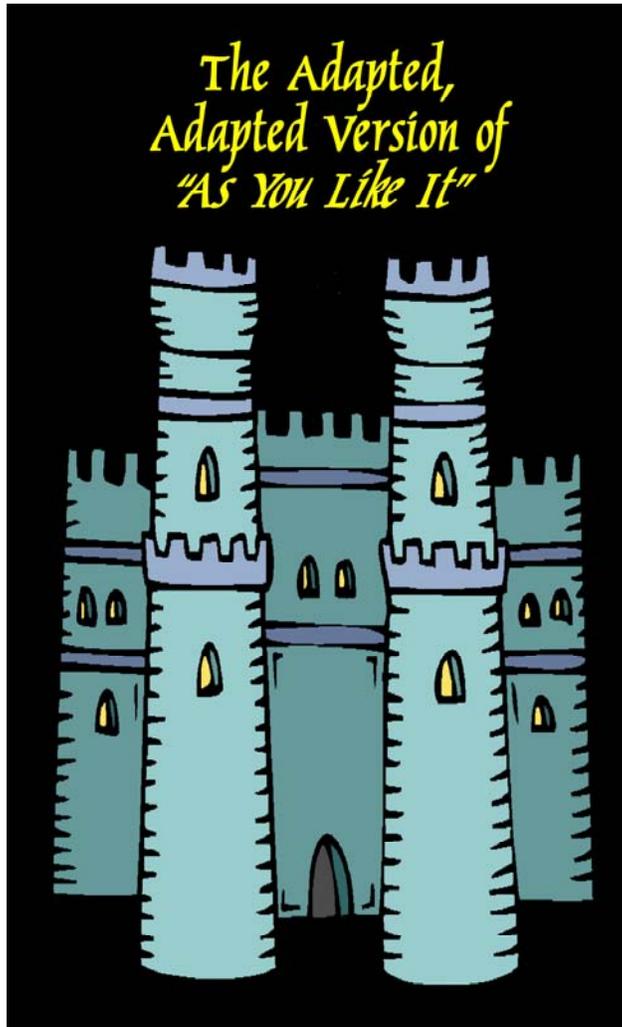


*The Adapted,
Adapted Version of
"As You Like It"*



Emilio Regina

BIG DOG PUBLISHING

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BIG DOG PUBLISHING

P.O. Box 1400

TALLEVAST, FL 34270

*The Adapted Adapted Version of
"As You Like It"*

FARCE. When a dimwitted professional wrestler mistakenly ends up at a community theatre instead of a wrestling arena, he is mistaken as an understudy and quickly finds himself on stage performing the role of Charles the Wrestler in Shakespeare's "As You Like It." Instead of losing the wrestling match as scripted in the play, Charlie scripts his own wrestling match and handily defeats Orlando with his infamous "Charlie Harse" move. Since Charlie has defeated Orlando, the play takes a major turn as Rosalind must cast her true love Orlando aside in favour of Charlie. As the play heads into a tailspin, the cast wrestles with whether to storm off the stage and go into hiding or adapt to an already adapted, adapted version of the play!

Performance Time: Approximately 30 minutes.

Characters

(6 M, 4 F, 1 flexible, opt. extras)

ROSALIND: Actress who plays Celia's cousin; engaged to actor who plays Duke Frederick.

CELIA: Actress who plays Rosalind's cousin.

MAIDSERVANT: Actress who plays Celia's maidservant.

STAGE MANAGER: Female.

DIRECTOR: Fills in as the Maidservant; flexible.

CHARLIE HARSE: Dimwitted professional wrestler; wears a wrestling outfit and a robe with the words "Charlie Harse" on the back.

OLIVER: Actor who plays Orlando's elder brother.

ORLANDO: In love with Rosalind; Donald's wrestling opponent.

DUKE FREDERICK: Plays Celia's father; engaged to actress who plays Rosalind.

PETE: Charlie's wrestling manager.

