

No Longer Celia  
By Mariel Stein



*And never two ladies loved as they do.*

*No Longer Celia*  
**By Mariel Stein**  
**Based on William Shakespeare's *As You Like It***

**Characters**

CELIA  
ROSALIND  
PHEBE  
SILVIUS  
JAQUES  
ORLANDO

**A Note on the Timeline within the Text**

The timeline of this text is up for interpretation. It is only important for people to know that the play begins at the dawn of Rosalind and Celia's first day in Arden and ends before Celia meets Oliver.

**A Note on the Transitions in the Text**

No transition should be silent, unless noted otherwise. Each transition should be underscored by music, as musical references and songs are embedded in *As You Like It*. The Forest of Arden should be as it was imagined by William Shakespeare.

**Disclaimer**

Parts of the text in Act I. Scene II. and Act I. Sene VI. are adapted from *As You Like It* by William Shakespeare.

Prologue/Act I. Scene I.

*CELIA and ROSALIND share a small bed in a cottage in the Forest of Arden. CELIA has changed her name to “Aliena” and is wearing a ragged dress. ROSALIND has changed her name to “Ganymede” and is wearing men’s clothing. Their faces are smirched.*

*Morning sunlight wakes ROSALIND; she gently opens her eyes.*

*CELIA rises abruptly. After the shock of her awakening fades, she softly grasps ROSALIND’s arm.*

CELIA

I dreamt a lonely dream.

ROSALIND

Tell me.

CELIA

I dreamt that I was back in the palace, tucked away in my bed. Sun filtered in through the curtains and I leapt from my comfort to wake you, but when I opened your door, you were gone, and in your place was a strange man.

ROSALIND

Was he an *attractive*, strange man?

CELIA

Rosalind, let me finish!

ROSALIND

Shhh! You must only call me Ganymede!

CELIA

*Ganymede*, may I finish telling you about my dream now?

ROSALIND

You may. Finish the story, my lady.

*CELIA nudges ROSALIND, playfully.*

CELIA

In your place was a strange man; someone I did not know. Yet, he seemed to recognize me, because he climbed out of the bed to embrace me...

ROSALIND

And kiss you!

CELIA

No, he did not *kiss* me; he wouldn't let me go!

ROSALIND

I wouldn't have wanted to wake at all!

CELIA

Well, *I* was relieved to wake. There's more.

ROSALIND

Go on.

CELIA

The man's arms became cold and rigid, like stone. I begged him to let me go and find you, but he wouldn't. I felt strangled by his hold, so I filled my lungs and screamed your name. But there was no sound. Nothing at all.

ROSALIND

I am beginning to understand this dream...

CELIA

What is it telling me?

ROSALIND

Speak less.

*CELIA glares, ROSALIND laughs and fidgets with her clothing.*

CELIA

Are they comfortable?

ROSALIND

What?

CELIA

The trousers.

ROSALIND

A bit long, but quite comfortable.

CELIA

I can mend them for you.

ROSALIND

Do I look handsome?

CELIA

You look lovely, Rose, you always do.

ROSALIND

Ganymede.

CELIA

*Ganymede*, do you wish to hear the rest?

ROSALIND

I'm listening.

CELIA

I was mute and the man still refused to release me, so I had to think of a way to distract him. Now, seal your lips; you mustn't say a thing.

*ROSALIND presents her shut lips.*

I kissed him.

*ROSALIND squeals, then covers her mouth with her hands.*

But I only did it to distract him, and it worked, because I was able to run from the room as fast as I could.

ROSALIND

You fool!

CELIA

No further commentary until the *end* of the dream!

*ROSALIND covers her mouth and squirms.*

I ran through the halls, but nothing was familiar. The walls were a boisterous shade of pink and the doors were crooked. The combination of colors and shapes made me so dizzy that I fainted. I've never lost consciousness in a dream before last night and didn't know that one could...

ROSALIND

You've never died in a dream before?

CELIA

No, I didn't *die*, I only lost consciousness.

ROSALIND

I know, but have you ever died in a dream?

CELIA

No! You can't *die* in a dream.

ROSALIND

Of course, you can die in a dream! You can do anything in a dream.

CELIA

I was always under the impression that dying in a dream meant dying in real life?

ROSALIND

Then I must be a ghost!

CELIA

How strange... when did you dream this?

ROSALIND

Many different times, in many different ways. Bloody, foolish, terrifying, terrible, calculated, sloppy, luxurious, pleasurable, spiritual...

CELIA

Pleasurable?

ROSALIND

I have died many pleasurable deaths in my sleep.

CELIA

But you mean...

ROSALIND

You haven't?

CELIA

I wasn't aware that I should...

ROSALIND

It isn't a matter of should or shouldn't, only have or haven't.

CELIA

Well, I suppose I haven't then.

ROSALIND

O, Celia! You should!

CELIA

You must only call me *Aliena*!

ROSALIND

*Aliena*! It's so fun to say. What if you kept it forever?

CELIA

I might...

ROSALIND

And what if I kept *Ganymede* forever!

CELIA

You would grow tired of being a man.

ROSALIND

I disagree.

CELIA

Why?

ROSALIND

I already told you; trousers are quite comfortable.

CELIA

What if we stayed here forever?

ROSALIND

What if! It's all so exciting, isn't it?

CELIA

The Forest of Arden.

ROSALIND

We would need another cottage, though.

CELIA

For what?

ROSALIND

For when we are married, of course!

CELIA

You and I?

*ROSALIND laughs.*

ROSALIND

No, of course not! For when we have husbands.

*CELIA's energy shifts, she becomes slightly less enthusiastic.*

CELIA

Oh, yes. Of course.

ROSALIND

Orlando and I would stay here. He'd lie right where you are. And together, we'd build you and *your* husband the most beautiful cottage in Arden, with a gorgeous window facing the pasture! I would help to build it myself, to be sure that it was perfect enough for you. Or, if we wanted to save time and effort, we might tell Touchstone to pack his bags, so you could have his room.

CELIA

No, we couldn't do that!

ROSALIND

Why not? By then he'll have found a nice, country lass and a cottage to call his own.

CELIA

Perhaps... I will miss him though, and I will need someone else to make me laugh.

ROSALIND

Then I will!

CELIA

If you have the time.

ROSALIND

I'll beg the sun to stay and the moon to wait, then I will have all of the time in the world.

CELIA

Promise?

ROSALIND

I swear it.

*ROSALIND grasps CELIA's hand. She looks into her eyes for a few seconds longer than CELIA is comfortable with. CELIA looks away.*

CELIA

Do you still wish to hear about my dream? I was nearing the end.

ROSALIND

You had just fainted.

CELIA

That's right, I fainted. I don't know how long I was unconscious, but when I opened my eyes, I was seated at the head of a long table and at the other end was my father. Touchstone was there too, but he wasn't dressed in his usual yellow and green. Instead, he wore filthy rags and an unfamiliar frown. I thought that we were seated for dinner, but the servants never came, so I stood up to continue my search, only I couldn't. My feet were stuck to the floor! I looked down to see what was holding them, but all I saw were roots; I was turning into a tree! My skin roughened into bark and my hair sprouted leaves. I grew and grew and grew, and as I did, I spotted two other trees nearby. Towering, brilliant, and strong.

*ROSALIND jumps out of bed, and begins to put on her shoes.*

What do you think it means?

ROSALIND

I think you know exactly what it means.

CELIA

But what do *you* think it's suggesting.

*ROSALIND ties her shoes and stands.*

Where are you going?

