

SHAKESPEARE'S TWELFTH NIGHT

Olivia

A wealthy, beautiful, and noble Illyrian lady, Olivia is courted by Orsino but insists that she is in mourning for her brother, who has recently died, and will not marry for seven years. Olivia seems to have no difficulty transferring her affections from one love interest to another, suggesting that her romantic feelings—like most emotions in the play—do not run deep. Olivia speaks to Viola, disguised as Cesario, about the Duke Orsino.

Your lord does know my mind; I cannot love him:
Yet I suppose him virtuous, know him noble,
Of great estate, of fresh and stainless youth;
In voices well divulged, free, learn'd and valiant;
And in dimension and the shape of nature
A gracious person: but yet I cannot love him;
He might have took his answer long ago.
Get you to your lord;
I cannot love him: let him send no more;
Unless, perchance, you come to me again,
To tell me how he takes it. Fare you well:
I thank you for your pains: spend this for me.