

A Midsummer Night's Dream

by William Shakespeare

adapted by Tiffany Antone

CHARACTERS

Royalty

Theseus: Duke of Athens

Hippolyta : His Amazonian Queen

Egeus: Hermia's Father

Hermia: A young woman, in love with Lysander

Demetrius: A young man, betrothed to Hermia

Lysander: A young man, in love with Hermia

Helena: A young woman, in love with Demetrius

Philostrate: An Athenian (small part – guest star)

Mechanicals

Quince: A Carpenter and head of The Company (Actors)

Nick Bottom: A weaver - Pyramus & Donkey

Francis Flute: A bellows mender – Thisbee

Robin Starveling: A tailor - Moonshine

Tom Snout: A tinker - Wall

Snug The Joiner – Lion

Fairies

Oberon: King of the Fairies

Titania: Queen of the Fairies

Puck: Oberon's lackey

Fairy

Peasblossom, Mustard Seed, Cobweb, Moth

1.1.1 Athens. The palace of THESEUS.

[Enter THESEUS and HIPPOLYTA]

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,
Like to a step-dame or a dowager
Long withering out a young man revenue.

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

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 interchanged love-tokens with my child:

Thou hast by moonlight at her window sung,
With feigning voice verses of feigning love,
And stolen the impression of her fantasy
With bracelets of thy hair, rings, gawds, conceits,
Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweetmeats, messengers
Of strong prevailment in unhardened youth:
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,
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;
Whether, if you yield not to your father's choice,
You can endure the livery of a nun.

HERMIA

So will I grow, so live, so die, my lord,
Ere I will my virgin patent up.

THESEUS

Take time to pause; and, by the next new moon —
The sealing-day betwixt my love and me,
For everlasting bond of fellowship —
Upon that day either prepare to die
For disobedience to your father's will,
Or else to wed Demetrius —

DEMETRIUS [interrupting]

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.
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;
My fortunes every way as fairly rank'd,
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.
And with Demetrius thought to have spoke thereof;
But, being over-full of self-affairs,
My mind did lose it. 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?

[Exit all but LYSANDER and HERMIA]

1.1.2

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.

HERMIA

Then let us teach our trial patience.

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,
To do observance to a morn of May,
There will I stay for thee.

HERMIA

My good Lysander!
I swear to thee, by Cupid's strongest bow,
By his best arrow with the golden head,
By the simplicity of Venus' doves,
By that which knitteth souls and prospers loves,
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.

1.1.3

[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!
Sickness is catching: O, were favour so,
Yours would I catch, fair Hermia, ere I go;
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;
And thence from Athens turn away our eyes,
To seek new friends and stranger companies.
Farewell, sweet playfellow: pray thou for us;

And good luck grant thee thy Demetrius!
Keep word, Lysander: we must starve our sight
From lovers' food till morrow deep midnight.

LYSANDER

I will, my Hermia.

[Exit HERMIA]

Helena, adieu:
As you on him, Demetrius dote on you!

[Exit]

1.1.4

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:
Nor hath Love's mind of any judgement taste;
Wings and no eyes figure unheedy haste:
And therefore is Love said to be a child,
Because in choice he is so oft beguiled.
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.

1.2.1 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 scrip.

QUINCE

Here is the scroll of every man's name, which is
thought fit, through all Athens, 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 Ercles 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.

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.

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

If 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

But I will aggravate my voice so that I will roar you
as gently as any sucking dove; I will roar you if '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 con them by to-morrow night;
and meet me in the palace wood, a mile without the town,
by moonlight; there will we rehearse. I pray you, fail me not.

BOTTOM

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

[Exit all]

2.1.1 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.
The cowslips tall her pensioners be:
In their gold coats spots you see;
Those be rubies, fairy favours,
In those freckles live their savours:
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;
Skim milk, and sometimes labour in the quern
And bootless make the breathless housewife churn;

And sometime make the drink to bear no barm;
Mislead night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?
Those that Hobgoblin call you and sweet Puck,
You do their work, and they shall have good luck:
Are not you he?

