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# As You Like It

By *William Shakespeare*

Adapted by *Scott Hunter*

## **A brief synopsis:**

“Whoever loved that loved not at first sight.”

## **A longer synopsis:**

Rosalind and Orlando fall in love at first sight. Unfortunately, moments later she is banished from the realm by her evil aunt, the Duchess Frederick. Rosalind takes exile in the Forest of Arden, where her banished mother, the Duchess Senior, also lives. To avoid being prey for scallywags, Rosalind dresses like a man and calls herself Ganymede. Her companions in exile are her two cousins, Celia and Luce, and the court jester, Touchstone.

Orlando also has family trouble. He escapes his house when he discovers his brother is trying to kill him. Along with his trusty servant Adam, Orlando escapes to, you guessed it, the Forest of Arden, where he carves love poems to Rosalind into the bark of trees.

When Orlando meets Rosalind in the forest he has no idea who she is and thinks she's a man. Rosalind promises Orlando she/he can cure him of his love sickness if he will pretend she/he is Rosalind and let her emotionally abuse him. Orlando agrees.

Along the way, many others fall in love. A shepherd named Silvius loves a woman named Phebe. But Phebe doesn't love him; she loves Ganymede, who is really Rosalind, who is in love with Orlando. Comedy ensues. Touchstone falls in love with a local milkmaid named Audrey, who is pursued by a simpleton named William. From the other side, Melancholy Jaqueline, the Emo Amazon of the forest, falls in love with Touchstone who only wants to run from her. More comedy.

Eventually, Rosalind reveals herself which makes a lot of couples get married on the spot. Only Melancholy Jaqueline is left unwed, which makes her unhappy, but being sad is the one thing that makes her happy, so she turns out all right in the end.

# The CAST of As You Like It

<i>The Playwright</i>	<i>Will Shakespeare, a writer of note</i>
<i>Lord Chamberlain's Players (Storytellers) Amazons, Henchmen, etc.)</i>	<i>Bianca, Hero, Miranda, Trincula, Beatrice, Trania Pinch, Margaret Pistol, Loctum Pounce, Sebastian</i>
<i>The House of Sir Rowland de Boys</i>	<i>Sir Rowland de Boys, mostly dead Orlando de Boys, young and spirited Oliver de Boys, back from a Comedia tour Jaques de Boys, oppressor of Orlando Adam, an old servant Dennis, a new servant</i>
<i>The House of Duke Frederick</i>	<i>The Duchess Frederick, the evil sister Celia, Duchess Frederick's daughter Luce, Duchess Frederick's daughter Duke Frederick, dies after two lines Touchstone, the court fool Charles, The Duchess's wrestler Hisperia, a lady in waiting Le Beau, a courtier</i>
<i>The House of Duke Senior</i>	<i>Rosalind, The Duchess Senior's daughter The Duchess Senior, the banished Duchess Duke Senior, dies after two lines Melancholy Jacqueline, a melancholy traveler Amiens, Amazon follower of the Duchess Senior</i>
<i>The Rustics</i>	<i>Corin, an old shepherdess Silvius, in love with Phebe Phebe, in love with Ganymede William, in love with Audrey Audrey, handy with a whip Sir Oliver Martext, the village Vicar A Lion, very hungry</i>
<i>The Freshmen Sheep</i>	<i>Rover, Sassy, Fluffy, Spike, Snowball, Spot, Sandy, Ariel, Troubles</i>

# As You Like It

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## ACT I

*(The curtain opens on a clearing in the woods, surrounded by tall trees and shrubs to hide behind. A large, moveable cloth banner hangs between nails on two tall center-stage trees. The banner reads: "The \_\_\_\_\_ High School Player, by license of the Lord Chamberlain's Men, under the direction of William Shakespeare, presents, AS YOU LIKE IT, like we like it." WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE enters and stands center.)*

SHAKESPEARE

Gentles, perhaps you wonder at this show, but wonder on 'til truth makes all things plain. The actors are at hand!

*(The entire cast rushes on stage and take fierce, funny, and menacing poses and freeze.)*

SHAKESPEARE

The best actors in the world,

*(The next lines come very fast and overlapping.)*

BIANCA

Either for tragedy.

TRINCULA

Comedy.

PINCH

History.

PISTOL

Pastoral.

POUNCE

Pastoral-comical.

MIRANDA

Historical-pastoral.

HERO

Tragical-historical.

BEATRICE

Tragical-comical-historical-pastoral,

MARGARET

Scene individable.

LOCTUM

Or poem unlimited.

SEBASTIAN

Seneca cannot be too heavy,

TRANIA

Nor Plautus too light.

SHAKESPEARE

For the law of writ and the liberty, these are the only men... and women. I am William Shakespeare.

*(He waits for applause. If applause does not come, he says.)*

Usually audiences applaud wildly when my name is mentioned. No, no. It's too late now, but we'll consider it done.... Tonight's play is a story of power....

*(The players restrike a pose for power.)*

Brother against brother.

*(Instantly, they strike a new pose of fighting.)*

Banishment.

*(New pose)*

Death.

*(New pose)*

Betrayal and lies.

*(New pose)*

Attacks by wild animals!

*(The players look confused, shrug and settle into a new pose.)*

And wrestling.

*(New pose)*

In short, a comedy. There are a few things you must know before we start our play. I have been "informed" that my plays are sometime hard to understand because the back stories and characters are so complicated.

*(The cast unfreezes and nods to Shakespeare.)*

It wasn't "too" complicated back in 1599 for an audience of illiterate, pig farming peasants.

*(The players snap back into a wide eyed pose.)*

But, times change. Attention spans change. So first, let's meet the characters and hear their back stories. Old Sir Rowland De Boy and Sons.

PINCH

Enter Old Sir Rowland de Boys.

SHAKESPEARE

Well spoken.

PINCH

Thank you. The narrators are the most important part of the play.

SHAKESPEARE

That's what I told them. Again.

PINCH

Enter Old Sir Rowland de Boys.

*(OLD SIR ROWLAND waddles forward using a cane.)*

SIR ROWLAND

I've lived a long and prosperous life. I am rich beyond the dreams of any man. I plan to retire now and enjoy the few....

*(He clutches his heart, staggers and collapses)*

.... seconds I have left.... Sons... Oh sons....

POUNCE

The sons of Sir Rowland De Boys.

*(Three sons step forward.)*

OLIVER DE BOYS

I am Oliver the eldest son of Sir Rowland de Boys. I have worked the hardest of all...

SIR ROWLAND

*(reaching for his son)*

Ughh... ughh...

OLIVER DE BOYS

One second, father. While my brothers waste their days in revelry and foolishness, I have lived a life of pious study. I can recite Chaucer and the Pythagorean Theorem. I have learned the Latin names of vegetables.

*(ORLANDO DE BOYS bounds forward.)*

ORLANDO

I am Orlando, the youngest son of Sir Rowland de Boys,.. and his favorite. So what if I'm a little spoiled, I'm charming. Isn't that right dad?

SIR ROWLAND

Ughhh... rah....

*(JAQUES DE BOYS steps forward carrying a microphone.)*

JAQUES DE BOYS

My name is Jaques, and I'm just one of da boys. Sorry. I just had to say that. In case you couldn't tell, Stand Up's my thing. I've been away on the Comedia tour. I just flew in from Italy, and boy, are my arms tired. What's with this audience? I'm dying here. Actually he's dying here.

HERO

On his death bed...

*(The players form a human bed made out of players and put Old Rowland on it.)*

Sir Rowland called his sons near him.

SIR ROWLAND

Oliver, you are the oldest. I trust you...

JAQUES DE BOYS

What did he say?

OLIVER DE BOYS

He said he leaves all his lands and wealth to me... Alone... Go figure.

SIR ROWLAND

Your brothers are young and wild. Take care of them.

OLIVER DE BOYS

Oh, I'll take care of them.

SIR ROWLAND

I should have been more specific.

*(Sir Rowland overacts and finally dies.)*

SHAKESPEARE

In the palaces of the dukes, there was also sibling rivalry brewing. The Duchess Senior and the Duchess Frederick were sisters who both married Dukes.

*(Each duchess comes out with her husband.)*

MIRANDA

And they were the happiest of sisters.

*(Each sister kneels and speaks to her duke.)*

DUKE SENIOR

You are my life.

DUKE FREDERICK  
My joy.

THE DUCHESS SENIOR  
My love.

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK  
My wealth.

HERO  
Years passed. Children were born.

TRANIA  
A girl named Rosalind to The Duchess Senior.

*(ROSALIND steps forward.)*

LOCTUM  
Twin girls for the Duchess Frederick, Celia and Luce.

*(CELIA and LUCE step forward.)*

PONCE  
For what would a Shakespeare comedy be without twins?

SHAKESPEARE *(interrupting)*  
I know what some of you are thinking. Two cousins for Rosalind? Two Duchesses? You're thinking, "This is just some thinly veiled plan to give more parts to girls."

*(Shakespeare pauses for a moment and then, have nothing more to add, steps back, out of the way so the narrators can continue.)*

BEATRICE  
Then, one day, while playing badminton together, Duke Senior mistook a rabid wolverine for the shuttlecock.

*(A stuffed animal flies out of the crowd and is caught by Duke Senior. It attacks his throat. Duke Frederick steps in to help. The stuffed animal jumps to Duke Frederick's neck and kills him. Both dukes lay dead on the floor and are dragged away by players.)*

BEATRICE  
Naturally death followed. For both.

BIANCA  
Years passed, and while the Duchess Senior prospered, The Duchess Frederick could not get over it.

BEATRICE

One day the Duchess Frederick paid a visit to her older sister and her niece Rosalind.

*(The HENCHMEN surround the Duchess Senior and Rosalind, draw weapons, and hold them at sword-point.)*

THE DUCHESS SENIOR

Younger sister, welcome to my house. To what do we owe the honor of these sword points?

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

Your house? As you know I have always coveted everything you own. Now it will all be mine. Kill them. Kill them now.

LOCTUM

Luckily, or we would not have a play, luckily the Duchess' own daughters interceded.

*(Celia and Luce rush in. They are both self-absorbed, although Luce is far more clueless and Celia more apt to be sarcastic.)*

LUCE

Mama, no!

CELIA

They're your family.

LUCE

You'll get blood everywhere.

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

Very well, for you pumpkins... Banish them.

CELIA

Not Ros.

LUCE

We've grown up together.

CELIA

Can't Ros stay with us?

LUCE

We'll have so much fun.

BOTH

Please!!!

## THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

It's up to Rosalind.

## THE DUCHESS SENIOR

Come with me, Rosalind. We'll live in the forest, coming and going like the wild pigs. We'll build a mud hut by the river and eat roots and night-crawler and never wash and grow wrinkled by hard work and watch our lives waste away, but at least we'll be together.

## ROSALIND

Auntie Frederick... you got that spare room, don't you?

## TRANIA

And so the Duchess Senior was banished to the forest.

## BIANCA

While Rosalind went with her cousins Celia and Luce for an extended sleep-over.

## SHAKESPEARE

That's quite enough characters and back story. As for the rest, we will introduce them as they come along. But now we must prepare the scene for William Shakespeare's, "As You Like It."

## PINCH

Performed like we like it!

## SHAKESPEARE

Places.

*(The players exit in a hurry. Shakespeare starts to exit, but notices a group of nerdy looking but very eager, grinning youngsters left on stage. They are not in costume and wear small backpacks and, better yet, fanny packs.)*

## SHAKESPEARE

What are you doing? The play's starting.

## ROVER

Excuse me, sir. What part are we?

## SHAKESPEARE

You? Who are you.

## SPOT

We're the freshmen.

## TROUBLES

Class of \_\_\_\_\_.

## SHAKESPEARE

Freshmen? I love Freshmen. You know what the best part about freshman is, don't you?

SPIKE

No. What?

SHAKESPEARE

They become Sophomores. Now why don't you go back stage and wait for the big group scenes. You can stand in the back.

SASSY

Sir, it's just that... our parents have paid for tickets.

FLUFFY

Hi mom!

SANDY

Hi granny?

SNOWBALL

And they want to know what part we have.

SHAKESPEARE

I see. Do you have any skills?

TROUBLES

Skills? Like what?

SHAKESPEARE

You know, attributes that could help the show.

SANDY

I can do a forward roll.

*( She does and pops up like a gymnast.)*

SNOWBALL

You go, girl.

SHAKESPEARE

Do you sing? Dance? Play some zany Elizabethan stringed instrument? Anything?

SASSY

I played Goldilocks in my fourth grade production of "Goldilocks and the 12 Bears."

SHAKESPEARE

Twelve bears?

ROVER

Our teacher wanted to add enough parts for everyone.

SHAKESPEARE

Well, we don't do that here. So beat it.

*(The freshmen start to whimper and cry.)*

Oh don't... Wait a minute, come to think of it... I have the perfect part for you.

TROUBLES

And we'll have lines?

SHAKESPEARE

Sure. Sure. If we have time.

*(Shakespeare scribbles a note.)*

Take this note to the costume girl. She'll know what I'm talking about.

*(The Freshmen run off, happy.)*

SHAKESPEARE

Ladies and Gentlemen, we are ready now. "As You Like It."

*(Trincula and Pistol replace the "As You Like It" banner with one that reads, "The House of de Boys." Orlando and ADAM enter. Adam uses a walker to shuffle about, and his teeth occasionally fall out as he speaks.)*

TRINCULA

Act I, Scene I. The Orchard of the house of Oliver De Boys. Enter Orlando and the serving man Adam.

PISTOL

Adam faithfully served Sir Rowland for fifty years before the old man died. Now he is forced to serve the misguided Oliver.

ADAM

I lost my teeth in Sir Rowland's service. My hair. My memory. Oh, that he was still alive. I never intended to live so long as to serve Oliver. Chut-chut-chut.

ORLANDO

As I remember, my father charged my brother to breed me well and there begins my sadness. He keeps me at home. A gentleman of my birth? That differs not from the stalling of an ox? His horses are bred better; but I, his brother, gain nothing under him. And the spirit of my father, which I think is within me, begins to mutiny against this servitude. I will no longer endure it.

*(Enter Oliver de Boys)*

ADAM

Yonder comes my master, your brother.

OLIVER DE BOYS

Now, sir! What mischief do you make here?

ORLANDO

Nothing. I am not taught to make any thing.

OLIVER DE BOYS

What mar you then, sir?

ORLANDO

That which God made, a poor unworthy brother of yours, with idleness.

OLIVER DE BOYS

Sir, be better employed.

ORLANDO

Shall I keep your hogs and eat husks with them?

OLIVER DE BOYS

Do you know who I am, sir? Have you forgotten?

ORLANDO

I know you are my eldest brother; and, were there twenty brothers betwixt us, I have as much of my father in me as you!

*(Orlando leaps on Oliver and they speak as they grapple!)*

OLIVER DE BOYS

Wilt thou lay hands on me, villain?

ORLANDO

I am no villain; I am the youngest son of Sir Rowland de Boys! Wert thou not my brother, I would not take this hand from thy throat till this other had pulled out thy tongue for saying my father begot villains.

ADAM

Sweet masters, be patient, for your father's remembrance, be at accord.

OLIVER DE BOYS

Let me go, I say.

ORLANDO

I will not, till I please. You shall hear me. My father charged you in his will to give me good education. You have trained me like a peasant, give me the money my father left me; I will go buy my fortunes.

