

AS YOU LIKE IT SYNOPSIS



Prolgue

Our play opens with the coronation ceremony of **Duke Frederick** (Celia's father and Rosalind's uncle). Duke Frederick has recently usurped the throne and kingdom of his older brother, Duke Senior (Rosalind's father). Tensions are high in the royal court.



ACT 1. Scene 1.

Orlando is the youngest son of the late Sir Rowland de Boys. Following his father's recent death, Orlando's oldest brother, **Oliver**, has withheld his inheritance from him. Orlando is frustrated by this unfair treatment and discusses his poor fortune with **Adam**, a kindly servant of the de Boys family.

When Oliver interrupts their conversation, Orlando and Oliver immediately start to bicker and fight. Adam breaks them up, asking that the brothers be patient with each other for the sake of their father's memory.



Oliver tells the audience about his strong dislike of his youngest brother. He devises a plan to have Orlando killed in an upcoming wrestling match against the famous and feared **Charles the Wrestler**.

Charles the Wrestler tells Oliver about the recent court drama. Oliver convinces Charles that he must challenge Orlando to a match, knowing that it will likely kill his youngest brother.



ACT 1. Scene 2.

Celia, Duke Frederick's daughter, and her cousin **Rosalind** talk about the recent changes at court. Rosalind misses her father, who has been banished to the Forest of Arden, and Celia tries to comfort her by telling her that once Duke Frederick dies, she will happily hand over the kingdom to Rosalind, the rightful heir.

Rosalind and Celia consult with **Touchstone**, the court's fool. **Le Beau** begins to prepare the space for the upcoming wrestling match between Charles and Orlando.



Rosalind and Orlando meet as he is preparing for his match and immediately are attracted to one another. She and Celia try to talk him out of wrestling, but he says for his honor he must follow through.

Orlando and Charles fight, and Orlando successfully defeats him. Duke Frederick is initially impressed with Orlando's skill, but when he discovers he is the son of Sir Rowland de Boys, he withdraws his prize money and praise.



Rosalind and Celia congratulate Orlando on his win, and Rosalind awards him with her necklace. Rosalind flirts with a love-struck Orlando. Le Beau fills Orlando in on the royal cousins.



ACT 1. Scene 3.

Later that night, Rosalind and Celia talk about the day's events, especially Rosalind's crush on Orlando.

The cousins are interrupted by an enraged Duke Frederick, demanding Rosalind leave the kingdom in the next few days. He tells Rosalind that he does not trust her and that she will be executed if she comes back to court. Celia and Rosalind are shocked by the sudden news.



Celia decides to leave with Rosalind, choosing to leave the kingdom and her father behind instead of be separated from Rosalind.

The pair decide to join Rosalind's father, Duke Senior, in the Forest of Arden. They plan to disguise themselves as common shepherds for their own protection.

Rosalind will dress as a young man and go by 'Ganymede,' and Celia will act as his sister 'Aliena.' They enlist Touchstone to accompany them.



ACT 2. Scene 1.

In the Forest of Arden, **Duke Senior** and his followers talk about their rustic lives in the countryside following their banishment.

The group quips about Jaques, a member of their exiled party, whose overly reflective tendencies make the Duke laugh.



ACT 2. Scene 2.

Back at court, Duke Frederick discovers that his daughter Celia has fled. Furious, he suspects Orlando has something to do with it. He commands his guards to find Orlando or Oliver so he can interrogate them.



ACT 2. Scene 3.

Adam finds Orlando just in time to tell him that Oliver has plans to kill him in a fire.

Together, Adam and Orlando plan to leave the kingdom and head to the Forest of Arden. In exchange for safety and comfort in his old age, Adam offers Orlando all the money he has saved. The two decide to escape. Adam says goodbye to his home for the final time.



ACT 2. Scene 4.

Exhausted, a disguised Rosalind, Celia and Touchstone arrive in the Forest of Arden. They overhear a young shepherd named **Silvius** telling **Corin**, an older shepherd, about his unrequited love for Phoebe, a young shepherdess.



"Ganymede" approaches Corin to ask about the countryside and to find a place to stay. Corin agrees to help them purchase a cottage and to help them run it.



ACT 2. Scene 5.

Amiens, a woodland musician, sings a song for an audience of foresters. **Jaques**, a melancholy and sarcastic gentleman, interrupts his performance and asks Amiens to sing lyrics that he has composed, mocking the original song.



ACT 2. Scene 6.

Orlando and Adam are weary from traveling. Adam, close to starvation, asks Orlando to leave him to die. Orlando refuses and goes out in search of much-needed food and supplies.



ACT 2. Scene 7.

Duke Senior and his followers prepare to have dinner. An excited Jaques enters with news that he has found a fool (Touchstone) in the woods.

Orlando surprises the group and takes a bored Jaques hostage, asking for food and shelter for his friend Adam. Duke Senior tells Orlando that he and his friend are welcome. Orlando leaves to bring Adam back to the campsite.



While Orlando fetches Adam, Duke Senior and Jaques ponder life. Jaques delivers the famous "All the World's a Stage" (Seven Ages of Man) monologue.



Orlando returns with a near-death Adam and is welcomed by everyone. Duke Senior learns that Orlando is the son of his late friend and ally Sir Rowland de Boys, and promises to take care of him.



ACT 3. Scene 1.