PUCK

Thou speak'st aright;
I am that merry wanderer of the night.
But, room, fairy! here comes Oberon.

FAIRY

And here my mistress. Would that he were gone!

2.1.2

[Enter, from one side, OBERON;
from the other, TITANIA, with fairies]

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: Why art thou here,
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?

TITANIA

These are the forgeries of jealousy:
And never, since the middle summer's spring,
Met we on hill, in dale, forest or mead,
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,
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:
And thorough this distemperature we see
The seasons alter: the spring, the summer,
The chiding 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.

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;
If not, shun me, and I will spare your haunts.

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 and fairies]

2.1.3

OBERON

Well, go thy way: thou shalt not from this grove
Till I torment thee for this injury.
My gentle Puck, come hither. Thou rememberest
Since once I sat upon a promontory,
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 votaress 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 show'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]

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,
On meddling monkey, or on busy ape,
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.

2.1.4

[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,

The more you beat me, I will fawn on you:
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.
What worser place can I beg in your love, —
And yet a place of high respect with me, —
Than to be used as you use your dog?

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.
Therefore I think I am not in the night;

DEMETRIUS

I'll run from thee and hide me in the brakes,
And leave thee to the mercy of wild beasts.

HELENA

The wildest hath not such a heart as you.

DEMETRIUS

Yet, 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 wooed, 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]

2.1.5

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, that he may prove
More fond on her than she upon her love:
And look thou meet me ere the first cock crow.

PUCK

Fear not, my lord, your servant shall do so.
[Exit Puck & Oberon]

2.2.1 Another part of the wood

[Enter TITANIA and fairies]

TITANIA

Come now, a roundel and a fairy song;
At our quaint spirits, sing me now asleep;
Then to your offices and let me rest.

FAIRY + FAIRIES [singing]

You spotted snakes with double tongue,
Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen;
Newts and blind-worms, do no wrong,
Come not near our fairy queen.
Philomel, with melody
Sing in our sweet lullaby;
Lulla, lulla, lullaby, lulla, lulla, lullaby:
Never harm,
Nor spell nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh;
So, good night, with lullaby.
Weaving spiders, come not here;
Hence, you long-legg'd spinners, hence!
Beetles black, approach not near;
Worm nor snail, do no offence.
Philomel, with melody
Sing in our sweet lullaby;
Lulla, lulla, lullaby, lulla, lulla, lullaby

FAIRY

Hence, away! now all is well:
One aloof stand sentinel.

[Exit Fairies. TITANIA sleeps]

[Enter OBERON and squeezes the 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 what shall appear
When thou wakest, it is thy dear:
Wake when some vile thing is near.

[Exit]

2.2.2

[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.

LYSANDER

Here is my bed: sleep give thee all his rest!

HERMIA

With half that wish the wisher's eyes be press'd!

[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]

2.2.3

[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]

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.
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?

HELENA

Wherefore was I to this keen mockery born?
When at your hands did I deserve this scorn?
Good troth, you do me wrong, good sooth, you do,
In such disdainful manner me to woo.
O, that a lady, of one man refused,
Should of another therefore be abused!

[Exit]

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,
And, all my powers, address your love and might
To honour Helen and to be her knight!

[Exit]

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:
Methought a serpent eat my heart away,
And you sat smiling at his cruel prey.
Lysander! what, removed? Lysander! lord!
What, out of hearing? gone? no sound, no word?
Alack, where are you speak, an if you hear;
Speak, of all loves! I swoon almost with fear.
No? then I well perceive you all not nigh
Either death or you I'll find immediately.

[Exit]

3.1.1 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 marvelous convenient place
for our rehearsal. This green plot shall be our
stage, this hawthorn-brake our tiring-house;
and we will do it in action as we will do it before the duke.

