

A Fool for Your Love Cast List

4 Male, 3 Female, 1 M/F, and Extras

TOWN CRIER (M) Professional announcement maker with a keen eye for fashion. His costume should include a cape.

PAGE (M/F) Servant of the court.

JESTER (M) Professional jokester by trade, very clumsy by nature.

LORD BORIS (M) Boorish brother of the king, engaged to Lady Abigail through an arranged marriage, which he does not take seriously. His costume should include a cape.

LADY ABIGAIL (F) The queen's niece who is engaged to Lord Boris, through an arranged marriage, which she is not happy about.

KING (M) The guy who arranged the marriage that Abigail and Boris are not so keen on.

QUEEN (F) Abigail's aunt, it also appears she's not too fond of arranged marriages.

JESTRESS (F) Talented in singing, instrument playing, dance, and sword swallowing. But her jokes aren't very good.

EXTRAS

COURTIERS (M/F) Nobility who help fill the Royal Table.

SERVANTS, GUARDS, PAGES (M/F) Announce and escort guests and help serve the meal.

Sample Pages

TOWN CRIER:

Good evening, most honored guests. I, uh . . . that is, we'll be ready to start in a moment. (*Thinking aloud.*) Where is that Jester? He's clumsy, but he's never late. (*Looks around again.*) The King will be coming; I guess I'll have to improvise. (*To audience.*)

Welcome, brave lords and ladies dear! (*Enter PAGE.*)

Forget your sorrow and have good cheer.

Welcome to the King's good feast,

And may your laughter be increased!

PAGE: (*In stage whisper, he beckons TOWN CRIER.*) Town Crier! Town Crier!

TOWN CRIER: Yes, what is it? I'm trying to welcome the guests! Have you seen the Jester?

PAGE: (*Crosses to TOWN CRIER.*) Didn't you hear what happened at last night's dinner?

TOWN CRIER: Of course. I was there.

PAGE: When the Jester was juggling torches—

TOWN CRIER: He dropped one on the royal table cloth. That's nothing new.

PAGE: If you'll remember, it was soaked by the scotch that Lord Boorish—

TOWN CRIER: Boris.

PAGE: That's what I said. It was soaked by the scotch that Lord Boorish was drinking. The scotch dribbled down his face and onto the tablecloth.

TOWN CRIER: I warned the Jester: juggling torches near a scotch-soaked table cloth is not a good combination.

PAGE: Neither is juggling torches and a scotch-soaked Boorish beard.

TOWN CRIER: Luckily, I was able to think clearly and act quickly.

PAGE: What? You ran like a little girl.

TOWN CRIER: Hello? Do you have any idea what beard smoke does to a chartreuse silk tunic? And eyebrow ash would just ruin my magenta doublet.

PAGE: Well, you missed the best part. Lord Boorish's face was on fire, and the Queen put it out with the Salmon Mousse.

TOWN CRIER: What a travesty!

PAGE: Actually, it was pretty funny.

TOWN CRIER: That Salmon Mousse was very delicate on the palette!

PAGE: The king was screaming for the guards; Lord Boris was screaming for the Jester's head; and the Queen was screaming for more Salmon Mousse. Well, the Jester knew he was done for, so he escaped while the smoke was still thick. You could say he disappeared in a puff of smoke.

TOWN CRIER: We are without a Jester? (*Looks to the back of the hall.*) And we have an irate Royal Court, which is arriving just now. I guess someone should announce them. (*Clears his throat.*)

Ready the meal and heat the wassail!
Bring forth the meat and finest of ale!
Blow the clarion! Singers appear!
The king and his court are drawing near! (*TOWN CRIER and PAGE exit.*)

Later, the new Jester is introduced . . .

PAGE: (*Bows.*) Sire, may I present our new Jester?

JESTRESS: Jestress.

KING: Jestress? (*Looks at her closely.*) A female Jester?

PAGE: My king, she comes highly-recommended from the Duchess of Chesney.

KING: Well, this is highly-unusual.

QUEEN: My lord, may I suggest that she might be a refreshing change?

BORIS: (*Love-struck.*) I agree with the Queen, your majesty. She is very (*Leers.*) refreshing.

QUEEN: Lord Boris, you forget yourself. You are betrothed to my niece, Lady Abigail.

BORIS: (*Eying JESTRESS.*) 'Tis easy to forget myself in the presence of such beauty.

