

A Midsummer Night's Dream

ACT I

Scene I

Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Philostrate, with attendants. 1

The. Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour
Draws on apace; four happy days bring in
Another moon; but O, methinks, how slow
This old moon wanes! She lingers my desires.
Hip. Four days will quickly steep themselves in night;
Four nights will quickly dream away the time;
And then the moon, like to a silver bow
New bent in heaven, shall behold the night
Of our solemnities.

The. Go, Philostrate,
Stir up the Athenian youth to merriments;
Awake the pert and nimble spirit of mirth;
Exit Philostrate

Hippolyta, I woo'd thee with my sword,
And won thy love doing thee injuries;
But I will wed thee in another key,
With pomp, with triumph, and with revelling.

Enter Egeus *and* his daughter Hermia, Lysander, *and* Demetrius 2

Ege. Happy be Theseus, our renowned Duke!
The. Thanks, good Egeus. What's the news with thee?
Ege. 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 hath bewitch'd the bosom of my child.
Thou, thou, Lysander, thou hast given her rhymes,
And interchang'd love-tokens with my child:
With cunning thou hast filch'd my daughter's heart,
Turn'd her obedience (which is due to me)
To stubborn harshness. And, my gracious Duke,
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.
The. What say you, Hermia? Be advis'd, fair maid.
To you your father should be as a god:
Dem. Relent, sweet Hermia; and Lysander, yield
Thy crazed title to my certain right.
Lys. You have her father's love, Demetrius
Let me have Hermia's; do you marry him.
Ege. Scornful Lysander, true, he hath my love;
And what is mine my love shall render him.

Lys. I am, my lord, as well deriv'd as he,
 As well possess'd; my love is more than his;
 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 made love to Helena,
 And won her soul: and she, sweet lady, dotes
 Upon this spotted and inconstant man.

The. I must confess that I have heard so much.

Her. 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.

The. Either to die the death, or to adjure
 Forever the sight of men.
 Therefore, fair Hermia, question your desires,
 Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

Her. So is Lysander

The. In himself he is

Her. I would my father looked but with my eyes.

The. Rather your eyes must with his judgement look.
 Take time to pause; and by the next new moon,
 The sealing-day betwixt my love and me
 Upon that day either look you arm yourself
 To fit your fancies to your father's will;
 Or else the law of the Athens yields you up
 To death, or to a vow of single life.
 Come, my Hippolyta; what cheer, my love?
 Demetrius and Egeus, go along;
 I must employ you in some business.

Ege. With duty and desire we follow you. *Exeunt all but Lys. and Her*

Lys. How now, my love? Why is your cheek so pale? **3**
 The course of true love never did run smooth.

Her. Then let us teach our trial patience

Lys. A good persuasion; therefore hear me, Hermia.
 I have a widow aunt, a dowager
 Of great revenue, and she hath no child-
 From Athens is her house remote seven leagues-
 And she respects me as her only son.
 There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee,
 And to that place the sharp Athenian law
 Cannot pursue us. If thou lov'st me then,
 Steal forth thy father's house tommorow night;
 And in the wood, a league without the town
 There will I stay for thee.

Her. My good Lysander
 I swear to thee by cupid's strongest bow,
 By his best arrow with the golden head,
 By all the vows that ever men have broke
 (In number more than woman spoke),

In that same place thou hast appointed me,
Tomorrow truly will I meet with thee.
Lys. Keep promise, love. Look, here comes Helena.

Enter Helena

4

Her. God speed fair Helena! Whither away?
Hel. Call you me fair? That fair again unsay!
Demetrius loves your fair: O happy fair!
Her. I frown upon him; yet he loves me still.
Hel. O that your frowns would teach my smiles such skill!
Her. The more I hate, the more he follows me.
Hel. The more I love, the more he hateth me.
Her. Take comfort: he no more shall see my face;
Lysander and myself will fly this place.
Lys. Helen, to you our minds we will unfold:
Tomorrow night when lovers' flights conceal,
Through Athens' gates have we devis'd to steal.
Her. There my Lysander and myself shall meet;
And thence from Athens turn away our eyes,
To seek new friends and strange companies.
Farewell sweet playfellow; pray thou for us,
And good luck grant thee thy Demetrius! *Exit Hermia and Lysander*
Hel. How happy some o'er other some can be! 5
Through Athens I am thought as fair as she.
But what of that? Demetrius thinks not so;
He will not know what all but we do know;
I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight:
Then to the wood will he, tomorrow 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

