

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

- THESEUS**.....Duke of Athens.
HIPPOLYTA.....queen of the Amazons, betrothed to Theseus.
EGEUSfather to Hermia.
PHILOSTRATE.....master of the revels to Theseus.
ATTENDANTS on **THESEUS** and **HIPPOLYTA**.
LYSANDER.....in love with Hermia.
DEMETRIUSalso in love with Hermia.
HERMIAdaughter to Egeus, in love with Lysander, short and brunette.
HELENAin love with Demetrius. tall and blonde.
QUINCE/prologue.....a carpenter.
BOTTOM/pyramus.....a weaver.
FLUTE/Thisby.....a bellows-mender.
SNOUT/Wall.....a tinker.
SNUG/lion.....a joiner.
STARVELING/Moona tailor.
OBERONking of the fairies.
TITANIAqueen of the fairies.
PUCK.....Oberon's henchman.
FAIRY.....Titania's assistant.
PEASEBLOSSOM.....fairy
COBWEBfairy
MOTHfairy
MUSTARDSEEDfairy
FAIRIES attending **OBERON** and **TITANIA**.

SCENE

Athens, and a wood near it.

At the start:

- Hippolyta does not especially love Theseus but is betrothed to him nonetheless.
- Helena loves Demetrius
- Hermia loves Lysander
- Lysander loves Hermia
- Demetrius wooed Helena earlier, but now claims he has only loved Hermia.
- Egeus wants Hermia to marry Demetrius.
- Titania is rumored to love Theseus
- Oberon is rumored to love Hippolyta
- Titania and Oberon are fighting

In the Woods:

- After Puck's love potion:
- Lysander loves Helena/not Hermia
- Demetrius loves Helena/not Hermia
- Queen Titania loves Bottom as an ass
- After Puck mends all:
- Lysander loves Hermia
- Demetrius loves Helena
- Titania loves King Oberon

ACT I; SCENE 1. Athens. The palace of THESEUS.

Enter **THESEUS**, **HIPPOLYTA**, **PHILOSTRATE**, and
ATTENDANTS.

THESEUS

Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour
Draws on apace; four happy days bring in
Another moon: but, O, methinks, how slow
This old moon wanes! She lingers my desires,

HIPPOLYTA

Four days will quickly steep themselves in night;
Four nights will quickly dream away the time;
And then the moon, like to a silver bow
New-bent in heaven, shall behold the night
Of our solemnities.

THESEUS

Go, Philostrate,
Stir up the Athenian youth to merriments;
Exit **PHILOSTRATE**
Hippolyta, I woo'd thee with my sword,
And won thy love, doing thee injuries;
But I will wed thee in another key,
With pomp, with triumph and with revelling.

Enter **EGEUS**, **HERMIA**, **LYSANDER**, and
DEMETRIUS.

EGEUS

Happy be Theseus, our renowned duke!

THESEUS

Thanks, good Egeus: what's the news with thee?

EGEUS

Full of vexation come I, with complaint
Against my child, my daughter Hermia.
Stand forth, Demetrius. My noble lord,
This man hath my consent to marry her.
Stand forth, Lysander: and my gracious duke,
This man hath bewitch'd the bosom of my child;
Thou, thou, Lysander, thou hast given her rhymes,
And hast by moonlight at her window sung,
With feigning voice verses of feigning love,
With cunning hast thou filch'd my daughter's heart,
Turn'd her obedience, which is due to me,
To stubborn harshness: and, my gracious duke,
Be it so she; will not here before your grace
Consent to marry with Demetrius,
I beg the ancient privilege of Athens,
As she is mine, I may dispose of her:
Which shall be either to this gentleman
Or to her death,

THESEUS

What say you, Hermia? Be advised fair maid:
To you your father should be as a god;
Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

HERMIA

So is Lysander.

THESEUS

In himself he is;
But in this kind, wanting your father's voice,
The other must be held the worthier.

HERMIA

I would my father look'd but with my eyes.

THESEUS

Rather your eyes must with his judgment look.

HERMIA

I do entreat your grace to pardon me.
I know not by what power I am made bold,
Nor how it may concern my modesty,
In such a presence here to plead my thoughts;
But I beseech your grace that I may know
The worst that may befall me in this case,
If I refuse to wed Demetrius.

THESEUS

Either to die the death or to abjure
For ever the society of men.
Therefore, fair Hermia, question your desires;
Take time to pause; and, by the next new moon--
The sealing-day betwixt my love and me,
Upon that day either prepare to die
For disobedience to your father's will,
Or else to wed Demetrius, as he would;
Or on Diana's altar to protest
For aye austerity and single life.

DEMETRIUS

Relent, sweet Hermia: and, Lysander, yield
Thy crazed title to my certain right.

LYSANDER

You have her father's love, Demetrius;
Let me have Hermia's: do you marry him.

EGEUS

Scornful Lysander! True, he hath my love,
And what is mine my love shall render him.

EGEUS (cont'd)

And she is mine, and all my right of her
I do estate unto Demetrius.

LYSANDER

I am, my lord, as well derived as he,
As well possess'd; my love is more than his;
And, which is more than all these boasts can be,
I am beloved of beauteous Hermia:
Why should not I then prosecute my right?
Demetrius, I'll avouch it to his head,
Made love to Nedar's daughter, Helena,
And won her soul; and she, sweet lady, dotes,
Devoutly dotes, dotes in idolatry,
Upon this spotted and inconstant man.

THESEUS

I must confess that I have heard so much,
Demetrius, come;
And come, Egeus; you shall go with me,
I have some private schooling for you both.
For you, fair Hermia, look you arm yourself
To fit your fancies to your father's will;
Or else the law of Athens yields you up--
Which by no means we may extenuate--
To death, or to a vow of single life.
Come, my Hippolyta: what cheer, my love?
Demetrius and Egeus, go along:

EGEUS

With duty and desire we follow you.

Exeunt **ALL** but **LYSANDER** and **HERMIA**.

LYSANDER

How now, my love! Why is your cheek so pale?
How chance the roses there do fade so fast?

HERMIA

Belike for want of rain, which I could well
Beteem them from the tempest of my eyes.

LYSANDER

Ay me! For aught that I could ever read,
Could ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth;
But, either it was different in blood,--

HERMIA

O cross! Too high to be enthrall'd to low.

LYSANDER

Or else mismatched in respect of years,--

HERMIA

O spite! Too old to be engaged to young.

LYSANDER

Or else it stood upon the choice of friends,--

HERMIA

O hell! To choose love by another's eyes.

LYSANDER

Or, if there were a sympathy in choice,
War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it,
Making it momentary as a sound,
Swift as a shadow, short as any dream;

HERMIA

If then true lovers have been ever cross'd,
It stands as an edict in destiny:
Then let us teach our trial patience,
Because it is a customary cross,
As due to love as thoughts and dreams and sighs,

LYSANDER

A good persuasion: therefore, hear me, Hermia.
I have a widow aunt, a dowager
Of great revenue, and she hath no child:
From Athens is her house remote seven leagues;
There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee;
And to that place the sharp Athenian law
Cannot pursue us. If thou lovest me then,
Steal forth thy father's house to-morrow night;
And in the wood, a league without the town,
Where I did meet thee once with Helena,

HERMIA

My good Lysander!
I swear to thee, by Cupid's strongest bow,
By his best arrow with the golden head,
By all the vows that ever men have broke,
In number more than ever women spoke,
In that same place thou hast appointed me,
To-morrow truly will I meet with thee.

LYSANDER

Keep promise, love. Look, here comes Helena.

Enter **HELENA**.

HERMIA

God speed fair Helena! Whither away?

HELENA

Call you me fair? That fair again unsay.
Demetrius loves your fair: O happy fair!
Your eyes are lode-stars; and your tongue's sweet air
More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear,
My ear should catch your voice, my eye your eye,
My tongue should catch your tongue's sweet melody.
O, teach me how you look, and with what art
You sway the motion of Demetrius' heart.

HERMIA

I frown upon him, yet he loves me still.

HELENA

O that your frowns would teach my smiles such skill!

HERMIA

I give him curses, yet he gives me love.

HELENA

O that my prayers could such affection move!

HERMIA

The more I hate, the more he follows me.

HELENA

The more I love, the more he hateth me.

HERMIA

His folly, Helena, is no fault of mine.

HELENA

None, but your beauty: would that fault were mine!

HERMIA

Take comfort: he no more shall see my face;
Lysander and myself will fly this place.

LYSANDER

Helen, to you our minds we will unfold:
To-morrow night, when Phoebe doth behold
Her silver visage in the watery glass,
Decking with liquid pearl the bladed grass,
A time that lovers' flights doth still conceal,
Through Athens' gates have we devised to steal.

HERMIA

And in the wood, where often you and I
Upon faint primrose-beds were wont to lie,
Emptying our bosoms of their counsel sweet,
There my Lysander and myself shall meet;
Farewell, sweet playfellow: pray thou for us;
And good luck grant thee thy Demetrius!

Exit **HERMIA** and **LYSANDER**.