QUEEN: Lord Boris! My niece is at the table!

ABIGAIL: Worry not, my Queen. I have not chosen this marriage. My father and the king arranged it. Perhaps the Jestress is the better match for Lord Boris. One fool deserves another.

KING: (*Attempting to regain control of his court.*) Truly spoken, Lady Abigail. (*She looks hopeful that the betrothal may be annulled.*) I did arrange this marriage. (*He looks threateningly toward BORIS.*) And I will brook no fools. (*An uncomfortable silence ensues.*)

QUEEN: (*Changing the subject.*) Well, good Jestress, perform for us. We could use some levity.

KING: Yes, what is your specialty? Puns?

ABIGAIL: Oh, yes. Our last Jester was wonderful at puns!

JESTRESS: I never do puns.

KING: Really? Then, what? Juggling? Slapstick?

JESTRESS: Political satire.

KING: Political . . . what?

JESTRESS: Satire, my king. Let me demonstrate. How many kings does it take to put a candle in a sconce?

KING: I don't know. How many kings does it take to put a candle in a sconce?

JESTRESS: None. Because in a totalitarian feudal system he can command an enslaved serf to do it for him. *(There is a dead silence.)*

QUEEN: That was . . . interesting.

ABIGAIL: I liked it. I know just how that serf feels.

QUEEN: *(Glances at ABIGAIL.)* Quite.

BORIS: Yes, she told that joke quite fetchingly. It lifted my heart, like a cool breeze on a hot summer day. A cool breeze that tickles my skin and—

QUEEN: *(Interrupting.)* What else do you do, my dear?

JESTRESS: I sing.

KING: Wonderful. Give us a merry little tune.

JESTRESS: Sorry, I don't do merry little tunes.

KING: An air? An anthem? A ditty?

JESTRESS: No, I don't do those either.

QUEEN: What do you sing?

JESTRESS: Protest songs.

QUEEN: Protest songs?

JESTRESS: Let me demonstrate. *(Clears her throat and sings to the tune of "Greensleeves." Though satire, it must be sung well in order to make the JESTER bit, which comes later, funny.)*

Alas, my king, you do me wrong

To use my labor exploitively;
For you have used me, oh so long
But now I have solidarity

Mean kings used all my toil
Mean kings used all my might
Mean kings are a loathsome boil
And who—

KING: (*Interrupting, upset.*) Hey, I'm not sure what that means exactly, but—

QUEEN: (*Attempting to keep the peace.*) But that was very . . . interesting.

ABIGAIL: I loved it! I mean, that line about being used exploitively, I can so identify with!

The Jester sneaks back to see if he can get his old job back . . .

TOWN CRIER: (*JESTER enters and tugs on TOWN CRIER's sleeve.*) Yes, what is it— (*He turns and sees the JESTER wearing a cloak with hood and stifles a gasp.*) Jester, what are you doing here? It's your head if they catch you. (*Considers.*) And my head if I'm caught talking to you!

JESTER: Town Crier, you've got to help me. There's no work for me out there. Being a Jester is all I know. You've got to help me get my job back.

TOWN CRIER: It's not looking good for you, my friend. The damage—

JESTER: I know, I know. Those were very expensive tapestries.

TOWN CRIER: I was talking about the damage to my second best set of evening wear. Do you know how difficult it is to find a surcoat in magenta? The dyeing process alone takes twelve days.

JESTER: Oh, that. (*A thought comes to him.*) Guess who I met while I was hiding in London?

TOWN CRIER: Why should I care whom you met?

JESTER: Oh, so you wouldn't want to know than Anthony d' Armani was visiting England?

TOWN CRIER: The Anthony d' Armani?

JESTER: How many Anthony d' Armanis do you know?

TOWN CRIER: The Anthony d' Armani is a genius at selecting fabric and style. His Boratti pantaloons are the perfect blend of style and comfort.

JESTER: I can introduce you.

TOWN CRIER: You? How do you know him?

JESTER: It turns out that Anthony d' Armani is a sucker for blond jokes. I had him eating out of my hand. He would do anything for more jokes now.

TOWN CRIER: Fabulous! I must get his opinion on capes. Are they really passé? Maybe a lined cape, with a twill weave . . .

JESTER: Ah, ah, ah. First, you must get me my job back.