DONALD: Actor who plays Charles the Wrestler; often forgets when to show up at the theatre.

EXTRAS (OPTIONAL): As Wrestling Spectators.

Setting

Theatre production of "As You Like It." Scenes can be done with very few sets and set pieces. Simple placards such as "Oliver's Orchard," "A Lawn Before the Palace," and "The Forest of Arden" can be used to suggest place/setting.

Synopsis of Scenes

SCENE 1: Theatre, rehearsal.

SCENE 2: Theatre, before the show.

SCENE 3: A lawn before the palace.

SCENE 4: Scene break; forest scene.

Props

Bench
Necklace, for Rosalind
Headset, for Stage Manager
Fake moustache
2 Tree stumps

Sound Effects

Intro music suitable for production of "As You Like It"
Scene break music

*"There is some good wrestling
coming anon..."*

—Maid servant

Scene 1

(AT RISE: In the midst of a fighting scene between Donald and Orlando in a rehearsal for an adapted version of "As You Like It." Donald, who has been defeated by Orlando, is down on the floor.)

DIRECTOR: Come on, Donald, can we put a little more life into the scene.

DONALD: Yeah, yeah, I'm just having an off day.

DIRECTOR: Well, you better get it together in the next 15 minutes. Let's take it again from, "Hush, hush. Your maidservant approaches."

(Donald exits. Rosalind, Celia enter and take their places.)

ROSALIND: *(To Celia.)* Hush, hush. Your maidservant approaches.

CELIA: With mouth full of news.

ROSALIND: Which she will put on us.

(Enter Maidservant.)

CELIA: *(To Maidservant.)* How now, what news?

MAIDSERVANT: There is some good wrestling coming anon, fair princess.

CELIA: Shall we see this wrestling, cousin?

MAIDSERVANT: You must if you stay, for here on the lawn before your father's palace is the place appointed for the wrestling, and they are ready to perform it.

ROSALIND: Yonder, sure, they are coming: let us now stay and see it. *(Flourish. Enter Duke, Orlando, Donald, Oliver and Wrestling Spectators [if desired]. Indicates Orlando.)* Is yonder the man?

MAIDSERVANT: He and even he, madam.

CELIA: Alas, he is too young! Yet he looks successfully.

ROSALIND: *(To Maidservant. Points to Orlando.)* Prithee, call him hither.

MAIDSERVANT: Monsieur challenger, you are called upon.

ORLANDO: I attend with all my respect and duty.

ROSALIND: Sir, have you challenged that man... *(Indicates Donald.)* ...to a wrestling match?

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.

ROSALIND: Young gentleman, your spirits are too bold for your years. We pray you for your own sake, to embrace your own safety, and give over this attempt.

CELIA: Do, young sir; your reputation shall not therefore be misprised. We will make it our suit to tell the duke that the wrestling might not go forward.

ORLANDO: I beseech you, do not make me unhappy by having so harsh opinion of my ability.

ROSALIND: The little strength I have, then I would it were with you.

CELIA: *(To Orlando.)* And mine to eke out hers.

DONALD: *(To Orlando.)* Come, where is this young gallant that is desirous to lie with his Mother Earth?

ORLANDO: Ready, sir.

DUKE: *(To Donald.)* You shall but one fall.

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

ROSALIND: Now Hercules be thy speed, young man!

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

(Donald and Orlando wrestle. Orlando gives Donald the first blow and Wrestling Spectators react.)

ROSALIND: O excellent young man!

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

(As they continue to fight, the Wrestling Spectators observe and react until Donald is defeated.)

DUKE: *(To Donald.)* How dost thou sir?

OLIVER: He cannot speak, my lord.

DUKE: Then bear him away.

DIRECTOR: Okay, that's all, folks. That was better, Donald, thank you. Well, we don't have much time before the show starts, so lets clear the stage and draw the curtains, and we'll see you here at a quarter to seven.

(Everyone adlibs and exits SL, except for Donald. As the curtains start to close, Donald delivers his next lines.)

