

Twelfth night analysis



The Twelfth Night is a romantic comedy written by William Shakespeare during the year 1623. This romantic comedy focuses on the story of a woman that goes by the name Viola. She ends up alone in a country called Illyria because of a shipwreck and loses her brother, Sebastian.

Because of this predicament, she decides to disguise herself as a male and serve the count, Orsino, for shelter in return. Throughout this play, conflicts arise between love interests, friends, and family. For instance, there is this entire conflict with Viola, Orsino, and Olivia where Viola falls in love with Orsino, however, Orsino is in love with Olivia. To make matters even more dramatic, Olivia falls in love with Viola's male disguise, Cesario. This conflict contributes to one of the themes present in Twelfth Night, deception within love. In act 2 scene 2 of Twelfth Night, Viola realizes the predicament she is in and speaks in a soliloquy. In this soliloquy, Viola talks about how Olivia falls in love with her and how she views herself as wicked for deceiving Olivia. Viola also states that she sees herself as a monster for falling in love with Orsino, even though she is supposed to be a man. With all this, Viola analyzes that both her and Olivia's love is "" hopeless"" as Viola cannot reveal herself as a woman. All of this is evident from Shakespeare's usage of dictation, tone, and mood

In the passage, Viola's use of vocabulary and diction depict her emotions with all that is happening to her and the people around her. She feels a sense of guilt for causing all this revolving love, even though she knows that it is all a lie. For instance, she says, "" Poor Lady, she were better love a dream./Disguise, I see thou art a wickedness""(lines 26-27). It is clear with this that Viola feels remorseful towards Olivia, as she says that Olivia falling

in love with Viola is the same as her falling in love with a dream. Viola feels this way because Cesario was never a real person, to begin with, much like a dream that is nonexistent in the real world. Another instance where dictation is present to emit Viola's thoughts and emotions is when she says, "" How will this fadge? My master loves her dearly,/And I, poor monster, fond as much on him/And she, mistaken, seems to dote on me./What will become of this?...""(lines 33-36). It appears that, even though Viola is explaining the situation, she uses phrases like "" I, poor monster"" because she sees herself as the one responsible for this misunderstanding.

Another element that contributes to the overall theme of "" deception within love"" is imagery. One example of imagery is when Viola says, "" In women's waxen hearts to set their forms!/Alas, our frailty is the cause, not we,/For such as we are made of, such we be.""(lines 30-32). In this quotation, Viola refers to both herself and Olivia. She talks about how women's hearts are much like wax in the way how wax is easily manipulated with heat or fire. In this case, women's hearts are easily manipulated with love. This prompts the audience to understand Viola better as they can comprehend her analogy with the description of both wax and a woman's heart as delicate. Another example of imagery is when Viola says, "" O Time, thou must untangle this, not I./It is too hard a knot for me t' untie.""(lines40-41). Imagery is applied as Viola describes this entire mess as a knot that is too difficult to untie. This leaves the audience to fully understand the situation and its complexity with finding a solution.

Both diction and imagery contribute to the last element applied in this passage, tone. In this passage, Viola's tone is recognizable as confusion and

desperation. The audience can see that in this scene, Viola is confused because of how the situation got out of control with everyone's feelings. She also feels desperate because she can't come up with a solution as she is unable to reveal her true gender. With the previous quote, she states that time will eventually correct this situation, but when the time comes, she knows that Viola, Olivia, and Orsino will become pained by the truth of their love.

One of the major themes present in Twelfth Night is deception within love. With the particular passage of Viola's soliloquy, it is seen that diction, imagery, and tone all contribute to this theme. All three of these elements endorse one another as they all relate to each other in addressing the theme Shakespeare was trying to portray in the play. They all helped the audience interpret the how Viola feels with this turn of events.