

The New Kittredge Shakespeare

William Shakespeare



As You Like It

Series Editor: James H. Lake

Edited by
Patricia Lennox

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INTRODUCTION TO THE KITTREDGE EDITION

AS YOU LIKE IT was first published, so far as we know, in the Folio of 1623, which affords a reasonably good text. For the date of composition 1599 may be confidently accepted. Meres, writing in 1598 (before October 19), does not record the play¹, but it is mentioned in the Stationers' Register on August 4, 1600. Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, first printed in 1598, is quoted in iii, 5, 81, 82:

Dead shepherd, now I find thy saw of might,
"Who ever lov'd that lov'd not at first sight?"

The plot of AS YOU LIKE IT is taken from Thomas Lodge's novel *Rosalynde. Euphues golden legacy: found after his death in his Cell at Silixedra* (1590). Lodge informs us in his dedication that he "writ this book" to "beguile the time" on his voyage to the islands of "Terceras and the Canaries" with Captain Clarke. This would have been about 1588. In his address "To the Gentlemen Readers" he says that he wrote it "in the Ocean, when every line was wet with a surge, and every humorous passion counterchecked with a storm." And he adds, politely, "If you like it, so"—that is, "well and good." This sentence apparently gave Shakespeare the title of his comedy; for the phrase "as you like it" obviously submits the drama to the fancy of the audience: "Good, if you like it; not so good, if you do not." Compare Rosalind's words in the Epilogue: "I charge you, O women, for the love you bear to men, to like as much of this play as please you; and I charge you, O men, for the love you bear to women, . . . that between you and the women the play may please."

Shakespeare follows Lodge's story closely, but softens some of the more violent incidents.

In Lodge, the quarrel with which the play begins is terrific. Saladyne (Shakespeare's Oliver) bids his servants lay hold on Rosader (Orlando) and bind him. Rosader, "half mad" with wrath, though "of a mild and courteous nature,"

1 Francis Meres, *Palladis Tamia: Wits Treasury*, 1598: "As *Plautus* and *Seneca* are accounted the best for Comedy and Tragedy among the Latins: so *Shakespeare* among the English is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage; for Comedy, witness his *Gentlemen of Verona*, his *Errors*, his *Love's labors lost*, his *Love's labors won*, his *Midsummer's night dream*, & his *Merchant of Venice*: for Tragedy his *Richard the 2.* *Richard the 3.* *Henry the 4.* *King John*, *Titus Andronicus* and his *Romeo and Juliet*."

belabors them with a great rake and forces Saladyne to take refuge in a loft adjoining the garden. They make peace, Saladyne promising to reinstate Rosader in his proper rank in the family. After the wrestling match, in which the champion is killed, Rosader goes home with a troop of gentlemen. The door is shut against him, but he breaks it down, enters the hall, sword in hand, and feasts his companions royally. As soon as they are gone, Rosader draws his sword, resolved to be revenged on Saladyne, but peace is made once more, this time by the mediation of Adam Spencer. Shortly after, however, Saladyne surprises Rosader in his sleep and has him chained to a post. He is released by Adam, who tells him that Saladyne has informed their kindred and allies that he is insane and has invited them to breakfast next morning to see him chained up as a desperate madman. Adam fastens him once more to the post, but leaves the fetters unlocked. The guests are convinced that Rosader is mad indeed, and after dinner, heated with wine, they begin to rail at him. Adam gives a sign, Rosader breaks loose, and, armed with poleaxes, they attack the guests, hurting many, killing some, and driving the rest out of the house. The sheriff of the county is summoned and vows to arrest Rosader. He and Adam break through the sheriff's posse and make their way to the Forest of Arden. There is no plot on Saladyne's part (as there is in Shakespeare) to murder his brother by burning down his lodging (ii, 3).

From this point the novel proceeds like the play. In the love story Shakespeare follows Lodge closely. Le Beau, Jaques, Touchstone, Audrey, William, and Sir Oliver Martext are Shakespeare's own. All the other important characters have their representatives in Lodge. The conclusion of the play is like that of the novel, except that Lodge's usurper, instead of being "converted both from his enterprise" against his brother (Shakespeare's Duke Senior) "and from the world" (v, 4, 167, 168), is killed in battle.

The novel is intensely Euphuistic² in style and tells its tale in a leisurely fashion, but it has considerable merit. Like the play, it contains a number of love poems. The only character who is at all humorous is Coridon, and his humor is very mild indeed. The leisurely mode gives the novelist one advantage over the playwright: the conversion of the wicked brother seems less precipitate in Lodge than in Shakespeare; but this is at the expense of details which, in a play, would have retarded the action unduly at the close. Sudden conversion of the villain is often an imperative *coup de théâtre* in comedy. We sometimes forget that we are just as conventional as the Elizabethans, though with a different set of conventions, and that to Shakespeare, the practical playwright, the conventions of his age were rules of the game. Perhaps Oliver is too lavishly rewarded for his penitence by the love of the charming Celia; but, after all, romance is not reality. "Every Jack must have his Jill" is a standard proverb for the dramatist.

2 Euphuistic style, named after a character in John Lyly's romance *Euphues* (1579), uses an artificial, high blown method of speaking, full of elaborate and far fetched figures of speech. [P.L.]

Lodge's novel provides the three couples represented in Shakespeare by Orlando and Rosalind, Oliver and Celia, Silvius and Phebe; but in Lodge they are all denizens of a kind of romantic fairyland that has slight contact with the actual. His Silvius and Phebe, indeed, are purely pastoral figures of the conventional sort—pleasant but quite artificial. In retaining this pastoral element Shakespeare has set it off by contrast with the rivalry of Touchstone and William for the hand of Audrey—an episode of his own felicitous invention; and thus he brings us into such intimate contact with the homely affairs of everyday life that we accept the romance of fairyland without challenge.

Lodge's source is the anonymous *Tale of Gamelyn*, which dates from about the middle of the fourteenth century. It occurs in manuscripts of *The Canterbury Tales* and once passed as Chaucer's work. Lodge must have had access to a manuscript, for *Gamelyn* was not printed until 1721, when Urry included it in his edition of Chaucer. In the violent features of his novel (summarized above), Lodge follows *Gamelyn* pretty closely.

Jaques and Touchstone, as we have seen, are original with Shakespeare. In very truth Jaques and Touchstone (each in his own inimitable way) serve a dramatic purpose of the highest order: they act as an unobtrusive chorus, and thus prevent our involving ourselves too deeply in the mists of the purely imaginative. It is largely due to them that we remain aware that the Forest of Arden is not the world, and that Rosalind and Orlando and the Banished Duke are far from home and are all playing their temporary parts in a highly imaginative masquerade and under whimsically unreal conditions. Thus they keep the drama sufficiently aloof from the purely pastoral. "Pastoral-comical" [*Hamlet's*] Polonius would term it. Let us add one category to his varied *genres* and call AS YOU LIKE IT pastoral-comical-actual.

