

## All the Worlds a Stage II

# Attempt at Poetry

After William Shakespeare, from *As You Like It* <sup>1</sup>

French quintet in dimeter-pentameter

<i>All the world's a stage</i>	a	5
<i>and all the men and women merely players.</i> <sup>2</sup>	b	11
For as we learn with age	a	6
'tis pleasures, few and fleeting, that assuage	a	11
this gold-plated, lonely valley of tears <sup>3</sup>	b	10
And yet the play we chase,	c	6
attach'd to longing, pain and fickle pleasures,	b	11
lusts, all things unchaste.	c	6
Our glorious home, forgotten, we haste	c	11
to fill the stage with hollow, paltry treasures	b	11
Created us, did He	d	6
with a soul, that longs for loftier things.	e	10
Not as glowing tree <sup>4</sup>	d	5
neither as blinking ape <sup>5</sup> , nor dolphin free <sup>6</sup>	d	10
nor with soft and silent angel <sup>7</sup> wings	e	9
But for His comp'ny <sup>8</sup> ,	d	5
in eternal happiness. Or endless fires.	b	11
Only the melancholy <sup>9</sup> see ...	d	8
<i>All the world's a stage</i>	a	5
<i>and all the men and women merely players.</i>	b	11

1 Contemporary articles in the Language Arts that pass for 'analyses' are ignorant of history, thus devoid of context or meaning of any depth. 'Analyses' of *As You Like It*, are likewise superficial, and bereft of value. Reading Shakespeare leaves us touched, deeply, but no one explains why, how this is so.

2 William Shakespeare, from *As You Like It*, 1599. The first two lines of Jacques' monologue, which are possibly the most quoted lines from his works.

3 The world as a place of suffering, temporary, is Catholic doctrine. The world as a *vale of tears* is a line from *Salve Regina*, a prayer beloved of Catholics.

4 From *The Wattle Tree* by Judith Wright, which was introduced as course material. In it she describes the tree as *one great world of gold* and *cascading light pure gold*. She abandons her God-given rights and powers; ascribes various powers to a tree, particularly truth and immortality; and then claims the powers of the tree. Such is the schizophrenic world of the atheist.

5 The rationalists, evolutionists and modernists would have us believe we descended from apes, they elevate animals and demean humans, reversing the order created by God.

6 The self-worshippers and new age people take that totally to heart, they equate humans to dolphins and whales.

7 We are not created as angels either. Creation has a specific order, the *great chain of being*: God; the angels; man; animals; plants; minerals.

8 Unbelievers are unaware that God created our souls to be with Him, in Heaven. Hence they know only this world, and their attachment to it is a life-or-death matter.

9 In contemporary articles <sup>1</sup>, Jacques' character in *As You Like It* is often described as melancholy, a counterpoint to that of Duke Senior, who sees something positive in everything, no matter what befalls him. Although that is not incorrect, it is superficial and incomplete, as is usual for these modern times, where religion is suppressed and fragments are isolated and elevated. No explanation is given for his melancholy. The relevance, the veracity, of being depressed in a transient world that cannot make us happy, and the longing for our permanent home, is lost. Indeed, in the end, Jacques rejects the world entirely, and retreats to a life of contemplation and prayer, in preparation for permanence.