

Woolf, Orlando, pages 27-28:

... He beheld, coming from the pavilion of the Muscovite Embassy, **a figure, which, whether boy's or woman's, for the loose tunic and trousers of the Russian fashion served to disguise the sex, filled him with the highest curiosity.** The person, whatever the name or sex, was about middle height, very slenderly fashioned, and dressed entirely in oyster-coloured velvet, trimmed with some unfamiliar greenish-coloured fur. But these details were obscured by the extraordinary seductiveness which issued from the whole person. **Images, metaphors of the most extreme and extravagant twined and twisted in his mind.** He called her **a melon, a pineapple, an olive tree, an emerald, and a fox in the snow** all in the space of three seconds; **he did not know whether he had heard her, tasted her, seen her, or all three Together.** (For though **we must pause not a moment in the narrative we may here hastily note that all his images at this time were simple in the extreme** to match his senses and were mostly taken from things he had liked the taste of as a boy. But if his senses were simple they were at the same time extremely strong. **To pause therefore and seek the reasons of things is out of the question.**)...A melon, an emerald, a fox in the snow---so he raved, so he stared. When the boy, for alas, a boy it must be---no woman could skate with such speed and vigour---swept almost on tiptoe past him, **Orlando was ready to tear his hair with vexation** that the person was of his own sex, and thus all embraces were out of the question. But the skater came closer. Legs, hands, carriage, were a boy's, but no boy ever had a mouth like that; no boy had those breasts; no boy had eyes which looked as if they had been fished from the bottom of the sea. Finally, coming to a stop and sweeping a curtsy with the utmost grace to the King, who was shuffling past on the arm of some Lord-in-waiting, the unknown skater came to a standstill. She was not a handbreadth off. **She was a woman.**