

Match: Lit Presents  
The BARDcore Production of

# A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

By William Shakespeare  
Cut and Directed by Victoria M. Fragnito

1. Theseus/Titania
2. Hippolyta/Oberon
3. Egeus/Quince
4. Hermia/Fairies
5. Lysander/Snout
6. Helena/Snug
7. Demetrius/Flute
8. Starveling/Fairies
9. Bottom
10. Puck/Philostrate

## Opening-

Philostrate enters on stage and shouts EGEUS! Egeus enters. Philostrate simply holds out their hand but Egeus reaches in their pockets to indicate they do not have anything to give. Philostrate points to their watch, then gives them *the eye*, and exits. Egeus ponders on stage, unsure of what to do when he hears joyous celebrations. The lovers are by the bar all having fun. The bartender hands them the bill and Demetrius takes care of it, while the other lovers rib him lovingly for having a lot of money. Egeus has an idea and exits. The lovers exit to the back while Demetrius heads up to the stage and falls asleep. Egeus sneaks back on with Love in Idleness in hand and shakes it over Demetrius. Egeus exits, possibly doing an evil laugh or twisting an invisible mustache. Who knows? All exit.

## ACT 1

### Scene 1. Athens. The palace of THESEUS

*Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, and PHILOSTRATE*

#### THESEUS

Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour  
Draw on apace; four happy days bring in  
Another moon: but, O, me thinks, how slow  
This old moon wanes!

#### HIPPOLYTA

Four days will quickly steep themselves in night;  
Four nights will quickly dream away the time:

#### 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 one 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 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

#### THESEUS

What say you, Hermia?

Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

**HERMIA**

So is Lysander.

**THESEUS**

In themselves, they are;  
But in this kind, wanting your parent's voice,  
The other must be held the worthier.

**HERMIA**

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

**THESEUS**

Rather your eyes must with their 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;  
Know of your youth, examine well your blood,  
Whether, if you yield not to your parent'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  
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,

Upon that day either prepare to die  
For disobedience to your parents will,  
Or else to wed Demetrius, as he would;  
Or on Diana's altar to protest  
For aye austerity and single life.

**DEMETRIUS**

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

**LYSANDER**

You have her parent's love, Demetrius;  
Let me have Hermia's: do you marry them?

**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 beautiful Hermia:  
Why should not I then prosecute my right?  
Demetrius, I'll avouch it to his head,  
Made love to Nedar's child, Helena,  
And won their soul; and they, sweet youth, 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. 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--  
Which by no means we may extenuate--  
To death, or to a vow of single life.  
Come, my Hippolyta: what cheer, my love?  
Demetrius and Egeus, go along:

**EGEUS**

With duty and desire we follow you.

*Exeunt all but LYSANDER and HERMIA*

**LYSANDER**

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

**HERMIA**

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

**LYSANDER**

Ay me! for aught that I could ever read,  
Could ever hear by tale or history,  
The course of true love never did run smooth;  
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 child.  
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 family'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!  
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,  
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!

**LYSANDER**

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

*Exit LYSANDER and HERMIA*

**HELENA**

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

**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, one by one, according to the scrip.

**QUINCE**

Here is the scroll of everyone'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.  
This is Ercles' vein, a tyrant's vein; a lover is more condoling.

**QUINCE**

Francis Flute, the bellows-mender.

**FLUTE**

Here, Peter Quince.

**QUINCE**

Flute, you must take Thisby on you.

**FLUTE**

What is Thisby? a wandering knight?

**QUINCE**

It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

**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 royals, that they would shriek; and that were enough to hang us all.

**ALL**

That would hang us, every mother's son.

**BOTTOM**

I grant you, friends, if that you should fright the royals 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. I pray you, fail me not.

#### **BOTTOM**

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

### **ACT II**

#### **SCENE I. 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--

#### **PUCK**

--Oberon doth keep their revels here to-night:  
Take heed Titania come not within their sight;  
For Oberon is passing fell and wrath,  
Because that they as their attendant hath  
A lovely boy, stolen from an Indian king;  
Titania never had so sweet a changeling;

And jealous Oberon would have the child  
Knight of their train, to trace the forests wild;  
But Titania perforce withholds the loved boy,  
Crowns him with flowers and makes him all their  
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:  
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.  
I jest to Oberon and make them smile  
When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,  
Neighing in likeness of a filly foal:  
The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,  
Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me;  
Then slip I from her bum, down topples she,  
And 'tailor' cries, and falls into a cough;  
And then the whole quire hold their hips and  
laugh,  
And waxen in their mirth and neeze and swear  
A merrier hour was never wasted there.