*ROSALIND reaches for her hat.*

ROSALIND

Forget the palace; it's time to be in Arden.

Transition I. I Like This Place. And Willingly Could Waste My Time in It.

*ROSALIND drags CELIA to her feet. She holds her hands and begins to spin her in a circle. The girls turn until ROSALIND lets go, and runs offstage. CELIA is dizzied by the spinning and struggles to regain her balance. In the background, SILVIUS chases PHEBE; JAQUES starts to cross the stage, shrugs, and turns around; ORLANDO writes frantically in a notebook.*

*Everything stops. CELIA stands alone.*

Act I. Scene II.

*The sounds of birds and sheep fill the forest. CELIA walks around, curiously. She bends over to examine a rock or a flower when PHEBE sprints across stage, nearly trampling her. She stumbles, but continues to run, without looking back at CELIA.*

PHEBE

Pick your head up, you nearly crippled me!

*CELIA picks up her head and yells after her.*

CELIA

My apologies, miss!

*She looks back down and continues to analyze the forest floor. She talks to herself.*

Though I don't understand why you're in such a rush. There's nowhere to go around here—

*She freezes.*

Unless there's a bear...or a lion!

*With this thought, CELIA suddenly jumps to her feet. She hears a rustling of leaves coming from the side of the stage that PHEBE entered from. She grabs a tree branch and waves it in the air.*

Stay back! Stay back, I say! I have...

*She glances at the flimsy branch in her hands.*

A weapon!

*Enter SILVIUS. He is covered in leaves and forest debris. He doesn't seem to mind or notice.*

SILVIUS

Oh! Hello, miss.

*CELIA continues to grip the branch.*

If you don't mind me asking, what are you planning to do with that?

CELIA

Oh, this? I was only testing its...sturdiness. I thought it might make a good staff.

SILVIUS

Are you a shepherdess?

CELIA

Yes. I only just moved here with Ros—I mean, my brother, Ganymede. He suggested that I keep myself busy with some sort of *forest* profession, but I do not have a staff of my own and thought this branch might serve the same effect.

SILVIUS

What is a profession?

CELIA

No matter, my name is Aliena. You are a shepherd, I presume?

SILVIUS

A shepherd by the name of Silvius.

CELIA

Silvius, of course, pleasure to meet you.

*CELIA offers her hand, SILVIUS accepts the gesture, tentatively.*

SILVIUS

Formal, I like it.

CELIA

Would you teach me to tend sheep?

SILVIUS

I don't see why not.

*He looks at his staff, then behind himself. He hands the staff to CELIA.*

My sheep are over that way, beyond those shrubs and apple trees. It would be wonderful practice for you to keep a watchful eye on them while I go about my business. I won't be gone long. I have to find Phebe.

*Exit SILVIUS, suddenly.*

CELIA

Silvius, what do I do with this?

*She waits for a response, but hears nothing.*

Silvius? No worries. I'll go find the sheep...

*CELIA wanders offstage, in the direction that SILVIUS came from. Sheep sounds. While she is gone, ROSALIND enters holding a handful of papers.*

ROSALIND

Aliena! Aliena, come quickly! You won't believe what I've found.

*Enter PHEBE, from behind a tree.*

Excuse me, fair shepherdess.

PHEBE

No need to apologize, good sir. You are a sight for weary eyes.

ROSALIND

Oh? I'm flattered...

PHEBE

What are you reading?

*PHEBE leans in a bit too close to ROSALIND, who backs up suddenly, dropping one of the pieces of paper. PHEBE picks it up.*

Who is Rosalinde?

ROSALIND

Rosalind.

PHEBE

It says Rosalinde.

ROSALIND

Does it now?

PHEBE

Did you write this?

ROSALIND

*She hesitates.*

Yes... I am a poet.

PHEBE

*Charmed by this.*

O. Do tell me more.

ROSALIND

Well...I was educated by my father, who was a poet himself. I was enraptured by the craft, encaptured by his words. I told him, "Father. Someday I will travel the world, gifting this language to all of its inhabitants." I have been moving ever since, constantly. Sniffing out inspiration, sealing it in words. That's what brings me here, to Arden: a place that is untouched and eager to be moved.

PHEBE

I am untouched and eager to be moved.

ROSALIND

And I must be on my way, to move...others. It's been a pleasure.

PHEBE

Phebe.

ROSALIND

Phebe. Yes. Well, enjoy your life.

*ROSALIND begins to exit.*

PHEBE

Sweet youth, wait! I didn't get your name.

ROSALIND

Ganymede.

PHEBE

O, sweet Ganymede. It was such a relief to happen upon you today. We don't have nearly enough strapping young men in Arden. Just now, I was hiding from the most horrible shepherd. He frightens me, chasing and taunting me day in, day out. You rescued me.

ROSALIND

You're welcome.

PHEBE

No, it's my pleasure. My pleasure, indeed. This...Rosalind. Is she a lover of yours?

ROSALIND

Lover? No...my other half.

PHEBE

That is very romantic. I would like for someone to write to me and give me poetry. I would like that far more than having a shepherd for a shadow. Do you want this poem back?

ROSALIND

I would like it back, thank you.

*ROSALIND walks over to PHEBE to retrieve the paper, but PHEBE hides it behind her back, gazing flirtatiously at her new acquaintance.*

Can I have it back?

PHEBE

Persuade me, poet.

ROSALIND

Actually, you can keep it.

*Exit ROSALIND.*

PHEBE

Ganymede! Please, don't go. I'm being followed by a tall and horrible shepherd!

*GANYMEDE is gone. PHEBE drops the poem on the ground.*

I don't understand.

*Enter CELIA.*

CELIA

Rosalind, is that you?

PHEBE

Who is this Rosalind?

*Frustrated at her slip-up.*

CELIA

Ganymede. Did you see Ganymede?

PHEBE

I did see Ganymede. We were just here, talking about poetry...and *love*.

CELIA

How unusual. Where did he go?

PHEBE

Why do you want to know?

CELIA

Because he's my...brother.

PHEBE

Why are you holding that staff?

CELIA

Did he go that way?

PHEBE

Are you hard of hearing? I said, why do you have that staff?

CELIA

I was only...learning to tend the sheep.

PHEBE

Learning to tend the sheep?

CELIA

Yes, that kind shepherd, Silvius, let me borrow it.

PHEBE

How...sweet. He's been trying to herd me with that thing.

CELIA

Hurt you?

PHEBE

Her-d me.

CELIA

Oh excuse me, I don't believe that's proper English.

PHEBE

*Mocking.*

"I don't believe that's proper English." What do you know of *proper* English, you're a shepherdess.

CELIA

I'm not a shepherdess, you are!

PHEBE

Then you're a butcher.

CELIA

Pardon me?

PHEBE

If you're not using the staff to *protect* the sheep, then you're a butcher. Here to steal the flock. Silvius is a...simple man. He would never accuse a woman of such. But I can see that you are a clever imposer.

CELIA

Imposter.

PHEBE

Imposer. You're new to Arden, aren't you? I've never seen you in my life.

CELIA

First, no, I am not a butcher. Secondly, yes, I am new to Arden.

PHEBE

You're from the palace, aren't you?

CELIA

No, I've never seen a palace in my life—what is a palace?

*PHEBE walks up, closely to CELIA and examines her face. She takes her pointer finger and tediously drags it across the dirt on her cheek.*

PHEBE

Nobody in the Forest of Arden is dull enough to fall on their face. It might be wise to put some on the hands and elbows next time.

*She gestures to CELIA's spotless hands and elbows.*

What are you doing here?

