

Olivia Mistakes Sebastian For Cesario. Arrange The Events In Twelfth Night In Order From Earliest To

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William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* is a comedy filled with mistaken identities, love triangles, and humorous misunderstandings. One of the most notable confusions in the play is when Lady Olivia mistakes Sebastian for Cesario, leading to a series of comic and dramatic events. Understanding the sequence of events that lead up to and follow this mistake provides insight into the play's complex plot and themes of identity, love, and deception. This article will explore the chronological order of the key events in *Twelfth Night*, emphasizing the moment Olivia confuses Sebastian for Cesario, and how the story unfolds from its earliest moments to the play's resolution.

Introduction to the Plot and Main Characters

Before diving into the chronological sequence, it's essential to familiarize ourselves with the primary characters involved in the mistaken identity:

- Viola: A young woman who is shipwrecked and disguises herself as a man named Cesario.
- Orsino: The Duke of Illyria, in love with Olivia.
- Olivia: A noblewoman mourning her brother's death, who initially refuses all suitors.
- Sebastian: Viola's twin brother, who is also shipwrecked and believed to be dead.
- Sir Toby Belch, Sir Andrew Aguecheek, Maria: Olivia's household friends involved in comic subplots.

The Earliest Events in Twelfth Night

1. The Shipwreck and Separation of Viola and

Sebastian

The play begins with a storm at sea that wrecks a ship carrying Viola and her twin brother Sebastian. Believing Sebastian to be drowned, Viola is left stranded in Illyria. This event sets the stage for the subsequent mistaken identities, as Viola must navigate her new environment in disguise.

2. Viola Disguises Herself as Cesario

To secure employment and protection, Viola adopts the male disguise of Cesario. She becomes a page to Duke Orsino, who immediately takes a liking to her. Viola, as Cesario, becomes an emissary of love for Orsino, tasked with wooing Olivia on his behalf.

3. Viola's Service to Duke Orsino

As Cesario, Viola forms a close bond with Orsino and is sent to Olivia to deliver his love messages. Her role is central to the plot, as her interactions with Olivia trigger the love triangle and the eventual confusion.

The Development of Love and Confusion

4. Olivia's Rejection of Orsino's Advances

Olivia, mourning her brother, refuses to accept Orsino's love, sending Cesario (Viola) away. Olivia's rejection sets the stage for her own romantic confusion, as she begins to develop feelings for Cesario, unaware of Viola's true identity.

5. Olivia Falls in Love with Cesario

Despite her initial rejection of Orsino, Olivia becomes enamored with Cesario, often expressing her affection and admiration. This unrequited love adds to the comedic tension, as Olivia's feelings are directed toward someone she does not realize is Viola in disguise.

6. Viola's Conflicted Feelings

Viola, as Cesario, finds herself caught between her loyalty to Orsino and her own feelings, which she begins to develop for Olivia. Her internal conflict deepens the play's exploration of love and identity.

The Turning Point: The Arrival of Sebastian

7. Sebastian's Arrival in Illyria

Meanwhile, Sebastian, the twin brother believed dead, arrives in Illyria with his friend Antonio. Unlike Viola, Sebastian is unaware of the confusion surrounding his identity and does not know about Viola's survival.

8. Olivia Meets Sebastian

Olivia encounters Sebastian and, mistaking him for Cesario, she immediately falls in love with him. Her admiration for Sebastian is intense, and she quickly plans to marry him. This moment is pivotal, as it marks the peak of mistaken identity and romantic confusion.

9. Olivia Marries Sebastian

In a humorous turn, Olivia marries Sebastian, believing him to be Cesario. The wedding is conducted with haste, adding to the comic chaos of the plot. Olivia's infatuation with Sebastian underscores the play's theme of mistaken perceptions.

The Climax: The Recognition and Resolution

10. The Recognition of Sebastian and Viola

The truth begins to emerge when Sebastian's friends, including Antonio, realize the mistaken identity. Viola, still disguised as Cesario, is

overwhelmed when Sebastian is brought before Olivia and the others. The two twins are finally reunited, and the confusion is resolved.

11. Olivia Discovers the Truth

Olivia, upon learning that Sebastian is her new husband and not Cesario, is surprised but also amused. She recognizes her mistake and acknowledges her love for Sebastian, who is unaware of her previous affections for Cesario.

12. Viola Reveals Her True Identity

Viola finally reveals she is a woman, which clarifies the romantic entanglements. Her feelings for Orsino are confirmed, and Orsino, realizing Viola's true identity, declares his love for her.

13. The Play's Happy Ending

The play concludes with multiple celebrations: Olivia and Sebastian's marriage, Viola's union with Orsino, and the humorous acceptance of the chaotic events. The mistaken identity serves as a catalyst for the play's comedic resolution.

Summary of Key Events in Chronological Order

To organize the events from earliest to latest, here is a concise list:

1. Shipwreck separates Viola and Sebastian, leaving Viola stranded in Illyria.
2. Viola disguises herself as Cesario and enters Duke Orsino's service.
3. Orsino sends Cesario to woo Olivia on his behalf.
4. Olivia rejects Orsino and receives Cesario's messages of love.
5. Olivia falls in love with Cesario (Viola in disguise).
6. Viola begins to develop feelings for Olivia, creating internal conflict.
7. Sebastian arrives in Illyria, unaware of the previous confusion.