But, room, fairy! here comes Oberon.

**Fairy**

And here my Titania. Would that they were gone!

*Enter, from one side, OBERON, with their train;  
from the other, TITANIA, with theirs*

**OBERON**

Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania.

**TITANIA**

What, jealous Oberon! Fairies, skip hence:

I have forsworn their bed and company.

**OBERON**

Tarry, rash wanton: am not I thy liege?

**TITANIA**

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

**OBERON**

How canst thou thus for shame, Titania,  
Glance at my credit with Hippolyta,  
Knowing I know thy love to Theseus?  
Didst thou not lead him through the glimmering  
night  
From Perigenia, whom he ravished?

And make him with fair AEgle break his faith,  
With Ariadne and Antiopa?

**TITANIA**

These are the forgeries of jealousy:  
And never, since the middle summer's spring,  
Met we on hill, in dale, forest or mead,  
By paved fountain or by rushy brook,  
Or in the beached margent of the sea,  
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:  
The human mortals want their winter here;  
No night is now with hymn or carol blest:  
Therefore the moon, the governess of floods,  
Pale in her anger, washes all the air,  
That rheumatic diseases do abound:  
And thorough this distemperature we see  
The seasons alter: hoary-headed frosts  
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 their 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.  
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 with their 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,  
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 any person madly dote  
Upon the next live creature that it sees.  
Fetch me this herb;

**PUCK**

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

**OBERON**

Having once this juice,  
I'll watch Titania when they are asleep,  
And drop the liquor of it in their eyes.  
The next thing then they waking look upon,  
Be it on lion, bear, or wolf, or bull,  
On meddling monkey, or on busy ape,  
They shall pursue it with the soul of love:  
And ere I take this charm from off their sight,  
As I can take it with another herb,  
I'll make them render up their 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; 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.

**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;

**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:

**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 soul:  
I should be wooed and was 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? 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 their eyes,  
And make them full of hateful fantasies.  
Take thou some of it, and seek through this grove:

A sweet Athenian youth is in love  
With a disdainful man: anoint his eyes;  
But do it when the next thing he espies  
May be the youth: thou shalt know the soul  
By the Athenian garments he hath on.  
Effect it with some care, that he may prove  
More fond on the youth than the youth upon their  
love:  
And look thou meet me ere the first cock crow.

**PUCK**

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

*Exeunt*

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

*Enter TITANIA, with their train*

**TITANIA**

Come, now a roundel and a fairy song;  
Sing me now asleep;  
Then to your offices and let me rest.

*The Fairies sing. TITANIA falls asleep, the fairies  
EXIT.*

*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,

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.  
Such separation as may well be said  
Becomes a virtuous youth and a maid,  
So far be distant; and, good night, sweet friend:  
Thy love ne'er alter till thy sweet life end!

**LYSANDER**

Amen, amen, to that fair prayer, say I;  
And then end life when I end loyalty!

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 youth;  
And here the youth, 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.  
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? Liege, 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 pidgeon for a dove?  
Things growing are not ripe until their season  
So I, being young, till now ripe not to reason;  
And touching now the point of human skill,  
Reason becomes the marshal to my will  
And leads me to your eyes, where I o'erlook  
Love's stories written in love's richest book.

**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 one,  
That I did never, no, nor never can,  
Deserve a sweet look from Demetrius' eye,  
But you must flout my insufficiency?  
Good troth, you do me wrong, good sooth, you do,  
In such disdainful manner me to woo.  
But fare you well: perforce I must confess  
I thought you soul of more true gentleness.  
O, that a person, of one youth refused,  
Should of another therefore be abused!

*Exit*

**LYSANDER**

They see not Hermia. Hermia, sleep thou there:  
And never mayst thou come Lysander near!  
And, all my powers, address your love and might

To honour Helen and to be his 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 pray.

Lysander! what, removed? Lysander! Liege!

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**

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

**BOTTOM**

Peter Quince,--

**QUINCE**

What sayest thou, bully Bottom?

**BOTTOM**

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

**SNOUT**

By'r lakin, a parlous fear.