*Enter Quince, the Carpenter; Snug, the Joiner; Bottom, the Weaver;
Flute, the Bellows Mender; Snout, the Tinker; and Starveling, the Tailor*

Quin. Is all our company here? 6
Bot. You were best to call them generally, man by man, according to the scrip
Quin. Here is the scroll of every man's name which is thought fit through Athens
to play in our interlude before the Duke and the Duchess, on his wedding
day at night.
Bot. First good Peter Quince, say what the play treats on; then read the names
of the actors; and so grow to a point.
Quin. Marry, our play is 'The most lamentable comedy, and most cruel death of
Pyramus and Thisbe.'
Bot. 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.
Quin. Answer as I call you. Nick Bottom, the weaver?
Bot. Ready. Name what part I am for, and proceed.

Quin. You, Nick bottom, are set down for Pyramus.
Bot. What is Pyramus? A lover, or a tyrant?
Quin. A lover, that kills himself most gallant for love.
Bot. 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.
Quin. Francis Flute, the bellows-mender?
Flu. Here, Peter Quince.
Quin. Flute, you must take Thisbe on you.
Flu. What is Thisbe? A wandering knight?
Quin. It is the lady that Pyramus must love.
Flu. Nay, faith, let not me play a woman: I have a beard coming.
Quin. That's all one: you shall play it in mask; and you may speak as small as you will.
Bot. Let me play Thisbe too. I'll speak in a monstrous little voice: "Thisne, Thisne!"- "Ah, Pyramus, my lover dear! Thy Thisbe dear, and lady dear!"
Quin. No, no, you must play Pyramus; and Flute, you Thisbe.
Bot. Well, proceed.
Quin. Robin Starveling, the tailor?
Star. Here, Peter Quince
Quin. Robin Starveling, you must play Thisbe's mother. Tom Snout, the tinker?
Snout. Here, Peter Quince.
Quin. You, Pyramus' father; myself, Thisbe'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.
Quin. You may do it extempore, for it is nothing but roaring.
Bot. Let me play the lion too. I will roar, that 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!"
Quin. And you should do it terribly, you will 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.
Bot. 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 and 'twere any nightingale.
Quin. 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.
Bot. Well, I will undertake it.

Quin. Masters, here are your parts; and I am to entreat you, request you, and desire you to con them by tomorrow night; and meet me in the palace wood, a mile with--out the town, by moonlight; there will we rehearse, for if we meet in the city, we shall be dogged with company, and our devices known. In the meantime I will draw a bill of properties, such as our play wants. I pray you fail me not.

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

Quin. At the Duke's oak we meet. *Exeunt*

ACT II

Scene I

Enter a Fairy at one door, and Puck at another.

7

Puck. How now, spirit! Whither wander you?
Fairy. Over hill, over dale,
through bush, through briar,
Over park, over pale
Through flood, through fire,
I do wander everywhere,
Swifter than the moon's sphere;
And I serve the Fairy Queen,
To dew her orbs upon the green.
I must go seek some dew-drops here,
And hang a pearl in every cowslips ear.

Puck. The king doth keep his revels here tonight;
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 fairies 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,
And sometimes make the drink to bear no barm,
Mislead knight-wanderers, laughing at their harm?
Those that hobgoblin call you, and sweet Puck,
You do their work, and they shall have good luck.
Are not you he?

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

*Enter Oberon, King of the Fairies, at one door with his train;
and Titania, the Queen, at another, with hers*

Obe. Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania. 8
Tita. What, jealous Oberon? Fairies, skip hence;
I have forsworn his bed and company.
Obe. Tarry, rash wanton; am not I thy lord?
Tita. Then I must be thy lady; but I know
These are the forgeries of jealousy:
And never, since the middle's summer spring,
Met we on hill, in dale, forest, or mead,
But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.
And through this distemperature we see
The seasons alter: 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.
Obe. Do you amend it then: it lies in you.
Why should Titania cross her Oberon?
I do but beg a little changeling boy
To be my henchman.
Tita. Set your heart at rest:
The fairy land buys not the child of me.
His mother was a votress of my order;
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.
Obe. How long within this wood intend you stay?
Tita. Perchance till after Theseus' wedding day.
Obe. Give me that boy, and I will go with thee.
Tita. Not for thy fairy kingdom. Fairies, away!
We shall chide downright if I longer stay. *Exeunt Tita. and her train*
Obe. Well, go thy way; thou shalt not from this grove 9
Till I torment thee for this injury.
My gentle Puck, come hither. Thou rememb'rst
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
And loos'd his love-shaft smartly from his bow
As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts
Yet it mark'd I where the bolt of Cupid fell:
It fell upon a little western flower,
Fetch me that flower; the herb I show'd thee once.
The juice of it, on sleeping eyelids laid,
Will make man or woman madly dote
Upon the next live creature that it sees.
Fetch me this herb, and be thou here again.
Puck I'll put a girdle round about the earth
In forty minutes. *Exit.*

