

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

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William Shakespeare

1564-1616

EC

Edward Cannon, Publisher

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Persons Represented

Theseus	Duke of Athens.
Egeus	Father to Hermia.
Lysander	in love with Hermia.
Demetrius	in love with Hermia.
Philostrate	Master of the Revels to Theseus.
Quince	the Carpenter.
Snug	the Joiner.
Bottom	the Weaver.
Flute	the Bellows-mender.
Snout	the Tinker.
Starveling	the Tailor.
Hippolyta	Queen of the Amazons, betrothed to Theseus.
Hermia	daughter to Egeus, in love with Lysander.
Helena	in love with Demetrius.
Oberon	King of the Fairies.
Titania	Queen of the Fairies.
Puck, or Robin Goodfellow	a Fairy.
Peasblossom	Fairy.
Cobweb	Fairy.
Moth	Fairy.
Mustardseed	Fairy.

Pyramus, Thisbe, Wall, Moonshine, Lion
Characters in the Interlude performed by the Clowns.
Other Fairies attending their King and Queen.
Attendants on Theseus and Hippolyta.

SCENE: Athens, and a wood not far from it.

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!
- Thesus 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 interchang'd love-tokens with my child:
Thou hast by moonlight at her window sung,
With feigning voice, verses of feigning love;
And stol'n the impression of her fantasy
With bracelets of thy hair, rings, gawds, conceits,
Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweetmeats,—messengers
Of strong prevailment in unharden'd youth;—
With cunning hast thou filch'd my daughter's heart;
Turned 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.
- Thesus What say you, Hermia? be advis'd, fair maid:
To you your father should be as a god;
One that compos'd your beauties: yea, and one
To whom you are but as a form in wax,
By him imprinted, and within his power
To leave the figure, or disfigure it.
Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.
- Hermia So is Lysander.
- Thesus 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.
- Thesus 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.
- Thesus 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;
For aye to be shady cloister mew'd,
To live a barren sister all your life,
Chanting faint hymns to the cold, fruitless moon.
Thrice-blessed they that master so their blood
To undergo such maiden pilgrimage:
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 yield my virgin patent up
Unto his lordship, whose unwished yoke
My soul consents not to give sovereignty.
- Thesus 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;
Or on Diana's altar to protest
For aye austerity and single life.
- Demetrius Relent, sweet Hermia;—and, Lysander, yield
Thy crazed title to my certain right.
- Lysander You have her father's love, Demetrius;
Let me have Hermia's: do you marry him.

- Egeus Scornful Lysander! true, he hath my love;
 And what is mine my love shall render him;
 And she is mine; and all my right of her
 I do estate unto Demetrius.
- Lysander I am, my lord, as well deriv'd 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's;
 And, which is more than all these boasts can be,
 I am belov'd of beauteous Hermia:
 Why should not I then prosecute my right?
 Demetrius, I'll avouch it to his head,
 Made love to Nedar's daughter, Helena,
 And won her soul; and she, sweet lady, dotes,
 Devoutly dotes, dotes in idolatry,
 Upon this spotted and inconstant man.
- Theseus I must confess that I have heard so much,
 And with Demetrius thought to have spoke thereof;
 But, being over-full of self-affairs,
 My mind did lose it.—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;
 I must employ you in some business
 Against our nuptial, and confer with you
 Of something nearly that concerns yourselves.
- Egeus With duty and desire we follow you.
- [Exeunt Theseus, Hippolyta, Egeus, Demetrius, and Train.]
- 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 Ah me! for aught that I could ever read,
 Could ever hear by tale or history,

By the simplicity of Venus' doves,
 By that which knitteth souls and prospers loves,
 And by that fire which burn'd the Carthage queen,
 When the false Trojan under sail was seen,—
 By all the vows that ever men have broke,
 In number more than ever women spoke,—
 In that same place thou hast appointed me,
 Tomorrow 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,
 When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear.
 Sickness is catching: O, were favour so,
 Yours would I catch, fair Hermia, ere I go;
 My ear should catch your voice, my eye your eye,
 My tongue should catch your tongue's sweet melody.
 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.—

As waggish boys in game themselves forswear,
 So the boy Love is perjur'd 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 dissolv'd, and showers of oaths did melt.
 I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight;
 Then to the wood will he to-morrow night
 Pursue her; and for this intelligence
 If I have thanks, it is a dear expense:
 But herein mean I to enrich my pain,
 To have his sight thither and back again.

