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presents  
a Theatre Script of

# A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

By William Shakespeare

Written c. 1594-6

Earliest Extant Edition: 1600

*A Script based on the Quarto of 1600*

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## DRAMATIS PERSONS

**THESEUS**, Duke of Athens.

**HIPPOLYTA**, Queen of the Amazons, betrothed to  
Theseus.

**PHILOSTRATE**, Master of the Revels to Theseus.

**EGEUS**, Father to Hermia.

**HERMIA**, daughter to Egeus, in love with Lysander.

**LYSANDER**, in love with Hermia.

**DEMETRIUS**, in love with Hermia.

**HELENA**, in love with Demetrius.

**QUINCE**, a carpenter,

**SNUG**, a joiner.

**BOTTOM**, a weaver.

**FLUTE**, a bellows-mender.

**SNOUT**, a tinker.

**STARVELING**, a tailor.

### Fairies:

**OBERON**, King of the Fairies.

**TITANIA**, Queen of the Fairies.

**PUCK**, or Robin Goodfellow.

**PEASE-blossom.**

**COBWEB.**

**MOTH.**

**MUSTARDSEED.**

Other fairies attending their King and Queen.

Attendants on Theseus and Hippolyta.

SCENE: Athens, and a wood near it.

## NOTES.

### A. The Earliest Texts of *A Midsummer Night's Dream.*

Two quartos of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are known to have been published before the great Folio of Shakespeare's plays appeared in 1623:

(1) a 1600 quarto, printed "for Thomas Fisher"; and

(2) a quarto printed "for James Roberts", in which the date 1600 appears on the title page; however, scholarship has determined that this edition was actually printed in 1619. Why the Roberts Quarto claimed the earlier date can only be surmised.

The play was next published in 1623 in the Folio. Interestingly, this version was based on the Roberts Quarto.

The edition of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* you have before you is based on the 1600 Fisher Quarto, which Ridley and others consider authoritative. Happily, the differences between the Fisher Quarto and Folio are minimal.

In general, the wording appearing in the main text will be that of the Fisher Quarto. Individual substantive discrepancies between the Folio and Fisher Quarto are discussed in the annotations of the annotated edition of the play. In the few cases in which the wording in the Folio is generally agreed to be superior to that of the Fisher Quarto, the wording of the Folio is adopted, and is identified as so in the notes.

### B. Punctuation.

Until the 1590s, the primary full-stops used in literature were the period and colon, the colon functioning much like a modern semicolon.

In the mid-1590s, English writing began to adopt the semicolon more regularly, but the transition was gradual and would take decades to complete. As a result, texts produced in the early or middle stages of the transition often appear, punctuation-wise, to be a jumble of undifferentiated full-stops.

The Fisher Quarto, on which our text of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is based, remained largely rooted in the colon era, though a good number of semi-colons are scattered throughout without any evident rule or pattern.

As was typical for the era, commas were added by the compositors (the men who set the type) with great generosity; a comma seems to have been inserted into most sentences to divide them into the smallest integral clauses possible.

Our edition of the play retains the majority of the punctuation of the Fisher Quarto. Punctuation has been added, removed, or modified only when the original punctuation obscured the meaning of the text. In other words, we changed the punctuation only when needed to facilitate comprehension.

### **C. Scene Breaks, Settings, and Stage Directions.**

Our edition of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is a faithful reproduction of the 1600 Fisher Quarto, but with the spelling generally modernized. In other words, as is usual for all the plays found on our website, we lean towards adhering to the wording of the original text as much as possible.

Words or syllables which have been added to the original text to clarify the sense or repair the meter are surrounded by hard brackets [ ], and will be found mostly to have been borrowed from the Folio version of the play. A director who wishes to remain truer to the original text may of course omit any of the supplementary wording.

The Fisher Quarto divides the play into neither numbered Acts nor Scenes; nor does it provide settings. Our division into Acts and Scenes follows the conventional separation employed by most modern editions. Suggestions for scene locations are those of Stevenson.

Stage directions in Elizabethan-era published plays are often minimal in number and confusing in quality. Hence, it is generally thought acceptable to healthily supplement a play's stage directions to give clarity to the action. As such, we adopt the stage directions suggested by the aforementioned Stevenson.

# A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

by William Shakespeare

*A Script based on the Quarto of 1600.*

## ACT I.

## SCENE I.

### *Athens: The Palace of Theseus.*

*Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Philostrate,  
and Attendants.*

1      ***Thes.*** Now fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour  
2      Draws on apace: four happy days bring in  
3      Another moon: but oh, methinks, how slow  
4      This old moon wanes! she lingers my desires,  
5      Like to a step-dame, or a dowager,  
6      Long withering out a young man's revenue.

8      **Hippol.** Four days will quickly steep themselves in night;  
10     Four nights will quickly dream away the time;  
12     And then the moon, like to a silver bow  
      Now bent in Heaven, shall behold the night  
      Of our solemnities.

[*Exit Philostrate.*]

22 Hippolyta, I wooed thee with my sword,  
And won thy love, doing thee injuries:  
24 But I will wed thee in another key,  
With pomp, with triumph, and with revelling.

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



78 I know not by what power I am made bold;  
Nor how it may concern my modesty,  
80 In such a presence, here to plead my thoughts:  
But I beseech your Grace, that I may know  
82 The worst that may befall me in this case,  
If I refuse to wed Demetrius.

84 **Thes.** Either to die the death, or to abjure,  
86 Forever, the society of men.  
Therefore, fair Hermia, question your desires,  
88 Know of your youth, examine well your blood,  
Whether (if you yield not to your father's choice)  
90 You can endure the livery of a nun,  
For aye to be in shady cloister mewed,  
92 To live a barren sister all your life,  
Chanting faint hymns to the cold fruitless moon.  
94 Thrice-blessèd they that master so their blood,  
To undergo such maiden pilgrimage:  
96 But earthlier happy is the rose distilled,  
Than that, which, withering on the virgin thorn,  
98 Grows, lives, and dies, in single blessedness.

100 **Herm.** So will I grow, so live, so die, my lord,  
Ere I will yield my virgin patent up  
102 Unto his lordship, whose unwishèd yoke  
My soul consents not to give sovereignty.

104 **Thes.** Take time to pause, and by the next new moon,  
106 The sealing-day betwixt my love and me,  
For everlasting bond of fellowship,  
108 Upon that day either prepare to die,  
For disobedience to your father's will,  
110 Or else to wed Demetrius, as he would,  
Or on Diana's altar to protest,  
112 For aye, austerity and single life.

114 **Demet.** Relent, sweet Hermia: – and, Lysander, yield  
Thy crazèd title to my certain right.

116 **Lysan.** You have her father's love, Demetrius;  
118 Let me have Hermia's: do you marry him.

120 **Egeus.** Scornful Lysander! true, he hath my love:  
And what is mine, my love shall render him.  
122 And she is mine, and all my right of her  
I do estate unto Demetrius.

124 **Lysan.** I am, my lord, as well derived as he,

126 As well possessed; my love is more than his;  
128 My fortunes every way as fairly ranked  
(If not with vantage) as Demetrius';  
130 And (which is more than all these boasts can be)  
I am beloved of beauteous Hermia.  
Why should not I then prosecute my right?  
132 Demetrius, I'll avouch it to his head,  
Made love to Nedar's daughter, Helena,  
134 And won her soul; and she (sweet lady) dotes,  
Devoutly dotes, dotes in idolatry,  
136 Upon this spotted and inconstant man.

138 **Thes.** I must confess that I have heard so much;  
And, with Demetrius, thought to have spoke thereof:  
140 But, being over-full of self-affairs,  
My mind did lose it. – But, Demetrius, come,  
142 And come, Egeus; you shall go with me:  
I have some private schooling for you both. –  
144 For you, fair Hermia, look you arm yourself  
To fit your fancies to your father's will;  
146 Or else, the law of Athens yields you up  
(Which by no means we may extenuate)  
148 To death, or to a vow of single life. –  
Come, my Hippolyta: what cheer, my love? –  
150 Demetrius and Egeus, go along:  
I must employ you in some business  
152 Against our nuptial, and confer with you  
Of something nearly that concerns yourselves.

154 **Egeus.** With duty and desire, we follow you.  
156

[*Exeunt all but Lysander and Hermia.*]

158 **Lysan.** How now my love? why is your cheek so pale?  
160 How chance the roses there do fade so fast?

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

164 **Lysan.** Ay me! for aught that I could ever read,  
166 Could ever hear by tale or history,  
The course of true love never did run smooth:  
168 But either it was different in blood, –

170 **Herm.** O cross! too high to be enthralled to love.

172 **Lysan.** Or else misgraffèd, in respect of years, –

174 | *Herm.* O spite! too old to be engaged to young.

176 | *Lysan.* Or else, it stood upon the choice of friends, —

178 | **Herm.** O hell, to choose love by another's eyes.

180     *Lysan.* Or, if there were a sympathy in choice,  
181     War, death, or sickness, did lay siege to it,  
182     Making it momentany as a sound,  
183     Swift as a shadow, short as any dream;  
184     Brief as the lightning in the collied night,  
185     That (in a spleen) unfolds both Heaven and earth;  
186     And, ere a man hath power to say “Behold!”  
187     The jaws of darkness do devour it up:  
188     So quick bright things come to confusön.

190     **Herm.** If then true lovers have been ever crossed,  
It stands as an edict, in destiny:  
192     Then let us teach our trial patience:  
Because it is a customary cross,  
194     As due to love as thoughts, and dreams, and sighs,  
Wishes, and tears, poor fancy's followers.

190      **Lysan.** A good persuasion: therefore, hear me, Hermia:  
198      I have a widow aunt, a dowager,  
200      Of great révénue, and she hath no child:  
202      From Athens is her house remote seven leagues;  
204      And she respects me as her only son:  
206      There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee;  
208      And to that place, the sharp Athenian law  
210      Cannot pursue us. If thou lov'st me, then  
212      Steal forth thy father's house, to-morrow night;  
214      And in the wood, a league without the town,  
216      (Where I did meet thee once with Helena,  
218      To do observance to a morn of May),  
220      There will I stay for thee.

222

**Lysan.** Keep promise, love. Look, here comes Helena.

224

*Enter Helena.*

226

**Herm.** God speed fair Helena! whither away?

228

**Helena.** Call you me "fair"? that "fair" again unsay.

230

Demetrius loves your fair: O happy fair!

Your eyes are lode-stars, and your tongue's sweet air

232

More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear,

When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear.

234

Sickness is catching: O, were favour so!

Your words I[d] catch, fair Hermia, ere I go;

236

My ear should catch your voice, my eye your eye,

My tongue should catch your tongue's sweet melody.

238

Were the world mine, Demetrius being bated,

The rest I'll give to be to you translated.

240

O, teach me how you look, and with what art

You sway the motion of Demetrius' heart!

242

**Herm.** I frown upon him; yet he loves me still.

244

**Helena.** O that your frowns would teach my smiles such skill!

246

**Herm.** I give him curses, yet he gives me love.

248

**Helena.** O that my prayers could such affection move!

250

**Herm.** The more I hate, the more he follows me.

252

**Helena.** The more I love, the more he hateth me.

254

**Herm.** His folly, Helena, is no fault of mine.

256

**Helena.** None but your beauty: would that fault were mine!

258

**Herm.** Take comfort: he no more shall see my face;

260

Lysander and myself will fly this place.

Before the time I did Lysander see,

262

Seemed Athens as a paradise to me.

O, then, what graces in my love do dwell,

264

That he hath turned a Heaven unto a hell!

