



EVERYMAN
TWELFTH NIGHT
 William Shakespeare

Edited by John F. Andrews
 former editor of the *Shakespeare Quarterly*
 Foreword by Alec McCowen

**The Everyman Shakespeare is the most authoritative,
 up-to-date paperback edition of the plays and poems.**

Uniquely among existing editions it provides:

- face-to-face text and notes
- a chronology of Shakespeare's life and times
- a rich selection of critical and theatrical responses to the play over the centuries
- text derived from the earliest printings, often preserving puns and wordplay otherwise lost
- foreword by an actor or theatre director describing the play in performance
- up-to-date commentary on the structure, atmosphere and content of the play and on its sources and influences

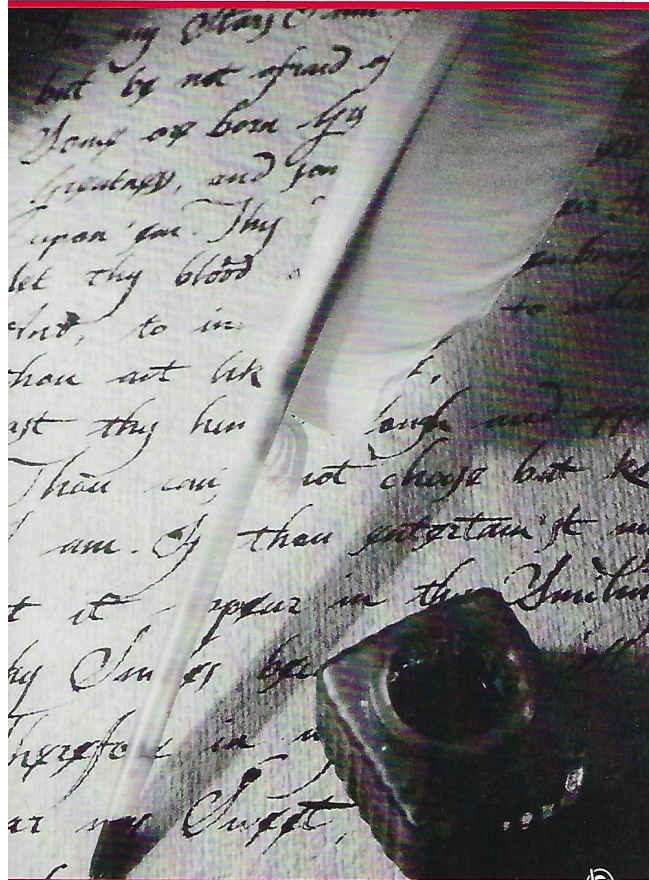
Cover photograph: David Slater
 Cover design: The Tango Design Consultancy

ISBN 0-460-87518-3



UK £3.99
 USA \$3.95
 CAN \$5.99

TWELFTH NIGHT



THE EVERYMAN SHAKESPEARE



Text © 1991 by Doubleday Book & Music Clubs, Inc.
 Textual revisions, revisions to notes, introduction, note on text, chronology, and all end matter © J. M. Dent 1994 and Charles E. Tuttle Co. 1994

First published in Everyman by J. M. Dent 1994
 Published by permission of GuildAmerica Books, an imprint of Doubleday Book and Music Clubs, Inc.

All rights reserved

Photaset by Deltatype Ltd, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire
 Printed in Great Britain by
 The Guernsey Press Co. Ltd, Guernsey, C.I.

for
 J. M. Dent
 Orion Publishing Group
 Orion House
 5 Upper St Martin's Lane, London WC2H 9EA
 and
 Charles E. Tuttle Co.
 28 South Main Street, Rutland,
 Vermont 05701 - USA

This book if bound as a paperback is subject to the condition that it may not be issued on loan or otherwise except in its original binding.

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data is available upon request

ISBN 0 460 87518 3

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements vi
Note on the Author and Editor vii
A Chronology of Shakespeare's Life and Times viii
Foreword to Twelfth Night by Alec McCowen xiii
Editor's Introduction to Twelfth Night xv
The Text of the Everyman Shakespeare xxi

TWELFTH NIGHT I

Perspectives on Twelfth Night 206
Suggestions for Further Reading 248
Plot Summary 255

FOREWORD TO *Twelfth Night*

So many memories of *Twelfth Night* . . .