DONALD: Did you say a quarter to seven or a quarter to eight? Excuse me, was that a quarter to seven or a quarter to eight?

(As the curtains are nearly closed, Donald exits SR. Lights go down.)

Scene 2

(AT RISE: Scene is played before curtain. Charlie and Pete enter from an isle of the theatre and make their way toward the stage. Charlie wears a wrestling outfit and a robe with the words "Charlie Harse" on the back.)

PETE: I think we're in the wrong place, Charlie.

CHARLIE: How's that, Pete?

PETE: This is a theatre, Charlie. I've yet to see a wrestling match in a theatre. I don't know about this.

CHARLIE: Hey, don't sweat it, Pete. It doesn't matter where I wrestle 'cause the fights are already planned... *(Quickly and all in one breath.)* ...they give me the old one-two, I come back with the bing-bang-boom, finish them off with the old trademark, and then you know the rest.

PETE: That's right, Charlie. The two fights tonight set the stage for the big rematches tomorrow. Say, listen, Charlie, stay right here. Don't move. I want to see if I can find someone. I'll be right back.

CHARLIE: You bet, Pete.

(Pete exits. Charlie looks around and decides to exit in the opposite direction. Stage Manager enters and notices the curtain slightly open and adjusts it. Seconds later Orlando enters.)

ORLANDO: Where's Charles the wrestler?

STAGE MANAGER: You mean Donald, the one who plays Charles the wrestler?

ORLANDO: At this point, I don't give a fiddler's fart what his name is. So, do you know where he is?

STAGE MANAGER: I don't know, and I hope he doesn't pull another trick like he did last week when he had his very own understudy come in for him. I know it's a small part, but the nerve of him—

ORLANDO: Yeah, the nerve of him. It's ten minutes to show time, and I'm starting to get poopie pants. Let me know if he makes an appearance.

STAGE MANAGER: You'll be the first to know.

ORLANDO: Thanks.

(Orlando exits through the curtain. Pete enters.)

PETE: Charlie, Charlie, where did you go?

STAGE MANAGER: And who are you, another understudy?

PETE: The name's Pete. I'm from a wrestling organization.

STAGE MANAGER: I'm Sherri, the stage manager for the play this evening.

PETE: A play?

STAGE MANAGER: Yes, a play. It's an adapted version of Shakespeare's "As you Like It." Now if you don't mind, I'm—

PETE: So, this is obviously not where the wrestling matches take place tonight.

STAGE MANAGER: There's a very brief scene with a wrestling match between two characters. Is that what you're referring to?

PETE: No, it's a whole evening of matches with various wrestlers.

STAGE MANAGER: Well, then, you're clearly in the wrong place.

PETE: But they said it was going to be right here.

STAGE MANAGER: Does this look like ringside to you?

PETE: No, of course not. But this is The Civic, isn't it?

STAGE MANAGER: This is The Civic Theatre. I think I know the place you're looking for. You want to be at The Civic Centre. There's wrestling at The Civic Centre tonight. Now, if you don't mind, I'm very busy...

(Stage Manager exits.)

PETE: Charlie...Charlie...Charlie, where are you? We're in the wrong place.

(Pete exits. Enter Director, Rosalind, and Duke.)

DIRECTOR: *(To Rosalind.)* Just ask Sherri to get you another moustache for the forest scene. Where's Donald? I'm going to strangle him if it's—

ROSALIND: But what about the male costume I wear that's also gone missing? What do I do about that?

DIRECTOR: Ask Sherri to get you another.

DUKE: We have a similar costume at home. Should I go get it?

DIRECTOR: It's too late.

DUKE: *(To Rosalind.)* Okay, sweetie, let's go find it.

ROSALIND: I think I'm having a breakdown; I can feel it.

DUKE: Calm down. Just think, tomorrow at this time you and I, we'll be walking on a sandy beach.

ROSALIND: Well, let's get through this first.