"Clown" and "fool" are, in one aspect of Elizabethan usage, synonymous terms. Touchstone, the professional jester *par excellence*, is regularly styled "Clown" in the stage directions and speech headings of the First Folio. In strictness, however, "clown" meant country bumpkin (as when Touchstone thus addresses Corin) and "fool" designated the professional jester—the fool in motley. Such a personage had his place in every great household, from the squire's family to the king's court. Clownish rustics are familiar figures on the Elizabethan stage. They amuse the audience by their absurdities in speech and their uncouth manners; but often their homespun wisdom and sly mother wit enable them to turn the tables on their more sophisticated associates—and then we laugh, not *at* the clowns but *with* them.

The fool in motley was in fact usually a "natural"—that is, in plain terms, a born fool, an idiot or half-wit; or he might be, not idiotic but crack-brained—a harmless paranoiac or, as we say, a person who is mentally "queer." Rarely was he—either in real life or in the drama—a clever fellow who, with all his wits about him, played the fool's part for a livelihood.

The professional fool, whether in real life or on the stage, had his special uniform. He wore a motley or parti-colored coat, and the legs of his hose or close breeches were of different colors. His hood or cap was crested with a piece of red

flannel, patterned after the comb of a cock. Hence “coxcomb” as a synonym for “fool.” Sometimes little bells were attached to the headgear. His “bauble” was a mock scepter, tipped with a grotesque head grinning idiotically or sticking out the tongue. Sometimes there was attached to the bauble an inflated bladder, with which the fool could whack his companions. Frequently he carried a pipe and a tabour—a small drum. Gentlemen wore rapier and dagger: the fool’s dagger, for safety’s sake, was made of wood, like that of the Vice in the moralities. The fool’s head was close-shaven, or his hair might be “nicked,” that is, cut in a zigzag pattern.

On the stage the fool regularly has the best of it in his encounters with his sane associates, who, indeed, are sometimes bigger fools than he. Touchstone is not to be regarded as mentally defective. He has wit at will and is playing the fool professionally. Touchstone’s technique is perfect. Take, for example, the mock-philosophy in his description of a shepherd’s life (iii, 2, 13–23), where the nicely poised antithetical distinctions counter-balance to a hair. Note his punning logic when he proves that Corin is damned, “like an ill-roasted egg,” because he has never visited the court. Touchstone is a facile rhymester. He has a fine taste in meters, justly scorning the “false gallop” (or canter) of Orlando’s verses, which he parodies skillfully. He has addressed love verses of his own to Audrey, but they are beyond her comprehension, and so he compares himself to Ovid³ among the Goths, with the inevitable pun on “goats.” And he has the orthodox Platonic doctrine that all poets are liars. In his encounter with the rustic William, his rival for Audrey’s hand (v, 1), he is perhaps most strikingly professional, parading the emptiest truisms with the pomp of philosophic wisdom and the polish of rhetoric. At the same time, we observe, he chastens the Elizabethan exuberance of style in their initial dialogue, which is elegantly simple and quite within William’s comprehension. Only in the concluding diatribe does he frolic in verbosity, and here he translates as he goes along.

There is a close sympathetic relation between Touchstone’s soliloquy on the lapse of time, as reported by Jaques (ii, 7, 22–28), and Jaques’s own world-weary monologue in the same scene: “All the world’s a stage.” That man’s life is divisible into at least four ages is an observation that must go back to the earliest dawn of intelligence in the human race. Five ages, and ten, are ancient reckonings. Seven—inevitable as a mystic number—is traditionally ascribed to Hippocrates and had become proverbial long before Shakespeare’s time. His matchless delineation has established that number in everybody’s mind. And who but Jaques could have given the matter so pensively vivid an utterance? Man’s life is a drama, and Jaques is the interpretative chorus.

The Globe theater was built in 1599. It is described as “de novo edificata” in a document of May 16 in that year. Since *AS YOU LIKE IT* was probably written in 1599, one may associate the famous speech “All the world’s a stage” with the

3 Ovid, Roman author, (43-BC to AD 17) whose sophisticated retelling of stories of Greek and Roman gods in *Metamorphoses* was one of Shakespeare’s favorite sources.

name chosen by Shakespeare and his partners for their new playhouse. That life is a drama in which men act their parts as upon the stage is an idea which had become proverbial in classic times. The metaphor had wide currency in Shakespeare's time. Shakespeare had already used the metaphor in *The Merchant of Venice* (i, 1, 77–79), where Antonio, in pensive mood, utters it in a kind of suspiration:

I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano—
A stage, where every man must play a part,
And mine a sad one.

And he returned to it in a passage where we may contrast with Jaques's high-comedy analysis of human life the tragic synthesis of the doomed Macbeth (v, 5, 24–26):

Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more.

George Lyman Kittredge

Focus Editor's Notes

Above and throughout I have retained Kittredge's major notes, but have removed or modified some of the lengthier commentaries that offered further comparisons with Lodge, other works contemporary to Shakespeare, and with earlier editors of *As You Like It*. I have also removed, as Prof. Kittredge no doubt would have done, his notes on now-settled or abandoned scholarly debates. The film notes are mine and are marked [P.L.]

INTRODUCTION TO THE FOCUS EDITION

As You Like It is one of Shakespeare's best loved comedies, a joyful, witty celebration of love. Most important of all, it has at its heart the wonderful Rosalind, one of his cleverest young women. She speaks nearly twenty-five percent of all the play's lines, is high-spirited, quirky, intelligent,—and “fathoms deep in love.” As this series' original editor G.L. Kittredge's introduction amply explores, the play was adapted from Thomas Lodge's prose romance published in 1590, *Rosalynde*, (the book's title is now generally spelled *Rosalind*). However, practically the only words Shakespeare left unchanged are in Lodge's preface—the line “If you like it, so; and yet I will be yours in duty, if you be mine in favor”—which Shakespeare turns into the title phrase *As You Like It*.

The play's more than 400-year performance history started in 1599, when it was among the first plays presented at Shakespeare's Globe theater. In fact, *As You Like It* has a history of firsts. In 1740 it was the first Shakespeare comedy to be performed in London nearly a century after the Puritans closed the theaters and eighty years after they reopened. In 1936 *As You Like It* was the first British-made sound film of a Shakespeare play. Scenes from the play were included in the first BBC Shakespeare television program in 1937, at the dawn of TV broadcasting. In 1946, after the end of World War II, the play was chosen as the inaugural production at London's summer theater in Regent Park, where it has been performed nearly every year since then. It was among the three plays chosen in 1978 for the first season of the monumental filmed-for-television series the BBC-Time/Life *Complete Works of William Shakespeare*. England's prestigious Royal Shakespeare Company included the play in its first season at Stratford-upon-Avon in 1960, and has performed a total of fifteen different productions since then.

The play has an equally prestigious history in America, where it is a particular favorite for summer Shakespeare festivals. Its extensive European performance history includes productions in Eastern Europe during Communist occupation where the play was used in veiled political protests against dictatorial regimes. Its film history includes four major versions between 1936 and 2009.