CELIA

I told you, I'm learning to tend sheep.

PHEBE

And Silvius is teaching you?

CELIA

I'm a patient student!

PHEBE

Right. Well, if that pitiful creature comes looking for me again, tell him you've never met me. Lying doesn't seem to be too difficult for you.

CELIA

I will do my best.

*PHEBE begins to walk away, then quickly turns around, physically imitating SILVIUS.*

PHEBE

*Dancing, frolicking.*

Phebe, Phebe, Phebe! Kind, shepherdess, have you seen my love?

CELIA

What did you say her name was?

PHEBE

*Dropping her persona.*

Perfect. Nice to meet you, Lady Royalty.

*Exit PHEBE.*

CELIA

*CELIA waits until PHEBE is long out of sight, then rolls on the ground, rubbing dirt on her elbows and hands.*

*Enter SILVIUS.*

SILVIUS

Aliena?

CELIA

Why, hello again, fair shepherd!

SILVIUS

If you don't mind me asking, why are you covering yourself with dirt?

CELIA

*Looking at her hands in shock.*

Now, would you look at that. My hands are quite dirty, I didn't notice. Thank you, Silvius, I will clean myself up.

*CELIA rubs her hands on her elbows, then brushes the rest of the dirt off on the skirt of her dress. SILVIUS watches.*

SILVIUS

I came to tell you that I did not find Phebe over there and was wondering if you have spotted her since I left to search—

CELIA

What did you say her name was?

SILVIUS

I never told you her name? How foolish of me. Her name is Phebe and she is the most beautiful woman in Arden.

CELIA

Are there many women in the Forest of Arden?

SILVIUS

Well there's Phebe and there's Audrey and...

CELIA

There's...

SILVIUS

Oh! There's you. There's Aliena.

CELIA

My goodness, I'll have to start memorizing!

SILVIUS

Yes, very important to remember everyone in Arden, especially the sheep.

CELIA

I look forward to spending more time with you, Silvius.

SILVIUS

Me too, but I'm afraid I must be going. I still haven't found Phebe and I promised that I would count all of my sheep for her, since she was afraid one had gone missing. It took me a bit longer than usual. I couldn't remember if I had one-hundred and fifteen or one-hundred and fifty.

CELIA

That is a big difference.

SILVIUS

Perhaps you could count the sheep for me, as part of your shepherdess training! I've noticed that Phebe isn't good with numbers, but she is very good with words. Don't tell her I said she isn't good with numbers, because she is also never wrong about anything. She told me that.

CELIA

As far as I'm concerned, Phebe is a mathematician!

SILVIUS

Is she now? O, Phebe! I must go ask her about this new hobby.

*SILVIUS begins to run off.*

CELIA

Your staff!

*SILVIUS turns around to take his staff.*

SILVIUS

Thank you, Aliena! Phebe, Phebe, Phebe...

*CELIA watches him leave. When his words fade, she looks at her filthy dress, and begins to wail, unhappy with the state of her appearance.*

CELIA

Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah—

*Enter JAQUES.*

JAQUES

Stop your whining, missus. Life is a bore, but polluting the air with meaningless noise seldom does anything to improve it.

CELIA

I am sorry, sir.

*JAQUES fixates on CELIA's face. He recognizes her, but isn't yet sure from where.*

JAQUES

Well then, I shall leave you to torment the earth in silence.

CELIA

*JAQUES begins to leave.*

Excuse me, sir! Where are you going?

JAQUES

Back to where I came from. You have ceased your yelling and now the world is normal again. Good day, good life, goodbye.

*JAQUES exits.*

CELIA

No, no, no don't go!

*CELIA takes a deep breath and yells again.*

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH...

*JAQUES enters. He stares at her and doesn't say anything. CELIA doesn't notice him and continues to yell. When she does, she lets her yell fade away, slowly...*

JAQUES

You called.

CELIA

Sir, I am very sorry if I disrupted your—whatever it is you're doing over there, but I need to find my brother and I was wondering if you've seen him.

JAQUES

And here I was, thinking that you desired my company. I do not know who your brother is and therefor, I have not seen him.

CELIA

Are you a fool?

JAQUES

I beg your pardon?

CELIA

Are you a jester?

JAQUES

If I were a fool or a jester, would you find me more useful?

CELIA

I'm sorry, but I fear that I've insulted you.

JAQUES

We mustn't waste our time fearing human opinions.

CELIA

Then I haven't offended you?

JAQUES

Oh yes, you've offended me plenty, but what does it matter.

CELIA

*She bows to JAQUES apologetically.*

I am so sorry, sir.

JAQUES

You are an odd girl. I do wish to know you better.

CELIA

*Looking up from her bow, surprised.*

You do?

JAQUES

You ask many questions, yet offer no answers.

CELIA

My name is Aliena.

JAQUES

I do not wish to know your name. Your name is nonsense to me. It is a meaningless jumble of sounds, meant to symbolize a person, yet it tells me nothing that I wish to know. If I were the great puppeteer of this world, I would have everyone refer to everyone by what they observe. That way, we would all know one another much better, and better yet, we would know what everyone thought of us as well.

CELIA

What a melancholy way to live.

JAQUES

To be melancholy is to live an honest life.

CELIA

To live an honest life is to say what one thinks.

JAQUES

Then we are in agreement.

CELIA

As for names, I will tell you what I know to be true. I knew a girl who changed her name. She was the daughter of a Duke, but when she grew up, she chose to leave her royal title, and left the name with it. It no longer served her. She chose a new one, an honest one, to accompany her on a journey.

JAQUES

I too knew a girl with a name fit for royalty; we met in a brothel.

CELIA

I must find my brother.

JAQUES

You have a brother now?

CELIA

Yes, I already told you as much.

JAQUES

I must have forgotten.

CELIA

If you see him, will you tell me where he is? He's a feminine-looking boy who answers to the name of Ganymede.

JAQUES

Ganymede. Peculiar name for a young boy.

CELIA

I assure you, he is nothing short of extraordinary.

JAQUES

You intrigue me. I do hope to see you again.

CELIA

And I, you. You remind me of something.

JAQUES

What sort of thing?

CELIA

Something lost.

JAQUES

Good day to the girl who changed her name.

*Exit JAQUES.*

*She watches him go, then spots a piece of paper on the ground. It's the poem that PHEBE dropped. She reads it.*

Roses in Winter  
Roses in Spring  
Roses in Autumn  
Roses I sing  
Roses at moonfall  
Roses at dusk  
Roses at dawn  
Rosalind I trust

*She looks surprised, then like she might puke.*

At least I know *he* didn't write this. But I will find the person who has.

*Exit CELIA.*

Transition II. Hang there, my verse, in witness of my love.

*PHEBE, ROSALIND, JAQUES, and SILVIUS occupy the stage, with poems attached to their clothing. CELIA wanders through the Forest of Arden, plucking the papers from their garments. She collects a pile of poems, then notices ORLANDO, who is sitting underneath a tree, writing meticulously in a notebook. He doesn't acknowledge her. She attempts to gain his attention, but his mind is clearly elsewhere.*

Act I. Scene III.

CELIA

May I see that notebook?

ORLANDO

Excuse me?

CELIA

That notebook you're scribbling away in, may I see it?

ORLANDO

I'm sorry—have we met?

CELIA

*Remembering her disguise.*

No! No, we have not. We have not met. I'm sorry, that was rude of me. Asking a stranger for his notebook. Precious things, notebooks—I'm Aliena.