[Exit Helena.]

SCENE II

Scene: The Same. A Room in a Cottage.

[Enter Snug, Bottom, Flute, Snout, Quince, and Starveling.]

- Quince Is all our company here?
- Bottom You were best to call them generally, man by man,
 according to the scrip.
- Quince Here is the scroll of every man's name, which is thought
 fit, through all Athens, to play in our interlude before the
 duke and 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 gallantly 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.
- Flute Nay, faith, let not me 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, my lover dear; thy Thisby dear! and lady dear!'
- Quince No, no, you must play Pyramus; and, Flute, you Thisby.
- Bottom Well, proceed.
- Quince Robin Starveling, the tailor.
- Starveling Here, Peter Quince.

- Quince Robin Starveling, you must play Thisby's mother.—
Tom Snout, the tinker.
- Snout Here, Peter Quince.
- Quince You, Pyramus' father; myself, Thisby's father;—Snug, the joiner, you, the lion's part:—and, I hope, here is a play fitted.
- Snug Have you the lion's part written? pray you, if it be, give it me, for I am slow of study.
- Quince You may do it extempore, for it is nothing but roaring.
- Bottom Let me play the lion too: I will roar that I will do any man's heart good to hear me; I will roar that I will make the duke say 'Let him roar again, let him roar again.'
- Quince An you should do it too terribly, you would fright the duchess and the ladies, that they would shriek; and that were enough to hang us all.
- All That would hang us every mother's son.
- Bottom I grant you, friends, if 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. What beard were I best to play it in?
- Quince Why, what you will.
- Bottom I will discharge it in either your straw-colour beard, your orange-tawny beard, your purple-in-grain beard, or your French-crown-colour beard, your perfect yellow.
- Quince Some of your French crowns have no hair at all, and then you will play bare-faced.— But, 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 dogg'd with company, and our devices known. In the meantime I will draw a bill of properties, such as our play wants. I pray you, fail me not.

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

Quince At the duke's oak we meet.

Bottom Enough; hold, or cut bow-strings.

[Exeunt.]

ACT II

SCENE I

Scene: A wood near Athens.

[Enter a FAIRY at One door, and Puck at another.]

Puck How now, spirit! whither wander you?

Fairy

Over hill, over dale,
 Thorough bush, thorough brier,
Over park, over pale,
 Thorough flood, thorough fire,
I do wander everywhere,
Swifter than the moon's sphere;
And I serve the fairy queen,
To dew her orbs upon the green.
The cowslips tall her pensioners be:
In their gold coats spots you see;
Those be rubies, fairy favours,
In those freckles live their savours;

I must go seek some dew-drops here,
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.
Farewell, thou lob of spirits; I'll be gone:
Our queen and all her 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, stol'n from an Indian king;
 She never had so sweet a changeling:
 And jealous Oberon would have the child
 Knight of his train, to trace the forests wild:
 But she perforce withholds the loved boy,
 Crowns him with flowers, and makes him all her joy:
 And now they never meet in grove or green,
 By fountain clear, or spangled starlight sheen,
 But they do square; that all their elves for fear
 Creep into acorn cups, and hide them there.
- Fairy Either I mistake your shape and making quite,
 Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite
 Call'd Robin Goodfellow: are not you he
 That frights the maidens of the villagery;
 Skim milk, and sometimes labour in the quern,
 And bootless make the breathless housewife churn;
 And sometime make the drink to bear no barm;
 Misdread night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?
 Those that Hobgoblin call you, and sweet Puck,
 You do their work, and they shall have good luck:
 Are not you he?
- Puck Thou speak'st aright;
 I am that merry wanderer of the night.
 I jest to Oberon, and make him smile,
 When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,
 Neighing in likeness of a filly foal;
 And sometime lurk I in a gossip's bowl,
 In very likeness of a roasted crab;
 And, when she drinks, against her lips I bob,
 And on her withered dewlap pour the ale.
 The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,
 Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me;
 Then slip I from her bum, down topples she,
 And 'tailor' cries, and falls into a cough;
 And then the whole quire hold their hips and loffe,
 And waxen in their mirth, and neeze, and swear
 A merrier hour was never wasted there.—
 But room, fairy, here comes Oberon.
- Fairy And here my mistress.—Would that he were gone!

