CONTENTS

List of illustrations page vi
Preface vii
List of abbreviations and conventions ix
Introduction 1
Journeys 1
Plays within the play 8
Theatrical genres 11
Pastoral 17
Counter-pastoral 19
The condition of the country 21
Politics 25
'Between you and the women the play may please' 30
Gender 32
Nuptials 41
Stage history 43
Date and occasion 62
Sources 64
Note on the text 67
List of characters 70
THE PLAY 73
Textual analysis 199
Appendixes:
1: Extracts from Shakespeare's principal source,
   Lodge's Rosalind 204
2: The songs 218
Reading list 219
ILLUSTRATIONS

1. The jester Tom Skelton  page 2
2. 'The Wheel of Life which is called Fortune', c. 1460  5
3. Hymen, 1580  9
4. Lucy Harrington Countess of Bedford attired for Jonson's Hymenaei, (1606)  10
5. Nicolas Poussin, Et in Arcadia Ego, c. 1630  16
6. The Horn Dance: production by Mark Brickman, Crucible Theatre, Sheffield, 1991  44
7. Mrs Abington as Rosalind  48
8. Playbill for a revival at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, 1798  49
9. 'What shall he have that killed the deer?': Stratford-upon-Avon, 1879  50
10. Vanessa Redgrave (Rosalind), Rosalind Knight (Celia), Colin Blakely (Touchstone): Stratford-upon-Avon, 1961  52
14. Patrick Toomey (Orlando) and Adrian Lester (Rosalind): Cheek by Jowl, 1991-5  58

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ORLANDO  As I remember, Adam, it was upon this fashion bequeathed
me by will but poor a thousand crowns and, as thou say’st, charged
my brother, on his blessing, to breed me well: and there begins my
sadness. My brother Jacques 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 manège, 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.

Enter Oliver

Adam Yonder comes my master, your brother.

Orlando Go apart, Adam, and thou shalt hear how he will shake me up.

[Adam withdraws]

Oliver Now, sir, what make you here?

Orlando Nothing: I am not taught to make anything.

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 you are, sir?
orlando  O, sir, very well: here in your orchard.
oliver  Know you before whom, sir?
orlando  Aye, 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  [Raising his hand] What, boy!
orlando  [Seizing his brother] Come, come, elder brother, you are too
young in this.
oliver  Wilt thou lay hands on me, villain?
orlando  I am no villein: I am the youngest son of Sir Roland de Boys;
he was my father, and he is thrice a villain that says such a father
begot villeins. 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  [Coming forward] 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 quali-

calculating insult.  

41–55 This edn.; not in r; menacing with his hand / Johnson  
Oxford; villaine r  45 Roland] This edn.; Roland r  
villaines r  

33, 34 know acknowledge.  
34 him he whom (for the usage, see Abbott 208).  
35 in . . . blood because of our noble breeding.  
36 so know me know me as a brother.  
36 courtesy of nations custom (of primogeniture) among civilised peoples.  
37 tradition surrender (of rank) (OED sv 2a).  
38 blood (1) rank, (2) spirit.  
39–40 coming . . . reverence earlier birth entitles you to the veneration he received (ironical).  
41 boy An insult that provokes Orlando to 'manly' behaviour.  
42–3 you . . . this Compare the proverb, 'He has made a younger brother of him' (Tilley #686), i.e.
even though you are older I am stronger.  
43 young inexperienced, weak.  
44 thou Oliver’s use of the singular pronoun is a calculated insult.  
44 villein rogue.  

45 *villein The context indicates that the meaning here is 'fellow of base extraction' (Johnson),
although r does not make a distinction between villain/villein (see collation): another example of
the way Orlando twists his brother’s words.  
45 Roland As 'Orlando' is the Italian form of this
name, it may be that Orlando is claiming the virtues
of his father.  
46–7 *such . . . villeins Compare the proverb,
'Such a father, such a son' (Tilley 194).  
49 railed on insulted.  
50 be patient calm yourselves.  
50–1 for your father’s remembrance in
memory of your father.  
55 peasant In the period more a term of abuse
than a designation of specific rank.  
55 obscuring concealing (OED Obscure r 4b).  
55–6 qualities accomplishments, manners
(OED Quality 2b).
ties. 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.

[He releases Oliver]

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 [To Adam] 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, Denis.

Enter Denis

DENIS Calls your worship?

OLIVER Was not Charles, the Duke’s wrestler, here to speak with me?

DENIS So please you, he is here at the door, and imports access to you.

