

As You Like It abbreviated

Act 2, Scene 7

Insight

Situation: Having stumbled onto the duke's dinner party, Duke Senior asks Orlando to go get the starving Adam and that they will help provide for him. It is at this point where Jaques delivers to the others Shakespeare's famous "All the world's a stage" soliloquy.

ORLANDO: There is an old poor man who after me hath many a weary step limped in pure love. Till he be first sufficed, oppressed with two weak evils, age and hunger, I will not touch a bit.

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

ORLANDO: I thank you.

He exits.

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

Jaques to the dinner party

All the world's a stage, and all good women
And men merely players, having times when
They enter and exit, playing many
Parts. At first the infant in the arms of
A nurse; then as a youth unwillingly
Creeping to school; then sighing deep in love
Like a furnace. Then a soldier, sudden
And quick in quarrel. Full of wise saws then,
Playing the part. The sixth age shifts into
Spectacles on a nose with a manly
Voice turned to one of a youth. Last scene you
See that ends this eventful history
In a new time of childishness to waste;
Oblivious, sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste.

Orlando enters carrying Adam

DUKE SENIOR: Welcome. Set down your venerable burden, and let him feed.

ORLANDO: I thank you most for him.

ADAM: I scarce can speak to thank you for myself.

DUKE SENIOR: Welcome. Give us some music, and, good cousin, sing.