266

**Lysan.** Helen, to you our minds we will unfold:

Tomorrow night, when Phoebe doth behold

268

Her silver visage in the watery glass,

Decking, with liquid pearl, the bladed grass,

270 (A time that lovers' flights doth still conceal),  
Through Athens' gates have we devised to steal.

**Herm.** And in the wood, where often you and I,  
Upon faint primrose-beds, were wont to lie,  
Emptying our bosoms, of their counsel swelled,  
There my Lysander and myself shall meet,  
And thence from Athens, turn away our eyes,  
To seek new friends and strange companiöns.  
Farewell, sweet playfellow: pray thou for us:  
And good luck grant thee thy Demetrius! –  
Keep word, Lysander: we must starve our sight  
From lovers' food till morrow deep midnight.

284 | *Lysan.* I will, my Hermia.

[Exit *Hermia*.]

[Exit *Lysander*.]

292      **Helena.** How happy some o'er other some can be!  
294      Through Athens, I am thought as fair as she.  
296      But what of that? Demetrius thinks not so:  
298      He will not know what all but he do know.  
300      And as he errs, doting on Hermia's eyes,  
302      So I, admiring of his qualities.  
304      Things base and vile, holding no quantity,  
306      Love can transpose to form and dignity.  
308      Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind:  
310      And therefore is winged Cupid painted blind.  
312      Nor hath Love's mind of any judgement taste:  
314      Wings, and no eyes, figure unheedy haste:  
316      And therefore is Love said to be a child,  
318      Because, in choice, he is so oft beguiled.  
320      As waggish boys, in game, themselves forswear,  
322      So the boy, Love, is perjured everywhere.  
324      For, ere Demetrius looked on Hermia's eyne,  
326      He hailed down oaths, that he was only mine;  
328      And when this hail some heat, from Hermia, felt,  
330      So he dissolved, and showers of oaths did melt.  
332      I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight:  
334      Then, to the wood, will he, tomorrow night,  
336      Pursue her: and for this intelligence,  
338      If I have thanks, it is a dear expense:  
340      But herein mean I to enrich my pain,

318 | To have his sight thither, and back again.

[*Exit Helena.*]

## ACT I, SCENE II.

*A Room in Quince's House.*

*Enter Quince the carpenter; Snug the joiner;  
Bottom the weaver, Flute the bellows-mender;  
Snout the tinker, and Starveling the tailor.*

1      **Quin.** Is all our company here?  
2  
4      **Bottom.** You were best to call them generally,  
man by man, according to the scrip.  
6      **Quin.** Here is the scroll of every man's name, which  
8      is thought fit, through all Athens, to play in our  
interlude before the duke and the duchess, on his  
wedding-day at night.  
10     **Bottom.** First, good Peter Quince, say what the play  
12     treats on; then read the names of the actors: and so  
grow to a point.  
14     **Quin.** Marry, our play is, "The Most Lamentable  
16     Comedy and Most Cruel Death of Pyramus and  
Thisbe."  
18     **Bottom.** A very good piece of work, I assure you,  
20     and a merry. Now, good Peter Quince, call forth your  
actors, by the scroll. — Masters, spread yourselves.  
22     **Quin.** Answer, as I call you. — Nick Bottom, the  
24     weaver?  
26     **Bottom.** Ready. Name what part I am for, and  
proceed.  
28     **Quin.** You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus.  
30     **Bottom.** What is Pyramus? a lover, or a tyrant?  
32     **Quin.** A lover that kills himself most gallant[ly] for  
34     love.  
36     **Bottom.** That will ask some tears in the true  
38     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  
40     is for a tyrant: I could play Ercles rarely, or a part  
to tear a cat in, to make all split:

42      *The raging rocks,  
44      And shivering shocks  
46      Shall break the locks  
46      Of prison-gates;  
48      And Phibus' car  
48      Shall shine from far,  
50      And make and mar  
50      The foolish Fates.*

52      This was lofty. Now, name the rest of the players.  
54      This is Ercles' vein, a tyrant's vein: a lover is more  
54      condoling.

56      **Quin.** Francis Flute, the bellows-mender?

58      **Flute.** Here, Peter Quince.

60      **Quin.** Flute, you must take Thisbe on you.

62      **Flute.** What is Thisbe? a wandering knight?

64      **Quin.** It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

66      **Flute.** Nay, faith, let not me play a woman: I have a  
68      beard coming.

68      **Quin.** That's all one: you shall play it in a mask: and  
70      you may speak as small as you will.

72      **Bottom.** And I may hide my face, let me play Thisbe  
74      too, I'll speak in a monstrous little voice; "Thisne;  
74      Thisne." "Ah Pyramus, my lover dear, thy Thisbe dear,  
76      and lady dear!"

76      **Quin.** No, no: you must play Pyramus: and, Flute,  
78      you Thisbe.

80      **Bottom.** Well, proceed.

82      **Quin.** Robin Starveling, the tailor?

84      **Starv.** Here, Peter Quince.

86      **Quin.** Robin Starveling, you must play Thisbe's  
88      mother. Tom Snout, the tinker?

88      **Snout.** Here, Peter Quince.

90      **Quin.** You, Pyramus' father: myself, Thisbe's father:  
92      Snug, the joiner, you, the lion's part: and, I hope, here

94      is a play fitted.

96      **Snug.** Have you the lion's part written? pray you,  
96      if it be, give it me, for I am slow of study.

98      **Quin.** You may do it extempore: for it is nothing but  
98      roaring.

100     **Bottom.** Let me play the lion too. I will roar, that I  
102     will do any man's heart good to hear me. I will roar,  
104     that I will make the duke say, "Let him roar again, let  
104     him roar again."

106     **Quin.** And you should do it too terribly, you would  
106     fright the duchess and the ladies, that they would  
108     shrike; and that were enough to hang us all.

110     **All.** That would hang us, every mother's son.

112     **Bottom.** I grant you, friends, if you should fright the  
112     ladies out of their wits, they would have no more  
114     discretion, but to hang us: but I will aggravate my  
114     voice so, that I will roar you as gently as any sucking  
116     dove; I will roar you, and 'twere any nightingale.

118     **Quin.** You can play no part but Pyramus: for  
118     Pyramus is a sweet-faced man; a proper man as  
120     one shall see in a summer's day; a most lovely,  
122     gentleman-like man: therefore you must needs play  
122     Pyramus.

124     **Bottom.** Well, I will undertake it. What beard were I  
124     best to play it in?

126     **Quin.** Why, what you will.

128     **Bottom.** I will discharge it in either your straw colour  
130     beard, your orange-tawny beard, your purple-in-grain  
132     beard, or your French crown colour beard, your  
132     perfit yellow.

134     **Quin.** Some of your French crowns have no hair at  
134     all; and then you will play barefaced. – But masters,  
136     here are your parts: and I am to entreat you, request  
136     you, and desire you, to con them by tomorrow night:  
138     and meet me in the palace wood, a mile without the  
138     town, by moonlight; there will we rehearse: for if we  
140     meet in the city, we shall be dogged with company,  
140     and our devices known. In the mean time, I will

142 draw a bill of properties, such as our play wants. I  
pray you, fail me not.

144           **Bottom.** We will meet, and there we may rehearse  
146            most obscenely and courageously. Take pains; be  
              perfit: adieu.

148           **Quin.** At the duke's oak we meet.

150           **Bottom.** Enough: hold, or cut bow-strings.

152           [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT II.

### SCENE I.

*A wood near Athens.*

*Enter a Fairy at one door,  
and Puck (Robin Goodfellow) at another.*

1      **Puck.** How now spirit! whither wander you?

2  
4      **Fairy.** Over hill, over dale,  
Over park, over pale,  
6      Thorough bush, thorough brier,  
Thorough flood, thorough fire:  
8      I do wander everywhere,  
Swifter than the moon's sphere;  
10     And I serve the Fairy Queen,  
To dew her orbs upon the green.  
12     The cowslips tall her pensioners be,  
In their gold coats, spots you see:  
14     Those be rubies, fairy favours:  
In those freckles, live their savours.  
16     I must go seek some dewdrops here,  
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear. —  
18     Farewell, thou Lob of spirits: I'll be gone.  
Our queen and all her elves come here anon.

20     **Puck.** The king doth keep his revels here tonight.  
Take heed the queen come not within his sight:  
22     For Oberon is passing fell and wrath,  
Because that she as her attendant, hath  
24     A lovely boy, stol'n from an Indian king:  
She never had so sweet a changeling.  
26     And jealous Oberon would have the child  
Knight of his train, to trace the forests wild;  
28     But she, perforce, withholds the lovèd boy,  
Crowns him with flowers, and makes him all her joy.  
30     And now, they never meet in grove or green,  
By fountain clear, or spangled starlight sheen,  
32     But they do square, that all their elves, for fear,  
Creep into acorn cups, and hide them there.

34  
36     **Fairy.** Either I mistake your shape and making quite,  
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite,  
Called Robin Goodfellow. Are not you he  
38     That frights the maidens of the villagery?

40 Skim milk, and sometimes labour in the quern,  
And bootless make the breathless housewife churn,  
42 And sometime make the drink to bear no barm,  
Mislead night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?  
Those that Hobgoblin call you, and sweet Puck,  
44 You do their work, and they shall have good luck.  
Are not you he?

46 **Puck.** Thou speak'st aright;  
48 I am that merry wanderer of the night.  
I jest to Oberon, and make him smile,  
50 When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,  
Neighing, in likeness of a filly foal;  
52 And sometime lurk I in a gossip's bowl,  
In very likeness of a roasted crab,  
54 And when she drinks, against her lips I bob,  
And on her withered dewlap pour the ale.  
56 The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,  
Sometime, for three-foot stool, mistaketh me:  
58 Then slip I from her bum, down topples she,  
And "tailor" cries, and falls into a cough;  
60 And then the whole quire hold their hips, and loffe;  
And waxen in their mirth, and neeze, and swear  
62 A merrier hour was never wasted there. —  
But room, fairy! — here comes Oberon.

64 **Fairy.** And here, my mistress! Would that he were gone!

66 *Enter Oberon at one door, with his train;  
68 Titania, at another, with hers.*

70 **Ober.** Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania.

72 **Titan.** What, jealous Oberon? — Fairies, skip hence:  
I have forsworn his bed and company.

74 **Ober.** Tarry, rash wanton. Am not I thy lord?

76 **Titan.** Then I must be thy lady: but I know  
78 When thou hast stol'n away from Fairy Land,  
And in the shape of Corin sat all day,  
80 Playing on pipes of corn, and versing love,  
To amorous Phillida. Why art thou here,  
82 Come from the farthest steppe of India?  
But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,  
84 Your buskined mistress, and your warrior love,  
To Theseus must be wedded; and you come,  
86 To give their bed joy and prosperity.

88     **Ober.** How canst thou thus for shame, Titania,  
89     Glance at my credit with Hippolyta,  
90     Knowing I know thy love to Theseus?  
91     Didst thou not lead him through the glimmering night  
92     From Perigenia, whom he ravishèd?  
93     And make him with fair Ægles break his faith  
94     With Ariadne, and Antíopa?