(Rosalind and Duke exit. Orlando sticks his head out from behind the curtain and startles Director.)

ORLANDO: *(To Director.)* [Susanna], where is Charles the Wrestler? *[Or insert male name if male is cast for part.]*

DIRECTOR: You mean Donald?

ORLANDO: Yeah, that's the numbskull. Have you seen him?

DIRECTOR: No.

ORLANDO: Well then, who's going to play the part of Charles?

DIRECTOR: I don't know.

ORLANDO: Well, he better not be up to his old tricks again.

DIRECTOR: I hope not, or I'll ring his neck this time.

(Orlando, frustrated, sticks his head behind the curtain. Charlie enters.)

CHARLIE: Excuse me. I'm Charlie, Charlie Harse. I'm looking for—

DIRECTOR: Well, you must be Donald's understudy for tonight.

CHARLIE: Actually, I'm the underdog.

DIRECTOR: Well, aren't we humorous with five minutes to go? I'm Susanna the director. I want a very brief match, with no lines. Have you had a chance to stage it with Orlando?

CHARLIE: Oh, sure. He comes in with the old one-two, I give him the bing-bang-boom, finish him off with the old trademark, and then you know the rest.

DIRECTOR: You mean he finishes you off.

CHARLIE: I'm the underdog, remember.

DIRECTOR: You're very amusing, Charlie Harse.

CHARLIE: No, no. It's not Charlie Harse. *(Shows her the back of his robe with his name.)* It's Charlie Harse [Arse]. The 'H' is silent.

DIRECTOR: Well, I'm relieved to have you, Charlie Harse. Look, they're going to open the doors in a few minutes, so why don't you go through the curtains and get ready for your debut, while I go see about a costume that's gone missing.

(Director exits to one side and Charlie disappears behind the curtain. Pete runs across the stage.)

PETE: Charlie, Charlie!

(Pete exits. The next piece of dialogue is heard from behind the curtain.)

ORLANDO: Who are you?

CHARLIE: Charlie Harse.

ORLANDO: I knew it. Another understudy.

CHARLIE: Actually, I'm the underdog.

ORLANDO: Well, okay, the underdog. So did they fill you in about our match?

CHARLIE: Oh, so you're my opponent. Yeah, yeah, it's the usual...you come in with the old one-two, then I come in with the bing-bang-boom and finish you off.

ORLANDO: Ha, ha, very funny. Hey, Charlie, we're starting in a couple of minutes. Go off to the wing there, and the stage manager'll cue you in.

CHARLIE: You bet.

ROSALIND: *(From behind curtain also.)* Have you seen my male costume around?

ORLANDO: No, I haven't. Did you misplace it?

DIRECTOR: No. Someone else did, and I'm going nuts trying to find it. So are you ready to go on?

ORLANDO: I'm as ready as can be.

ROSALIND: Was that Donald's understudy?

ORLANDO: That's him.

ROSALIND: What do you think?

ORLANDO: He'll have to do.

ROSALIND: This is the second time he's sent us an understudy like this.

ORLANDO: Not very professional of him, is it?

ROSALIND: You got that right. Have you had a chance to talk to him about the stage fight?

ORLANDO: Just briefly, but I think it'll be fine.

ROSALIND: The lights are dimming. I've got to go find that costume. Break a leg.

ORLANDO: Thanks. *(Music as the lights dim. Curtains are drawn, lights up on a bare stage. Play begins. Orlando is CS.)* My brother, Oliver, keeps me rustically at home, or to speak more properly, stays me at home unkept. He lets me feed with his hinds, and bars me the place of a brother. I no longer can endure it and know not how to avoid it.

(Enter Oliver.)

OLIVER: Now, sir, what make you here?

ORLANDO: Nothing: I am not taught to make anything.

OLIVER: Know where you are, sir?

ORLANDO: O, very well, sir: here in your orchard.

OLIVER: Know you before whom, sir?

ORLANDO: Ay, I know you are my eldest brother; and in the gentle condition of blood, you should know me. I have much of my father in me as you.