ORLANDO

Aliena. Strange. Are you named after someone?

CELIA

Myself.

ORLANDO

Yourself?

CELIA

Yes.

ORLANDO

And how can one be named after herself?

CELIA

Quite simply, by thinking of a name.

ORLANDO

Odd... Well, I'm Orlando.

CELIA

Nice to meet you, Orlando. May I see your notebook *now*?

ORLANDO

Why are you so keen on seeing my notebook?

CELIA

Because I'm curious about it. Let me have it!

ORLANDO

It's personal!

CELIA

Oh, is it now?

*CELIA waves the ripped pages in front of him.*

ORLANDO

Where did you get those?

CELIA

In a bush, on a tree, in a robin's nest—I think my sheep ate a couple.

ORLANDO

*Grabbing the papers from her.*

You weren't supposed to take them; they weren't for you to take.

CELIA

What do you mean they weren't for me to take, you've spread them about the forest!

ORLANDO

Yes I have—

CELIA

And I thought they *must* be free for the taking. After all, you don't own the forest, and literature is rather scarce here.

*She yawns.*

I was bored, you see.

ORLANDO

Well, you're welcome then.

CELIA

I didn't thank you.

ORLANDO

You said you were bored before you found my poetry.

CELIA

Yes, I was, but your poetry was excruciating—

ORLANDO

Excruciating? In what way?

CELIA

Excruciatingly *boring*! May I see your notebook now?

ORLANDO

Now? Certainly not.

CELIA

*She dances around him, begging, childlike.*

Please, Orlando! Please, please, please...

ORLANDO

*Abruptly.*

Fine!

*He closes his notebook, and hands it to CELIA. She immediately calms down, reads.*

CELIA

Rosalind, Rosalind,  
Love, don't hide.  
Rosalind, Rosalind  
Be my bride.  
Rosalind, Rosalind  
In my sleep.  
Rosalind, Rosalind  
You are my sheep—

If you don't mind me saying it, this is truly terrible.

ORLANDO

*Snatching his notebook back.*

I didn't ask you to read it, you asked me.

CELIA

I asked because I thought that *perhaps* you'd improved a little since I found the other ones!

*ORLANDO stares at her, dumbfounded.*

ORLANDO

You're bold for a shepherdess.

CELIA

You're bland for poet. Come, let me help you.

*She reaches for the notebook.*

ORLANDO

You will do no such thing.

CELIA

And why is that?

ORLANDO

You haven't met my muse. How can you be inspired to write about her?

CELIA

I'll be your ghost writer.

ORLANDO

Ghost wha—

CELIA

At least let me give you some ideas! I'm *bored* and I want to write a poem with you. It will be a collaborative effort.

*ORLANDO sits beneath the tree again. He pats the earth beside him, inviting CELIA. She joins him.*

CELIA

Now. Tell me about your *muse*.

ORLANDO

*Pondering.*

Well, she's a woman.

CELIA

No! I thought she was a sheep.

ORLANDO

*ORLANDO crosses out the word "sheep" from his previous poem.*

Go on. Write something then.

*He offers her his notebook and writing utensil.*

CELIA

*Accepting his offer.*

You'll have to inspire me first. Tell me, from your own tongue, how *Rosalind* makes you feel. Amuse me.

ORLANDO

*Overcome.*

O, how shall I begin! There is no beginning.

CELIA

A good start would be when you first met her...

ORLANDO

Yes! Brilliant. When I first met Rosalind, she offered me this chain, that I still wear around my neck.

*He pulls the chain out from under his shirt.*

CELIA

Wonderful, but how did you *feel* when you saw her?

ORLANDO

How do I put it in words?

CELIA

Tell me her qualities, and I'll seal them in writing.

ORLANDO

Simply, beautiful.

CELIA

Yes, I know. I mean, of course she is, if you pine for her so.

ORLANDO

How do I say it?

CELIA

Where did you first meet her?

ORLANDO

In the court, after a wrestling match.

CELIA

Is she regal?

ORLANDO

Yes! She's regal and dignified; fit to be the queen of a foreign land—or of the world!

CELIA

Tell me more.

ORLANDO

She is the beginning of every thought, and the ending to every sentence. She is...the oasis at the center of the harrowing desert—the serpent's venomous tongue, only her venom is enchantment.

*CELIA repositions, writing vigorously. As she writes, ORLANDO rises with a burst of passionate energy.*

And I cannot live out of her sight. I cannot live out of her company. I will continue to garnish this forest with my words—though you tell me that they are “terrible” and “excruciating”—because without Rosalind, the forest will die. The flowers will wilt, the trees will fall, and the people will weep. Let them whimper and wail! For these are the same people who ignore my words, step on my poems, sneer at my love, and disregard the perfection and radiance that is Rosalind! Rosalind! Rosalind! Rosalind!

*ORLANDO stops.*

That was actually quite poetic. Don't you think so, Aliena?

*CELIA continues to write, without acknowledging him.*

Perhaps I'm mad.

*ORLANDO walks back over to CELIA, who is writing intensely. He hangs over her, peeking at the notebook, and watches her write.*

Aliena, you are writing an epic!

CELIA

Only for someone so deserving as your Rosalind.

ORLANDO

Can I read—

CELIA

It is not yet finished.

ORLANDO

Oh. Do you need me to tell you anything more about Rosalind?

CELIA

No.

*CELIA continues writing in silence, save for the sounds of the forest. ORLANDO watches over her shoulder. He reads a line.*

ORLANDO

Why should this a desert be? For it is unpeopled?

*CELIA writes.*

Tongues I'll hang on every tree—

CELIA

I cannot focus when you talk in my ear like that.

ORLANDO

I'm only appreciating your poetic expertise!

CELIA

Appreciate it in silence.

*ORLANDO lies down and sighs. He remains on the ground, briefly, then springs up to read again.*

CELIA

Patience...

*ORLANDO squirms with anticipation.*

And....

*ORLANDO takes the notebook.*

Finished. Tell me if I've honored her.

*ORLANDO holds the notebook, CELIA sits beside him; they read together.*

ORLANDO

But upon the fairest boughs,  
Or at every sentence end,  
Will I Rosalinda write,  
Teaching all that read to know  
The quintessence of every sprite  
Heaven would in little show.

CELIA

Therefore Heaven Nature charged  
That one body should be fill'd  
With all graces wide-enlarged:  
Nature presently distill'd

ORLANDO

Helen's cheek, but not her heart,  
Cleopatra's majesty,  
Atalanta's better part,  
Sad Lucretia's modesty.

CELIA

Thus Rosalind of many parts  
By heavenly synod was devised,  
Of many faces, eyes and hearts,  
To have the touches dearest prized.  
Heaven would that she these gifts should have,

CELIA/ORLANDO

And I to live and die her slave.

*ORLANDO and CELIA sit in silence, staring at the page. ORLANDO turns to CELIA.*

ORLANDO

You are in love.

CELIA

What? No, I am not.

ORLANDO

Surely you are, to have written this.

CELIA

Yet, you claim to be in love and cannot have written this.

ORLANDO

Fair point.

*An uncomfortable silence, for CELIA.*

I thank—

CELIA

Perhaps I am.

ORLANDO

What?

CELIA

What if you're right, and I am in love. What then?

ORLANDO

You're asking the wrong man.

CELIA

I must leave you.

ORLANDO

Wait!

*He rips the poem out of his notebook and hands it to CELIA.*

Go hang it somewhere—but don't feed it to any of your sheep.

CELIA

I won't. And I promise you that Rosalind will see it. Good day, Orlando.