56, 59, 63 will have a mind to (OED sv v. 3).
57 exercises acquired skills (OED Exercise ab 6b).
58 allottery portion; a nonce-word not recorded in OED, and probably a pun on ‘lottery’.
59 testament his will.
60 buy my fortunes purchase an office (at court?).
60 And . . . spent Another allusion to the prodigal son, disdained by his older brother.
60–1 thou . . . you in Orlando used ‘you’ in the preceding lines; Oliver’s use of ‘thou’ is the language of a master to a servant (Abbott 232); the ‘you’ that comes next, following ‘sir’, is even more contemptuous.
62 will (1) wishes (see 54, 59), (2) our father’s testament.
63 offend assai (OED sv s).
64–6 ‘old dog’ . . . service In Aesop there is a fable of an old greyhound who, rebuked by his master when he could not hold a beast he had captured, responded ‘Thou has loved me catching game, thou has hated me being slow and toothless’ (William Bullokar, Aesop’s Fables in True Orthography (1585), sig. G1).
66 spoke For the form, see Abbott 343.
68 grow upon become troublesome to.
68–9 physic your rankness cure your excessive exuberance or insolence; ‘rankness’ is a symptom of murrain, a disease of cattle, a condition that requires bloodletting. OED Rankness cites Jon Fitzherbert, A Tract for all Husbandmen (1523), par. 58: ‘Murrain . . . cometh of a rankness of blood’ and compare JC 3.1.153; there may also be an allusion to pruning a ‘rank’ or over-luxuriant plant (OED Rank adj 5).
69 neither either (Abbott 128).
69 Holla Come here (Cotgrave, cited in OED).
71 Charles, the Duke’s wrestler He may have been thought of as the Duke’s ‘champion’, as in Rosalind (p. 107).
72 So please you If it may please you.
72 door Perhaps to a walled garden or orchard.
OLIVER  Call him in.

’Twill be a good way, and tomorrow the wrestling is.

[Exit Denis]

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, be banished 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. (Rosalind, p. 108) wrote that the banished Gerismond ‘lived as an outlaw in the Forest of Arden’, ostensibly the Forêt des Ardennes in Flanders, although in his narrative the girls start at Bordeaux and walk due east. The Forest of Arden was an extensive tract of country north of Shakespeare’s birthplace, Stratford-upon-Avon, although the addition ‘of England’ implies that the forest of the play is in France (compare ‘the stubbornest young fellow of France’ (1.1.111–12). Shakespeare overlays these mythical locations with another, the antique Greenwood that figures so often in the Robin Hood ballads.

92 a many The indefinite article makes numeral adjectives less definite (see OED A art 2).

93 merry The word was often used to designate utopian equality in populist texts of the period; compare ‘it was never merry world in England since gentlemen came up’ (2H6 4.2.6–7).
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 tomorrow 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. Tomorrow, 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 intendment, 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 villainous contriver.
against me, his natural brother. Therefore use thy discretion: I had
as lief thou didst break his neck as his finger. And thou wert best
look to’t – for if thou dost him any slight disgrace or if he do not
mightily grace himself on thee, he will practise against thee by
poison, entrap thee by some treacherous device, and never leave
thee till he hath ta’en thy life by some indirect means or other. For
I assure thee – and almost with tears I speak it – there is not one so
young and so villainous this day living. I speak but brotherly of him,
but should I anatomise him to thee as he is, I must blush and weep,
and thou must look pale and wonder.

CHARLES I am heartily glad I came hither to you. If he come tomorrow,
I’ll give him his payment; if ever he go alone again, I’ll never wrestle
for prize more – and so God keep your worship. Exit

OLIVER Farewell, good 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, never schooled and yet
learned, full of noble device, of all sorts enchantingly beloved, and
indeed so much in the heart of the world, and especially of my own
people who best know him, that I am altogether misprized. But it
shall not be so long this wrestler shall clear all: nothing remains but
that I kindle the boy thither, which now I’ll go about. Exit

114 natural blood (OED sv 1jb).

114–15 I . . . finger At this stage in Lodge’s nar-
riative Saladyne bribes Charles (Rosalind, p. 107):
handing the wrestler a purse would be an appropri-
ate piece of stage business here.

115 thou wert best For the construction, see
Abbott 230.

116 look to’t be careful.

116 disgrace injury or disfigurement.

117 grace him on thee gain credit at your
expense.

117 practise plot.

118 device trick.

119 but brotherly with the reserve of a brother –
in the manner of the innumerable hostile brothers
in Shakespearean texts.

