

Disguises



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Making it "What You Will" Shakespeare's Twelfth Night's subtitle, "What You Will", entices the thought that you can make the play what you'd like it to be. The audience isn't the only group that gets to change the shape of the play however. Through disguises and false identities, the characters in the play are able to alter the play in an attempt to fulfill their needs. Viola does this successfully by using her disguise as a servant to get close and personal with Orsino, who she would not have been close to normally. Sir Andrews' disguise on the other hand, doesn't work as well as he'd hoped.

His attempts to cloak his true joking, fun-loving personality with a mask of machismo. His disguise ends up turning Olivia off, instead of on. For both these characters, their attempts to change who they are, and make the play what they will, work to reconstruct the plot of the play. Viola's pursuit at catching Orsino's eye was easily done once her disguise allowed her to get close to him. Without her disguise, she would be viewed as just another woman trying to compete for Orsino's love, which he proclaims is only for Olivia. In act 2, scene 1, Orsino opens up to Cesario, his trusted confidant.

He talks to Cesario and tells him all about how he views love. He explains to Cesario that, "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," (II, iv 30-34). This helps Viola, as she's able to understand that men, especially Orsino, have wavering affections towards women, so she should not worry about his love for Olivia. Without her ability to get Orsino to confide in her, she wouldn't really know what to do or how to act towards him.

Gaining this information, she's able to act on it in a way that completely alters the play. Sir Andrew tries instead to act how he thinks Olivia would like him to. He expects that she, like all other women, is attracted to a macho, strong man. However, he couldn't be more wrong. He tries to seduce her this way for the majority of the play until he eventually learns that has been the thing that has scared her away from him the whole time. It isn't until he challenges Viola to a duel that he realizes he's sunk to deep and his chances with Olivia are over.

Had Sir Andrew actually gone along with whom he was, he may have had a better chance with Olivia. He could've negated the whole love triangle by taking Olivia out of the game, but he altered the plot in a way which he couldn't do that. Both of the characters try to disguise themselves to improve their chances with their lovers. While it works for Viola, who finds out a lot about Orsino, it doesn't work for Sir Andrew who only scares Olivia away. Whether they were successful or not, the two of them altered the plot of the play by trying to make it "What You Will". Disguises By therealestging