ORLANDO

Rosalind, in the forest of Arden? Can you imagine?

*Exit CELIA.*

What do you mean when you say that "Rosalind will see it?"

*He turns to address CELIA, but she is gone.*

Aliena? Do you know Rosalind?

*Exit ORLANDO.*

Transition III. Love is Merely a Madness.

*ORLANDO tears more pages from his notebook, tossing them into the air. Alternatively: the pages fall from the sky. He dances alone in the falling poems. ROSALIND enters. CELIA runs in and hands her the poem, ROSALIND begins to read it, but drops it when she sees ORLANDO. He sees her too; he examines her. CELIA drifts into the background, observing the scene. ROSALIND and ORLANDO circle one another, their palms pressed together (in the style of historical dance). They come to a halt, maintaining strong eye contact. ORLANDO reaches for ROSALIND's head to alter her appearance,*

*but she stops his hand. ROSALIND winks at CELIA, then runs off. ORLANDO follows her. CELIA remains.*

Act I. Scene IV.

*CELIA sits alone onstage, picking at a flower. She plucks each petal in a frustrated silence, and squishes them between her fingers. Enter JAQUES.*

JAQUES

I heard a flower crying out for help. Rescue! Rescue!

*CELIA continues to mutilate the flower.*

You are unhappy, youth.

CELIA

Not unhappy, I am melancholy.

JAQUES

I have taught you well.

*He sits beside her and picks up a flower. He twists the stem between his thumb and pointer finger.*

Then there is no cause for your sadness?

CELIA

None that I can comprehend.

JAQUES

Ah, but there is something. Think on it.

*JAQUES lies down and shuts his eyes. CELIA puts down the flower and looks over at him. She opens her mouth, as if she is about to tell him something, then hesitates and closes her lips.*

CELIA

There is a...mysterious sort of feeling inside me. I don't know how to describe it.

*She ponders it for a moment.*

When someone places a tray of petit fours before you, immediately, you set your sight on the perfect one. Perhaps it's the biggest, or most colorful, with the thickest layer of icing. But maybe it's not much different than the others on the platter, you only *think* that it is. It's one of a kind to you. Except, someone else feels the same way. And just as you move your hand up off of your lap to select the cake, that other someone snatches it. You want to say something. You want to wrestle him to the ground and take what is yours, only you realize, it doesn't belong to anyone. There's nothing you can do to get it back. Instead, you watch him eat it and choose another...or nothing at all. Does that make any sense?

JAQUES

Do you want to know what I think?

CELIA

What?

JAQUES

I think that you are terribly hungry.

CELIA

Yes, I am, but it's not the point. I still don't know the point of it all.

JAQUES

You aren't from Arden.

CELIA

Why do you say that?

JAQUES

*Petit fours.*

CELIA

It was only an example, and how do *you* know what petit fours are?

JAQUES

I've had my fair share of delicacies.

CELIA

But all there is to eat in the forest is stew. And potatoes—if we're lucky.

JAQUES

Don't tell me that you think I've *always* been in Arden.

CELIA

It seems that you've been here a while...

JAQUES

What is a while? For all I know, *you* were born here.

CELIA

And you weren't? Where did you come from, then?

JAQUES

Here and there. I've stolen from Kings, I've dined with Queens. I've fallen in love, I've fallen asleep. I've plodded, I've pleaded. I've sailed, I've sank. And now I'm here in Arden, with a girl from the palace, who pretends to be something that she is not.

CELIA

What if I don't know what I am?

JAQUES

You're a girl, you're young, and you have an expensive food craving.

CELIA

Can I ask you—

JAQUES

Go on. Burden me with questions.

CELIA

Have you ever longed for something you know you shouldn't?

JAQUES

Pomegranates. They are a scarce and sacred fruit. Certainly not abundant in Arden. And why should I long for something I cannot have?

CELIA

I shouldn't?

JAQUES

Shouldn't what?

CELIA

Long for something I cannot have?

JAQUES

You can, but it will make you melancholy.

CELIA

But I told you, I already am.

JAQUES

Well, if you already are by all means, continue.

*CELIA drops to the ground, letting out an aggravated groan.*

But if you're going to *continue* to be melancholy, please, do it quietly.

CELIA

I don't know how to do it.

JAQUES

You simply shut your lips—

CELIA

Not that. Love!

JAQUES

You don't know how to love?

CELIA

Yes. How do I do it?

JAQUES

This is a highly inappropriate conversation to be having with a girl in the middle of a forest.

CELIA

Then we can sit here and say nothing instead.

JAQUES

Let's say nothing.

*They sit in silence. CELIA dramatically picks at grass. JAQUES sits uncomfortably still, then breaks the silence.*

JAQUES

This person, whom you love. Does he live here, in the forest?

CELIA

Yes.

JAQUES

Hm. This man—

*CELIA laughs.*

CELIA

This *man*.

JAQUES

He is someone you know quite well?

CELIA

Very well.

JAQUES

Intriguing...you have not been in Arden for very long.

CELIA

I have not.

JAQUES

But you and this person, you are not merely acquaintances.

CELIA

Not merely anything.

*JAQUES examines their surroundings, checking for any observers. He looks back at CELIA, cautiously.*

JAQUES

You are in love with your brother?

*CELIA stares back at him silently, processing.*

CELIA

No...

*JAQUES lets out a sigh of relief.*

JAQUES

I was becoming worried–

CELIA

But yes.

JAQUES

Yes?

CELIA

I'm not quite sure.

JAQUES

Not sure? Is it a no, or a yes?

CELIA

It's not a simple situation!

JAQUES

To ask it *simply*, again, are you in love with your brother?

CELIA

He's not my brother.

JAQUES

He is not?

CELIA

No.

JAQUES

Then why did you say he is your brother?

CELIA

It makes things far less complicated, I swear.

JAQUES

This is most intriguing. I knew you were an odd one when we met.

CELIA

Now, back to the matter at hand.

JAQUES

What was that, exactly?

CELIA

I am melancholy and in love with someone I shouldn't be.

*JAQUES yawns.*

What?

JAQUES

You are boring me.

CELIA

Why am I boring you?

JAQUES

You should be joyous and overflowing with sickening youth. You are in love. You are in love!  
Go sing about it or write a sappy poem—

CELIA

I already did, and I actually thought it was quite good—

JAQUES

The point is this. We cannot both be melancholy. Stop sulking and go do something about it.  
Something interesting...why don't you go tell this *feminine*-looking youth how you feel.

CELIA

I couldn't!

JAQUES

And why couldn't you?

CELIA

Because I don't know how I feel!

JAQUES

You bore me, girl. Even I know how you feel, and I don't have anything left to feel.

CELIA

But what if she—what if *he* doesn't feel what I feel?

JAQUES

Then you laugh about it, pretend it was merely a jest, and run away crying profusely.

CELIA

Oh...

JAQUES

Farewell now. I will leave you to your love pursuits. I cannot distract you any longer.

CELIA

Wait!

JAQUES

What is it, girl?

CELIA

What makes you so melancholy?

JAQUES

If I could answer, I wouldn't be.

*JAQUES begins to exit, but stops. He turns his head, slightly, towards CELIA.*

JAQUES

Goodbye, Celia.

*CELIA is stunned by the sound of her former name; a smile grows upon her face.*

CELIA

Goodbye, Jaques.

*JAQUES turns to face CELIA. He smiles and brings a finger to his lips; CELIA does the same.*

*Exit JAQUES.*

Transition IV. There Is No Truth in Him.