96     **Titan.** These are the forgeries of jealousy:  
97     And never, since the middle summer's spring,  
98     Met we on hill, in dale, forest, or mead,  
99     By pavèd fountain, or by rushy brook,  
100    Or in the beachèd margent of the sea,  
101    To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,  
102    But with thy brawls thou hast disturbed our sport.  
103    Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,  
104    As in revenge, have sucked up, from the sea,  
105    Contagious fogs: which, falling in the land,  
106    Hath every pelting river made so proud,  
107    That they have overborne their continents.  
108    The ox hath therefore stretched his yoke in vain,  
109    The ploughman lost his sweat, and the green corn  
110    Hath rotted, ere his youth attained a beard:  
111    The fold stands empty in the drownèd field,  
112    And crows are fatted with the murrian flock;  
113    The nine men's morris is filled up with mud:  
114    And the quaint mazes, in the wanton green,  
115    For lack of tread, are undistinguishable.  
116    The human mortals want their winter here,  
117    No night is now with hymn or carol blest.  
118    Therefore the moon (the governess of floods)  
119    Pale in her anger, washes all the air,  
120    That rheumatic diseases do abound.  
121    And, thorough this distemperature, we see  
122    The seasons alter: hoary-headed frosts  
123    Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose,  
124    And on old Hiëms' chin and icy crown,  
125    An odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds  
126    Is, as in mockery, set. The spring, the summer,  
127    The chiding autumn, angry winter change  
128    Their wonted liveries: and the mazèd world,  
129    By their increase, now knows not which is which:  
130    And this same progeny of evils comes  
131    From our debate, from our dissensiön;  
132    We are their parents and original.

134     *Ober.* Do you amend it then: it lies in you.  
Why should Titania cross her Oberon?  
136 I do but beg a little changeling boy,  
To be my henchman.

*Ober.* How long, within this wood, intend you stay?

160      ***Titan.*** Perchance, till after Theseus' wedding-day.  
161      If you will patiently dance in our round,  
162      And see our moonlight revels, go with us:  
163      If not, shun me, and I will spare your haunts.

164 | *Ober.* Give me that boy, and I will go with thee.

166 **Titan.** Not for thy fairy kingdom. – Fairies, away! –  
We shall chide downright, if I longer stay.

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170      *Ober.* Well: go thy way. Thou shalt not from this grove,  
172      Till I torment thee for this injury. —  
174      My gentle Puck, come hither: thou rememberest,  
176      Since once I sat upon a promontory,  
178      And heard a mermaid, on a dolphin's back,  
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath,  
That the rude sea grew civil at her song,  
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,  
To hear the sea-maid's music.

*Puck.* I remember.

182      *Ober.* That very time, I saw (but thou couldst not)  
184      Flying between the cold moon and the earth,  
186      Cupid, all armed: a certain aim he took  
188      At a fair vestal, thronèd by [the] west,  
190      And loosed his love-shaft smartly from his bow,  
192      As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts:  
194      But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft  
196      Quenched in the chaste beams of the watery moon:  
198      And the imperial votress passèd on,  
200      In maiden meditation, fancy-free.  
202      Yet marked I where the bolt of Cupid fell:  
204      It fell upon a little western flower;  
206      Before, milk-white; now purple, with love's wound,  
208      And maidens call it love-in-idleness.  
210      Fetch me that flower; the herb I shewed thee once.  
212      The juice of it, on sleeping eye-lids laid,  
214      Will make or man or woman madly dote  
216      Upon the next live creature that it sees.  
218      Fetch me this herb, and be thou here again  
220      Ere the leviathan can swim a league.

204      **Puck.** I'll put a girdle round about the earth,  
In forty minutes.

206

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

222 | Enter Demetrius, Helena following him.

224 **Demet.** I love thee not: therefore pursue me not.  
Where is Lysander and fair Hermia?  
226 The one I'll stay: the other stayeth me.  
Thou told'st me, they were stol'n unto this wood;  
228 And here am I, and wood, within this wood,  
Because I cannot meet my Hermia.

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

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

236 **Demet.** Do I entice you? do I speak you fair?  
238 Or rather do I not in plainest truth,  
Tell you I do not, nor I cannot love you?

240 **Helena.** And even for that, do I love you the more.  
242 I am your spaniel: and, Demetrius,  
The more you beat me, I will fawn on you:  
244 Use me but as your spaniel: spurn me, strike me,  
Neglect me, lose me: only give me leave  
246 (Unworthy as I am) to follow you.  
What worser place can I beg, in your love,  
248 (And yet, a place of high respect with me)  
Than to be usèd as you use your dog?

250 **Demet.** Tempt not, too much, the hatred of my spirit.  
252 For I am sick, when I do look on thee.

254 **Helena.** And I am sick when I look not on you.

256 **Demet.** You do impeach your modesty too much,  
To leave the city, and commit yourself  
258 Into the hands of one that loves you not;  
To trust the opportunity of night,  
260 And the ill counsel of a desert place,  
With the rich worth of your virginity.

262 **Helena.** Your virtue is my privilege: for that  
264 It is not night, when I do see your face.  
Therefore, I think, I am not in the night;  
266 Nor doth this wood lack worlds of company.  
For you, in my respect, are all the world.  
268 Then how can it be said I am alone,  
When all the world is here, to look on me?

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

274 **Helena.** The wildest hath not such a heart as you.  
Run when you will: the story shall be changed:  
276 Apollo flies and Daphne holds the chase:  
The dove pursues the griffin: the mild hind

278 Makes speed to catch the tiger. Bootless speed,  
When cowardice pursue, and valour flies.

280 **Demet.** I will not stay thy questions. Let me go:  
282 Or if thou follow me, do not believe,  
But I shall do thee mischief in the wood.

284 **Helena.** Ay, in the temple, in the town, the field,  
286 You do me mischief. Fie, Demetrius!  
Your wrongs do set a scandal on my sex:  
288 We cannot fight for love, as men may do:  
We should be wooed, and were not made to woo.

290 *[Exit Demetrius.]*

292 I'll follow thee, and make a Heaven of hell,  
294 To die upon the hand I love so well.

296 *[Exit Helena.]*

298 **Ober.** Fare thee well, nymph. Ere he do leave this grove,  
Thou shalt fly him, and he shall seek thy love. —

300 *Re-enter Puck.*

302 Hast thou the flower there? Welcome, wanderer.

304 **Puck.** Ay, there it is.

306 **Ober.** I pray thee give it me.  
308 I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,  
Where oxlips, and the nodding violet grows,  
310 Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine,  
With sweet musk-roses, and with eglantine:  
312 There sleeps Titania, sometime of the night,  
Lulled in these flowers, with dances and delight:  
314 And there the snake throws her enamelled skin,  
Weed wide enough to wrap a fairy in.  
316 And, with the juice of this, I'll streak her eyes,  
And make her full of hateful fantasies.  
318 Take thou some of it, and seek through this grove:  
A sweet Athenian lady is in love  
320 With a disdainful youth: anoint his eyes.  
But do it, when the next thing he espies,  
322 May be the lady: thou shalt know the man  
By the Athenian garments he hath on.  
324 Effect it with some care, that he may prove  
More fond on her than she upon her love:

326 | And look thou meet me ere the first cock crow.

328 | **Puck.** Fear not, my lord: your servant shall do so.

330 | *[Exeunt.]*

## ACT II, SCENE II

*Another part of the wood.*

*Enter Titania, with her train.*

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

10 | *The Fairies sing.*

12 | *All Fairies.*

14     *You spotted snakes, with double tongue,  
Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen,  
Newts and blind-worms, do no wrong,*  
16     *Come not near our Fairy Queen.*

18 | *Chorus.*

20      *Philomel, with melody,  
          Sing in our sweet lullaby,  
          Lulla, lulla, lullaby, lulla, lulla, lullaby:*  
22      *Never harm,  
          Nor spell, nor charm,  
          Come our lovely lady nigh;  
          So good night, with lullaby.*

26      *1<sup>st</sup> Fairy. Weaving spiders, come not here;*  
28      *Hence, you long-legged spinners, hence!*  
30      *Beetles black, approach not near:*  
          *Worm nor snail, do no offence.*

32 | *Chorus.*

*Philomel, with melody, &c.*

34      *2<sup>nd</sup> Fairy.* Hence, away! now all is well:  
36      One aloof, stand sentinel.

[*Exeunt Fairies*]

[*Titania sleeps.*]

*Enter Oberon,  
and squeezes the flower on Titania's eyelids.*

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

54 [Exit Oberon.]

56 | Enter Lysander and Hermia.

58 **Lysan.** Fair love, you faint, with wandering in the wood:  
And to speak troth, I have forgot our way.  
60 We'll rest us, Hermia, if you think it good,  
And tarry for the comfort of the day.

**Herm.** Be it so, Lysander: find you out a bed:  
For I, upon this bank, will rest my head.

66 **Lysan.** One turf shall serve as pillow for us both:  
One heart, one bed, two bosoms, and one troth.

**Herm.** Nay, good Lysander: for my sake, my dear,  
Lie further off, yet: do not lie so near.

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

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

90                   **Lysan.** Amen, amen, to that fair prayer, say I;  
92                   And then end life, when I end loyalty!

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

**Herm.** With half that wish, the wisher's eyes be pressed!

[They sleep.]

*Enter Puck.*

100      **Puck.** Through the forest have I gone,  
102      But Athenian found I none,  
104      On whose eyes I might approve  
106      This flower's force in stirring love. —  
108      Night and silence. Who is here?  
110      Weeds of Athens he doth wear:  
112      This is he (my master said)  
114      Despisèd the Athenian maid:  
116      And here the maiden, sleeping sound,  
118      On the dank and dirty ground.  
120      Pretty soul, she durst not lie  
122      Near this lack-love, this kill-courtesy. —  
124      Churl, upon thy eyes I throw  
126      All the power this charm doth owe:  
128      When thou wak'st, let love forbid  
130      Sleep his seat on thy eyelid.  
132      So awake, when I am gone:  
134      For I must now to Oberon.

[Exit Puck.]

*Enter Demetrius and Helena running.*

124 *Helena.* Stay, though thou kill me, sweet Demetrius.

126 *Demet.* I charge thee hence, and do not haunt me thus.

128 *Helena.* O, wilt thou darkling leave me? do not so.

130 **Demet.** Stay, on thy peril: I alone will go.

[Exit Demetrius.]

134 **Helena.** O, I am out of breath in this fond chase!

The more my prayer, the lesser is my grace.

136 Happy is Hermia, wheresoe'er she lies:

For she hath blessed and attractive eyes.

138 How came her eyes so bright? Not with salt tears.

If so, my eyes are oftener washed than hers.

140 No, no: I am as ugly as a bear:  
E. 1. 1.

For beasts that meet me, run away for fear.

142 Therefore, no marvel, though Demetrius  
Do, as a monster, fly my presence, thus.  
144 What wicked and dissembling glass of mine  
Made me compare with Hermia's sphery eyne? –  
146 But who is here? Lysander, on the ground?  
Dead, or asleep? I see no blood, no wound. –  
148 Lysander, if you live, good sir, awake.

150 **Lysan.** [Awaking.]  
And run through fire I will for thy sweet sake.  
152 Transparent Helena, nature shews art,  
That through thy bosom makes me see thy heart.  
154 Where is Demetrius? Oh how fit a word  
Is that vile name to perish on my sword!

156  
158 **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.

160  
162 **Lysan.** Content with Hermia? No: I do repent  
The tedious minutes I with her have spent.  
Not Hermia, but Helena I love.  
164 Who will not change a raven for a dove?  
The will of man is by his reason swayed:  
166 And reason says you are the worthier maid.  
Things growing are not ripe, until their season:  
168 So I, being young, till now ripe not to reason.  
And touching now the point of human skill,  
170 Reason becomes the marshal to my will,  
And leads me to your eyes; where I o'erlook  
172 Love's stories, written in love's richest book.