120 anatomise him lay his character bare.

125 payment punishment (OED sv sb' 3).

125 go alone walk without aid.

126 prize This was often a ram (see Joseph
Strutt, The Sports and Pastimes of the People of

127 stir this gamester torment this ‘athlete’
(see OED Gamester 1).

128–9 soul . . . he Like Iago, Oliver finds it diffi-
cult to rationalise his jealousy to himself.

129 he him (Abbott 206).

129 gentle well born.

130 learned educated (OED sv ppl adj 2).

130 device inclinations, thoughts (OED sv 4).

130 of all sorts by all ranks.

130 enchantingly as if they were under his spell.

132 people servants.

132 misprized despised.

133 clear all settle matters.

134 kindle incite.

134 boy an insulting designation for a man.

134 go set.
Enter Rosalind and Celia

Celia  I pray thee, Rosalind, sweet my coz, be merry.

Rosalind  Dear Celia, I show more mirth than I am mistress of, and would you yet were merrier: unless you could teach me to forget a banished father, you must not learn me how to remember any extraordinary pleasure.

Celia  Herein, I see, thou lov'st me not with the full weight that I love thee; if my uncle, thy banished father, had banished thy uncle, the Duke my father, so thou hadst been still with me, I could have taught my love to take thy father for mine; so wouldst thou, if the truth of thy love to me were so righteously tempered as mine is to thee.

Rosalind  Well, I will forget the condition of my estate to rejoice in yours.

Celia  You know my father hath no child but I, nor none is like to have; and, truly, when he dies thou shalt be his heir: for what he hath taken away from thy father perforce I will render thee again in affection. By mine honour, I will, and when I break that oath, let me turn monster. Therefore, my sweet Rose, my dear Rose, be merry.
ROSA Lind From henceforth I will, coz, and devise sports. Let me see, what think you of falling in love?

CE Lia Marry, I prithee do, to make sport withal: but love no man in good earnest – nor no further in sport neither – than with safety of a pure blush thou mayst in honour come off again.

ROSA Lind What shall be our sport then?

CE Lia Let us sit and mock the good housewife Fortune from her wheel, that her gifts may henceforth be bestowed equally.

ROSA Lind I would we could do so: for her benefits are mightily misplaced, and the bountiful blindwoman doth most mistake in her gifts to women.

CE Lia ’Tis true, for those that she makes fair she scarce makes honest, and those that she makes honest she makes very ill-favouredly.

ROSA Lind Nay, now thou goest from Fortune’s office to Nature’s: Fortune reigns in gifts of the world, not in the lineaments of Nature.

Enter Touchstone the clown

28 blindwoman This edn; blinde woman f 31 ill-favouredly | f subst.; ill-favoured Rowe 34 SD Touchstone Theobald subst.; Clowne v

21 make sport pass the time pleasantly (here with a bawdy sense).
21 withal (1) with, (2) with all (men).
22 with safety of without damage to (OED records this usage, but only from 1619 (Safety 1c)).
23 come off retire as from a field of combat; there is a possible reference to orgasm, although OED records the usage only from 1650 (Come v 17); see, however, 2.4.40–2n., Dekker, A Honest Whore (1604), ’a wench that will come with a wet finger’ (1.2.4), and Middleton and Dekker, The Roaring Girl (1611), ed. Paul Mulholland, 1987, 2.1.192.
25–6 Celia proposes a discussion on a set theme: 25 housewife (1) mistress of a household, (2) hussy, whore.
25 Fortune For the iconology of Fortune and debates between Fortune and Nature, see Frederick Kiefer, Fortune and Elizabethan Tragedy, 1983, pp. 277–81; there is a set meditation on Fortune by Adam in Rosalind, pp. 141–2 (Appendix 1, pp. 210–11).
25 wheel By which Dame Fortune, commonly depicted as wearing a blindfold, raised people into prosperity and happiness and then plunged them down again to misery – with a disparaging pun on a housewife’s spinning-wheel (see plate 2).
26 equally justly (OED sv 3).
27 benefits favours, gifts.
27–8 misplaced improperly bestowed.
28 bountiful (1) liberal, (2) promiscuous (?).
28 blindwoman Compare the proverb, ‘Fortune is blind’ (Tilley f604).
28 mistake go astray (OED sv 6).
30–2 Compare the proverb, ‘Beauty and chastity (honesty) seldom meet’ (Tilley b163).
30 fair beautiful.
30 scarce seldom.
30 honest virtuous, chaste.
31 ill-favouredly of uncomely appearance; ‘ill-favoured’ (see collation) improves the balance of the sentence.
32 office function.
33 gifts of the world material possessions, power.
33–4 lineaments of Nature e.g. virtue, wit, beauty.
34 SD *Touchstone . . . clown Touchstone’s name does not appear in f until 2.4 (see 2.4.0 SD. 2–3 n.); it is also likely that he wears the fool’s uniform of motley only in this latter scene (see 2.7.13 n.). His entrance, some lines before he speaks, is either evidence of prompt-book copy, or perhaps it gives him an opportunity silently to upstage his mistress and her friend.
CELIA No? When Nature hath made a fair creature, may she not by Fortune fall into the fire? Though Nature hath given us wit to flout at Fortune, hath not Fortune sent in this fool to cut off the argument?

