

AS YOU LIKE IT | FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Shakespeare's language can seem scary, but give it a try! *Go at your own pace, and have fun!*



SHAKESPEARE IN PRISON

DETROIT PUBLIC THEATRE'S
SIGNATURE COMMUNITY PROGRAM



Rosalind and Celia are cousins and BFFs, but they got kicked out of their home, so they're hiding out in the woods, with Rosalind dressed up as a man for safety. In the woods, they start finding terrible love poems written to Rosalind. But who could be writing those lame verses...?

Enter Orlando, who was also kicked out of his home and is also hiding out in the woods. Turns out he secretly fell in love with Rosalind before they all ran away. Also turns out he's a terrible poet (but so good-looking that no one cares)...

Just before this scene, Celia has discovered that Orlando is the one writing the awful poems. But Rosalind has to keep pretending she's a man... Oh, boy. Sounds like a comedy!

The Shakespeare

CELIA

Didst thou hear these verses?

ROSALIND

O yes, I heard them all, and more too, for some of them had in them more feet than the verses would bear.

CELIA

Trow you who hath done this?

ROSALIND

Is it a man?

CELIA

And a chain that you once wore about his neck — change you color?

ROSALIND

I prithee, who?

CELIA

O Lord, Lord, it is a hard matter for friends to meet; but mountains may be removed with earthquakes and so encounter.

ROSALIND

Nay, but who is it?

CELIA

Is it possible?

ROSALIND

Nay, I prithee now, with most petitionary vehemence, tell me who it is.

CELIA

O wonderful, wonderful, and most wonderful wonderful, and yet again wonderful, and after that out of all hooping!

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 it is quickly and speak apace. Is he of God's making? What manner of man? Is his head worth a hat? Or his chin worth a beard?

CELIA

Nay, he hath but a little beard.

ROSALIND

Why, God will send more if the man will be thankful. Let me stay the growth of his beard, if thou delay me not the knowledge of his chin.

CELIA

It is young Orlando, that tripped up the wrestler's heels and your heart both in an instant.

ROSALIND

Nay, but the devil take mocking! Speak sad brow and true maid.

CELIA

I'faith, coz, 'tis he.

ROSALIND

Orlando?

CELIA

Orlando.

ROSALIND

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

CELIA

You must borrow me Gargantua's mouth first. 'Tis a word too great for any mouth of this age's size. To say ay and no to these particulars is more than to answer in a catechism.

ROSALIND

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 atomies as to resolve the propositions of a lover; but take a taste of my finding him and relish it with good observance. I 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

Give me audience, good madam.

ROSALIND

Proceed.

CELIA

There lay he stretched along like a wounded knight —

ROSALIND

Though it be pity to see such a sight, it well becomes the ground.

CELIA

Cry holla to thy tongue, I prithee: it curvets unseasonably. He was furnished like a hunter —

ROSALIND

O ominous, he comes to kill my heart!

CELIA

I would sing my song without a burden — thou bring'st me out of tune.

ROSALIND

Do you not know I am a woman? When I think, I must speak. Sweet, say on.

The Translation

CELIA

Were you listening to these poems?

ROSALIND

Oh yes, I heard them all, and more, too. Some of those lines had more words than the poems could handle.

CELIA

Do you know who wrote these?

ROSALIND

Was it a man?

CELIA

And he had a chain that once belonged to you hanging around his neck. Are you blushing?

ROSALIND

Please, who?

CELIA

Oh God, God! It's difficult to bring two friends together, but even mountains can be moved together by earthquakes.

ROSALIND

No, who are you talking about?

CELIA

Is it possible?

ROSALIND

No, I'm begging you now, tell me who it is.

CELIA

Oh, this is wonderful, wonderful—just wonderful wonderful! And another wonderful, and beyond-my-ability-to-express wonderful!

ROSALIND

Good grief, do you think that just because I'm dressed like a man, I have a man's patience? Every second you delay is as long and dull as a journey to South Seas. I'm begging you, tell me who it is quickly, and speak fast. Did God make him? I mean, what sort of man is he? Is he enough of a man to wear a hat and grow a beard?

CELIA

No, he has only a little beard.

ROSALIND

Well, eventually God will send him some more hair, if he thanks Him. I'll wait till his beard grows in, if you'll just hurry up and tell me what chin that beard is on.

CELIA

It's Orlando, who triumphed over both the wrestler and you in the same instant.

ROSALIND

Damn you for mocking me. Speak seriously and honestly.