(With vehemence, Orlando approaches Oliver.)

OLIVER: Wilt thou lay hands on me, villain?

ORLANDO: I am no villain; I am Orlando, the youngest son of Sir Rowland de Boys; he was my father. Wert thou not my brother, I would not take this hand from thy throat till the other had pull'd out thy tongue for saying so.

(Charlie Harse enters.)

OLIVER: Let me go, I say!

CHARLIE: Hey, hey, hey! What's going on here? I thought I was supposed to fight tonight.

(In horror, the Stage Manager and Director poke their heads out from the wings. Oliver adlibs some lines for the surprise situation.)

OLIVER: Ah, who art thou?

CHARLIE: I'm Charlie Harse.

ORLANDO: 'Tis Charles the wrestler who hath made a premature entrance.

CHARLIE: It's not Charles. It's Charlie Harse.

ORLANDO: Be it so. From henceforth ye shall be called Charlie Harse. Now, sir, go you in.

CHARLIE: Yeah, sure, I'll go and do you in at the same time. Come on. Let's go.

(Orlando takes Charlie Harse to the side of the stage. Curtain on Charlie's side of the stage sweeps toward Charlie so as to wrap around him and usher him offstage.)

ORLANDO: Stand you hither and I'll make an advancement on thee.

CHARLIE: Hither, smither; come on, let's giver. *(The curtain is wrapped around Charlie by the Stage Manager off in the wing. Note: These lines are delivered offstage simultaneously with Oliver and Orlando's next few lines. The Stage Manager and Director try to hush Charlie up.)* Hey, who turned off the lights? Hey, hey, hey...what's going on?! Help, I can't see. Pete, I've been blinded. Pete, help. Pete, I'm scared of the dark. Pete, baby, help me. Help ho! Mommy!

(Oliver and Orlando resume the position they were in before they were interrupted by Charlie.)

OLIVER: Let me go, I say!

ORLANDO: I will not; now take critical note: My father charged you in his will to give me good education but you have trained me like a peasant; therefore, allow me the poor allottery my father left me by testament.

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

ORLANDO: Then I will no further offend you than becomes me for my good.

(Orlando exits.)

OLIVER: *(Aside.)* Tomorrow, Charles the wrestler, ah...Charlie wrestles, before the new duke. I will plot to have him wrestle my dear brother, and give the swine the payment he indeed deserves. I hope I shall see an end of

him; for my soul hates nothing more than he. It shall not be so long that Charles, the wrestler, shall clear all, and for this he shall receive handsome payment. Do it, Charles. (*Lights start to go down. Lines are delivered simultaneously as music and lights fade.*) What the heck is going on?! Who was that guy?

(Enter Orlando, Stage Manager, and Director, who are barely visible to the audience as lights fade out.)

ORLANDO: *(To Oliver.)* He's the understudy for Donald.

OLIVER: Well, I think he just ruined the show.

DIRECTOR: Maybe not. You guys did a pretty good job of covering up. Now let's get ready for the next scene.

STAGE MANAGER: If there's going to be a next scene.

DIRECTOR: What do you mean?

STAGE MANAGER: Well, in spite of what just happened, the Maidservant refuses to go on stage.

DIRECTOR: What?!

(Light are down. Music fades in louder as voices on stage become inaudible.)

Scene 3

(A lawn before the palace. There is a bench. Lights begin to come up on Celia and Rosalind, but Pete is caught with his head poking out from a wing.)

PETE: *(Shouts.)* Charlie! Charlie! *(Realizes scene has started. Tries to cover.)* Ah...where...art...thou...Charlie?

(Celia and Rosalind are dumbfounded. Embarrassed, Pete quickly withdraws his head from the scene.)

CELIA: I pray thee, Rosalind, my sweet cousin, be merry.

ROSALIND: Celia, I show more mirth than I am mistress of, and would you yet I were merrier?

