool, how they have baffled thee!

Malvolio

I'll be revenged on the whole pack of you!

Orsino

Pursue him, and entreat him to a peace.

When that is done, and all these stories known, A solemn combination shall be made

Of our dear souls. Then come, Cesario,

For so shall you be, while you are a man,

But when in women's clothes you shall be seen,

Viola shall be mistress and my queen.