ROSALIND Indeed there is Fortune too hard for Nature, when Fortune makes Nature’s natural the cutter-off of Nature’s wit.

CELIA Peradventure this is not Fortune’s work neither but Nature’s who, perceiving our natural wits too dull to reason of such goddesses, hath sent this natural for our whetstone: for always the dullness of the fool is the whetstone of the wits. – How now, Wit, whither wander you?

TOUCHSTONE Mistress, you must come away to your father.

CELIA Were you made the messenger?

TOUCHSTONE No, by mine honour, but I was bid to come for you.

ROSALIND Where learned you that oath, fool?

TOUCHSTONE Of a certain knight that swore, by his honour, they were good pancakes, and swore, by his honour, the mustard was naught. Now, I’ll stand to it, the pancakes were naught and the mustard was good – and yet was not the knight forsworn.

35 Nature . . . fire Compare the proverb, ‘Shunning the smoke, he fell into the fire’ (Tilley s570).

36 Fortune Chance.

37 fall into the fire lose her virtue.

38–9 Flout at, complain about.

39 argument (1) theme, discussion (OED sv 6), (2) penis (Williams, pp. 29-30).

39 there in that.

39 too hard more than a match.

40 natural fool, idiot (OED sv sb 2); compare 3.3.17 where Touchstone puts down Corin by calling him ‘a natural philosopher’.

40 Nature’s wit the wit Nature has given us; ‘wit’ may refer here to the sexual organs (see Williams, pp. 340-1).

41 Peradventure Perhaps.

42 *perceiving f2’s reading (see collation) improves the sentence structure.

42–4 wits . . . wits Compare the proverbs, ‘X is the whetstone of wit’ (Dent w298.1) and ‘A whetstone cannot itself cut but yet it makes tools cut’ (Tilley w299).


42 reason discourse, talk.

44 dullness slowness, bluntness.

44–5 Wit . . . you Compare the proverb, addressed to anyone too loquacious, ‘Wit, whither wilt thou?’ (Tilley w570; OED Wit 2e).

46 away along.

47 messenger officer sent to apprehend state prisoners (OED sv 3a); compare Prov. 26.6: ‘He that sendeth a message by the hand of a fool, is as he that cutteth off the feet and drinketh iniquity.’

49–63 The jest of the man who swears by what he has not is also found in Richard Edwards’ Damon and Pithias (1565), 1155–8.

50–1 honour . . . mustard For a link with a jest in Jonson’s Every Man in his Humour, where a clown buys a coat of arms and the motto ‘Not without mustard’, a possible reference to Shakespeare’s motto Non sanz droict (‘Not without right’), see Samuel Schoenbaum, William Shakespeare: A Documentary Life, 1975, p. 171.

51 pancakes pancake, fritter, or flapjack are alternatives or synonyms.

51 naught bad, unsatisfactory (OED sv 11).

52 stand to it insist, swear.

53 forsworn perjured (with a possible allusion to the homily ‘Against Swearing and Perjury’ (Shaheen, p. 160)).
CEILIA How prove you that in the great heap of your knowledge?
ROSALIND Aye, marry, now unmuzzle your wisdom.
TOUCHSTONE Stand you both forth now. Stroke your chins and swear, by your beards, that I am a knave.
CEILIA By our beards – if we had them – thou art.
TOUCHSTONE By my knavery – if I had it – then I were. But if you swear by that that is not you are not forsworn: no more was this knight swearing by his honour, for he never had any; or if he had, he had sworn it away before ever he saw those pancakes or that mustard.
CEILIA Prithee, who is’t that thou mean’st?
TOUCHSTONE One that old Frederick, your father, loves.
CEILIA My father’s love is enough to honour him. Enough! Speak no more of him; you’ll be whipped for taxation one of these days.
TOUCHSTONE The more pity that fools may not speak wisely what wise men do foolishly.
CEILIA By my troth, thou say’st true: for, since the little wit that fools have was silenced, the little foolery that wise men have makes a great show. – Here comes ‘Monsieur the Beau’.