CELIA: Rosalind, now take heed: If my uncle, thy banished father, had banished thy uncle, the duke my father, thou wouldst be with me, true?

ROSALIND: True; but unless you could teach me to forget a banished father who's now exiled in the forest of Arden, you must not learn me how to remember any extraordinary pleasure.

CELIA: Grant you, 'tis impossible to forget. What other remedy for merriment then?

ROSALIND: To seek my father in the forest of Arden anon, unless I am also speedily banished by the duke your father, then straightaway.

CELIA: Then if it be so, I'll follow thee. But alas, what danger will it be to us, maids as we are, to travel forth so far! Beauty as ours provoketh thieves sooner than gold.

ROSALIND: Then with moustache I'll suit up in the likes of a man with militant looks and a curtle-axe upon my thigh.

CELIA: And I'll put myself in poor and mean attire and with a kind of umber smirch my face...O, but what hidden woman's fear would pound in our hearts. 'Twould be a

dreadful way. Let us not ponder't and wait for preferable conditions; therefore my sweet Rose, my dear Rose, be merry.

ROSALIND: From henceforth I will, coz, and devise sports. Let me see; what think you of falling in love?

CELIA: Ah, 'tis a good one to muse. What think I of falling in love? To love no man in good earnest, nor furthermore in sport.

ROSALIND: Hush, hush. Your maidservant approaches.

CELIA: With mouth full of news.

ROSALIND: Which she will put on us.

(Enter Director dressed as the Maidservant.)

CELIA: *(To Director.)* How now, what news?

DIRECTOR: There is some good wrestling coming anon, fair princess.

CELIA: Shall we see this wrestling, cousin?

DIRECTOR: You must if you stay; for here on the lawn before your father's palace is the place appointed for the wrestling, and they are ready to perform it.

ROSALIND: Yonder, sure, they are coming: let us now stay and see it.

(Flourish. Enter Duke, Orlando, Charlie, Pete, and Wrestling Spectators for the wrestling match. Pete pokes his head out from a wing.)

PETE: *(Whispers.)* Charlie!

ROSALIND: *(To Director. Indicates Orlando.)* Is yonder the man?

DIRECTOR: He and even he, madam.

CELIA: Alas, he is too young! Yet he looks successfully.

ROSALIND: *(To Maidservant. Points to Orlando.)* Prithee, call him hither.

DIRECTOR: *(To Orlando.)* Monsieur challenger, you are called upon.

ORLANDO: I attend with all my respect and duty.

ROSALIND: Sir, have you challenged that man to a wrestling match?

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.

ROSALIND: Young gentleman, your spirits are too bold for your years. We pray you for your own sake, to embrace your own safety, and give over this attempt.

CELIA: Do, young sir; your reputation shall not therefore be misprised. We will make it our suit to tell the duke that the wrestling might not go forward.

ORLANDO: I beseech you, do not make me unhappy by having so harsh opinion of my ability.

CHARLIE: Hey, lover boy, quit your sweet talk, and let's fight. *(Drops his robe on the floor.)*

ROSALIND: *(To Orlando.)* The little strength I have, I would it were with you.

CELIA: *(To Orlando.)* And mine to eke out hers.

CHARLIE: *(To Orlando.)* Hey, pretty boy, are you ready, or what's the story?

ORLANDO: Ready sir.

DUKE: *(To Charlie.)* You shall but one fall.

CHARLIE: Oh, no, no. He gives me the old one-two, then I come in with the bing-bang-boom—

ROSALIND: Now Hercules be thy speed, young man!

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

(Charlie and Orlando wrestle. Orlando gives Charlie the first blow and all Spectators react.)

CHARLIE: Hey, hey, take it easy there. That's one—

ROSALIND: O excellent young man!

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

(Charlie is hit again. Spectators react.)

CHARLIE: That's two.

ORLANDO: *(To Charlie, whispers.)* What's the matter with you? Will you lie down and play dead so we can get on with the show!

CHARLIE: *(Hits Orlando.)* Bing!