8. Olivia encounters Sebastian and mistakes him for Cesario, leading to her falling in love with him.
9. Olivia marries Sebastian, believing him to be Cesario.
10. Antonio recognizes Sebastian and warns him of the danger.
11. Confusion heightens as Viola and Sebastian's relationships intertwine.
12. The twins are finally reunited, and their identities are revealed.
13. Olivia discovers Sebastian is not Cesario, and her marriage is based on mistaken identity.
14. Viola's true identity is disclosed, and her relationship with Orsino is confirmed.
15. The play concludes with multiple marriages and the resolution of misunderstandings.

Conclusion

The mistaken identity of Sebastian for Cesario is a pivotal moment in Twelfth Night that underscores the play's themes of disguise, love, and the fluidity of identity. From the initial shipwreck to the joyful resolution, the sequence of events highlights Shakespeare's mastery of comedy through complex plots and humorous misunderstandings. Understanding the chronological order of these events enriches our appreciation of the play's intricate structure and timeless humor. Whether as a humorous mishap or a reflection on the nature of love and perception, the confusion surrounding Olivia's mistaken belief about Sebastian and Cesario remains one of the most memorable moments in Shakespeare's work.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the initial misunderstanding between Olivia and Sebastian in Twelfth Night?

Olivia mistakenly believes Sebastian to be Cesario (Viola in disguise) after seeing him and confuses his identity due to their similar appearances.

How does Olivia's mistaken identity of Sebastian impact the plot?

Her mistake leads to her falling in love with Sebastian, complicating the romantic entanglements and misunderstandings among the characters.

When does Olivia first mistake Sebastian for Cesario in Twelfth Night?

Olivia first confuses Sebastian with Cesario during their initial encounter at her house, shortly after Sebastian's arrival in Illyria.

What events follow Olivia's mistake of Sebastian for Cesario?

Olivia's affection shifts from Cesario (Viola) to Sebastian, and she quickly plans to marry him, unaware of the true identities involved.

How does Sebastian react to Olivia's love and proposal after being mistaken for Cesario?

Sebastian is surprised but accepts Olivia's love, not realizing that she is mistaking him for Cesario, which adds to the comedic confusion.

When does Viola realize Olivia has mistaken Sebastian for Cesario?

Viola, disguised as Cesario, begins to suspect the truth when Olivia openly professes her love for Sebastian and confesses her intentions to marry him.

What is the significance of Sebastian's arrival in the sequence of events?

Sebastian's arrival is pivotal as it triggers Olivia's mistaken love for him, leading to comic misunderstandings and the eventual unravelling of the mistaken identities.

How do the characters resolve the confusion caused by Olivia mistaking Sebastian for Cesario?

The truth is eventually revealed through a series of confessions and recognitions, restoring order and allowing the romantic pairings to be correctly aligned.

What is the final order of events involving Olivia mistaking Sebastian for Cesario in Twelfth Night?

The sequence begins with Sebastian's arrival in Illyria, Olivia's mistaken belief upon seeing him, her falling in love and proposing marriage, and finally the recognition of identities leading to resolution.

Additional Resources

Olivia Mistakes Sebastian For Cesario: An In-Depth Analysis of the Classic Mistake in Twelfth Night

In William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, one of the most delightful and intricate comedies of the Bard's oeuvre, mistaken identity plays a central role in driving the plot and comedy. Among these confusions, the most significant—and perhaps most amusing—is Olivia's mistaken assumption that Sebastian is Cesario, leading to a series of comic and romantic developments that underscore themes of love, identity, and perception. This article offers a comprehensive exploration of this pivotal mistake, detailing the sequence of events from the earliest to the latest, analyzing the actors involved, and examining the dramatic and thematic significance of this confusion.

Background: The Characters Involved in the Mistake

Before delving into the sequence of events, it's essential to understand the key characters involved:

- Olivia: A wealthy noblewoman who, mourning her brother's death, has sworn off suitors and refuses to see any male visitor.
- Sebastian: The twin brother of Viola, presumed dead after a shipwreck; he is unaware of Viola's presence in Illyria.
- Viola / Cesario: Viola, shipwrecked and stranded in Illyria, disguises herself as a young man named Cesario, serving Duke Orsino.
- Antonio: A sea captain and loyal friend to Sebastian, who helps him navigate Illyria.

The confusion hinges on Olivia's mistaken perception of Sebastian's identity, compounded by Viola's disguise as Cesario, and the subsequent unfolding of events.

The Sequence of Events Leading to Olivia's Mistake

This section traces the chronological progression of the key moments culminating in Olivia mistaking Sebastian for Cesario.

1. The Arrival of Viola (As Cesario) in Illyria

The story begins with Viola's shipwreck, after which she disguises herself as Cesario to serve Duke Orsino. Her role as Cesario places her at the heart of Illyrian social and romantic intrigues. Viola's position as Orsino's confidant and messenger becomes crucial, especially when she is tasked with delivering Orsino's love messages to Olivia.