[56] Stand you both forth Both step forward (OED Stand v. 932).
[58] By (1) In accord with, (2) By reason of.
[59] were would be.
[59–61] if . . . any Compare the proverb, ‘No man ever lost his honour but he that had it not’ (Tilley Mj26).
[65] The line may well be corrupt (see collation). As the usurping Frederick was in fact the younger brother, ‘old’ might be taken as a jocular and over-familiar epithet that stings Celia into defending her father.
[65] Frederick It is conceivable that this is a compositorial misreading for ‘Ferdinand’ (see List of Characters, n. to Duke Senior, p. 71), in which case Theobald’s emendation of the following sit is unnecessary. Alternatively ‘Frederick’ may have been the name of the knight (see collation).
[66] sit* Theobald’s emendation is justified by the fact that at 1.2.186 and 5.4.138 we learn that it is Celia’s father who is called Frederick – although possibly Shakespeare himself made the error. The line occurs in part of a stint set by Compositor B who made similar errors with speech headings in 5.1.

65 One that | v. One Collier 65 Frederick | subst.; Ferdinand conj. Capell; Collier 66 sit* Theobald; Ros. v 66 him. Enough![Hanmer subst.; him enough r 72 ‘Monsieur the Beau’] This edn; Monsieur the Beau r

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Enter Le Beau

Rosalind With his mouth full of news.

Celia Which he will put on us as pigeons feed their young.

Rosalind Then shall we be news-crammed.

Celia All the better: we shall be the more marketable. – Bonjour,

Monsieur Le Beau, what’s the news?

Le Beau Fair princess, you have lost much good sport.

Celia ‘Sport’: of what colour?

Le Beau ‘What colour’, madam? How shall I answer you?

Rosalind As wit and fortune will.

Touchstone [Imitating Le Beau] Or as the destinies decrees.

Celia Well said: that was laid on with a trowel.

Celia Nay, if I keep not my rank —

Rosalind Thou loosest thy old smell.

Le Beau You amaze me, ladies! I would have told you of good wrestling

which you have lost the sight of.

Rosalind Yet tell us the manner of the wrestling.

Le Beau I will tell you the beginning and, if it please your ladyships,

you may see the end, for the best is yet to do; and here where you

are they are coming to perform it.

Celia Well, the beginning that is dead and buried.
LE BEAU  There comes an old man and his three sons –
CELIA  I could match this beginning with an old tale.
LE BEAU  Three proper young men, of excellent growth and presence –
ROSALIND  With bills on their necks: ‘Be it known unto all men by these
95    presents’.
LE BEAU  The eldest of the three wrestled with Charles, the Duke’s
96    wrestler, which Charles in a moment threw him and broke three of
97    his ribs that there is little hope of life in him. So he served the
98    second and so the third: yonder they lie, the poor old man, their
99    father, making such pitiful dole over them that all the beholders
100   take his part with weeping.
ROSALIND  Alas!
TOUCHSTONE  But what is the sport, monsieur, that the ladies have
105   lost?
LE BEAU  Why, this that I speak of.
TOUCHSTONE  Thus men may grow wiser every day. It is the first time
110   that ever I heard breaking of ribs was sport for ladies.
CELIA  Or I, I promise thee.
ROSALIND  But is there any else longs to see this broken music in his
115   sides? Is there yet another dotes upon rib-breaking? Shall we see
120   this wrestling, cousin?
LE BEAU  You must if you stay here, for here is the place appointed for
125   the wrestling and they are ready to perform it.

93 sons –] Theobald; sons f 94 presence –] Theobald subst.; presence f
95–6 presence – / ROSALIND . . . necks] f subst.; presence, with bills on their necks. Rosalind conj. Farmer in
96    Stevens 111–12 ROSALIND . . . -breaking?] f subst.; TOUCHSTONE . . . -breaking? / Rosalind Cam., con. anon
115    see f; see Theobald, conj. Warburton

