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## - BACKGROUND -

Orsino, Duke of Illyria, loves the Countess Olivia—but she will have nothing to do with him. Orsino sends his page Cesario (the disguised Viola, who has fallen in love with him) to plead his cause. Olivia falls in love with Cesario.

Viola's twin brother Sebastian (whom she believes has drowned in a shipwreck) arrives in Illyria. Olivia mistakes Sebastian for his disguised sister, and Sebastian falls in love with Olivia. More complications follow before identities are revealed and the story is brought to a happy end.

## - CAST OF CHARACTERS -

**ORSINO** Duke of Illyria

**SEBASTIAN** a young gentleman, Viola's brother

**ANTONIO** a sea captain, friend of Sebastian

**A SEA CAPTAIN** friend of Viola

**VALENTINE** and **CURIO** gentlemen

**SIR TOBY BELCH** Olivia's uncle

**SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK** Sir Toby's friend

**OLIVIA** a rich countess

**VIOLA** Sebastian's sister; later disguised as Cesario

**MARIA** Olivia's gentlewoman in waiting

**MALVOLIO** Olivia's steward

**FABIAN** Olivia's servant

**FESTE** Olivia's jester

**LORDS, A PRIEST, SAILORS, OFFICERS, MUSICIANS, and OTHERS**

# ACT 1

## | Scene 1 |

*An apartment in the duke's palace in Illyria. The duke, Curio, and lords enter. Musicians play.*

**DUKE:** If music be the food of love, play on,  
Give me too much of it. By gorging,  
The appetite may sicken and so die.  
*(Listening briefly)* Enough! No more!  
It's not as sweet now as it was before.  
Oh, spirit of love! How alive and fresh  
you are!  
In spite of being as deep as the sea,  
Nothing precious comes to you without  
Losing some of its value even in a minute!  
Love has such variety that nothing can  
Equal its extravagance.

**CURIO:** Will you go hunt, my lord?

**DUKE:** Hunt what, Curio?

**CURIO:** The hart.

**DUKE** *(placing his hand on his heart)*: Why,  
That is what I'm doing. When my eyes first  
Saw Olivia, I thought she purified the air.  
That instant I was turned into a hart,  
And my desires, like fierce and cruel hounds,  
Have chased me ever since.

*(Valentine enters.)*

**DUKE:** Well? What news from her?

**VALENTINE:** My lord, I was not invited in.  
Through her maid, the answer is this:  
For seven summers, not even the sun  
Will see her face. Like a nun, she will wear  
A veil, weeping salt tears around her room,  
To honor her dead brother's love, which  
She wishes to keep fresh in sad memory.

**DUKE:** Oh, she who has such a tender heart  
To pay this debt of love for a mere brother!  
How will she love when Cupid's arrow  
Strikes her heart?  
Lead the way to sweet beds of flowers!  
Love thoughts are richer under the bowers.

*(All exit.)*

## | Scene 2 |

*The seacoast. Viola, captain, and sailors enter.*

**VIOLA:** What country is this, friends?

**CAPTAIN:** This is Illyria, lady.

**VIOLA:** What am I doing in Illyria?

My brother is in heaven. But maybe  
He is not drowned. What do you think?

**CAPTAIN:** Luckily, you yourself were saved.

**VIOLA:** Oh, my poor brother!  
Maybe he was saved, too.

**CAPTAIN:** True, madam. After our ship split,  
When we were clinging to the drifting boat,  
I saw your brother tie himself to a mast.  
He was riding the waves  
As long as I could keep him in sight.

**VIOLA** (*giving him money*): For saying that,  
Here's gold. My own escape gives me hope  
That he escaped, too.  
Do you know this country?

**CAPTAIN:** Yes. I was born and raised here.

**VIOLA:** Who governs here?

**CAPTAIN:** A noble duke named Orsino.

**VIOLA:** Orsino! My father spoke of him.  
He was a bachelor then.

**CAPTAIN:** And he still is—or was till recently.  
A month ago, when I left, I heard rumors  
That he sought the love of fair Olivia.

**VIOLA:** Who's she?

**CAPTAIN:** A virtuous maiden, the daughter of  
A count who died a year ago. He left her in  
The protection of his son, her brother,  
Who died soon after that. For his dear love,  
They say, she has given up the company  
And even sight of men!

**VIOLA:** I wish I served that lady and could