

SIDE 11 – MARIA, FESTE, OLIVIA, (+ MALVOLIO, TOBY)

MARIA Nay, either tell me where thou hast been, or I will not open my lips so wide as a bristle may enter in way of thy excuse. My lady will hang thee for thy absence.

FOOL Let her hang me. He that is well hanged in this world needs to fear no colors.

MARIA Make that good.

FOOL He shall see none to fear.

MARIA A good Lenten answer. I can tell thee where that saying was born, of “I fear no colors.”

FOOL Where, good Mistress Mary?

MARIA In the wars; and that may you be bold to say in your foolery.

FOOL Well, God give them wisdom that have it, and those that are Fools, let them use their talents.¹⁵

MARIA Yet you will be hanged for being so long absent. Or to be turned away, is not that as good as a hanging to you?

FOOL Many a good hanging prevents a bad marriage, and, for turning away, let summer bear it out.

MARIA You are resolute, then?

FOOL Not so, neither, but I am resolved on two points.

MARIA That if one break, the other will hold, or if both break, your gaskins fall.

FOOL Apt, in good faith, very apt. Well, go thy way. If Sir

Toby would leave drinking, thou wert as witty a piece of Eve's flesh as any in Illyria.

MARIA Peace, you rogue. No more o' that. Here comes my lady. Make your excuse wisely, you were best.

She exits.

Enter Lady Olivia with Malvolio and Attendants.

FOOL, *aside* Wit, an 't be thy will, put me into good fooling! Those wits that think they have thee do very oft prove fools, and I that am sure I lack thee may pass for a wise man. For what says Quinapalus? "Better a witty Fool than a foolish wit."—God bless thee, lady!

OLIVIA Take the Fool away.

FOOL Do you not hear, fellows? Take away the Lady.

OLIVIA Go to, you're a dry Fool. I'll no more of you. Besides, you grow dishonest.

FOOL Two faults, madonna, that drink and good counsel will amend. For give the dry Fool drink, then is the Fool not dry. Bid the dishonest man mend himself; if he mend, he is no longer dishonest; if he cannot, let the botcher mend him. Anything that's mended is but patched; virtue that transgresses is but patched with sin, and sin that amends is but patched with virtue. If that this simple syllogism will serve, so; if it will not, what remedy? As there is no true cuckold but calamity, so beauty's a flower. The Lady bade take away the Fool. Therefore, I say again, take her away.

OLIVIA Sir, I bade them take away you.

FOOL Misprision in the highest degree! Lady, *cucullus non facit monachum*. That's as much to say as, I wear not motley in my brain. Good madonna, give me leave to prove you a fool.

OLIVIA Can you do it?

FOOL Dexteriously, good madonna.

OLIVIA Make your proof.

FOOL I must catechize you for it, madonna. Good my mouse of virtue, answer me.

OLIVIA Well, sir, for want of other idleness, I'll bide your proof.

FOOL Good madonna, why mourn'st thou?

OLIVIA Good Fool, for my brother's death.

FOOL I think his soul is in hell, madonna.

OLIVIA I know his soul is in heaven, Fool.

FOOL The more fool, madonna, to mourn for your brother's soul, being in heaven. Take away the fool, gentlemen.

OLIVIA What think you of this Fool, Malvolio? Doth he not mend?

MALVOLIO Yes, and shall do till the pangs of death shake him. Infirmity, that decays the wise, doth ever make the better Fool.

FOOL God send you, sir, a speedy infirmity, for the better increasing your folly! Sir Toby will be sworn that I am no fox, but he will not pass his word for twopence that you are no fool.

OLIVIA How say you to that, Malvolio?

MALVOLIO I marvel your Ladyship takes delight in such a barren rascal. I saw him put down the other day with an ordinary fool that has no more brain than a stone. Look you now, he's out of his guard already. Unless you laugh and minister occasion to him, he is gagged. I protest I take these wise men that crow so at these set kind of Fools no better than the Fools' zanies.

OLIVIA O, you are sick of self-love, Malvolio, and taste with a distempered appetite. To be generous, guiltless, and of free disposition is to take those things for bird-bolts that you deem cannon bullets. There is no slander in an allowed Fool, though he do nothing but rail; nor no railing in a known discreet man, though he do nothing but reprove.

FOOL Now Mercury endue thee with leasing, for thou speak'st well of Fools!

Enter Maria.

MARIA Madam, there is at the gate a young gentleman much desires to speak with you.

OLIVIA From the Count Orsino, is it?

MARIA I know not, madam. 'Tis a fair young man, and well attended.

OLIVIA Who of my people hold him in delay?

MARIA Sir Toby, madam, your kinsman.

OLIVIA Fetch him off, I pray you. He speaks nothing but madman. Fie on him! *Maria exits.* Go you, Malvolio. If it be a suit from the Count, I am sick, or not at home; what you will, to dismiss it. (*Malvolio exits.*) Now you see, sir, how your fooling grows old, and people dislike it.

FOOL Thou hast spoke for us, madonna, as if thy eldest son should be a Fool, whose skull Jove cram with brains, for—here he comes—one of thy kin has a most weak *pia mater*.

Enter Sir Toby.

OLIVIA By mine honor, half drunk!—What is he at the gate, cousin?

TOBY A gentleman.

OLIVIA A gentleman? What gentleman?

TOBY 'Tis a gentleman here—a plague o' these pickle herring!—How now, sot?

FOOL Good Sir Toby.

OLIVIA Cousin, cousin, how have you come so early by this lethargy?

TOBY Lechery? I defy lechery. There's one at the gate.

OLIVIA Ay, marry, what is he?

TOBY Let him be the devil an he will, I care not. Give me faith, say I. Well, it's all one. *He exits.*

OLIVIA What's a drunken man like, Fool?

FOOL Like a drowned man, a fool, and a madman. One draught above heat makes him a fool, the second mads him, and a third drowns him.

OLIVIA Go thou and seek the crowner and let him sit o' my coz, for he's in the third degree of drink: he's drowned. Go look after him.

FOOL He is but mad yet, madonna, and the Fool shall look to the madman. *He exits.*