93 comes For the singular form, see Abbott 335. 93–4 Parents with three children provide a com-
94    mon motif in folk stories – Rosalind and the pseudo-
95    Chaucerian Tale of Gamelyn are examples. This
96    nameless family is a figure of the de Boys family in
97    which there were also three sons, in their case re-
98    united at the end of the play. The episode of the old
99    man and his sons who are killed by Charles is nar-
100   rated in Rosalind (p. 110) – in Lodge, however,
101   there are only two sons in this inset episode, and
102   Rosader seeks to avenge their deaths.
103    match rival.
104    tale Celia may be continuing the bawdy puns
105    with a jest on ‘tail’.
106    proper honest, good-looking.
107    growth stature.
108    bills papers, writings.
109–7 Be . . . presents Many legal documents
110    began ‘Noverint universi per praesentes’: ‘know all
111    men by these presents’ – Rosalind’s line is an excuse
112    for a pun on ‘presence’.
113    presents (1) documents, writings (OED
114    Present f 38), (2) genitals (Rubinstein, p. 203).
115    which the which (Abbott 289).
116    dole lamentation.
117    promise assure (OED sv ∨ 5b).
118    any anyone (Abbott 244).
119    see experience, attend (OED sv ∨ 5a).
120    broken music Music arranged for more than one instrument (Shakespeare’s England ii, 31,
121    33), but here also referring to the sound of ribs
122    being broken.
123    Shall . . . cousin The line could express
124    either desire to see the sport or repulsion.
Flourish. Enter Duke [Frederick], Lords, Orlando, Charles, and Attendants

Duke Frederick Come on; since the youth will not be entreated, his own peril on his forwardness.

Rosalind Is yonder the man?

Le Beau Even he, madam.

Celia Alas, he is too young; yet he looks successfully.

Duke Frederick How now, daughter — and cousin: are you crept hither to see the wrestling?

Rosalind Aye, my liege, so please you give us leave.

Duke Frederick You will take little delight in it, I can tell you: there is such odds in the man. In pity of the challenger’s youth, I would fain dissuade him, but he will not be entreated. Speak to him, ladies: see if you can move him.

Celia Call him hither, good Monsieur Le Beau.

Duke Frederick Do so; I’ll not be by.

[The Duke stands aside]

Le Beau Monsieur the challenger, the princess calls for you.

Orlando I attend them with all respect and duty.

Rosalind Young man, have you challenged Charles the wrestler?

Orlando No, fair princess, he is the general challenger. I come but in as others do to try with him the strength of my youth.

Celia Young gentleman, your spirits are too bold for your years: you have seen cruel proof of this man’s strength. If you saw yourself


116 sd Flourish Sounded on trumpets to signify the presence of authority.

117 Come on Approach.

117 entreated persuaded (OED Entreat v 10).

117–8 his own . . . forwardness his rashness has created the danger he is in.

121 successfully able to succeed.

122 cousin Used indifferently for various relatives including, as here, nieces.

122–3 are you crept hither have you sneaked here (for the use of ‘are’ for ‘have’, see Abbott 205).

126 odds in the man advantage in Charles (see OED Odds 4).

126 in pity of Out of compassion for.

131–2 princess . . . them The title ‘princess’ could be applied to a female member of any ruling family (OED Prince 6); grammatically ‘princess’ could be an uninflected plural (Abbott 471) and ‘calls’ a third person plural termination (Abbott 333); if, however, ‘princess’ was singular, ‘them’ meant ‘her and her entourage’.

134 is the general challenger will take on all comers (compare Hulme, p. 145).

134 come but in merely enter the competition (OED Come 63k).

135 try test.

137 cruel proof Charles’ defeat of the old man’s three sons.

137–8 If . . . eyes Compare the proverb, “The eye that sees all things else sees not itself” (Tilley 1232).
with your eyes or knew yourself with your judgement, the fear of your adventure would counsel you to a more equal enterprise. We pray you, for your own sake, to embrace your own safety and give over this attempt.

ROSALEND Do, young sir: your reputation shall not therefore be misprized. We will make it our suit to the Duke that the wrestling might not go forward.

ORLANDO I beseech you, punish me not with your hard thoughts, wherein I confess me much guilty to deny so fair and excellent ladies anything. But let your fair eyes and gentle wishes go with me to my trial, wherein if I be foiled, there is but one shamed that was never gracious; if killed, but one dead that is willing to be so. I shall do my friends no wrong, for I have none to lament me; the world no injury, for in it I have nothing; only in the world I fill up a place, which may be better supplied when I have made it empty.

ROSALEND The little strength that I have, I would it were with you.

CELIA And mine to eke out hers.

ROSALEND Fare you well: pray heaven I be deceived in you.

CELIA Your heart's desires be with you.