Obe Having once this juice, 10
I'll watch Titania when she is asleep,
And drop the liquor of it in her eyes:
The next thing then she waking looks upon
(Be it lion, bear, or wolf, or bull
On meddling monkey or busy ape)
She shall pursue it with the soul of love.
And ere I take this charm from off her sight
As I can take it with another herb
I'll make her render up her page to me,
But who comes here? I am invisible;
And I will overhear their conference.

Enter Demetrius and Helena. 11

Dem. I love thee not, therefore pursue me not.
Where is Lysander and fair Hermia?
Thou told'st me they were stol'n unto this wood;
And here I am, and wood within this wood
Because I cannot meet my Hermia.

Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.

Hel. You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant-

Dem. 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?

Hel. And even for that do I love you the more.

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.

Dem. Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit;

For I am sick when I do look on thee.

Hel. And I am sick when I look not on you.

Dem. I'll run from thee and hide me in the brakes,

And leave thee to the mercy of wild beasts.

Hel. The wildest hath not such a heart as you.

Dem. 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.

Hel. 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.

Obe. Fare thee well, nymph; ere he do leave this grove 12

Thou shalt fly him, and he shall seek thy love. 13

Enter Puck 14

Hast thou the flower there? Welcome, wanderer.

Puck. Ay, there it is.

Obe. I pray thee give it me.

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

Puck. Fear not, my lord, your servant shall do so.
Obe. Farewell, thou lob of spirits; I'll be gone'
 Our queen and all her elves come here anon.

Scene II

Enter Titania, Queen of Fairies with her train.

15

Tita. Come now, sing me now asleep;
 Then to your offices, and let me rest.

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

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

Third Fairy. *Hence, away! Now all is well;
 One aloof stand sentinel.*

Enter Oberon.

Obe. What thou seest when thou dost wake,
 Do it for thy true love take;
 Love and languish for his sake.
 Be it ounce, or cat, or bear,
 Pard, or boar with bristled hair,
 In thy eye that shall appear
 When thou wak'st, it is thy dear.
 Wake when some vile thing is near.

16

Enter Lysander and Hermia.

Lys. Fair love, you faint with wand'ring 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.

17

Her. Be it so, Lysander: find you out a bed,
 For I upon this bank will rest my head.
Lys. One turf shall serve as pillow for us both;
 One heart, one bed, two bosoms, and one troth.
Her. Nay, good Lysander; for my sake dear,
 Lie further off yet; do not lie so near.
Lys. I mean that my heart unto yours is knit,
 So that but one heart we can make of it:
 Then by your side no bedroom me deny;
 For lying so, Hermia, I do not lie.
Her. Lysander riddles very prettily
 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:
Lys. Amen, amen, to that fair prayer say I:

Enter Puck.

Puck. Through the forest have I gone; 18
 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.
 Churl, upon thy eyes I throw
 All the power this charm doth owe:
 So awake when I am gone;
 For I must now to Oberon.

Enter Demetrius and Helena running.

Hel. Stay, though thou kill me, sweet Demetrius!
Dem. I charge thee, hence, and do not haunt me thus. *Exit.*
Hel. O wilt thou darkling leave me? Do not so. 19
 But who is here? Lysander, on the ground
 Dead, or asleep? I see no blood, no wound.
 Lysander, if you live, good sir, awake!
Lys. And run through fire for thy sweet sake!
 Transparent Helena! Nature shows art,
 That through thy bosom makes me see thy heart.
Hel. Do not say so, Lysander, say not so.
 You would not use a gentle lady so:
Lys. But here, with all good will, with all my heart
 In Hermia's love I yield all up my part;
 And yours fair Helena to me bequeath
 Whom I do love and will do till my death.
Hel. Never did mockers waste more idle breath.

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!

Exeunt

Lys. She sees not Hermia. Hermia, sleep thou there,
And never mayst come Lysander near!
For all my powers, address your love and might
To honour Helen and to be her knight!