174 **Helena.** Wherfore was I to this keen mockery born?  
When, at your hands, did I deserve this scorn?  
176 Is 't not enough, is 't not enough, young man,  
That I did never, no nor never can,  
178 Deserve a sweet look from Demetrius' eye,  
But you must flout my insufficiency?  
180 Good troth, you do me wrong (good sooth you do)  
In such disdainful manner me to woo.  
182 But, fare you well: perforce I must confess,  
I thought you lord of more true gentleness.  
184 O, that a lady, of one man refused,  
Should, of another, therefore be abused!

186  
188 [Exit Helena.]

190     *Lysan.* She sees not Hermia. – Hermia, sleep thou there,  
And never mayst thou come Lysander near!  
For, as a surfeit of the sweetest things  
192     The deepest loathing to the stomach brings:  
Or, as the heresies, that men do leave,  
194     Are hated most of those they did deceive:  
So thou, my surfeit, and my heresy,  
196     Of all be hated; but the most, of me! –  
And all my powers, address your love and might,  
198     To honour Helen, and to be her knight!

200 | [Exit Lysander.]

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

216 | *[Exit Hermia.]*

## ACT III.

### SCENE I.

*The wood. Titania lying asleep.*

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

1      **Bottom.** Are we all met?

2      **Quin.** Pat, pat: and here's a marvellous convenient  
4      place for our rehearsal. This green plot shall be our  
6      stage, this hawthorn-brake our tiring-house, and we  
will do it in action, as we will do it before the duke.

8      **Bottom.** Peter Quince?

10     **Quin.** What sayest thou, Bully Bottom?

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

16     **Snout.** Berlakin, a parlous fear.

18     **Starv.** I believe we must leave the killing out, when  
20    all is done.

22     **Bottom.** Not a whit: I have a device to make all well.  
24    Write me a prologue, and let the prologue seem to  
say, we will do no harm with our swords, and that  
26    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.

28     **Quin.** Well: we will have such a prologue, and it  
30    shall be written in eight and six.

32     **Bottom.** No: make it two more: let it be written in  
eight and eight.

34     **Snout.** Will not the ladies be afeared of the lion?

36     **Starv.** I fear it, I promise you.

38     **Bottom.** Masters, you ought to consider with  
40    yourselves, to bring in (God shield us) a lion among

42 ladies, is a most dreadful thing; for there is not  
a more fearful wild-fowl than your lion living: and  
we ought to look toote.

44 **Snout.** Therefore, another prologue must tell he is  
46 not a lion.

48 **Bottom.** Nay: you must name his name, and half his  
50 face must be seen through the lion's neck, and he  
52 himself must speak through, saying thus, or to the  
54 same defect: "Ladies," or, "Fair ladies, I would wish  
56 you," or, "I would request you," or, "I would entreat  
58 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.

60 **Quin.** Well: it shall be so: But there is two hard things;  
62 that is, to bring the moonlight into a chamber:  
for you know, Pyramus and Thisbe meet by moonlight.

64 **Snout.** Doth the moon shine, that night we play our  
play?

66 **Bottom.** A calendar, a calendar! look in the almanac:  
find out moonshine, find out moonshine.

68 **Quin.** Yes: it doth shine that night.

70 **Bottom.** Why then, may you leave a casement of the  
72 great chamber window (where we play) open; and the  
moon may shine in at the casement.

74 **Quin.** Ay: or else, one must come in, with a bush  
76 of thorns, and a lantern, and say he comes to  
disfigure, or to present, the person of moonshine.  
78 Then, there is another thing; we must have a wall in  
the great chamber: for Pyramus and Thisbe (says  
80 the story) did talk through the chink of a wall.

82 **Snout.** You can never bring in a wall. What say you,  
Bottom?

84 **Bottom.** Some man or other must present wall: and  
86 let him have some plaster, or some loam, or some  
rough-cast, about him, to signify wall; or let him  
88 hold his fingers thus: and through that cranny, shall

90 Pyramus and Thisbe whisper.

92 **Quin.** If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit  
94 down, every mother's son, and rehearse your parts.  
Pyramus, you begin: when you have spoken your  
96 speech, enter into that brake, and so every one  
according to his cue.

98 *Enter Puck.*

100 **Puck.** What hempen home-spuns have we swaggering here,  
So near the cradle of the Fairy Queen? –  
102 What, a play toward! I'll be an auditor,  
An actor too perhaps, if I see cause.

104 **Quin.** Speak, Pyramus: – Thisbe stand forth.

106 **Bottom.** Thisbe, the flowers of odious savours sweet, –

108 **Quin.** Odours, odours.

110 **Bottom.** – odours savours sweet:  
So hath thy breath, my dearest Thisbe dear.  
112 But hark, a voice! stay thou but here awhile,  
And by and by I will to thee appear.

114 *[Exit Bottom.]*

116 **Puck.** A stranger Pyramus than e'er played here.

118 *[Exit Puck.]*

120 **Flute.** Must I speak now?

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

126 **Flute.** Most radiant Pyramus, most lily-white of hue,  
128 Of colour like the red rose, on triumphant brier,  
Most brisky juvenal, and eke most lovely Jew,  
130 As true as truest horse, that yet would never tire,  
I'll meet thee Pyramus, at Ninny's tomb.

132 **Quin.** "Ninus' tomb," man: why, you must not speak  
134 that yet; that you answer to Pyramus. You speak all  
your part at once, cues and all. – Pyramus enter: your  
136 cue is past: it is, "never tire."

138 | **Flute.** O – As true as truest horse, that yet would never tire.

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

**Bottom.** If I were fair, Thisbe, I were only thine.

146 **Quin.** O monstrous! O strange! we are haunted!  
Pray, masters! fly, masters! Help!

[*Exeunt Quince, Snug, Flute, Snout,  
and Starveling.*]

150      **Puck.** I'll follow you: I'll lead you about a round,  
152      Through bog, through bush, through brake, through brier:  
            Sometime a horse I'll be, sometime a hound,  
154      A hog, a headless bear, sometime a fire,  
            And neigh, and bark, and grunt, and roar, and burn,  
156      Like horse, hound, hog, bear, fire, at every turn.

[Exit Puck.]

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

### *Re-enter Snout.*

164      ***Snout.*** O Bottom, thou art changed! what do I see on  
166      thee?

168 **Bottom.** What do you see? you see an ass-head of your own, do you?

[Exit Snout]

Re-enter Quince

174      **Quin.** Bless thee, Bottom, bless thee! thou art  
175      translated.

178 | *Exit Quince* |

180 **Bottom.** I see their knavery: this is to make an ass of me, to fright me, if they could. But I will not stir  
182 from this place, do what they can: I will walk up and down here, and I will sing, that they shall hear I am  
184 not afraid

186 | *Sings.*

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

190

192     ***Titan.*** [Awaking.]

194     What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?

196     ***Bottom.*** [Sings.]

198     *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; —*

200

202     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?

204

206     ***Titan.*** I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again:  
Mine ear is much enamoured of thy note:

208     So is mine eye entrallèd to thy shape,  
And thy fair virtue's force (perforce) doth move me

210     On the first view to say, to swear, I love thee.

212     ***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.

214

216

218     ***Titan.*** Thou art as wise, as thou art beautiful.

220     ***Bottom.*** Not so neither: but if I had wit enough to  
get out of this wood, I have enough to serve mine  
own turn.

222

224     ***Titan.*** Out of this wood do not desire to go:  
Thou shalt remain here, whether thou wilt or no.

226     I am a spirit, of no common rate:  
The summer still doth tend upon my state,

228     And I do love thee: therefore go with me.  
I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee:

230     And they shall fetch thee jewëls, from the deep,  
And sing, while thou, on pressèd flowers, dost sleep:

232     And I will purge thy mortal grossness so,  
That thou shalt, like an airy spirit, go. —

234     Pease-blossom, Cobweb, Moth, and Mustardseed!

*Enter four Fairies.*

238    **Pease.** Ready.

240    **Cob.** And I.

242    **Moth.** And I.

244    **Must.** And I.

246    **All.** Where shall we go?

248    **Titan.** Be kind and courteous to this gentleman:  
    Hop in his walks, and gambol in his eyes,  
250    Feed him with apricocks, and dewberries,  
    With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries;  
252    The honey-bags steal from the humble-bees,  
    And for night-tapers, crop their waxen thighs,  
254    And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes,  
    To have my love to bed, and to arise;  
256    And pluck the wings from painted butterflies,  
    To fan the moonbeams from his sleeping eyes;  
258    Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies.

260    **Peas.** Hail, mortal!

262    **Cob.** Hail!

264    **Moth.** Hail!

266    **Must.** Hail!

268    **Bottom.** I cry your worships' mercy, heartily: – I  
    beseech your worship's name.

270    **Cob.** Cobweb.

272    **Bottom.** I shall desire you of more acquaintance,  
274    good Master Cobweb: if I cut my finger, I shall make  
    bold with you. – Your name, honest gentleman?

276    **Pease.** Pease-blossom.

278    **Bottom.** I pray you, commend me to Mistress  
280    Squash, your mother, and to Master Peascod, your  
    father. Good Master Pease-blossom, I shall desire  
282    you of more acquaintance, too. – Your name, I  
    beseech you, sir?

284    **Must.** Mustardseed.

286    **Bottom.** Good Master Mustardseed, I know your

288    patience well. That same cowardly, giant-like ox-beef  
290    hath devoured many a gentleman of your house. I  
292    promise you, your kindred hath made my eyes water  
294    ere now. I desire your more acquaintance, good Master  
296    Mustardseed.

294    ***Titan.*** Come, wait upon him: lead him to my bower.  
296    The moon, methinks, looks with a watery eye:  
298    And when she weeps, weeps every little flower,  
298    Lamenting some enforcèd chastity.  
300    Tie up my lover's tongue, bring him silently.

[*Exeunt.*]



42 But hast thou yet latched the Athenian's eyes  
With the love-juice, as I did bid thee do?

44 **Puck.** I took him sleeping (that is finished too)  
46 And the Athenian woman by his side;  
That when he waked, of force she must be eyed.

48 *Enter Demetrius and Hermia.*

50 **Ober.** Stand close: this is the same Athenian.

52 **Puck.** This is the woman: but not this the man.

54 **Demet.** O, why rebuke you him that loves you so?  
56 Lay breath so bitter on your bitter foe.

58 **Herm.** Now I but chide: but I should use thee worse,  
For thou (I fear) hast given me cause to curse.

60 If thou hast slain Lysander in his sleep,  
Being o'er-shoes in blood, plunge in the deep,  
62 And kill me too.

The sun was not so true unto the day  
64 As he to me: would he have stolen away  
From sleeping Hermia? I'll believe as soon  
66 This whole earth may be bored, and that the moon  
May through the centre creep, and so displease  
68 Her brother's noontide with the Antipodes.  
It cannot be, but thou hast murdered him;  
70 So should a murtherer look; so dead, so grim.

72 **Demet.** So should the murdered look, and so should I,  
Pierced through the heart, with your stern cruëltý:  
74 Yet you, the murtherer, look as bright, as clear,  
As yonder Venus, in her glimmering sphere.

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

80 **Demet.** I had rather give his carcass to my hounds.

82 **Herm.** Out, dog! out, cur! thou driv'st me past the bounds  
Of maiden's patience. Hast thou slain him then?  
84 Henceforth be never numbered among men. —  
O, once tell true: tell true, even for my sake; —  
86 Durst thou have looked upon him, being awake?  
And hast thou killed him, sleeping? O brave touch!  
88 Could not a worm, an adder, do so much?  
An adder did it: for with doubler tongue

90 Than thine (thou serpent) never adder stung.

92 **Demet.** You spend your passion on a misprised mood:  
I am not guilty of Lysander's blood:  
94 Nor is he dead, for aught that I can tell.

96 **Herm.** I pray thee, tell me then, that he is well.

