

As You Like It

3.3

Enter Touchstone the clown and Audrey, followed by Jaques

TOUCHSTONE Come apace, good Audrey. I will fetch up your goats, Audrey. And how, Audrey, am I the man yet? Doth my simple feature content you?

AUDREY Your features, Lord warrant us±±what features?

TOUCHSTONE I am here with thee and thy goats as the 5
most capricious poet honest Ovid was among the Goths.

JAQUES (*aside*) O knowledge ill-inhabited; worse than Jove in a thatched house.

TOUCHSTONE When a man's verses cannot be understood, nor a man's good wit seconded with the forward child, 10
understanding, it strikes a man more dead than a great reckoning in a little room. Truly, I would the gods had made thee poetical.

AUDREY I do not know what 'poetical' is. Is it honest in deed and word? Is it a true thing? 15

TOUCHSTONE No, truly; for the truest poetry is the most feigning, and lovers are given to poetry; and what they swear in poetry it may be said, as lovers, they do feign.

AUDREY Do you wish, then, that the gods had made me poetical? 20

TOUCHSTONE I do, truly; for thou swearest to me thou art honest. Now if thou wert a poet, I might have some hope thou didst feign.

AUDREY Would you not have me honest?

TOUCHSTONE No, truly, unless thou wert hard-favoured; 25
for honesty coupled to beauty is to have honey a sauce to sugar.

JAQUES (*aside*) A material fool.

AUDREY Well, I am not fair, and therefore I pray the gods make me honest. 30

TOUCHSTONE Truly, and to cast away honesty upon a foul slut were to put good meat into an unclean dish.

AUDREY I am not a slut, though I thank the gods I am foul.

TOUCHSTONE Well, praised be the gods for thy foulness. 35
Sluttishness may come hereafter. But be it as it may
be, I will marry thee; and to that end I have been with
Sir Oliver Martext, the vicar of the next village, who
hath promised to meet me in this place of the forest,
and to couple us. 40

JAQUES (*aside*) I would fain see this meeting.

AUDREY Well, the gods give us joy.

TOUCHSTONE Amen.±±A man may, if he were of a fearful
heart, stagger in this attempt; for here we have no
temple but the wood, no assembly but horn-beasts. But 45
what though? Courage. As horns are odious, they are
necessary. It is said many a man knows no end of his
goods. Right: many a man has good horns, and knows
no end of them. Well, that is the dowry of his wife, 'tis
none of his own getting. Horns? Even so. Poor men 50
alone? No, no; the noblest deer hath them as huge as
the rascal. Is the single man therefore blessed? No. As
a walled town is more worthier than a village, so is
the forehead of a married man more honourable than
the bare brow of a bachelor. And by how much defence 55
is better than no skill, by so much is a horn more
precious than to want.

Enter Sir Oliver Martext

Here comes Sir Oliver.±±Sir Oliver Martext, you are
well met. Will you dispatch us here under this tree, or
shall we go with you to your chapel? 60

SIR OLIVER MARTEXT Is there none here to give the woman?

TOUCHSTONE I will not take her on gift of any man.

SIR OLIVER MARTEXT Truly she must be given, or the
marriage is not lawful.

JAQUES (*coming forward*) Proceed, proceed. I'll give her. 65

TOUCHSTONE Good even, good Monsieur What-ye-call't.
How do you, sir? You are very well met. God'ield you
for your last company. I am very glad to see you. Even
a toy in hand here, sir.

Jaques removes his hat

Nay, pray be covered. 70

JAQUES Will you be married, motley?

TOUCHSTONE As the ox hath his bow, sir, the horse his

curb, and the falcon her bells, so man hath his desires;
and as pigeons bill, so wedlock would be nibbling.

JAQUES And will you, being a man of your breeding, be 75
married under a bush, like a beggar? Get you to church,
and have a good priest that can tell you what marriage
is. This fellow will but join you together as they join
wainscot; then one of you will prove a shrunk panel
and, like green timber, warp, warp. 80

TOUCHSTONE I am not in the mind but I were better to be
married of him than of another, for he is not like to
marry me well, and not being well married, it will be
a good excuse for me hereafter to leave my wife.

JAQUES Go thou with me, and let me counsel thee. 85

TOUCHSTONE

Come, sweet Audrey.

We must be married, or we must live in bawdry.

Farewell, good Master Oliver. Not

O, sweet Oliver,

O, brave Oliver,

90

Leave me not behind thee

but

Wind away,

Begone, I say,

I will not to wedding with thee.

95

SIR OLIVER MARTEXT (*aside*) 'Tis no matter. Ne'er a fan-
tastical knave of them all shall flout me out of my
calling.

Exeunt