Exeunt Lysander

Her. 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, remov'd? Lysander! Lord!
What, out of hearing? Gone? No sound, no word?
Alack, where are you? Speak, and 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

20

ACT III

Scene I

Enter Quince, Bottom, Snug, Flute, Snout, and Starveling

Bot. Are we all met? **21**
Quin. Pat, pat; and here's a marvelous convenient place for our rehearsal.
Bot. Peter Quince!
Quin. What sayest thou, bully Bottom?
Bot. There are things in this comedy of Pyramus and Thisbe that will never please. First, Pyramus must draw a sword to kill himself; which the ladies can not abide.
Star. I believe we must leave the killing out, when all is done.
Bot. Not a whit; I have a device to make all well. Write us 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.
Quin. Well, we will have such a prologue.
Snout. Will not the ladies be afeard of the lion?
Star. I fear it, I promise you.
Bot. Masters, you ought to consider with yourself; to bring in (God shield us) a lion among ladies is a most dreadful thing; for there is not a more fearful wild-fowl than your lion living; and we ought to look to't.
Snout. Therefore another prologue must tell he is not a lion.
Bot. 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." No, I am no such thing I am a man, as other men are.
Quin. 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?

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

Quince Yes, it doth shine that night.

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

Quince Then there is another thing: we must have a wall in the great chamber; for Pyramus and Thisbe, says the story, did talk through the chink of a wall.

Snout. You could never bring in a wall. What say you, Bottom?

Bot. Some man or other must present Wall; and let him have some plaster, or some loam, to signify Wall; and let him hold his fingers thus, and through that cranny shall Pyramus and Thisbe whisper.

Quince. If that may be, then all is well. Come sit down, and rehearse your parts. Pyramus, you begin.

Enter Puck

Puck What thick-skull'd rustics have we swaggering here, 22
So near the cradle of the Fairy Queen?
What, a play?

Quince Speak, Pyramus; Thisbe, stand forth.

Bot. *Thisbe, the flowers of odious savours sweet-*

Quince 'Odorous!' 'Odorous!'

Bot. *Odorous savours sweet;*

So hath thy breath, my dearest Thisbe dear.

But hark, a voice! Stay thou but here awhile,

And by and by I will to thee appear.

Bottom Exeunt

Puck A stranger Pyramus than e're played here!

Puck Exeunt 23

Flu. Must I speak now?

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

Flu. *Most radiant Pyramus, most lily-white of hue
Of colour like the red rose on triumphant briar,
If I were fair, Thisbe, I were only thine.
I'll meet thee, Pyramus, at Ninny's tomb.*

Quin. 'Ninus' tomb', man! But, 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!

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

Enter Bottom with the ass-head on.

Bot. If I were fair, Thisbe, I were only thine. 24

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

Bot. What do you see? You see an ass-head of your own, do you?

Quin. Bless thee, Bottom, bless thee! Thou art translated.

Puck. I'll follow you: I'll lead you about a round!

Sometimes a horse I'll be, sometimes a hound,
And neigh, and bark, and grunt, and roar, and burn,
Like horse, hound, hog, bear, fire, at every turn.

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

Help!

All exeunt

Bot. Why do they run away? This is a knavery of them to make me afeard. I see their knavery: this is to make an ass of me, to fright me, if they could. But 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. **25**

[*Sings.*]

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

[*The singing awakens Titania.*]

Titania. What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?

[*Bottom continues singing.*]

Bottom. 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 nowadays. The more the pity that some honest neighbors 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 Peasblossom, Cobweb, Moth and Mustardseed.

26

Peas. Ready.
Cob. And I.
Moth. And I.
Mus. And I.
All. Where shall we go?
Titania. Be kind and courteous to this gentlemen;
 Feed him with apricocks and dew berries,
 With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries;
 Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies.
Peas. Hail, mortal!
Cob. Hail!
Moth. Hail!
Mus. Hail!
Bottom. I cry your worships mercy, heartily. I beseech your worship's name?
Cob. 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 gentlemen?
Peas. Peaseblossom.
Bottom. I pray you, commend me to Mistress Squash, your mother, and to Master
 Peascod, your father. Good Master Peaseblossom, I shall desire you of
 more acquaintance too. Your name, I beseech you sir?
Mus. Mustardseed.
Bottom. Good Master Mustardseed, I know your patience will. 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. *Exit all.*

Scene II

Enter Oberon, King of the Fairies 27

Obe. 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. 28
 Near to her close and consecrated bower,
 While she was in her dull and sleeping hour,
 A crew of patches, rude mechanicals,
 That work for bread upon Athenian stalls,
 Were met together to rehearse a play
 Intended for great Theseus' nuptial day.
 The shallowest thick-skin of that barren sort,
 Who Pyramus presented in their sport,
 Forsook his scene, and enter'd in a brake,
 When I did him at this advantage take:
 An ass's nolle I fixed on his head.
 Anon, his Thisbe must be answered,

And forth my mimic comes. When they him spy -
As wild geese that the creeping fowler eye,
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.
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.

