

## ACT I

### SCENE I. 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!

#### 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 interchanged love-tokens  
with my child:  
Thou hast by moonlight at her window  
sung, 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, according to our law  
Immediately provided in that case.

#### THESEUS

What say you, Hermia? be advised fair  
maid:  
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;  
Know of your youth, examine well your  
blood,  
Whether, if you yield not to your father's  
choice, You can endure the livery of a  
nun, To live a barren sister all your life,  
But earthlier happy is the rose distill'd,  
Than that which withering on the virgin  
thorn  
Grows, lives and dies in single  
blessedness.

**HERMIA**

So will I grow, so live, so die, my lord,  
Ere I will my virgin patent up  
Unto his lordship, whose unwished yoke  
My soul consents not to give sovereignty.

**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, as he would.

**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.  
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,  
If not with vantage, as Demetrius';  
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,  
And with Demetrius thought to have  
spoke thereof;  
But, 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--  
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?

**HERMIA**

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

**LYSANDER**

Ay me! for aught that I could ever read,  
The course of true love never did run smooth;

**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.  
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;  
And she respects me as her only son.  
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,  
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,  
Were the world mine, Demetrius being bated,  
The rest I'd give to be to you translated.  
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.  
Before the time I did Lysander see,  
Seem'd Athens as a paradise to me:  
O, then, what graces in my love do dwell,  
That he hath turn'd a heaven unto a hell!

**LYSANDER**

Helen, to you our minds we will unfold:  
To-morrow night,  
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 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:  
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.  
As waggish boys in game themselves forswear,  
So the boy Love is perjured everywhere:  
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*

**SCENE II. Athens. QUINCE'S house.**

*Enter QUINCE, SNUG, BOTTOM,  
FLUTE, SNOUT, 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, 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”

**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.

**BOTTOM**

I grant you, friends, if that you should fright the ladies out of their wits, they would have no more discretion but to hang us: 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 con 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.

*Exeunt*

**ACT II**

**SCENE I. A wood near Athens.**

*Enter, from opposite sides,  
PEASEBLOSSOM, and PUCK*

**PUCK**

How now, spirit! whither wander you?

**PEASEBLOSSOM**

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.  
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.

**PEASEBLOSSOM**

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,  
But, room, fairy! here comes Oberon.

**PEASEBLOSSOM**

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: 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?

**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,  
But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd  
our sport.  
Therefore the moon, the governess of  
floods,  
Pale in her anger, washes all the air,  
That rheumatic diseases do abound:  
And thorough this distemperature we see  
The seasons alter: hoary-headed frosts  
Far in the fresh lap of the crimson rose,  
And on old Hiems' thin and icy crown  
An odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds  
Is, as in mockery, set: 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 votaress 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,  
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.

**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 her train*

**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 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*

**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.

*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;  
And here am I, and wode within this  
wood,  
Because I cannot meet my Hermia.  
Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no  
more.

**HELENA**

You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant;  
But yet you draw not iron, for my heart  
Is true as steel: leave you your power to  
draw,  
And I shall have no power to follow you.

**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; 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,  
Therefore I think I am not in the night;  
Nor doth this wood lack worlds of  
company,  
For you in my respect are all the world:  
Then how can it be said I am alone,  
When all the world is here to look on me?

**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.  
Run when you will, the story shall be  
changed:  
Apollo flies, and Daphne holds the chase;  
The dove pursues the griffin; the mild  
hind makes speed to catch the tiger;  
bootless speed,  
When cowardice pursues and valour flies.

**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*

**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 there the snake throws her enamell'd  
skin,  
Weed wide enough to wrap a fairy in:  
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.

*Exeunt*

**SCENE II. Another part of the wood.**

*Enter TITANIA, with her train*

**TITANIA**

Come, now a roundel and a fairy song;  
The clamorous owl that nightly hoots and  
wonders  
At our quaint spirits. Sing me now asleep;  
Then to your offices and let me rest.

*The Fairies sing*

*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, & c.*

**MUSTARDSEED**

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

*Exeunt 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 that shall appear  
When thou wakest, it is thy dear:  
Wake when some vile thing is near.