The Play as Fairy Tale and Pastoral

Shakespeare's *As You Like It* is part fairy tale, but as Catherine Belsey argues in *Why Shakespeare?*, this is a very sophisticated fairy tale. Like many magic tales, *As You Like It* is set in a faraway land in the distant past and starts with the banishment of the story's noble-born heroes—Orlando and Rosalind—who bravely go into exile, travel to save their lives and seek their fortunes, each accompanied by a faithful companion. Orlando is the youngest of Sir Roland de Boys' three sons. (Fairy tale

siblings usually come in threes; when three brothers are injured in the wrestling match, Celia observes that it sounds like a story “from an old tale.”) Rosalind, as the daughter of the kingdom’s rightful ruler, Duke Senior, is referred to as a princess. Like many fairy tale heroines she must disguise herself to save her life, but she is unusual in adopting a male disguise—and enjoying it thoroughly.

Rosalind and Orlando each face three tests, the traditional number for folk tale and mythic heroes. Rosalind’s tests are enduring banishment, finding her father, and uniting a pair of lovers (Silvius and Phebe). Orlando’s tests are a more traditional combination of strength and valor. He defeats the powerful wrestler, saves his dying servant Adam, and rescues his brother from the lioness. As with all fairy tales, there is a touch of supernatural intervention when the god Hymen appears in Act 5 to solemnize the happily-ever-after weddings. However, there is an important difference in the final fates of the villains. In *As You Like It* the two major evil-doers, Duke Frederick and Oliver, are reformed instead of being punished as they would have been in a traditional fairy tale, like those collected by the Brothers Grimm.

The play has fewer dark undertones than many of Shakespeare’s other comic plays, and what darkness it does have is also typical of fairy tales. Most of *As You Like It* takes place in a magical forest that each inhabitant sees slightly differently. By the end of the play every major character has entered the Forest of Arden and been changed for the better by being there. The location of the forest is appropriately inconclusive: partially France (the Ardennes), partially England (ancient Britain’s Forest of Arden) and partially a make believe location that is nowhere on the map. It is a place where palm trees and lions coexist with oak trees and deer in a chilly wintry world that quickly progresses to springtime.

As You Like It draws on the conventions of fairy tale, comedy, and romance, but the genre of the pastoral poem is especially important. Shakespeare skilfully plays with the pastoral, a literary form he would be familiar with from the ancient Roman poet Virgil, as well as popular Elizabethan poems, especially Edmund Spenser’s *Shepherd’s Calendar* (1579), Philip Sidney’s *Arcadia* (1581-84), and Christopher Marlowe’s “The Passionate Shepherd to His Love,” (c. 1599) and Lodge’s *Rosalind*. The pastoral originated with the Greek poet Teocritus who, in the third century B.C.E. wrote poems about Sicilian shepherds (*pastor* is Latin for shepherd). One staple of all pastorals is the conviction that life in the country is simple and pure, while that at the court (or city) is political and corrupt. The pastoral poem’s stock characters that appear in *As You Like It* include: the wise old shepherd who talks with the love-struck young shepherd much more about love than about sheep; the beautiful but disdainful beloved shepherdess; and the comically lusty rustic couple.

The ancient Greek and Roman pastoral shepherds may live in Arcadia, but the Elizabethan pastoral often added veiled political debate. In *As You Like It* Shakespeare moves in and out of a countryside that is both romanticized pastoral—verses hung on trees, poetic shepherds—and a realistic place with cold wind, meager food, and absentee landlords. The Forest of Arden is described by some characters as a golden

place and by others as a harsh desert, but they all see it in some way as the Arcadian, idealized landscape of pastoral poetry.

The Language of the Play

This is a play where everyone loves to talk—and their talk is full of word games. Simple shepherds and court jesters, old dukes and young women disguised as men, philosophers and young poets all play with words, spin them round, using them with as many meanings as possible. Shakespeare loves image clusters. Here there are references to time throughout: clock time and life time. The old news is the new news. Although “there is no clock in the forest,” Orlando is expected to be on time, and Rosalind knows exactly how many minutes he is late. Jaques divides a life’s time into seven ages. Touchstone sees the progression of life in two stages: “We ripe and ripe and then we rot and rot.”

There are also densely woven references to romantic love and sexual desire, something the play is quite frank about. In past performances and editions some of Rosalind’s sexual references have been silently removed by directors and editors who thought them indelicate. However, Rosalind has no thought of prudery when she speaks. Instead when she talks about love with Celia, it is clear that for Rosalind sex is part of love. In different ways Rosalind and Phebe challenge the Petrarchian ideal beloved, the object of Silvius’s and Orlando’s poetry. Just as Touchstone mimics Orlando’s “dog trot” poetry and adds his own sexual allusions with lines like “Winter gowns must all be lined / so must gentle Rosalind.” Language games are Touchstone’s meat and drink, his profession, but even he runs up against a barrier when he tries to seduce the country wench Audrey, who is puzzled by his vocabulary but understands his goal. Everyone else, whether from the court or the country, moves easily among word games that are in equal part philosophical, poetic, and bawdy.

The Play in Performance

On stage the original Rosalind would have been a boy actor, and although women appeared on the English stage after 1660, their only Shakespeare roles were in the tragedies. The first female Rosalind appeared in the 1740 breakthrough production played by the enormously popular Hannah Pritchard; her friend and frequent acting partner Kitty Clive was Celia. It was the actresses, starting with Pritchard and Clive, who finally brought *As You Like It* and other Shakespeare comedies back to the theater. Between 1740 and 1753 *As You Like It*, with minor adaptations to Shakespeare’s text, was frequently performed at Drury Lane and Covent Garden, London’s two legally licensed playhouses. From 1776 to 1817 it was acted more frequently than any other play at Drury Lane—and since then has never been absent from the stage for long. The chance to cross-dress and wear leg-revealing male clothing added to the role’s attraction. Two eighteen-century actresses who made Rosalind their signature role were renowned both as comic actresses and as royal mistresses (Margaret (Peg) Wolfington, mistress of Charles II and Dorothy

Jordan, mistress of the Duke of Clarence, later King William IV). Both played Ganymede as a cheeky, outspoken hoyden, a mix of high spirits and wholesome sexual allure.

At the beginning of the nineteenth-century audiences, influenced by the Romantic's idealistic view of Shakespeare, preferred a more demure Rosalind, someone who was less a tomboy and more a womanly woman, high-hearted, tender and delicate. Later, in the final decades of the nineteenth century, Rosalind was played to conform to the Victorian ideal of angelic womanhood. She became more girlish and sentimental; lines considered less refined or bawdy were removed. Great nineteenth-century actresses, in significant productions, delighted audiences with a combination of the girlish charm and legs in tights. Their Rosalinds were praised as the embodiment of pure and lovely womanliness. Their Ganymedes avoided what was now considered the vulgar hoyden of the eighteenth century. Each actress had her own, individual interpretation of Rosalind: one was praised for Ganymede's manliness, another for Rosalind's ethereality and delicacy, and another for her intelligence and innate good breeding.