**STARVELING**

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

**BOTTOM**

Not a whit: I have a device to make all well.

Write me a prologue; and let the prologue seem to say, we will do no harm with our swords, and that Pyramus is not killed indeed; and, for the more 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;

**SNOUT**

Will not the people be afeard of the lion?

**STARVELING**

I fear it, I promise you.

**SNOUT**

Therefore another prologue must tell he is not a lion.

**BOTTOM**

Nay, you must name his name,  
and he himself must speak  
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.  
Ay; one must come in with 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 HOLE 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 child, and rehearse your parts.  
Pyramus, you begin: when you have spoken your  
speech, enter into that brake: and so every one  
according to their 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,  
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,

friends! fly, friends! Help!

**BOTTOM**

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

**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?

**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?

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 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

*Enter FAIRIES*

**FAIRIES**

Ready. Where shall we go?

**TITANIA**

Be kind and courteous to this gentleman;

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

*Exeunt*

-----**ACT BREAK**  
1-----

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

*Enter OBERON*

**OBERON**

I wonder if Titania be awaked;  
Then, what it was that next came in their eye,  
Which they 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 Titania with a monster is in love.  
Near to their close and consecrated bower,  
While they were in their 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, 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 youth by his side:  
That, when he waked, of force they 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?

It cannot be but thou hast murder'd him;  
So should a murderer look, so dead, so grim.

**DEMETRIUS**

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

**HERMIA**

I pray thee, tell me then that they are 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 they 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:

Of thy misprision must perforce ensue  
Some true love turn'd and not a false turn'd true.  
About the wood go swifter than the wind,  
And Helena of Athens look thou find:  
By some illusion see thou bring them here:  
I'll charm his eyes against they 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 him shine as gloriously  
As the Venus of the sky.  
When thou wakest, if he be by,  
Beg of him for remedy.

*OBERON puts TOO MUCH of the flower on  
DEMETRIUS. Whoops. 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?  
Scorn and derision never come in tears:  
Look, when I vow, I weep;

**HELENA**

These vows are Hermia's:

**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!  
O, let me kiss this seal of bliss!

**HELENA**

O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent  
To set against me for your merriment:

Can you not hate me, as I know you do,  
But you must join in souls to mock me too?  
If you were adults, as adults you are in show,  
You would not use a gentle soul so;  
To vow, and swear, and superpraise my parts,  
When I am sure you hate me with your hearts.  
You both are rivals, and love Hermia;  
And now both rivals, to mock Helena:.

**LYSANDER**

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

**HELENA**

Never did mockers waste more idle breath.

**DEMETRIUS**

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

Look, where thy love comes; yonder is thy dear.

*Re-enter HERMIA*

**HERMIA**

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

**LYSANDER**

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

**HERMIA**

What love could press Lysander from my side?

**LYSANDER**

Lysander's love, that would not let them 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 siblings' 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 these in scorning your poor friend?  
It is not friendly.

**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 godlike, nymph, divine and rare,  
Precious, celestial? Wherefore speaks he this  
To them he hates? and wherefore doth Lysander  
Deny your love, so rich within their 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, persevere, counterfeit sad looks,  
Make mouths upon me when I turn my back;  
Wink each at other; hold the sweet jest up:  
This sport, well carried, shall be chronicled.  
If you have any pity, grace, or manners,  
You would not make me such an argument.  
But fare ye well: 'tis partly my own fault;  
Which death or absence soon shall remedy.

**LYSANDER**

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

**HELENA**

O excellent!

**HERMIA**

Sweet, do not scorn them 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:

**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 loon!

**DEMETRIUS**

No, no; they'll seem to break loose; take on as you  
would follow,  
But yet come not: you are too tame, 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,-- 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 them?

**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 they hath made compare  
Between our statures; they hath urged their  
height;  
And with their personage, their tall personage,  
Their height, forsooth, they hath prevail'd with  
them.  
And are you grown so high in their 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, friends,  
Let her not hurt me: I was never curst;  
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.  
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:

**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, 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.

**LYSANDER**

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

**DEMETRIUS**

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

*Exeunt LYSANDER and DEMETRIUS*

**HERMIA**

You, -- 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 youth  
By the Athenian garment they 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.  
And from each other look thou lead them thus,  
Till o'er their brows death-counterfeiting sleep  
With leaden legs and batty wings doth creep:  
Then crush this herb into their eyes;  
Whose liquor hath this virtuous property,  
When they next wake, all this derision  
Shall seem a dream and fruitless vision,  
Whiles I in this affair do thee employ,  
I'll to my love and beg their Indian boy;  
And then I will their 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.