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.

PUCK [enters, unseen by others]

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 savors sweet, —

QUINCE

Odours, odours.

BOTTOM

— odours savors 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]

PUCK

A stranger Pyramus than e'er played here. [Exit]

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,
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!

PUCK

I'll follow you, I'll lead you about around,
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.

BOTTOM

Why do they run away? this is a knavery of them to make me afeard.

SNOUT

Bottom, thou art changed! What do I see on thee?

QUINCE

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

[Exit all but BOTTOM]

[Enter Puck leading Oberon, who watch the following scene]

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.

[Sings]

The woosel cock so black of hue,
With orange-tawny bill,

TITANIA [Awaking]

What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?

BOTTOM [Sings]

The throstle with his note so true,
The wren with little quill, —

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.

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,
And they shall fetch thee jewels from the deep,
And sing while thou on pressed flowers dost sleep;

And I will purge thy mortal grossness so
That thou shalt like an airy spirit go.
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;
Hop in his walks and gambol in his eyes;
Feed him with apricocks and dewberries,
With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries;
The honey-bags steal from the humble-bees,
Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies.

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

I shall desire you of more acquaintance, 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. Good
Master Peaseblossom, I shall desire you of more
acquaintance too. 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. I
desire your more acquaintance, good Master
Mustardseed.

TITANIA

Come, wait upon him; lead him to my bower.
Tie up my love's tongue; bring him silently.

3.2.1

[OBERON and PUCK come forward]

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: would he have stolen away
From sleeping Hermia? I'll believe as soon
This whole earth may be bored and that the moon
May through the centre creep and so displease
Her brother's noontide with Antipodes.
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

What's this to my Lysander? where is he?
Ah, good Demetrius, wilt thou give him me?

DEMETRIUS

I had rather give his carcass to my hounds.

HERMIA

Out, dog! out, cur! thou drivest me past the bounds
Of maiden's patience. Hast thou slain him, then?
Henceforth be never number'd among men!

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.
And from thy hated presence part I so:
See me no more, whether he be dead or no. [Exit]

DEMETRIUS

There is no following her in this fierce vein:
Here therefore for a while I will remain. [Lies down and sleeps]

OBERON

What hast thou done? thou hast mistaken quite
And laid the love-juice on some true-love's sight:
About the wood go swifter than the wind,
And Helena of Athens look thou find:
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]

OBERON [anoints Demetrius' eyes]

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.

3.2.2

[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]

Helena, goddess, nymph, perfect, divine!
To what, my love, shall I compare thine eyne?
Crystal is muddy. O, how ripe in show
Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow!

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;
To vow, and swear, and superpraise my parts,
When I am sure you hate me with your hearts.

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.
My heart to her but as guest-wise sojourn'd,
And now to Helen is it home return'd,

There to remain.

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 [enters]

Dark night, that from the eye his function takes,
The ear more quick of apprehension makes;
Wherein it doth impair the seeing sense,
It pays the hearing double recompense.
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 yon fiery oes 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?

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,
Precious, celestial? Wherefore speaks he this
To her he hates? and wherefore doth Lysander
Deny your love, so rich within his soul,
And tender me, forsooth, affection,
But by your setting on, by your consent?

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.
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:
Helen, I love thee; by my life, I do.

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

Hang off, thou cat, thou burr! vile thing, let loose,
Or I will shake thee from me like a serpent!
Demetrius, I will keep my word with thee.

DEMETRIUS

I would I had your bond, 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?
Since night you loved me; yet since night you left
me. 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

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;
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;
But he hath chid me hence and threaten'd me

To strike me, spurn me, nay, to kill me too:
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 jowl.

[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]

HERMIA

I am amaz'd, and know not what to say. [Exit]

3.2.3

OBERON

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

PUCK

Believe me, king of shadows, I mistook.

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.