HELENA

How happy some o'er other some can be!
Through Athens I am thought as fair as she.
But what of that? Demetrius thinks not so;
He will not know what all but he do know:
And as he errs, doting on Hermia's eyes,
So I, admiring of his qualities:
Things base and vile, folding no quantity,
Love can transpose to form and dignity:
Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind;
And therefore is wing'd Cupid painted blind:
For ere Demetrius look'd on Hermia's eyne,
He hail'd down oaths that he was only mine;
And when this hail some heat from Hermia felt,
So he dissolved, and showers of oaths did melt.
I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight:
Then to the wood will he to-morrow night
Pursue her; and for this intelligence
If I have thanks, it is a dear expense:
But herein mean I to enrich my pain,
To have his sight thither and back again.

Exit **HELENA**.

ACT I; SCENE 2. Athens. QUINCE'S house.

Enter QUINCE, SNUG, BOTTOM, FLUTE, SNOOT, and STARVELING

QUINCE
Is all our company here?

BOTTOM
You were best to call them generally, man by man, according to the script.

QUINCE
Here is the scroll of every man's name, which is thought fit, to play in our interlude before the duke and the duchess, on his wedding-day at night.

BOTTOM
First, good Peter Quince, say what the play treats on, then read the names of the actors, and so grow to a point.

QUINCE
Marry, our play is, The most lamentable comedy, and most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisby.

BOTTOM
A very good piece of work, I assure you, and a merry. Now, good Peter Quince, call forth your actors by the scroll. Masters, spread yourselves.

QUINCE
Answer as I call you. Nick Bottom, the weaver.

BOTTOM
Ready. Name what part I am for, and proceed.

QUINCE
You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus.

BOTTOM
What is Pyramus? A lover, or a tyrant?

QUINCE
A lover, that kills himself most gallant for love.

BOTTOM
That will ask some tears in the true performing of it: if I do it, let the audience look to their eyes; I will move storms, I will condole in some measure. To the rest: yet my chief humour is for a tyrant: I could play Eracles rarely, or a part to tear a cat in, to make all split.

The raging rocks
And shivering shocks
Shall break the locks
Of prison gates;
And Phibbus' car
Shall shine from far
And make and mar
The foolish Fates.

This was lofty! Now name the rest of the players.
This is Eracles' vein, a tyrant's vein; a lover is more condoling.

QUINCE
Francis Flute, the bellows-mender.

FLUTE

Here, Peter Quince.

QUINCE

Flute, you must take Thisby on you.

FLUTE

What is Thisby? A wandering knight?

QUINCE

It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

FLUTE

Nay, faith, let me not play a woman; I have a beard coming.

QUINCE

That's all one: you shall play it in a mask, and you may speak as small as you will.

BOTTOM

An I may hide my face, let me play Thisby too, I'll speak in a monstrous little voice. 'Thisne, Thisne;' 'Ah, Pyramus, lover dear! Thy Thisby dear, and lady dear!'

QUINCE

No, no; you must play Pyramus: and, Flute, you Thisby.

BOTTOM

Well, proceed.

QUINCE

Robin Starveling, the tailor.

STARVELING

Here, Peter Quince.

QUINCE

Robin Starveling, you must play Thisby's mother. Tom Snout, the tinker.

SNOUT

Here, Peter Quince.

QUINCE

You, Pyramus' father: myself, Thisby's father: Snug, the joiner; you, the lion's part: and, I hope, here is a play fitted.

SNUG

Have you the lion's part written? Pray you, if it be, give it me, for I am slow of study.

QUINCE

You may do it extempore, for it is nothing but roaring.

BOTTOM

Let me play the lion too: I will roar, that I will do any man's heart good to hear me; I will roar, that I will make the duke say 'Let him roar again, let him roar again.'

QUINCE

An you should do it too terribly, you would fright the duchess and the ladies, that they would shriek; and that were enough to hang us all.

ALL

That would hang us, every mother's son.

BOTTOM

I grant you, friends, but I will aggravate my voice so that I will roar you as gently as any sucking dove; I will roar you an 'twere any nightingale.

QUINCE

You can play no part but Pyramus; for Pyramus is a sweet-faced man; a proper man, as one shall see in a summer's day; a most lovely gentleman-like man: therefore you must needs play Pyramus.

BOTTOM

Well, I will undertake it.

QUINCE

Masters, here are your parts: and I am to entreat you, request you and desire you, to know them by to-morrow night; and meet me in the palace wood, a mile without the town, by moonlight; there will we rehearse, for if we meet in the city, we shall be dogged with company, and our devices known. In the meantime I will draw a bill of properties, such as our play wants. I pray you, fail me not.

BOTTOM

We will meet; and there we may rehearse most obscenely and courageously. Take pains; be perfect: adieu.

QUINCE

At the duke's oak we meet.

Exeunt **OMNES**.

ACT II; SCENE 1. A wood near Athens.

Enter, from opposite sides, a **FAIRY**, and **PUCK**

PUCK

How now, spirit! Whither wander you?

FAIRY

Over hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough brier,
Over park, over pale,
Thorough flood, thorough fire,
I do wander everywhere,
Swifter than the moon's sphere;
And I serve the fairy queen,
To dew her orbs upon the green.
I must go seek some dewdrops here
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.
Farewell, thou lob of spirits; I'll be gone:
Our queen and all our elves come here anon.

PUCK

The king doth keep his revels here to-night:
Take heed the queen come not within his sight;
For Oberon is passing fell and wrath,
Because that she as her attendant hath
A lovely boy, stolen from an Indian king;
She never had so sweet a changeling;
And jealous Oberon would have the child
Knight of his train, to trace the forests wild;
But she perforce withholds the loved boy,
Crowns him with flowers and makes him all her joy:
And now they never meet in grove or green,
By fountain clear, or spangled starlight sheen,
But, they do square, that all their elves for fear
Creep into acorn-cups and hide them there.

FAIRY

Either I mistake your shape and making quite,
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite
Call'd Robin Goodfellow: are not you he
That frights the maidens of the villagery;

PUCK

Thou speak'st aright;
I am that merry wanderer of the night.
I jest to Oberon and make him smile
When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,
Neighing in likeness of a filly foal:
And sometime lurk I in a gossip's bowl,
In very likeness of a roasted crab,
And when she drinks, against her lips I bob
And on her wither'd dewlap pour the ale.
The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,
Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me;
Then slip I from her bum, down topples she,
And 'tailor' cries, and falls into a cough;
And then the whole quire hold their hips and laugh,
And waxen in their mirth and neeze and swear
A merrier hour was never wasted there.
But, room, fairy! Here comes Oberon.

FAIRY

And here my mistress. Would that he were gone!

Enter, from one side, **OBERON**, with his train; from the
other, **TITANIA**, with hers

OBERON

Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania.

TITANIA

What, jealous Oberon! Fairies, skip hence:
I have forsworn his bed and company.

OBERON

Tarry, rash wanton: am not I thy lord?

TITANIA

Then I must be thy lady: but I know
When thou hast stolen away from fairy land,
And in the shape of Corin sat all day,
Playing on pipes of corn and versing love
To amorous Phillida. Why art thou here,
Come from the farthest Steppe of India?
But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,
Your buskin'd mistress and your warrior love,
To Theseus must be wedded, and you come
To give their bed joy and prosperity.

OBERON

How canst thou thus for shame, Titania,
Glance at my credit with Hippolyta,
Knowing I know thy love to Theseus?
Didst thou not lead him through the glimmering night
From Perigenia, whom he ravished?
And make him with fair Aegle break his faith,
With Ariadne and Antiopa?

TITANIA

These are the forgeries of jealousy:
And never, since the middle summer's spring,
Met we on hill, in dale, forest or mead,
By paved fountain or by rushy brook,
Or in the beached margin of the sea,
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,

TITANIA (cont'd)

But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.
Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,
As in revenge, have suck'd up from the sea
Contagious fogs; which falling in the land
Have every pelting river made so proud
That they have overborne their continents:
The human mortals want their winter here;
No night is now with hymn or carol blest:
Therefore the moon, the governess of floods,
Pale in her anger, washes all the air,
The seasons alter: hoary-headed frosts
Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose,
the spring, the summer,
The childing autumn, angry winter, change
Their wonted liveries, and the mazed world,
By their increase, now knows not which is which:
And this same progeny of evils comes
From our debate, from our dissension;
We are their parents and original.

OBERON

Do you amend it then; it lies in you:
Why should Titania cross her Oberon?
I do but beg a little changeling boy,
To be my henchman.

TITANIA

Set your heart at rest:
The fairy land buys not the child of me.
His mother was a vot'ress of my order:
And, in the spiced Indian air, by night,
Full often hath she gossip'd by my side,
And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands,
Marking the embarked traders on the flood,

TITANIA (cont'd)

When we have laugh'd to see the sails conceive
And grow big-bellied with the wanton wind;
Which she, with pretty and with swimming gait
Following,—her womb then rich with my young squire,—
Would imitate, and sail upon the land,
To fetch me trifles, and return again,
As from a voyage, rich with merchandise.
But she, being mortal, of that boy did die;
And for her sake do I rear up her boy,
And for her sake I will not part with him.

OBERON

How long within this wood intend you stay?

TITANIA

Perchance till after Theseus' wedding-day.
If you will patiently dance in our round
And see our moonlight revels, go with us;

OBERON

Give me that boy, and I will go with thee.

TITANIA

Not for thy fairy kingdom. Fairies, away!
We shall chide downright, if I longer stay.