CELIA

Really, cousin, it's him.

ROSALIND

Orlando?

CELIA

Orlando.

ROSALIND

Oh no! What am I going to do in my man's clothing? What did he do when you saw him? What did he say? How did he look? Where did he go? What brings him here? Did he ask about me? Where is he staying? How did he say good-bye? And when will you see him again? Answer me in a word.

CELIA

You'd better get me Gargantua's mouth first. The word's too big for any mouth nowadays. Answering "yes" and "no" to all those questions would be harder than answering a catechism.

ROSALIND

But does he know that I'm here in the forest and dressed in men's clothing? Does he look as bright and handsome as the day we saw him wrestling?

CELIA

It's easier to count specks than to answer a lover's millions of questions. But taste my story, and relish it by paying attention. I found Orlando under a tree, like a dropped acorn.

ROSALIND

That tree could be called God's tree, since it drops such wonderful fruit.

CELIA

Let me talk, good lady.

ROSALIND

Go on.

CELIA

He lay there, stretched out like a wounded knight.

ROSALIND

Though that must have been a pitiful sight, the ground looked beautiful.

CELIA

Cry, "whoa!" to your tongue, please. It's leaping about like a frisky horse. He was dressed like a hunter.

ROSALIND

Oh, that's ominous! He has come to kill my heart.

CELIA

I'd like to sing my song solo. You're making me go off-key.

ROSALIND

Don't you know that I'm a woman? Whatever I think, I have to say. Sweetheart, go on.



AS YOU LIKE IT | FOOD FOR THOUGHT

You can respond to these in any way you choose:

Write

ACT IT OUT

Talk about it

Draw

THINK ABOUT IT

... up to you!



SHAKESPEARE IN PRISON

DETROIT PUBLIC THEATRE'S
SIGNATURE COMMUNITY PROGRAM



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



This is an incredibly fun little speech!

Try playing Rosalind. Switch up your objective and tactic with each question. Experiment with pacing. (Don't forget to breathe on punctuation!) Think about staging. See what you come up with!

Here's the thing: Celia's reactions are what will sell the scene to the audience. So... try playing Celia—and try not to think too much about your reactions. Just see what happens, and then go from there...

Romeo & Juliet
1595 (ish*)

5 years

As You Like It
1600 (ish*)

A Timeline
of
Shakespeare's Career

Over-achiever.



1590

1592 (ish*)
Richard III

1599 (ish*)
Julius Caesar

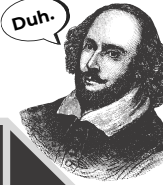
1600 (ish*)
Hamlet

1603 (ish*)
Othello

1606 (ish*)
King Lear

1611 (ish*)
The Tempest

1613



Duh.

*Why are all the dates "ish"?

No one knows exactly when Shakespeare wrote each play, but scholars have spent a lot of time figuring out some good guesses!

Often, when we're analyzing a scene in a play, we talk about its *mechanics*, which means the same thing as when we talk about actual machines: *how does it work?*

Intriguingly, the mechanics of this scene between Celia and Rosalind (*As You Like It*) and the last pack's scene between the Nurse and Juliet (*Romeo & Juliet*) are essentially the same!

- Celia/Nurse have information that Rosalind/Juliet want about the person they're in love with.
- Celia/Nurse withhold the information and tease Rosalind/Juliet for awhile.
- Rosalind/Juliet are increasingly annoyed and try all sorts of tactics to get Celia/Nurse to spill the beans.
- Celia/Nurse eventually spill those beans.
- Everyone is super excited about the spilled beans.

But the scenes are also really different because of the relationships between the characters. Celia and Rosalind are cousins, peers, the same age; the Nurse is Juliet's caretaker, old enough to be her mother, and her family's employee. All of that affects the *dynamic*: the way the characters interact with one another.

The question is... how does that affect the way each scene is performed by the actors and staged by the director? What could be the same? What would need to be different to tell your audience the clearest story possible?

Shakespeare evolved over his career, but as he wrote new plays, he kept coming back to similar ideas and situations. This scene is a simple example: Early in his career, he wrote in verse for almost everything (think of the *Romeo & Juliet* pack). But as he got more experience, he started using prose for laid-back, casual conversations like this one, to show that the characters are relaxed.

Think back over the activity packs and any other Shakespeare you've read. Can you think of some ideas that seem to repeat themselves? Or situations that keep showing up?

What's something you've evolved on?

Is there anything you talk or think about differently than you used to? Or some idea you're always working out in your mind?