Till o'er their brows death-counterfeiting sleep
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.
But, notwithstanding, haste; make no delay:
We may effect this business yet ere day. [Exit]

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.

LYSANDER [Enters]

Where art thou, proud Demetrius? speak thou now.

PUCK [as Demetrius]

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

LYSANDER

I will be with thee straight.

PUCK [as Demetrius]

Follow me, then, to plainer ground.

[Exit LYSANDER, as following the voice]

DEMETRIUS [enters]

Lysander! speak again:
Thou runaway, thou coward, art thou fled?
Speak! In some bush? Where dost thou hide thy head?

PUCK [as Lysander]

Come, recreant; come, thou child;
I'll whip thee with a rod.

DEMETRIUS

Yea, art thou there?

PUCK [as Lysander]

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

LYSANDER [Enters]

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;
That fallen am I in dark uneven way,
And here will rest me. [Lies down]
Come, thou gentle day! [Sleeps]

[Re-enter PUCK and DEMETRIUS]

DEMETRIUS

Thou runn'st before me, shifting every place,
And darest not stand, nor look me in the face.
Where art thou now?

PUCK [as Lysander]

Come hither: I am here.

DEMETRIUS

Nay, then, thou mock'st me. Thou shalt buy this dear,
If ever I thy face by daylight see:
Now, go thy way. Faintness constraineth me
To measure out my length on this cold bed.
By day's approach look to be visited. [Lies down and sleeps]

HELENA [enters]

O weary night, long and tedious night,
Abate thy hour! Shine comforts from the east,
That I may back to Athens by daylight,
From these that my poor company detest:

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.
Here she comes, curst and sad:
Cupid is a knavish lad,
Thus to make poor females mad.

HERMIA [enters]

Never so weary, never so in woe,
Bedabbled with the dew and torn with briers,
I can no further crawl, no further go;
My legs can keep no pace with my desires.
Here will I rest me till the break of day.
Heavens shield Lysander, if they mean a fray!
[Lies down and sleeps]

PUCK

On the ground
Sleep sound:
I'll apply
To your eye,
Gentle lover, remedy.
[Squeezes the juice on LYSANDER's eyes]
When thou wakest,
Thou takest
True delight
In the sight
Of thy former lady's eye:
And the country proverb known,
That every man should take his own,
In your waking shall be shown:
Jack shall have Jill;
Nought shall go ill;
The man shall have his mare again, and all shall be well. [Exit]

4.1.1 Titania's bower. Oberon, watching, unseen

TITANIA

Come, sit thee down upon this flowery bed,

While I thy amiable cheeks do coy,
And stick musk-roses in thy sleek smooth head,
And kiss thy fair large ears, my gentle joy.

BOTTOM

Where's Peaseblossom?

PEASEBLOSSOM

Ready.

BOTTOM

Scratch my head Peaseblossom. Where's Mounsieur Cobweb?

COBWEB

Ready.

BOTTOM

Mounsieur Cobweb, good mounsieur, get you your
weapons in your hand, and kill me a red-hipped
humble-bee on the top of a thistle; and, good
mounsieur, bring me the honey-bag. Do not fret
yourself too much in the action, mounsieur; and,
good mounsieur, have a care the honey-bag break not;
I would be loath to have you overflown with a
honey-bag, signior. Where's Mounsieur Mustardseed?

MUSTARDSEED

Ready. What's your Will?

BOTTOM

Nothing, good mounsieur, but to help Cavalery Cobweb
to scratch. I must to the barber's, monsieur; for
methinks I am marvellous hairy about the face; and I
am such a tender ass, if my hair do but tickle me,
I must scratch.

TITANIA

O say, sweet love, what thou desirest to eat.
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. [Fairies exit]
So doth the woodbine the sweet honeysuckle
Gently entwist; the female ivy so
Enrings the barky fingers of the elm.
O, how I love thee! how I dote on thee! [They sleep]

[Enter PUCK]

OBERON [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;
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.
Titania, music call; and strike more dead
Than common sleep of all these five the sense.