ORLANDO: Ouch! What are you doing?!

CHARLIE: *(Hits Orlando again.)* Bang!

ORLANDO: Oh, now that really hurt!

CHARLIE: *(Hits Orlando and knocks him down.)* Boom!

ORLANDO: What are you, some kind of lunatic?!

(Actors watch in disbelief and adlib "What's he doing?" "That is definitely not part of the show," "Where did they get this guy?" etc. While Orlando is down, Charlie comes down on his thigh with a "charley horse," a professional wrestling move.)

CHARLIE: And a Charley Harse, too! *(Charlie does a victory dance.)*

ORLANDO: *(On the floor twitching.)* Ohh!

(Commotion on stage. Actors adlib. The Stage Manager, Director, and Pete look on from the wings in horror.)

DUKE: *(Breaks character. To Charlie.)* You ass!

CHARLIE: That's Harse [Arse]. A lot of people get it confused. *(Shows off his muscles and pays no attention to the Duke's next lines.)*

DUKE: *(Breaks character.)* You bonehead! You were supposed to lose the fight, and Oliver was going to carry you off the stage. Who's going to take Orlando's part now? You really

crippled him! *(To Orlando.)* Get up. You have to finish the scene with Rosalind and Celia.

ORLANDO: I can't.

DUKE: *(To Celia and Rosalind.)* Address all your lines to that buffoon... *(Indicates Charlie.)* ...now that Orlando is out of the picture. *(Actors look at Charlie. In character, to Orlando.)* Ah, how doest thou, sir?

OLIVER: He cannot speak, my lord.

DUKE: Bear him away. *(Oliver exits, dragging Orlando off the stage. To Charlie.)* What is thy name, young man?

CHARLIE: Charlie Harse. My father goes by the same name. They call him The Senior Harse [*Arse*].

DUKE: I would thou hadst been son to some man else:
The world esteem'd thy father honourable,
But I as duke know him as a villain
And thus find him as mine enemy.

CHARLIE: Hey, those are fighting words. You must be the next contender. Put up your dukes, Duke.

DUKE: But fare thee well; thou art a gallant youth
I would thou hadst told me of another father.

(Duke exits. Extras and Maidservant sneak off the stage. Note: At opportune times some of the actors offstage peek out from the wings.)

CHARLIE: *(Shouts after Duke.)* Hey, that's an insult there, buddy. What do you have against my father anyway? That's my father you're talking about.

CELIA: *(To Rosalind.)* Gentle cousin, let us go and encourage this young man, for my father's rough and envious disposition sticks me at heart. *(To Charlie.)* Sir, you have fought well.

CHARLIE: Thanks.

ROSALIND: Sir, my father loved your father as his soul...

CHARLIE: No kidding?

ROSALIND: And all the world was of my father's mind.

Gentleman, wear this for me, one out of suits with fortune

That would give me more, but that her hands lacks means.
(Takes a necklace from her neck and places it on his neck. To
Celia.) Shall we go, coz?

(Rosalind and Celia start to exit.)

CHARLIE: Wait, come back.

ROSALIND: *(To Celia.)* He calls us back: Shall I ask him what
he would?

CELIA: I beseech you, do, dear Rose.

ROSALIND: *(To Charlie.)* Did you call, sir?

CHARLIE: Yeah. I was just wondering if you wanted to go
out for –

ROSALIND: Sir, you have wrestled well, and overthrown
more than your enemies. I will be with you. Fare you well.

(Rosalind and Celia exit.)

CHARLIE: *(Aside.)* I think she hit on me. *(Pursues her.)* Hang
on there, Rosie. I think you and I can really hit it off.

*(Charlie exits. Music. Lights fade. Some actors enter in a state of
disbelief. Note: Though the lights have faded, the actors are still
slightly visible to the audience. The actors panic and adlib during
the scene break.)*

Scene 4

(Enter Stage manager, wearing a headset. Note: Scene break music is still playing but should be low enough so that the audience can hear what is being said on stage, since the scene break is actually part of the next scene. Also, the lights should remain dim so that the actors are barely visible. The impression should be that there is havoc during a break in the scene.)

