

# As You Like It



**William Shakespeare**

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# ACT 1

## SCENE 1

**Orchard of Oliver's house.**

*Enter ORLANDO and ADAM*

**ORLANDO;** As I remember, Adam, it was upon this fashion bequeathed me by will but poor a thousand crowns, and, as thou sayest, charged my brother, on his blessing, to breed me well: and there begins my sadness. My brother Jaques he keeps at school, and report speaks goldenly of his profit: for my part, he keeps me rustically at home, or, to speak more properly, stays me here at home unkept; for call you that keeping for a gentleman of my birth, that differs not from the stalling of an ox? His horses are bred better; for, besides that they are fair with their feeding, they are taught their manage, and to that end riders dearly hired: but I, his brother, gain nothing under him but growth; for the which his animals on his dunghills are as much bound to him as I. Besides this nothing that he so plentifully gives me, the something that nature gave me his countenance seems to take from me: he lets me feed with his hinds, bars me the place of a brother, and, as much as in him lies, mines my gentility with my education. This is it, Adam, that grieves me; and the spirit of my father, which I think is within me, begins to mutiny against this servitude: I will no longer endure it, though yet I know no wise remedy how to avoid it.

**ADAM;** Yonder comes my master, your brother.

**ORLANDO;** Go apart, Adam, and thou shalt hear how he will shake me up.

*Enter OLIVER*

**OLIVER;** Now, sir! what make you here?

**ORLANDO;** Nothing: I am not taught to make any thing.

**OLIVER;** What mar you then, sir?

**ORLANDO;** Marry, sir, I am helping you to mar that which God made, a poor unworthy brother of yours, with idleness.

**OLIVER;** Marry, sir, be better employed, and be naught awhile.

**ORLANDO;** Shall I keep your hogs and eat husks with them? What prodigal portion have I spent, that I should come to such penury?

**OLIVER;** Know you where your are, sir?

**ORLANDO;** O, sir, very well; here in your orchard.

**OLIVER;** Know you before whom, sir?

**ORLANDO;** Ay, better than him I am before knows me. I know you are my eldest brother; and, in the gentle condition of blood, you should so know me. The courtesy of nations allows you my better, in that you are the first-born; but the same tradition takes not away my blood, were there twenty brothers betwixt us: I have as much of my father in me as you; albeit, I confess, your coming before me is nearer to his reverence.

**OLIVER;** What, boy!

**ORLANDO;** Come, come, elder brother, you are too young in this.

**OLIVER;** Wilt thou lay hands on me, villain?

**ORLANDO;** I am no villain; I am the youngest son of Sir Rowland de Boys; he was my father, and he is thrice a villain that says such a father begot villains. Wert thou not my brother, I would not take this hand from thy throat till this other had pulled out thy tongue for saying so: thou hast railed on thyself.

**ADAM;** Sweet masters, be patient: for your father's remembrance, be at accord.

**OLIVER;** Let me go, I say.

**ORLANDO;** I will not, till I please: you shall hear me. My father charged you in his will to give me good education: you have trained me like a peasant, obscuring and hiding from me all gentleman-like qualities. The spirit of my father grows strong in me, and I will no longer endure it: therefore allow me such exercises as may become a gentleman, or give

me the poor allottery my father left me by testament; with that I will go buy my fortunes.

**OLIVER;** And what wilt thou do? beg, when that is spent? Well, sir, get you in: I will not long be troubled with you; you shall have some part of your will: I pray you, leave me.

**ORLANDO;** I will no further offend you than becomes me for my good.

**OLIVER;** Get you with him, you old dog.

**ADAM;** Is 'old dog' my reward? Most true, I have lost my teeth in your service. God be with my old master! he would not have spoke such a word.

*Exeunt ORLANDO and ADAM*

**OLIVER;** Is it even so? begin you to grow upon me? I will physic your rankness, and yet give no thousand crowns neither. Holla, Dennis!

*Enter DENNIS*

**DENNIS;** Calls your worship?

**OLIVER;** Was not Charles, the duke's wrestler, here to speak with me?

**DENNIS;** So please you, he is here at the door and importunes access to you.

**OLIVER;** Call him in.

*Exit DENNIS*

'Twill be a good way; and to-morrow the wrestling is.

*Enter CHARLES*

**CHARLES;** Good morrow to your worship.

**OLIVER;** Good Monsieur Charles, what's the new news at the new court?

**CHARLES;** There's no news at the court, sir, but the old news: that is, the old duke is banished by his younger brother the new duke; and three or four loving lords have put themselves into voluntary exile with him, whose lands and revenues enrich the new duke; therefore he gives them good leave to wander.

**OLIVER;** Can you tell if Rosalind, the duke's daughter, bebanished with her father?

**CHARLES;** O, no; for the duke's daughter, her cousin, so loves her, being ever from their cradles bred together, that she would have followed her exile, or have died to stay behind her. She is at the court, and no less beloved of her uncle than his own daughter; and never two ladies loved as they do.

**OLIVER;** Where will the old duke live?

**CHARLES;** They say he is already in the forest of Arden, and a many merry men with him; and there they live like the old Robin Hood of England: they say many young gentlemen flock to him every day, and fleet the time carelessly, as they did in the golden world.

**OLIVER;** What, you wrestle to-morrow before the new duke?

**CHARLES;** Marry, do I, sir; and I came to acquaint you with a matter. I am given, sir, secretly to understand that your younger brother Orlando hath a disposition to come in disguised against me to try a fall. To-morrow, sir, I wrestle for my credit; and he that escapes me without some broken limb shall acquit him well. Your brother is but young and tender; and, for your love, I would be loath to foil him, as I must, for my own honour, if he come in: therefore, out of my love to you, I came hither to acquaint you withal, that either you might stay him from his intentment or brook such disgrace well as he shall run into, in that it is a thing of his own search and altogether against my will.

**OLIVER;** Charles, I thank thee for thy love to me, which thou shalt find I will most kindly requite. I had myself notice of my brother's purpose herein and have by underhand means laboured to dissuade him from it, but he is resolute. I'll tell thee, Charles: it is the stubbornest young fellow of France, full of ambition, an envious emulator of every man's good

parts, a secret and villanous contriver againstme his natural brother:  
therefore use thydiscretion; I had as lief thou didst break his neckas his  
finger. And thou wert best look to't; for ifthou dost him any slight  
disgrace or if he do notmightily grace himself on thee, he will  
practiseagainst thee by poison, entrap thee by sometreachorous device  
and never leave thee till hehath ta'en thy life by some indirect means or  
other;for, I assure thee, and almost with tears I speakit, there is not one  
so young and so villanous thisday living. I speak but brotherly of him;  
butshould I anatomize him to thee as he is, I mustblush and weep and  
thou must look pale and wonder.

**CHARLES;** I am heartily glad I came hither to you. If he cometo-morrow,  
I'll give him his payment: if ever he goalone again, I'll never wrestle for  
prize more: andso God keep your worship!

**OLIVER;** Farewell, good Charles.

*Exit CHARLES*

Now will I stir this gamester: I hope I shall see  
an end of him; for my soul, yet I know not why,hates nothing more than  
he. Yet he's gentle, neverschooled and yet learned, full of noble device,  
ofall sorts enchantingly beloved, and indeed so muchin the heart of the  
world, and especially of my ownpeople, who best know him, that I am  
altogethervisprised: but it shall not be so long; thiswrestler shall clear  
all: nothing remains but thatI kindle the boy thither; which now I'll go  
about.

*Exit*