

Role of Forest of Arden in As You Like It.

Need for pastoral setting :

The role of the Forest of Arden is to serve as the pastoral setting needed to make the play satirical of pastoral literature. The plot of As You Like It was borrowed from a popular pastoral novel published in Shakespeare's time, *Rosalynde*, by Thomas Lodge. Pastoral literature is a genre of literature stemming all the way back to Ancient Greece and Rome that idealized a shepherd's country life in contrast with corrupt city life. In *As You Like It*, the Forest of Arden represents the country life and an escape from corruption while the Duke's court represents corrupted city life.

Symbol of freedom :

Apart from its real presence, it becomes a symbol of freedom. The play begins in the courtly world of Dukes. Orlando is the younger brother of Oliver who mistreats him because of his envy and inferior complexity. Rosalind's father is banished by the unlawful Frederick. All of them are somehow brought to the Forest of Arden. When Rosalind is banished by her uncle, Celia suggests that together they leave for the Forest of Arden and will not be an exile but a step toward freedom.

Place of love :

The Forest is a place where there are no regulations or limits set by Time. Its importance is that it provides the space for the development of the most elementary emotion in its characters which is love. Away from the evils of courtly life, the Forest of Arden as a pastoral space is free of whatever wrong found in society. It provides solitude. Jaques' melancholy is nurtured and soothed in the Forest. Orlando writes simple poems full of sincere emotions. Rosalind is free from the tyranny of her uncle and closer to her father. When Touchstone is talking to Rosalind about the quality of Orlando's poems, he says that "let the forest judge." It tells us of the connection between the Forest and the characters of the play.

Place for transformation :

Oliver who hates his brother in the beginning and wants to get him killed faces a lioness while entering the forest. Orlando saves him selflessly and inside the Forest of Arden, Oliver's heart

changes and he acknowledges his brotherhood. The Forest of Arden provides that mental rest to the characters in which they come out of the falsehood of the world. It is a space of simplicity which has the role of soothing the misery of even a lover in despair because Orlando learns more about the ways of love in the forest than he knew in the court.

Thus the of the forest of Arden in *As You Like It* is very important. It plays very significant role to develop the theme of the play. The resolution of the play is really a restoration of the moral order of society, with everyone occupying their rightful place and fulfilling their moral obligations.