98 **Demet.** And if I could, what should I get therefore?

100 **Herm.** A privilege, never to see me more:  
And from thy hated presence part I [so]:  
102 See me no more, whether he be dead or no.

104 [Exit Hermia.]

106 **Demet.** There is no following her in this fierce vein:  
Here therefore, for a while, I will remain.  
108 So sorrow's heaviness doth heavier grow  
For debt that bankrout sleep doth sorrow owe:  
110 Which now in some slight measure it will pay,  
If for his tender here I make some stay.

112 [Demetrius lies down and sleeps.]

114 **Ober.** What hast thou done? thou hast mistaken quite,  
116 And laid the love-juice on some true-love's sight.  
Of thy misprision must perforce ensue  
118 Some true love turned, and not a false turned true.

120 **Puck.** Then fate o'er-rules, that one man holding troth,  
A million fail, confounding oath on oath.

122 **Ober.** About the wood, go swifter than the wind,  
124 And Helena of Athens look thou find.  
All fancy-sick she is and pale of cheer,  
126 With sighs of love, that costs the fresh blood dear.  
By some illusion see thou bring her here:  
128 I'll charm his eyes against she do appear.

130 **Puck.** I go, I go, look how I go,  
Swifter than arrow from the Tartar's bow.

132 [Exit Puck.]

134 **Ober.** Flower of this purple dye,  
136 Hit with Cupid's archery,  
Sink in apple of his eye;  
138 When his love he doth espy,

140 Let her shine as gloriously  
As the Venus of the sky. —  
142 When thou wak'st, if she be by,  
Beg of her for remedy.

*Re-enter Puck.*

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

152      **Ober.** Stand aside. The noise they make  
154      Will cause Demetrius to awake.

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

*Enter Lysander and Helena.*

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

170 **Helena.** You do advance your cunning, more, and more.  
When truth kills truth, O devilish-holy fray!  
172 These vows are Hermia's. Will you give her o'er?  
Weigh oath with oath, and you will nothing weigh.  
174 Your vows to her and me, put in two scales,  
Will even weigh; and both as light as tales.

*Lysan.* I had no judgement, when to her I swore.

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

180 *Lysan. Demetrius loves her, and he loves not you.*

182 | Page

184      **Demet.** [Awaking.]  
O Helen, goddess, nymph, perfect divine,  
To what, my love, shall I compare thine eyne?  
186      Crystal is muddy, O, how ripe in show

188 Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow!  
That pure congealèd white, high Taurus' snow,  
Fanned with the eastern wind, turns to a crow,  
190 When thou hold'st up thy hand: O, let me kiss  
This princess of pure white, this seal of bliss!

192     *Helena.* O spite! O hell! I see, you all are bent  
194     To set against me, for your merriment.  
196     If you were civil, and knew courtesy,  
198     You would not do me thus much injury.  
200     Can you not hate me, as I know you do,  
202     But you must join in souls to mock me too?  
204     If you were men, as men you are in show,  
206     You would not use a gentle lady so;  
208     To vow, and swear, and superpraise my parts,  
210     When I am sure you hate me with your hearts.  
212     You both are rivals, and love Hermia:  
214     And now both rivals, to mock Helena.  
216     A trim exploit, a manly enterprise,  
218     To conjure tears up in a poor maid's eyes  
220     With your derision! none of noble sort  
222     Would so offend a virgin, and extort  
224     A poor soul's patience, all to make you sport.

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

218 | ***Helena.*** Never did mockers waste more idle breath.

220 **Demet.** Lysander, keep thy Hermia: I will none.  
If e'er I loved her, all that love is gone.  
222 My heart to her but as guest-wise sojourned,  
And now to Helen is it home returned,  
224 There to remain.

226 *Lysan.* Helen, it is not so.

228 **Demet.** Disparage not the faith thou dost not know,  
Lest to thy peril, thou aby it dear. —  
230 Look, where thy love comes: yonder is thy dear.

232 *Re-enter Hermia.*

234 **Herm.** Dark night, that from the eye his function takes,  
The ear more quick of apprehension makes;

236 Wherein it doth impair the seeing sense,  
It pays the hearing double recompence. —  
238 Thou art not by mine eye, Lysander, found:  
Mine ear, I thank it, brought me to thy sound.  
240 But why, unkindly, didst thou leave me so?

242 **Lysan.** Why should he stay, whom love doth press to go?

244 **Herm.** What love could press Lysander from my side?

246 **Lysan.** Lysander's love, that would not let him bide,  
Fair Helena; who more engilds the night  
248 Than all yon fiery oes and eyes of light.  
Why seek'st thou me? could not this make thee know,  
250 The hate I bare thee made me leave thee so?

252 **Herm.** You speak not as you think: it cannot be.

254 **Helena.** Lo: she is one of this confederacy!  
Now I perceive they have conjoined all three,  
256 To fashion this false sport, in spite of me. —  
Injurious Hermia, most ungrateful maid,  
258 Have you conspired, have you with these contrived  
To bait me with this foul derision?  
260 Is all the counsel that we two have shared,  
The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent,  
262 When we have chid the hasty-footed time  
For parting us: — O, is all forgot?  
264 All school-days' friendship, childhood innocence?  
We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,  
266 Have with our needles created both one flower,  
Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,  
268 Both warbling of one song, both in one key;  
As if our hands, our sides, voices, and minds  
270 Had been incorporate. So we grew together,  
Like to a double cherry, seeming parted;  
272 But yet an union in partition,  
Two lovely berries moulded on one stem;  
274 So with two seeming bodies, but one heart;  
Two of the first, like coats in heraldry,  
276 Due but to one, and crownèd with one crest.  
And will you rent our ancient love asunder,  
278 To join with men, in scorning your poor friend?  
It is not friendly, 'tis not maidenly:  
280 Our sex, as well as I, may chide you for it;  
Though I alone do feel the injury.

282 **Herm.** I am amazed at your [passionate] words:

284 I scorn you not: it seems that you scorn me.

286 **Helena.** Have you not set Lysander, as in scorn,  
To follow me, and praise my eyes and face?  
288 And made your other love, Demetrius,  
(Who even but now did spurn me with his foot)  
290 To call me goddess, nymph, divine, and rare,  
Precious celestial? Wherefore speaks he this,  
292 To her he hates? and wherefore doth Lysander  
Deny your love (so rich within his soul)  
294 And tender me (forsooth) affectiön,  
But by your setting on, by your consent?  
296 What though I be not so in grace as you,  
So hung upon with love, so fortunate,  
298 But miserable most, to love unloved?  
This you should pity, rather than despise.

300 302 **Herm.** I understand not what you mean by this.

304 **Helena.** Ay, do; perséver, counterfeit sad looks:  
Make mouths upon me, when I turn my back:  
306 Wink each at other, hold the sweet jest up:  
This sport, well carried, shall be chronicled.  
If you have any pity, grace, or manners,  
308 You would not make me such an argument. –  
But fare ye well: 'tis partly my own fault:  
310 Which death, or absence soon shall remedy.

312 **Lysan.** Stay, gentle Helena: hear my excuse,  
My love, my life, my soul, fair Helena!

314 316 **Helena.** O excellent!

318 **Herm.** Sweet, do not scorn her so.

320 **Demet.** If she cannot entreat, I can compel.

322 **Lysan.** Thou canst compel no more than she entreat:  
Thy threats have no more strength than her weak prayers. –  
324 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.

326 **Demet.** I say, I love thee more than he can do.

328 **Lysan.** If thou say so, withdraw, and prove it too.

330 **Demet.** Quick, come!

332      **Herm.**                    Lysander, whereto tends all this?

334      **Lysan.**                    Away, you Ethiop!

336      **Demet.**                    No, no: he'll

338      Seem to break loose: – take on as you would follow,

            But yet come not. You are a tame man, go!

340      **Lysan.**                    Hang off, thou cat, thou burr! vile thing, let loose,

342      Or I will shake thee from me, like a serpent!

344      **Herm.**                    Why are you grown so rude? what change is this,

            Sweet love?

346      **Lysan.**                    Thy love! out, tawny Tartar, out!

348      Out, loathèd medicine! O hated potion, hence!

350      **Herm.**                    Do you not jest?

352      **Helena.**                    Yes, sooth: and so do you.

354      **Lysan.**                    Demetrius, I will keep my word with thee.

356      **Demet.**                    I would I had your bond; for I perceive,

            A weak bond holds you. I'll not trust your word.

358      **Lysan.**                    What? should I hurt her, strike her, kill her dead?

360      Although I hate her, I'll not harm her so.

362      **Herm.**                    What? can you do me greater harm than hate?

            Hate me, wherefore? O me! what news, my love?

364      Am not I Hermia? are not you Lysander?

            I am as fair now as I was erewhile.

366      Since night, you loved me; yet since night, you left me:

            Why then, you left me (O, the gods forbid)

368      In earnest, shall I say?

370      **Lysan.**                    Ay, by my life:

            And never did desire to see thee more.

372      Therefore be out of hope, of questiön, of doubt;

            Be certain: nothing truer: 'tis no jest,

374      That I do hate thee, and love Helena.

376      **Herm.**                    O me, you juggler, you canker-blossom,

            You thief of love! what, have you come by night,

378      And stol'n my love's heart from him?

380      **Helena.**                    Fine, i' faith!

            Have you no modesty, no maiden shame,

382 No touch of bashfulness? What, will you tear  
Impatient answers from my gentle tongue?  
384 Fie, fie, you counterfeit, you puppet, you!

386 **Herm.** Puppet? why so? ay, that way goes the game.  
Now I perceive that she hath made compare  
388 Between our statures: she hath urged her height,  
And with her personage, her tall personage,  
390 Her height (forsooth) she hath prevailed with him.  
And are you grown so high in his esteem,  
392 Because I am so dwarfish and so low?  
How low am I, thou painted maypole? speak:  
394 How low am I? I am not yet so low,  
But that my nails can reach unto thine eyes.

396      **Helena.** I pray you, though you mock me, gentlemen,  
398      Let her not hurt me. I was never curst:  
400      I have no gift at all in shrewishness:  
402      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.

# 404 | *Herm* | Lower? bark again!

400      **Helena.** Good Hermia, do not be so bitter with me;  
408      I evermore did love you, Hermia,  
410      Did ever keep your counsels, never wronged you,  
412      Save that, in love unto Demetrius,  
414      I told him of your stealth unto this wood.  
416      He followed you: for love, I followed him.  
418      But he hath chid me hence, and threatened me  
420      To strike me, spurn me; nay, to kill me too.  
422      And now, so you will let me quiet go,  
424      To Athens will I bear my folly back,  
426      And follow you no further. Let me go.  
428      You see how simple, and how fond I am.

420 **Herm.** Why? get you gone. Who is 't that hinders you?

422 | *Helena.* A foolish heart, that I leave here behind.

424 | **Herm.** What, with Lysander?

426 *Helena.* With Demetrius.

428 *Lysan.* Be not afraid: she shall not harm thee, Helena.

430 **Demet.** No sir: she shall not, though you take her part.

432     **Helena.** O, when she is angry, she is keen and shrewd!  
433     She was a vixen when she went to school:  
434     And though she be but little, she is fierce.

436     **Herm.** Little again? nothing but low and little?  
437     Why will you suffer her to flout me thus?  
438     Let me come to her.

440     **Lysan.**                   Get you gone, you dwarf;  
441     You minimus, of hindering knot-grass made;  
442     You bead, you acorn.

444     **Demet.**                   You are too officious  
445     In her behalf that scorns your services.  
446     Let her alone: speak not of Helena,  
447     Take not her part; for if thou dost intend  
448     Never so little shew of love to her,  
449     Thou shalt aby it.