[Enter Oberon at one door, with his Train, and Titania, at another, with hers.]

- Oberon Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania.
- Titania What, jealous Oberon! Fairies, skip hence;
I have forsworn his bed and company.
- Oberon Tarry, rash wanton: am not I thy lord?
- Titania Then I must be thy lady; but I know
When thou hast stol'n away from fairy-land,
And in the shape of Corin sat all day,
Playing on pipes of corn, and versing love
To amorous Phillida. Why art thou here,
Come from the farthest steep of India,
But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,
Your buskin'd mistress and your warrior love,
To Theseus must be wedded; and you come
To give their bed joy and prosperity.
- Oberon How canst thou thus, for shame, Titania,
Glance at my credit with Hippolyta,
Knowing I know thy love to Theseus?
Didst not thou lead him through the glimmering night
From Perigenia, whom he ravish'd?
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 on 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,
Hath every pelting river made so proud
That they have overborne their continents:
The ox hath therefore stretch'd his yoke in vain,
The ploughman lost his sweat; and the green corn
Hath rotted ere his youth attain'd a beard:
The fold stands empty in the drowned field,
And crows are fatted with the murrion flock;
The nine men's morris is fill'd up with mud;

- 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 chang'd;
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 woo'd, and were not made to woo.
I'll follow thee, and make a heaven of hell,
To die upon the hand I love so well.

[Exeunt Demetrius and Helena.]

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

[Re-enter Puck.]

Hast thou the flower there? Welcome, wanderer.

Puck Ay, there it is.

Oberon I pray thee give it me.
 I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows,
 Where ox-lips and the nodding violet grows;
 Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine,
 With sweet musk-roses, and with eglantine:
 There sleeps Titania sometime of the night,
 Lulled 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

Scene: Another part of the wood.

[Enter Titania, with her Train.]

Titania Come, now a roundel and a fairy song;
 Then, for the third part of a minute, hence;
 Some to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds;
 Some war with rere-mice for their leathern wings,
 To make my small elves coats; and some keep back
 The clamorous owl, that nightly hoots and wonders
 At our quaint spirits. Sing me now asleep;
 Then to your offices, and let me rest.

SONG.

First Fairy

I.
 You spotted snakes, with double tongue,
 Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen;
 Newts and blind-worms do no wrong;
 Come not near our fairy queen:

CHORUS.
 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.

Second Fairy

II.
 Weaving spiders, come not here;
 Hence, you long-legg'd spinners, hence;
 Beetles black, approach not near;
 Worm nor snail do no offence.

CHORUS Philomel with melody, &c.

First Fairy Hence away; now all is well.
 One, aloof, stand sentinel.

[Exeunt Fairies. Titania sleeps.]

[Enter Oberon.]

Oberon What thou seest when thou dost wake,

[Squeezes the flower on Titania'S eyelids.]

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 wak'st, 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 farther off yet, do not lie so near.

Lysander O, take the sense, sweet, of my innocence;
Love takes the meaning in love's conference.
I mean that my heart unto yours is knit;
So that but one heart we can make of it:
Two bosoms interchained with an oath;
So then two bosoms and a single troth.
Then by your side no bed-room me deny;
For lying so, Hermia, I do not lie.

Hermia Lysander riddles very prettily:—
Now much beshrew my manners and my pride
If Hermia meant to say Lysander lied!
But, gentle friend, for love and courtesy
Lie further off; in human modesty,
Such separation as may well be said
Becomes a virtuous bachelor and a maid:
So far be distant; and good night, sweet friend:
Thy love ne'er alter till thy sweet life end!

Lysander Amen, amen, to that fair prayer say I;
And then end life when I end loyalty!
Here is my bed: Sleep give thee all his rest!

Hermia With half that wish the wisher's eyes be pressed!

[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 wak'st 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 Demetrius.]

Helena O, I am out of breath in this fond chase!
 The more my prayer, the lesser is my grace.
 Happy is Hermia, wheresoe'er she lies,
 For she hath blessed and attractive eyes.
 How came her eyes so bright? Not with salt tears:
 If so, my eyes are oftener wash'd than hers.
 No, no, I am as ugly as a bear;
 For beasts that meet me run away for fear:
 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

[Waking.]