Obe. 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

Obe. Stand close: this is the same Athenian 29
Puck. This is the woman, but not this the man.
Dem. O why rebuke you him that loves you so?
Lay breath so bitter on your bitter foe.
Her. Now I but chide but I should use thee worse,
For thou, I fear, hast given me cause to curse.
The sun was not so true unto the day
As he to me. Would he have stol'n away?
It cannot be but thou hast murder'd him:
So should a murderer look, so dead, so grim.
Dem. So should the murder'd look, then so should i,
Pierc'd through the heart with your stern cruelty;
Yet you, murderer, look as bright, as clear,
As yonder Venus in her shimmering sphere.
Her. What's this to my Lysander? Where is he?
Ah, good Demetrius, wilt thou give him me?
Dem. I had rather give his carcase to my hounds.
Her. Out, dog! Out, cur! Thou driv'st me past the bounds
Of maiden's patience. Hast thou slain him then?
O once tell true; tell true, even for my sake!
Dem. You spend your passion in a mispris'd mood:
I am not guilty of Lysander's blood;
Nor is he dead, for aught that I can tell.
Her. I pray thee tell me then that he is well.
Dem. And if I could, what should I get therefor?
Her. A privilege, never to see me more. *Exit.*
Dem. There is no following her in this fierce vain;
Here therefore for a while I will remain
So sorrow's heaviness doth heavier grow
For debt that bankrupt sleep doth sorrow owe.

Lies down and sleeps.

Obe. What hast thou done? Thou hast mistaken quite, 30

And laid the love-juice on some true love's sight;
Puck. Then fate o'er-rules, that, one man holding troth,
 A million fail, confounding oath on oath.
Obe. About the wood go swifter go than the wind,
 And Helena of Athens look thou find;
 I go, I go, look how I go!
 Swifter than arrow from the Tartar's bow. *Exit.*
Obe. Flower of this purple dye, **31**
 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 sky.
 When thou wak'st, if she be by,
 Beg of her for remedy.

Enter Puck

Puck. Captain of our fairy band,
 Helena is here at hand;
Obe. Stand aside. The noise they make
 Will cause Demetrius to awake.

Enter Lysander and Helena

32

Lys. Stay, gentle Helena; hear my excuse,
 My love, my life, my soul, fair Helena!
Hel. You do advance your cunning more and more.
 These vows are Hermia's will you give her o'er.
Lys. Demetrius loves her, and he loves not you.
Dem. O Helen, goddess, nymph, perfect, divine!
 To what, my love, shall I compare thine eyne?
Lys. You are unkind, Demetrius; be not so;
 For you love Hermia; this you know I know.
Hel. Yet Hermia still loves you; then be content.
Lys. 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?
Hel. O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent
 To set against me for your merriment;
 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!
Lys. Helen, it is not so.
Dem. Disparage not the faith thou dost not know.

Enter Hermia.

33

Her. 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?
Lys. Why should he stay, whom love doth press to go?
Her. What love could press Lysander from my side?
Lys. Lysander's love, that would not let him bide -
 Fair Helena! who more engilds the night
 Than all yon fiery oes and eyes of light.
 Why seek'st thou me? Could not this make thee know,
 The hate I bear thee made me leave thee so?
Her. You speak not as you think. It cannot be.
Hel. 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 conspir'd, have you with these contriv'd
 To bait me with this foul derision?
Her. I am amazed at your passionate words.
 I scorn you not; it seems that you scorn me.
Hel. 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
 But by your setting on, by your consent?
Her. I understand not what you mean by this.
Hel. Ay, do! perserver, 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.
Lys. Helen, I love thee, by my life I do!
 My love, my life, my soul, fair Helena!
Hel. O excellent!
Her. Sweet, do not scorn her so.
Dem. If she cannot entreat, I can compel.
Lys. Thou canst compel no more than she entreat.
Dem. I say I love thee more than he can do.
Lys. If thou say so, withdraw, and prove it too.
Dem. Come, quick!
Her. Lysander, whereto tends all this?
Lys. Away, you Ethiop!
Lys. Hang off, thou cat, thou bur! Vile thing, let loose;
 Or I will shake thee from me like a serpent!
Her. Why are you grown so rude? What change is this,
 Sweet love?
Lys. Thy love? Out, tawny Tartar, out!
 Out, loathed med'cine! O hated poison, hence!
 Do you not jest?
Hel. Yes, sooth; and so do you.
Lys. Demetrius, I will keep my word with thee.
Dem. I would I had your bond, for I perceive
 A weak bond holds you. I'll not trust your word.
Lys. What? should I hurt her, strike her, kill her dead?
 Although I hate her, I'll not harm her so.

