

Twelfth night william shakespeare

[Literature](#), [Play](#)



Unlike some of Shakespeare's other plays, Twelfth Night should not be analyzed deeply. It is meant to be a light-hearted comedy. However, some lessons can still be learned. In Twelfth Night, the characters Malvolio, Olivia, and Sir Andrew express the theme that people are blind of their actions and refuse to see their faults until people or events force them to do so. The theme of the novel is most noticeably expressed through the character of Malvolio. Malvolio is Olivia's servant, a mere peasant, but thinks himself to be much more than that.

He looks down on people who are of the same importance as him, such as Feste. This is illustrated when Olivia asks Malvolio of his opinion on Feste and he makes remarks about Feste as if he is so much greater than him. Olivia brings Malvolio's arrogance out in the open when she says, " O, you are sick of self love, Malvolio," 1 after his comment. He even looks down upon people who are of higher class than him, such as Sir Toby. When Malvolio comes to Sir Toby and his friends at night time, he uses a rude tone and attitude towards them in telling them to be quiet. At one time, he accuses them of being mad, 3 but never realizes his arrogance.

Malvolio's arrogance would lead to Maria's scam of writing a phony letter to fool Malvolio. 4 It is Malvolio's conceit that would allow the joke to be successful. Prior to Maria dropping the letter in front of Malvolio, he is daydreaming about being married to Olivia. 5 He also mentions how Maria wants his love. His conceit makes him think that he can also have any woman he wants. After such a dream, finding the letter would be extraordinary for Malvolio.

His dream makes him gullible towards the letter. Even while the joke is being played on him, Malvolio displays his arrogance when he tells Olivia that he has greatness thrust upon him. 6 This shows that he still doesn't realize that he is arrogant so the joke is proving to be effective. It is not until the end that Malvolio finds out that a joke has been played on him. He realizes his fault but is confused why Olivia sent him to the dark house for doing as she asked. 7 Malvolio now takes the joke on himself but still plans to obtain revenge on the pranksters.

Although Malvolio may not have learned much from his faults, Olivia is a character who certainly has. At the beginning, she continuously craves attention. She over exaggerates the death of her brother so that everyone will feel sorry for her and help her through her troubles. 8 She says that she will wear black and a veil for seven years but the next day is no longer in such depression. She constantly turns down any of the Duke's servants who come to pursue her as she is not sympathetic for the Duke.

She is not aware of how insensitive she is until Olivia herself falls madly in love with Cesario that she realizes her fault. She starts doing desperate things in order to see Cesario like when she sent Malvolio with the ring. 10 Although Olivia tries to show that she is not madly in love with Cesario, 11 when Cesario is about to leave, she can no longer hold the act and starts praising Cesario. She is so in love with Cesario that she doesn't want anything bad to happen to him. She is always trying to make a good impression on him.

When Sebastian fought with Sir Andrew and Sir Toby, Olivia was hysterical. She was apologizing as if it was her fault and telling Sebastian, who she thought was Cesario, not to take offense in the situation. 12 It is obvious that Olivia has become very sensitive and is now pursuing Cesario just as the Duke was seeking her earlier in the play. At the end when everything falls into place, Olivia apologizes to the Duke and offers to pay for the weddings. 13 This shows that she has realized her fault and now wishes to make up for it.

Olivia improved her life as she converted from a greedy and cold-hearted woman to a generous and friendly lady. Another character in Twelfth Night who realizes their fault is Sir Andrew. Throughout the play, Sir Andrew does idiotic and cowardly things. When Sir Toby tells Sir Andrew to "accost" Maria, Sir Andrew thinks it is her last name and starts speaking with her as if it is her last name. 14 Sir Andrew never realizes all the stupidity that goes into his daily actions.

He is supposed to be a rich man who can speak many languages but when Sir Toby asks, "Pourquoi?" to Sir Andrew, he doesn't know what it means. 15 This shows that he only memorizes how to speak the language but doesn't even know what he is saying. Only an idiot can do such things. When Sir Andrew writes the letter that challenges Cesario to a fight, 16 he does foolish things, such as including the words, "thy friend" on this letter. He tries to show that he is tough by challenging Cesario to a fight.

He thinks that when he wins the fight, Olivia will fall madly in love with him. 17 When he hears that Cesario is a top-notch fighter with quite a temper, he

tells Sir Toby to offer his horse to Cesario as a bribe so that he doesn't have to fight. 18 This display of cowardliness proves how Sir Andrew is not only an idiot but a chicken as well. It is not until the end of the story, where Sir Toby tells Sir Andrew off, that Sir Andrew realizes his fault. Sir Toby refers to Sir Andrew as a " knave" and an " ass-head".

After this, Sir Andrew leaves and doesn't return, realizing his idiocy. Malvolio, Olivia, and Sir Andrew were all blind of their faults until people or events instilled awareness in them. The practical joke on Malvolio enabled him to learn about his fault. Olivia's crush on Cesario helped her in realizing her flaw and making up for it. Sir Toby and his remarks towards Sir Andrew helped Sir Andrew discover his defects. The sub-title 'What you will' suggests a jovial title for this play. Therefore, this light-hearted theme fits in well with this comical play.