TITANIA

Music, ho! music, such as charmeth sleep!

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.

[Exit OBERON, TITANIA, and PUCK]

4.1.2

[Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, and EGEUS]

THESEUS

What nymphs are these?

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

But speak, Egeus; is not this the day
That Hermia should give answer of her choice?

EGEUS

It is, my lord.

THESEUS

Go, bid the huntsmen wake them with their horns.

*Horns and shout within. LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS, HELENA, and HERMIA
wake and start up*

Good morrow, friends. Saint Valentine is past:
Begin these wood-birds but to couple now?
I pray you all, stand up.
I know you two are rival enemies:
How comes this gentle concord in the world?
That hatred is so far from jealousy,
To sleep by hate, and fear no enmity?

LYSANDER

My lord, I shall reply amazedly,

Half sleep, half waking: but as yet, I swear,
I cannot truly say how I came here;
But, as I think,--for truly would I speak,
And now do I bethink me, so it is,--
I came with Hermia hither: our intent
Was to be gone from Athens, where we might,
Without the peril of the Athenian law.

EGEUS

Enough, enough, my lord; you have enough:
I beg the law, the law upon his head.
They would have stolen away; they would, Demetrius,
Thereby to have defeated you and me,
Of my consent that she should be your wife.

DEMETRIUS

My lord, fair Helen told me of their stealth,
Of this their purpose hither to this wood;
And I in fury hither follow'd them,
Fair Helena in fancy following me.
But, my good lord, I wot not by what power,--
But by some power it is,--my love to Hermia,
Melted as the snow, seems to me now
As the remembrance of an idle gaud
Which in my childhood I did dote upon;
And all the faith, the virtue of my heart,
The object and the pleasure of mine eye,
Is only Helena. To her, my lord,
Was I betroth'd ere I saw Hermia:
But, like in sickness, did I loathe this food;
But, as in health, come to my natural taste,
Now I do wish it, love it, long for it,
And will for evermore be true to it.

THESEUS

Egeus, I will overbear your will;
For in the temple by and by with us
These couples shall eternally be knit:
Away with us to Athens; three and three,
We'll hold a feast in great solemnity.
Come, Hippolyta.

[Exeunt THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, and EGEUS]

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.

[Exit Lovers]

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]

4.2.1 QUINCE'S house.

[Enter QUINCE, FLUTE, SNOUT, and STARVELING, then SNUG]

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?

FLUTE

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

QUINCE

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

SNUG

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

FLUTE

O sweet bully Bottom!

BOTTOM [enters]

Where are these lads? where are these hearts?

QUINCE

Bottom! most courageous day! 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. All that I will tell you is, that the duke hath dined. Get your apparel together, meet presently at the palace; every man look o'er his part; for the short and the long is, our

play is preferred. In any case, let Thisby have clean linen; and let not him that plays the lion pair his nails, for they shall hang out for the lion's claws. 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!

[Exit all]

5.1.1 The palace of THESEUS.

Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, and PHILOSTRATE, followed by LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS, HERMIA, and HELENA

THESEUS

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?
Call Philostrate.

PHILOSTRATE

Here, mighty Theseus.

THESEUS

Say, what abridgement have you for this evening?

PHILOSTRATE

There is a brief how many sports are ripe. [Gives a paper]

THESEUS

[Reads aloud] 'The battle with the Centaurs, to be sung
By an Athenian eunuch to the harp.'

We'll none of that.

[Reads]

'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.

[Reads]

'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

And we will hear it.

PHILOSTRATE

No, my noble lord;
It is not for you: I have heard it over,
And it is nothing, nothing in the world.

THESEUS

I will hear that play. Go, bring them in.

[Exit PHILOSTRATE]

HIPPOLYTA

I love not to see wretchedness o'er charged.

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.

[Enter PHILOSTRATE]

PHILOSTRATE

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

THESEUS

Let him approach.

