

ORSINO and VIOLA

- **Orsino.** Come hither, boy: if ever thou shalt love,
In the sweet pangs of it remember me;
For such as I am all true lovers are,
Unstaid and skittish in all motions else,
Save in the constant image of the creature
That is beloved. How dost thou like this tune?
- **Viola.** It gives a very echo to the seat
Where Love is throned.
- **Orsino.** Thou dost speak masterly:
My life upon't, young though thou art, thine eye
Hath stay'd upon some favour that it loves:
Hath it not, boy?
- **Viola.** A little, by your favour.
- **Orsino.** What kind of woman is't?
- **Viola.** Of your complexion.
- **Orsino.** She is not worth thee, then. What years, i' faith?
- **Viola.** About your years, my lord.
- **Orsino.** Too old by heaven: let still the woman take
An elder than herself: so wears she to him,
So sways she level in her husband's heart:
For, boy, however we do praise ourselves,
Our fancies are more giddy and unfirm,
More longing, wavering, sooner lost and worn,
Than women's are.
- **Viola.** I think it well, my lord.
- **Orsino.** Then let thy love be younger than thyself,
Or thy affection cannot hold the bent;
For women are as roses, whose fair flower
Being once display'd, doth fall that very hour.
- **Viola.** And so they are: alas, that they are so;
To die, even when they to perfection grow!
- **Orsino.** Once more, Cesario,
Get thee to yond same sovereign cruelty:

Tell her, my love, more noble than the world,
Prizes not quantity of dirty lands;
The parts that fortune hath bestow'd upon her,
Tell her, I hold as giddily as fortune;
But 'tis that miracle and queen of gems
That nature pranks her in attracts my soul.

- **Viola.** But if she cannot love you, sir?

- **Orsino.** I cannot be so answer'd.

- **Viola.** Sooth, but you must.
Say that some lady, as perhaps there is,
Hath for your love a great a pang of heart
As you have for Olivia: you cannot love her;
You tell her so; must she not then be answer'd?

- **Orsino.** 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 big, to hold so much; they lack retention
Alas, their love may be call'd appetite,
No motion of the liver, but the palate,
That suffer surfeit, cloyment and revolt;
But mine is all as hungry as the sea,
And can digest as much: make no compare
Between that love a woman can bear me
And that I owe Olivia.

- **Viola.** Ay, but I know—

- **Orsino.** What dost thou know?

- **Viola.** Too well what love women to men may owe:
In faith, they are as true of heart as we.
My father had a daughter loved a man,
As it might be, perhaps, were I a woman,
I should your lordship.