*(Orlando releases Oliver from a headlock.)*

OLIVER DE BOYS

And what wilt thou do? Beg, when that is spent?

ORLANDO

I will leave you, brother. I will no further offend you.

OLIVER DE BOYS

Get you with him, you old dog.

ADAM

Is 'old dog' my reward? Then best beware my bite.

*(Adam's teeth fly out, and he takes a moment chase them down and replace them.)*

OLIVER DE BOYS

Go.

ADAM

My old master, he would not have spoke such a word.

*(Adam and Orlando exit.)*

OLIVER DE BOYS

I will be rid of Orlando, and yet give no thousand crowns to him neither. Holla, Dennis!

*(Enter DENNIS, a crazy servant.)*

DENNIS

I am Dennis. I live to humbly serve Sir Oliver de Boys. Since I am only a servant. I don't even have a narrator to introduce me.

OLIVER DE BOYS

Dennis!

DENNIS

Calls your worship?

OLIVER DE BOYS

Yes. I have let Adam go.

DENNIS

Old Adam?

OLIVER DE BOYS

He could no longer be counted on.

DENNIS

Trustworthy, loyal, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, Adam? That Adam?

OLIVER DE BOYS

Yes.

DENNIS

Never liked him.

OLIVER DE BOYS

In any case, I'm promoting you to servant.

DENNIS

I thought I was your servant.

OLIVER DE BOYS

You? You were a clay-brained, knotted pated fool! Now I'm promoting you from clay-brained, knotted pated fool to Servant.

DENNIS

Thank you, your goodness.

OLIVER DE BOYS

Don't grovel or I'll demote you to blithering idiot.

DENNIS

Sorry. I was overcome.

OLIVER DE BOYS

Is there any new news from court?

DENNIS

There's no new news at the court, sir, but the old new news is, the Duchess Senior is banished by her younger sister to the forest of Arden. They say many merry gentlewomen flock to her every day, and pass the time as huntresses, like Amazons in the stories of old.

OLIVER DE BOYS

Can you tell if Rosalind, Rosalind... delicate - beautiful Rosalind, the duchess' daughter, be banished with her mother?

DENNIS

Kind of stuck on her, are you?

*(Oliver strangles Dennis.)*

OLIVER DE BOYS

Thou starvling! eel-skin! Horseback breaker! Thou whoreson obscene greasy.... bull's pizzle!

DENNIS

I think I prefer blithering idiot.

*(The strangle hold is interrupted by a floury of trumpets. The entourage of Charles The Wrestler enters. Sebastian leads and speaks in his best ringside announcer voice.)*

SEBASTIAN

Ladies and gentlemen, on our stage to-night, undefeated in 167 bouts, this month alone, the scourge of the mortal coil and the nether regions of ice. The champion of champions, Charles, the wrestler! *(echoing)* Wrestler, wrestler, wrestler.

*(CHARLES THE WRESTLER steps forward, revealed by the partng of the crowd and surrounded by adoring girls. He is tiny in size, but speaks with a huge Arnold Schwarzenegger accent.)*

DENNIS

Why don't I get an introduction like that?

OLIVER DE BOYS

Good Monsieur Charles, you wrestle to-morrow before the new Duchess?

CHARLES

Marry, do I, sir; and I came to acquaint you with an urgent matter. Your younger brother Orlando hath a disposition to come in disguised against me.

OLIVER DE BOYS

What?

CHARLES

He wishes to wrestle.... me!

OLIVER DE BOYS

I have laboured to dissuade him from it, but he is resolute.

CHARLES

Tomorrow, sir, I wrestle for my credit; and he that escapes me without some broken limb shall acquit himself well.

OLIVER DE BOYS

Broken limbs, you say?

CHARLES

Arms, legs, fingers, collar bones. Necks. Your brother is but young and tender; and, for your love, I would be loath to maim him... even kill him... as I must, for my own honour,

OLIVER DE BOYS

I understand.

CHARLES

You surprise me. I came hither to acquaint you withal, that you might stop him.

OLIVER DE BOYS

Stop him? I'll tell thee, Charles, Orlando is the stubbornest young fellow of France.

*(Becomng overly emotional)*

Full of ambition, an envious emulator of every man's good parts, a secret and villainous contriver against me his natural brother!

*(Oliver calms as he notices everyone leaning in to stare at his outburst)*

Therefore, use thy discretion.

CHARLES

My discretion?

*(Oliver pulls Charles aside and they whisper.)*

OLIVER DE BOYS

I would just as soon thou didst break his neck as his finger.

CHARLES

I see.

*(As he speaks, Oliver pulls out his wallet and slips some money to Charles.)*

OLIVER DE BOYS

I assure thee, and almost with tears I speak it, there is not one so young and so villainous this day living.

CHARLES

I am glad I came hither to you. If he come to-morrow, I'll give him his payment:

*(Trumpets blare. The entourage exits with a flourish.)*

OLIVER DE BOYS

Now will I stir this gamester, Orlando. I hope I shall see an end of him!

*(He laughs wildly. Dennis joins in. Oliver suddenly becomes filled with remorse.)*

But, why?

DENNIS

I didn't say anything.

OLIVER DE BOYS

Why? Why? He's gentle.

DENNIS

True.

OLIVER DE BOYS

Never schooled and yet learned.

DENNIS

Exactly.

OLIVER DE BOYS

Full of noble ideas.

DENNIS

Athletic, don't forget athletic.

OLIVER DE BOYS

He is beloved of all strangers and even better liked by those who best know him.

DENNIS

Who does he think he is?

OLIVER DE BOYS

*(back to being evil)*

But it shall not be much longer; this wrestler shall clear all!

*(They exit, laughing in a wildly villainous manner. Miranda and Beatrice enter and hang a sign which reads: "The Royal Palace.")*

MIRANDA

The next morning, outside the Royal Palace, Rosalind and her cousins Celia and Luce are out for a walk.

BEATRICE

Since her mother's banishment, Rosalind finds little pleasure in life.

*(Beatrice and Miranda exit as Rosalind, Luce and Celia make their way on stage.)*

CELIA

I pray thee, Rosalind, sweet my coz, be merry.

ROSALIND

Dear Cousins, unless you could teach me to forget a banished mother, I can have no pleasure.

LUCE

I see thou lovest us not with the full weight that we love thee. If our aunt, thy banished mother, had banished thy aunt, the duchess our mother, we could have taught our love to take thy mother for ours:

CELIA

You know our mother has no other children, and, truly, when she dies, thou shalt be her heir.

LUCE

What?

CELIA

For what she hath taken away from thy mother perforce, we will render again to you.

LUCE

In affection.

CELIA

In affection.

LUCE

Therefore, be merry.

ROSALIND

You want to party, then?

LUCE

Yes.

ROSALIND

To what end?

CELIA

Let me see; what think you of falling in love?

LUCE

Yes! To make sport withal, but love no man in good earnest;

CELIA

Nor no further in sport neither than with safety of a pure blush, thou mayst in honour come off again.

ROSALIND

What is the sport, then?

*(TOUCHSTONE enters. He is the court jester, but his wit is always lost on the people who must listen to it. Trania and Margaret enter to introduce him.)*

TRANIA

Enter Touchstone, The court jester.

MARGARET

Here's a sample of his quick and ready wit.

TOUCHSTONE

At breakfast, a certain knight swore by his honour that the pancakes were good and swore by his honour the syrup was not.

MARGARET

And?

TOUCHSTONE

I'll prove the pancakes were not and the syrup was good, and yet the knight was not a liar.

CELIA

How do you prove that, if you are but a jester and the knight a knight.

LUCE

Wouldn't you be a knave to question a knight?

TOUCHSTONE

Stand you forth, stroke your chins, and swear by your beards that I am a knave.

CELIA

By our beards, then,

LUCE

If we had them,

BOTH

Thou art a knave.

TOUCHSTONE

By my knavery, if I had it, then I were; but if you swear by that that is not, you are not forsworn, and having no beards, I am no knave.

LUCE

We are daughters of royalty. You will have to explain it better.

TOUCHSTONE

This knight, swearing by his honour, is not forsworn, for he never had any; or if he had, he had sworn it away before ever he saw those pancakes or that syrup.

*(Touchstone laughs proudly at his wit, but the others are not amused.)*

CELIA

Whip him.

*(Trania and Margaret pull out whips and chase Touchstone around the stage.)*

TOUCHSTONE

But I was sent to deliver a message. Your mother wishes to see you.

*(As Touchstone avoids the lash, LE BEAU enters opposite. He is flamboyant and proud of it.)*

LE BEAU

I am here. Le Beau.

*(The courtier takes a pose midstage. Trania and Margaret pause to introduce him.)*

MARGARET

Enter Monsieur Le Beau, the court keeper of gossip.

LE BEAU

Gossip? No, no, no. My mouth, it is full of news. News is not gossip.

TRANIA

Whatever.

LE BEAU

I will put the news on you, as pigeons feed their young. Then shall you be news-crammed.

MARGARET

He brings... news... of the wrestling match.

LE BEAU

Fair princesses, you have lost much good sport.

*(He sees Rosalind.)*

Mademoiselle Rosalind.

*(He kisses her hand passionately. Celia and Luce hold out hands. He ignores them.)*

You amaze me.

TRANIA

Tell them the manner of the wrestling.

LE BEAU

I will tell you the beginning; and, if it please your ladyships, you may see the end; for here, where you are, they are coming to perform it.

CELIA

Well, tell us the beginning that is dead and buried.

*(The scene is replayed from Le Beau's memory. A crowd comes on stage. A WOMAN with three son is in the middle opposite Charles the Wrestler. The Duchess Frederick takes wagers from the crowd.)*

LE BEAU

There comes an old woman and her three sons,--

LUCE

Three against one.

LE BEAU

The eldest of the three was first to wrestle with Charles, the wrestler.

*(The FIRST WRESTLER squares off with Charles.)*

BIANCA

Let's get ready to rumble!

*(Music blares. They wrestle. Tiny Charles throws the huge challenger and the music cuts abruptly. The First Wrestler dies as Le Beau describes it.)*

LE BEAU

Charles, in a moment threw him and broke three of his ribs, that there is little hope of life in him:

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

He's dead, all right.

*(The Duchess collects bets as players drag the dead brother aside.)*

SECOND WRESTLER

Curse you, Charles the wrestler. I will avenge my brother.

*(The music restarts. Charles and the Second Wrestler tangle. Charles breaks the neck of the bigger opponent. The music stops.)*

LE BEAU

Charles served the second with an equally morbid blow.

*(The Second Wrestler dies.)*

Yonder they lie; the poor old woman, their mother, making such pitiful dole over them that all the beholders take her part with weeping.

*(All cry, over the top sobbing. They cut off instantly when the Mother speaks.)*

THE MOTHER

I have yet one son to avenge his brothers. Charles the wrestler, stand forward and accept your fate!

*(She pushes out her third son, the THIRD WRESTLER. Charles steps to him. The music starts. They take their wrestling stances. The Third Wrestler suddenly runs away. Charles and all the crowd follow him off stage.)*

ROSALIND

Alas!

TOUCHSTONE

But what is the sport, monsieur, that the ladies have lost?

LE BEAU

Why, this that I speak of.

TOUCHSTONE

It is the first time that ever I heard breaking of ribs was sport for ladies.

ROSALIND

Or I, I promise thee. Such barbaric games. Is there any of us that longs to see this rib-breaking?

*(Luce and Celia raise their hands.)*

LE BEAU

You must see it if you stay here; for here they are.

*(Charles the Wrestler chases the Third Wrestler onto the stage, the crowd following. Charles catches the young boy and lifts him overhead before slamming him to the ground. The Third Wrestler is dragged off. Money changes hands for the wagering crowd. The Duchess Frederick collects most of it.)*

ROSALIND

I, for one, will not watch more.

*(She steps aside where she cannot see the wrestling.)*

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

Are there any more challengers?

*(Adam waddles forward.)*

ADAM

One more, Madame.

*(The crowd laughs.)*

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

In pity of the challenger's youth I would fain dissuade him.

ADAM

Not me. *(ring announcer voice)* Ladies and Gentlemen, here he is, the... the... *(regular voice)*  
Well, there's not much to say, is there. My master, Orlando.

*(Orlando leaps forward and flexes like a body builder. The crowd laugh's harder.)*

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

Have you challenged Charles the wrestler?

ORLANDO

He is the general challenger. I come but in, as others do, to try with him the strength of my youth.

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

So be it. Let the wagering begin at fifty to one!

*(Wagering begins. The Duchess takes money. Charles approaches Orlando.)*

CHARLES

Come, where is this young gallant that is so desirous to lie with his mother earth?

ORLANDO

If you mean to mock me after, you should not have mocked me before. But come your ways.

*(The bell sounds. Music starts. They wrestle. Charles is pummeling Orlando. He is about to finish him when the bell rings to end the first fall. Adam helps the weakened Orlando to his corner while Charles struts and accepts the adulation of the crowd and adoring women. Celia and Luce approach Orlando.)*

CELIA

Young gentleman, your spirits are too bold for your years.

LUCE

You have seen cruel proof of this man's strength.

CELIA

We pray you, for your own sake, to embrace your own safety and give over this attempt.

*(Rosalind angrily marches back from her aside.)*

ROSALIND

Enough! We will make it our suit to the Duchess that the wrestling might not go forward.

*(She sees Orlando for the first time and freezes. He sees her. All others on stage freeze and the lights dim on them. Fireworks go off in the background. A love song plays. Orlando and Rosalind perform a strange, ritualistic and momentary, love ballet. He lifts her and sets her down. Instantly the music stops and the characters on stage reanimate.)*

ORLANDO

I beseech you, punish me not with your hard thoughts; to deny so fair and excellent a lady any thing. But let your fair eyes and gentle wishes go with me to my trial.

ADAM

Spit.

*(Adam holds out a bucket for Orlando to spit in. He does. Rosalind takes off her handkerchief and rubs the sweat off of Orlando's face. She then presents him, breathlessly, with the token.)*

ROSALIND

Wear this for me.

*(The bell rings. Fight music starts. Orlando speaks, his voice rising in emotion like King Henry V, fueled by his new love.)*

ORLANDO

If I be foiled, there is but one shamed; if killed, but one dead that was willing to be so. I shall do my friends no wrong, for I have none to lament me, in 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. Now Hercules be thy speed!

*(Orlando rips off his shirt, like Hulk Hogan, and screams as he turns to face Charles. Charles shakes in fear, then runs away. Orlando catches him and after a short, one sided battle, throws Charles down, knocking him out. Stunned silence. The Duchess inches over to Charles the Wrestler's motionless body.)*

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

How dost thou, Charles?

LE BEAU

He cannot speak, my lady.

*(The crowd rushes up to the Duchess, and she has to pay off her bets as she questions Orlando.)*

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

What is thy name, young man?

ORLANDO

Orlando, the youngest son of Sir Rowland de Boys.

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

DeBoys!

*(She freezes mid payout. The crowd, likewise, is shocked.)*

I would thou hadst been son to some man else. The world esteem'd thy father honourable, but I found him mine enemy.

*(The crowd reanimates. The Duchess exits with gamblers chasing her.)*

CELIA

Gentle cousin, let us go thank him and encourage him:

*(Luce and Celia drag Rosalind over to Orlando.)*

LUCE

Our Mother's rough and envious disposition sticks me at heart.

