

SCENE IX.

*Enter Maria.*

*Oli.* Give me my veil: come, throw it o'er my face;  
We'll once more hear *Orsino's* embassy.

*Enter Viola.*

*Vio.* The honourable lady of the house, which is she?

*Oli.* Speak to me, I shall answer for her: your will?

*Vio.* Most radiant, exquisite, and unmatchable beauty—I pray  
you, tell me, if this be the lady of the house, for I never saw  
her: I would be loath to cast away my speech; for, besides that  
it is excellently well penn'd, I have taken great pains to con it.  
Good beauties, let me sustain no scorn; I am very prompt, even  
to the least sinister usage.

*Oli.* Whence came you, sir?

*Vio.* I can say little more than I have studied, and that  
question's out of my part. Good gentle one, give me modest  
assurance, if you be the lady of the house, that I may proceed in  
my speech.

*Oli.* Are you a comedian?

*Vio.* No, my profound heart; and yet, by the very fangs  
of malice, I swear, I am not that I play. Are you the lady of  
the house?

*Oli.* If I do not usurp myself, I am.

*Vio.* Most certain, if you are she, you do usurp yourself; for  
what is yours to bestow, is not yours to reserve; but this is from  
my commission. I will on with my speech in your praise, and  
then show you the heart of my message.

*Oli.* Come to what is important in't: I forgive you the praise.

*Vio.* Alas, I took great pains to study it, and 'tis poetical.

*Oli.* It is the more like to be feign'd: I pray you, keep it in.  
I heard, you were saucy at my gates, and I allow'd your approach,  
rather to wonder at you than to hear you. If you be not mad, be  
gone;