

As You Like It

Act III, sc. 2

ROSALIND

Ros. I have been told so of many: but indeed an old religious uncle of mine taught me to speak, who was in his youth an inland man; one that knew courtship too well, for there he fell in love. I have heard him read many lectures against it; and I thank God, I am not a woman, to be touched with so many giddy offences as he hath generally taxed their whole sex withal.

~~**Orl.**—Can you remember any of the principal evils that he laid to the charge of women?~~

Ros. There were none principal; they were all like one another as half-pence are; every one fault seeming monstrous till his fellow fault came to match it.

~~**Orl.**—I prithee, recount some of them.~~

Ros. No, I will not cast away my physic, but on those that are sick. There is a man haunts the forest, that abuses our young plants with carving -Rosalind- on their barks; hangs odes upon hawthorns, and elegies on brambles; all, forsooth, deifying the name of Rosalind: if I could meet that fancy-monger, I would give him some good counsel, for he seems to have the quotidian of love upon him.

~~**Orl.**—I am he that is so love-shaked. I pray you, tell me your remedy.~~

Ros. There is none of my uncle's marks upon you: he taught me how to know a man in love; in which cage of rushes I am sure you are not prisoner.

~~**Orl.**—What were his marks?~~

Ros. A lean cheek, which you have not; a blue eye and sunken, which you have not; an unquestionable spirit, which you have not; a beard neglected, which you have not: but I pardon you for that, for, simply, your having in beard is a younger brother's revenue.

Then, your hose should be ungartered, your bonnet unbanded, your sleeve unbuttoned, your shoe untied, and everything about you demonstrating a careless desolation. But you are no such man: you are rather point-device in your accoutrements; as loving yourself than seeming the lover of any other.

~~Orl. — Fair youth, I would I could make thee believe I love.~~

Ros. Me believe it! you may as soon make her that you love believe it; which, I warrant, she is apter to do than to confess she does; that is one of the points in the which women still give the lie to their consciences. But, in good sooth, are you he that hangs the verses on the trees, wherein Rosalind is so admired?

~~Orl. — I swear to thee, youth, by the white hand of Rosalind, I am that he, that unfortunate he.~~

Ros. But are you so much in love as your rimes speak?

~~Orl. — Neither rime nor reason can express how much.~~

Ros. Love is merely a madness, and, I tell you, deserves as well a dark house and a whip as madmen do; and the reason why they are not so punished and cured is, that the lunacy is so ordinary that the whippers are in love too. Yet I profess curing it by counsel.

~~Orl. — Did you ever cure any so?~~

Ros. Yes, one; and in this manner. He was to imagine me his love, his mistress; and I set him every day to woo me: at which time would I, being but a moonish youth, grieve, be effeminate, changeable, longing and liking; proud, fantastical, apish, shallow, inconstant, full of tears, full of smiles, for every passion something, and for no passion truly anything, as boys and women are, for the most part, cattle of this colour; would now like him, now loathe him; then entertain him, then forswear him; now weep for him, then spit at him; that I drave my suitor from his mad humour of love to a living humour of madness, which was, to forswear the full stream of the world, and to live in a nook

merely monastic. And thus I cured him; and this way will I take upon me to wash your liver as clean as a sound sheep's heart, that there shall not be one spot of love in't.

Orl. — ~~I would not be cured, youth.~~

Ros. I would cure you, if you would but call me Rosalind, and come every day to my cote and woo me.

Orl. — ~~Now, by the faith of my love, I will: tell me where it is.~~

Ros. Go with me to it and I'll show it you; and by the way you shall tell me where in the forest you live. Will you go?

Orl. — ~~With all my heart, good youth.~~

Ros. Nay, you must call me Rosalind. Come, sister, will you go?