CELIA

Sir, you have well deserved your victory.

LUCE

If you keep your promises in love half as well as you have exceeded all promise in battle --

BOTH

Your mistress shall be happy.

*(Orlando and Rosalind stare into each other's eyes. Orlando cannot speak. Rosalind cannot speak. They only stare at each other. Their lips quiver.)*

CELIA

Oh, dear.

LUCE

Shall we go, coz?

CELIA

Ay. Fare you well, fair gentleman.

ROSALIND

Sir, you have wrestled well and overthrown more than your enemies.

*(Celia and Luce drag Rosalind off stage. Orlando faints, caught by Adam.)*

ADAM

You are weak from the wrestling.

ORLANDO

Not from the wrestling, Adam.

ADAM

How so, then?

ORLANDO

What passion hangs these weights upon my tongue?

ADAM

Weights?

ORLANDO

I cannot speak to her, yet she urged conference.

ADAM

She did not urge anything. Just stood there dumbfounded.

ORLANDO

O poor Orlando, thou art overthrown!

*(Enter Le Beau.)*

LE BEAU

Good sir. You deserve high commendation, true applause and love. Yet I do in friendship counsel you to leave this place, for such the Duchess misconstrues all that you have done.

ORLANDO

Pray you, tell me this; which of the three were daughters of the Duchess that here was at the wrestling?

LE BEAU

None, if we judge by their atrocious manners; but yet indeed the lesser two are the Duchess Frederick's daughter. The other is Rosalind, daughter to the banish'd Duchess.

*(Orlando begins repeating Rosalind's name to himself, as if in a trance. Le beau speaks over his passionate mumblings.)*

ORLANDO

Rosalind! Rosalind! Rosalind...

LE BEAU

But I can tell you that of late Duchess Frederick hath ta'en displeasure 'gainst the gentle Rosalind.

ADAM

On what grounds?

LEBEAU

No other argument but that the people praise her for her virtues and pity her for her good mother's sake.

ORLANDO

Rosalind!

LE BEAU

Sir, fare you well. I have warned you at great personal risk. Hereafter, in a better world than this, I shall desire more love and knowledge of you.

ADAM

He is not for you, sir.

LE BEAU

Pity.

*(Orlando bounds off, shouting his true love's name. Adam and Le Beau follow. Rosalind, Celia and Luce enter)*

CELIA

Why, cousin! why, Rosalind!

LUCE

Cupid have mercy!

CELIA

Not a word?

ROSALIND

Not one to throw at a dog.

CELIA

Come, come, wrestle with thy affections.

ROSALIND

O, they take the part of a better wrestler than myself!

CELIA

Is it possible, on such a sudden meeting, you should fall into so strong a liking with old Sir Rowland's youngest son?

ROSALIND

My father loved Sir Rowland as his soul.

CELIA

Does it therefore ensue that you should love his son? By this kind of chase, we should hate him, for our mother hated his father dearly.

LUCE

Yet I hate not Orlando.

CELIA

But is all this for your father?

ROSALIND

No, for my child's father.

LUCE

Stay a minute.

*(Luce and Celia digest what that means.)*

CELIA

Can it be?

LUCE

O.

CELIA

Uh.

LUCE

Ick.

ROSALIND

Let me love him, and you love him because I do. Look, here comes your mother.

LUCE

With his eyes full of anger.

*(The Duchess enters with her HENCHMEN and addresses Rosalind.)*

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

Mistress, dispatch you with your safest haste and get you from our court.

ROSALIND

Me, madam?

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

You, cousin.

HENCHMEN

You cousin!

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

Within these ten days, if that thou be'st found so near our public court as twenty miles, thou diest for it.

HENCHMEN *(fading echoes)*

Diest, diest, diest.

ROSALIND

Why?

HENCHMEN

Why?

ROSALIND

I do beseech your grace, let me know my fault. Dear Aunt, never did I offend your highness.

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

Thus do all traitors say.

HENCHMEN *(fading echoes)*

Traitor! Traitor! Traitor.

DUCKE FREDERICK

Let it suffice thee that I trust thee not.

ROSALIND

Yet your mistrust cannot make me a traitor.

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

Thou art thy Mother's daughter; there's enough.

ROSALIND

So was I when your highness took her dukedom;

HENCHMEN

Ooh!

ROSALIND

So was I when your highness banish'd her:

HENCHMEN

Ooh!

ROSALIND

Treason is not inherited, your highness; And if it were, what's that to me? My Mother was no traitor.

HENCHMEN

Ooh!

CELIA

Mother, hear us speak. If she be a traitor, why so am I;

LUCE

And I!

CELIA

We have learned, played, eaten together.

LUCE

We still have slept together.

HENCHMEN

Ooh?

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

She is too subtle for thee; and her smoothness, her very silence and her patience speak to the people, and they pity her.

HENCHMEN

Yeah!

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

Firm and irrevocable is my doom which I have pass'd upon her; she is banish'd.

CELIA

Pronounce that sentence then on your daughters, then. We cannot live out of her company.

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

You are fools. You, niece, provide yourself. If you outstay the time, upon mine honour, and in the greatness of my word, thou diest!

HENCHMEN

Diest, diest, diest.

*(Henchman 1 continues with an additional echo after everyone else has stopped.)*

HENCHMAN 1

Diest.... sorry.

*(The Duchess and her Henchmen exit.)*

CELIA

O my poor Rosalind, whither wilt we go?

ROSALIND

We?

LUCE

You don't think you get to have an adventure without us?

CELIA

No! Let my Mother seek other heirs.

*(Luce and Celia suddenly become very excited about running away.)*

LUCE

Therefore devise with us how we may fly.

CELIA

Where to go and what to bear with us?

LUCE

Whither shall we go?

ROSALIND

To seek my mother in the forest of Arden.

CELIA

The forest!

ROSALIND

Alas, what danger will it be to us, maids as we are, to travel forth so far!

CELIA (*Even more excited*)

Danger!

LUCE

Beauty provoketh thieves sooner than gold.

CELIA

We might be attacked.

LUCE

Or robbed.

CELIA

Or ravished.

ROSALIND

Or worse.

CELIA

I have it! We'll put ourselves in poor and dirty attire and with a kind of umber color smirch our faces!

LUCE

So shall our beauty pass along and never stir assailants!

ROSALIND

Would it not be better, because that I am more than common strong, that I did dress up like a man? An axe upon my thigh. A boar-spear in my hand, hiding a woman's fear.

LUCE

We'll have a swashing!,

CELIA

What shall we call thee when thou art a man?

ROSALIND

Call me Ganymede!

LUCE

Oh?

CELIA

Ganymede?

ROSALIND

From Greek mythology. A humble shepherd, Zeus disguised himself as an eagle and kidnapped Ganymede, taking him to Mount Olympus, where the humble hero was given eternal youth and called the most beautiful of mortals. Call me Ganymede!

CELIA

I can see why that would appeal to you.

ROSALIND

But what will you be call'd?

CELIA

Something that hath a reference to my state. No longer Celia, but Aliena. That's Latin for stranger. I love foreign languages.

LUCE

And you will call me... Luce.

CELIA

That is your real name.

LUCE

Then you will call me Celia!

CELIA

That's my real name.

LUCE

Then who is Aliena?

ROSALIND

Enough. We'll call you Elise.

CELIA

Let's get our jewels and our wealth together.

LUCE

But who will carry them.

*(They think.)*

CELIA

The clownish fool out of our father's court?

ROSALIND

Touchstone!

CELIA

Would he not be a comfort to our travel?

LUCE

He will follow me where I ask him.

CELIA

He would brave the darkest woods for me.

LUCE

He'll go o'er the wide world for me!

ROSALIND

Sisters! Let's devise the best time and safest way to hide us from the pursuit that will follow.

LUCE

They will pursue us?

CELIA

Most assuredly!

ROSALIND

Now go we in content, to liberty and not to banishment.

*(Loctum enters and hangs the banner "At the House of the Duchess Frederick." Enter the Duchess Frederick and Le Beau.)*

LOCTUM

The next morning the Duchess Frederick awoke to the news that her daughters were missing.

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

Can it be possible that no man saw them?

LE BEAU

Nor woman, neither.

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

It cannot be. Some villains of my court are involved in this.

LE BEAU

The ladies, the attendants of their chamber, saw them abed, and in the morning early they found the beds untreaured of their mistresses.

*(The Henchmen drag in HISPERIA. She has obviously been tortured and is near death . )*

HENCHMAN 3

Hisperia, the princesses' gentlewoman, Confesses!

HISPERIA

Confesses? I told you everything you wanted right away. And then they start hitting me with clubs.

HENCHMAN 2

Sticks. They were sticks.

HENCHMAN 1

Twigs really.

HISPERIA

Twigs, my eye.

HENCHMAN 4

We barely tapped her. Like this.

*(The Henchmen pound Hisperia with their sticks.)*

HENCHMAN 2

We had to make sure her information was reliable.

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

What was the information?

*(The Henchman cock their clubs, ready to strike.)*

HISPERIA

I secretly o'erheard your daughters and Rosalind praise the parts and graces of that wrestler.

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

I saw it myself.

HISPERIA

And I believes, wherever they are gone, that youth, Orlando, is surely in their company.

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

Let her go...

*(The Henchmen hesitate.)*

Well?

HENCHMAN 3

There's a finite probability that she knows more.

HISPERIA

That's what I told them in the beginning, your highness, and that's all there is.

HENCHMAN 4

Please, your highness. Just a little flogging?

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

Very well.

*(The Henchmen drag her off, kicking and screaming, to flog her some more.)*

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

The youth Orlando.

LE BEAU

Only yesterday he inquired about the girls.

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

Send to his brother's house; fetch that gallant Orlando hither. If he be absent, bring his brother to me; Go!!

*(They exit. A new banner is hung: "the House of de Boys." Orlando enters with women hanging on him after his victory over the wrestler. He does not return their affections.)*

TRANIA

Enter Orlando.

BEATRICE

Sweet Orlando.

TRANIA

Gentle Orlando.

BEATRICE

Young Orlando.

TRANIA

Virtuous, strong and valiant Orlando.

ORLANDO

That's enough.

BEATRICE

All right. That night, Orlando settles down for sleep in the humble hut provided by his evil brother Oliver de Boys.

TRANIA

Suddenly, the old servant Adam enters with news.`

*(Adam enters and tries to shake Orlando awake. The narrators exit.)*

ADAM

Your virtues, gentle master, are holy traitors to you. O, what a world is this, when what is comely envenoms him that bears it!

ORLANDO *(groggily)*

Why, what's the matter?

ADAM

O unhappy youth! Within this roof the enemy of all your graces lives. Your brother--no, no brother; yet the son-- Yet not the son, I will not call him son of him I was about to call his father--

ORLANDO

What's the matter?

ADAM

Oliver hath heard your praises, and this night he means to burn your hut down while you are sleeping. if he fail of that, he will have other means to cut you off.

ORLANDO

Idle threats.

*(Orlando lays back to sleep. Adam shakes him violently.)*

ADAM

I overheard him. This is no place; this house is but a butchery. Abhor it, fear it, do not enter it.

ORLANDO

Why, where, Adam, wouldst thou have me go?

ADAM

No matter whither, so you stay not here.

ORLANDO

But....

ADAM

But what? Your brother is trying to kill you!

ORLANDO

But... What, wouldst thou have me go and do?

ADAM

You'll find some employment.

ORLANDO

Should I beg my food?

ADAM

No, you'll find employment.

ORLANDO

Or with a base and boisterous sword enforce a thievish living on the common road?

ADAM

You'll find employment!

ORLANDO

This I will not do, do how I can; I rather will subject me to the malice of a bloody brother.

*(He lies back down. Adam vaults him upright.)*

ADAM

Do not so.

*(Adam pulls out a bag of gold.)*

I have five hundred crowns, The thrifty hire I saved under your father, which I did store for my retirement. Take that. Here is the gold;

ORLANDO

Very nice of you.

ADAM

Let me be your servant: Though I look old, yet I am strong and lusty; for in my youth I never did apply hot and rebellious liquors in my blood, nor did not with unbashful forehead woo the means of weakness and debility;

*(This is too much information for Orlando.)*

ORLANDO

Whoa. But come thy ways; well go along together.

*(They exit. A sign is hung: "the Forest of Arden." Shakespeare enters.)*

SHAKESPEARE

Our scene moves to the forest of Arden. Thick groves of trees and open fields allow both outlaw and sheep herd to exist side by side. And in this place the old characters converge.

*(Rosalind enters, dressed as a man. She seems exhilarated by the fresh air. She inspects the clearing. Shakespeare remains on stage to watch the short, crossing scenes. Enter Celia and Luce, dressed in peasant clothes. They are tired, as if taking a hike was the most strenuous thing they had ever done in their life. They sit to rest.)*

CELIA

Jupiter, how weary are my spirits!

LUCE

I care not for my spirits, if my legs were not weary.

CELIA

I pray you, bear with me; I cannot go no further, Rosalind.

ROSALIND

Ganymede.

*(Enter Touchstone. He carries six large suitcases. Each step is agony. He staggers and the suitcases fall to the ground around him.)*

TOUCHSTONE

Help.

*(The girls help him by stacking the suitcases back onto his arms until he is burdened again.)*

TOUCHSTONE

Ay, now am I in Arden; the more fool I.

ROSALIND

Forward. *(All groan)* Shall I find in my heart to disgrace my man's apparel and to cry like a woman? No! Travelers must be content. Forward.

*(She leads them off, grumbling as they go.)*

LUCE

When I was at home, I was in a better place.

*(They exit. Adam enters carrying Orlando on his back. This is made harder by the fact that he is using a walker. Orlando talks as Adam struggles across the stage.)*

ORLANDO

O good old man, how well in thee appears the constant service of the antique world, when servants sweat for duty, not for money!

ADAM

You took all my money.

ORLANDO

Thou art not for the fashion of these times, where none will sweat but for promotion, and having that, do choke their service up even with the having. It is not so with thee.

ADAM

Arrrgh.

*(They exit.)*

SHAKESPEARE

Along with the old, we will meet new characters. Phebe and the young shepherd who loves her, Silvius. If you will see a pageant truly play'd, between the pale complexion of true love and the red glow of scorn and proud disdain, watch a little.

*(Enter Phebe chased by Silvius. They are followed by the Freshman who are dressed now as SHEEP. )*

SILVIUS

Sweet Phebe, say that you love me not, but say not so in bitterness.

PHEBE

And know that I cannot love you. Go your way.

SILVIUS

I could go, but my heart would have to stay. And no man can live separated from his heart.

*(They are at a stand off, Phebe keeping the sheep between Silvius and herself. He lunges to hug her. She grabs his wrist on the way by and flips him on his back, then pins him down with her knee.)*

PHEBE

Then go to your death but do it quickly.

SILVIUS

You touched me.

PHEBE

Heavens!

*(She sprints off stage. He talks to the sheep.)*

SILVIUS

She touched me on the wrist.

*(He sprints off after her.)*

Sweet Phebe! Look at me.

*(The herd of sheep remain and baa loudly at Shakespeare with disgust for the part he has given them. Old CORIN enters. She is the wise old woman of the forest.)*

SHAKESPEARE

Enter old Corin, a shepherdess too old and wise to be in love.