Exit **TITANIA** with **TITANIA FAIRIES**.

OBERON

Well, go thy way: thou shalt not from this grove
Till I torment thee for this injury.

Exit **OBERON FAIRIES**.

My gentle Puck, come hither. Thou rememberest
Since once I sat upon a promontory,

OBERON (cont'd)

And heard a mermaid on a dolphin's back
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath
That the rude sea grew civil at her song
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,
To hear the sea-maid's music.

PUCK

I remember.

OBERON

That very time I saw, but thou couldst not,
Flying between the cold moon and the earth,
Cupid all arm'd: a certain aim he took
At a fair vestal throned by the west,
And loosed his love-shaft smartly from his bow,
As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts;
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the watery moon,
And the imperial vot'ress passed on,
In maiden meditation, fancy-free.

Yet mark'd I where the bolt of Cupid fell:

It fell upon a little western flower,

Before milk-white, now purple with love's wound,
And maidens call it love-in-idleness.

Fetch me that flower; the herb I shew'd thee once:

The juice of it on sleeping eye-lids laid

Will make or man or woman madly dote

Upon the next live creature that it sees.

Fetch me this herb; and be thou here again

Ere the leviathan can swim a league.

PUCK

I'll put a girdle round about the earth
In forty minutes.

Exit PUCK.

OBERON

Having once this juice,
I'll watch Titania when she is asleep,
And drop the liquor of it in her eyes.
The next thing then she waking looks upon,
Be it on lion, bear, or wolf, or bull,
She shall pursue it with the soul of love:
And ere I take this charm from off her sight,
As I can take it with another herb,
I'll make her render up her page to me.
But who comes here? I am invisible;
And I will overhear their conference.

Enter **DEMETRIUS**, **HELENA**, following him.

DEMETRIUS

I love thee not, therefore pursue me not.
Where is Lysander and fair Hermia?
The one I'll slay, the other slayeth me.
Thou told'st me they were stolen unto this wood;
Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.

HELENA

You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant;

DEMETRIUS

Do I entice you? Do I speak you fair?
Or, rather, do I not in plainest truth
Tell you, I do not, nor I cannot love you?

HELENA

And even for that do I love you the more.
I am your spaniel; and, Demetrius,
Use me but as your spaniel, spurn me, strike me,
Neglect me, lose me; only give me leave,
Unworthy as I am, to follow you.

DEMETRIUS

Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit;
For I am sick when I do look on thee.

HELENA

And I am sick when I look not on you.

DEMETRIUS

You do impeach your modesty too much,
To leave the city and commit yourself
Into the hands of one that loves you not;
To trust the opportunity of night
And the ill counsel of a desert place
With the rich worth of your virginity.

HELENA

Your virtue is my privilege: for that
It is not night when I do see your face,
Nor doth this wood lack worlds of company,
For you in my respect are all the world:

DEMETRIUS

I will not stay thy questions; let me go:
Or, if thou follow me, do not believe
But I shall do thee mischief in the wood.

HELENA

Ay, in the temple, in the town, the field,
You do me mischief. Fie, Demetrius!
Your wrongs do set a scandal on my sex:
We cannot fight for love, as men may do;
We should be wood and were not made to woo.

Exit **DEMETRIUS**

I'll follow thee and make a heaven of hell,
To die upon the hand I love so well.

Exit **HELENA**.

OBERON

Fare thee well, nymph: ere he do leave this grove,
Thou shalt fly him and he shall seek thy love.

Re-enter **PUCK**.

Hast thou the flower there? Welcome, wanderer.

PUCK

Ay, there it is.

OBERON

I pray thee, give it me.
I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,
There sleeps Titania sometime of the night,
Lull'd in these flowers with dances and delight;
And with the juice of this I'll streak her eyes,
And make her full of hateful fantasies.
Take thou some of it, and seek through this grove:
A sweet Athenian lady is in love
With a disdainful youth: anoint his eyes;
But do it when the next thing he espies
May be the lady: thou shalt know the man
By the Athenian garments he hath on.
Effect it with some care,

PUCK

Fear not, my lord, your servant shall do so.

Exeunt **OMNES**.

ACT II; SCENE 2. Another part of the wood.

Enter **TITANIA**, with her train.

TITANIA

Come, now a roundel and a fairy song;

MUSIC – dance.

Sing me now asleep;

Then to your offices and let me rest.

MUSIC – quiet.

FAIRY

Hence, away! now all is well:

One aloof stand sentinel.

Exeunt **FAIRIES**. **TITANIA** sleeps.

Enter **OBERON**, squeezes a flower on **TITANIA**'s eyelids.

OBERON

What thou seest when thou dost wake,

Do it for thy true-love take,

Love and languish for his sake:

Be it ounce, or cat, or bear,

Pard, or boar with bristled hair,

In thy eye that shall appear

When thou wakest, it is thy dear:

Wake when some vile thing is near.

Exit **OBERON**.

Enter **LYSANDER** and **HERMIA**.

LYSANDER

Fair love, you faint with wandering in the wood;

And to speak troth, I have forgot our way:

We'll rest us, **Hermia**, if you think it good,

And tarry for the comfort of the day.

HERMIA

Be it so, **Lysander**: find you out a bed;

For I upon this bank will rest my head.

LYSANDER

One turf shall serve as pillow for us both;

One heart, one bed, two bosoms and one troth.

HERMIA

Nay, good **Lysander**; for my sake, my dear,

Lie further off yet, do not lie so near.

LYSANDER

O, take the sense, sweet, of my innocence!

Love takes the meaning in love's conference.

I mean, that my heart unto yours is knit

So that but one heart we can make of it;

Two bosoms interchained with an oath;

So then two bosoms and a single troth.

Then by your side no bed-room me deny;

For lying so, **Hermia**, I do not lie.

HERMIA

Lysander riddles very prettily:

Now much beshrew my manners and my pride,

If **Hermia** meant to say **Lysander** lied.

But, gentle friend, for love and courtesy

Lie further off; in human modesty,

Such separation as may well be said

Becomes a virtuous bachelor and a maid,

So far be distant; and, good night, sweet friend:

Thy love ne'er alter till thy sweet life end!

LYSANDER

Amen, amen, to that fair prayer, say I;

And then end life when I end loyalty!

They sleep. Enter **PUCK**.

PUCK

Through the forest have I gone.
But Athenian found I none,
On whose eyes I might approve
This flower's force in stirring love.
Night and silence.--Who is here?
Weeds of Athens he doth wear:
This is he, my master said,
Despised the Athenian maid;
And here the maiden, sleeping sound,
On the dank and dirty ground.
Pretty soul! She durst not lie
Near this lack-love, this kill-courtesy.
Churl, upon thy eyes I throw
All the power this charm doth owe.
When thou wakest, let love forbid
Sleep his seat on thy eyelid:
So awake when I am gone;
For I must now to Oberon.

Exit **PUCK**. Enter **DEMETRIUS** and **HELENA**, running.

HELENA

Stay, though thou kill me, sweet Demetrius.

DEMETRIUS

I charge thee, hence, and do not haunt me thus.

HELENA

O, wilt thou darkling leave me? Do not so.

DEMETRIUS

Stay, on thy peril: I alone will go.

Exit **DEMETRIUS**.

HELENA

O, I am out of breath in this fond chase!
The more my prayer, the lesser is my grace.
Happy is Hermia, wheresoe'er she lies;
For she hath blessed and attractive eyes.
How came her eyes so bright? Not with salt tears:
If so, my eyes are oftener wash'd than hers.
No, no, I am as ugly as a bear;
For beasts that meet me run away for fear:
But who is here? Lysander! on the ground!
Dead? or asleep? I see no blood, no wound.
Lysander if you live, good sir, awake.

LYSANDER

[Awaking] And run through fire I will for thy sweet sake.
Transparent Helena! Nature shows art,
That through thy bosom makes me see thy heart.
Where is Demetrius? O, how fit a word
Is that vile name to perish on my sword!

HELENA

Do not say so, Lysander; say not so
What though he love your Hermia? Lord, what though?
Yet Hermia still loves you: then be content.

LYSANDER

Content with Hermia! No; I do repent
The tedious minutes I with her have spent.
Not Hermia but Helena I love:
Who will not change a raven for a dove?
The will of man is by his reason sway'd;
And reason says you are the worthier maid.

HELENA

Wherefore was I to this keen mockery born?
When at your hands did I deserve this scorn?
Is't not enough, is't not enough, young man,
That I did never, no, nor never can,
Deserve a sweet look from Demetrius' eye,
But you must flout my insufficiency?
O, that a lady, of one man refused,
Should of another therefore be abused!

Exit **HELENA**.

LYSANDER

She sees not Hermia. Hermia, sleep thou there:
And never mayst thou come Lysander near!
For as a surfeit of the sweetest things
The deepest loathing to the stomach brings,
Or as tie heresies that men do leave
Are hated most of those they did deceive,
So thou, my surfeit and my heresy,
Of all be hated, but the most of me!
And, all my powers, address your love and might
To honour Helen and to be her knight!

Exit **LYSANDER**.