*Exit*

*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*

*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.  
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:  
Therefore no marvel though Demetrius  
Do, as a monster fly my presence thus.  
What wicked and dissembling glass of  
mine  
Made me compare with Hermia's sphery  
eyne?  
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?  
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?

*Exit*

**LYSANDER**

She sees not Hermia. Hermia, sleep thou  
there:  
And never mayst thou come Lysander  
near!

*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 pray.  
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*

### ACT III

**SCENE I. The wood. TITANIA lying  
asleep.**

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

**BOTTOM**

Are we all met?

**QUINCE**

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?

**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 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 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 loam, 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 everyone according to his cue.

*Enter PUCK behind*

**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*

**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, 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,  
SNOUT, 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*

**BOTTOM**

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

*Re-enter SNOUT*

**SNOUT**

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

**BOTTOM**

What do you see? you see an asshead of  
your own, do you?

*Exit SNOUT*

*Re-enter QUINCE*

**QUINCE**

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

*Exit*

**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 ousel cock so black of hue,  
With orange-tawny bill,  
The throstle with his note so true,  
The wren with little quill,--

**TITANIA**

[Awaking] What angel wakes me from  
my flowery bed?

**BOTTOM**

[Sings]

The finch, the sparrow and the lark,  
The plain-song cuckoo gray,  
Whose note full many a man doth mark,  
And dares not answer nay;--

for, indeed, who would set his wit to so  
foolish a bird? who would give a bird the  
lie, though he cry 'cuckoo' never so?

**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 gleek 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,  
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 apricots and dewberries,  
With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries;

The honey-bags steal from the humble-bees,

And for night-tapers crop their waxen thighs

And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes,

To have my love to bed and to arise;

And pluck the wings from Painted butterflies to fan the moonbeams from his sleeping eyes:

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, 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. 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*

**SCENE II. 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 nole 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,  
Sever themselves and madly sweep the sky,  
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.

**DEMETRIUS**

So should the murder'd look, and so should I, pierced through the heart with your stern cruelty:  
Yet you, the murderer, look as bright, as clear, as yonder Venus in her glimmering sphere.

**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 HERMIA*

**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:  
Of thy misprision must perforce ensue  
Some true love turn'd and not a false  
turn'd true.

**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*

**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.

*Enter LYSANDER and HELENA*

**LYSANDER**  
Why should you think that I should woo  
in scorn?

**HELENA**  
You do advance your cunning more and  
more.

**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! To what, my love, shall I  
compare thine eyne?  
Crystal is muddy. O, how ripe in show  
Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting  
grow! That pure congealed white, high  
Taurus snow, fann'd with the eastern  
wind, turns to a crow when thou hold'st up  
thy hand: O, let me kiss  
This princess of pure white, this seal of  
bliss!

**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:  
A trim exploit, a manly enterprise,  
To conjure tears up in a poor maid's eyes.

**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**

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 you 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?  
Is all the counsel that we two have shared,  
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, 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?

**HERNIA**

I understand not what you mean by this.

**HELENA**

Ay, do, persever, 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, you Ethiope!

**DEMETRIUS**

No, no; he'll seem to break loose; take on  
as you would follow. But yet come not:  
you are a tame man, go!

**LYSANDER**

Hang off, thou cat, thou burr! vile thing,  
let loose, or I will shake thee from me like  
a serpent!

**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; 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 amazed, and know not what to say.

*Exit*

**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;  
And so far am I glad it so did sort  
As this their jangling I esteem a sport.

**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.

**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.

**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*

**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.

**PUCK**

Follow me, then, to plainer ground.

*Exit LYSANDER, as following the voice*

*Re-enter DEMETRIUS*

**DEMETRIUS**

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

**PUCK**

Thou coward, art thou bragging to the  
stars, telling the bushes that thou look'st  
for wars, and wilt not come? Come,  
recreant; come, thou child;  
I'll whip thee with a rod: he is defiled  
That draws a sword on thee.

**DEMETRIUS**

Yea, art thou there?

**PUCK**

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

*Exeunt*

*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;  
That fallen am I in dark uneven way,  
And here will rest me.