450     **Lysan.**                   Now she holds me not:  
451     Now follow, if thou dar'st, to try whose right,  
452     Of thine or mine, is most in Helena.

454     **Demet.** Follow? nay: I'll go with thee, cheek by jowl.

456                             [*Exeunt Lysander and Demetrius.*]

458     **Herm.** You, mistress, all this coil is 'long of you. –  
459     Nay, go not back.

462     **Helena.**                   I will not trust you, I,  
463     Nor longer stay in your curst company.  
464     Your hands than mine are quicker for a fray.  
465     My legs are longer though, to run away.

466                             [*Exit Helena.*]

468     **Herm.** I am amazed, and know not what to say.

470                             [*Exit Hermia.*]

472     **Ober.** This is thy negligence: still thou mistak'st,  
473     Or else committ'st thy knaveries wilfully.

476     **Puck.** Believe me, king of shadows, I mistook.  
477     Did not you tell me, I should know the man  
478     By the Athenian garments he had on?  
479     And, so far blameless proves my enterprise,

480    That I have 'nointed an Athenian's eyes:  
481    And so far am I glad it so did sort,  
482    As this their jangling I esteem a sport.

484    **Ober.** Thou see'st, these lovers seek a place to fight:  
485    Hie therefore, Robin, overcast the night,  
486    The starry welkin cover thou anon  
487    With drooping fog, as black as Acheron,  
488    And lead these testy rivals so astray,  
489    As one come not within another's way.  
490    Like to Lysander, sometime frame thy tongue:  
491    Then stir Demetrius up, with bitter wrong:  
492    And sometime rail thou like Demetrius:  
493    And from each other, look thou lead them thus;  
494    Till o'er their brows, death-counterfeiting sleep  
495    With leaden legs and batty wings doth creep:  
496    Then crush this herb into Lysander's eye;  
497    Whose liquor hath this virtuous property,  
498    To take from thence all error with his might,  
499    And make his eyeballs roll with wonted sight.  
500    When they next wake, all this derisiön  
501    Shall seem a dream, and fruitless visiön.  
502    And back to Athens shall the lovers wend,  
503    With league whose date till death shall never end.  
504    Whiles I in this affair do thee employ,  
505    I'll to my queen and beg her Indian boy:  
506    And then I will her charmèd eye release  
507    From monster's view, and all things shall be peace.

508    **Puck.** My fairy lord, this must be done with haste,  
509    For night's swift dragons cut the clouds full fast,  
510    And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger:  
511    At whose approach, ghosts, wandering here and there,  
512    Troop home to churchyards: damnèd spirits all,  
513    That in crossways and floods have burial,  
514    Already to their wormy beds are gone:  
515    For fear lest day should look their shames upon,  
516    They wilfully themselves exile from light,  
517    And must for aye consort with black-browed night.

519    **Ober.** But we are spirits of another sort:  
520    I, with the morning's love, have oft made sport;  
521    And, like a forester, the groves may tread  
522    Even till the eastern gate all fiery-red,  
523    Opening on Neptune, with fair blessed beams,  
524    Turns into yellow gold his salt green streams. —  
525    But notwithstanding, haste, make no delay:



578

*[Lies down.]*

580

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

582

*[Sleeps.]*

584

*Re-enter Puck and Demetrius.*

586

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

588

**Demet.** 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?

594

**Puck.** Come hither: I am here.

596

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

602

*[Lies down and sleeps.]*

604

*Re-enter Helena.*

606

**Helena.** 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 sorrow's eye,  
Steal me awhile from mine own company.

612

*[Lies down and sleeps.]*

614

**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.

620

*Re-enter Hermia.*

622

**Herm.** Never so weary, never so in woe.  
Bedabbled with the dew, and torn with briers:  
I can no further crawl, no further go:

626 My legs can keep no pace with my desires.  
Here will I rest me, till the break of day:  
628 Heavens shield Lysander, if they mean a fray!

630 *[Lies down and sleeps.]*

632 **Puck.** On the ground  
Sleep sound:  
634 I'll apply  
Your eye,  
636 Gentle lover, remedy.

638 *[Squeezing the juice on Lysander's eyes.]*

640 When thou wak'st,  
Thou tak'st  
642 True delight  
In the sight  
644 Of thy former lady's eye:  
And the country proverb known,  
646 That every man should take his own,  
In your waking shall be shown:  
648 Jack shall have Jill:  
Nought shall go ill:  
650 The man shall have his mare again,  
And all shall be well.

652 *[Exit Puck.]*

## ACT IV.

### SCENE I.

*The same part of the woods.*

*Lysander, Demetrius, Helena, and Hermia,  
lying asleep.*

*Enter Titania and Bottom; Pease-blossom, Cobweb,  
Mustardseed, and other Fairies attending;  
Oberon behind unseen.*

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

6      **Bottom.** Where's Pease-blossom?

8      **Pease.** Ready.

10     **Bottom.** Scratch my head, Pease-blossom. — Where's  
11     Mounsieur Cobweb?

12     **Cob.** Ready.

14     **Bottom.** Mounsieur Cobweb, good mounsieur, get  
15     you your weapons in your hand, and kill me a red-  
16     hipped humble-bee on the top of a thistle: and good  
17     mounsieur, bring me the honey-bag. Do not fret  
18     yourself too much in the action, mounsieur: and,  
19     good mounsieur, have a care the honey-bag break not;  
20     I would be loth to have you overflowed with a honey-  
21     bag, signior. Where's Mounsieur Mustardseed?

24     **Must.** Ready.

26     **Bottom.** Give me your neaf, Mounsieur Mustardseed.  
27     Pray you, leave your curtsy, good mounsieur.

28     **Must.** What's your will?

30     **Bottom.** Nothing, good mounsieur, but to help  
31     Cavalry Cobweb to scratch. I must to the barber's,  
32     mounsieur; for methinks I am marvellous hairy about  
33     the face; and I am such a tender ass, if my hair do  
34     but tickle me, I must scratch.

36



86 And now I have the boy, I will undo  
This hateful imperfection of her eyes.  
88 And, gentle Puck, take this transformèd scalp  
From off the head of this Athenian swain;  
90 That he, awaking when the other do,  
May all to Athens back again repair,  
92 And think no more of this night's accidents,  
But as the fierce vexation of a dream.  
94 But first I will release the Fairy Queen. –  
    Be as thou wast wont to be;  
96 See as thou wast wont to see:  
    Dian's bud o'er Cupid's flower  
98 Hath such force and blessedèd power. –  
    Now, my Titania, wake you, my sweet queen.  
100

**Titan.** My Oberon, what visions have I seen!  
102 Methought I was enamoured of an ass.

104 **Ober.** There lies your love.

106 **Titan.** How came these things to pass?  
O, how mine eyes do loathe his visage now!

108 **Ober.** Silence awhile. – Robin, take off this head: –  
110 Titania, music call; and strike more dead  
Than common sleep of all these five the sense.

112 **Titan.** Music, ho, music: such as charmeth sleep!  
114

[*Music, still.*]

116 **Puck.** Now, when thou wak'st, with thine own fool's eyes peep.

118 **Ober.** Sound, music! – Come, my queen, take hands with me,  
120 And rock the ground whereon these sleepers be.  
Now, thou and I are new in amity,  
122 And will tomorrow midnight, solemnly  
Dance in Duke Theseus' house triumphantly,  
124 And bless it to all fair prosperity.  
There shall the pairs of faithful lovers be  
126 Wedded, with Theseus, all in jollity.

128 **Puck.** Fairy King, attend, and mark:  
I do hear the morning lark.

130 **Ober.** Then my queen, in silence sad,  
132 Trip we after [the] night's shade:  
We the globe can compass soon,

134 Swifter than the wandering moon.

136 **Titan.** Come my lord, and in our flight,  
Tell me how it came this night,  
138 That I sleeping here was found,  
With these mortals on the ground.

140 [*Exeunt.*]

142 [*Wind horn.*]

144 *Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Egeus, and train.*

146 **Thes.** Go one of you, find out the forester:  
148 For now our observation is performed.  
And since we have the vaward of the day,  
150 My love shall hear the music of my hounds. –  
Uncouple, in the western valley, let them go: –  
152 Dispatch I say, and find the forester. –

154 [*Exit an Attendant.*]

156 We will, fair queen, up to the mountain's top,  
And mark the musical confusiön  
158 Of hounds and echo in conjunctiön.

160 **Hippol.** I was with Hercules and Cadmus, once,  
When in a wood of Crete they bayed the bear,  
162 With hounds of Sparta: never did I hear  
Such gallant chiding; for, besides the groves,  
164 The skies, the fountains, every region near  
Seeme[d] all one mutual cry. I never heard  
166 So musical a discord, such sweet thunder.

168 **Thes.** My hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind:  
So flewed, so sanded; and their heads are hung  
170 With ears that sweep away the morning dew;  
Crook-kneed, and dew-lapped, like Thessalian bulls:  
172 Slow in pursuit; but matched in mouth like bells,  
Each under each. A cry more tuneable  
174 Was never hollowed to, nor cheered with horn,  
In Crete, in Sparta, nor in Thessaly.  
176 Judge when you hear. – But, soft! what nymphs are these?

178 **Egeus.** My lord, this is my daughter here asleep,  
And this Lysander, this Demetrius is,  
180 This Helena, old Nedar's Helena.  
I wonder of their being here together.

184     *Thes.* No doubt, they rose up early, to observe  
          The rite of May: and hearing our intent,  
          Came here, in grace of our solemnity.  
186     But speak, Egeus, is not this the day  
          That Hermia should give answer of her choice?

*Egeus.* It is, my lord.

*Thes.* Go, bid the huntsmen wake them with their horns.

194 [Horns and shout within.  
*Lysander, Demetrius, Helena, and Hermia  
wake and start up.*]

198 Good Morrow, friends. Saint Valentine is past:  
Begin these wood-birds but to couple, now?

200 *Lysan.* Pardon, my lord.

202 ***Thes.*** I pray you all, stand up. —  
I know you two are rival enemies.  
204 How comes this gentle concord in the world,  
That hatred is so far from jealousy,  
206 To sleep by hate, and fear no enmity?

208     *Lysan.* My lord, I shall reply amazedly,  
209     Half sleep, half waking: but, as yet, I swear,  
210     I cannot truly say how I came here.  
211     But as I think (for truly would I speak)  
212     And now I do bethink me, so it is;  
213     I came with Hermia, hither: our intent  
214     Was to be gone from Athens, where we might  
215     Without the peril of the Athenian law, —

216      **Egeus.** Enough, enough, my lord; you have enough.  
218      I beg the law, the law, upon his head: —  
219      They would have stol'n away, they would, Demetrius,  
220      Thereby to have defeated you and me;  
221      You of your wife, and me, of my consent:  
222      Of my consent, that she should be your wife.

224 **Demet.** My lord, fair Helen told me of their stealth,  
225 Of this their purpose hither, to this wood,  
226 And I in fury hither followed them,  
227 Fair Helena in fancy following me.  
228 But my good lord, I wot not by what power,  
229 (But by some power it is) my love to Hermia,  
230 (Melted as the snow) seems to me now

As the remembrance of an idle gaud,  
Which in my childhood I did dote upon:  
And all the faith, the virtue of my heart,  
234 The object and the pleasure of mine eye,  
Is only Helena. To her, my lord,  
236 Was I betrothed ere I saw Hermia:  
But, like a sickness, did I loathe this food;  
238 But, as in health, come to my natural taste,  
Now I do wish it, love it, long for it,  
240 And will for evermore be true to it.

