

# *Salt Waves Fresh: An Adaptation of Twelfth Night*

By Gretchen E. Minton

## **Prologue**

*Setting: The sea-coast (Strand or nearby).*

*Enter LOCAL, on the beach, sorting through various books that have washed up on shore.*

LOCAL

[*to audience*] They always wash up on the shore—survivors of cyclones, of shipwrecks, of the tides of history. Each time I ask myself: is it worth saving this story, or that one? I keep listening to these words, trying out different languages, hoping that someone has the wisdom to help us through yet another storm. [*Picking up a book*] People once came here to exploit this place's resources, to lay claim to its land. Now they're coming from the islands out there because there is no more land. [*picking up another book*]. Another cyclone, another flood. There are islands of life today in Townsville though—people gathering together, cut off from the outside world while they wait for the waters to recede. Is it a holiday, or the end of days? [*one more book*] Maybe there is a story that can be recycled for a time such as this. Or for the many times.

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## **Scene 1**

*Setting: The sea-coast (Strand or nearby). A cyclone has hit, causing high winds, torrential rain, and flooding.*

*Enter TOWNSPEOPLE, crying out in fear, moving debris, scrambling for higher ground as they exclaim in horror that there are animal carcasses floating in the water. General chaos.*

*They Exit.*

*LOCAL comes forward looking out at the ocean, toward a shipwreck.*

LOCAL

O, I have suffered  
With those that I saw suffer. A brave vessel,  
Who had, no doubt, some noble creature in her,  
Dashed all to pieces. O, the cry did knock  
Against my very heart! Poor souls, did they perish?

[*He spots VIOLA and rescues her.*]

VIOLA

What country, friend, is this?

LOCAL

This is a land called...Illyria? No, that's not quite right. We're much further south than that. [*picking up some books and leafing through them*] Sometimes people call it this [*pointing*] or this, and once it was called this [*pointing again*]. It could be any of these names, or none of them. There's a great deal to consider when naming this place.

VIOLA

And what should I do on this shore?

My brother, he is in the other world.

Perchance he is not drowned. --What think you, sir?

LOCAL

It is perchance that you yourself were saved.

VIOLA

O my poor brother! And so perchance may he be.

LOCAL

Assure yourself: after your ship did split,  
I saw one man who clung unto the boat,  
Most provident in peril, bind himself  
To a strong mast that lived upon the sea,  
Where, like Boomali on the dolphin's back,  
I saw him hold acquaintance with the waves  
So long as I could see.

VIOLA

For saying so, dear thanks.

Mine own escape unfoldeth to my hope,

Whereto thy speech serves for authority,

The like of him. Know'st thou this country?

LOCAL

Ay, madam, well, for I was bred and born  
Not three hours' travel from this very place.

VIOLA [*pointing to nearby house*] Who lives here?

LOCAL A man of strength, in nature as in rank.

VIOLA What is his name?



VIOLA

I thank thee, lead me on. [*Local leading the way toward Orsino's home*]

*Exit Local.*

[*to audience*] I had a name before, when I lived elsewhere, among my own people. But when the ship split off the Queensland coast, I lost everything—my family, my clothes, my name. I floated and floated alongside turtles, until strong hands tried to pull me into a canoe. They couldn't hold me though. Am I a spirit? Displaced, then transplanted, now I will be called [*looking at the books on the beach and choosing a name seemingly at random*] Giom. I inhabit the between-lands.

*Exit.*