HERMIA

[Awaking] Help me, Lysander, help me! do thy best
To pluck this crawling serpent from my breast!
Ay me, for pity! what a dream was here!
Lysander, look how I do quake with fear:
Lysander! what, removed? Lysander! lord!
What, out of hearing? gone? no sound, no word?
No? Then I well perceive you all not nigh
Either death or you I'll find immediately.

Exit **HERMIA**.

TITANIA remains asleep.

ACT III; SCENE 1. The wood. TITANIA lying asleep.

Enter **QUINCE**, **SNUG**, **BOTTOM**, **FLUTE**, **SNOUT**, and **STARVELING**.

BOTTOM

Are we all met?

QUINCE

Pat, pat; and here's a marvellous convenient place for our rehearsal.

BOTTOM

Peter Quince,--

QUINCE

What sayest thou, bully Bottom?

BOTTOM

There are things in this comedy of Pyramus and Thisby that will never please. First, Pyramus must draw a sword to kill himself; which the ladies cannot abide. How answer you that?

SNOUT

By'r lakin, a parlous fear.

STARVELING

I believe we must leave the killing out, when all is done.

BOTTOM

Not a whit: I have a device to make all well. Write me a prologue; and let the prologue seem to say, we will do no harm with our swords, and that Pyramus is not killed indeed; and, for the more

BOTTOM (cont'd)

better assurance, tell them that I, Pyramus, am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver: this will put them out of fear.

QUINCE

Well, we will have such a prologue; and it shall be written in eight and six.

BOTTOM

No, make it two more; let it be written in eight and eight.

SNOUT

Will not the ladies be afeard of the lion?

STARVELING

I fear it, I promise you.

BOTTOM

Masters, you ought to consider with yourselves: to bring in--God shield us!--a lion among ladies, is a most dreadful thing; for there is not a more fearful wild-fowl than your lion living; and we ought to look to 't.

SNOUT

Therefore another prologue must tell he is not a lion.

BOTTOM

Nay, you must name his name, and half his face must be seen through the lion's neck: and he himself must speak through, saying thus, or to the same defect,--'Ladies, '--or 'Fair-ladies--I would wish You, '--or 'I would request you, '--or 'I would entreat you,--not to fear, not to tremble: my life

BOTTOM (cont'd)
for yours. If you think I come hither as a lion, it were pity of my life: no I am no such thing; I am a man as other men are; and there indeed let him name his name, and tell them plainly he is Snug the joiner.

QUINCE
Well it shall be so. But there is two hard things; that is, to bring the moonlight into a chamber; for, you know, Pyramus and Thisby meet by moonlight.

SNOUT
Doth the moon shine that night we play our play?

BOTTOM
A calendar, a calendar! Look in the almanac; find out moonshine, find out moonshine.

QUINCE
Yes, it doth shine that night.

BOTTOM
Why, then may you leave a casement of the great chamber window, where we play, open, and the moon may shine in at the casement.

QUINCE
Ay; or else one must come in with a bush of thorns and a lanthorn, and say he comes to disfigure, or to present, the person of Moonshine. Then, there is another thing: we must have a wall in the great chamber; for Pyramus and Thisby says the story, did talk through the chink of a wall.

SNOUT
You can never bring in a wall. What say you, Bottom?

BOTTOM
Some man or other must present Wall: and let him have some plaster, or some rough-cast about him, to signify wall; and let him hold his fingers thus, and through that cranny shall Pyramus and Thisby whisper.

QUINCE
If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit down, every mother's son, and rehearse your parts. Pyramus, you begin: when you have spoken your speech, enter into that brake: and so every one according to his cue.

Enter **PUCK**.

PUCK
What hempen home-spuns have we swaggering here, So near the cradle of the fairy queen? What, a play toward! I'll be an auditor; An actor too, perhaps, if I see cause.

QUINCE
Speak, Pyramus. Thisby, stand forth.

BOTTOM
Thisby, the flowers of odious savours sweet,--

QUINCE
Odours, odours.

BOTTOM

--odours savours sweet:
So hath thy breath, my dearest Thisby dear.
But hark, a voice! Stay thou but here awhile,
And by and by I will to thee appear.

Exit **BOTTOM**.

PUCK

A stranger Pyramus than e'er played here.

Exit **PUCK**.

FLUTE

Must I speak now?

QUINCE

Ay, marry, must you; for you must understand he goes
but to see a noise that he heard, and is to come again.

FLUTE

Most radiant Pyramus, most lily-white of hue,
Of colour like the red rose on triumphant brier,
Most brisky juvenal and eke most lovely Jew,
As true as truest horse that yet would never tire,
I'll meet thee, Pyramus, at Ninny's tomb.

QUINCE

'Ninus' tomb,' man: why, you must not speak that
yet; that you answer to Pyramus: you speak all your
part at once, cues and all Pyramus enter: your cue
is past; it is, 'never tire.'

FLUTE

O,--As true as truest horse, that yet would never tire.

Re-enter **PUCK**, and **BOTTOM** with an ass's head.

BOTTOM

If I were fair, Thisby, I were only thine.

QUINCE

O monstrous! O strange! We are haunted. Pray,
masters! Fly, masters! Help!

Exeunt **QUINCE**, **SNUG**, **FLUTE**, **SNOOUT**, and
STARVELING.

PUCK

I'll follow you, I'll lead you about a round,
Through bog, through bush, through brake, through brier:
Sometime a horse I'll be, sometime a hound,
A hog, a headless bear, sometime a fire;
And neigh, and bark, and grunt, and roar, and burn,
Like horse, hound, hog, bear, fire, at every turn.

Exit **PUCK**.

BOTTOM

Why do they run away?

Enter **QUINCE**.

QUINCE

Bless thee, Bottom! bless thee! thou art
translated.

Exit **QUINCE**.

BOTTOM

I see their knavery: this is to make an ass of me; to fright me, if they could. But I will not stir from this place, do what they can: I will walk up and down here, and I will sing, that they shall hear I am not afraid.

BOTTOM sings.

TITANIA

What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?

BOTTOM sings.

TITANIA

I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again:
Mine ear is much enamour'd of thy note;
So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape;
And thy fair virtue's force perforce doth move me
On the first view to say, to swear, I love thee.

BOTTOM

Methinks, mistress, you should have little reason for that: and yet, to say the truth, reason and love keep little company together now-a-days; the more the pity that some honest neighbours will not make them friends. Nay, I can gleeek upon occasion.

TITANIA

Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.

BOTTOM

Not so, neither: but if I had wit enough to get out of this wood, I have enough to serve mine own turn.

TITANIA

Out of this wood do not desire to go:
Thou shalt remain here, whether thou wilt or no. I am a spirit of no common rate;
The summer still doth tend upon my state;
And I do love thee: therefore, go with me;
I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee,
Peaseblossom! Cobweb! Moth! and Mustardseed!

Enter **PEASEBLOSSOM**, **COBWEB**, **MOTH**, and **MUSTARDSEED**.

PEASEBLOSSOM

Ready.

COBWEB

And I.

MOTH

And I.

MUSTARDSEED

And I.

ALL

Where shall we go?

TITANIA

Be kind and courteous to this gentleman;

PEASEBLOSSOM

Hail, mortal!

COBWEB

Hail!

MOTH
Hail!

MUSTARDSEED
Hail!

BOTTOM
I cry your worship's mercy, heartily: I beseech your
worship's name.

COBWEB
Cobweb.

BOTTOM
Good Master
Cobweb: if I cut my finger, I shall make bold with
you. Your name, honest gentleman?

PEASEBLOSSOM
Peaseblossom.

BOTTOM
I pray you, commend me to Mistress Squash, your
mother, and to Master Peascod, your father. Your name, I beseech
you, sir?

MUSTARDSEED
Mustardseed.

BOTTOM
Good Master Mustardseed, I know your patience well:
I promise you your kindred had made my eyes water ere now

TITANIA
Come, wait upon him; lead him to my bower.
The moon methinks looks with a watery eye;
And when she weeps, weeps every little flower,
Lamenting some enforced chastity.
Tie up my love's tongue bring him silently.

Exeunt **OMNES**.

INTERMISSION

ACT III; SCENE 2. Another part of the wood.

Enter **OBERON**.

OBERON

I wonder if Titania be awaked;
Then, what it was that next came in her eye,
Which she must dote on in extremity.

Enter **PUCK**.

Here comes my messenger.
How now, mad spirit!
What night-rule now about this haunted grove?

PUCK

My mistress with a monster is in love.
Near to her close and consecrated bower,
While she was in her dull and sleeping hour,
A crew of patches, rude mechanicals,
That work for bread upon Athenian stalls,
Were met together to rehearse a play
Intended for great Theseus' nuptial-day.
The shallowest thick-skin of that barren sort,
Who Pyramus presented, in their sport
Forsook his scene and enter'd in a brake
When I did him at this advantage take,
An ass's nolle I fixed on his head:
Anon his Thisbe must be answered,
And forth my mimic comes. When they him spy,
As wild geese that the creeping fowler eye,
So, at his sight, away his fellows fly;
I led them on in this distracted fear,
And left sweet Pyramus translated there:
When in that moment, so it came to pass,
Titania waked and straightway loved an ass.

OBERON

This falls out better than I could devise.
But hast thou yet latch'd the Athenian's eyes
With the love-juice, as I did bid thee do?