At the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, aged sixteen, being cast as an unlikely Sir Toby, and my pride in my first stage-belch before saying 'A plague o' these pickle-herring!' At school I had never dreamed that I would be asked to display this talent. Belching for a living? An actor's life for me!

The first time I saw *Twelfth Night*, in 1946 at the Birmingham Rep when I was twenty-one. I still remember leaving the old theatre under a spell of enchantment – convinced that I had discovered a masterpiece single-handed, and that nobody else had ever realized its magic.

When I was about twenty-four, being asked at short notice and with no rehearsal to play the Second Officer, who has to come on and say, 'Antonio, I arrest thee at the suit of Count Orsino.' When I entered, I realized I didn't know which actor was playing Antonio and whispered to a fellow Officer for information. In this same production there was no time for a costume fitting, and the crotch of my tights was embarrassingly level with my knees. Luckily this was a single performance at the Battersea Town Hall or it might have halted my career.

The thrill of being cast as Malvolio in a lovely production at the Old Vic in 1960. In order to imagine and duplicate the Steward's passion for his Mistress, I pretended to myself that Olivia was actually Vivien Leigh, with whom I personally had been besotted for years. Then one night Vivien Leigh came backstage to congratulate me – and I was too tongue-tied to confess that she had been my inspiration.

Playing Malvolio again in the BBC Television Shakespeare series, and watching Fabian emerge as a leading character under the skill of the young Robert Lindsay.

xiv

But perhaps best of all is my memory of a recital of Shakespeare pieces given by a group of us when we were on tour in Russia with the Royal Shakespeare Company. We were invited to an Old Actors' Home, which was located in a grand palace in Leningrad (now St Petersburg). I was to open the recital with Malvolio's famous letter speech. The old actors were in their seats and an interpreter came on to explain the plot to them. Suddenly I heard indignant shouting. 'What's happening?' I asked a Russian guide; 'it sounds like a riot!' He said, 'They are shouting "We know! We know! We know the plot of *Twelfth Night*! Don't tell us! We know! Get on with it!"' They were a wonderful audience, and I got my laughs.

Twelfth Night is a deceptively simple play. It reads, and can be performed, without effort. And yet Shakespeare has created an entire world of madness, and an entirely original cast of beguiling characters. It is a comedy; but the comedy will only work against the background of the cruelty and danger in the play.

Feste is desperate to keep his position as Clown. Maria is quietly desperate in her love of Sir Toby. Sir Andrew is gulled and robbed. Orsino, Viola, Olivia, and Antonio are sickeningly in love. And the treatment of Malvolio is monstrously cruel. But at the end of it all, we have visited an enchanted world – a world we somehow recognize, a world that is forever lodged in our dreams.

And as well as all the wonderful poetry within the play, the heart-catching lyricism, there is the best retort to all the killjoys and puritans: 'Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?'

Alec McCowen

ALEC MCCOWEN, one of Britain's leading actors, made his New York stage debut in the role of the Messenger in *Antony and Cleopatra*. His wide-ranging Shakespearean roles include Hamlet, Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*, the Fool in *King Lear*, and Antipholus of Syracuse in *The Comedy of Errors*, in which he toured Europe, the United States and the Soviet Union. Among his diverse acting credits are the title role in *Hadrian VII*, Professor Higgins in *Pygmalion* and Martin Dysart in *Equus*.

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION TO *Twelfth Night*

Twelfth Night, or What You Will, is commonly referred to as the last of Shakespeare's 'festive' comedies. From all indications it was completed in late 1601 or early 1602, though cogent reasons have been offered for placing at least the initial phases of its composition in 1600, and the first performance that can be dated with certainty occurred at London's Middle Temple Hall on 2 February 1602.

In ways that hark back to *The Comedy of Errors*, a product of the years before 1595, and look forward to the tragicomic romances with which Shakespeare would round out his theatrical career between 1608 and 1613, *Twelfth Night* conveys an aura of 'Wonder', an enigmatic confluence of 'Chance' and 'Destiny', which serves to counter any temptation we might have to presume that 'What You Will' is altogether a matter of human choice. Like most of Shakespeare's works, it compels an audience to consider the problematic relationships between the 'real' world the drama imitates and the 'play' world it conjures into the charmed circle, the 'Wooden O', in which its staged events were originally presented to a theatregoing public. In the process it prompts us to ponder the elusiveness of such concepts as Fate and Freedom, Wisdom and Folly, Sanity and Madness, and Nature and Art.