CORIN

All right, sheep, that's enough.

*(The sheep quiet.)*

I my youth I wast as true a lover as ever sigh'd upon a midnight pillow. But in my age, I now know the difference between love and....

*(She freezes mid sentence as AUDREY steps onto the stage. She is a milkmaid who carries a yoke with two pails. On her hip is a whip for her goats.)*

SHAKESPEARE

Enter Audrey, a woman of the earth.

CORIN

A woman who dominates goats with a whip.

*(Audrey is the Marilyn Monroe of the forest, sexy yet innocent. She is followed several feet up stage and behind by every available male in the cast and some females who can't control themselves. These are her constant STALKERS. When Audrey stops, they stop. When Audrey moves, they move. When Audrey senses they are stalking and turns quickly to look, everyone dives for cover and hides. When Audrey turns back to the audience, they unfreeze and inch a little closer. Audrey sets down her pails and slowly wipes the sweat off of her brow. Each of her stalkers pulls out a handkerchief and offers it to her. She notices none of them. She picks up her pails and exits. The stalkers creep after her.)*

CORIN

The forest will be a better place when that one is wed. Come along sheep.

*(Corin herds the sheep off stage.)*

SHAKESPEARE

We will meet again the mother of Rosalind, The Duchess Senior, and her band of merry Amazons.

*(Enter DUCHESS SENIOR and her entourage of AMAZON WOMEN. AMIENS THE AMAZON, is her right hand woman. The Duchess Senior is very enthusiastic as are her followers.)*

THE DUCHESS SENIOR

Now, my co-mates and brothers and sisters in exile, hath not old custom made this life more sweet than that of painted pomp?

AMIENS

Down with pomp!

AMAZONS (Cheering)

Old customs! Out with the old, etc.

THE DUCHESS SENIOR

Are not these woods more free from peril than the envious court?

AMEINS

Free from peril!

AMAZONS

Free! We have given away all our money, etc.

THE DUCHESS SENIOR

Here feel we but the seasons' difference, as the icy fang and churlish chiding of the winter's wind. And when it bites and blows upon my body, even till I shrink with cold, I smile and say "This is no flattery. These are counselors that feelingly persuade me what I am!"

MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

I'm cold, that's what I am.

*(The Amazons part and behind them, dressed all in black is the Emo Amazon MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE. She can find sadness in any situation. The Duchess approaches Melancholy Jacqueline. Melancholy Jacqueline freezes, limbs out, like a tree, before the Duchess can get too close. She stays frozen until the Amazons exit.)*

THE DUCHESS SENIOR

Melancholy Jacqueline, sweet are the uses of adversity, which, like the toad, ugly and venomous, wears yet a precious jewel in his head.

AMEINS

Like the toad!

*(The Amazons seem a bit confused, then shrug and cheer.)*

AMAZONS

Whatever, etc.

THE DUCHESS SENIOR

And this, our life exempt from public haunt finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones and good in every thing. I would not change it.

SHAKESPEARE

Happy is she that can translate the stubbornness of fortune into so quiet and so sweet a style.

THE DUCHESS SENIOR

Come, shall we go and kill us venison?

ALL

Venison! Kill! Yea!

*(The Duchess leads them off. Left behind, Melancholy Jacqueline, unfreezes as a tree.)*

MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

Kill? And yet it irks me the poor dappled fools, being natives here, should in their own forest with forked heads have their round haunches gored.

SHAKESPEARE

This is Melancholy Jacqueline. She will moralize on any spectacle, and sometimes we'll even understand it.

MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

Sweep on, you fat and greasy citizens; we are mere usurpers, and tyrants, to fright the animals and to kill them up in their assign'd and native dwelling-place.

SHAKESPEARE

Look you, who comes here; a young man and an old woman in solemn talk. The forest of Arden.

*(Shakespeare exits with a flourish. Corin and Silvius enter and cross the stage, herding the Sheep. Rosalind, Celia, Luce and Touchstone enter opposite, hide, and watch. Melancholy Jacqueline refreezes as a tree.)*

CORIN

Do not chase her. That is the way to make her scorn you still.

SILVIUS

O, Corin, that thou knew'st how I do love her!

CORIN

I partly guess; for I have loved ere now.

SILVIUS

No, Corin, being old, thou canst not guess, though but if thy love were ever like to mine— as sure I think did never man love so— how many actions most ridiculous hast thou been drawn to by thy fantasy?

CORIN

Into a thousand that I have forgotten.

SILVIUS

O Thou didst then ne'er love so heartily! If thou remember'st not the slightest folly that ever love did make thee run into, thou hast not loved: Or if thou hast not sat as I do now, wearying thy hearer in thy mistress' praise, thou hast not loved: Or if thou hast not broke from company abruptly, as my passion now makes me, thou hast not loved. O Phebe, Phebe, Phebe!

*(He runs off crying. Corin exist with the sheep. The others sneak out into the open. Luce and Celia openly laugh. Rosalind stares after the departing shepherd, lost in thought. Melancholy Jacqueline remains frozen as a tree, but shuffles forward, inch by inch, to eavesdrop.)*

LUCE

Such passion is indeed sport!

CELIA

I thank God I am not in love.

ROSALIND

Alas, poor shepherd! Watching thy wounds of love, I have found mine own.

CELIA

Yes... Of course, I was sympathetic.

LUCE

As was I.

TOUCHSTONE

I remember, when I was in love I broke my sword upon a stone and bid the stone, "Take that!"

CELIA

Why?

TOUCHSTONE

For coming at night to visit my girl Jane.

LUCE

True lovers do strange things.

TOUCHSTONE

I remember I took two cod fish and, giving them to her, said with weeping tears 'Wear these for my sake.'

*(He mimes holding up to fish where her bosom would be.)*

CELIA

Enough, Touchstone?

TOUCHSTONE

As all is mortal in nature, so is all nature in love mortal in folly.

*(Touchstone leans against a tree only to find it is Melancholy Jacqueline. She tries to play it off.)*

## MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

Tree.

*(Melancholy Jacqueline inches off the stage as the opposite side of the stage is filled with sheep. Corin herds them on. Celia and Luce stare at the sheep as if they are food.)*

CELIA

I pray you, Touchstone, question yond woman if she for gold will give us any food.

LUCE

I faint almost to death.

TOUCHSTONE

Holla, you clown!

CORIN

Who calls?

TOUCHSTONE

Your betters, madam.

CORIN

I should hope so. If not, you are very wretched.

*(Rosalind swaggers forward and speaks like a man.)*

ROSALIND

Peace, I say. Good even to you, friend.

CORIN

And to you, gentle... sir, and to you all.

ROSALIND

I prithee, shepherdess, if that love or gold can in this desert place buy rest and feed. My sisters faint from hunger.

CORIN

Fair sir, I pity them, then. I am shepherdess to another man and my master will never find the way to heaven by doing deeds of hospitality.

ROSALIND

I pray thee, what if we were to buy the cottage, pasture and the flock.

*(Corin laughs at the thought. Touchstone holds up a bag of gold and she stops.)*

CELIA

We will mend thy wages.

CORIN

Assuredly! My master means to sell. I will help you buy it with your gold, and you shall have lamb chops tonight.

*(The Sheep panic and run off in all directions, baaing.)*

LUCE

I like this place. And willingly could waste my time in it.

*(All exit. Adam enters coughing and wheezing and carrying Orlando on his back.)*

ADAM

Dear master, I can go no further. O, I die for food! Here lie I down, and measure out my grave.

ORLANDO

Show some heart, Adam! Live a little; comfort a little; cheer thyself a little. Your mind is nearer death than your powers.

*(Adam collapses, dropping Orlando from his back.)*

ADAM

Farewell kind master.

ORLANDO

Hold death awhile at the arm's end, and if I bring thee not something to eat, I will give you permission to die. But if thou diest before I come back, thou art a mocker of my labour.

ADAM

Well said!

ORLANDO

I'll be with thee quickly and thou shalt not die for lack of a dinner!

*(Orlando bounds off to find food. Adam drags himself off. Melancholy Jacqueline enters with the Amazon Amiens.)*

AMIENS

Melancholy Jacqueline, the duchess hath been all this day to look you.

MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

And I have been all this day to avoid her. She boasts and seeks pleasure too much for my company. I think deeply on important matters, but I give heaven thanks and make no boast of them.

AMIENS

You wouldn't boast, madam?

MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

I'll give you a verse on this subject.

AMIENS

I don't know about...

MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

I wrote it yesterday.

AMIENS

I don't really think I have time.

MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

Thus it goes:— If it do come to pass/ That any man become an ass,  
Leaving his moral life for ease,/ A stubborn will, himself to please,  
Ducdame, ducdame, ducdame:/ And so with...

AMIENS

What's that 'ducdame'?

MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

'Tis a Greek invocation, to call fools into a circle.  
Thus I continue - And so with...

AMIENS

O Look. Here comes a fool now.

MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

The very fool I told you of.

*(Enter Touchstone, chasing sheep, trying to catch one for dinner. He dives and misses. He catches a small one and slings it over the back of his shoulders. It baas and cries as he carries it. Melancholy Jacqueline freezes like a tree so as not to be noticed.)*

AMIENS

Good morrow, fool,

TOUCHSTONE

No, madam, Call me not fool till heaven hath sent me fortune. What time is it.

AMIENS

Ten o'clock.

## TOUCHSTONE

How the world wags. 'Tis but an hour ago since it was nine,

## AMIENS

Tis but an hour.

## TOUCHSTONE

An hour ago I was a courtier, now look at me. And after one hour more 'twill be eleven. And so, from hour to hour, we ripe and ripe, and then, from hour to hour, we rot and rot; And thereby hangs a tale.'

## MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

How deep.

*(Melancholy Jacqueline unfreezes to speak. She then lets out a low, sustained note of song, which signals to the audience that she has fallen in love with Touchstone, and a low, sustained note is as excited as she will allow herself to get. It merely confuses Touchstone and Ameins. When Melancholy Jacqueline realizes they are watching her, she cuts off her note and quickly snaps back into being a tree.)*

Tree.

*(Touchstone exits quickly and confused, the doomed sheep baaing on his shoulders. The other sheep follow like sheep. Melancholy Jacqueline unfreezes. She is in love. Though her words are joyous, her tone is melancholy.)*

## AMEINS

What a fool indeed.

## MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

My lungs begin to crow.

## AMIENS

Pardon?

## MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

That fools should think so deeply. O noble fool! worthy fool! Motley's the only wear.

*(Melancholy Jacqueline exits stealthily in the direction of Touchstone. Two Amazons, Bianca and Trincula, lead the Duchess and her entourage on stage)*

## BIANCA

In another part of the forest, The Duchess Senior and her merry Amazons were preparing the daily feast.

## TRINCULA

After a hard day of hunting venison, it was time to party.

*(Music starts. The Amazons dance and play and set out food. A huge, choreographed, River Dance style number breaks out. In the middle of their dance, Melancholy Jacqueline enters. She is wearing Touchstone's jester hat. Even so, she is an immediate party pooper. The music screeches to a stop. Everyone freezes to see the Emo Amazon.)*

MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

More, more, I prithee, more.

THE DUCHESS SENIOR

It will make you melancholy, Mademoiselle Jacqueline.

MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

I thank it. More, I prithee, more. I can suck melancholy out of a song, as a weasel sucks eggs.

THE DUCHESS SENIOR

What is this hat? You look happy!

MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

Let me explain...

*(Everyone groans and sits down to listen to her lecture.)*

MELANCHOLY JAQUES

I am wise. I must have liberty, as large as the wind, to blow my opinions on whom I please; for so court jesters have.

THE DUCHESS SENIOR

Will you be our jester?

MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

I will through and through cleanse the foul body of the infected world, if they will patiently receive my medicine.

AMAZONS

We're laughing already. Looking forward to that, etc.

*(Orlando leaps out onto the stage with his sword drawn and screaming like a Ninja in attack mode.)*

ORLANDO

Eat no more!

*(Orlando leaps about as if he is expecting a huge battle. He stabs at several Amazons, before they can draw their swords, wounding a few in the process. Finally he leaps to Melancholy Jacqueline and puts his sword up to her throat.)*

ORLANDO

Forbear, and eat no more.

MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

Why, I have eaten none yet.

ORLANDO

Nor shalt not, till necessity be served.

THE DUCHESS SENIOR

What a rude despiser of good manners?

ORLANDO

Forbear! I say she dies if any of you touches any of this fruit 'till I and my affairs are answered.

AMAZONS

Go ahead. Look, I'm eating fruit. Pass the fruit, etc.

*(The Duchess shushes the Amazons.)*

THE DUCHESS SENIOR

What would you have? Your gentleness shall force more than your force move us to gentleness.

*(Orlando pauses in his fight.)*

ORLANDO

What?

THE DUCHESS SENIOR

Sit down and feed, and welcome to our table.

ORLANDO

Welcome?

THE DUCHESS SENIOR

Welcome.

ORLANDO

Oh.

*(Orlando releases Melancholy Jacqueline, then apologizes to the Amazons he stabbed.)*

ORLANDO

Pardon me.

*(Orlando dives into the food, eating as fast as he can and stuffing food into his shir.)*

ORLANDO

I pray you, I thought that all things were savage here; And therefore put I on the countenance of stern commandment.

THE DUCHESS SENIOR

And therefore sit you down in gentleness and take upon command what help we have.

ORLANDO

Then but forbear your food a little while, whiles, like a doe, I go to find my fawn and give it food. There is an old poor man, who after me hath many a weary step limp'd in pure love. Till he is full, I will not touch a bit. Perhaps a bit.

*(He guzzles more food.)*

THE DUCHESS SENIOR

Go find him out, and we will waste nothing till you return.

ORLANDO

I thank ye; and be blest for your good comfort!

*(Adam enters and catches Orlando eating. Adam is crushed.)*

ADAM

Master?

ORLANDO

Adam. I was just coming to get you. Fruit?

THE DUCHESS SENIOR

Welcome. Set down venerable burthen, and feed.

ADAM

I scarce can speak to thank you for myself.

THE DUCHESS SENIOR

Welcome; fall to. I will not trouble you as yet, to question you about your fortunes.

*(To the Amazons)*

Thou seest we are not all alone unhappy. This wide and universal theatre presents more woeful pageants than the scene wherein we play in.

MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

All the world's a stage,

*(The Amazons all groan and hang their heads. Orlando and Adam are confused.)*

## MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

And all the men and women merely players. They have their exits and their entrances;  
And one man in his time plays many parts,

## AMAZONS

Wonderful, that's right, back to the meal.

## MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

His acts being seven ages. At first the infant, mewling and puking in the nurse's arms. And then  
the whining school-boy, with his satchel and shining morning face, creeping like snail  
unwillingly to school.

## AMAZONS

Very funny, well done, good speech, etc.

## MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

And then the lover,

## AMAZONS

I knew that was coming, etc.

## MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad made to his mistress' eyebrow.

*(speaking quickly so the Amazons can't interrupt)*

Then a soldier! Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard, jealous in honour, sudden and  
quick in quarrel, seeking the bubble reputation even in the cannon's mouth.

## AMAZONS

A bit violent, isn't that? Etc.

## MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

And then the justice, in fair round belly with good capon lined, with eyes severe and beard of  
formal cut, full of wise saws and modern instances; and so he plays his part.