In the twentieth century on stage and in film the role of Rosalind has continued to be reinterpreted. An important change has been the return of her previously deleted, bowdlerized lines. She now speaks frankly about sex, and her wonderfully balanced sense of the romantic and the realistic has returned. She has become less sentimental, more clear-eyed, but still remains full of youthful exuberance. Each decade has its own Rosalind. These have included the long-legged film star Katherine Hepburn (1950) and a very youthful Vanessa Redgrave (1961). Gwyenth Paltrow followed her film success in *Shakespeare in Love* by playing Rosalind on stage (1999); Rebecca Hall went from her stage Rosalind (2007) to star in Woody Allen's film, *Vicky Christina Barcelona*. Adrian Lester, who played Oliver in Kenneth Branagh's *As You Like It* film, was Rosalind in the all-male production by Cheek by Jowl (1991, revived 1994). This production occurred at a time when several important critical discussions of the play focused on a subtext of erotic *frisson* for an Elizabethan audience watching a young man play a sexually attractive woman playing an equally appealing young man. Lester's intelligent and moving performance, done without wigs or special makeup and with only a slight softening of the voice, made clear that the persuasive power of great acting moves beyond the boundaries of gender and race.

The Setting: For *As You Like It* the Forest of Arden set has been one of the key elements of any production, sometimes generating as much critical comment as the actors' performances. On the nineteenth-century stage elaborate set design was a major part of any Shakespeare production and would continue to be the dominant style until after World War I. The trend toward a realistic forest set for this play is generally dated as beginning with actor-manager William Charles Macready's Drury Lane production of *As You Like It* in 1842, where he played Jaques. This major production had sets that featured perspective paintings on backdrops, and "cut flats" along the sides, interspersed with a scattering of "magnificently realistic"



Rosalind (Adrian Lester) and Celia (Simon Coates) share a joyful dance in the 1994 revival of *Cheek by Jowl's* all-male stage production (photo by John Haynes).

trees, to further the illusion of depth. Even more unusual was the enormous number of seventy-four “supers” in the ensemble playing the courtiers, the crowd at the wrestling match and the Old Duke’s followers in the forest. It began the demand for increasingly realistic and densely decorated stage productions that would also claim historical accuracy with luxurious fifteenth-century inspired costumes and court sets. The promise of picturesque scenic effects and lavish costumes was prominent in the plays’ advertising between 1850 and the early 1900s. The trend included *Forests of Arden* with real grass, moss-grown logs, avenues of trees, rustic bridges and babbling brooks. For example, in 1907 actor-manager Oscar Asche included two thousand pots of ferns, bamboo groves, piles of leaves, and, in at least one performance, a live deer on stage. To accommodate the highly-decorated set Shakespeare’s text was cut and scenes rearranged so that all the *Forest of Arden* scenes were sequential and the forest scenery did not have to be moved once it was in place.

It was not until 1919 and Nigel Playfair’s highly controversial production at Stratford-upon-Avon that a production ignored historical accuracy and visual realism. The costumes were only vaguely, though prettily, medieval and the streamlined set consisted of paintings of an abstract forest with stylized leaves and trees in the clean-lined modern style of Austria’s *Weiner Werkstatte* artists. Twentieth- and twenty-first century productions have, on the whole, favored the suggested forest over the

AS YOU LIKE IT

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Duke Senior, living in banishment
Duke Frederick, his brother, and usurper of his dukedom
Amiens, }
Jaques, } lords attending on the banished *Duke*
Le Beau, a courtier attending on *Duke Frederick*
Charles, wrestler to *Duke Frederick*
Oliver, }
Jaques de Boys, } sons of *Sir Rowland de Boys*,
Orlando, }
Adam, } servants to *Oliver*.
Dennis }
Touchstone, a clown
Sir Oliver Martext, a vicar
Corin, }
Silvius, } shepherds
William, a country fellow, in love with *Audrey*
Hymen

Rosalind, daughter to the banished *Duke*
Celia, daughter to *Duke Frederick*
Phebe, a shepherdess
Audrey, a country wench

Lords, pages, and attendants, etc.

SCENE—*Oliver's orchard; Duke Frederick's court; the Forest of Arden.*]

ACT I

SCENE I. [*Oliver's orchard.*]

Enter Orlando[†] and Adam.

ORLANDO As I remember, Adam, it was upon this fashion: he bequeathed me by will but poor a thousand crowns, and, as thou say'st, charged my brother on his blessing to breed me well, and there begins my sadness. My brother Jaques he keeps at school, and report speaks goldenly of his profit. For my part, he keeps me rustically at 5 home or, to speak more properly, stays me here at home unkept, for call you that keeping for a gentleman of my birth that differs not from the stalling of an ox? His horses are bred better, for, besides that they are fair with their feeding, they are taught their manage, and to that end riders dearly hir'd, but I, his brother, gain nothing under him but growth, for the which his animals on his dunghills are as much bound to him as I. Besides this nothing 12 that he so plentifully gives me, the something that nature gave me his countenance seems to take from me. He lets me feed with his hinds, bars me the place of a brother, and, as much as in him

Professor Kittredge's scene headings identify specific details about locations, for instance, Oliver's orchard, a lawn before Duke Frederick's Palace, or before Duke Senior's cave. These are meant as guides to help the reader picture the scene. They are not directions that Shakespeare actually wrote; the scene headings in the Folio say who is in the scene, but not where it takes place.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The play begins in the middle of a conversation where we learn that Orlando's older brother has forced him to live like a servant on the family estate. [P.L.] 2. **Poor a thousand crowns.** a small inheritance from such a wealthy father. Even the old servant Adam managed to save 500 crowns. By law the eldest son inherits the estate, but he is expected to care for others in the family. [P.L.]. 3–6. **to breed me:** to bring me up. —**Jaques.** Dissyllabic throughout the play, as the metrical passages show. This Jaques de Boys, Sir Rowland's second son, appears at 5.4.134. —**keeps:** supports, maintains. —**school:** often used for "college" or "university." —**goldenly:** in golden terms. —**profit:** proficiency; progress in his studies. —**keeps me rustically:** maintains me like a countryman. Orlando puns bitterly on *keep* in the sense of "detain." 6. **stays me...unkept:** detains me uncared for. 8. **keeping:** maintenance, support. 9. **fair:** in good physical condition. The full phrase is "fair in flesh." 10. **manage:** manège. The word was used both for horse-training and for training in horsemanship. 14. **his countenance:** either "his behaviour toward me" or (spoken with bitter irony) "his patronage." Both senses were common. 15. **hinds:** farm hands.

† Czinzer dresses Olivier's Orlando like a Hollywood Robin Hood with thigh-high boots, tights, a leather jerkin, and romantic full-sleeved white shirt. In contrast, Adam is scrawny, with long wispy white hair, looks ancient and is dressed in a medieval peasant's robe. The BBC dressed Orlando in a more rugged variation on Olivier's costume. Branagh's costumes are 19th century European and Orlando wears workman's overalls, while his brother wears a gentleman's frock coat. [P.L.]