CHARLES Come, where is this young gallant that is so desirous to lie with his mother earth?

ORLANDO Ready, sir, but his will hath in it a more modest working.
DUKE FREDERICK You shall try but one fall.

CHARLES No, I warrant your grace you shall not entreat him to a second, that have so mightily persuaded him from a first.

ORLANDO You mean to mock me after: you should not have mocked me before. But come your ways.

ROSALIND Now Hercules be thy speed, young man.

CELIA I would I were invisible, to catch the strong fellow by the leg.

[They wrestle]

ROSALIND O excellent young man.

CELIA If I had a thunderbolt in mine eye, I can tell who should down.

[Charles is thrown to the ground.]

Duke frederick No more, no more!

Orlando Yes, I beseech your grace, I am not yet well breathed.

Duke frederick How dost thou, Charles?

Le Beau He cannot speak, my lord.

Duke frederick Bear him away.

They wrestle

ROSALIND O excellent young man.

CELIA If I had a thunderbolt in mine eye, I can tell who should down.

[Charles is carried out]

What is thy name, young man?

Orlando Orlando, my liege, the youngest son of Sir Roland de Boys.

Duke frederick I would thou hadst been son to some man else;

The world esteemed thy father honourable

But I did find him still mine enemy.

Thou shouldst have better pleased me with this deed

Hadst thou descended from another house.

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160 fall This 'consisted in either the adversary's back or one shoulder and the contrary heel touching the ground' (Shakespeare's England, ii, 456).

163-4 Compare the proverbs, 'Do not triumph before the victory' (Tilley v30) and 'He who mocks shall be mocked' (Tilley s1031).

164 come your ways let's get under way.

165 be thy speed lend you success.

166 sd The wrestling 'is a kind of popular tournament, a ritual spectacle associated with the ballads of Robin Hood, the legendary righter of wrongs of Sherwood Forest' (Laroque, p. 233).

168 thunderbolt in mine eye In Petrarchan verse, the conceit of a woman having the power to wound with darts shot from her eyes is frequently found; here Celia craves the might of Jupiter.

173 sd The wrestling 'is a kind of popular tournament, a ritual spectacle associated with the ballads of Robin Hood, the legendary righter of wrongs of Sherwood Forest' (Laroque, p. 233).

176 The play's first switch to verse registers the way in which the formalities of power politics are used to cover the violence of the characters' feelings and emotions at this point.
But fare thee well. Thou art a gallant youth:
I would thou hadst told me of another father.

[Exeunt Duke Frederick, Le Beau, Touchstone, Lords, and Attendants]

Celia Were I my father, coz, would I do this?

Orlando I am more proud to be Sir Roland’s son —
His youngest son — and would not change that calling
To be adopted heir to Frederick.

Rosalind My father loved Sir Roland as his soul
And all the world was of my father’s mind;
Had I before known this young man his son,
I should have given him tears unto entreaties
Ere he should thus have ventured.

Celia Gentle cousin,
Let us go thank him and encourage him;
My father’s rough and envious disposition
Sticks me at heart. — Sir, you have well deserved:
If you do keep your promises in love
But justly, as you have exceeded all promise,
Your mistress shall be happy.

Rosalind [Giving him a chain from her neck] Gentleman,
Wear this for me: one out of suits with Fortune,
That could give more, but that her hand lacks means. —
Shall we go, coz?

Celia Aye. — Fare you well, fair gentleman.
[They turn to go]

ORLANDO [Aside] Can I not say, ‘I thank you’? My better parts
Are all thrown down, and that which here stands up
Is but a quintain, a mere lifeless block.

ROSALIND [To Celia] He calls us back. My pride fell with my fortunes,
I’ll ask him what he would. – Did you call, sir?
Sir, you have wrestled well and overthrown
More than your enemies.

[They gaze upon each other]

CELIA Will you go, coz?

ROSALIND Have with you. – Fare you well.

Exeunt [Rosalind and Celia]

ORLANDO What passion hangs these weights upon my tongue?
I cannot speak to her, yet she urged conference.

Enter LE BEAU

O poor Orlando! thou art overthrown:
Or Charles or something weaker masters thee.

LE BEAU Good sir, I do in friendship counsel you
To leave this place. Albeit you have deserved
High commendation, true applause, and love,
Yet such is now the Duke’s condition
That he misconstrues all that you have done.
The Duke is humorous: what he is indeed
More suits you to conceive than I to speak of.