## AMAZONS

Excellent Metaphor. Loved it. Now let's get back to the meal. Etc.

## MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

The sixth age shifts into the lean and slipper'd pantaloon, with spectacles on nose and pouch on  
side, his youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide for his shrunk shank; and his big manly  
voice, turning again toward childish treble, pipes and whistles in his sound. Last scene of all...

## AMAZONS

Thank goodness. About time, etc.

## MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

That ends this strange eventful history, is second childishness and mere oblivion, sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

*(Melancholy Jacqueline pauses. The Duchess applauds followed by all her Amazons. Melancholy Jacqueline stares them down until they stop applauding and wait for her to speak.)*

## MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

And now . . . , the seven ages of woman.

*(The Amazons shout and throw dinner rolls and fruit at her. All exit. Pinch and Pistol enter and hang a new banner, "The Palace of the Duchess Frederick." The Duchess Frederick enters. Her Henchmen enter opposite dragging in Oliver de Boys and Dennis.)*

## PINCH

Meanwhile, back at the Duchess Frederick's palace, evil was brewing.

## PISTOL

The Duke's henchmen, not finding Orlando, brought back the brother Oliver de Boys.

## PINCH

Where he had some explaining to do.

## OLIVER DE BOYS

And we have not seen Orlando since.

## THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

Not see him since? Sir, sir, that cannot be:

## OLIVER DE BOYS

If I had seen him, madam, I would have killed him.

## THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

Truly? Good. I need not seek an absent argument of my revenge, with you present. Kill him. Kill them both.

*(The Henchmen start to drag them off.)*

## DENNIS

O that your highness knew his heart in this! He never loved his brother in his life.

## THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

Perhaps he'll love him better in death.

DENNIS

Wait! Suppose I were to say to you, I know where Orlando is?

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

You do?

OLIVER DE BOYS

You do?

DENNIS

No. But suppose I were to say it to you?

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

Then I would say, "Look to it. Find out this Orlando, wheresoe'er he is; Seek him with candle; bring him living.... Or dead!"

DENNIS

Then I say it.

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

Very well, but if you do not, thy lands and all things that thou dost call thine worth seizure we will seize.

JAQUES DE BOY

Evil villain.

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

The more villain thou.

OLIVER DE BOYS

*(Taking it as a compliment.)*

Thanks. You are too kind.

DUKE FREERICK

Go!

*(All exit. Ponce and Miranda change the banner back to "The Forest of Arden."  
Orlando and Adam enter. Orlando hangs poems on trees.)*

POUNCE

In the forest, as the days passed, Orlando had time to think.

MIRANDA

And he could think of only one thing.

POUNCE

Rosalind.

MIRANDA

He wrote down his thoughts in the form of poems.

POUNCE

And published them by nailing the papers to trees, so that passers by read his thoughts.

*(Exit narrators.)*

ORLANDO

Hang there, my verse, in witness of my love. O Rosalind!

ADAM

May we rest, sir?

ORLANDO

Rest? There are poems to be written.

ADAM

Well, they'll have to wait. We're out of paper.

*(Orlando pulls out his knife. Adam is scared.)*

ORLANDO

These trees shall be my books and in their barks my thoughts I'll character; That every eye which in this forest looks shall see thy virtue witness'd every where. Run, run, Orlando; carve on every tree the fair, the chaste and unexpressive she.

*(He bounds off followed by Adam and his walker. The voluptuous Audrey enters followed by her stalkers. WILLIAM, a country simpleton and one of the stalkers, approaches Audrey and holds out a picture he has drawn of her. The other Stalkers whisper admonitions to him.)*

STALKERS

Don't do it. Stay away. Stop, etc.

*(Audrey sets down her milk pails to stretch, which drives the Stalkers into a frenzy. She does not notice William and his outstretched hand. Touchstone runs on from the opposite direction, looking back over his shoulder at someone off stage who he is running from. He bumps into Audrey, knocking her into William. William trembles at the act of catching her, but is still unable to speak in her presence. Touchstone is instantly entranced with Audrey. She, not so much. Music swells and Touchstone is about to dance, when Melancholy Jacqueline enters following Touchstone. Touchstone breaks his trance to yelp and hide in the trees from Melancholy Jacqueline. The Stalkers, including*

*William, likewise recoil and hide from the Emo Amazon. Melancholy Jacqueline approaches Audrey and they stare each other down.)*

MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

By my troth, I was seeking for a fool when I found you.

AUDREY

He is drowned in my milk pail. Look but in, and you shall see the fool.

*(Melancholy Jacqueline looks deep into her milk pail.)*

MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

There I see nothing but mine own image.

AUDREY

My mistake.

MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

God be wi' you. Let's meet as little as we can.

AUDREY

I do desire we may be better strangers.

*(Audrey and Melancholy Jacqueline give each other one more look and then exit their opposite ways, the Stalkers following Audrey. Touchstone emerges from behind a tree.)*

TOUCHSTONE

I would kiss the cow's dugs that her pretty hands had milked.

*(He starts after Audrey when the stage is flood by sheep and their shepherdess Corin.)*

TOUCHSTONE

Who was that Milkmaid?

CORIN

Audrey? You know not how to pick a woman. She is not for you.

TOUCHSTONE

But I am for her.

CORIN

Really. So you like this shepherd's life, Master Touchstone?

TOUCHSTONE

Truly. In respect of itself, it is a good life, but in respect that it is a shepherd's life, it is a very vile life. Now, in respect it is in the fields, it pleaseth me well; but in respect it is not in the court, it is tedious. As is it a spare life, look you, it fits my humour well; but as there is no more riches in it, it goes much against my stomach.

CORIN

That's a long answer for a simple question.

TOUCHSTONE

Hast thou no philosophy in thee, shepherdess?

CORIN

No more but that I know the more one gets sick the worse one feels; and that the property of rain is to wet and fire to burn; that good pasture makes fat sheep, and that a great cause of the night is not so great in the sun;

TOUCHSTONE

You are a natural philosopher. Wast ever in court, shepherd?

CORIN

Me? In court? No, truly.

TOUCHSTONE

Then, truly, thou art damned like an ill-roasted egg, all on one side.

CORIN

For not being at court? Your reason.

TOUCHSTONE

Why, if thou never wast at court, thou never sawest good manners.

*(The Sheep nod and react as if they understand)*

If thou never sawest good manners, then thy manners must be wicked; *(sheep react)* and wickedness is sin, *(sheep react)* and sin is damnation *(sheep agree)* Thou art in a parlous state, shepherdess.

CORIN

You have too courtly a wit for me. I'll rest.

TOUCHSTONE

Wilt thou rest damned? God help thee, shallow woman!

CORIN

Sir, I am a true labourer. I earn that I eat, get that I wear, owe no man hate, envy no man's happiness, glad of other men's good, content with my harm, and the greatest of my pride is to see my ewes graze and my lambs suck.

## TOUCHSTONE

That is another simple sin in you, to bring the ewes and the rams together and to offer to get your living by the copulation of cattle; (*sheep react*) to betray a she-lamb of a twelvemonth to a crooked-pated, old, cuckoldly ram out of all reasonable match.

*(Unseen by Corin, the male sheep chase off the female sheep.)*

## TOUCHSTONE

If thou beest not damned for this, the devil himself will have no shepherds; I cannot see else how thou shouldst 'scape.

## CORIN

Here comes Ganymede, my new master.

*( Enter Rosalind reading one of Orlando's poems.)*

## ROSALIND

“From the east to western Ind, /No jewel is like Rosalind.  
Her worth, being mounted on the wind,/ Through all the world bears Rosalind.  
All the pictures fairest lined/ Are but black to Rosal... ined.”

*(Touchstone snatches away the poem and pretends to read it.)*

## TOUCHSTONE

Sweetest nut hath sourest rind, /Such a nut is Rosalind.

## ROSALIND

Let me see.

## TOUCHSTONE

This is the very false gallop of verses. Why do you infect yourself with them?

## ROSALIND

Peace, you dull fool! I found them on a tree.

## CORIN

Truly, the tree yields bad fruit.

## ROSALIND

Shepherdess, where are the sheep?

*(Corin looks around, finds the sheep missing and exits after them. Enter Luce and Celia laughing at verses.)*

## TOUCHSTONE

Peace! Here comes your cousins, reading. I have business in the forest and so will make an honourable retreat; and leave you girls to gossip.

*(He exits in the direction of Audrey)*

CELIA *(reading)*

“Therefore Heaven Nature charged/ That one body should be fill'd  
With all graces wide-enlarged...”

LUCE

Wide-Enlarged? Let me see?

*(reading)*” Nature presently distill'd/ Helen's cheek, but not her heart,/Cleopatra's majesty/  
Atalanta's better part,/Sad Lucretia's modesty...”

ROSALIND

What tedious homily of love!

CELIA

Didst thou hear these verses?

ROSALIND

O, yes, I heard them all, and more too;

CELIA

But didst thou hear without wondering how thy name should be hanged and carved upon these trees?

LUCE

Know you who hath done this?

ROSALIND

Is it a man?

CELIA

We saw him, and a scarf, that you once wore, about his neck.

LUCE

You change colour, Cousin?

ROSALIND

I prithee, who was it?

CELIA

It is... hard enough for friends to meet accidentally on the street. but here in the mountains?

LUCE

Mountains may be removed with earthquakes and so encounters like this.

ROSALIND

*(loud and annoyed at their stalling)*

Nay, but who is it?

LUCE

Is it possible? That's what I said to myself.

ROSALIND

Nay, I prithee now with most petitionary vehemence, tell me WHO IT IS!

CELIA

It is... wonderful, wonderful, and most wonderful wonderful!

LUCE

And yet again wonderful, and after that,

CELIA

Out of all whooping!

ROSALIND

Good my complexion! dost thou think, though I am caparisoned like a man, I have a doublet and hose in my disposition? One inch of delay more is a South-sea of discovery; I prithee, tell me who is it quickly, and speak apace!

LUCE

I don't like her tone.

ROSALIND *(sweetly)*

I would thou couldst stammer, that thou mightst pour this concealed man out of thy mouth, as wine comes out of a narrow-mouthed bottle, either too much at once, or none at all. I prithee, take the cork out of thy mouth that I may drink thy tidings.

CELIA

So you may put a man in your belly?

LUCE

Good, Celia! I'm shocked!

*(Rosalind grabs them by the collars, about to kill.)*

ROSALIND

What manner of man!?

BOTH

It is young Orlando!

*(Rosalind releases them and goes into a love trance.)*

LUCE

The one that tripped up the wrestler's heels and your heart both in an instant.

ROSALIND

Nay, but the devil take mocking.

CELIA

I' faith, coz, 'tis he.

ROSALIND

Orlando?

CELIA *(mocking)*

Orlando.

LUCE *(mocking)*

Oh, Orlando!\

ROSALIND

*(Speaking very fast, without taking a breath.)*

Alas the day! what shall I do with my doublet and hose? What did he when thou sawest him? What said he? How looked he? Wherein went he? What makes him here? Did he ask for me? Where remains he? How parted he with thee? and when shalt thou see him again? Answer me in one word.

*(Celia slaps her to get her out of her speed talking.)*

That's not the word! But doth he know that I am in this forest and in man's apparel? Looks he as freshly as he did the day he wrestled?

CELIA

It is as easy to count atoms as to resolve the propositions of a lover;

LUCE

We found him under a tree, like a dropped acorn.

ROSALIND

It may well be called Jove's tree, when it drops forth such fruit.

CELIA

There lay he, stretched along, like a wounded knight.

LUCE

He was furnished like a hunter.

*(Orlando enters. He runs to a tree and begins carving on a poem on its bark. Adam follows him, very tired.)*

ROSALIND

O, ominous! he comes to kill my heart.

CELIA

Stand aside.

*(The twins drag Rosalind to a hiding spot.)*

ADAM

I pray you, mar no more trees with writing love-songs in their barks.

ORLANDO

I pray you, mar no more of my verses with reading them ill-favouredly.

ADAM

Rosalind? I do not like her name.

ORLANDO

There was no thought of pleasing you when she was christened.

ADAM

What stature is she of?

ORLANDO

Just as high as my heart.

ADAM

You are full of pretty answers. The worst fault you have is to be in love.

ORLANDO

'Tis a fault I will not change for your best virtue. I am weary of you.

JAQUES

I'll tarry no longer with you, farewell, good Signior Love. And if you find me, do not wake me, for I shall be dreaming of a better place.

*(Adam waddles off while Orlando passionately attacks another tree. Rosalind and the twins creep out of hiding.)*

ROSALIND

I will speak to him, like a saucy lackey and under that habit play the knave with him.

*(Celia and Luce try to stop her, but she is gone. They retreat to hide and watch.)*

ROSALIND *(man's voice)*

Do you hear, forester?

*(Orlando jumps and yelps, hiding the knife behind his back.)*

ORLANDO

Very well. What would you?

ROSALIND

There is a man haunts the forest, that abuses our young plants with carving 'Rosalind' on their barks; hangs odes upon hawthorns and elegies on brambles. If I could meet that fancy-monger I would give him some good counsel, for he seems to have the quotidian of love upon him.

ORLANDO

I am he that is so love-shaked. I pray you tell me your remedy.

*(Rosalind inspects him closely.)*

ROSALIND

There is none of love's marks upon you.

ORLANDO

What marks?

ROSALIND

A lean cheek, which you have not, a blue eye and sunken, which you have not, a beard neglected, your hose should be ungartered, your bonnet unbanded, your sleeve unbuttoned, your shoe untied and every thing about you demonstrating a careless desolation; but you are no such man; you are rather loving yourself than seeming the lover of any other.

ORLANDO

Fair youth, I would I could make thee believe I love.

ROSALIND

Me believe it? You may as soon make her that you love believe it; which, I warrant, she is apter to do than to confess she does. But, in truth, are you he that hangs the verses on the trees, wherein Rosalind is so admired?

ORLANDO

I swear to thee, youth, by the white hand of Rosalind, I am that he, that unfortunate he.

ROSALIND

Love is merely a madness, and, I tell you, deserves as well a dark house and a whip as madmen do. And the reason why they are not so punished and cured is, that the lunacy of love is so ordinary that the whippers are in love too. Yet I profess curing it by counsel.

ORLANDO

Did you ever cure any so?

ROSALIND

Yes, one, and in this manner. He was to imagine me his love, and I set him every day to woo me. At which time would I grieve, be changeable, longing and liking, proud, fantastical, apish, shallow, full of tears, full of smiles, would now like him, now loathe him; now weep for him, then spit at him; I drove my suitor from his mad humour of love to a living humour of madness; which was, to forswear the world, and to live in a nook merely monastic. And thus I cured him; and will cure you, if you would but call me your love's name and come every day to woo me.

ORLANDO

Now, by the faith of my love, I will, good youth.

ROSALIND

Nay you must call me Rosalind.

ORLANDO

Rosalind! Rosalind! Rosalind!

*(Orlando ballet leaps off yelling Rosalind to the trees! Celia and Luce come out of hiding, laughing and leaping and making fun of Orlando.)*

ROSALIND

Come, sisters, will you go?

*(They exit. The voluptuous Audrey enters followed by Touchstone and in the background, her Stalkers. They watch with anger. Touchstone carries two Sheep, one under each arm, as he pursues Audrey.)*

TOUCHSTONE

Come apace, good Audrey. Wear these for me.