PUCK

I took him sleeping,--that is finish'd too,--
And the Athenian woman by his side:
That, when he waked, of force she must be eyed.

Enter **HERMIA** and **DEMETRIUS**.

OBERON

Stand close: this is the same Athenian.

PUCK

This is the woman, but not this the man.

DEMETRIUS

O, why rebuke you him that loves you so?
Lay breath so bitter on your bitter foe.

HERMIA

Now I but chide; but I should use thee worse,
For thou, I fear, hast given me cause to curse,
If thou hast slain Lysander in his sleep,
Being o'er shoes in blood, plunge in the deep,
And kill me too.

The sun was not so true unto the day

As he to me:

It cannot be but thou hast murder'd him;

So should a murderer look, so dead, so grim.

DEMETRIUS

So should the murder'd look, and so should I,
Pierced through the heart with your stern cruelty:

HERMIA

O, once tell true, tell true, even for my sake!
Durst thou have look'd upon him being awake,
And hast thou kill'd him sleeping? O brave touch!
Could not a worm, an adder, do so much?
An adder did it; for with doubler tongue
Than thine, thou serpent, never adder stung.

DEMETRIUS

You spend your passion on a misprised mood:
I am not guilty of Lysander's blood;
Nor is he dead, for aught that I can tell.

HERMIA

I pray thee, tell me then that he is well.

DEMETRIUS

An if I could, what should I get therefore?

HERMIA

A privilege never to see me more.

Exit **HERMIA**.

DEMETRIUS

There is no following her in this fierce vein:
Here therefore for a while I will remain.

DEMETRIUS lies down and sleeps.

OBERON

What hast thou done? Thou hast mistaken quite
And laid the love-juice on some true-love's sight:

PUCK

Then fate o'er-rules, that, one man holding troth,
A million fail, confounding oath on oath.

OBERON

About the wood go swifter than the wind,
And Helena of Athens look thou find:
All fancy-sick she is and pale of cheer,
With sighs of love, that costs the fresh blood dear:
By some illusion see thou bring her here:
I'll charm his eyes against she do appear.

PUCK

I go, I go; look how I go,
Swifter than arrow from the Tartar's bow.

Exit **PUCK**.

OBERON

Flower of this purple dye,
Hit with Cupid's archery,
Sink in apple of his eye.
When his love he doth espy,
Let her shine as gloriously
As the Venus of the sky.
When thou wakest, if she be by,
Beg of her for remedy.

Re-enter **PUCK**.

PUCK

Captain of our fairy band,
Helena is here at hand;
And the youth, mistook by me,
Pleading for a lover's fee.
Shall we their fond pageant see?
Lord, what fools these mortals be!

OBERON

Stand aside: the noise they make
Will cause Demetrius to awake.

PUCK

Then will two at once woo one;
That must needs be sport alone;
And those things do best please me
That befall preposterously.

Enter **LYSANDER** and **HELENA**.

LYSANDER

Why should you think that I should woo in scorn?
Scorn and derision never come in tears:
Look, when I vow, I weep; and vows so born,
In their nativity all truth appears.
How can these things in me seem scorn to you,
Bearing the badge of faith, to prove them true?

HELENA

You do advance your cunning more and more.
When truth kills truth, O devilish-holy fray!
These vows are Hermia's: will you give her o'er?
Weigh oath with oath, and you will nothing weigh:
Your vows to her and me, put in two scales,
Will even weigh, and both as light as tales.

LYSANDER

I had no judgment when to her I swore.

HELENA

Nor none, in my mind, now you give her o'er.

LYSANDER

Demetrius loves her, and he loves not you.

DEMETRIUS

[Awaking] O Helena, goddess, nymph, perfect, divine!

HELENA

O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent
To set against me for your merriment:
If you were civil and knew courtesy,
You would not do me thus much injury.
Can you not hate me, as I know you do,
But you must join in souls to mock me too?
If you were men, as men you are in show,
You would not use a gentle lady so;
You both are rivals, and love Hermia;
And now both rivals, to mock Helena:

LYSANDER

You are unkind, Demetrius; be not so;
For you love Hermia; this you know I know:
And here, with all good will, with all my heart,
In Hermia's love I yield you up my part;
And yours of Helena to me bequeath,
Whom I do love and will do till my death.

HELENA

Never did mockers waste more idle breath.

DEMETRIUS

Lysander, keep thy Hermia; I will none:
If e'er I loved her, all that love is gone.

LYSANDER

Helen, it is not so.

DEMETRIUS

Disparage not the faith thou dost not know,
Lest, to thy peril, thou aby it dear.
Look, where thy love comes; yonder is thy dear.

Re-enter **HERMIA**.

HERMIA

Thou art not by mine eye, Lysander, found;
Mine ear, I thank it, brought me to thy sound
But why unkindly didst thou leave me so?

LYSANDER

Why should he stay, whom love doth press to go?

HERMIA

What love could press Lysander from my side?

LYSANDER

Lysander's love, that would not let him bide,
Fair Helena, who more engilds the night
Than all you fiery o's and eyes of light.
Why seek'st thou me? Could not this make thee know,
The hate I bear thee made me leave thee so?

HERMIA

You speak not as you think: it cannot be.

HELENA

Lo, she is one of this confederacy!
Now I perceive they have conjoin'd all three
To fashion this false sport, in spite of me.
Injurious Hermia! Most ungrateful maid!
Have you conspired, have you with these contrived
To bait me with this foul derision?
Is all the counsel that we two have shared,

HELENA (cont'd)

The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent,
When we have chid the hasty-footed time
For parting us,—O, is it all forgot?
And will you rent our ancient love asunder,
To join with men in scorning your poor friend?
It is not friendly, 'tis not maidenly:
Our sex, as well as I, may chide you for it,
Though I alone do feel the injury.

HERMIA

I am amazed at your passionate words.
I scorn you not: it seems that you scorn me.

HELENA

Have you not set Lysander, as in scorn,
To follow me and praise my eyes and face?
And made your other love, Demetrius,
Who even but now did spurn me with his foot,
To call me goddess, nymph, divine and rare?

HERMIA

I understand not what you mean by this.

HELENA

Ay, do, persevere, counterfeit sad looks,
Make mouths upon me when I turn my back;
Wink each at other; hold the sweet jest up:
This sport, well carried, shall be chronicled.
If you have any pity, grace, or manners,
You would not make me such an argument.
But fare ye well: 'tis partly my own fault;
Which death or absence soon shall remedy.

LYSANDER

Stay, gentle Helena; hear my excuse:
My love, my life my soul, fair Helena!

HELENA

O excellent!

HERMIA

Sweet, do not scorn her so.

DEMETRIUS

If she cannot entreat, I can compel.

LYSANDER

Thou canst compel no more than she entreat:
Thy threats have no more strength than her weak prayers.
Helen, I love thee; by my life, I do:
I swear by that which I will lose for thee,
To prove him false that says I love thee not.

DEMETRIUS

I say I love thee more than he can do.

LYSANDER

If thou say so, withdraw, and prove it too.

DEMETRIUS

Quick, come!

HERMIA

Lysander, whereto tends all this?

LYSANDER

Away!

HERMIA

Why are you grown so rude? What change is this?
Sweet love,--

LYSANDER

Thy love! Out, tawny Tartar, out!
Out, loathed medicine! Hated potion, hence!

HERMIA

Do you not jest?

HELENA

Yes, sooth; and so do you.

LYSANDER

Demetrius, I will keep my word with thee.

DEMETRIUS

I would I had your bond, for I perceive
A weak bond holds you: I'll not trust your word.

LYSANDER

What, should I hurt her, strike her, kill her dead?
Although I hate her, I'll not harm her so.

HERMIA

What, can you do me greater harm than hate?
Hate me! Wherefore? O me! What news, my love!
Am not I Hermia? Are not you Lysander?
I am as fair now as I was erewhile.
Since night you loved me; yet since night you left me:
Why, then you left me--O, the gods forbid!--
In earnest, shall I say?

LYSANDER

Ay, by my life;
And never did desire to see thee more.
Therefore be out of hope, of question, of doubt;
Be certain, nothing truer; 'tis no jest
That I do hate thee and love Helena.

HERMIA

O me! You juggler! You canker-blossom!
You thief of love! What, have you come by night
And stolen my love's heart from him?

HELENA

Fine, i' faith!
Have you no modesty, no maiden shame,
No touch of bashfulness? What, will you tear
Impatient answers from my gentle tongue?
Fie, fie! You counterfeit, you puppet, you!

HERMIA

Puppet? Why so? Ay, that way goes the game.
Now I perceive that she hath made compare
Between our statures; she hath urged her height;
And with her personage, her tall personage,
Her height, forsooth, she hath prevail'd with him.
And are you grown so high in his esteem;
Because I am so dwarfish and so low?
How low am I, thou painted maypole? Speak;
How low am I? I am not yet so low
But that my nails can reach unto thine eyes.

HELENA

I pray you, though you mock me, gentlemen,
Let her not hurt me: I was never curst;
I have no gift at all in shrewishness;

HELENA (cont'd)

I am a right maid for my cowardice:
Let her not strike me. You perhaps may think,
Because she is something lower than myself,
That I can match her.

HERMIA

Lower! Hark, again.