200 better parts spirits.
201 quintain A butt used as a target by those
riding at tilt, sometimes carved in the likeness of a
Saracen or Turk (see Joseph Strutt, The Sports and
Pastimes of the People of England, ed. William Hone,
1836, pp. 112–22).
203 mere complete.
204 He calls us back Rosalind’s overhearing of
Orlando’s aside constitutes a kind of theatrical joke
– or is evidence of her infatuation.
205 Will A subtle variation on Rosalind’s ques-
tion at 205.
206 Have with you I’m coming.
207 Conference conversation, a rendezvous
(OED sv 4b).
208 Or Either.
209 something weaker (1) a woman (the
“weaker vessel” (1 Pet. 3:7), (2) the feminine part of
my nature.
212 deserved acquired (OED Deserve 1).
213 condition mood (four syllables: Cercignani,
p. 309).
214 misconsiders misconstrues (the spelling
indicates the stress on the second syllable).
215 humorous ill-humoured (OED sv 3b);
headstrong (Furness).
216 indeed in reality.
217 i.e. I choose (for the construction, see
Abbott 216).
ORLANDO I thank you, sir; and pray you tell me this: 220
Which of the two was daughter of the Duke,
That here was at the wrestling?

LE BEAU Neither his daughter, if we judge by manners,
But yet indeed the taller is his daughter;
The other is daughter to the banished Duke 225
And here detained by her usurping uncle
To keep his daughter company, whose loves
Are dearer than the natural bond of sisters.
But I can tell you that of late this Duke
Hath ta’en displeasure ’gainst his gentle niece,
Grounded upon no other argument 230
But that the people praise her for her virtues
And pity her for her good father’s sake;
And, on my life, his malice ’gainst the lady
Will suddenly break forth. Sir, fare you well,
Hereafter, in a better world than this,
I shall desire more love and knowledge of you.

ORLANDO I rest much bounden to you: fare you well.

[Exit Le Beau]

Thus must I from the smoke into the smother, 240
From tyrant duke unto a tyrant brother.
But heavenly Rosalind!

Shakespeare First Folio, 1955, p. 297. It is apparent from the text of MND that Helena and Hermia were played by one tall and one ‘low’ boy.

222 was The subject is ‘two’, treated as a collective noun.
223 manners moral behaviour (OED Manner s6 4a).
224 taller more spirited or handsome (OED Tall s2b, which cites John Dickenson, Greene in Concert New Raised from his Grave (1598): ‘With her tongue she was as tall a warrioress as any of her sex’). Editorial tradition detected error, with the word bearing its modern sense: Rosalind describes herself as tall (1.3.105), and at 4.5.82 Celia is described as being ‘low’. It’s reading could, it was argued, be either an authorial carelessness, or a compositorial error, possibly for ‘smaller’ (i.e. ‘more slender’), or ‘shorter’ which would give Le Beau a prissy rhyme with ‘daughter’ (see 79n.); alternatively it could be evidence that the text was revised to match the heights of a new set of boy players (see Greg, The Shakespeare First Folio, 1955, p. 207).
225 taller taller Rowe; shorter Malone; less taller Keightley
226 other is other’s Rowe; not in r
227 whose referring to both Celia and Rosalind.
228 gentle well born.
229 argument basis.
230 suddenly immediately.
231 knowledge friendship, intimacy (OED sv 6a).
232 bounden indebted.
233 Compare the proverb, ‘Shunning the smoke, he fell into the fire’ (Tilley 5726).
234 Rosalind %’s ‘Rosaline’ is a compositorial idiosyncrasy (see Textual Analysis, p. 201 n. 5).
Enter Celia and Rosalind

Celia  Why, cousin; why, Rosalind—Cupid have mercy, not a word? Rosalind  Not one to throw at a dog. Celia  No, thy words are too precious to be cast away upon curs: throw some of them at me. Come, lame me with reasons. Rosalind  Then there were two cousins laid up, when the one should be lamed with reasons, and the other mad without any. Celia  But is all this for your father? Rosalind  No, some of it is for my child’s father—O how full of briars is this working-day world!

Celia  They are but burs, cousin, thrown upon thee in holy-day foolery: if we walk not in the trodden paths, our very petticoats will catch them.

Rosalind  I could shake them off my coat: these burs are in my heart.

Celia  Hem them away.

Rosalind  I would try, if I could cry ‘hem’ and have him.

Celia  Come, come, wrestle with thy affections.

Rosalind  O they take the part of a better wrestler than myself.

Celia  O, a good wish upon you: you will try in time in despite of a fall. But turning these jests out of service, let us talk in good earnest. Is...