

Our version starts with THE STORM and the shipwreck - the two twins have been separated and neither knows the other is still alive. After THE STORM, Feste steps forward and speaks directly to the audience

FESTE*: The great and noble Count Orsino. The ruler of all Illyria.
He is a great man. He is very much in love - or he thinks he is.
He is in love with ... the idea of being in love. Yukk!
The only problem is - the woman he is trying to woo is just not interested in him. (*reaction: Aaah! Feste: It's sadder than that!*)
Reaction: Aaah!!)

Never mind, for this man has discovered something else about love
music.

SCENE ONE - ORSINO'S COURT

Music starts, and the actors unfreeze. We are in COUNT ORSINO'S Court. Flunkeys, and yes-men, including VALENTINE and CURIO, who are all trying to please him, surround him. ORSINO is trying very hard, but not quite managing, to be melancholy. The music plays gently underneath, and Orsino adopts a variety of "romantic poses".

ORSINO: If music be the food of love, play on;
Give me so much of it, that by overeating,
My appetite will wane and die.

All the LORDS sigh.

ORSINO: Play that bit again

The music repeats. Everyone listens very hard indeed. Not quite sure what they are listening to.

ORSINO: Yes, it has a dying fall;
It came over my ear like the sweet sound
That breathes upon a bank of violets ..

LORD: Violets?

ORSINO: Enough; no more (*The music stops*)
It's not as sweet as it was before.

They all freeze, as we cross back to the seashore.

VIOLA: Orsino! My father use to speak about Orsino.
He was a bachelor then.

CAPTAIN: He still is. Well he was up to about a month ago. The talk is that he has fallen in love with the fair Olivia.

VIOLA: Olivia? Who's she?

CAPTAIN: Olivia? She is a Countess, now. Poor lady.

VIOLA: Poor? Why?

As the Captain continues to explain, OLIVIA dressed in mourning clothes crosses the stage from left to right. Slowly and sadly, followed by MARIA, MALVOLIO, and other members of her household.

CAPTAIN: Olivia is the daughter of a count who died twelve months ago.
She was left in the care of her brother ...

VIOLA: As I was.

CAPTAIN: But her brother sadly, also recently died.

VIOLA: *(suddenly thinking of her own brother, who could also be dead)* Oh...!

CAPTAIN: Since that day, she has been in mourning.

OLIVIA: *(speaking directly to the audience)* I will stay in mourning for seven years.

CAPTAIN: She won't have anything to do with men at all. Well, not for another seven years anyhow.

OLIVIA and her followers exit.

VIOLA: Oh poor lady. I wish I could serve her.

CAPTAIN: Why?

VIOLA: We have both lost our brothers. Maybe I can share her sadness, and she might share mine.

CAPTAIN: Well there's no chance of that. She won't have anything to do with anyone. Not even Count Orsino.

VIOLA: Then I have another plan. I will find a job with Count Orsino.

CAPTAIN: A job?

VIOLA: Yes, as a servant. I will disguise myself as a man.

CAPTAIN: A man?

VIOLA: And you will present me to him.

CAPTAIN: Me?

VIOLA: Yes, I shall serve this duke. For I can sing, and speak to him in many sorts of music. You did say he liked music.

CAPTAIN: I did.

VIOLA: Lead on. Let's go.

SCENE NINE - OLIVIA'S GARDEN

There is a hedge upstage centre. SIR ANDREW and SIR TOBY enter.

SIR AND: That Maria's a wonderful woman, you know.

SIR TOBY: Yes! She thinks the world of me. She adores me!

SIR AND: *(sighing)* I was adored once.

SIR TOBY: Are you coming Signor Fabian?

FABIAN: *(entering)* I'm coming. I wouldn't miss one moment of this sport for all the world

SIR TOBY: Won't you be glad to see the stingy, mean, rascally sheep-biter come by some notable shame?

FABIAN: I will rejoice, sir. I've hated the man ever since he reported my bear-baiting party to my lady.

SIR TOBY: And we will have the bear again. Look, here comes the little villain.

MARIA enters.

MARIA: Quick, hide. Malvolio's coming down the garden path. He's been teaching good manners to his own shadow for the past half hour. Ooh this letter is going to make a complete idiot of him.