- ORLANDO Come, come, elder brother, you are too young in this.
[*Seizes him.*]
- OLIVER Wilt thou lay hands on me, villain?
- ORLANDO I am no villain. I am the youngest son of Sir Rowland de Boys, he was my father, and he is thrice a villain that says such a father begot villains. Wert thou not my brother, I would not take this hand from thy throat till this other had pull'd out thy tongue for saying so. Thou hast rail'd on thyself. 47
- ADAM [*comes forward*] Sweet masters, be patient! For your father's remembrance, be at accord!
- OLIVER Let me go, I say. 50
- ORLANDO I will not till I please. You shall hear me. My father charg'd you in his will to give me good education. You have train'd me like a peasant, obscuring and hiding from me all gentlemanlike qualities. The spirit of my father grows strong in me, and I will no longer endure it. Therefore allow me such exercises as may become a gentleman, or give me the poor allottery my father left me by testament. With that I will go buy my fortunes. [*Releases him.*]
- OLIVER And what wilt thou do? beg when that is spent? Well, sir, get you in. I will not long be troubled with you. You shall have some part of your will. I pray you leave me. 60
- ORLANDO I will no further offend you than becomes me for my good.
- OLIVER Get you with him, you old dog!
- ADAM Is "old dog" my reward? Most true, I have lost my teeth in your service. God be with my old master! he would not have spoke such a word. *Exeunt Orlando, Adam.* 65
- OLIVER Is it even so? Begin you to grow upon me? I will physic your rankness, and yet give no thousand crowns neither. Holla, Dennis!
Enter Dennis.
- DENNIS Calls your worship?
-

41. **you are too young:** you act too much like a hot-headed youngster. 45. **villain:** Used by the elder brother it means a wicked man, by Orlando it means someone of inferior birth. [P.L.] 48. **Sweet:** beloved. —**patient:** calm. 51. **I will not till I please.** The ease with which Orlando, the "boy," holds his elder brother in spite of his struggling, prepares us for his prowess against Charles the wrestler. 53. **obscuring...all gentlemanlike qualities.** Orlando's point is that Oliver has not allowed any part of the training that befits a gentleman to come into his knowledge at all. 56. **allottery:** allotment. 66. **to grow upon me:** to become so big that you occupy more than your due space in the world and so crowd me—encroach upon my rights and privileges. —**physic:** reduce, as by medical treatment. 67. **rankness:** overgrowth.

OLIVER Was not Charles the Duke's wrestler here to speak with me? 69

DENNIS So please you, he is here at the door and importunes access to you.

OLIVER Call him in. [*Exit Dennis.*] 'Twill be a good way, and tomorrow the wrestling is.

Enter Charles.

CHARLES Good morrow to your worship.

OLIVER Good Monsieur Charles! What's the new news at the new court?

CHARLES There's no news at the court, sir, but the old news. That is, the old Duke is banished by his younger brother the new Duke, and three or four loving lords have put themselves into voluntary exile with him, whose lands and revenues enrich the new Duke, therefore he gives them good leave to wander. 79

OLIVER Can you tell if Rosalind, the Duke's daughter, be banished with her father?

CHARLES O, no! for the Duke's daughter her cousin so loves her, being ever from their cradles bred together, that she would have followed her exile, or have died to stay behind her. She is at the court, and no less beloved of her uncle than his own daughter, and never two ladies loved as they do. 86

OLIVER Where will the old Duke live?

CHARLES They say he is already in the Forest of Arden, and a many merry men with him, and there they live like the old Robin Hood of England. They say many young gentlemen flock to him every day, and fleet the time carelessly as they did in the golden world. 91

OLIVER What, you wrestle tomorrow before the new Duke?

CHARLES Marry do I, sir, and I came to acquaint you with a matter. I am given, sir, secretly to understand that your younger brother, Orlando, hath a disposition to come in disguis'd against me to try a fall. Tomorrow, sir, I wrestle for my credit, and he that escapes me without some broken limb shall acquit him well. Your brother is but young and tender, and for your love I would be loath to foil him, as I must for my own honor if he come in. Therefore, out of

73. **Good morrow:** good morning. 84. **have died to stay behind her:** would have died at staying behind her, if forced to remain at home. 88. **the Forest of Arden.** Shakespeare follows Lodge in laying the scene in "the Forest of Arden," that is, Ardennes, on the Meuse [in France]; but no doubt he remembered the Forest of Arden in Warwickshire, his native county. 91. **fleet the time:** make the time float by. —**in the golden world:** in the Golden Age, when there was neither toil nor trouble. 93. **Marry do I:** To be sure I do. 96. **a fall:** a bout at wrestling. 97. **shall acquit him well:** will have to give a good account of himself.

my love to you, I came hither to acquaint you withal, that either you might stay him from his intendment, or brook such disgrace well as he shall run into, in that it is a thing of his own search and altogether against my will. 103

OLIVER Charles, I thank thee for thy love to me, which thou shalt find I will most kindly requite. I had myself notice of my brother's purpose herein and have by underhand means labored to dissuade him from it, but he is resolute. I'll tell thee, Charles, it is the stubbornest young fellow of France, full of ambition, an envious emulator of every man's good parts, a secret and villanous contriver against me his natural brother. Therefore use thy discretion. I had as lief thou didst break his neck as his finger. And thou wert best look to't, for if thou dost him any slight disgrace, or if he do not mightily grace himself on thee, he will practise against thee by poison, entrap thee by some treacherous device, and never leave thee till he hath ta'en thy life by some indirect means or other, for I assure thee (and almost with tears I speak it) there is not one so young and so villanous this day living. I speak but brotherly of him, but should I anatomize him to thee as he is, I must blush and weep, and thou must look pale and wonder. 119

CHARLES I am heartily glad I came hither to you. If he come tomorrow. I'll give him his payment. If ever he go alone again, I'll never wrestle for prize more. And so God keep your worship!

OLIVER Farewell, good Charles. [*Exit (Charles)*]. Now will I stir this gamester. I hope I shall see an end of him, for my soul (yet I know not why) hates nothing more than he. Yet he's gentle,

100. **withal**: with it; with the facts of the case. 101–102. **intendment**: intention. —**brook...well**: put up with. —**run into**. 104. **I thank thee**: Oliver has been using the ceremonious *you* to Charles, though the wrestler is much below him in rank. Throughout this long speech, however, he drops into the familiar *thou*, in order to flatter Charles by an air of confidential friendliness. 106. **by underhand means**: Oliver implies that Orlando is too headstrong to listen to direct expostulation. 142. **it**: Used in speaking of a person in a familiar way—sometimes with affection, sometimes (as here) with scorn. 108–109. **stubbornest**: In Elizabethan English this suggests not merely obstinacy but also a generally rough, perverse, and intractable disposition. —**envious emulator**: envious rival. —**parts**: accomplishments. The word may apply to good qualities of any kind—mental, moral, or physical. 110–11. **his natural brother**: his own brother. —**had as life**: The literal meaning is, “I should think it as agreeable to me.” 113. **grace himself**: do himself credit; win honor for himself (in the wrestling match). —**practise**: plot; deal treacherously. 115. **indirect**: circuitous, underhand. 117–18. **I speak but brotherly of him**: I speak less than the truth about him, as befits a brother. —**anatomize**: the ordinary old word for “dissect”—common in a figurative sense. 119. **look pale**: with horror at the thought of making an enemy of such a man. 121. **If ever he go alone again**: Charles has no reason to doubt Oliver's description of Orlando as a villain [p.l.] 122. **keep**: guard, protect. 123–24. **stir**: incite (to wrestle with Charles). —**this gamester**: this young sport. It should be noted that both these passages represent (in soliloquy) unuttered and unutterable thoughts and feelings—not spoken words. 125. **gentle**: furnished with all the qualities that befit a gentleman.