*The sound of a clock ticking. CELIA stands and watches JAQUES go. When JAQUES is gone, ROSALIND enters, weeping. CELIA rushes to comfort her, but she pushes her away. ROSALIND turns away from CELIA and continues to weep. CELIA walks up behind her, and gently touches her shoulders. The sound of the clock stops. ROSALIND turns to face CELIA and shouts "ORLANDO," repeatedly. CELIA plugs her ears. ROSALIND runs offstage.*

Act I. Scene V.

*Enter PHEBE, who is being chased by SILVIUS.*

PHEBE

Are you *absolutely* sure that all your sheep are there?

SILVIUS

For you, I am certain; I counted them.

PHEBE

Recently?

SILVIUS

Just now!

PHEBE

You are mistaken. If you were following me around just now, which you were, how could you have counted them?

SILVIUS

There is no need to worry, Phebe.

PHEBE

But how can you be certain of their safety when they are gone from your sight?

SILVIUS

Your safety concerns me more.

PHEBE

And *their* safety concerns me most. Go. Watch them.

*SILVIUS hesitates.*

For me?

SILVIUS

Alright, I'll check on them

PHEBE

Oh, Silvius. How loyal you are.

*Enter CELIA and ROSALIND.*

*They watch PHEBE and SILVIUS from behind a tree.*

SILVIUS

I will find you after I've counted them.

*Exit SILVIUS.*

PHEBE

Not as long as I can hide.

*Exit PHEBE.*

ROSALIND

He is a thousand times more proper a man than she.

CELIA

But she is no man; you are the man.

ROSALIND

More proper a man than she a *woman*. And I am no man.

CELIA

Orlando would disagree.

ROSALIND

I plan to marry him today.

CELIA

And reveal yourself so soon?

ROSALIND

No, not yet. It will be a false marriage, a game of sorts.

CELIA

Will it be sanctified?

ROSALIND

In my eyes, it will be. And when he comes, I'll convince him to play along.

CELIA

He would not marry a man.

ROSALIND

True. But I do make a handsome one.

CELIA

I won't be part of it.

ROSALIND

I'll find you when the time comes.

*Exit ROSALIND*

Act I. Scene VI.

*CELIA stands alone onstage.*

CELIA

I don't remember meeting Rosalind,  
But often, I imagine how it went.  
As I lay sleeping in my cradle bed  
A pair of gentle hands did plant her there,  
So softly that I was not stirred by sound;  
Her presence, rather, and perhaps her heart.  
A thumping sound sparked echoes in my head,  
And baby dreams of mother's milk transformed  
To open eyes that met my very own;  
A set of swan-like hearts beating as one.  
O true, the day was wondrous beyond words!  
So wondrous that my mind does shame me now  
For failing to recall the memory.  
But what more is a mind good for, I ask?  
If not creating thoughts and dreaming dreams.  
When Rosalind is near, my petals fall;  
Yet I can't find the words to speak at—

*ROSALIND and ORLANDO enter, interrupting CELIA's speech. CELIA watches them.*

ROSALIND

What would you say to me if I were your Rosalind?

ORLANDO

Nothing; I would kiss you first.

*ORLANDO moves in to kiss ROSALIND, but she stops him to preserve her male disguise.*

ROSALIND

No, you must *speak* first! Then, when you have rambled your words away, you might take occasion to kiss.

ORLANDO

And what if that kiss is denied?

ROSALIND

Aren't I your Rosalind?

ORLANDO

I prefer to say that you are, because it feels as if I'm talking to her.

*ROSALIND and ORLANDO continue to play in the background, and CELIA becomes the focal point of the scene, commenting on their interactions. When CELIA speaks, ROSALIND and ORLANDO do not pause, but are muted, and should not acknowledge CELIA until they are directed to in the text. (For reference: The scene that is being acted by ROSALIND and ORLANDO is Act IV Scene I from As You Like It.)*

CELIA

Fool, she is your Rosalind!

*(aside.)* He met her but *one time* in the court. Perhaps this is why he cannot seem to realize that it is her.

*One time.* Do men and women truly fall in love so fast?

ROSALIND

Now I will be your Rosalind in a more "coming-on" disposition. Ask me what you will. I will grant it.

CELIA

Then love me, Rosalind.

ORLANDO

Then love me, Rosalind!

ROSALIND

Yes, I promise you, I will; Fridays, Saturdays and all.

ORLANDO

And will you have me?

ROSALIND

Of course...and twenty other men just like you.

*CELIA laughs.*

ORLANDO

What did you say?

CELIA

*(aside.)* If he intends to earn her love, he should try to understand her humor, first.

*At this time, ROSALIND turns away from ORLANDO and addresses CELIA.*

ROSALIND

Come, sister, you will be the priest and marry us.

CELIA

*(aside.)* Oh my goodness, no.

*ROSALIND takes CELIA by the hand and drags her back into the scene.*

No, no, no, no, no...

ROSALIND

Give me your hand, Orlando.

*ORLANDO and ROSALIND join hands, CELIA stands behind and between them. They look at her, waiting, but she says nothing.*

What do you say, sister?

CELIA

*(aside.)* What do I say? This is madness!

ORLANDO

Come on, marry us!

*ROSALIND and ORLANDO stare at CELIA, eagerly.*

CELIA

I cannot say the words.

*(aside.)* The first reason being that I am not a priest.

ROSALIND

You must begin, “Will you, Orlando...”

CELIA

*(aside.)* I know what the words *are*, but I do not wish to say them.

*CELIA looks at ROSALIND, then ORLANDO. She sighs and speaks unenthusiastically.*

Will you, Orlando, have to wife this Rosalind?

ORLANDO

I will.

ROSALIND

Yes, but when?

ORLANDO

Why now; as fast as she can marry us!

CELIA

*(aside.)* Truly, I have never seen two lovers in such a rush as this.

ROSALIND

Then you must say, “I take thee, Rosalind, for wife.”

ORLANDO

I take thee, Rosalind, for wife.

ROSALIND

I should ask you for your commission, but I do take thee, Orlando, for my husband.

*ROSALIND pauses, realizing that she has finished the ceremony herself, without CELIA's assistance.*

I suppose we don't need a priest after all... You see, women's thoughts often run before their actions.

*ROSALIND kisses ORLANDO, who pulls back, shocked. After a brief hesitation, he leans in and kisses her back. CELIA, who is extremely uncomfortable, steps around and in front of the pair; she addresses the audience.*

CELIA

Once again, here is my cue for silence. When we lived together in the palace, I spoke freely; with more comfort than she could afford. When she was banished, I poured out words to defend her place. Now, this forest has taken the liberty that I sought, but it has granted Rosalind the freedom she deserves.

*CELIA looks back at ROSALIND and ORLANDO, who are conversing passionately.*

If I shouted, would she listen? If I waved my arms about, would she see? If I took her hand in mine, would she feel anything at all?

*CELIA approaches ROSALIND from behind, reaching out her hand, then pulls away.*

If I told her I loved her, what would she say?

*CELIA now looks at ORLANDO, disdainfully.*

I wonder if he knows who his playmate really is. Orlando isn't clever, but he isn't dull either. I hope they'll be happy. This forest is trying my strength...

*ROSALIND and ORLANDO become audible again; CELIA is intrigued.*

ROSALIND

Go. Go your ways and leave me here, alone. I knew that you would turn out this way; my sister warned me and I agreed. That flattering tongue of yours won me...

CELIA

*(aside.)* It's growing harder to distinguish the truth from the act.