She drops the letter (valentine card) centre stage, and joins the others who are hiding behind the hedge. MALVOLIO enters stage right. He is day-dreaming aloud persuading himself that Olivia loves him. The others keep appearing comically from behind various plants and shrubs in the garden.

MALVOLIO: Fate. Destiny. It's all in the stars, Malvolio. Maria once told me that Olivia admired me;

SIR TOBY: *(to Maria)* Did you?

MALVOLIO: And the lady herself said that if she should fall in love it would be with a man of my complexion. Besides, she has more respect for me than anyone else. What else should I think?

SIR TOBY: You conceited rogue.

FABIAN: Peace, peace. This arrogance only makes his downfall better.

MALVOLIO: To be Count Malvolio.

SIR TOBY: Ah, rogue.

SIR AND: Pistol him, pistol him!

FABIAN: Ssssh.

MALVOLIO: Having been married to her for about three months, sitting in my office...

SIR TOBY: I'll punch him in the eye.

MALVOLIO: ... Wearing my embroidered velvet gown, I will summon Sir Toby

SIR TOBY: Oh no you won't.

FABIAN: Peace, Sssh!

MALVOLIO: While I am waiting I will maybe wind up my watch, or play with some rich jewel. Toby approaches. He bows to me.

SIR TOBY: Shall this fellow live?

MALVOLIO: I extend my hand to him -

SIR TOBY: And does not Sir Toby slap you on the mouth?

MALVOLIO: And I say "Cousin Toby - you must amend your drunken ways" ...

SIR TOBY: Out scab.

MALVOLIO: "Besides you waste all your time with a foolish knight - "

SIR AND: Does he mean me?

MALVOLIO: "- One Sir Andrew Aguecheek."

SIR AND: He does mean me!

MALVOLIO sees the letter. He picks it up.

MALVOLIO: Hello, what have we here?

SIR TOBY: Now the fish is taking the bait.

MALVOLIO: Hmm. This is my lady's handwriting. These are her very c's, her u's and her t's. And look she makes these great p's. It is definitely her

handwriting. (*He reads*) "To the unknown beloved, this letter and my good wishes". To whom should this be? Yes, this is her seal!

Music starts

MALVOLIO: Jove knows I love, but who? Lips do not move: no man must know.
M.O.A.I. does sway my life" M.O.A.I. M? O? A? I?

SONG - GIVE ME AN 'M' - Malvolio and Full Company

Malvolio: **Give me an 'M'**
The letter that's before me
'O' and I'm the only man for her
Give me an 'A'
She's saying she'll adore me
And 'I' is for the eyes she has for me
In my stars she is above me
But greater things have come to lesser men
So when
They ask why are you smiling?
I'll reply out loud
I'll sing it strong and proud
And shout it to the crowd
Give me an 'M' !

MALVOLIO: 'M' ! - Malvolio. 'M' is for Malvolio. That's me!

FABIAN: I told you he'd work it out.

MALVOLIO: M - but the other letters are all wrong. It should go M A I O. 'O' should be at the end.

SIR TOBY: I'll whack him on his end - that'll make him shout 'Oh'!

Malvolio: **Give me an 'M'**
And let me see you smiling
Let your laughter lighten up the sky
Give me an 'O'
For clothes with much more styling
Get your gartered tights on right away
Why don't you dress in yellow
Yellow is a colour I adore
Now this could change my situation
It's obvious to me
It's what she wants to see
She's going to set me free
Give me an 'M'!

MALVOLIO: If this falls into your hands, revolve. (*He spins around*)
Do not be afraid of greatness. Some are born great, some achieve
greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon 'em.
Malvolio, your time is here. Arise, the GREAT Count Malvolio!

The Full Company comes on in the style of an American marching band

Chorus: **Give me an 'M'**
 The letter that's before me
 'O' and I'm the only man for her
 Give me an 'A'
 She's saying she'll adore me
 And 'I' is for the eyes she has for me
 In my stars she is above me
 But greater things have come to lesser men
 So when
 They ask why are you smiling?
 I'll reply out loud
 I'll sing it strong and proud
 And shout it to the crowd
 Give me an 'M' !
 Give me an 'O' !
 Give me an 'A' !
 Give me an 'I' !

Malvolio: Say it again!

Chorus: **Give me an 'M' !**