never school'd and yet learned, full of noble device, of all sorts enchantingly beloved, and indeed so much in the heart of the world, and especially of my own people, who best know him, that I am altogether misprised. But it shall not be so long; this wrestler shall clear all. Nothing remains but that I kindle the boy thither, which now I'll go about. *Exit.* 131

SCENE II. [*A lawn before Duke Frederick's Palace.*]

Enter Rosalind and Celia.[†]

- CELIA I pray thee, Rosalind, sweet my coz, be merry.
- ROSALIND Dear Celia, I show more mirth than I am mistress of, and would you yet I were merrier? Unless you could teach me to forget a banished father, you must not learn me how to remember any extraordinary pleasure. 5
- CELIA Herein I see thou lov'st me not with the full weight that I love thee. If my uncle, thy banished father, had banished thy uncle, the Duke my father, so thou hadst been still with me, I could have taught my love to take thy father for mine. So wouldst thou, if the truth of thy love to me were so righteously temper'd as mine is to thee. 10
- ROSALIND Well, I will forget the condition of my estate to rejoice in yours.
- CELIA You know my father hath no child but I, nor none is like to have, and truly, when he dies, thou shalt be his heir, for what he hath taken away from thy father perforce, I will render thee again in affection. By mine honor, I will! and when I break that oath, let me turn monster. Therefore, my sweet Rose, my dear Rose, be merry.
- ROSALIND From henceforth I will, coz, and devise sports. Let me see. What think you of falling in love? 18

126. **noble device**: noble ideas. —**of all sorts**: by all sorts and conditions of men. 127. **enchantingly**: as if by enchantment. An allusion to the old belief that affection could be won by magic spells and potions. 129. **misprised**: undervalued. A mild word for "despised." 130. **clear all**: settle the whole business. —**thither**: to the wrestling match. 131. **go about**: attend to; undertake.

SCENE II.

1. **coz**: cousin [P.L.] 4. **learn**: teach. 8. **so**: provided that. 10. **righteously temper'd**: composed of the right elements. 11. **estate**: circumstances in life. 12. **like**: likely. 14. **render thee again**: pay thee back.

† Czimmer and the BBC dress Rosalind and Celia in an elaborate fairy tale medieval style that includes headgear concealing their hair, which helps to explain why Orlando does not recognize them in the forest. In Branagh Orlando does not see Rosalind's face clearly because during most of their conversation the only part visible is her eyes; the fan she holds up hides the rest. [P.L.]

- CELIA Marry, I prithee do, to make sport withal! But love no man in good earnest, nor no further in sport neither than with safety of a pure blush thou mayst in honor come off again.
- ROSALIND What shall be our sport then?
- CELIA Let us sit and mock the good housewife Fortune from her wheel, that her gifts may henceforth be bestowed equally. 24
- ROSALIND I would we could do so, for her benefits are mightily misplaced, and the bountiful blind woman doth most mistake in her gifts to women.
- CELIA 'Tis true, for those that she makes fair she scarce makes honest, and those that she makes honest she makes very ill-favoredly. 29
- ROSALIND Nay, now thou goest from Fortune's office to Nature's. Fortune reigns in gifts of the world, not in the lineaments of Nature.
Enter [Touchstone, the] Clown.
- CELIA No? When Nature hath made a fair creature, may she not by Fortune fall into the fire? Though Nature hath given us wit to flout at Fortune, hath not Fortune sent in this fool to cut off the argument? 35
- ROSALIND Indeed, there is Fortune too hard for Nature when Fortune makes Nature's natural the cutter-off of Nature's wit.
- CELIA Peradventure this is not Fortune's work neither, but Nature's, who perceiveth our natural wits too dull to reason of such goddesses and hath sent this natural for our whetstone, for always the dulness of the fool is the whetstone of the wits. How now, wit? Whither wander you? 42
- TOUCHSTONE Mistress, you must come away to your father.
- CELIA Were you made the messenger?
- TOUCHSTONE No, by mine honor, but I was bid to come for you. 45
- ROSALIND Where learned you that oath, fool?
- TOUCHSTONE Of a certain knight that swore by his honor they were good pancakes, and swore by his honor the mustard was naught. Now I'll
-

20–21. **with safety of a pure blush...in honor:** honorably and in safety, so that your blushes may still be those of modesty and not of shame. 23. **mock...Fortune from her wheel:** Fortune is represented in literature and art as a woman seated at a spinning wheel symbolizing ascending and descending fortune. [P.L.] 33–34. **wit to flout at Fortune:** cleverness which enables us to jeer at Fortune. 35. **argument:** subject under discussion. 37. **natural:** born fool, idiot. 38. **Peradventure:** perhaps. Celia continues to play with the question whether Nature or Fortune is the greater force in human life. 39. **of:** about, concerning. 48. **naught:** worthless; good for nothing.



Medieval princesses Rosalind (Helen Mirren) and Celia (Angharad Rees) stroll about the castle grounds as they discuss falling in love (Act 1, scene 2) in the BBC version filmed on location at Glamis Castle.

stand to it, the pancakes were naught, and the mustard was good,
and yet was not the knight forsworn. 50

CELIA How prove you that in the great heap of your knowledge?

ROSALIND Ay, marry, now unmuzzle your wisdom.

TOUCHSTONE Stand you both forth now. Stroke your chins, and swear by your
beards that I am a knave.

CELIA By our beards (if we had them), thou art. 55

TOUCHSTONE By my knavery (if I had it), then I were. But if you swear by
that that is not, you are not forsworn. No more was this knight,
swearing by his honor, for he never had any, or if he had, he had
sworn it away before ever he saw those pancakes or that mustard.

CELIA Prithee, who is't that thou mean'st? 60

TOUCHSTONE One that old Frederick, your father, loves.

50. **was not...forsworn:** did not swear falsely. The jest was an old one and in itself not remarkable. The humor consists in the elaborate foolery with which Touchstone proves his point. 56. **By my knavery:** intentionally ambiguous. In its first meaning it is an oath which is no oath, like "by our beards," because it is made by something that does not exist. Its second meaning is "by means of," "by reason of my knavery."

- CELIA My father's love is enough to honor him. Enough! Speak no more of him. You'll be whipp'd for taxation one of these days.
- TOUCHSTONE The more pity that fools may not speak wisely what wise men do foolishly. 65
- CELIA By my troth, thou sayest true, for, since the little wit that fools have was silenced, the little foolery that wise men have makes a great show. Here comes Monsieur Le Beau.
- Enter Le Beau.*
- ROSALIND With his mouth full of news.
- CELIA Which he will put on us as pigeons feed their young. 70
- ROSALIND Then shall we be news-cramm'd.
- CELIA All the better! We shall be the more marketable.—Bon jour, Monsieur Le Beau. What's the news?
- LE BEAU Fair princess, you have lost much good sport.
- CELIA Sport? of what color? 75
- LE BEAU What color, madam? How shall I answer you?
- ROSALIND As wit and fortune will.
- TOUCHSTONE Or as the Destinies decree.
- CELIA Well said! That was laid on with a trowel.
- TOUCHSTONE Nay, if I keep not my rank— 80
- ROSALIND Thou lovest thy old smell.
- LE BEAU You amaze me, ladies. I would have told you of good wrestling, which you have lost the sight of.
- ROSALIND Yet tell us the manner of the wrestling.
- LE BEAU I will tell you the beginning, and if it please your ladyships, you