HELENA

Good Hermia, do not be so bitter with me.
I evermore did love you, Hermia,
Did ever keep your counsels, never wrong'd you;
Save that, in love unto Demetrius,
I told him of your stealth unto this wood.
He follow'd you; for love I follow'd him;
And now, so you will let me quiet go,
To Athens will I bear my folly back
And follow you no further: let me go:
You see how simple and how fond I am.

HERMIA

Why, get you gone: who is't that hinders you?

HELENA

A foolish heart, that I leave here behind.

HERMIA

What, with Lysander?

HELENA

With Demetrius.

LYSANDER

Be not afraid; she shall not harm thee, Helena.

DEMETRIUS

No, sir, she shall not, though you take her part.

HELENA

O, when she's angry, she is keen and shrewd!
She was a vixen when she went to school;
And though she be but little, she is fierce.

HERMIA

'Little' again! Nothing but 'low' and 'little'!
Why will you suffer her to flout me thus?
Let me come to her.

LYSANDER

Get you gone, you dwarf;
You minimus, of hindering knot-grass made;
You bead, you acorn.

DEMETRIUS

You are too officious
In her behalf that scorns your services.
Let her alone: speak not of Helena;
Take not her part; for, if thou dost intend
Never so little show of love to her,
Thou shalt aby it.

LYSANDER

Now she holds me not;
Now follow, if thou darest, to try whose right,
Of thine or mine, is most in Helena.

DEMETRIUS

Follow! Nay, I'll go with thee, cheek by jole.

Exeunt LYSANDER and DEMETRIUS.

HERMIA

You, mistress, all this coil is 'long of you:
Nay, go not back.

HELENA

I will not trust you, I,
Nor longer stay in your curst company.
Your hands than mine are quicker for a fray,
My legs are longer though, to run away.

Exit **HELENA**.

HERMIA

I am amazed, and know not what to say.

Exit **HERMIA**.

OBERON

This is thy negligence: still thou mistakest,
Or else committ'st thy knaveries wilfully.

PUCK

Believe me, king of shadows, I mistook.
Did not you tell me I should know the man
By the Athenian garment he had on?
And so far blameless proves my enterprise,
That I have 'nointed an Athenian's eyes;

OBERON

Thou see'st these lovers seek a place to fight:
Hie therefore, Robin, overcast the night;
And lead these testy rivals so astray
As one come not within another's way.
And from each other look thou lead them thus,
Till o'er their brows death-counterfeiting sleep

OBERON (cont'd)

With leaden legs and batty wings doth creep:
Then crush this herb into Lysander's eye;
Whose liquor hath this virtuous property,
To take from thence all error with his might,
And make his eyeballs roll with wonted sight.
When they next wake, all this derision
Shall seem a dream and fruitless vision,
And back to Athens shall the lovers wend,
With league whose date till death shall never end.
Whiles I in this affair do thee employ,
I'll to my queen and beg her Indian boy;
And then I will her charmed eye release
From monster's view, and all things shall be peace.

PUCK

My fairy lord, this must be done with haste,
For night's swift dragons cut the clouds full fast,
And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger;
At whose approach, ghosts, wandering here and there,
Troop home to churchyards: damned spirits all,
That in crossways and floods have burial,
They willfully themselves exile from light
And must for aye consort with black-brow'd night.

OBERON

But we are spirits of another sort:
I with the morning's love have oft made sport,
But, notwithstanding, haste; make no delay:
We may effect this business yet ere day.

Exit **OBERON**.

PUCK

Up and down, up and down,
I will lead them up and down:
I am fear'd in field and town:
Goblin, lead them up and down.
Here comes one.

Re-enter **LYSANDER**.

LYSANDER

Where art thou, proud Demetrius? speak thou now.

PUCK

Here, villain; drawn and ready. Where art thou?

LYSANDER

I will be with thee straight.

Exit **LYSANDER**, as following the voice.

Re-enter **DEMETRIUS**.

DEMETRIUS

Yea, art thou there?

PUCK

Follow my voice: we'll try no manhood here.

Exeunt **OMNES**.

Re-enter **LYSANDER**.

LYSANDER

He goes before me and still dares me on:
When I come where he calls, then he is gone.
The villain is much lighter-heel'd than I:
I follow'd fast, but faster he did fly;
Lies down.

Come, thou gentle day!

Sleeps. Re-enter **PUCK** and **DEMETRIUS**.

PUCK

Ho, ho, ho! Coward, why comest thou not?

DEMETRIUS

Where art thou now?

PUCK

Come hither: I am here.

DEMETRIUS

Thou shalt buy this dear,
If ever I thy face by daylight see:
Now, go thy way.

Lies down and sleeps.

Re-enter **HELENA**

HELENA

O weary night, O long and tedious night,
Abate thy hour! Shine comforts from the east,
And sleep, that sometimes shuts up sorrow's eye,
Steal me awhile from mine own company.
Lies down and sleeps.

PUCK

Yet but three? Come one more;
Two of both kinds make up four.

Re-enter **HERMIA**.

HERMIA

I can no further crawl, no further go;
My legs can keep no pace with my desires.
Lies down and sleeps.

PUCK

On the ground
Sleep sound:
I'll apply
To your eye,
Gentle lover, remedy.
Squeezing the juice on **LYSANDER**'s eyes.
When thou wakest,
Thou takest
True delight
In the sight
Of thy former lady's eye:
Jack shall have Jill;
Nought shall go ill;

Exit **PUCK**.

ACT IV; SCENE 1. The same.

LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS, HELENA, and HERMIA lying asleep.
Enter **TITANIA** and **BOTTOM**; **PEASEBLOSSOM, COBWEB,**
MOTH, MUSTARDSEED, and other **FAIRIES** attending; **OBBERON**
behind unseen.

TITANIA
Come, sit thee down upon this flowery bed,

BOTTOM
Where's Peaseblossom?

PEASEBLOSSOM
Ready.

BOTTOM
Scratch my head Peaseblossom. Where's Mounsieur Mustardseed?

MUSTARDSEED
Ready. What's your Will?

TITANIA
What, wilt thou hear some music,
my sweet love?

BOTTOM
I have a reasonable good ear in music.

TITANIA
Or say, sweet love, what thou desirest to eat.

BOTTOM
Methinks I have a great desire to a bottle
of hay: good hay, sweet hay, hath no fellow.

TITANIA
I have a venturous fairy that shall seek
The squirrel's hoard, and fetch thee new nuts.

BOTTOM
I had rather have a handful or two of dried peas.
But, I pray you, let none of your people stir me: I
have an exposition of sleep come upon me.

TITANIA
Sleep thou, and I will wind thee in my arms.
Fairies, begone, and be all ways away.
Exeunt **FAIRIES**.

So doth the woodbine the sweet honeysuckle
Gently entwine; the female ivy so
Enrings the barked fingers of the elm.
O, how I love thee! How I dote on thee!

They sleep. Enter **PUCK**.

OBBERON
[Advancing] Welcome, good Robin.
See'st thou this sweet sight?
Her dotage now I do begin to pity:
For, meeting her of late behind the wood,
Seeking sweet favours from this hateful fool,
I did upbraid her and fall out with her;
When I had at my pleasure taunted her
And she in mild terms begg'd my patience,

OBERON (cont'd)

I then did ask of her her changeling child;
Which straight she gave me, and her fairy sent
To bear him to my bower in fairy land.
And now I have the boy, I will undo
This hateful imperfection of her eyes:
And, gentle Puck, take this transformed scalp
From off the head of this Athenian swain;
That, he awaking when the other do,
May all to Athens back again repair
And think no more of this night's accidents
But as the fierce vexation of a dream.
But first I will release the fairy queen.
Be as thou wast wont to be;
See as thou wast wont to see:
Dian's bud o'er Cupid's flower
Hath such force and blessed power.
Now, my Titania; wake you, my sweet queen.

TITANIA

My Oberon! What visions have I seen!
Methought I was enamour'd of an ass.

OBERON

There lies your love.

TITANIA

How came these things to pass?
O, how mine eyes do loathe his visage now!

OBERON

Silence awhile. Robin, take off this head.

Music, still.

PUCK

Now, when thou wakest, with thine
own fool's eyes peep.

OBERON

Sound, music! Come, my queen, take hands with me,
And rock the ground whereon these sleepers be.
Now thou and I are new in amity,
And will to-morrow midnight solemnly
Dance in Duke Theseus' house triumphantly,
And bless it to all fair prosperity:
There shall the pairs of faithful lovers be
Wedded, with Theseus, all in jollity.

PUCK

Fairy king, attend, and mark:
I do hear the morning lark.

OBERON

Then, my queen, in silence sad,
Trip we after the night's shade:
We the globe can compass soon,
Swifter than the wandering moon.

TITANIA

Come, my lord, and in our flight
Tell me how it came this night
That I sleeping here was found
With these mortals on the ground.

Exeunt **OMNES**. Horns winded within.
Enter **THESEUS**, **HIPPOLYTA**, **EGEUS**, and train.

EGEUS
My lord, this is my daughter here asleep;
And this, Lysander; this Demetrius is;
This Helena, old Nedar's Helena:
I wonder of their being here together.

THESEUS
No doubt they rose up early to observe
The rite of May, and hearing our intent,
Came here in grace our solemnity.

LYSANDER, **DEMETRIUS**, **HELENA**, and **HERMIA**
wake and start up.