TOWN CRIER: What? That's impossible. Lord Boris wants your neck, and the king wants your head. *(Lights up on Royal Table. TOWN CRIER grabs JESTER and pulls him farther side-stage.)* Quick! Don't let them see you.

Still, the Town Crier decides to help the Jester by disguising him as the Jestress . . .

TOWN CRIER: *(Tiptoes onstage and looks around. He signals the JESTER, who remains offstage.)* The coast is clear, good Jester. Come on.

JESTER: No.

TOWN CRIER: No? After all the trouble I went through to disguise you? No? This is the thanks I get? Get in here this instant, or I will call the guard.

JESTER: It's just that I feel *(He makes his entrance dressed as the JESTRESS. His dress and make-up should be exaggerated.)* stupid. *(Pause here for the audience to get the full effect of the visual.)*

TOWN CRIER: What's stupid? The hours I put into creating an exact match of her outfit?

JESTER: No.

TOWN CRIER: The hours I spent dyeing and styling that horse's tale you are wearing on your head?

JESTER: No.

TOWN CRIER: *(Aggravated.)* The time I spent covering the pores on your face—which are the size of dinner plates, by the way—with a base? Or the time I spent painting lips on that gash you call a mouth?

JESTER: No.

TOWN CRIER: Then what is stupid?

JESTER: The way I look.

TOWN CRIER: *(Steps back and appraises him anew.)* You're right. You do look stupid. But is it my fault that the Jestress has no sense of style? In any case, this is the only way you can work your way back into your job. You pretend to be the Jestress, perform magnificently, and then reveal that you are actually the Jester.

JESTER: What about the real Jestress?

TOWN CRIER: I'm working on that. When you want to perform for the court, I will lure her away from the banquet hall.

JESTER: How will you lure her?

TOWN CRIER: I'll use my manly charms. *(Skeptical look from the JESTER.)* Look, have you got a better idea?

JESTER: No, no. That sounds brilliant. But am I supposed to do what she does to entertain?

TOWN CRIER: You'd better at first, or the court might be suspicious. You've got her beat easily with your jokes, but she is a much better singer and dancer than you. You'd better practice up.

JESTER: What about the *(Takes a big gulp.)* sword swallowing?

TOWN CRIER: Yes, there's that. I guess you'd better practice that, too. Tell you what. I'll go find a sword, and you go find some brandy.

JESTER: Brandy? Why the brandy?

TOWN CRIER: We may have to cauterize the wound. *(JESTER starts to think about this, realizes the implications, and starts to exit, but TOWN CRIER grabs him.)* Don't get any ideas. It's too late in the game to run away now. Go find the brandy, and I'll meet you back here. *(They exit SR.)*

(ABIGAIL and JESTRESS enter SL.)

ABIGAIL: But Jestress, how will we change Boris's mind?

JESTRESS: We just have to . . . persuade him a bit.

ABIGAIL: How?

JESTRESS: When Boris comes this way, I'll pull his cape over his head, and then we'll spin him around until he can't see straight. *(They get in position SR.)*

ABIGAIL: That should get his mind spinning.

JESTRESS: *(JESTRESS looks at ABIGAIL skeptically.)* Was that a pun? I hate puns. Just leave the humor to the professionals, okay? *(She looks side-stage.)* Someone is coming. I think it's Lord Boris. Get ready.

(TOWN CRIER enters SR; JESTRESS and ABIGAIL jump him from behind, pull his cape over his head, and spin him around. TOWN CRIER wobbles and sways. JESTRESS & ABIGAIL give each other a high five.)

ABIGAIL: That will teach you, you two-timing—

JESTRESS: Male chauvinist—

ABIGAIL: *(Takes cape off of TOWN CRIER.)* Town Crier?

JESTRESS: Oops. Sorry about that.

(TOWN CRIER looks as if he is about to say something, but then grabs his stomach in obvious nausea. He exits SR in a very dizzy state. Off-stage, we hear a very loud bang. JESTRESS and ABIGAIL stare SR.)

JESTRESS: Wow. That's the biggest serving tray I've ever seen.

ABIGAIL: And the Town Crier hit it face first.

JESTRESS: What was on the tray?

ABIGAIL: Looks like Salmon Mousse.

JESTRESS: It's all over the Town Crier's cape.

ABIGAIL: He's going to be very upset: it's very hard to get Mousse stains out silk.