Her. 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.
Why then, you left me (O, the gods forbid!)
In earnest, shall I say?

Lys. Ay, by my life;
Be certain! nothing truer; 'tis no jest
That I do hate thee, and love Helena.

Her. O me, you juggler, you canker-bosom,
You thief of love! What, have you come by night
And stol'n my love's heart from him?

Hel. 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!

Her. "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.

Hel. 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.

Her. "Lower"? hark again.

Hel. Good Hermia, do not be so bitter with me.
I evermore did love you, Hermia,

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

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

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

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

Lys. Get you gone, you dwarf;
You minimus, of hind'ring knot grass made;
You bead, you acorn.

Dem. 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.

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

Dem. Follow? Nay; I'll go with thee, cheek by jowl. [Exit Dem. and Lys.]

Her. You, mistress, all this coil is long of you. **34**
Nay, go not back.

Hel. 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 Hel.]

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

Oberon and Puck come forward. **35**

Obe. This is thy negligence: still thou mistak'st,
Or else committ'st thy knaveries willfully.

Puck. Believe me, king of shadows, I mistook.
Did you not tell me I should know the man
By the Athenian garments he had on?
And so far blameless proves my enterprise
That I have 'noited an Athenian's eyes:
And so far am I glad it so did sport.
As this their jangling I esteem a sport.
Shall we their fond pageant see?

Obe. Lord what fools these mortals be!
But notwithstanding, haste, make no delay;
We may correct this business yet ere day. *Exit.*

INTERMISSION

ACT IV

Scene I

Enter Oberon and Puck

Obe. Thou knowst these lovers seek a place to fight. **35**
Hie therefore, Robin, overcast the night;
And lead these testy rivals so astray
As one come not within another's way.
Like to Lysander sometime frame thy tongue,
Then stir Demetrius up with bitter wrong;
And sometime rail thou like Demetrius:
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 Lysander's eye,
Whose liquor hath this virtuous property,
To take from thence all error with his might,
And make his eyeballs roll with wonted sight.
When they next wake, all this derision
Shall seem a dream and fruitless vision;

And back to Athens shall the lovers wend,
With league whose date till death shall never end.
Whiles I in this affair do thee employ,
I'll to my Queen, and beg her Indian boy;
And then I will her charmed eye release
From monster's view, and all things shall be peace.

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.

36

Enter Lysander

37

Lys. Where art thou, proud Demetrius? Speak thou now.

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

Lys. I will be with thee straight.

Puck. Follow me then

To plainer ground.

Exit Lys.

Enter Demetrius

Dem. Lysander, speak again.

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

Puck. Thou coward, art thou bragging to the stars,
Telling the bushes that thou look'st for wars,
And wilt not come? Come, recreant, come thou child!
I'll whip thee with a rod; he is defil'd
That draws a sword on thee.

Dem. Yea, art thou there?

Puck. Follow my voice; we'll try no manhood here.

Exit Dem.

Enter Lysander

Lys. He goes before me, and still he 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

Enter Demetrius

Puck. Ho,ho,ho! Coward, why co'st thou not?

Dem. Abide me if thou dar'st, for well I wot

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

Puck. Come hither; I am here.

Dem. 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. *Sleeps*

Enter Helena

Hel. O weary night, O long and tedious night,
Abate thy hours! 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 sorrows eye,
Steal me away from mine own company. *Sleeps*

Puck. Yet but three? Come one more,
Two of both kinds makes up four.
Here she comes, curst and sad:
Cupid is a knavish lad
Thus to make poor females mad!

Enter Hermia

Her. Never so weary, never so in woe,
Bedabbled with the dew, and torn with briars,
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. *Sleeps*

Scene II

Enter Titania with her train

Tit. Come sit thee down upon this flowery bed, **38**
While I thy amiable cheeks do coy,
And stick musk-roses in thy sleek smooth head,
And kiss thy fair large ears, my gentle joy.

Bottom. Where's Peaseblossom?

Peas. Ready.

Bottom. Scratch my head, Peaseblossom. Where's Mounsiour Cobweb?

Cob. Ready.

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

Mus. Ready.