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

Helena

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

Lysander

Content with Hermia? No: I do repent
The tedious minutes I with her have spent.
Not Hermia but Helena I love:
Who will not change a raven for a dove?
The will of man is by his reason sway'd;
And reason says you are the worthier maid.
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 man,
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 lord of more true gentleness.
O, that a lady of one man refus'd
Should of another therefore be abus'd!

[Exit]

Lysander

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

For, as a surfeit of the sweetest things
The deepest loathing to the stomach brings;
Or, as the heresies that men do leave
Are hated most of those they did deceive;
So thou, my surfeit and my heresy,
Of all be hated, but the most of me!
And, all my powers, address your love and might
To honour Helen, and to be her knight!

[Exit]

Hermia

[Starting.]

Help me, Lysander, help me! do thy best
To pluck this crawling serpent from my breast!
Ay me, for pity!—What a dream was here!
Lysander, look how I do quake with fear!
Methought a serpent eat my heart away,
And you sat smiling at his cruel prey.—
Lysander! what, removed? Lysander! lord!
What, out of hearing? gone? no sound, no word?
Alack, where are you? speak, an if you hear;
Speak, of all loves! I swoon almost with fear.
No?—then I well perceive you are not nigh:
Either death or you I'll find immediately.

[Exit]

ACT III.

SCENE I

Scene: The Wood. The Queen of Fairies 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. This green plot shall be our stage, this hawthorn brake our tiring-house; and we will do it in action, as we will do it before the duke.
- Bottom Peter Quince,—
- Quince What sayest thou, bully Bottom?
- Bottom There are things in this comedy of 'Pyramus and Thisby' that will never please. First, Pyramus must draw a sword to kill himself; which the ladies cannot abide. How answer you that?
- Snout By'r lakin, a parlous fear.
- Starveling I believe we must leave the killing out, when all is done.
- Bottom Not a whit: I have a device to make all well. Write me a prologue; and let the prologue seem to say we will do no harm with our swords, and that Pyramus is not killed indeed; and for the more 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 it.
- 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 Thisbe meet by moonlight.
- Snout Doth the moon shine that night we play our play?
- Bottom A calendar, a calendar! look in the almanack; 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 lantern, 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 every one according to his cue.

[Enter Puck behind.]

Puck What hempen homespuns 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.

Pyramus 'Thisby, the flowers of odious savours sweet,'

Quince Odours, odours.

Pyramus '—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!

[Aside.—Exit.]

Thisbe 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.

Thisbe '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 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.'

[Re-enter Puck, and Bottom with an ass's head.]

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

Pyramus 'If I were fair, Thisby, I were only thine:-'

Quince O monstrous! O strange! we are haunted. Pray, masters! fly, masters!
Help!

[Exeunt Clowns.]

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 ass-head of your own, do you?

[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

[Waking.]

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.—
 Peasblossom! Cobweb! Moth! and Mustardseed!

[Enter Four Fairies.]

- First Fairy Ready.
- Second Fairy And I.
- Third Fairy And I.
- Fourth Fairy Where shall we go?
- Titania Be kind and courteous to this gentleman;
Hop in his walks and gambol in his eyes;
Feed him with apricocks and dewberries,
With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries;
The honey bags steal from the humble-bees,
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.
- First Fairy Hail, mortal!
- Second Fairy Hail!
- Third Fairy Hail!
- Fourth Fairy Hail!
- Bottom I cry your worships 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?
- Peasblossom Peasblossom.
- Bottom I pray you, commend me to Mistress Squash, your mother, and to Master Peascod, your father. Good Master Peasblossom, 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: That same cowardly giant-like ox-beef hath devoured many a gentleman of your

house: I promise you your kindred hath made my eyes water ere now.
I desire you of 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 grave; & chastity.
Tie up my love's tongue, bring him silently.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II

Scene: Another part of the wood.

[Enter Oberon.]