*Lies down*

Come, thou gentle day!  
For if but once thou show me thy grey  
light, I'll find Demetrius and revenge this  
spite.

*Sleeps*

*Re-enter PUCK and DEMETRIUS*

**PUCK**

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

**DEMETRIUS**

Abide me, if thou darest; for well I wot  
Thou runn'st before me, shifting every  
place, and darest not stand, nor look me in  
the face.  
Where art thou now?

**PUCK**

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*

*Re-enter HELENA*

**HELENA**

O weary night, O 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.

*Re-enter HERMIA*

**HERMIA**

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.

*Squeezing 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*

## ACT IV

**SCENE I. The same. LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS, HELENA, and HERMIA**

lying asleep.

*Enter TITANIA and BOTTOM;  
PEASEBLOSSOM, COBWEB, MOTH,  
MUSTARDSEED, and other Fairies  
attending; OBERON behind 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.

**BOTTOM**

Give me your neaf [hand], Mounsieur Mustardseed. Pray you, leave your courtesy, good mounsieur.

**MUSTARDSEED**

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**

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

**BOTTOM**

I have a reasonable good ear in music. Let's have the tongs and the bones.

**TITANIA**

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

**BOTTOM**

Truly, a peck of provender: I could munch your good dry oats. Methinks I have a

great desire to a bottle [bale] 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*

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:  
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:  
Diane'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.

**PUCK**

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

**OBERON**

Come, my queen, take hands with me,  
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*

*Horns winded within*

*Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, EGEUS,  
 and train*

**THESEUS**

Go, one of you, find out the forester;  
 For now our observation is perform'd;  
 And since we have the vaward [vanguard]  
 of the day, my love shall hear the music of  
 my hounds. Uncouple in the western  
 valley; let them go: dispatch, I say, and  
 find the forester.

*Exit an Attendant*

We will, fair queen, up to the mountain's  
 top, And mark the musical confusion  
 Of hounds and echo in conjunction.

**HIPPOLYTA**

I was with Hercules and Cadmus once,  
 When in a wood of Crete they bay'd the  
 bear with hounds of Sparta: never did I  
 hear such gallant chiding: for, besides the  
 groves, the skies, the fountains, every  
 region near seem'd all one mutual cry: I  
 never heard so musical a discord, such  
 sweet thunder.

**THESEUS**

My hounds are bred out of the Spartan  
 kind, slow in pursuit, but match'd in  
 mouth like bells, each under each. A cry  
 more tuneable was never holla'd to, nor  
 cheer'd with horn, in Crete, in Sparta, nor  
 in Thessaly: Judge when you hear. But,  
 soft! 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**

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

**LYSANDER**

Pardon, my lord.

**THESEUS**

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.

You of your wife and me of my consent,  
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**

Fair lovers, you are fortunately met:  
Of this discourse we more will hear anon.  
Egeus, I will overbear your will;  
For in the temple by and by with us  
These couples shall eternally be knit:  
And, for the morning now is something

worn, our purposed hunting shall be set  
aside. Away with us to Athens; three and  
three, we'll hold a feast in great solemnity.  
Come, Hippolyta.

*Exeunt THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, EGEUS,  
and train*

**DEMETRIUS**

These things seem small and  
undistinguishable, like far off mountains  
turned in to clouds.

**HERMIA**

Methinks I see these things with parted  
eye, when everything seems double.

**HELENA**

So methinks:

And I have found Demetrius like a jewel,  
Mine own, and not mine own.

**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*

**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: peradventure, to make it the more  
gracious, I shall sing it at her death.

*Exit*

**SCENE II. Athens. QUINCE'S house.**

*Enter QUINCE, FLUTE, SNOUT, 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: 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 everything,  
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; meet presently at the  
palace; every man look o'er his part; for

the short and the long is, our play is preferred; and I do not doubt but to hear them say, it is a sweet comedy. No more words: away! go, away!

*Exeunt*

## ACT V

### **SCENE I. Athens. The palace of THESEUS.**

*Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, PHILOSTRATE, Lords and Attendants*

#### **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.

#### **HIPPOLYTA**

But all the story of the night told over, And all their minds transfigured so together, more witnesseth than fancy's images and grows to something of great constancy; but, howsoever, strange and admirable.