ROSALIND

You will be back at two o'clock?

ORLANDO

Yes, sweet Rosalind.

CELIA

*(aside.)* He'll be tardy, mark my words

ROSALIND

I swear, and God mark my words, if you dare break this promise, I will think you the most pathetic and hollow lover, and above all, the most unworthy of this Rosalind you claim to love so dearly. Beware my condemnation and keep your promise.

ORLANDO

I will, as if you really were Rosalind. Farewell.

ROSALIND

Well, time is the old justice that examines all such offenders, and let time try. Farewell.

*Exit ORLANDO.*

CELIA

You have simply humiliated all of womankind with that talk.

ROSALIND

O coz, coz, coz, my pretty little coz, if only you could understand how I feel! My love is as deep as the sea, yet I cannot say a word.

CELIA

Oh, but I do understand—as fast as you pour affection in, it runs out.

ROSALIND

Aliena, I swear, I cannot be out of the sight of Orlando: I'll go find a tree to sit and sigh beneath until he returns.

*Exit ROSALIND.*

CELIA

And I'll sleep.

Transition V: Celia's Dream.

*CELIA lies down to sleep on the forest floor. While she is sleeping, PHEBE, SILVIUS, ORLANDO, ROSALIND, and JAQUES join hands and circle around her. She rises into her dream. SILVIUS crawls on all fours, following PHEBE like an obedient animal. PHEBE pulls out a rope and ties it around his neck. She leads him offstage, skipping happily. ROSALIND approaches CELIA and beckons her, seductively. CELIA looks*

*around; she sees JAQUES and ORLANDO, watching. She doesn't move. ROSALIND continues to seduce her, caressing her. Then, she leans in to kiss her. CELIA doesn't resist, but when they pull away, JAQUES is pointing at them. He pulls a cowbell out from behind him and begins to ring it. He runs off. ORLANDO grabs ROSALIND around the waist and attempts to drag her offstage with him. CELIA follows, grabbing ROSALIND by the hands, and pulls her. The two engage in a tug of war, but CELIA is too weak. She watches ORLANDO pull ROSALIND out of sight. CELIA collapses on the floor, sinking into the sleeping position she began in.*

Act I. Scene VII.

*CELIA is asleep onstage. SILVIUS runs across stage, nearly tripping over her. He stops, leans over, and pokes her with his staff. CELIA sits up, startled.*

SILVIUS

Excuse me for asking, Aliena, but why are you on the ground?

CELIA

I must have fallen asleep here. There's no need to worry.

SILVIUS

Asleep? Here?

CELIA

Really, it's nothing to be concerned about. I had the strangest dream though...

SILVIUS

A dream? I don't think I've ever had one of those.

CELIA

Never had a dream? You must be mistaken.

SILVIUS

Well, if I did, I certainly don't remember it.

CELIA

If I'm remembering correctly, you were in my dream.

SILVIUS

I was? Tell me, tell me!

CELIA

I don't know, it was very odd. I wouldn't want you to think poorly of me for it.

SILVIUS

Why would I? Tell me about the dream!

CELIA

But I must warn you: sometimes, dreams don't make much sense at all.

*SILVIUS sits beside CELIA, cross-legged and eager, like a child waiting to hear a bedtime story.*

Well...if you insist. I was here, in the forest, and nobody was normal. Jaques was running around ringing a bell like a maniac, which was odd, because he never seems to have much energy in him. My brother, Ganymede, was there too and he was suddenly a girl, which was peculiar—

SILVIUS

He was a girl?

CELIA

Yes, very strange—

SILVIUS

Don't tell me I became a woman too...

CELIA

No, you transformed into one of your sheep—or was it a dog? I'm struggling to remember now. But, you were an animal of sorts and you had a master—

SILVIUS

A sheep or a dog! What did I look like?

CELIA

I told you, I can't seem to remember if you were a sheep or a dog or another animal all togeth—

SILVIUS

Did I have spots?

CELIA

Silvius. It's not important.

SILVIUS

Who was my master?

CELIA

Why don't you tell me?

SILVIUS

But I told you, I've never had a dream, so how could I know?

CELIA

Sometimes, dreams are symbolic.

SILVIUS

What is symbolic?

CELIA

It means that they reflect our real lives. Sometimes.

SILVIUS

Oh! I still don't know. Was it Corin?

CELIA

No.

SILVIUS

Was it Ganymede?

CELIA

No, it was Phebe.

SILVIUS

Phebe?

CELIA

Yes. I probably shouldn't have told you that. In the future I'm going to keep my dreams to mys-

SILVIUS

Did she pay attention to me?

CELIA

In her own way.

SILVIUS

Did she stroke my ears? Did she shout my name, or call me sweet things? Did she beckon for me to follow her, or to keep her safe from harm? Did she protect me? Did she love me?

CELIA

It's difficult to remember so many details. My dream is fading as we speak.

SILVIUS

But do you remember if she loved me, Aliena?

CELIA

What of it. Why does it matter?

SILVIUS

Why does it *matter*? Why does anything matter?

CELIA

Forget about the dream. In real life, here in Arden, do you believe that Phebe loves you?

*SILVIUS ponders this.*

Daily, she runs and hides from you. She teases you. She demands you to complete foolish and unnecessary tasks so that she will be rid of you. She doesn't love you, Silvius.

*SILVIUS sits, silently.*

You're too good for her anyway. Too loyal.

*A shout from offstage.*

PHEBE

Silvius!

*SILVIUS immediately perks up and rises to standing.*

SILVIUS

Phebe?

CELIA

Not this again...

*Enter PHEBE.*

PHEBE

O, Silvius! I am so relieved to see you. I need you to deliver this to that fair brother of her's.

*SILVIUS looks around, confusedly.*

SILVIUS

Brother of who...

*PHEBE gestures harshly at CELIA.*

PHEBE

Her's. Brother of her's.

*CELIA raises her hand and waves to SILVIUS, playfully.*

SILVIUS

Ganymede! Of course, of course. Give me the letter, Phebe, and I will handle it with care.

*PHEBE kisses the letter and places it in SILVIUS' open palms.*

CELIA

Stop! Why can't I give Ganymede the letter? He is my brother, afterall.

PHEBE

You're clumsy and I fear you'll lose it, or worse: open it.

CELIA

Why on earth would I want to open it?

PHEBE

Besides, I want Silvius to be there when he reads it.

SILVIUS

You will not be disappointed, Phebe. I will find him now!

*Exit SILVIUS.*

CELIA

I presume that my brother is off playing with Orlando somewhere in the forest. I doubt they'd caper anywhere too visible, given the nature of their relationship. Don't expect Silvius to find him so soon.

PHEBE

Silvius will find him; he isn't particularly *busy*.

CELIA

Who isn't busy, Ganymede?

PHEBE

No, Silvius, of course. I'm sure that your brother is off writing a beautiful poem about me.

CELIA

I doubt it.

PHEBE

What are you so cross about?

CELIA

Silvius works harder than you think. Anyone with eyes can see it.

PHEBE

I suppose that's true; he does work very hard to gain my affection. It's laughable.

CELIA

You're a cruel woman.

PHEBE

I'm practical.

CELIA

You should tell him that you don't love him. Put him out of his misery.

PHEBE

If I did that, he wouldn't be so loyal, now would he?

CELIA

He's in love with you! He would do anything for you! You could tell him off kindly, but instead, you choose to lead him along. How do you expect him to ever find another person to love?

PHEBE

I don't. Who else would he love?

CELIA

Someone! There must be someone!