Good morrow, friends. Saint Valentine is past:
Begin these wood-birds but to couple now?

LYSANDER
Pardon, my lord.

THESEUS
I pray you all, stand up.

LYSANDER
I cannot truly say how I came here;
But, as I think,
I came with Hermia hither:

DEMETRIUS
my good lord, I wot not by what power,--
But by some power it is,--my love to Hermia,
Melted as the snow,
The object and the pleasure of mine eye,
Is only Helena.

THESEUS
Fair lovers, you are fortunately met:
Of this discourse we more will hear anon.
Away with us to Athens; three and three,
We'll hold a feast in great solemnity.
Come, Hippolyta.

Exeunt **THESEUS**, **HIPPOLYTA**, **EGEUS**, and train.

HERMIA
Methinks I see these things with parted eye,
When every thing seems double.

DEMETRIUS
Are you sure
That we are awake? It seems to me
That yet we sleep, we dream. Do not you think
The duke was here, and bid us follow him?

HERMIA
Yea; and my father.

HELENA
And Hippolyta.

LYSANDER

And he did bid us follow to the temple.

DEMETRIUS

Why, then, we are awake: let's follow him
And by the way let us recount our dreams.

Exeunt **OMNES**.

BOTTOM

[Awaking] When my cue comes, call me, and I will
answer: my next is, 'Most fair Pyramus.' Heigh-ho!
Peter Quince! Flute, the bellows-mender! Snout,
the tinker! Starveling! God's my life, stolen
hence, and left me asleep! I have had a most rare
vision. I have had a dream, past the wit of man to
say what dream it was: man is but an ass, if he go
about to expound this dream. Methought I was--there
is no man can tell what. Methought I was,--and
methought I had,--but man is but a patched fool, if
he will offer to say what methought I had. The eye
of man hath not heard, the ear of man hath not
seen, man's hand is not able to taste, his tongue
to conceive, nor his heart to report, what my dream
was. I will get Peter Quince to write a ballad of
this dream: it shall be called Bottom's Dream,
because it hath no bottom; and I will sing it in the
latter end of a play, before the duke:

Exit **BOTTOM**.

ACT IV; SCENE 2. Athens. QUINCE'S house.

Enter **QUINCE**, **FLUTE**, **SNOOT**, and **STARVELING**.

QUINCE

Have you sent to Bottom's house? Is he come home yet?

STARVELING

He cannot be heard of. Out of doubt he is transported.

FLUTE

If he come not, then the play is marred: it goes not forward, doth it?

QUINCE

It is not possible: you have not a man in all Athens able to discharge Pyramus but he.

FLUTE

No, he hath simply the best wit of any handicraft man in Athens.

QUINCE

Yea and the best person too; and he is a very paramour for a sweet voice.

FLUTE

You must say 'paragon': a paramour is, God bless us, a thing of naught.

Enter **SNUG**.

SNUG

Masters, the duke is coming from the temple, and there is two or three lords and ladies more married:

SNUG (cont'd)

if our sport had gone forward, we had all been made men.

FLUTE

O sweet bully Bottom!

Enter **BOTTOM**.

BOTTOM

Where are these lads? Where are these hearts?

QUINCE

Bottom! O most courageous day! O most happy hour!

BOTTOM

Masters, I am to discourse wonders: but ask me not what; for if I tell you, I am no true Athenian. I will tell you every thing, right as it fell out.

QUINCE

Let us hear, sweet Bottom.

BOTTOM

Not a word of me. All that I will tell you is, that the duke hath dined. Get your apparel together, good strings to your beards, new ribbons to your pumps; meet presently at the palace; every man look o'er his part; for the short and the long is, our play is preferred. And, most dear actors, eat no onions nor garlic, for we are to utter sweet breath; and I do not doubt but to hear them say, it is a sweet comedy. No more words: away! Go, away!

Exeunt **OMNES**.

ACT V; SCENE 1. Athens. The palace of THESEUS.

Enter **THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, PHILOSTRATE,**
LORDS and **ATTENDENTS.**

HIPPOLYTA

'Tis strange my Theseus, that these
lovers speak of.

THESEUS

More strange than true: I never may believe
These antique fables, nor these fairy toys.
Lovers and madmen have such seething brains,
Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend
More than cool reason ever comprehends.
The lunatic, the lover and the poet
Are of imagination all compact:
One sees more devils than vast hell can hold,
That is, the madman: the lover, all as frantic,
Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt:
The poet's eye, in fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.
Such tricks hath strong imagination,
That if it would but apprehend some joy,
It comprehends some bringer of that joy;
Or in the night, imagining some fear,
How easy is a bush supposed a bear!

HIPPOLYTA

But all the story of the night told over,
And all their minds transfigured so together,

HIPPOLYTA (cont'd)

More witnesseth than fancy's images
And grows to something of great constancy;

THESEUS

Here come the lovers, full of joy and mirth.

Enter **LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS, HERMIA,** and
HELENA.

Joy, gentle friends!

Come now; what masques, what dances shall we have,
To wear away this long age of three hours
Between our after-supper and bed-time?
Where is our usual manager of mirth?

PHILOSTRATE

Here, mighty Theseus.

THESEUS

Say, what abridgement have you for this evening?
What masque? What music? How shall we beguile
The lazy time, if not with some delight?

PHILOSTRATE

There is a brief how many sports are ripe:
Make choice of which your highness will see first.
Gives **THESEUS** a paper.

THESEUS

[Reads] 'The battle with the Centaurs, to be sung
By an Athenian eunuch to the harp.'
We'll none of that:
' The thrice three Muses mourning for the death
Of Learning, late deceased in beggary.'
That is some satire, keen and critical,
Not sorting with a nuptial ceremony.

THESEUS (cont'd)

A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus
And his love Thisbe; very tragical mirth.
Merry and tragical! Tedious and brief!
That is, hot ice and wondrous strange snow.
How shall we find the concord of this discord?

PHILOSTRATE

A play there is, my lord, some ten words long,
Which is as brief as I have known a play;
But by ten words, my lord, it is too long,
Which makes it tedious; for in all the play
There is not one word apt, one player fitted:
And tragical, my noble lord, it is;
For Pyramus therein doth kill himself.
Which, when I saw rehearsed, I must confess,
Made mine eyes water; but more merry tears
The passion of loud laughter never shed.

THESEUS

What are they that do play it?

PHILOSTRATE

Hard-handed men that work in Athens here,
Which never labour'd in their minds till now,

THESEUS

We will hear it.

PHILOSTRATE

No, my noble lord;
It is not for you:

THESEUS

I will hear that play;
For never anything can be amiss,
When simpleness and duty tender it.
Go, bring them in: and take your places, ladies.

Exit **PHILOSTRATE**.

HIPPOLYTA

I love not to see wretchedness o'er charged
And duty in his service perishing.

THESEUS

Why, gentle sweet, you shall see no such thing.

HIPPOLYTA

He says they can do nothing in this kind.

THESEUS

The kinder we, to give them thanks for nothing.
Trust me, sweet,
Out of this silence yet I pick'd a welcome;
And in the modesty of fearful duty
I read as much as from the rattling tongue
Of saucy and audacious eloquence.
Love, therefore, and tongue-tied simplicity
In least speak most, to my capacity.

Re-enter **PHILOSTRATE**.

PHILOSTRATE

So please your grace, the Prologue is address'd.

THESEUS

Let him approach.

Enter **QUINCE** for the *Prologue*.

Prologue

If we offend, it is with our good will.
That you should think, we come not to offend,
But with good will. To show our simple skill,
That is the true beginning of our end.
Consider then we come but in despite.
We do not come as minding to contest you,
Our true intent is. All for your delight
We are not here. That you should here repent you,
The actors are at hand and by their show
You shall know all that you are like to know.

THESEUS

This fellow doth not stand upon points.

LYSANDER

He hath rid his prologue like a rough colt; he knows
not the stop. A good moral, my lord: it is not
enough to speak, but to speak true.

HIPPOLYTA

Indeed he hath played on his prologue like a child
on a recorder; a sound, but not in government.

THESEUS

His speech, was like a tangled chain; nothing
impaired, but all disordered. Who is next?

Enter *Pyramus* and *Thisbe*, *Wall*, *Moonshine*, and *Lion*.

Prologue

Gentles, perchance you wonder at this show;
But wonder on, till truth make all things plain.
This man is *Pyramus*, if you would know;
This beautiful lady *Thisbe* is certain.
This man, with lime and rough-cast, doth present
Wall, that vile *Wall* which did these lovers sunder;
And through *Wall*'s chink, poor souls, they are content
To whisper. At the which let no man wonder.
This man, with lanthorn, dog, and bush of thorn,
Presenteth *Moonshine*; for, if you will know,
By moonshine did these lovers think no scorn
To meet at *Ninus'* tomb, there, there to woo.
This grisly beast, which *Lion* hight by name,
The trusty *Thisbe*, coming first by night,
Did scare away, or rather did affright;
And, as she fled, her mantle she did fall,
Which *Lion* vile with bloody mouth did stain.
Anon comes *Pyramus*, sweet youth and tall,
And finds his trusty *Thisbe*'s mantle slain:
Whereat, with blade, with bloody blameful blade,
He bravely broach'd is boiling bloody breast;
And *Thisbe*, tarrying in mulberry shade,
His dagger drew, and died. For all the rest,
Let *Lion*, *Moonshine*, *Wall*, and lovers twain
At large discourse, while here they do remain.