#### **THESEUS**

Here come the lovers, full of joy and mirth.

*Enter LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS, HERMIA, and HELENA*

Joy, gentle friends! joy and fresh days of love accompany your hearts!

#### **LYSANDER**

More than to us wait in your royal walks, your board, your bed!

#### **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? What revels are in hand? Is there no play, To ease the anguish of a torturing hour? Call Philostrate.

#### **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.

*Giving a paper*

#### **THESEUS**

[Reads] 'The battle with the Centaurs, to be sung by an Athenian eunuch to the harp.' We'll none of that: that have I told my love, in glory of my kinsman Hercules.

*Reads*



'The riot of the tipsy Bacchanals,  
Tearing the Thracian singer in their rage.'  
That is an old device.

*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;  
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.

*Re-enter PHILOSTRATE*

**PHILOSTRATE**

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

**THESEUS**

Let him approach.

*Flourish of trumpets*

*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 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 is 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.

*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*

**THESEUS**

Pyramus draws near the wall: silence!

**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**

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**

Not Shafalus to Procrus was so true.

**Thisbe**

As Shafalus to Procrus, I to you.

**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*

**THESEUS**

Now is the mural down between the two  
neighbours.

**DEMETRIUS**

No remedy, my lord, when walls are so  
wilful to hear without warning.

**HIPPOLYTA**

This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard.

**THESEUS**

The best in this kind are but shadows; and  
the worst are no worse, if imagination  
amend them.

**HIPPOLYTA**

It must be your imagination then, and not  
theirs.

**THESEUS**

If we imagine no worse of them than they  
of themselves, they may pass for excellent  
men. 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, 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?

**DEMETRIUS**

He dares not come there for the candle;  
for, you see, it is already in snuff.

**HIPPOLYTA**

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

**THESEUS**

It appears, by his small light of discretion,  
that he is in the wane; but yet, in courtesy,  
in all reason, we must stay the time.

**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.

*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.

**LYSANDER**

And so the lion vanished.

**DEMETRIUS**

And then came Pyramus.

*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*

**DEMETRIUS**

No die, but an ace, for him; for he is but one.

**LYSANDER**

Less than an ace, man; for he is dead; he is nothing.

**THESEUS**

With the help of a surgeon he might yet recover, and prove an ass.

**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*

**HIPPOLYTA**

Methinks she should not use a long one for such a Pyramus: I hope she will be brief.

**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.  
O 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*

**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.

The iron tongue of midnight hath told  
twelve: Lovers, to bed; 'tis almost fairy  
time.  
I fear we shall out-sleep the coming morn  
As much as we this night have  
overwatch'd.

This palpable-gross play hath well  
beguiled the heavy gait of night. Sweet  
friends, to bed. A fortnight hold we this  
solemnity, in nightly revels and new  
jollity.

*Exeunt*

*Enter PUCK*

**PUCK**

Now the hungry lion roars,  
And the wolf howls the moon;  
Whilst the heavy ploughman snores,  
All with weary task fordone.  
Now it is the time of night  
That the graves all gaping wide,  
Every one lets forth his sprite,  
In the church-way paths to glide:  
And we fairies, that do run  
By the triple Hecate's team,  
From the presence of the sun,  
Following darkness like a dream,  
Now are frolic: not a mouse  
Shall disturb this hallow'd house:  
I am sent with broom before,  
To sweep the dust behind the door.

*Enter OBERON and TITANIA with their  
train*

**OBERON**

Through the house give gathering light,  
By the dead and drowsy fire:  
Every elf and fairy sprite  
Hop as light as bird from brier;  
And this ditty, after me,  
Sing, and dance it trippingly.

**TITANIA**

First, rehearse your song by rote  
To each word a warbling note:  
Hand in hand, with fairy grace,  
Will we sing, and bless this place.

*Song and dance*

**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;  
And the blots of Nature's hand  
Shall not in their issue stand;  
Never mole, hare lip, nor scar,  
Nor mark prodigious, such as are  
Despised in nativity,  
Shall upon their children 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.

*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.