Bottom. Give me your neaf, Mounsiour Mustardseed. Pray you, leave your coutesy,
good mounsiour.

Mus. What's your will?

Bottom. Nothing, good mounsiour, but to help Cavalery Cobweb to scratch. I must
to the barber's, mounsiour, for methinks I am marvelous 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 desir'st 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. [Exit Fairies.]
O how I love thee! How I dote on thee! [They sleep.]

Enter Puck and Oberon

Oberon. Welcome, good Robin. Seest thou this sweet sight? 39
Her dotage now I do begin to pity;
Effected with some care, I will undo
This hateful imperfection of her eyes.
And gentle Puck, take this transformed scalp
From off the head of this Athenian swain,
That he awaking when the other do,
May all to Athens back again repair,
And think no more of this night's accidents
But as the fierce vexation of a dream.
But first I will release the fairy queen.
 Be as thou wast wont to be;
 See as thou wont to see;
 Dian's bud o'er Cupid's flower
 Hath such force and blessed power.
Now my Titania, wake you, my sweet queen.
Titania. My Oberon! What visions have I seen!
Methought I was enamour'd of an ass.
Oberon. There lies your love.
Titania. How came these things to pass?
O how mine eyes do loathe his visage now!
Oberon. Silence awhile. Robin, take off this head.
Titania, music call, and strike more sound!
Puck. Now when thou wak'st, with thine own fool's eyes peep.
Oberon. 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.
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 wandering moon. [Exit Titania and Oberon.]

Scene III

Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Egeus, and his Train. 40

The. Go one of you, find out the forester;

For now our observation is perform'd,
 We will, fair queen, up to the mountain's top,
 But soft, what nymphs are these?
Ege. My lord, this is my daughter here asleep,
 And this Lysander; this Demetrius is,
 This Helena, old Nedar's Helen.
The. But speak Egeus; is not this the day
 That Hermia should give answer of her choice?
Ege. It is, my lord.
The. Go, bid the huntsmen wake them with their horns
 Good-morrow friends. Saint Valentine is past:
 Begin these wood birds but to couple now?
Lys. Pardon, my lord.
The 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?
Lys. 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 I do 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-
Ege. 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.
Dem. 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 know not by what power-
 But by some power it is - my love to Hermia,
 Melts as the snow; the virtue of my heart
 The object and pleasure of mine eye,
 Is only Helena. To her, my lord,
 Was I betroth'd ere I saw Hermia;
The. 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 Hippolyta, Theseus, Egeus, and Train*
Dem. These things seem small and undistinguishable, **41**
 Like far-off mountains turned into clouds.

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

Hel. So methinks;
And I have found Demetrius like a jewel,
Mine own, and not mine own.

Dem. 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?

Her. Yea, and my father

Hel. And Hippolyta

Lys. And he did bid us follow him to the castle.

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

Enter Bottom. **42**

Bot. 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. 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.

Enter Mechanicals **43**

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

Bot. Masters, If 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.

Quin. Let us hear, sweet Bottom.

Bot. 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; and meet presently at the palace; every man look o'er his part. 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 all*

ACT V

Scene I

Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Egeus and train.

Hip. Tis strange, my Theseus, that these lovers speak of. **44**

The. More strange than true. I never may believe
These antique fables, nor these fairy toys.

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

Enter the lovers

The. Here come the lovers, full of joy and mirth.
Joy, gentle friends, joy and fresh days of love
Accompany your hearts! 45

Lys. More than to us
Wait in your royal walks, your board, your bed!

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

Phil. Here, mighty Theseus.

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

Phil. A play there is, my lord, some ten words long,
Which is as brief as I have known a play;

The. What are they that do play it?

Phil. Hard-handed men that work in Athens here,
Which never labour'd in their minds till now;
And now have toil'd their unbreath'd memories
With this same play, against your nuptial.

The. And we will hear it.

Phil. No, my noble lord,
It is not for you.