*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

**DEMETRIUS**

Yea, art thou there?

**PUCK**

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

*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 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;  
Here she comes, curst and sad:  
Cupid is a knavish lad,  
Thus to make poor humans 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 and  
then DEMETRIUS's*

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:  
The man shall have his love again, and all shall be  
well.

*Exit*

**ACT IV**

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

*lying asleep. Enter TITANIA and BOTTOM; 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**

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  
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?  
Their dotage now I do begin to pity:  
For, meeting them of late behind the wood,  
Seeking sweet favours from this hateful fool,  
I did upbraid them and fall out with them;  
I then did ask of them their changeling child;  
Which straight they gave me, and their fairy sent  
To bear him to my bower in fairy land.  
And now I have the boy, I will undo  
This hateful imperfection of their 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 monarch.  
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 love.

**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!

**PUCK**

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

**OBERON**

Come, my love, 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 liege, attend, and mark:  
I do hear the morning lark.

**OBERON**

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

**TITANIA**

Come, my love, 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**

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

**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 their 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 them, 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,

**HERMIA**

Methinks I see these things with parted eye,  
When every thing 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*

----- **ACT BREAK 2** -----  
-----

**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 people more married:

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

**FLUTE**

O sweet bully Bottom! Thus hath he lost sixpence a day during his life; he could not have 'scaped sixpence a day: an the duke had not given him sixpence a day for playing Pyramus, I'll be hanged; he would have deserved it: sixpence a day in Pyramus, or nothing.

*Enter BOTTOM*

**BOTTOM**

Where are these lads? where are these hearts?

**QUINCE**

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

**BOTTOM**

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

**QUINCE**

Let us hear, sweet Bottom.

**BOTTOM**

Not a word of me. All that I will tell you is, 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!

*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. 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; and it was play'd  
When I from Thebes came last a conqueror.

*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 people that work in Athens here,  
Which never labour'd in their minds till now,  
And now have toil'd their unbreathed memories  
With this same play, against your nuptial.

**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;  
Unless you can find sport in their intents,  
Extremely stretch'd and conn'd with cruel pain,  
To do you service.

**THESEUS**

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

**PHILOSTRATE**

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

*Enter QUINCE for the Prologue*

**Prologue- QUINCE**

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.

**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 disorder'd. 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 HOLE, 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.  
*Exeunt Prologue, Thisbe, Lion, and Moonshine*

**THESEUS**

I wonder if the lion be to speak.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER**

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

**Wall- SNOUT**

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,  
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?

**AUDIENCE MEMBER**

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 HOLE, 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 HOLE,  
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**

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.

**HIPPOLYTA**

This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard.  
*Enter Lion and Moonshine*

**Lion**

You, people, 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.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER**

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

**Moonshine**

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

**Thisbe**

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

**Lion**

[Roaring] Oh--  
*Thisbe runs off*  
*The Lion shakes Thisbe's mantle, and exit*  
*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*

*Re-enter Thisbe*

**Thisbe**

Asleep, my love?

What, dead, my dove?

O Pyramus, arise!

Speak, speak. Quite dumb?

Dead, dead? A tomb

Must cover thy sweet eyes.

These My lips,

This cherry nose,

These yellow cowslip cheeks,

Are gone, are gone:

Lovers, make moan:

Tongue, not a word:

Come, trusty sword;

Come, blade, my breast imbrue:

*Stabs herself*

And, farewell, friends;

Thus Thisbe ends:

Adieu, adieu, adieu.

*Dies*

**BOTTOM**

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. and so it is, truly; and very notably  
discharged. The iron tongue of midnight hath told  
twelve:

Lovers, to bed; 'tis almost fairy time.

Sweet friends, to bed.

A fortnight hold we this solemnity,

In nightly revels and new jollity.

*Exeunt*

*Enter PUCK*

*Enter OBERON and TITANIA with their train*

**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;  
Through this palace, with sweet peace;  
And the owner of it blest  
Ever shall in safety rest.  
Trip away; make no stay;  
Meet us 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.

***END OF PLAY.***