242     *Thes.* Fair lovers, you are fortunately met.  
243     Of this discourse, we more will hear anon. —  
244     Egeus, I will overbear your will:  
245     For in the temple, by and by, with us,  
246     These couples shall eternally be knit.  
247     And, for the morning now is something worn,  
248     Our purposed hunting shall be set aside. —  
249     Away, with us, to Athens! three and three,  
250     We'll hold a feast in great solemnity. —  
251     Come, Hippolyta.

[*Exeunt Theseus, Hippolyta, Egeus and train.*]

**Demet.** These things seem small and undistinguishable,  
Like far-off mountains turnèd into clouds.

258 **Herm.** Methinks I see these things with parted eye,  
When every thing seems double.

270 | **Herm.** Yea, and my father.

272 ***Helena.*** And Hippolyta.

274 | *Lysan.* And he did bid us follow to the temple.

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

278 [Exeunt Lysander, Demetrius, Hermia, and Helena.]

280

**Bottom.** [Awaking.]

When my cue comes, call me, and I will answer:  
my next is, "Most fair Pyramus." – Hey ho! Peter  
Quince? Flute, the bellows-mender? Snout, the  
tinker? Starveling? Gods my life! stolen hence, and  
left me asleep? I have had a most rare vision. I have  
had a dream, past the wit of man to say what dream it  
was. Man is but an ass, if he go about [to] expound  
this dream. Methought I was – there is no man can tell  
what. Methought I was, – and methought I had, –  
but man is but a patched fool, if he will offer to say  
what methought I had. The eye of man hath not  
heard, the ear of man hath not seen, man's hand is not  
able to taste, his tongue to conceive, nor his heart to  
report, what my dream was. I will get Peter Quince to  
write a ballad of this dream: it shall be called  
Bottom's Dream, because it hath no bottom: and  
I will sing it in the latter end of a play, before the  
duke. Peradventure, to make it the more gracious,  
I shall sing it at her death.

302

[Exit Bottom.]

## ACT IV, SCENE II.

*Athens, Quince's house.  
The afternoon of the same day.*

*Enter Quince, Flute, Snout, and Starveling.*

1     *Quin.* Have you sent to Bottom's house? is he come  
2     home yet?

4 **Starv.** 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?

10 **Quin.** It is not possible. You have not a man, in all Athens, able to discharge Pyramus, but he.

12      **Flute.** No, he hath simply the best wit of any  
14      handicraft man in Athens.

16 **Quin.** Yea, and the best person too, and he is a very  
paramour for a sweet voice.

18      **Flute.** You must say "paragon": a paramour is  
20      (God bless us) a thing of naught.

22 | *Enter Snug*

24 **Snug.** Masters, the duke is coming from the temple,  
25 and there is two or three lords and ladies more  
26 married. If our sport had gone forward, we had all  
been made men.

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

36 | *Enter Bottom.*

38 **Bottom.** Where are these lads? where are these  
hearts?

40      *Quin.* Bottom! O most courageous day! O most  
42      happy hour!

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

48     **Quin.** Let us hear, sweet Bottom.

50     **Bottom.** Not a word of me. All that I will tell you is,  
52     that the Duke hath dined. Get your apparel together,  
54     good strings to your beards, new ribands to your  
       pumps, meet presently at the palace, every man look  
56     o'er his part. For the short and the long is, our play is  
58     preferred. In any case let Thisbe have clean linen;  
60     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 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.  
62     Away, go, away!

[*Exeunt.*]

## ACT V.

### SCENE I.

*Athens: the palace of Theseus.*

*The evening of the same day.*

*Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Philostrate,  
Lords, and Attendants.*

1      **Hippol.** 'Tis strange, my Theseus, that these lovers speak of.

2      **Thes.** More strange than true: I never may believe  
4      These antique fables, nor these fairy toys.  
6      Lovers and madmen have such seething brains,  
8      Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend  
10     More than cool reason ever comprehends.  
12     The lunatic, the lover, and the poet  
14     Are of imagination all compact:  
16     One sees more devils than vast hell can hold:  
18     That is the madman. The lover, all as frantic,  
20     See Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt.  
22     The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy, rolling,  
24     Doth glance from Heaven to earth, from earth to Heaven.  
26     And as imagination bodies forth  
28     The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen  
30     Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing  
32     A local habitation, and a name.  
34     Such tricks hath strong imaginatiön,  
36     That if it would but apprehend some joy,  
38     It comprehends some bringer of that joy;  
40     Or in the night, imagining some fear,  
42     How easy is a bush supposed a bear!

24      **Hippol.** But, all the story of the night told over,  
26      And all their minds transfigured so together,  
28      More witnesseth than fancy's images,  
30      And grows to something of great constancy:  
32      But howsoever, strange and admirable.

34      **Thes.** Here come the lovers, full of joy and mirth.

36      *Enter Lysander, Demetrius, Hermia, and Helena.*

38      Joy, gentle friends, joy and fresh days of love  
40      Accompany your hearts!

38     **Lysan.**                   More than to us  
          Wait in your royal walks, your board, your bed!

40     **Thes.** Come now: what masques, what dances shall we have,  
42     To wear away this long age of three hours,  
44     Between our after-supper and bed-time?  
46     Where is our usual manager of mirth?  
48     What revels are in hand? Is there no play,  
50     To ease the anguish of a torturing hour?  
52     Call Philostrate.

54     **Philo.**                   Here, mighty Theseus.

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

62     **Philo.** There is a brief, how many sports are ripe.  
64     Make choice, of which your highness will see first.

66                                [*Giving a paper.*]

68     **Thes.** [Reads.]  
69     *The battle with the Centaurs, to be sung,*  
70     *By an Athenian eunuch to the harp?* –  
72     We'll none of that. That have I told my love,  
74     In glory of my kinsman Hercules.  
75     [Reads.]  
76     *The riot of the tipsy Bacchanals,*  
77     *Tearing the Thracian singer in their rage?* –  
78     That is an old device: and it was played,  
80     When I from Thebes came last a conqueror.  
81     [Reads.]  
82     *The thrice three Muses, mourning for the death*  
83     *Of Learning, late deceased in beggary?* –  
84     That is some satire, keen and critical,  
86     Not sorting with a nuptial ceremony.  
87     [Reads.]  
88     *A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus*  
89     *And his love Thisbe; very tragical mirth?* –  
90     Merry, and tragical? Tedious, and brief?  
92     That is hot ice, and wondrous strange snow.  
94     How shall we find the concord of this discord?

96     **Philo.** A play there is, my lord, some ten words long;  
98     Which is as brief as I have known a play:  
100    But, by ten words, my lord, it is too long:  
102    Which makes it tedious. For in all the play,

86 There is not one word apt, one player fitted.  
87 And tragical, my noble lord, it is;  
88 For Pyramus, therein, doth kill himself.  
89 Which when I saw rehearsed, I must confess,  
90 Made mine eyes water: but more merry tears  
91 The passion of loud laughter never shed.

92 **Thes.** What are they, that do play it?

94 **Philo.** Hard-handed men, that work in Athens here,  
95 Which never laboured in their minds till now:  
96 And now have toiled their unbreathed memories,  
97 With this same play, against your nuptial.

100 **Thes.** And we will hear it.

102 **Philo.** No, my noble lord,  
103 It is not for you: I have heard it over,  
104 And it is nothing, nothing in the world;  
105 Unless you can find sport in their intents  
106 Extremely stretched, and conned with cruël pain,  
107 To do you service.

108 **Thes.** I will hear that play.  
109 For never anything can be amiss,  
110 When simpleness and duty tender it.  
111 Go bring them in, and take your places, ladies.

114 [Exit Philostrate.]

116 **Hippol.** I love not to see wretchedness o'ercharged,  
117 And duery, in his service, perishing.

120 **Thes.** Why, gentle sweet, you shall see no such thing.

122 **Hippol.** He says they can do nothing in this kind.

124 **Thes.** The kinder we, to give them thanks for nothing.  
125 Our sport shall be to take what they mistake:  
126 And what poor duty cannot do, noble  
127 Respect takes it in might, not merit.  
128 Where I have come, great clerks have purposèd  
129 To greet me with premeditated welcomes;  
130 Where I have seen them shiver and look pale,  
131 Make periods in the midst of sentences,  
132 Throttle their practised accent in their fears,  
133 And in conclusion dumbly have broke off,  
134 Not paying me a welcome. Trust me, sweet,

134 Out of this silence, yet, I picked a welcome:  
136 And in the modesty of fearful duty,  
136 I read as much as from the rattling tongue  
138 Of saucy and audacious eloquence.  
138 Love, therefore, and tongue-tied simplicity,  
140 In least speak most, to my capacity.

140 *Re-enter Philostrate.*

142 **Philo.** So please your Grace, the Prologue is addressed.

144 **Thes.** Let him approach.

146 148 [Flourish of trumpets.]

150 152 *Enter Quince for the Prologue.*

154 **Prol.** If we offend, it is with our good will.  
156 That you should think, we come not to offend,  
156 But with good will. To shew our simple skill,  
158 That is the true beginning of our end.  
158 Consider then, we come but in despite.  
160 We do not come, as minding to content you,  
160 Our true intent is. All for your delight,  
162 We are not here. That you should here repent you,  
162 The actors are at hand: and, by their show,  
164 You shall know all, that you are like to know.

166 **Thes.** This fellow doth not stand upon points.

168 **Lysan.** He hath rid his prologue like a rough colt: he  
170 knows not the stop. A good moral, my lord: it is not  
172 enough to speak; but to speak true.

174 **Hippol.** Indeed he hath played on his prologue like a  
176 child on a recorder; a sound, but not in government.

176 **Thes.** His speech was like a tangled chain; nothing  
178 impaired, but all disordered. Who is next?

174 176 *Enter Pyramus and Thisbe, Wall,  
178 Moonshine, and Lion.*

176 **Prol.** Gentles, perchance you wonder at this show;  
178 But, wonder on, till truth make all things plain.  
178 This man is Pyramus, if you would know:  
180 This beauteous lady Thisbe is certain.  
180 This man, with lime and rough-cast, doth present

182 Wall, that vile Wall, which did these lovers sunder:  
184 And through Wall's chink, poor souls, they are content  
186 To whisper. At the which, let no man wonder.  
188 This man, with lantern, dog, and bush of thorn,  
190 Presenteth Moonshine. For if you will know,  
192 By moonshine did these lovers think no scorn  
194 To meet at Ninus' tomb, there, there to woo.  
196 This grizly beast (which Lion hight by name)  
198 The trusty Thisbe, coming first by night,  
200 Did scare away, or rather did affright:  
202 And as she fled, her mantle she did fall:  
204 Which Lion vile with bloody mouth did stain.  
206 Anon comes Pyramus, sweet youth, and tall,  
208 And finds his trusty Thisbe's mantle slain:  
210 Whereat, with blade, with bloody blameful blade,  
212 He bravely broached his boiling bloody breast.  
214 And Thisbe, tarrying in mulberry shade,  
216 His dagger drew, and died. For all the rest,  
218 Let Lion, Moonshine, Wall, and lovers twain,  
220 At large discourse, while here they do remain.

**Thes.** I wonder, if the lion be to speak.

204  
206 **Demet.** No wonder, my lord: one lion may, when  
many asses do.

208 [Exeunt Prologue, Pyramus, Thisbe,  
Lion, and Moonshine.]

210  
212 **Wall.** In this same interlude it doth befall,  
214 That I, one Snout by name, present a wall:  
216 And such a wall, as I would have you think,  
218 That had in it a crannied hole or chink:  
220 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 siníster,  
Through which the fearful lovers are to whisper.