Oberon I wonder if Titania be awak'd;
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 thickskin 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 nowl I fixed grave; & 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,
Or russet-pated choughs, many in sort,
Rising and cawing at the gun's report,
Sever themselves and madly sweep the sky,

So at his sight away his fellows fly:
 And at our stamp here, o'er and o'er one falls;
 He murder cries, and help from Athens calls.
 Their sense thus weak, lost with their fears, thus strong,
 Made senseless things begin to do them wrong;
 For briars and thorns at their apparel snatch;
 Some sleeves, some hats: from yielders all things catch.
 I led them on in this distracted fear,
 And left sweet Pyramus translated there:
 When in that moment,—so it came to pass,—
 Titania wak'd, and straightway lov'd 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 wak'd, of force she must be ey'd.

[Enter Demetrius and Hermia.]

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 stol'n away
 From sleeping Hermia? I'll believe as soon
 This whole earth may be bor'd; and that the moon
 May through the centre creep and so displease
 Her brother's noontide with the antipodes.
 It cannot be but thou hast murder'd him;
 So should a murderer look; so dead, so grim.

Demetrius So should the murder'd look; and so should I,
 Pierc'd 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 driv'st me past the bounds
Of maiden's patience. Hast thou slain him, then?
Henceforth be never number'd among men!
Oh! once tell true; tell true, even for my sake;
Durst thou have look'd upon him, being awake,
And hast thou kill'd him sleeping? O brave touch!
Could not a worm, an adder, do so much?
An adder did it; for with doubler tongue
Than thine, thou serpent, never adder stung.
- Demetrius You spend your passion on a mispris'd mood:
I am not guilty of Lysander's blood;
Nor is he dead, for aught that I can tell.
- Hermia I pray thee, tell me, then, that he is well.
- Demetrius An if I could, what should I get therefore?
- Hermia A privilege never to see me more.—
And from thy hated presence part I so:
See me no more whether he be dead or no.
- [Exit]
- Demetrius There is no following her in this fierce vein:
Here, therefore, for a while I will remain.
So sorrow's heaviness doth heavier grow
For debt that bankrupt sleep doth sorrow owe;
Which now in some slight measure it will pay,
If for his tender here I make some stay.
- [Lies down.]
- 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 wak'st, if she be by,
 Beg of her for remedy.

[Re-enter Puck.]

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

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

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

Lysander[Enter and Helena.]

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

Helena You do advance your cunning more and more.
 When truth kills truth, O devilish-holy fray!

These vows are Hermia's: will you give her o'er?
 Weigh oath with oath, and you will nothing weigh:
 Your vows to her and me, put in two scales,
 Will even weigh; and both as light as tales.

Lysander I had no judgment when to her I swore.

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

Lysander Demetrius loves her, and he loves not you.

Demetrius

[Awaking.]

O Helen, 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;
 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:
 A trim exploit, a manly enterprise,
 To conjure tears up in a poor maid's eyes
 With your derision! None of noble sort
 Would so offend a virgin, and extort
 A poor soul's patience, all to make you sport.

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;

When we have chid the hasty-footed time
 For parting us,—O, is all forgot?
 All school-days' friendship, childhood innocence?
 We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,
 Have with our needles created both one flower,
 Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,
 Both warbling of one song, both in one key;
 As if our hands, our sides, voices, and minds,
 Had been incorporate. So we grew together,
 Like to a double cherry, seeming parted;
 But yet a union in partition,
 Two lovely berries moulded on one stem:
 So, with two seeming bodies, but one heart;
 Two of the first, like coats in heraldry,
 Due but to one, and crowned with one crest.
 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?
 What though I be not so in grace as you,
 So hung upon with love, so fortunate;
 But miserable most, to love unlov'd?
 This you should pity rather than despise.

Hermia I understand not what you mean by this.

Helena Ay, do persever, counterfeit sad looks,
 Make mows 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 Ethiopie!

Demetrius No, no, sir:—he will
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 lov'd 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, doubt,
Be certain, nothing truer; 'tis no jest
That I do hate thee and love Helena.
- Hermia O me! you juggler! you cankerblossom!
You thief of love! What! have you come by night,
And stol'n 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 urg'd 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 farther. 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 hind'ring 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.

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

Puck My fairy lord, this must be done with haste,
 For night's swift dragons cut the clouds full fast;
 And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger,
 At whose approach ghosts, wandering here and there,
 Troop home to churchyards: damned spirits all,
 That in cross-ways and floods have burial,
 Already to their wormy beds are gone;
 For fear lest day should look their shames upon
 They wilfully exile themselves from light,
 And must for aye consort with black-brow'd night.

