

As You Like It abbreviated

Act 5, Scene 4

Counsel

Situation: The ever so talented Rosalind arranges for Duke Senior and Hyman, the mythical god of marriage, to marry the four couples: Rosalind and Orlando; Celia and Oliver; Audrey and Touchstone; Phoebe and Silvius. She then offers us an epilogue, saying “It is not the fashion to see the lady the epilogue, but it is no more unhandsome than to see the lord the prologue.”

Jacques de Boys, the second brother, enters.

SECOND BROTHER: Let me have audience for a word or two. Duke Frederick, hearing how that every day men of great worth resorted to this forest, addressed by a mighty power, was converted both from his enterprise and from the world, his crown bequeathing to his banished brother. This to be true I do engage my life.

DUKE SENIOR: Welcome, young man. Thou offer'st fairly to thy brothers' wedding: to one his lands withheld, and to the other a land itself at large, a potent dukedom. Every of this happy number shall share the good of our returned fortune. Meantime, forget this new-fall'n dignity, and fall into our rustic revelry. Play, music.

JAQUES TO THE SECOND BROTHER: Sir, by your patience: if I heard you rightly, the duke hath put on a religious life and thrown into neglect the pompous court.

SECOND BROTHER: He hath.

DUKE SENIOR: Proceed, proceed. We'll begin these rites, as we do trust they'll end, in true delights.

They dance. All exit but Rosalind.

Rosalind with Epilogue

**It is no less improper the lady
Provide the epilogue than you to see
The lord the prologue. If be true a good
Wine needs no advertisement, 'tis true that
A good play needs no epilogue. Yet could
Not good wine as good plays prove better at
Self-betterment? To beg will not become
Me, not dressed as a beggar; yet in some
Way I want to summon you. I'll begin
With women: for the love you bear for men,
Enjoy this play with all the love within
You. Men, for the love you bear to women,
And none of you hate them, as each here sees,
May for you and your women the play please.**

ROSALIND: When I make curtsy, bid me farewell.