The principal catalyst for the metamorphoses that constitute the comedy's action is an ingenue named Viola. In keeping with her name, she proves to be an instrument of harmony. But when we gauge her movements in terms of the kinds of initiative that define a heroine's part in earlier plays such as *As You Like It* and *The Merchant of Venice*, the maiden whose fortunes we follow in *Twelfth Night* seems comparatively docile. Like her Shakespearean predecessors, she resorts to male disguise; and like them, she realizes that she must rely upon her wits to survive, let alone

prevail, in circumstances that force her to function as a displaced person. Unlike Rosalind, however, who enters the Forest of Arden of her own volition and who then proceeds to work a special kind of 'Magic' in the green world of *As You Like It*, and unlike Portia, who manifests even more assertiveness than Rosalind when she assumes the persona of a 'learned Judge' in the tension-filled courtroom of *The Merchant of Venice*, Viola finds herself in a strange land that appears to be at the mercy of influences beyond her comprehension and control. To a degree that is unusual among Shakespeare's resourceful female protagonists, she entrusts her lot to Providence, and only through what Wordsworth was later to term 'wise passiveness' is she finally able to negotiate her way from the coast of Illyria to the metaphorical Elysium with which her quest concludes.

For Viola's story the playwright drew upon a prose romance, Barnaby Riche's tale of 'Apolonius and Silla' in *Riche his Farewell to Militarie Profession* (1581). It is possible that Shakespeare took some details, either directly or indirectly, from an anonymous Italian comedy, *Gl'Ingannati* (*The Deceived*), which was published in 1537, and from two Italian plays named *Gl'Inganni*, one (published in 1562) by Niccolo Secchi, the other (published in 1592) by Curzio Gonzaga. He may also have consulted adaptations of *Gl'Ingannati* in Matteo Bandello's *Novelle* (1554) and in Pierre de Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques* (1579), the two antecedents for Barnaby Riche's rendering of the narrative. But as Middle Temple law student John Manningham remarked in the earliest extant account of *Twelfth Night* (1602),* the ultimate source for the play's love-plot was the Roman playwright Titus Maccius Plautus (254–184 BC). Shakespeare had already borrowed from Plautus's *Menaechmi* (a farce about identical twins) when he wrote *The Comedy of Errors* several years previously, and it is likely that he repaired both to the *Menaechmi* and to his own updating of Plautus when he began thinking about *Twelfth Night*.

More important for the play's atmosphere than any specific

* See the opening paragraph of 'Perspectives on *Twelfth Night*' for a quotation from Manningham's diary.

literary or dramatic model, however, was the mood traditionally associated with Twelfth Night (the evening of 6 January, the twelfth day after Christmas), when the Church celebrated the Feast of the Epiphany. On this occasion Christians commemorated the appearance of the Saviour to a world in need of pardon and deliverance, and in accordance with New Testament exhortations to seek 'peace' and exercise 'good will' (Luke 2:14) Elizabethans engaged in a form of carnival release that liberated them from many of the restraints that governed their lives for the rest of the year. Festus, the Lord of Misrule, presided over gaudy, and at times raucous, masquerade balls. In many locales a boy or a 'licens'd Fool' was designated to serve for the nonce as a satiric Bishop, a Mayor, or even a King. And no matter where the holiday was honoured, everyone relaxed for a night of revelry and reconciliation in which the immediate, though temporary, object was to forget about the social hierarchies and personal conflicts of ordinary existence and turn an everyday realm of affairs topsy-turvy.

Curiously, there are few if any explicit references to Twelfth Night within the play itself. But in the 'Uncivil Rule' of Sir Toby Belch and his boon companions, in the role of the Clown (Feste) who roams from one setting to another as Illyria's exponent of Folly, in the 'Madness' that seems to descend without warning upon even the gravest of personages, and in the epiphanies (revelations) that lead Olivia to declare the final scene 'most Wonderful', we have abundant indications that the title of the comedy is purposeful.