Oberon But we are spirits of another sort:
 I with the morning's love have oft made sport;
 And, like a forester, the groves may tread
 Even till the eastern gate, all fiery-red,
 Opening on Neptune with fair blessed beams,
 Turns into yellow gold his salt-green streams.
 But, notwithstanding, haste; make no delay:
 We may effect this business yet ere day.

[Exit Oberon.]

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

[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.

When thou wak'st,
Thou tak'st
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 Puck.—Demetrius, Helena &c, sleep.]

ACT IV

SCENE I

Scene: The Wood.

[Enter Titania and Bottom; Peasblossom, 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 Peasblossom?

Peasblossom Ready.

Bottom Scratch my head, Peasblossom.—
 Where's Monsieur Cobweb?

Cobweb Ready.

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

Mustardseed Ready.

- Bottom Give me your neif, Monsieur Mustardseed.
Pray you, leave your curtsy, good monsieur.
- Mustardseed What's your will?
- Bottom Nothing, good monsieur, but to help Cavalero 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 us 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, be gone, and be all ways away.
So doth the woodbine the sweet honeysuckle
Gently entwist,—the female ivy so
Enrings the barky fingers of the elm.
O, how I love thee! how I dote on thee!

[They sleep.]

[Oberon advances. Enter Puck.]

- Oberon Welcome, good Robin. Seest thou this sweet sight?
Her dotage now I do begin to pity.
For, meeting her of late behind the wood,
Seeking sweet favours for this hateful fool,
I did upbraid her and fall out with her:
For she his hairy temples then had rounded
With coronet of fresh and fragrant flowers;
And that same dew, which sometime on the buds

[Still music.]

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

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

Oberon Then, my queen, in silence sad,
 Trip we after night's shade.
 We the globe can compass soon,
 Swifter than the wand'ring 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 sound 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 of the day,
 My love shall hear the music of my hounds,—
 Uncouple in the western valley; go:—
 Despatch, 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

But, as I think,—for truly would I speak—
 And now I do bethink me, so it is,—
 I came with Hermia hither: our intent
 Was to be gone from Athens, where we might be,
 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 stol'n 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 gawd
 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 a 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 purpos'd 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 into clouds.

[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! 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 not 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; good strings to your beards, new ribbons to your pumps; meet presently at the palace; every man look over 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 pare his nails, for they shall hang out for the lion's claws. And, most dear actors, eat no onions nor garlick, 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

Scene: Athens. An Apartment in 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.
The lunatic, the lover, and the poet
Are of imagination all compact:
One sees more devils than vast hell can hold;
That is the madman: the lover, all as frantic,
Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt:
The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.
Such tricks hath strong imagination,
That, if it would but apprehend some joy,
It comprehends some bringer of that joy;
Or in the night, imagining some fear,
How easy is a bush supposed a bear?

Hippolya He says they can do nothing in this kind.

Thesus The kinder we, to give them thanks for nothing.
 Our sport shall be to take what they mistake:
 And what poor duty cannot do,
 Noble respect takes it in might, not merit.
 Where I have come, great clerks have purposed
 To greet me with premeditated welcomes;
 Where I have seen them shiver and look pale,
 Make periods in the midst of sentences,
 Throttle their practis'd accent in their fears,
 And, in conclusion, dumbly have broke off,
 Not paying me a welcome. Trust me, sweet,
 Out of this silence yet I pick'd a welcome;
 And in the modesty of fearful duty
 I read as much as from the rattling tongue
 Of saucy and audacious eloquence.
 Love, therefore, and tongue-tied simplicity
 In least speak most to my capacity.

[Enter Philostrate.]

Philostrate So please your grace, the prologue is address'd.

Thesus Let him approach.

[Flourish of trumpets. Enter 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 content 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.'

Thesus 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.

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

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

[Enter PYRAMUS and Thisbe, Wall, Moonshine, and Lion, as in dumb show.]

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 by name Lion hight,
 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.]

Thesus 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.

Thesus Would you desire lime and hair to speak better?

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

Thesus Pyramus draws near the wall; silence.

[Enter PYRAMUS.]

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

[Wall holds up his fingers.]

Thanks, courteous wall: Jove shield thee well for this!
 But what see what see I? No Thisby do I see.
 O wicked wall, through whom I see no bliss,
 Curs'd be thy stones for thus deceiving me!