63. **You'll be whipp'd**: the punishment which a fool who went too far in his jesting might expect. —**for taxation**: for your satirical criticism; literally, for taking persons *to task*, finding fault with them. 64. **The more pity**: The conversation of stage fools frequently turns on this antithesis: the folly of those who have their wits and the wisdom of fools. 66. **By my troth**: by my faith. 67. **was silenced**. The court of Rosalind's father, at which Touchstone's wit had been relished, was more favorable to frankness than that of the suspicious usurper Frederick. This speech, with Celia's friendly warning to the fool, gives us a hint what to expect from Duke Frederick when he appears. 70. **put on us**: force upon us. 75. **color**: kind, sort [P.L.] 77. **As wit and fortune will**. The suggestion is that Le Beau's wits are slow and need the aid of good luck to furnish a clever reply. 78. **the Destinies decree**: Touchstone suggests that whatever Le Beau says will depend neither on his cleverness nor on casual good luck in hitting upon a felicitous phrase, but on predestination; in other words, that he is a puppet in the hands of Fate, with neither mind nor will of his own. Such a gibe is certainly "laid on with a trowel," as a mason slaps on the mortar. 80. **my rank**: my rank as a first-rate jester. 82. **amaze me**: perplex; confuse.

- may see the end, for the best is yet to do, and here, where you are,
they are coming to perform it. 87
- CELIA Well, the beginning that is dead and buried.
- LE BEAU There comes an old man and his three sons—
- CELIA I could match this beginning with an old tale. 90
- LE BEAU Three proper young men, of excellent growth and presence.
- ROSALIND With bills on their necks, “Be it known unto all men by these
presents”—
- LE BEAU The eldest of the three wrestled with Charles, the Duke’s wrestler,
which Charles in a moment threw him and broke three of his ribs,
that there is little hope of life in him. So he serv’d the second, and
so the third. Yonder they lie, the poor old man, their father, making
such pitiful dole over them that all the beholders take his part with
weeping.
- ROSALIND Alas! 100
- TOUCHSTONE But what is the sport, monsieur, that the ladies have lost?
- LE BEAU Why, this that I speak of.
- TOUCHSTONE Thus men may grow wiser every day. It is the first time that ever I
heard breaking of ribs was sport for ladies.
- CELIA Or I, I promise thee. 105
- ROSALIND But is there any else longs to see this broken music in his sides?
Is there yet another dotes upon rib-breaking? Shall we see this
wrestling, cousin?
- LE BEAU You must, if you stay here, for here is the place appointed for the
wrestling, and they are ready to perform it. 110
- CELIA Yonder sure they are coming. Let us now stay and see it.
Flourish. Enter Duke [Frederick], Lords, Orlando, Charles, and Attendants.
- DUKE Come on. Since the youth will not be entreated, his own peril on
his forwardness!
- ROSALIND Is yonder the man?
- LE BEAU Even he, madam. 115
- CELIA Alas, he is too young! Yet he looks successfully.

90. **an old tale:** A folk or fairy tale. 91. **proper:** handsome. 92. **bills:** Rosalind puns on *presence* and *presents*, as well as on *bills* (long pointed weapons with a hook near the end) and *bills* (labels, notices). 98. **dole:** lamentation. 106. **to see...sides:** to see his ribs broken. *Broken music* means, literally, music arranged in parts for several distinct instruments. 116. **looks successfully:** looks as if he would succeed.

- DUKE How now, daughter, and cousin! Are you crept hither to see the wrestling?
- ROSALIND Ay, my liege, so please you give us leave. 119
- DUKE You will take little delight in it, I can tell you, there is such odds in the men. In pity of the challenger's youth I would fain dissuade him, but he will not be entreated. Speak to him, ladies; see if you can move him.
- CELIA Call him hither, good Monsieur Le Beau.
- DUKE Do so. I'll not be by. [*Steps aside.*] 125
- LE BEAU Monsieur the challenger, the princess calls for you.
- ORLANDO I attend them with all respect and duty.
- ROSALIND Young man, have you challeng'd Charles the wrestler?
- ORLANDO No, fair princess. He is the general challenger; I come but in as others do, to try with him the strength of my youth. 130
- CELIA Young gentleman, your spirits are too bold for your years. You have seen cruel proof of this man's strength. If you saw yourself with your eyes, or knew yourself with your judgment, the fear of your adventure would counsel you to a more equal enterprise. We pray you for your own sake to embrace your own safety and give over this attempt. 136
- ROSALIND Do, young sir. Your reputation shall not therefore be misprised. We will make it our suit to the Duke that the wrestling might not go forward. 139
- ORLANDO I beseech you, punish me not with your hard thoughts, wherein I confess me much guilty to deny so fair and excellent ladies anything. But let your fair eyes and gentle wishes go with me to my trial, wherein if I be foil'd, there is but one sham'd that was never gracious; if kill'd, but one dead that is willing to be so. I shall do my friends no wrong, for I have none to lament me; the world no injury, for in it I have nothing. Only in the world I fill up a place, which may be better supplied when I have made it empty. 147
- ROSALIND The little strength that I have, I would it were with you.
- CELIA And mine, to eke out hers.
-

120. **odds**: disparity. 127. **them**: As Orlando approaches the two ladies, who appear to be of equal rank, he includes them both in his reply, especially since he does not know which is which (line 215). 137. **misprised**: undervalued. A mild word for "disgraced." 140–42. **punish me not...wherein...anything**: Punish me not by thinking ill of me in respect to that in which I confess I am blameworthy, namely, in refusing so fair and excellent ladies anything. 143. **foil'd**: defeated, overcome [P.L.] 144. **gracious**: honored.



In Branagh's *As You Like It* Nobuyuki Takano's substantial Charles the Wrestler is clearly a formidable challenge for Adrian Lester's Orlando.

- ROSALIND Fare you well. Pray heaven I be deceiv'd in you! 150
- CELIA Your heart's desires be with you!
- CHARLES Come, where is this young gallant that is so desirous to lie with his
mother earth?
- ORLANDO Ready, sir, but his will hath in it a more modest working.
- DUKE You shall try but one fall. 155
- CHARLES No, I warrant your Grace you shall not entreat him to a second
that have so mightily persuaded him from a first.
- ORLANDO You mean to mock me after. You should not have mock'd me
before. But come your ways!
- ROSALIND Now Hercules be thy speed, young man! 160
- CELIA I would I were invisible, to catch the strong fellow by the leg.
Wrestle.†
- ROSALIND O excellent young man!

150. **Pray heaven I be deceiv'd in you:** I pray heaven you are stronger than you look. 154. **modest working:** moderate operation. 155. **fall:** a bout at wrestling. 159. **come your ways:** come on. 160. **Hercules.** Greek mythical character known for strength. [P.L.] —**thy speed:** thy helper to success.

† Orlando is always outmatched and the fight is potentially dangerous. Czinner has the wrestler hold Orlando in bone-crushing embraces and knock him down repeatedly until suddenly Orlando has lifted the wrestler above his head (the film does not show how he accomplished this), twirls him round and tosses him out into the crowd. The BBC has Orlando somersault the wrestler into a fence which breaks under his weight, knocking him out. Branagh gives Orlando the most formidable opponent, a large Sumo wrestler who, eventually, is tripped up and falls out of the ring in this Japanese match. [P.L.]