Back in the kingdom, Duke Frederick commands Oliver him to find Orlando. Until Oliver finds Orlando, the Duke will take control of all his lands and property, and will banish Oliver if he does not find his brother.



ACT 3. Scene 2.

Orlando, still in love with Rosalind, decides to fill the woods with poetry about her, not knowing that she is disguised in the same forest.

(APT's production takes an intermission after this point).



Touchstone and Corin talk about the differences between life at court and life in the country.

Rosalind (still disguised as “Ganymede”) is shocked to find poetry composed about her all around the forest. Touchstone mocks the bad poetry.



Celia tells Rosalind that she has discovered who is the poet behind all of these recent sonnets, but delights in withholding the information from Rosalind.

Rosalind is shocked to find that Orlando is the poet and that he is so near by. Knowing she must maintain her male disguise, Rosalind finds herself in a strange situation.



Just then, Jaques and Orlando enter, playfully bickering about Orlando’s mediocre-at-best poetry.

Once Jaques leaves, Rosalind decides to talk with Orlando as “Ganymede.”

“Ganymede” asks Orlando about his poems and offers a solution to help him with his ongoing lovesick condition. “Ganymede” tells Orlando that “he” is a love expert, and will pretend to be Rosalind so Orlando can practice wooing the “real Rosalind” until he gets over his feelings for her.

Orlando agrees to visit “Ganymede” every day and woo him as “Rosalind.”

ACT 3. Scene 3.

Touchstone has fallen for a simple but beautiful goat herder named **Audrey**. Audrey is in turn charmed by Touchstone’s wit and humor.

Touchstone has arranged for them to be quickly married by a country priest in the woods. Before the ceremony can commence, however, Jaques tells Touchstone to wait until the couple can properly be married.





ACT 3. Scene 4.

Rosalind talks to an annoyed Celia about her love of Orlando. She also informs Celia that she has recently run into her father, Duke Senior, but as she was in disguise, he did not recognize her.

Corin invites "Ganymede" and "Aliena" to listen in on a conversation between the lovesick Silvius and an irritated Phoebe.



ACT 3. Scene 5.

Silvius attempts to woo an exasperated **Phoebe** to no avail. After Phoebe responds with harsh remarks, Rosalind as "Ganymede" steps in to defend the despondent Silvius.

During this interaction, Phoebe falls madly in love with "Ganymede."



After "Ganymede" leaves, an overwhelmed Phoebe employs Silvius to help her compose and deliver a letter to "Ganymede" in response to his insults.



ACT 4. Scene 1.

Jaques and "Ganymede" have a conversation about life and travels.

Orlando arrives late to court "Rosalind" (played by Ganymede, played by Rosalind), and the two playfully fight. Celia pretends to marry Orlando and "Rosalind."

ACT 4. Scene 2.

Jaques stumbles upon a group of forest men celebrating their recent successful hunt for a deer.





ACT 4. Scene 3.

An impatient Rosalind and Celia wait for Orlando's daily visit.

Silvius arrives with a letter from Phoebe for "Ganymede," in which she offers herself in marriage to "him." Silvius is crushed by this news. "Ganymede" instructs Silvius to tell Phoebe that if she loves "him" (Ganymede), she must turn her affection to Silvius instead.



Oliver arrives in the forest with a message from his brother Orlando. Celia and Rosalind learn that Orlando saved Oliver from a lion and that the brothers are once again on good terms.

Rosalind faints at the sight of Orlando's bloody handkerchief. Celia and Oliver help her to recover from the shock.



ACT 5. Scene 1.

Touchstone and Audrey make plans to be married. Touchstone meets **William**, one of Audrey's suitors, and outwits him.



ACT 4. Scene 3.

Orlando learns that his brother Oliver has fallen in love with "Aliena" (Celia) and the two plan to be married soon. He feels even more lovesick for Rosalind.

Orlando shares these feelings with "Ganymede," who tells him that he has the magical ability to make Rosalind appear at his brother's wedding.

Phoebe confronts "Ganymede" about his rude response to her proposal. "Ganymede" instructs Silvius to tell the group about what love is.

"Ganymede" makes a promise to Phoebe that if he doesn't marry her, she must marry Silvius. The group agrees to meet at the wedding.





ACT 5. Scene 4.

Duke Senior, Orlando, Oliver and Jaques prepare for the upcoming wedding. Duke Senior asks if Orlando believes this “Ganymede” will be true to his word.

Touchstone enters with Audrey and entertains the group before the wedding festivities.



All the foresters gather for the wedding, officiated and blessed by **Hymen**, the god of marriage.

Hymen reveals the real Celia and Rosalind, no longer in disguise as shepherds. Rosalind is reunited with her father and Orlando.

All the couples wed. Rosalind marries Orlando. Celia marries Oliver. Touchstone marries Audrey. Phoebe marries Silvius.



The weddings are blessed by Hymen and the foresters celebrate.

Jaques de Boys, the middle brother of Oliver and Orlando, suddenly appears with news that Duke Frederick has taken up a religious life and stepped away from the throne.



Duke Senior’s title is reinstated. He returns Oliver’s lands to him and names Orlando the next in royal succession. Learning that news about Duke Frederick, Jaques decides to leave the group and join him.

Everyone celebrates the news that they can return to the kingdom.



ACT 5. Epilogue.

Rosalind addresses the audience and shares some musings about the play. She hopes the audience liked it and bids them farewell.