*(He offers her the two sheep. They break free and run away.)*

TOUCHSTONE

I will fetch up your goats, Audrey. Audrey? Am I the man yet? Doth my simple feature content you?

AUDREY

Your features! Lord warrant us! What features!

*(The Stalkers agree while staying invisible.)*

TOUCHSTONE

I am here with thee and thy goats, I am a poet among animals. Isn't that enough?

AUDREY

I do not know what 'poetical' is. Is it honest in deed and word? Is it a true thing?

TOUCHSTONE

No, truly; for the truest poetry is the most flattering; and lovers are given to poetry, and what they swear in poetry is not true.

AUDREY

Do you wish then that the gods had made me poetical?

TOUCHSTONE

I do, truly; for thou swearest to me thou art honest. Now, if thou wert a poet, I might have some hope thou would flatter me.

AUDREY

Would you not have me honest?

TOUCHSTONE

No, truly, unless thou wert hard-favoured; for honesty coupled to beauty is to have honey as a sauce on sugar.

AUDREY

Well, I am not fair.

*(The Stalkers protest.)*

And therefore I pray the gods make me honest.

TOUCHSTONE

Truly, and to cast away honesty upon a foul slut were to put good meat into an unclean dish.

AUDREY

I am not a slut, though I thank the gods I am foul.

TOUCHSTONE

Well, praised be the gods for thy foulness! sluttishness may come hereafter. But be it as it may be, I will marry thee.

*(The Stalker jump forward a step to listen to the answer, still unseen by Audrey.)*

AUDREY

Again.

TOUCHSTONE

I will ma... ma... marry thee.

AUDREY

Here we have no temple but the wood, no assembly but horn-beasts.

TOUCHSTONE

As horns are odious, they are necessary.

AUDREY

Horns are a husband's dowry to his wife, though 'tis none of his own getting.

*(Touchstone becomes resigned that he will get nothing until they are married.)*

TOUCHSTONE

There is a Vicar in the next village.

AUDREY

Well, the gods give us joy!

*(Audrey pulls Touchstone off stage. All the Stalkers exit after them except two, the simpleton William and SIR OLIVER MARTEXT, the Vicar, who linger behind to stare longingly after her.)*

SIR OLIVER MARTEXT

Ne'er shall a fantastical knave flout me out of my calling.

WILLIAM

Vicar.

*(Sir Oliver Martext jumps, surprised by William who is behind him.)*

SIR OLIVER MARTEXT

William. You shouldn't creep up like that.

WILLIAM

You won't let them marry, will you, Vicar? I have a prior claim.

SIR OLIVER MARTEXT

Yes, we know. As you keep telling us. She kissed you behind the haystack.

WILLIAM

No. She kissed me on the mouth.

*(Sir Oliver Martext leaves shaking his head. William follows.)*

WILLIAM

Wait for me.

*(Enter Celia, Luce and Rosalind.)*

ROSALIND

Never talk to me; I will weep.

CELIA

Do, but yet have the grace to consider that tears do not become a man.

ROSALIND

But have I not cause to weep?

LUCE

As good cause as one would desire; therefore weep.

ROSALIND

His very hair is of the dissembling colour.

CELIA

I' faith, his hair is of a good colour.

LUCE

An excellent colour if chestnut was the *only* colour.

ROSALIND

And his kissing is as full of sanctity as the touch of holy bread.

CELIA

He hath a pair of lips.

LUCE

Though what you know about his kissing, is pure imagination.

ROSALIND

But why did he swear he would come this morning, and comes not?

CELIA

Nay, certainly, there is no truth in him.

ROSALIND

Do you think so?

CELIA

Yes;

LUCE

He is not a pick-purse nor a horse-stealer, but for his verity in love, he is as honest as a worm-eaten nut.

ROSALIND

Not true in love?

CELIA

Yes, when he is in; but I think he is not in.

ROSALIND

You have heard him swear downright he was.

LUCE

'Was' is not 'is:'

CELIA

He writes brave verses, speaks brave words, swears brave oaths and breaks them bravely.

*(Enter Phebe followed close by Silvius and the sheep. The sheep follow Silvius as if they are in love with him.)*

SILVIUS

Sweet Phebe, do not scorn me. The common executioner, whose heart the accustom'd sight of death makes hard, falls not the axe upon the humbled neck but first begs pardon. Will you sterner be than he that lives by bloody drops?

PHEBE

Now I do frown on thee with all my heart; and if mine eyes can wound, now let them kill thee.

SILVIUS

O dear Phebe, would that you knew the wounds invisible that love's keen arrows make.

PHEBE

But till that time, come not thou near me, and when that time comes, pity me not; as till that time I shall not pity thee.

*(Phebe bumps into Rosalind. Fireworks go off. A heavenly choir sings. She is goof in love with Rosalind.)*

ROSALIND

Who might be your mother, that you insult the wretched? Must you be proud and pitiless? (*to Silvius*) You foolish shepherd, wherefore do you follow her, You are a thousand times a properer man than she a woman. 'Tis such fools as you that makes the world full of ill-favour'd children. But, mistress, know yourself. Down on your knees, and thank heaven for a good man's love, for I must tell you friendly in your ear, sell when you can. You are not for all markets.

*(Phebe falls on her knees in front of Rosalind. Rosalind notices the strange look in Phebe's eyes.)*

ROSALIND

Why do you look on me?

PHEBE

Sweet youth, I had rather hear you chide than this man woo.

ROSALIND

Why look you so upon me?

PHEBE

For no ill will I bear you.

ROSALIND

I pray you, do not fall in love with me, for I am falser than vows made in wine. Besides, I like you not. Come, sisters. Shepherdess, look on him better, and be not proud. Though all the world could see, none could be so abused in sight as he. Come, to our flock.

*(Rosalind, Celia & Luce exit. Silvius holds on to Phebe preventing her escape. The Sheep hang onto Silvius.)*

PHEBE

Dead Shepherd, now I find thy saw of might, who ever loved that loved not at first sight?

SILVIUS

Sweet Phebe,--, pity me.

PHEBE

Why, I am sorry for thee, gentle Silvius.

SILVIUS

I would have you.

PHEBE

Silvius, the time was that I hated thee, but since that thou can talk of love so well, thy company, which erst was irksome to me, I will endure.

SILVIUS

So holy and so perfect is my love, that I shall think it a most plenteous crop to glean the broken ears after the man that the main harvest reaps.

PHEBE

That' sick. Know'st now the youth that spoke to me erewhile?

SILVIUS

His name is Ganymede. He hath bought the cottage and the bounds that the old carlot once was master of. You love him?

PHEBE

Not. 'Tis but a peevish boy; yet he talks well; But what care I for words? Yet words do well when he that speaks them pleases those that hear. It is a pretty youth. The best thing in him is his complexion; He is not very tall; yet for his years he's tall. His leg is but so so; there was a pretty redness in his lip, a little riper and more lusty red than that mix'd in his cheek; There be some women, Silvius, had they mark'd him in parcels as I did, would have gone near to fall in love with him.

SILVIUS

I think you love him.

PHEBE

I love him not nor hate him not.

*(She laughs then suddenly becomes angry when she remembers Rosalind's words.)*

And yet I have more cause to hate him than to love him: For what had he to do to chide at me? And, now I am remember'd, he scorn'd at me. I marvel why I answer'd not again. But that's all one; omittance is no quittance. I'll write to him a very taunting letter, and thou shalt bear it.

SILVIUS

Phebe, with all my heart.

PHEBE

I will be bitter with him and passing short. Go with me, Silvius.

*(They all exit. Shakespeare enters and speaks to the audience.)*

SHAKESPEARE

Will Orlando and Rosalind ever get together?

*(Orlando and Rosalind run out on stage and strike an exaggerated loving pose.)*

And why is he so eager to be cured of love? Will Celia and Luce find happiness with the simple life?

*(Celia, Luce and the Sheep sprint on stage and strike exaggerated poses.)*

Will Oliver de Boys kill Orlando in the forest?

*(Oliver de Boys, Dennis and the Henchmen rush on stage to surround Orlando and strike sinister poses.)*

Will the Duchess Senior be restored to her throne and will her evil sister, the Duchess Frederick,

get her comeuppance?

*(The Duchess Senior and her Amazons rush on and hold the Duchess Frederick at sword point.)*

Will Silvius catch the shepherdess Phebe?

*(Silvius chases Phebe onto the stage)*

Will Jaques de Boys ever get to say another line?

*(Jaques de Boys enters quickly holding a microphone like a standup comedian.)*

#### JAQUES DE BOYS

Three blondes walked into a bar. You'd think one of them would have seen it. Did you hear the one about the farmer? He was outstanding in his field.

#### SHAKESPEARE

Will Touchstone find happiness at the end of a whip.

*(Audrey runs Touchstone on stage. The Stalkers follow.)*

Will Melancholy Jacqueline become a happy fool with her fool or foolishly return to her foolhardy ways?

*(Melancholy Jacqueline walks ever so slowly on stage and poses next to Touchstone.)*

Will Touchstone or Melancholy Jacqueline finally say something understandable?

Will Shakespeare....

*(The sentence started with the same cadence but Shakespeare cuts off the sentence after his name and pauses to allow the audience to catch up to the fact that there is no more.)*

Come back after intermission and see.

*(Everyone runs off stage except Melancholy Jacqueline who walks slowly as the curtain closes.)*

## ACT II

*(The curtain opens on Melancholy Jacqueline, frozen as a tree in the middle of the empty stage. She wears Touchstone's jester hat. Touchstone chases Audrey onto the stage. They form a standoff, one on each side of the "tree." The Stalkers follow and lurk in the back.)*

TOUCHSTONE

It is said, 'many a man knows no end of his goods:' right.

*(He lunges at Audrey. They switch sides of Melancholy Jacqueline.)*

AUDREY

Many a man has good horns, and knows no end of them.

TOUCHSTONE

Poor men!

*(He lunges and they switch sides.)*

AUDREY

The noblest deer hath them as huge as the rascal.

TOUCHSTONE

My love!

*(He lunges for her. They switch.)*

AUDREY

I fear you lie to me.

TOUCHSTONE

A lie circumstantial.

AUDREY

A lie direct, which cannot be ignored.

TOUCHSTONE

And you may avoid that too, with an "If". I knew when seven justices could not take up a quarrel, but when the parties were met themselves, one of them thought but of an "If", as, 'If you said so, then I said so;' and they shook hands and swore brothers. Your "If" is the only peacemaker; much virtue in "If."

AUDREY

Give me an "If."

TOUCHSTONE

If I love you more than heaven and earth, I will never lie to you.

*(He lunges. She runs out where she can see the Stalkers. They dive behind the trees for cover. Sir Oliver Martext is late to dive and caught out in the open.)*

AUDREY

Sir Oliver Martext?

SIR OLIVER MARTEXT

I was... taking a walk.

AUDREY

This is the Vicar you spoke of.

TOUCHSTONE

Good even, good Master What-ye-call't. How do you, sir? You are very well met. God 'ild you for your last company...

*(Sir Oliver and Audrey cast flirty eyes at each other.)*

Pray be covered, Audrey.

*(Touchstone covers her.)*

Good Master Oliver, we must be married, or we must live in bawdry sin.

SIR OLIVER MARTEXT

Why would I marry you.

TOUCHSTONE

Not me. Audrey.

SIR OLIVER MARTEXT

Yes. I will marry Audrey.

TOUCHSTONE

To me.

SIR OLIVER MARTEXT

Oh.

AUDREY

Will you dispatch us here under this tree, or shall we go with you to your chapel?

SIR OLIVER MARTEXT

Yes, well... Is there none here to give away the woman?

TOUCHSTONE

I will not take her on gift of any man.

SIR OLIVER MARTEXT

Truly, she must be given, or the marriage is not lawful.

AUDREY

Proceed, proceed I'll give myself.

SIR OLIVER MARTEXT

I worry that such a gift will be returned.... But not unopened.

*(Sir Oliver Martext pulls Touchstone aside.)*

SIR OLIVER MARTEXT

Will you be married, being a man of your breeding, under a bush like a beggar? Get you to church, and have a good priest that can tell you what marriage is. I will but join you together as they join wainscot; then one of you will prove a shrunk panel and, like green timber, warp. Warp!

TOUCHSTONE

I am not in the mind, but I were better to be married of you than of another, for you are not like to marry me well; and not being well married, it will be a good excuse for me hereafter to leave my wife.

*(Touchstone laughs. Sir Oliver laughs. They both laugh. Sir Oliver suddenly bolts for the wings and runs off stage as fast as he can. Audrey and Touchstone and the Stalkers follow.)*

WILLIAM

I have a claim.

*(He exits. Melancholy Jacqueline remains as a tree. She merely turns her head to acknowledge Touchstone's departure. Rosalind, Celia and Luce enter.)*

ROSALIND

I met my mother yesterday in the woods and had much question with her.

CELIA

Did you tell her who you were?

ROSALIND

I wanted to. She must have thought me simple, the way I stared at her, for she asked me of what parentage I was; I told her, of as good as she....

*(They notice Melancholy Jacqueline standing as a tree and go to inspect her.)*

ROSALIND (*as man again*)

I prithee, pretty youth, let me be better acquainted with thee.

LUCE

They say you are melancholy.

MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

I am so; I do love it better than laughing.

CELIA

Those that are in extremity of either are abominable fools worse than drunkards.

MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

I have more than the scholar's melancholy, which is emulation, or the musician's, which is fantastical, or the courtier's, which is proud, or the soldier's, which is ambitious, or the lawyer's, which is politic, or the lady's, which is nice.

LUCE

That's a lot of melancholy.

MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

It is a melancholy of mine own, compounded by contemplation, which wraps me in a most humorous sadness.

*(Melancholy Jacqueline ceremoniously removes the jester hat and hands it to Luce. She resumes her tree pose and shuffles off stage as a tree. As she turns we notice there is a poem to Rosalind nailed to her back. Orlando bounds in opposite.)*

ORLANDO

Good day and happiness!

*(Celia and Luce withdraw to hide and watch.)*

ROSALIND

Why, how now, Orlando! Where have you been all this while? You a lover! If you serve me such another trick, never come in my sight more.

ORLANDO

Ganymede...

ROSALIND

You must call me Rosalind.

ORLANDO

My fair Rosalind.

*(At the sound of her name her starts to space out and get goofy. Rosalind slaps him to bring him back to reality.)*

ORLANDO

Thanks.

ROSALIND

Now say what you would say to your lover, and you were late.

ORLANDO

I come within an hour of my promise.

ROSALIND

Break an hour's promise in love! A lover will divide a minute into a thousand parts and never break a thousandth part of a minute in the affairs of love. It may be said of him that Cupid hath clapped him o' the shoulder, but I'll warrant him heart-whole.

ORLANDO

All right.... Pardon me, dear Rosalind.

ROSALIND

Nay, an you be so tardy, come no more in my sight. I had rather be wooed by a snail.

ORLANDO

A snail?

ROSALIND

Ay, of a snail; for though he comes slowly, he carries his house on his head; a better inheritance, I think, than you would leave a woman.

*(Orlando gets discouraged and starts to leave.)*

ROSALIND

Come, woo me, woo me, for now I am in a holiday humour and like enough to consent. What would you say to me now, an I were your very very Rosalind?

ORLANDO

I would kiss before I spoke.