Exeunt *Prologue*, *Thisbe*, *Lion*, and *Moonshine*.

THESEUS

I wonder if the lion be to speak.

DEMETRIUS

No wonder, my lord: one lion may, when many asses do.

Wall

In this same interlude it doth befall
That I, one Snout by name, present a wall;
And such a wall, as I would have you think,
That had in it a crannied hole or chink,
Through which the lovers, Pyramus and Thisby,
Did whisper often very secretly.
This loam, this rough-cast and this stone doth show
That I am that same wall; the truth is so:
And this the cranny is, right and sinister,
Through which the fearful lovers are to whisper.

THESEUS

Would you desire lime and hair to speak better?

DEMETRIUS

It is the wittiest partition that ever I heard
discourse, my lord.

Enter *Pyramus*.

Pyramus

O grim-look'd night! O night with hue so black!
O night, which ever art when day is not!
O night, O night! alack, alack, alack,
I fear my Thisby's promise is forgot!
And thou, O wall, O sweet, O lovely wall,
That stand'st between her father's ground and mine!
Thou wall, O wall, O sweet and lovely wall,
Show me thy chink, to blink through with mine eyne!

Wall holds up his fingers

Thanks, courteous wall: Jove shield thee well for this!
But what see I? No Thisby do I see.

O wicked wall, through whom I see no bliss!
Cursed be thy stones for thus deceiving me!

THESEUS

The wall, methinks, being sensible, should curse again.

Pyramus

No, in truth, sir, he should not. 'Deceiving me'
is Thisby's cue: she is to enter now, and I am to
spy her through the wall. You shall see, it will
fall pat as I told you. Yonder she comes.

Enter *Thisbe*.

Thisbe

O wall, full often hast thou heard my moans,
For parting my fair Pyramus and me!
My cherry lips have often kiss'd thy stones,
Thy stones with lime and hair knit up in thee.

Pyramus

I see a voice: now will I to the chink,
To spy an I can hear my Thisby's face. Thisby!

Thisbe

My love thou art, my love I think.

Pyramus

O kiss me through the hole of this vile wall!

Thisbe

I kiss the wall's hole, not your lips at all.

Pyramus

Wilt thou at Ninny's tomb meet me straightway?

Thisbe

'Tide life, 'tide death, I come without delay.

Exeunt *Pyramus* and *Thisbe*.

Wall

Thus have I, Wall, my part discharged so;
And, being done, thus Wall away doth go.

Exit *Wall*.

HIPPOLYTA

This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard.

Enter *Lion* and *Moonshine*.

Lion

You, ladies, you, whose gentle hearts do fear
The smallest monstrous mouse that creeps on floor,
May now perchance both quake and tremble here,
When lion rough in wildest rage doth roar.
Then know that I, one Snug the joiner, am
A lion-fell, nor else no lion's dam;
For, if I should as lion come in strife
Into this place, 'twere pity on my life.

THESEUS

A very gentle beast, of a good conscience.

DEMETRIUS

The very best at a beast, my lord, that e'er I saw.

Moonshine

This lanthorn doth the horned moon present;--

DEMETRIUS

He should have worn the horns on his head.

THESEUS

He is no crescent, and his horns are
invisible within the circumference.

Moonshine

This lanthorn doth the horned moon present;
Myself the man i' the moon do seem to be.

THESEUS

This is the greatest error of all the rest: the man
should be put into the lanthorn. How is it else the
man i' the moon?

HIPPOLYTA

I am awear of this moon: would he would change!

LYSANDER

Proceed, Moon.

Moonshine

All that I have to say, is, to tell you that the
lanthorn is the moon; I, the man in the moon; this
thorn-bush, my thorn-bush; and this dog, my dog.

Enter *Thisbe*.

Thisbe

This is old Ninny's tomb. Where is my love?

Lion

[Roaring] Oh--

Thisbe runs off.

DEMETRIUS

Well roared, Lion.

THESEUS

Well run, Thisbe.

HIPPOLYTA

Well shone, Moon. Truly, the moon shines with a good grace.

The *Lion* shakes *Thisbe's* mantle, and exit.

THESEUS

Well moused, Lion.

Enter *Pyramus*.

Pyramus

Sweet Moon, I thank thee for thy sunny beams;
I thank thee, Moon, for shining now so bright;
For, by thy gracious, golden, glittering gleams,
I trust to take of truest Thisby sight.
But stay, O spite!

But mark, poor knight,

What dreadful dole is here!

Eyes, do you see?

How can it be?

O dainty duck! O dear!

Thy mantle good,

What, stain'd with blood!

Approach, ye Furies fell!

O Fates, come, come,

Cut thread and thrum;

Quail, crush, conclude, and quell!

THESEUS

This passion, and the death of a dear friend, would go near to make a man look sad.

HIPPOLYTA

Beshrew my heart, but I pity the man.

Pyramus

O wherefore, Nature, didst thou lions frame?
Since lion vile hath here deflower'd my dear:
Which is--no, no--which was the fairest dame
That lived, that loved, that liked, that look'd
with cheer.

Come, tears, confound;

Out, sword, and wound

The pap of *Pyramus*;

Ay, that left pap,

Where heart doth hop:

Stabs himself

Thus die I, thus, thus, thus.

Now am I dead,

Now am I fled;

My soul is in the sky:

Tongue, lose thy light;

Moon take thy flight:

Exit *Moonshine*.

Now die, die, die, die, die.

Dies.

HIPPOLYTA

How chance Moonshine is gone before
Thisbe comes
back and finds her lover?

THESEUS

She will find him by starlight. Here she comes; and her passion ends the play.

Re-enter *Thisbe*.

Thisbe

Asleep, my love?
What, dead, my dove?
O Pyramus, arise!
Speak, speak. Quite dumb?
Dead, dead? A tomb
Must cover thy sweet eyes.
These My lips,
This cherry nose,
These yellow cowslip cheeks,
Are gone, are gone:
Lovers, make moan:
His eyes were green as leeks.
Tongue, not a word:
Come, trusty sword;
Come, blade, my breast imbrue:
Stabs herself.
And, farewell, friends;
Thus Thisby ends:
Adieu, adieu, adieu.
Dies.

THESEUS

Moonshine and Lion are left to bury the dead.

DEMETRIUS

Ay, and Wall too.

BOTTOM

[Starting up] No assure you; the wall is down that parted their fathers. Will it please you to see the epilogue, or to hear a Bergomask dance between two of our company?

THESEUS

No epilogue, I pray you; for your play needs no excuse. Never excuse; for when the players are all dead, there needs none to be blamed. Marry, if he that writ it had played Pyramus and hanged himself in Thisbe's garter, it would have been a fine tragedy: and so it is, truly; and very notably discharged. But come, your Bergomask: let your epilogue alone.

Music – a dance.

Exeunt **OMNES**. Enter **PUCK** with music.
Enter **OBERON** and **TITANIA** with their train.

OBERON

Through the house give gathering light,
Every elf and fairy sprite
And this ditty, after me,
Sing, and dance it trippingly.

TITANIA

Now, until the break of day,
Through this house each fairy stray.
Hand in hand, with fairy grace,
Will we sing, and bless this place.

Song and dance with **OBERON**, **TITANIA** and **FAIRIES**.

Exeunt **OBERON**, **TITANIA**, and train.

PUCK

If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended,
That you have but slumber'd here
While these visions did appear.
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream,
Gentles, do not reprehend:
if you pardon, we will mend:
And, as I am an honest Puck,
If we have unearned luck
Now to 'scape the serpent's tongue,
We will make amends ere long;
Else the Puck a liar call;
So, good night unto you all.
Give me your hands, if we be friends,
And Robin shall restore amends.

Select Glossary

abridgement : pasttime, entertainment	mazed : perplexed
aby: pay for, atone for	mew'd : confined
avouch it to his head : declare it in his presence	murrion : diseased
aye : ever	nole: noodle, head
barm : yeast, froth	persever: to persevere
bated : excepted	pert : lively
beteem : grant	Phoebe : goddess of the moon
bootless : in vain	prevailment: influence
brakes : thickets	proper : handsome
buskin'd : wearing buskin boots	quern : hand mill for grinding
by'r lakin: by our ladykin (the Virgin Mary)	quire : company
chaplet : garland	shrewd : mischievous
childing : fruitful	solemnities : celebration
collied : dark	spotted : guilty
constancy: consistency	square : quarrel
dewlap : wrinkled skin on the neck	streak : anoint
discharge : perform	swimming gait : gliding step
eyne : eyes	trace : range
fancies : thoughts of love	triumph : public festivity
fancy-free : free from love	unbreathed : unexercised
feigning : soft	unharden'd : impressionable
gawds : baubles	vot' res (votares): A priestess (bound by religious vows)
glass : mirror	weed : garment
griffin : mythical beast with head of eagle/body of lion	well derived : nobly born
interlude : short play	well derived : wealthy
knacks : knicknacks	
leviathan : sea monster	
lingers : prolongs	
lode stars : stars that guide and attract	
margent : edge	