PHEBE

Perhaps where you come from, but not here. If you see Ganymede, tell him I've been thinking about him...

*Exit PHEBE.*

*CELIA sticks her tongue out after her.*

*Enter JAQUES from the opposite direction.*

JAQUES

Hey, ho! She has forgotten how to speak.

CELIA

Sorry to disappoint, but I have not.

JAQUES

That is disappointing.

CELIA

That woman. That—

JAQUES

Yes, use your words...

CELIA

I do not like her.

JAQUES

Not a particularly poetic statement, but an honest one.

CELIA

She doesn't know how lucky she is. To have somebody sweet pining after her all day and night.

JAQUES

It may seem that way to you, but she doesn't like him all that much, now does she?

CELIA

No, she does not. How foolish.

JAQUES

Then is she so lucky after all? She knows what she wants.

CELIA

I need to find Ganymede.

JAQUES

Yes, you do.

CELIA

Goodbye, Jaques.

JAQUES

Goodbye. And don't forget to tell her how you feel.

*CELIA halts and looks back at JAQUES. He nods knowingly.*

*Exit CELIA and JAQUES in opposite directions.*

Act I. Scene VIII.

*ROSALIND runs on stage. She is looking for someone. She begins to pace, then sits down on the ground, dejected.*

*Enter CELIA.*

CELIA

All alone? I would have thought to see your *husband* here.

*ROSALIND looks up at CELIA, contented to see her.*

ROSALIND

He's hardly my husband. Not yet.

CELIA

Not yet? Then why did I go through all the trouble to officiate?

ROSALIND

Was it really so much trouble?

CELIA

So much that I couldn't bring myself to finish the job.

ROSALIND

No worries, I finished it for you.

CELIA

Where is Orlando?

ROSALIND

That's the real trouble. Late. Nowhere to be seen.

CELIA

That is a shame.

ROSALIND

All this time you thought I was with him, I was not.

CELIA

You were not?

ROSALIND

I waited for him at first. I waited under the tree he sits beneath to write. I waited for what must have been an hour before I began to climb.

CELIA

You did what?

ROSALIND

I climbed through the branches and leaves, with splinters on my hands. When I reached the crown, I shouted with what little breath I had, "Orlando!"

*ROSALIND springs to her feet and continues to shout.*

Orlando! Orlando! Orlando! Orlando! Orlando...

*She shouts until her words fade to sobs. She cries.*

CELIA

Rose!

*CELIA embraces her.*

ROSALIND

If he loves me, why does he keep me waiting? Not once has he been on time.

CELIA

He doesn't love you.

ROSALIND

Why do you say that?

CELIA

Because he loves Rosalind.

ROSALIND

But I am Rosalind!

CELIA

No you aren't! Not like this. He thinks you're Ganymede.

ROSALIND

Why would he have kissed me if he thought I was a man?

CELIA

You told him you were a man named Ganymede.

ROSALIND

That I did.

CELIA

And you promised to cure his love if he imagined you his mistress.

ROSALIND

What are you saying?

CELIA

It was only a game to him!

ROSALIND

Not in my eyes.

CELIA

I know.

*ROSALIND's disposition shifts. She takes off her hat and sits. CELIA joins her.*

CELIA

You are so good. He doesn't deserve you.

ROSALIND

I feel foolish for waiting.

CELIA

If you are foolish, then so am I.

ROSALIND

There is no point waiting around for someone who doesn't love you.

*She looks at CELIA.*

If only I could marry you instead.

*CELIA leans in and kisses her. ROSALIND pulls away. They stare at one another like startled animals, not blinking. A smile creeps across ROSALIND's face and she begins to laugh. She laughs hysterically, and hugs CELIA.*

This forest is turning us all into fools.

*CELIA laughs, half-heartedly.*

First I have Phebe pining after me, and now you! I need to get out of these clothes. They're confusing all of the ladies.

*CELIA continues to smile, but she is holding back tears.*

O Celia, don't cry! What is wrong? Tell me. Tell me.

CELIA

I love you, Rosalind.

ROSALIND

And I love you!

CELIA

As you love Orlando, I love you.

*ROSALIND looks at CELIA, surprised.*

I'm not a fool. There is no confusion. There is no mistaking. There is only love. Love that is written in verse, not prose. Love that is sung, not spoken. Love that is shared, not hidden. And I know that it doesn't make much sense to you, though I feel it clear as dew on a flower, but I love you all the same. I don't expect you to feel what I feel; you clearly do not. But I hope that you will continue to love me in the way you do. Nothing more, nothing less.

*ROSALIND reaches for CELIA's hands. She smiles and gazes into her eyes, then kisses her on the cheek.*

ROSALIND

Nothing more, nothing less.

CELIA

When will you be Rosalind again?

ROSALIND

Soon. When will you be Celia again?

CELIA

I'm not sure that I ever will be.

ROSALIND

Then be Aliena for the world, but be Celia for me.

CELIA

That I will be.

ROSALIND

Good.

CELIA

Will you tell Orlando who you are?

ROSALIND

I will need to! Whenever, *if ever* I find him...

CELIA

Will you marry him?

ROSALIND

I already have!

CELIA

Yes, I remember. But, will you marry him as yourself.

ROSALIND

That's the final step, isn't it?

CELIA

And I'll be there by your side.

ROSALIND

Of course you will. Who knows, maybe we can find a man for you as well! That is, if you want one.

CELIA

That's the final step, isn't it?

ROSALIND

Yes, the final step. If it makes you happy.

*ROSALIND brings her hand to CELIA's cheek. She looks at her fondly, with a tinge of pity in her eyes.*

CELIA

And if Orlando makes you happy, you must find him.

*ROSALIND pulls her hand away, springs to her feet, and shouts.*

ROSALIND

Orlando!

*ROSALIND walk around the stage, shouting ORLANDO's name. PHEBE runs on, shouting GANYMEDE's name. SILVIUS runs on shouting PHEBE's name. JAQUES walks onstage, looks around, then walks upstage and sits without saying anything. ORLANDO runs on, shouting ROSALIND's name, he doesn't see her and turns to run off. Everyone runs and shouts, concealing CELIA, who stands silently in the center of the stage. PHEBE grabs SILVIUS by the hand; she drags him offstage. ORLANDO stops when he hears ROSALIND shouting his name from the other side of the stage; they look at each other, CELIA is caught between them. They meet in front of CELIA. ORLANDO reaches for ROSALIND's head to alter her appearance. Depending on the costume, he removes her hat or runs his fingers through her short hair. It is clear that he sees ROSALIND now and not GANYMEDE. They join hands, and walk off. As she watches them go, CELIA catches JAQUES' eye; he stands, nods his head to her, and exits. CELIA stands alone.*

## Epilogue

CELIA

If I could halt the reaching arms of time,  
I'd dig my feet into the lifeless soil  
To stretch my branches to the stagnant sky  
And straighten up my trunk to meet the clouds.  
They'd drift to me to fill my empty arms—  
The loveless void that daily weighed me down—  
Or flow into my ears to fog my mind;  
Until I could not find my source of pain.  
But where there's love, there is no end in sight,  
And trees will only grow or fall to earth;  
For you, I'll be content, not satisfied:  
A stump building up strength to grow again.  
This epilogue must end and I will go,  
What is next for me? Only you will know.

*CELIA takes a moment to stand up tall and push her shoulders back. She turns to exit, but stops herself. She turns and walks back to center. The sounds of birds and sheep fill the forest. CELIA takes a breath in, large enough for the audience to see. Blackout.*

END OF PLAY