5.1.2

[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,

[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 beauteous lady Thisby 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 Thisby, 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 Thisby's mantle slain:
Whereat, with blade, with bloody blameful blade,
He bravely broach'd his boiling bloody breast;
And Thisby, 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.

[Exit Prologue, Pyramus, 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]

THESEUS

Pyramus draws near the wall: silence!

PYRAMUS

O grim-look'd night! 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, wall, sweet, lovely wall,
That stand'st between her father's ground and mine!
Thou wall, wall, 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.
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.

THISBE [enters]

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 if I can hear my Thisby's face. Thisby!

THISBE

My love thou art, my love I think.

PYRAMUS

Think what thou wilt, I am thy lover's grace.
And, like Limander, am I trusty still.

THISBE

And I like Helen, till the Fates me kill.

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]

HIPPOLYTA

This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard.

THESEUS

Here come two noble beasts in, a man and a lion.

[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, and of a good conscience.

DEMETRIUS

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

THESEUS

Let us listen to the moon.

MOONSHINE

This lanthorn doth the horned moon present; —

DEMETRIUS

He should have worn the horns on his head.

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 awary 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.

DEMETRIUS

Why, all these should be in the lanthorn; for all
these are in the moon. But, silence! here comes Thisbe.

THISBE [enters]

This is old Ninny's tomb. Where is my love?
[Lion roars. Thisbe runs off, leaving her scarf]

DEMETRIUS

Well roared, Lion.

THESEUS

Well run, Thisbe.

HIPPOLYTA

Well shone, Moon.

[The Lion shakes Thisbe's mantle, and exit]

THESEUS

Well moused, Lion.

LYSANDER

And so the lion vanished.

DEMETRIUS

And then came Pyramus.

PYRAMUS [enters]

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?

dainty duck! dear!

Thy mantle good,
What, stain'd with blood!

Approach, ye Furies fell!

Fates, come, come,

Cut thread and thrum;

Quail, crush, conclude, and quell!

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.

HIPPOLYTA

How chance Moonshine is gone before Thisbe comes

THESEUS

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

THISBE [enters]

Asleep, my love?
What, dead, my dove?
O Pyramus, arise!
Speak, speak. Quite dumb?
Dead, dead? A tomb
Must cover thy sweet eyes.
These lily lips,
This cherry nose,
These yellow cowslip cheeks,
Are gone, are gone:
Lovers, make moan:
His eyes were green as leeks.
Sisters Three,
Come, come to me,
With hands as pale as milk;

Lay them in gore,
Since you have shore
With shears his thread of silk.
Tongue, not a word:
Come, trusty sword;
Come, blade, my breast imbrue:
[Stabs herself]
And, farewell, friends;
Thus Thisby ends:
Adieu, adieu, adieu.
[Dies. Bell begins tolling twelve.]

THESEUS

Moonshine and Lion are left to bury the dead.

DEMETRIUS

Ay, and Wall too.

BOTTOM [Starting up]

No I assure you; the wall is down that
parted their fathers. Will it please you to see the
epilogue?

THESEUS

No epilogue, I pray you; for your play needs no
excuse.

[Court applauds. Players bow and leave]

The iron tongue of midnight hath told twelve:
Lovers, to bed; 'tis almost fairy time.

[Exit THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA and LOVERS]

5.2.3

Enter OBERON, PUCK, TITANIA and fairies

OBERON

Now, until the break of day,
Through this house each fairy stray.
To the best bride-bed will we,
Which by us shall blessed be;
And the issue there create

Ever shall be fortunate.
So shall all the couples three
Ever true in loving be;
With this field-dew consecrate,
Every fairy take his gait;
And each several chamber bless,
Through this palace, with sweet peace.
And the owner of it blest
Ever shall in safety rest.
Trip away; make no stay;
Meet me all by break of day.day.

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.

[Fin]