Thesus 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.

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

[Exeunt Wall, PYRAMUS and Thisbe.]

Thesus Now is the mural down between the two neighbours.

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

Hippolya This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard.

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

Hippolya It must be your imagination then, and not theirs.

Thesus If we imagine no worse of them than they of
themselves, they may pass for excellent men.
Here come two noble beasts in, a moon 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.

Thesus A very gentle beast, and of a good conscience.

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

Lysander This lion is a very fox for his valour.

- Thesus True; and a goose for his discretion.
- Demetrius Not so, my lord; for his valour cannot carry his discretion, and the fox carries the goose.
- Thesus His discretion, I am sure, cannot carry his valour; for the goose carries not the fox. It is well; leave it to his discretion, and let us listen to the moon.
- Moonshine This lanthorn doth the horned moon present:
- Demetrius He should have worn the horns on his head.
- Thesus 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.
- Thesus This is the greatest error of all the rest: the man should be put into the lantern. 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.
- Hippolya I am awearry of this moon: would he would change!
- Thesus 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 lantern is the moon; I, the man i' the moon; this thorn-bush, my thorn-bush; and this dog, my dog.
- Demetrius Why, all these should be in the lantern; 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 Oh!

[The Lion roars.—Thisbe runs off.]

- Demetrius Well roared, lion.
- Thesus Well run, Thisbe.

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

[The Lion tears Thisbe'S Mantle, and exit.]

Thesus Well moused, lion.

Demetrius And so comes Pyramus.

Lysander And then the lion vanishes.

[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 streams,
 I trust to take of truest Thisby's 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! stained with blood?
 Approach, ye furies fell!
 O fates! come, come;
 Cut thread and thrum;
 Quail, rush, conclude, and quell!

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

Hippolya 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 liv'd, that lov'd, that lik'd, that look'd with cheer.
 Come, tears, confound;
 Out, sword, and wound
 The pap of Pyramus:
 Ay, that left pap,
 Where heart doth hop:—
 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!
 Now die, die, die, die, die.

[Dies. Exit Moonshine.]

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.
 Thesus With the help of a surgeon he might yet recover and prove an ass.
 Hippolya How chance moonshine is gone before Thisbe comes
 back and finds her lover?
 Thesus She will find him by starlight.—Here she comes; and
 her passion ends the play.

[Enter Thisbe.]

Hippolya Methinks she should not use a long one for such a
 Pyramus: I hope she will be brief.
 Demetrius A mote will turn the balance, which Pyramus, which
 Thisbe, is the better.
 Lysander She hath spied him already with those sweet eyes.
 Demetrius And thus she moans, videlicet.—
 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 lily 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;
 And farewell, friends:—
 Thus Thisbe ends;
 Adieu, adieu, adieu.

[Dies.]

Thesus Moonshine and lion are left to bury the dead.

Demetrius Ay, and wall too.

Bottom No, I 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 need none to be blamed. Marry, if he that writ it had played Pyramus, and hang'd himself in Thisbe's garter, it would have been a fine tragedy: and so it is, truly; and very notably discharged. But come, your Bergomask; let your epilogue alone.

[Here a dance of Clowns.]

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 beguil'd
 The heavy gait of night.—Sweet friends, to bed.—
 A fortnight hold we this solemnity,
 In nightly revels and new jollity.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II

[Enter Puck.]

Puck Now the hungry lion roars,
 And the wolf behowls the moon;
 Whilst the heavy ploughman snores,

All with weary task fordone.
 Now the wasted brands do glow,
 Whilst the scritch-owl, scritch'ing loud,
 Puts the wretch that lies in woe
 In remembrance of a shroud.
 Now it is the time of night
 That the graves, all gaping wide,
 Every one lets forth its 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 glimmering 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 gate;
 And each several chamber bless,
 Through this palace, with sweet peace;
 E'er shall it in safety rest,
 And the owner of it blest.
 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.

[Exit]

COLOPHON

This manual was typeset using the $\text{\LaTeX} 2_{\epsilon}$ typesetting system created by Leslie Lamport and the memoir class written by Peter Wilson. The body text is set 10/12pt on a 25pc measure with the Computer Modern family designed by Donald Knuth.