ROSALIND

Nay, you were better speak first, and when you were out of things to talk about, you might take occasion to kiss. Very good orators, when they are out, they will spit; and for lovers lacking matter, the cleanliest shift is to kiss.

ORLANDO

How if the kiss be denied? Then I die.

ROSALIND

No. The poor world is almost six thousand years old, and in all this time there was not any man died in a love-cause. Men have died from time to time and worms have eaten them, but not for love.

ORLANDO

I would not have my real Rosalind of this mind, for, I protest, her frown might kill me.

ROSALIND

By this hand, it will not kill a fly. But come, now I will be your Rosalind in a more coming-on disposition, and ask me what you will. I will grant it.

ORLANDO

Then love me, Rosalind.

ROSALIND

Yes, faith, will I!

ORLANDO

And wilt thou have me?

ROSALIND

Ay, and twenty such!

ORLANDO (*pulling back*)

What sayest thou?

ROSALIND

Are you not good?

ORLANDO

I hope so.

ROSALIND

Why then, can one desire too much of a good thing?

*(She calls to Celia and Luce out of hiding.)*

Come, sisters, pretend you shall be the priest and marry us. Give me your hand, Orlando. What do you say, sister?

CELIA

I cannot say the words.

LUCE

I can. Will you, Orlando, have to wife this Rosalind?

ORLANDO

I will.

LUCE

Now tell me how long you would have her after you have possessed her.

ORLANDO

For ever and a day.

ROSALIND

Say 'a day,' without the 'ever.' No, no, Orlando; men are April when they woo, December when they wed. Maids are May when they are maids, but the sky changes when they are wives. I will be more jealous of thee than a Barbary cock-pigeon over his hen, more clamorous than a parrot against rain, more new-fangled than an ape, more giddy in my desires than a monkey. I will weep for nothing, like Diana in the fountain, and I will do that when you are disposed to be merry; I will laugh like a hyena, and that when thou art inclined to sleep.

ORLANDO

But will my Rosalind do so?

ROSALIND (*woman's voice*)

By my life, she will do as I do. Now kiss the bride.

*(She grabs him and kisses him before he can react. He struggles at first, but then starts to like it, then pushes away when he realizes he is kissing a man. He yelps and keeps her at arm's length for the rest of the scene as she pursues him.)*

ORLANDO

I will leave thee. Two hours.

ROSALIND

Alas! dear love, I cannot lack thee two hours.

ORLANDO

I must attend the duchess at dinner. By two o'clock I will be with thee again.

ROSALIND (*Man's voice again.*)

Ay, go your ways, go your ways; I knew what you would prove. My friends told me as much. Two o'clock is your hour?

ORLANDO

Ay, Ganymede... sweet Rosalind.

ROSALIND

By my troth, and in good earnest, and so God mend me, and by all pretty oaths that are not dangerous, if you break one jot of your promise or come one minute behind your hour, I will think you the most pathological break-promise and the most hollow lover and the most unworthy of her you call Rosalind. Therefore beware my censure and keep your promise.

ORLANDO

With no less religion than if thou wert indeed my Rosalind. So adieu.

*(He scrambles off.)*

CELIA

You have simply misused our sex in your love-prate. We must have your doublet and hose plucked over your head, and show the world what the bird hath done to her own nest.

ROSALIND

O my pretty little cousins, that thou didst know how many fathom deep I am in love! But it cannot be sounded. My affection hath an unknown bottom, like the bay of Portugal.

LUCE

Or rather, bottomless, that as fast as you pour affection in, it runs out.

CELIA

Make sure it stays an unknown bottom.

ROSALIND

I'll tell thee, I cannot be out of the sight of Orlando. I'll go find a shadow and sigh till he come.

CELIA

And I'll sleep.

*(They exit. Amazons Hero and Beatrice enter to narrate. Jaques de Boys enters surrounded by the sheep who listen to his stand up act.)*

HERO

In another part of the forest, two brothers were about to meet.

BEATRICE

One had his eye on killing Orlando, the other his eye on killing the audience.

JAQUES DE BOYS

Thank you. Thank you. Good to be back in France again. I was performing in Scotland, did some hitchhiking. Car stops. I notice there's a sheep driving and the farmer is sitting next to him in the passenger's seat. I ask the farmer, "Why is the sheep driving?" He says, "'Cause I don't have a license."

SHEEP

Baaaaad. Baaaad.

*(Hero and Beatrice shake their heads and leave.)*

JAQUES DE BOYS

To be honest, that joke works better in front of an audience of dogs. Here's one: why did the highway patrol officer pull over the sheep? Cause she made an illegal ewe turn. Get it? E-w-e.

SHEEP

Baaaaad. Baaaad.

JAQUES DE BOYS

How does a sheep say Merry Christmas in Spain? Fleece Navidad.

*(The sheep get up to leave, shaking their heads. Oliver de Boys enters opposite doing a slow clap of his hands. Dennis is with him. Jaques de Boys calls after the sheep.)*

JAQUES DE BOYS

Hey, you're supposed to be a captive audience.

*(One sheep pauses to give Jaques de Boys a thumbs down before leaving.)*

JAQUES DE BOYS

There's always a heckler, somewhere.... Sheep don't even have thumbs! And learn to spell while you're at it. That "ewe" joke was funny.

*(He turns his attention to the clapping sound behind him.)*

JAQUES DE BOYS

What do you.... Brother?

*(They embrace.)*

OLIVER DE BOYS

Brother!

JAQUES DE BOYS

I haven't seen you since –

DENNIS

Act one.

JAQUES DE BOYS

What brings you to the forest? Have you come to see my act?

OLIVER DE BOYS

I've seen your act.

JAQUES DE BOYS

And?

OLIVER DE BOYS

I've come to kill Orlando.

JAQUES DE BOYS

I've got another set at eight.

OLIVER DE BOYS

Maybe if I'm finished.

*(The Sheep stampede back across the stage.)*

DENNIS

What caused that? That was strange.

JAQUES DE BOYS

Lion!

DENNIS

I tell the truth. It was strange.

JAQUES DE BOYS

No! Lion!

*(Behind Oliver, a LION leaps on stage and roars. Oliver de Boys draws his sword. Dennis and Jaques de Boys start to run away.)*

OLIVER DE BOYS

Stay and fight with me.

JAQUES DE BOYS

It would make more sense to fight with the lion. But I'll pass.

DENNIS

Good luck.

*(Jaques de Boys and Dennis exit in a hurry. Heroic music plays. Oliver de Boys and the Lion face off. All the narrators pop up from behind the shrubbery to narrate.)*

MARGARET

A lion, crouching, with catlike watch, waits for the man to stir first; for 'tis the royal disposition of that beast to prey on nothing that doth seem as dead:

OLIVER DE BOYS *(to Margaret)*

Really?

MARGARET

Yes.

OLIVER DE BOYS

I'm dead.

*(Oliver de Boys falls down and plays dead. The Lion edges over to poke at him.)*

LOCTUM

When who should approach? Orlando!

*(Orlando leaps onto the stage, sword drawn.)*

ORLANDO

Stand back, vile beast.... What? 'Tis my elder brother, who even now did try and kill me. Shall I save him or leave him to die?

PINCH

Did Orlando leave him there, food to be suck'd by a hungry lion?

POUNCE

Twice did he turn his back to leave.

*(Orlando turns to leave but come back.)*

POUNCE

Twice did he turn his back to leave.

*(Orlando grudgingly repeats the action.)*

PISTOL

But kindness, nobler ever than revenge, and nature, stronger than his just occasion, made him give battle to the lion.

*(Heroic music plays. Orlando rushes the Lion. When they meet, they instantly go into to super slow motion. The Lion gashes Orlando's arm.)*

MIRANDA

Upon his arm the lion tore some flesh away.

*( With his last bit of strength, Orlando stabs the Lion.)*

BIANCA

Before the mighty beast fell before him.

*(The Lion exits, looking quite annoyed that he is stabbed. Orlando rushes to help up is brother. The two look at each other, trembling at what might happen next.)*

TRINCULA

What followed next? Tears and recountments.

SEBESTIAN

Happy reunions and forgiveness.

*(Jaques de Boys reenters and the three group hug.)*

TRANIA

In brief, a family united.... Briefly.

ORLANDO

Rosalind!

*(Orlando grabs his injured arms and passes out, apparently dead. Oliver de Boys and Jaques de Boys each grab a foot and drag him off stage. Jaques de Boys continues to babble all the way off stage.)*

JAQUES DE BOYS

An antelope and a gazelle were running away from a lion. The antelope says, "It's no use, we can't outrun him." The gazelle says, "I'm not trying to outrun the lion. I'm trying to outrun you."

OLIVER DE BOYS

That's horrible.

JAQUES DE BOYS

What do you get when you cross a lion with a beagle?

OLIVER DE BOYS

What?

JAQUES DE BOYS

A terrified postman.

*(The narrators shake their heads and slowly sink back down below the shrubbery. Rosalind, Celia and Luce enter.)*

ROSALIND

Is it not past two o'clock, and no Orlando!

CELIA

I warrant you, with pure love and troubled brain, he hath ta'en his bow and arrows and is gone forth to sleep.

LUCE

Look, who comes here.

*(Silvius enter carrying a letter.)*

SILVIUS

My errand is to you, fair youth; My gentle Phebe bid me give you this. I know not the contents; but, as I guess by the stern brow and waspish action which she did use as she was writing of it, it bears an angry tenor. Pardon me. I am but as a guiltless messenger.

ROSALIND

She says I am not fair? Me? That I lack manners; She calls me proud, and that she could not love me were man as rare as Phoenix. She says her love is not the hare that I do hunt. Why writes she so to me?

LUCE

Well, shepherd?

CELIA

This is a letter of your own device.

SILVIUS

No, I protest, I know not the contents: Phebe did write it.

CELIA

Alas, poor shepherd!

ROSALIND

Do you pity him? No, he deserves no pity. Wilt thou love such a woman? What, to make thee an instrument and play false strains upon thee! Well, go your way to her, for I see love hath made thee a tame snake, and say this to her, that if she love me, I charge her to love thee; if she will not, I will never have her. If you be a true lover, hence, and not a word; for here comes more company. Show him off.

*(Celia and Luce pull Silvius off stage. Enter Oliver de Boys and Jaques de Boys. They carry a paper and a bloody handkerchief which was Rosalind's gift to Orlando.)*

JAQUES DE BOYS

So he says to the prince, "That's not a bare bodkin, that's my wife."

*(Jaques de Boys laughs and notices Rosalind.)*

Good morrow, fair youth.

OLIVER DE BOYS

I know you by description; Such garments and such years:

*(Jaques de Boys reads from a paper.)*

JAQUES DE BOYS

"The boy is fair, of female favour, and bestows himself like a ripe sister. The women appear of low class and dirtier than their brother."

OLIVER DE BOYS

Are not you the owner of the house by the brook?

ROSALIND

It is no boast, being ask'd, to say we are.

JAQUES DE BOYS

Orlando doth commend him to you.

ROSALIND

I see. He sends you instead?

OLIVER DE BOYS

And he sends this bloody napkin.

ROSALIND

What must we understand by this?

JAQUES DE BOYS

Orlando sent us hither, strangers as we are, to tell this story, that you might excuse his broken promise.

OLIVER DE BOYS

And to give this napkin dyed in his blood unto the shepherd youth that he in sport doth call his Rosalind.

*(Rosalind faints in a heap on the floor.)*

OLIVER DE BOYS

Many will swoon when they do look on blood.

JAQUES DE BOYS

We didn't even get to the part about the lion. Look, he recovers.

ROSALIND *(girl voice)*

I would I were at home.

OLIVER DE BOYS

Be of good cheer, youth. You lack a man's heart.

ROSALIND *(man voice)*

I do so, I confess it. I pray you, tell your brother how well I pretended to be a woman. Heigh-ho!

*(Rosalind gathers herself and stands like a man, laughing. Oliver de Boys offers her the handkerchief, again, and she faints, again.)*

JAQUES DE BOYS

This was not counterfeit passion though. There is too great testimony in her complexion that it was a passion of earnest.

*(They each take one of her arms and lift her up. She is too weak to stand on her own, so they must hold on and steady her.)*

JAQUES DE BOYS

We'll take you to our brother.

*(They start to help, feet dragging, the still wobbly Rosalind off stage.)*

ROSALIND

Orlando?

JAQUES DE BOYS

He's fine. Just a little maimed. I'm his younger brother, the comedian.

ROSALIND

Glad to meet you.

OLIVER DE BOYS

I'm his evil brother.

ROSALIND *(still dazed)*

I've heard so much about you.

JAQUES DE BOYS

While you're unable to run away, you mind if I try out some of my new material on you?

*(Celia and Luce rush in from the opposite wing and see Rosalind being dragged off.)*

CELIA

Unhand her... him!

LUCE

Ruffians!

*(The sisters take fighting stances. The brothers turn to them, for the first time face to face. Luce and Jaques de Boys, and Celia and Oliver de Boys fall instantly in love. Music plays. Fireworks. The brothers release Rosalind and she plops into a heap on the ground. The couples dance a ritual love ballet as the music swells. They leap off through the forest, exiting and leaving Rosalind to crawl off after them. Sebastian and Trania enter with simple William between them.)*

SEBASTIAN

Meet William. He has only a first name, because he knows only his first name.

TRANIA

Witty or witless, it doesn't matter, he still feels the turning knife of unreturned love.

SEBASTIAN

And who is the object of his desire?

WILLIAM

Audrey. She kissed me.

TRANIA

Once.

WILLIAM

She told me once was enough.

*(Enter Audrey, carrying a whip and pulling Touchstone on a leash. The Stalkers follow.)*

TOUCHSTONE

We shall find another vicar and in time be married; patience, gentle Audrey.

AUDREY

Faith, this priest was good enough.

TOUCHSTONE

A most wicked vicar, Audrey. Vile excuses. We'll send for a new one. Until then, we can... pretend to be married.

*(Audrey raises her whip to threaten Touchstone but notices William.)*

AUDREY

William?

TOUCHSTONE

Who is this?

AUDREY

A youth here in the forest lays claim to me.

WILLIAM

I do.

AUDREY

Sweet William, most have a better claim than you.

*(The Stalkers all raise their hands, unseen, of course, by Audrey.)*

WILLIAM

Your betrothal has made me bold and I must speak.

AUDREY *(to Touchstone)*

He hath no interest in me in the world

*(William takes off his hat and stares at Audrey, awkward and goofy.)*

AUDREY

Say your piece, then.

WILLIAM

Good even, Audrey.

AUDREY

Is that all?

WILLIAM

And good even to you, sir.

TOUCHSTONE

It is meat and drink to me to see a clown. I shall be flouting; I cannot hold.

WILLIAM

Hold what?

TOUCHSTONE

Gentle friend. Cover thy head, cover thy head; nay, prithee, be covered. How old are you, friend?

*(William thinks hard, trying to remember.)*

WILLIAM

How soon do you need to know?

AUDREY

Five and twenty.

TOUCHSTONE

A ripe age. Is thy name William, sir?

WILLIAM

William, sir... No.

AUDREY

Yes.

WILLIAM

No, just William.

TOUCHSTONE

A fair name. Wast born i' the forest here?

WILLIAM

No. At my house, sir, I thank God.

TOUCHSTONE

'Thank God;' a good answer. Art thou rich?