Implication: Viola's disguise means her true identity is concealed, which sets the stage for subsequent mistaken identities.

2. Viola's Mission to Olivia

Orsino sends Cesario (Viola in disguise) to woo Olivia on his behalf, believing that Olivia will respond better to a young man. Viola, as Cesario, approaches Olivia with Orsino's proposals. Olivia, however, is struck by Cesario's charm and sincerity, and she begins to develop feelings for him, unaware of his true identity.

Key Point: Olivia's fascination with Cesario deepens, which complicates her emotional response once she encounters Sebastian.

3. Olivia's Rejection of Orsino's Suit and Her Growing Affection for Cesario

Olivia, despite the persistent advances of Orsino, remains unmoved. Instead, she becomes increasingly attracted to Cesario, admiring his wit, kindness, and the way he speaks on behalf of Orsino.

- Olivia's rejection of Orsino underscores her independence and her emotional conflict.
- Her admiration for Cesario blinds her to his true identity and background.

Impact: Olivia's feelings for Cesario create tension, especially when she begins to consider marriage.

4. Olivia's Encounter with Sebastian

Meanwhile, Sebastian arrives in Illyria, guided by Antonio, who has helped him escape peril in his homeland. Sebastian is unaware of Viola's presence and believes she is dead. Olivia's household, still under the influence of her fascination with Cesario, is preparing for her to meet the supposed 'young man' she has fallen for.

Important Note: Olivia does not yet see Sebastian, but her subconscious associations with Cesario's qualities influence her perceptions.

5. Olivia's First Encounter with Sebastian

In a pivotal scene, Olivia unexpectedly encounters Sebastian, who bears an uncanny resemblance to Cesario due to their twin-like features. Olivia, who is still entranced by Cesario, is immediately captivated by Sebastian's appearance and demeanor.

- Olivia's immediate attraction is based on Sebastian's physical resemblance to Cesario, which she perceives as a sign of his noble nature.
- Her emotional response is heightened, and she is drawn to Sebastian romantically.

Dramatic Irony: The audience recognizes that Sebastian is not Cesario, but Olivia's perception is clouded by her feelings and the visual similarity.

6. Olivia's Mistaken Identity: Confusing Sebastian for Cesario

The climax of the mistaken identity occurs when Olivia, in her infatuation, publicly confesses her love to Sebastian, believing him to be Cesario. She offers herself to him in marriage, expressing her desire to wed the 'young man' who has captured her heart.

- Olivia's proposal is sincere but based on a mistaken assumption.
- Sebastian, bewildered by her overtures, is confused but eventually accepts her proposal, believing she is acting out of love for Cesario.

Key Factors Contributing to the Mistake:

- Sebastian's physical resemblance to Cesario.
- Olivia's emotional state and desire to find love.
- The absence of Viola (Cesario) at this moment, leaving her perceptions unchallenged.

7. The Revelation and Recognition

The final turning point occurs when Viola, disguised as Cesario, arrives at Olivia's household, leading to a series of comic and dramatic revelations:

- Viola's identity is revealed, clarifying the confusion.
- Sebastian recognizes Olivia's affection and her mistaken belief that he is Cesario.
- Olivia, upon realizing the truth, is surprised but unrepentant, having fallen for Sebastian genuinely.

Consequences:

- Olivia and Sebastian's union.
- Viola and Orsino's rekindled love.
- The resolution of multiple mistaken identities.

Analysis of the Mistake: Thematic and Dramatic Significance

This sequence not only advances the plot but also illuminates key themes:

- Appearance vs. Reality: Olivia's mistake exemplifies how appearances can deceive and how love often depends on perception.
- Identity and Disguise: The twin-like resemblance between Sebastian and Cesario emphasizes the fluidity of identity, a recurring motif in *Twelfth Night*.
- The Power of Love: Olivia's passionate misidentification underscores love's capacity to transcend rational understanding, often leading to comic or tragic consequences.
- Social and Class Boundaries: Olivia's willingness to marry Sebastian reflects her disregard for social constraints once love is involved, contrasting with her initial mourning and aloofness.

Conclusion: The Lasting Impact of Olivia's Mistake

Olivia's mistaken belief that Sebastian is Cesario is a pivotal moment in *Twelfth Night*, encapsulating the play's exploration of love's illusions and the complexities of identity. From her initial encounter with Sebastian to her proposal and subsequent realization, this mistake drives much of the

play's humor and emotional depth.

This sequence exemplifies Shakespeare's mastery in weaving intricate misunderstandings that propel characters toward self-discovery and happiness, often through comic suffering. Olivia's mistake is not merely a comedic device but a reflection of the human condition—our perceptions are fleeting, and love often blossoms in the realm of illusion, only to be clarified by the truth.

In sum, the mistaken identity of Sebastian as Cesario is a masterstroke that enriches Twelfth Night's enduring charm and philosophical depth, demonstrating how appearances can deceive but also reveal the profound truths of love and human nature.

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