

As You Like It

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SCENE I. The forest.

Enter ROSALIND, CELIA, and JAQUES

JAQUES

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

ROSALIND

They say you are a melancholy fellow.

JAQUES

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

ROSALIND

Those that are in extremity of either are abominable fellows and betray themselves to every modern censure worse than drunkards.

JAQUES

Why, 'tis good to be sad and say nothing.

ROSALIND

Why then, 'tis good to be a post.

JAQUES

I have neither the scholar's melancholy, which is emulation, nor the musician's, which is fantastical, nor the courtier's, which is proud, nor the soldier's, which is ambitious, nor the lawyer's, which is politic, nor the lady's, which is nice, nor the lover's, which is all these: but it is a melancholy of mine own, compounded of many simples, extracted from many objects, and indeed the sundry's contemplation of my travels, in which my often rumination wraps me in a most humorous sadness.

ROSALIND

A traveller! By my faith, you have great reason to

be sad: I fear you have sold your own lands to see other men's; then, to have seen much and to have nothing, is to have rich eyes and poor hands.

JAQUES

Yes, I have gained my experience.

ROSALIND

And your experience makes you sad: I had rather have a fool to make me merry than experience to make me sad; and to travel for it too!

Enter ORLANDO

ORLANDO

Good day and happiness, dear Rosalind!

JAQUES

Nay, then, God be wi' you, an you talk in blank verse.

Exit

ROSALIND

Farewell, Monsieur Traveller: look you lisp and wear strange suits, disable all the benefits of your own country, be out of love with your nativity and almost chide God for making you that countenance you are, or I will scarce think you have swam in a gondola. Why, how now, Orlando! where have you been all this while? You a lover! An you serve me such another trick, never come in my sight more.

ORLANDO

My fair Rosalind, I come within an hour of my promise.

ROSALIND

Break an hour's promise in love! He that will divide a minute into a thousand parts and break but a part of the 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

Pardon me, dear Rosalind.

ROSALIND

Nay, an you be so tardy, come no more in my sight: I had as lief be wooed of a snail.

ORLANDO

Of a snail?

ROSALIND

Ay, of a snail; for though he comes slowly, he carries his house on his head; a better jointure, I think, than you make a woman: besides he brings his destiny with him.

ORLANDO

What's that?

ROSALIND

Why, horns, which such as you are fain to be beholding to your wives for: but he comes armed in his fortune and prevents the slander of his wife.

ORLANDO

Virtue is no horn-maker; and my Rosalind is virtuous.

ROSALIND

And I am your Rosalind.

CELIA

It pleases him to call you so; but he hath a Rosalind of a better leer than you.

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 gravelled for lack of matter, you might take

occasion to kiss. Very good orators, when they are out, they will spit; and for lovers lacking--God warn us!--matter, the cleanliest shift is to kiss.

ORLANDO

How if the kiss be denied?

ROSALIND

Then she puts you to entreaty, and there begins new matter.

ORLANDO

Who could be out, being before his beloved mistress?

ROSALIND

Marry, that should you, if I were your mistress, or I should think my honesty ranker than my wit.

ORLANDO

What, of my suit?

ROSALIND

Not out of your apparel, and yet out of your suit.
Am not I your Rosalind?

ORLANDO

I take some joy to say you are, because I would be talking of her.

ROSALIND

Well in her person I say I will not have you.

ORLANDO

Then in mine own person I die.

ROSALIND

No, faith, die by attorney. The poor world is almost six thousand years old, and in all this time there was not any man died in his own person, videlicet, in a love-cause. Troilus had his brains dashed out with a Grecian club; yet he did what he could to die before, and he is one of the patterns of love. Leander, he would have lived many a fair year, though Hero had turned nun, if it had not been

for a hot midsummer night; for, good youth, he went
but forth to wash him in the Hellespont and being
taken with the cramp was drowned and the foolish
coroners of that age found it was 'Hero of Sestos.'
But these are all lies: men have died from time to
time and worms have eaten them, but not for love.

ORLANDO

I would not have my right 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, Fridays and Saturdays and all.

ORLANDO

And wilt thou have me?

ROSALIND

Ay, and twenty such.

ORLANDO

What sayest thou?

ROSALIND

Are you not good?

ORLANDO

I hope so.

ROSALIND

Why then, can one desire too much of a good thing?
Come, sister, you shall be the priest and marry us.
Give me your hand, Orlando. What do you say, sister?

ORLANDO

Pray thee, marry us.

CELIA

I cannot say the words.

ROSALIND

You must begin, 'Will you, Orlando--'

CELIA

Go to. Will you, Orlando, have to wife this Rosalind?

ORLANDO

I will.

ROSALIND

Ay, but when?

ORLANDO

Why now; as fast as she can marry us.

ROSALIND

Then you must say 'I take thee, Rosalind, for wife.'

ORLANDO

I take thee, Rosalind, for wife.

ROSALIND

I might ask you for your commission; but I do take thee, Orlando, for my husband: there's a girl goes before the priest; and certainly a woman's thought runs before her actions.

ORLANDO

So do all thoughts; they are winged.

ROSALIND

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 hyen, and that when thou art inclined to sleep.

ORLANDO

But will my Rosalind do so?

ROSALIND

By my life, she will do as I do.

ORLANDO

O, but she is wise.

ROSALIND

Or else she could not have the wit to do this: the wiser, the waywarder: make the doors upon a woman's wit and it will out at the casement; shut that and 'twill out at the key-hole; stop that, 'twill fly with the smoke out at the chimney.

ORLANDO

A man that had a wife with such a wit, he might say 'Wit, whither wilt?'

ROSALIND

Nay, you might keep that cheque for it till you met your wife's wit going to your neighbour's bed.

ORLANDO

And what wit could wit have to excuse that?

ROSALIND

Marry, to say she came to seek you there. You shall

never take her without her answer, unless you take her without her tongue. O, that woman that cannot make her fault her husband's occasion, let her never nurse her child herself, for she will breed it like a fool!

ORLANDO

For these two hours, Rosalind, I will leave thee.

ROSALIND

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

ORLANDO

I must attend the duke at dinner: by two o'clock I will be with thee again.

ROSALIND

Ay, go your ways, go your ways; I knew what you would prove: my friends told me as much, and I thought no less: that flattering tongue of yours won me: 'tis but one cast away, and so, come, death! Two o'clock is your hour?

ORLANDO

Ay, 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 that may be chosen out of the gross band of the unfaithful: therefore beware my censure and keep your promise.

ORLANDO

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

ROSALIND

Well, Time is the old justice that examines all such offenders, and let Time try: adieu.

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 coz, coz, coz, my pretty little coz, 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.

CELIA

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

ROSALIND

No, that same wicked bastard of Venus that was begot
of thought, conceived of spleen and born of madness,
that blind rascally boy that abuses every one's eyes
because his own are out, let him be judge how deep I
am in love. I'll tell thee, Aliena, 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.

Exeunt