The. I will hear that play;
Go bring them in; and take your places, ladies *Exit Philostrate*

*Enter with a trumpeter before them, Bottom as Pyramus and Flute as Thisbe
and Snout as Wall and Starveling as Moonshine and Snug as Lion.*

Pro. *Gentles, perchance you wonder at this show;* 46
But wonder on, till truth make all things plain.
This man is Pyramus, if you would know;
This beauteous lady Thisbe is certain.
This man, with lime and rough-cast, doth present
Wall, that vile wall which did these lovers sunder;
And through Wall's chink, poor souls, they are content
To whisper. At the which let no man wonder.
This man, with lantern, dog, and bush of thorn,
Presenteth Moonshine; for, if you will know,
By moonshine did these lovers think no scorn
To meet at Ninus' tomb, there, there to woo.
This grisly beast, which Lion hight by name,
The trusty Thisbe, coming first by night,
Did scare away, or rather did affright;
And as she fled, her mantle she did fall,
Which lion vile with bloody mouth did stain.
Anon comes Pyramus, sweet youth and tall,
And finds his trusty Thisbe's mantle slain;
Whereat with blade, with bloody blameful blade,
He bravely broach'd his boiling bloody breast;
And Thisbe, tarrying in mulberry shade,

*His dagger drew, and died. For all the rest.
Let Lion, Moonshine, Wall, and lovers twain
At large discourse, while here they do remain.*

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

The. I wonder if the lion be to speak?
Dem. 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 Thisbe,
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.*
The. Would you desire lime and hair to speak better?
Dem.. It is the wittiest partition that ever I heard discourse, my lord.

Enter Pyramus.

The. Pyramus draws near the wall; silence!
Pyr. *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 Thisbe'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 stretches out his fingers]
Thanks, courteous wall: Jove shield thee well for this!
But what see I? No Thisbe do I see.
O wicked wall, through whom I see no bliss,
Curs'd be thy stones for thus deceiving me!*
The. The wall, methinks, being sensible, should curse again.
Pyr. No, in truth sir, he should not. 'Deceiving me' is Thisbe'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.

This. *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.*
Pyr. *I see a voice; now will I to the chink,
To spy and I can hear my Thisbe's face.
Thisbe?*
This. *My love thou art, my love I think!*
Pyr. *Think what thou wilt, I am thy lover's grace;
And like Limander am I trusty still.*
This. *And I like Helen, till the Fates me kill.*

Pyr. Not Shafalus to Procrus was so true.
This. As Shafalus to Procrus, I to you.
Pyr. O kiss me through the hole of this vile wall.
This. I kiss the wall's hole, not your lips at all.
Pyr. Wilt thou at Ninny's tomb meet me straight away?
This. 'Tide life, 'tide death, I come without delay.
Exeunt Pyramus and Thisbe [severally]
Wall. Thus have I, Wall, my part discharged so;
 And, being done, thus Wall away doth go. *Exit.*
The. Now is the mure rased between the two neighbours.
Dem. No remedy my lord, when walls are so willful to hear without warning.
Hip. This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard.
The. The best in this kind are but shadows; and the worst are no worse, if
 imagination amend them.
Hip. It must be your imagination then, and not theirs.
The. If we imagine no worse of them than they of themselves, they may pass
 for excellent men. Here come two noble beasts in, a man and a lion.

Enter Lion and Moonshine.

Lion. You ladies, You whose gentle hearts do fear
 The smallest monstrous mouse that creeps on floor,
 May now, perchance, both quake and tremble here,
 When lion rough in wildest rage doth roar.
 Then know that I as Snug the joiner am
 A lion fell, nor else no lions dam;
 For if I should as lion come in strife
 Into this place, 'twere pity on my life.
Moon. This lantern doth the horned moon present-
 This lantern doth the horned moon present:
 Myself the Man i'th' Moon do seem to be.
Hip. I am aweary of this moon. Would he would change!
The. Proceed, Moon.
Moon. All that I have to say is, to tell you that the lan-
 tern is the moon, I the Man i'th' Moon; this thorn-
 bush my thorn-bush; and this dog my dog.
This. This is old Ninny's tomb. Where is my love?
Lion. O-! *The lion roars. Thisbe[dropping*
her mantle,]runs off.
Dem. Well roared, Lion!
The. Well run, Thisbe!
Hip. Well shone, Moon! Truly, the moon shines with a
 good grace. [The lion worries the mantle, and exit.]
The. Well moused, Lion!
Dem. And then came Pyramus-
Lys. And so the lion vanished.

Enter Pyramus.

Pyr. 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 Thisbe 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.*

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

Hip. Beshrew my heart, but I pity the man.

Pyr. *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! [exit Moonshine]
Now die, die, die, die, die! [dies.]*

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

The. She will find him by starlight.

Enter Thisbe.

This. Here she comes, and her passion ends the play.

*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! [stabs herself]
And farewell, friends;
Thus Thisbe ends:
Adieu, adieu, adieu! [dies.]*

They bow and exit the stage

The. Moonshine and Lion are left to bury the dead. **47**

Dem. Ay, and Wall too.

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

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

Puck If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended, **48**
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, goodnight unto you all.