The same holds true for the work's subtitle. For if the words 'Twelfth Night' dispose us to anticipate a pageant about the triumph of 'good will', it would seem logical that a prerequisite to such a joyous outcome must be the subjection or banishment of 'bad will'. As it happens, the name 'Malvolio' means 'bad will', and at one point the detractors of Olivia's dyspeptic Steward describe him as an ill-tempered 'Puritan'. In that epithet Elizabethan audiences would have recognized not one but a legion of adversaries. Not only did England's Puritans oppose all 'Cakes and Ale'; many of them harboured an even stronger antipathy to the theatre, to pastimes such as bear-baiting, dancing, and

card-playing, and to any activity they defined as idleness or frivolity.

What transpires with Malvolio amounts, in effect, to a combination of exorcism and ostracism, and one that the play's early seventeenth-century viewers would have applied to a full range of anti-festive Puritan attitudes. First Malvolio the unruly enemy of Misrule is 'tickled' into donning the very 'Mask' he claims to despise, that of a jovial merrymaker. Along the way Malvolio the scorned of Folly is gulled into displaying himself as an unwitting fool before the spectator (Lady Olivia) he most fervently wishes to impress with his judgement and sobriety. Then Malvolio the 'Madman' is made the central figure of a mumming in which a mock 'Curate' essays to free him of the demonic spirit that 'Sir Topas' pretends to regard as possessing the body and soul of a man long credited with solemnity. And finally, once he is exposed to public humiliation after his release from the lunatic's 'Dark Room', Malvolio the Victim is required to endure what he can only perceive as the vicious baiting of a 'whole Pack' of grinning mastiffs. Not surprisingly, he storms out of the chamber vowing vengeance.

The entertainer Steve Martin once quipped that 'comedy isn't pretty', and the comeuppance Malvolio is subjected to is so excruciating that many observers have preferred to respond to it, not as a 'Sport', but as a quasi-tragedy. At the very least the disciplining of the overbearing Steward would seem to mitigate the love and fellowship that Twelfth Night is normally expected to inculcate. Before we infer that the 'Malice' visited upon Malvolio spoils the party irrevocably, however, we should remember, first, that the Steward's own 'Humour of State' is what has incited 'the Whirligig of Time' to plague him with what the Greeks called Nemesis, and, second, that after being entreated 'to a Peace' he may in the fullness of 'Golden Time' forgive his tormentors and be restored to his proper place in the reconstituted household of his Lady and her new Lord. If so, Malvolio will have been induced to acquire some much-needed self-understanding, and any improvement in mental and emotional health that results will have justified the pain he suffered *en route* to that devoutly-to-be-wished consummation.

Something similar could be said of other characters in *Twelfth Night*. Early in the play Olivia tells Malvolio that he is 'sick of Self-love'. The Countess's diagnosis is accurate, of course, but what she fails to notice is that the physician is herself in need of attention. Olivia's prescription arrives almost immediately in the form of a Viola appalled as 'Cesario'. As amusing as it may be for the theatre audience, the embarrassment the Lady experiences when she falls in love with this unresponsive 'Page' is as distressing for her as Malvolio's treatment is for the 'poor Fool' the Steward is shown to be by his ordeal.

Meanwhile Orsino, who believes himself to be the only conceivable match for Olivia, undergoes an agony of his own. When his rejection by the Countess is compounded by the apparent betrayal of his trusted emissary, the frenzied Duke is driven to a potentially savage retaliation. Fortunately, however, before he can execute his murderous impulse, the proceedings are interrupted by news that two other characters (Sir Toby and Sir Andrew) have just been administered a purgation that befits their own maladies. Then, just as suddenly, the play's confusions are astonishingly resolved by 'A Natural Perspective, that is and is not'. Once the mistaken identities are sorted out, it becomes evident that, like the 'Adversity' that proves 'Sweet' in *As You Like It*'s Forest of Arden, the 'blind Waves' that buffet the shores of Illyria have blessed Orsino's dukedom with a 'most happy Wrack'.

As You Like It culminates with an Epilogue in which Rosalind invites the audience to 'like as much of this Play as please you'. *Twelfth Night* moves to its close with Feste's musical reminder that 'Man's Estate' is a steady diet of 'the Wind and the Rain'. The Clown's words sound a more sombre note than do Rosalind's. But like the sentiments that arise from the earlier comedy, they keep us aware that whenever we need a respite from our travails, we can find solace in a company of thespians who'll 'strive to please [us] every Day'.