WILLIAM

No, I'm William.

*(to Audrey)*

'Tis a simple choice who can't remember a name from one moment to the next.

TOUCHSTONE

By my troth, we that have good wits have much to answer for.

WILLIAM

Ay, sir, I have a pretty wit.

TOUCHSTONE

Why, thou sayest well. I do now remember a saying, 'The fool doth think he is wise, but the wise man knows himself to be a fool.' The heathen philosopher, when he had a desire to eat a grape, would open his lips when he put it into his mouth; meaning thereby that grapes were made to eat and lips to open.

WILLIAM

That's a lot of words.

TOUCHSTONE

You do love this maid?

WILLIAM

I do, sir.

TOUCHSTONE

Then learn this of me: to have, is to have; for it is a figure in rhetoric that drink, being poured out of a cup into a glass, by filling the one doth empty the other; for all your writers do consent that ipse is he. Now, you are not ipse, for I am he.

WILLIAM

Which he, sir?

TOUCHSTONE

He, sir, that must marry this woman. Therefore, you clown, abandon,--which is in the vulgar leave,--the society of this female,--which in the common is woman; which together is, abandon the society of this female, or, clown, thou perishest; or, to thy better understanding, diest; or, to wit, I kill thee, make thee away, translate thy life into death, thy liberty into bondage. I will deal in poison with thee, or in steel; I will kill thee a hundred and fifty ways. Therefore tremble and depart. Do you understand?

WILLIAM

Bondage. I understood that part.

AUDREY

Do go William.

WILLIAM

God rest you merry, sir.

*(William, dejected goes back to the other Stalkers and hides behind a shrub.)*

TOUCHSTONE

To-morrow is the joyful day, Audrey; to-morrow will we be married.

AUDREY

I do desire it with all my heart; and I hope it is no dishonest desire to desire to be a woman of the world.

*(She takes a quiet, wistful moment. Touchstone moves up to take advantage and hug her. She whips him. She chases him off followed by the Stalkers. Enter Orlando, Jaques de Boys and Oliver de Boys. Orlando's arm is in a bloody sling from his maiming.)*

ORLANDO

Is't possible that but seeing you should love her? and loving woo? and, wooing, she should grant? and will you persevere to enjoy her?

JAQUES DE BOYS

Neither call the giddiness of it in question.

OLIVER DE BOYS

The poverty of her.

JAQUES DE BOYS

The small acquaintance.

OLIVER DE BOYS

My sudden wooing.

JAQUES DE BOYS

Nor her sudden consenting;

OLIVER DE BOYS

But say with me,

BOTH

I love her!

OLIVER DE BOYS

For my father's house and all the revenue that was old Sir Rowland's we will estate upon you, Orlando, and here live and die shepherds.

ORLANDO

Well..., You have my consent. Let your weddings be to-morrow. Go you and prepare Aliena and Elise; for look you, here comes Ganymede.

*(Oliver and Jaques hurry away from Rosalind as she enters.)*

ROSALIND

O, my dear Orlando, how it grieves me to see thee wear thy heart in a scarf!

ORLANDO

It is my arm.

ROSALIND

I thought thy heart had been wounded with the claws of a lion.

ORLANDO

Wounded it is, but with the eyes of a lady.

ROSALIND

Did your brothers tell you how I counterfeited to swoon when he showed me your handkerchief?

ORLANDO

Ay, and greater wonders than that.

ROSALIND

O, I know where you are, nay, 'tis true, there was never any thing so sudden:' for your brothers and my sisters no sooner met but they looked, no sooner looked but they loved, no sooner loved but they sighed, no sooner sighed but they asked one another the reason, no sooner knew the reason but they sought the remedy. They are in the very wrath of love; clubs cannot part them.

ORLANDO

They shall be married to-morrow, but, O, how bitter a thing it is to look into happiness through another man's eyes!

ROSALIND

Why then, to-morrow I cannot serve your turn for Rosalind?

ORLANDO

I can live no longer by thinking.

ROSALIND

I will weary you then no longer with idle talking. Believe then that I can do strange things. If you do love Rosalind so near the heart as your gesture cries it out, when your brothers marry, shall you marry Rosalind.

ORLANDO

Speakest thou in sober meanings?

ROSALIND

By my life, I do. Therefore, put you in your best array. Bid your friends; for if you will be married to-morrow, you shall, and to Rosalind, if you will.

*(Enter Phebe followed by Silvius followed by the sheep.)*

ROSALIND

Look, here comes a lover of mine and a lover of hers.

PHEBE

Youth, you have done me much ungentleness, to show the letter that I writ to you.

ROSALIND

I care not if I have. You are there followed by a faithful shepherd; Look upon him, love him; he worships you.

PHEBE

Good shepherd, tell this youth what 'tis to love.

SILVIUS

It is to be all made of sighs and tears; And so am I for Phebe.

*(Silvius runs to embrace Phebe. She breaks free instantly and runs to hug Rosalind.)*

PHEBE

And I for Ganymede.

ORLANDO

And I for Rosalind.

ROSALIND

And I for no woman.

*(Rosalind breaks free to chase Orlando.)*

SHEEP

Baaa!

*(The Sheep hug Silvius.)*

SILVIUS

It is to be all made of faith and service; And so am I for Phebe.

*(The action speeds up the second time through with the lines overlapping and people and sheep rushing their loves and then breaking free to chase again.)*

PHEBE

And I for Ganymede.

ORLANDO

And I for Rosalind.

ROSALIND

And I for no woman.

SHEEP

Baaa!

*(All pause to catch their breath.)*

SILVIUS

It is to be all made of fantasy, all made of passion and all made of wishes, all adoration, duty, and observance, all humbleness, all patience and impatience, all purity, all trial, all observance; And so am I for Phebe.

*(The chasing resumes even faster.)*

PHEBE

And I for Ganymede.

ORLANDO

And I for Rosalind.

ROSALIND

And I for no woman.

SHEEP

Baaa!

*(They all catch each other finally, Orlando clutched by Rosalind, in turn clutched by Phebe, who is clutched by Silvius, who is clutched by the sheep. They are all both trying to break away and clutch at the same time.)*

PHEBE

If this be so, why blame you me to love you?

SILVIUS (*overlapping*)

If this be so, why blame you me to love you?

ORLANDO (*overlapping*)

If this be so, why blame you me to love you?

*(Everyone pauses for a moment.)*

ROSALIND

Who do you speak to, 'Why blame you me to love you?'

ORLANDO

To her that is not here, nor doth not hear.

SHEEP

Baaaa.

ROSALIND (*breaking free*)

Pray you, no more of this; 'tis like the howling of Irish wolves.

*(The sheep recoil in fear and hide behind Silvius from the wolves.)*

SHEEP

Baaaa!

ROSALIND

*(To Silvius)* I will help you, if I can. *(To Phebe)* I would love you, if I could. I will marry you, if ever I marry woman, and I'll be married to-morrow. *(To Orlando)* I will satisfy you, if ever I satisfied man, and you shall be married to-morrow. *(To Silvius)* I will content you, if what pleases you contents you, and you shall be married to-morrow. *(To Orlando)* As you love Rosalind, meet. *(To Silvius)* As you love Phebe, meet, and as I love no woman, I'll meet. *(To Sheep)* Sheep, you're on your own. So fare you well. I have left you commands.

SILVIUS

I'll not fail, if I live.

PHEBE

Nor I.

ORLANDO

Nor I.

*(They exit, leaving the Sheep alone on stage. Melancholy Jacqueline and Old Corin come out on one side, the Stalkers led by Sir Oliver Martext and William on the other. Bianca and Trincula enter to narrate.)*

BIANCA

And so the joyous wedding day is at hand.

TRINCULA

But not all are happy.

WILLIAM

I had a claim.

OLIVER MARTEXT

I for one am glad to be out of love's spell.

A STALKER

What will we do now?

CORIN

You could stalk me.

STALKERS

No thanks. Too busy. I think I have a dentist appointment, etc.

MELANCHOLY JACQUELINE

I will travel. I will sell my own lands to see other men's. I will see much and have nothing. I will gain experience, and my experience will make me sad.

SHEEP

Baaa. Baa, baaa. Baa.

WILLIAM

I understand.

*(Enter the Duchess Senior, the de Boys brothers, and all the wedding guests except Celia, Luce and Rosalind.)*

PINCH

There is, sure, another flood toward, and all the couples are coming to the ark.

PISTOL

Here comes a pair of very strange beasts, which in all tongues are called fools.

*(Enter Touchstone and Audrey in a frilly wedding dress. All the men seem to know her.)*

TOUCHSTONE

Salutation and greeting to you all!

AUDREY

Good my ladyship, bid us welcome. This is the motley-minded gentleman that hath been a courtier.

TOUCHSTONE

If any man doubt that, let him put me to my purgation. I have trod a measure; I have flattered a lady; I have been politic with my friend, smooth with mine enemy; I have undone three tailors; I have had four quarrels, and like to have fought one.

THE DUCHESS SENIOR

I know him very well. My sister's fool!

*(The Amazons all draw swords and hold them on Touchstone.)*

TOUCHSTONE

God 'ild you, madam; I desire you of the like. I press in here amongst the rest of the country copulatives, to swear and to forswear according as marriage binds and blood breaks a poor virgin.

STALKERS

Really? I don't think so, etc.

TOUCHSTONE

Your highness, she is an ill-favoured thing but mine own; a poor humour of mine is to take that that no man else will. Rich honesty dwells like a miser, your highness, in a poor house; as your pearl in your foul oyster. --bear your body more seeming, Audrey:-

*( Enter Rosalind, Luce and Celia.)*

ROSALIND

Patience once more, whiles our compact is urged. *(To the Duchess)* If I bring in your Rosalind, will you bestow her on Orlando here?

THE DUCHESS SENIOR

That would I, had I kingdoms to give with her.

ROSALIND *(to Orlando)*

And you say, you will have her, when I bring her?

ORLANDO

That would I, were I of all kingdoms king.

ROSALIND *(to Phebe)*

You say you'll marry me, if I be willing?

PHEBE

That will I, should I die the hour after.

ROSALIND

But if you do refuse to marry me, you'll give yourself to this most faithful shepherd?

PHEBE

So is the bargain.

ROSALIND *(to Silvius)*

You say, that you'll have Phebe, if she will?

SILVIUS

Though to have her and death were both one thing.

ROSALIND

Keep you your words.

*(Rosalind removes her beard and lets down her hair. Her big reveal. No one seems to recognize her. They instead look confused and murmur. Rosalind sighs. She motions for everyone to move a little more up stage, which they do. Rosalind turns her back to the audience and with a quick snap, rips open her doublet to reveal what is beneath it. Everyone but Luce, Celia and Rosalind immediately faints. Rosalind closes her doublet and runs to the side of Orlando. Luce and Celia rush to their loves. Everyone recovers slowly.)*

ROSALIND

To you I give myself, for I am yours.

THE DUCHESS SENIOR

If there be truth in sight, you are my daughter.

ORLANDO

If there be truth in sight, you are my Rosalind.

PHEBE

If sight and shape be true, why then, my love adieu!

ROSALIND

I'll have no mother, if you be not she. I'll have no husband, if you be not he, nor ne'er wed woman, if you be not she.

SIR OLIVER MARTEXT

Peace, ho! I bar confusion: 'Tis I must make conclusion of these most strange events. Here's ten that must take hands to join in Hymen's bands.

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

Make that twelve.

*(She enters with Dennis.)*

THE DUCHESS SENIOR

Sister?

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

My fiancé, Dennis.

DENNIS

I guess you'll be calling me Duke Dennis soon.

THE DUCHESS SENIOR

Have you come to disrupt these proceeding, or to kill me?

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

In truth, it had crossed my mind. Hearing how that every day men and women of great worth resorted to this forest, I became jealous, and I came to take you sister and put you to the sword. And to the skirts of this wild wood I came; where I met again, Dennis.

DENNIS

I was searching for Orlando when I became separated from my master. Then I met the Duchess by a babbling brook.

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

I was converted by love, both from my enterprise and from the world. I hereby bequeath my crown to you, my banish'd sister, and all your lands are restored to you and all of you who were exiled here.

DENNIS

Wait. You said we were living in the palace in luxury.

THE DUCHESS FREDERICK

I will live a religious life in the natural state with my love.

SIR OLIVER MARTEXT

Is there anyone else before we start the ceremony.

ADAM

I sir. I wish to marry.

SIR OLIVER MARLETT

And where is the bride?

ADAM

I... she... I thought it was worth a try.

*(Sir Oliver Martext motions for the couples to gather before him. He opens his book to read the vows.)*

SIR OLIVER MARTEXT

If truth holds true contents.  
You and you no cross shall part:  
You and you are heart in heart  
You to his love must accord,  
Or have a woman to your lord:  
You were rulers of the lands  
Now you'll be ruled by wedding bands.  
You and you are sure together,  
As the winter to foul weather.  
Wedding is great Juno's crown:  
O blessed bond of board and bed!  
'Tis Hymen peoples every town;  
High wedlock then be honoured:

*(Everyone hugs and then freezes in tableau. Shakespeare enters.)*

SHAKESPEARE

And thus everyone lived happily, except, of course Melancholy Jacqueline, who lived unhappily, which made her happy. And so there's nothing left of our play except for this... the epilogue...

*(Rosalind steps out to start the epilogue. The Sheep break tableau and surround Shakespeare.)*

ROVER

That's the end?

FLUFFY

You said we'd have lines.

SPIKE

You promised us lines.

SANDY

We counted on it. You lied.

SHAKESPEARE

I said "If there's time." And Touchstone –

## TOUCHSTONE

A lie can be avoided with an "If."

SPOT *(to the other sheep)*

Come on. I suppose we'll have to live with our disappointment.

## SNOWBALL

Let's go, sheep. Nothing to see here.

## TROUBLES

There'll be other plays I suppose.

## SASSY

Turn off the camcorder, mom. Just... just.... turn it off.

*(The sheep start off baaaing meekly. Shakespeare motions to Rosalind. She shrugs.)*

## ROSALIND

It is not the fashion to see the sheep do the epilogue; but it is no more unhandsome than to see Shakespeare speak the prologue.

## SHAKESPEARE

And now.... the epilogue. Sheep... It's all your.

*(The sheep run back, and deliver the most animated epilogue ever.)*

## SANDY

If it be true that good wine needs no bush, 'tis true that a good play needs no epilogue.

## SPOT

Yet to good wine they do use good bushes.

## FLUFFY

And good plays prove the better by the help of good epilogues.

## ROVER

Our way is to conjure you.

## SASSY

And I'll begin with the women. I charge you, O women, for the love you bear to men, to like as much of this play as please you.

## SPIKE

And I charge you, O men, for the love you bear to women--

SNOWBALL

As we perceive by your simpering, none of you hates them--

SPIKE

--that between you and the women the play may please.

ROVER

If I were a woman I would kiss as many of you as had beards that pleased me.

SNOWBALL

Complexions that I liked.

TROUBLES

And breaths that I defied not.

SASSY

And, I am sure, as many as have good beards--

SPOT

Or good faces--

TROUBLES

Or sweet breaths--

FLUFFY

Will, for our kind offer, when we make curtsy--

SANDY

Bid us farewell.

SHEEP

Baaaa.

*(The Sheep exit as if they are synchronized swimming sheep. The rest of the cast follows.)*