HOW TO READ *AS YOU LIKE IT* AS PERFORMANCE

As You Like It was, approximately, Shakespeare's twentieth play, and along with *Julius Caesar* and *Twelfth Night*, one of the new ones counted on by his acting company to draw London theatergoers to their new Globe theater. In 1599, the year *As You Like It* was first performed, the Chamberlain's Men moved their theater from London to Southwark, a seedy suburb on the other side of the Thames river. This was a rather dangerous place, where brothels, taverns and bear-baiting matches attracted a rough crowd. In contrast, Shakespeare's company needed to continue filling its theater with more respectable audience members, men and women representing every social level, including middle-class merchants and wealthy aristocrats along with penniless apprentices. The new Globe thrived; Shakespeare's theatergoers crossed the river to "hear" his plays (not to "see" them as we say today). *As You Like It* and its wonderful Rosalind gave them a great deal to both hear and see.

A surprising amount happens very quickly in *As You Like It*. The play's action-packed Act 1 has a fight, a murder plot and death threats, a wrestling match and lovers' first meeting, banishments and the beginning of a great adventure. The three brief scenes at the beginning of Act 2 move with almost cinematic swiftness from Duke Senior's camp in the Forest of Arden (69 lines); back to court where the corrupt Duke Frederick begins the "search and inquisition" to find "the runaways," (20 lines); and back to Orlando's home which, prudently, Orlando decides he must leave to save his life (70 lines). By Act 2, scene 4, the lovers, Rosalind and Orlando, have arrived separately in the Forest of Arden. Acts 3 and 4 bring them together, but the lovesick Orlando does not realize the clever lad, Ganymede, is really his beloved Rosalind in disguise. When the young man promises to cure Orlando's love madness with some role playing, Orlando agrees to pretend that Ganymede is Rosalind. On Shakespeare's stage this meant that the boy actor playing Rosalind would be a boy pretending to be a girl pretending to be a boy who is pretending to be a girl.

Of course, neither Rosalind nor Orlando really wants to cure his love through the mock—and often mocking—wooing that follows. The important thing is that Orlando learns to love the real woman instead of worshipping a romanticized ideal. As Ganymede, Rosalind teaches him that the best love is not based on a sonnet to an

abstract beloved, but, instead, comes from a mutual exchange, a shared discussion. In the swift Act 5, when Orlando protests against all this pretending and says he “can live no longer by thinking” Ganymede promises to perform magic and bring him his Rosalind. She does. The convention in Shakespeare’s day was that a comedy ends with marriage. *As You Like It* ends with four marriages (one more than Lodge’s *Rosalind*). In the play’s happy ending evil forces are converted to good, the kingdom is restored, and lovers are united.

But Shakespeare has one more surprise in store. After the play seems to be over, Rosalind returns to “conjure” the audience with an Epilogue that emphasizes the play’s gender-bending games. Shakespeare’s original boy-actor would have been speaking both in and out of character, shifting between his own male identity and Rosalind’s female persona, beginning as himself, “If I were a woman, I would...” but ending as a woman, “when I curtsey, bid me farewell.”

Reading the play today, imagining it as a performance can be very rewarding. One of the play’s timeless points is that love, true love, must be based on reality, not the high flown language of poets—or for our own time, the fantasies of movies and television romances. As you read, remember that Shakespeare is writing for an audience of real people. He wanted his lovers, his dukes, his philosophers and clowns to be people that his audience would care about. The classic plot for a romantic movie has been described: boy meets girl; boy loses girl; boy gets girl. That is pretty much what Shakespeare has written in this play. He has enhanced the mix by adding two generations, the young lovers and parents; for good measure he has thrown in sibling rivalry along with a few villains. Certainly, we are familiar with the idea of love at first sight, one of the play’s central ideas. Some of the themes in the play are even clearer to us today than they would have been to readers a hundred years ago, particularly the twist that allows a young woman, Rosalind, to be a hero capable at saving herself.

The text of this play, with its quick shifts from place to place—from the court to the forest, to different parts of the forest, and finally back to the court—was specifically written for the thrust stage of Shakespeare’s time. Performances at the Globe were given in daylight; the building’s roof covered only the outer rim of the auditorium and sheltered the more expensive seats. The roof directly above the stage was painted to represent the zodiac and represented the sky. The audience was on three sides of the stage, some sitting in the tiers of seats, others (the cheapest tickets) standing next to the stage. The theater held over a thousand people, but no one was very far from the stage and the acoustics were excellent. There was no scenery on the stage, so a play could move quickly from place to place. A throne could suggest the palace and a table and chair could indicate a room in a house. Actors entered from doors on either side upstage (at the back of the stage), or from a curtained recess upstage, or they could appear on a small balcony also centered upstage. A trap door set in the stage could be opened to allow a character to go down to hell, or it could become a grave or just a hole dug in the ground, none of which were needed for *As You Like It*.

FILMING BRANAGH'S *AS YOU LIKE IT*

—Russell Jackson

Russell Jackson is Allardyce Nicoll Professor of Drama in the Department of Drama and Theatre Arts in the University of Birmingham (England). As text adviser, he has worked with Kenneth Branagh on all his Shakespeare films and on other stage, film and radio projects.

Principal photography for the film began on location at Wakehurst Place in West Sussex towards the end of April 2005. As with his earlier Shakespeare films, Branagh took a week or so for rehearsals before shooting began. In the largely studio-bound *Hamlet* (1996) and *Love's Labour's Lost* (1990) this was done on sound stages and—where possible—on the completed or near-completed sets. For *Much Ado about Nothing* (1993) and *As You like It*, which made copious use of “natural” exteriors, we rehearsed on location, which gave the director and the key technicians a good sense of what would be needed “on the day” as well as allowing the actors to develop their ideas about the characters and their journey—in the case of *As You Like It* a literal as well as metaphorical one, passing through various elements of the Wakehurst landscape. We also worked through the play from beginning to end, which is especially valuable before filming, which rarely proceeds “in sequence”. At the end of the rehearsal period, Branagh likes the actors —by now feeling like a theatre company—to run through the whole screenplay, as if in a private studio performance. On this occasion the script was given a reading in front of an invited audience, chiefly of Wakehurst employees, literally “under the greenwood tree,” with mulled wine and braziers to provide some warmth on a characteristically chilly English April evening and a brief narration to indicate the film's action.

Wakehurst, administered jointly by the National Trust of Great Britain and leased to the Royal Botanical Gardens, provided an astonishing range of landscape—a wooded valley with a lake, rocky outcrops, lawns, and paths meandering through what would seem like a “wild” forest. All this was within about twenty minutes' drive from Gatwick Airport, but mercifully clear of its flight paths and with uninterrupted distant vistas. But any “real” environment is altered by becoming a

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~ Irene G. Dash
Hunter College, CUNY, retired

Patricia Lennox teaches at the Gallatin School of New York University. Her publications include book and theater reviews and articles on Shakespeare directors, performers, productions and media versions of the plays.

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