

As You Like It abbreviated

Act 2, Scene 7

Fantasy

Situation: Having now entered the Forest of Arden, Orlando leaves a famished and exhausted Adam under a tree as he wanders off to find food for the two of them, only to come across Duke Senior and his entourage about to enjoy a dinner together. Just before Orlando interrupts the dinner party, the men listen to Jaques tell a tale of his encounter earlier in the day with a motley fool.

DUKE SENIOR: Why monsieur? You look merrily.

Jaques to Duke Senior

I met a motley fool i' th' forest,
A fool, as I do live by food and rest,
A fool, who railed on to Lady Fortune
In good terms. "Good morrow, fool" quoth I. "No
Sir," quoth he, "Call me not 'fool' till heaven
Hath sent me fortune." Would you not then know
He drew a dial from his pouch and says, "See
How the world works. 'Tis now ten, and to be
Eleven after one hour. So from hour
To hour we ripe and from hour to hour we
Rot, and thereby hangs a tale." And he, our
Fool, says, "They have a gift if ladies be
Fair." He hath strong observations from school
Vented in mangled form. Were I a fool!

JAQUES: O, that I were a fool! I am ambitious for a motley coat.

DUKE SENIOR: Thou shalt have one.

JAQUES: It is my only suit, provided that you weed your better judgments of all opinion that grows rank in them that I am wise. I must have liberty withal, as large a charter as the wind, to blow on whom I please, for so fools have.

Orlando enters brandishing a sword.

ORLANDO: Forbear, and eat no more.

JAQUES: Why, I have eat none yet.

DUKE SENIOR TO ORLANDO: Art thou thus boldened, man, by thy distress, or else a rude despiser of good manners, that in civility thou seem'st so empty?