STAGE MANAGER: *(Into headset.)* Don't fade in the lights, and keep that music going. Can you hear me? I said, don't bring up the lights and keep the music going. I think we're in for a longer scene break than usual. I'm going to see about this fiasco, so hang tough, and I'll cue you in for the next scene.

(Charlie and Pete enter the side of stage.)

PETE: Charlie, listen to me...we're in the wrong place.

CHARLIE: Oh, no, Pete, we're in the right place at the right time. I'm in love, Pete.

PETE: Will you shut up? You're out of control. Now get a hold of yourself and listen to me.

CHARLIE: Where did she go? I need to ask her out to dinner and then...well, then you know the rest. *(Calls out.)* Rosie, Rosie, where did she go? *(Starts to exit.)*

PETE: *(Shouts.)* Charlie! Charlie, get back here, you nincompoop!

(Charlie and Pete exit. Enter Stage Manager, Director, Duke, Celia, and Rosalind.)

DUKE: *(To Director.)* Call off the show.

DIRECTOR: The show must go on.

DUKE: I refuse to go on, and so do some of the others who are in hiding.

DIRECTOR: Okay, then let's go with scene seven in the forest with Celia, and Rosalind dressed as a man, reading Orlando's love poems.

STAGE MANAGER: But Orlando is out of the picture; the audience now thinks Rosalind is in love with Charlie the wrestler and not Orlando.

DIRECTOR: Yes, but we can still do scene seven with Celia and Rosalind in the forest. They can just skip the lines with Orlando's name.

ROSALIND: But how is the audience going to know that scene seven is when Celia and Rosalind have been banished to the forest without doing the scene that leads up to it?

CELIA: *(To Duke.)* So come on, we need to do the scene where you banish us.

DUKE: I'm not going to be humiliated again. I'm through.

ROSALIND: Oh, yeah?

DUKE: Yeah.

ROSALIND: Well, then, we're through. Our marriage is off.

DUKE: What does this have to do with our personal relationship?

ROSALIND: Everything. So, are you in?

DUKE: No!

(Duke exits.)

DIRECTOR: Okay, scene seven it is. It's a bit of a stretch, but I think the audience'll catch on.

STAGE MANAGER: *(To Rosalind.)* Where's your male costume?

ROSALIND: I can't find it.

(Stage Manager picks up Charlie's wrestling robe from the stage floor and hands it to Rosalind.)

STAGE MANAGER: Here, put this on. (*Hands her a fake moustache.*) And here's your moustache. (*Stage Manager exits.*)

CELIA: (*To Director.*) What's going to happen after this scene?

DIRECTOR: One scene at a time, please.

(*Enter Stage Manager with two tree stumps for Rosalind and Celia to sit on.*)

ROSALIND: But the next scene after this is when Orlando was supposed to incidentally encounter Rosalind in the forest.

CELIA: (*To Director.*) Yes, and ask him questions to test his love for her while disguised as a man.

DIRECTOR: We'll figure it out when we get there. We're now adapting to the adapted version of this splendid play.

ROSALIND: Splendid!

STAGE MANAGER: Are we ready?

DIRECTOR: Ready.

STAGE MANAGER: Okay, we're ready to go. Lights up, and fade music. Three, two, one, go.

(*Stage Manager and Director exit. Lights up and music fades for the next scene in the forest.*)

CELIA: (*To Rosalind.*) Didst thou read this verse that's been hanged and pasted upon that big oak tree over yonder?

(*From the wing, a handheld branch with a poem hanging from it becomes visible to the audience. Rosalind reaches over and takes a poem off the branch. The branch is then slowly withdrawn as Rosalind reads the following poem. NOTE: Charlie enters midway through the poem. Only Celia acknowledges him initially.*)

[END OF FREEVIEW]