222 **Thes.** Would you desire lime and hair to speak  
better?

224  
226 **Demet.** It is the wittiest partition that ever I heard  
discourse, my lord.

228 **Thes.** Pyramus draws near the wall: silence.

230

*Re-enter Pyramus.*

232 **Pyra.** O grim-looked night! O night, with hue so black,  
O night, which ever art, when day is not:  
234 O night, O night, alack, alack, alack,  
I fear my Thisbe's promise is forgot.  
236 And thou O wall, O sweet, O lovely wall,  
That stands't between her father's ground and mine,  
238 Thou wall, O wall, O sweet and lovely wall,  
Show me thy chink, to blink through, with mine eyne,

240

[*Wall holds up his fingers.*]

242

Thanks, courteous wall. Jove shield thee well for this.  
244 But what see I? No Thisbe do I see.  
O wicked wall, through whom I see no bliss,  
246 Cursed be thy stones, for thus deceiving me.

248

**Thes.** The wall, methinks, being sensible, should  
curse again.

250

**Pyra.** No, in truth sir, he should not. "Deceiving me"  
252 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  
254 told you: yonder she comes.

256

*Re-enter Thisbe.*

258

**Thisbe.** O wall, full often hast thou heard my moans,  
For parting my fair Pyramus and me.  
260 My cherry lips have often kissed thy stones;  
Thy stones, with lime and hair knit now again.

262

**Pyra.** I see a voice: now will I to the chink,  
To spy and I can hear my Thisbe's face. —  
Thisbe?

266

**Thisbe.** My love thou art, my love I think.

268

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

272

**Thisbe.** And I, like Helen, till the Fates me kill.

274

**Pyra.** Not Shafalus to Procrus, was so true.

276

**Thisbe.** As Shafalus to Procrus, I to you.

278

**Pyra.** O kiss me, through the hole of this vild wall!

280 | ***Thisbe***. I kiss the wall's hole; not your lips at all.

282 *Pyra.* Wilt thou, at Ninny's tomb, meet me straightway?

284 | ***Thisbe.*** 'Tide life, 'tide death, I come without delay.

[*Exeunt Pyramus and Thisbe.*]

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

290 [Exit Wall.]

**292**      **Thes.** Now is the moon used between the two  
294      neighbours.

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

**Hippol.** This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard.

300      **Thes.** The best, in this kind, are but shadows: and the  
302      worst are no worse, if imagination amend them.

304      **Hippol.** It must be your imagination, then, and not  
306      theirs.

308 **Thes.** 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.

### *Re-enter Lion and Moonshine.*

312      **Lion.** You ladies, you (whose gentle hearts do fear  
314      The smallest monstrous mouse that creeps on floor)  
May now, perchance, both quake and tremble here,

316 When lion rough, in wildest rage, doth roar,  
Then know that I, as Snug the joiner, am  
318 A lion fell, nor else no lion's dam;  
For, if I should, as lion, come in strife,  
320 Into this place, 'twere pity on my life.

322 | **Thes.** A very gentle beast, and of a good conscience.

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

326 **Lysan.** This lion is a very fox, for his valour

328 | *Lysan.* This hero is a very fox, for his valo-

330      **Demet.** Not so, my lord; for his valour cannot carry  
332      his discretion: and the fox carries the goose.

334      **Thes.** His discretion, I am sure, cannot carry his  
336      valour; for the goose carries not the fox. It is well:  
338      leave it to his discretion, and let us listen to the moon.

340      **Moon.** This lanthorn doth the hornèd moon present; —

342      **Demet.** He should have worn the horns on his head.

344      **Thes.** He is no crescent, and his horns are invisible,  
346      within the circumference.

348      **Moon.** This lanthorn doth the hornèd moon present,  
350      Myself, the man ith moon, do seem to be.

352      **Thes.** This is the greatest error of all the rest: the  
354      man should be put into the lanthorn. How is it else  
356      the man ith moon?

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

362      **Hipp.** I am aweary of this moon. Would he would  
364      change.

366      **Thes.** It appears, by his small light of discretion, that  
368      he is in the wane: but yet in courtesy, in all reason,  
370      we must stay the time.

372      **Lysan.** Proceed, Moon. Re-

374      **Moon.** All that I have to say, is to tell you, that the  
376      lanthorn is the moon; I, the man ith moon; this  
378      thorn-bush, my thorn-bush; and this dog, my dog.

380      **Demet.** Why, all these should be in the lanthorn; for  
382      all these are in the moon. — But silence: here comes  
384      Thisbe.

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

388      **Lion.** [Roaring] Oh — [Thi-

390      **Demet.** Well roared, Lion.



432 Thus die I, thus, thus, thus.  
Now am I dead,  
434 Now am I fled,  
My soul is in the sky.  
436 Tongue, lose thy light;  
Moon, take thy flight:  
438

440 Now die, die, die, die, die.

442

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

446 **Lysan.** Less than an ace, man; for he is dead, he is  
448 nothing.

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

452 **Hippol.** How chance Moonshine is gone before?  
454 Thisbe comes back, and finds her lover.

456 **Thes.** She will find him, by starlight. Here she  
comes, and her passion ends the play.

458

460 **Hippol.** Methinks she should not use a long one, for  
462 such a Pyramus: I hope she will be brief.

464 **Demet.** A moth will turn the balance, which  
Pyramus, which Thisbe, is the better: he for a man,  
466 God warrant us; she for a woman, God bless us.

468 **Lysan.** She hath spied him already, with those sweet  
eyes.

470 **Demet.** And thus she means, videlicet: —

472 **Thisbe.** Asleep, my love?  
474 What, dead, my dove?  
O Pyramus, arise,  
476 Speak, speak. Quite dumb?  
Dead, dead? A tomb  
478 Must cover thy sweet eyes.  
These lily lips,  
480 This cherry nose,

482 These yellow cowslip cheeks  
482 Are gone, are gone:  
484 Lovers make moan:  
484 His eyes were green, as leeks.  
486 O sisters three,  
486 Come, come, to me,  
488 With hands as pale as milk,  
488 Lay them in gore,  
490 Since you have shore  
490 With shears, his threed of silk.  
492 Tongue, not a word:  
492 Come trusty sword,  
492 Come blade, my breast imbrue:  
494  
496 [Stabs herself.]  
496 And farewell friends:  
498 Thus Thisbe ends:  
498 Adieu, adieu, adieu.  
500  
502 [Dies.]  
502 **Thes.** Moonshine and Lion are left to bury the dead.  
504  
506 **Demet.** Ay, and Wall too.  
506  
508 **Lion.** No, I assure you, the wall is down, that parted  
508 their fathers. – Will it please you, to see the Epilogue,  
510 or to hear a Bergomask dance between two of our  
510 company?  
512  
512 **Thes.** No Epilogue, I pray you; for your play needs  
514 no excuse. Never excuse: for when the players are all  
514 dead, there need none to be blamed. Marry, if he that  
516 writ it had played Pyramus, and hanged himself in  
516 Thisbe's garter, it would have been a fine tragedy: and  
518 so it is truly, and very notably discharged. But come,  
518 your Bergomask: let your Epilogue alone.  
520  
520 [A dance.]  
522 The iron tongue of midnight hath told twelve:  
522 Lovers to bed, 'tis almost fairy time.  
524 I fear we shall out-sleep the coming morn,  
524 As much as we this night have overwatched.  
526 This palpable-gross play hath well beguiled  
526 The heavy gait of night. Sweet friends, to bed.  
528 A fortnight hold we this solemnity,

530           In nightly revels, and new jollity.

[*Exeunt.*]

532           *Enter Puck.*

534           **Puck.** Now the hungry lion roars,  
536           And the wolf beholds the moon;  
538           Whilst the heavy ploughman snores,  
540           All with weary task foredone.  
542           Now the wasted brands do glow,  
544           Whilst the screech-owl, screeching loud,  
546           Puts the wretch that lies in woe,  
548           In remembrance of a shroud.  
550           Now it is the time of night,  
552           That the graves, all gaping wide,  
554           Every one lets forth his sprite,  
556           In the church-way paths to glide.  
558           And we fairies, that do run,  
560           By the triple Hecate's team,  
562           From the presence of the sun,  
564           Following darkness like a dream,  
566           Now are frolic: not a mouse  
568           Shall disturb this hallowed house.  
570           I am sent, with broom, before,  
572           To sweep the dust behind the door.

574           *Enter Oberon and Titania with all their train.*

576           **Ober.** Through the house give glimmering light,  
578           By the dead and drowsy fire.  
580           Every elf and fairy sprite,  
582           Hop as light as bird from brier,  
584           And this ditty, after me,  
586           Sing, and dance it trippingly.

588           **Titan.** First rehearse your song by rote,  
590           To each word a warbling note.  
592           Hand in hand, with fairy grace,  
594           Will we sing and bless this place.

596           [*Song and dance.*]

598           **Ober.** Now, until the break of day,  
600           Through this house, each fairy stray.  
602           To the best bride-bed will we,  
604           Which by us shall blessed be:  
606           And the issue, there create,

578      Ever shall be fortunate:  
So shall all the couples three  
Ever true in loving be:  
580      And the blots of Nature's hand  
Shall not in their issue stand.  
582      Never mole, hare-lip, nor scar,  
Nor mark prodigious, such as are  
584      Despisèd in nativity,  
Shall upon their children be.  
586      With this field-dew consecrate,  
Every fairy take his gait,  
588      And each several chamber bless,  
Through this palace, with sweet peace,  
590      Ever shall in safety rest,  
And the owner of it blest.  
592      Trip away; make no stay:  
Meet me all, by break of day.

[*Exeunt Oberon, Titania, and train.*]

598      **Puck.** If we shadows have offended,  
    Think but this (and all is mended),  
    That you have but slumbered here,  
600      While these visions did appear.  
    And this weak and idle theme,  
602      No more yielding but a dream,  
    Gentles, do not reprehend.  
604      If you pardon, we will mend.  
    And, as I am an honest Puck,  
606      If we have unearnèd luck  
    Now to scape the serpent's tongue,  
608      We will make amends, ere long:  
    Else, the Puck a liar call.  
610      So, good night unto you all.  
    Give me your hands, if we be friends  
612      And Robin shall restore amends.

[Exit Puck.]

616 | FINIS

## Optional Textual Changes.

The texts of the Scripts prepared for our website, [www.ElizabethanDrama.org](http://www.ElizabethanDrama.org), generally lean towards retaining the language of the plays' earliest editions. This includes keeping archaic words and language that modern editors tend to modernize and correct. On the other hand, where obvious errors in typography have occurred, the emendations suggested by early and modern editors are usually accepted.

This edition of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is based on the text of the Quarto printed in 1600. The play appeared again in the 1623 Folio of Shakespeare's works. Comparison of the two editions shows a number of variations in wording and word choice, though not enough of them exist so as to cause the reader to lose sleep, wondering if he or she is missing anything by choosing one text over the other.

You will find below a fairly comprehensive list of changes a director may wish to consider applying to the text of our play, in order to make the language more sensible. These emendations are of several types:

- (1) modernization of archaic words;
- (2) substantive alternate wording found in the Folio; and
- (3) commonly-accepted emendations suggested by later editors and commentators.

Explanations for all these possible emendations can be found in the annotations to the play.

An asterisk (\*) indicates an emendation based on alternative wording in the Folio.

### Universal Emendations:

1. modernize **shew(s)(ed)** to **show(s)(ed)** everywhere:  
2.1.197; 2.2.152; 3.2.448, 580; 5.1.153.
2. modernize **vild** to **vile** everywhere:  
5.1.278, 421.
- 3: modernize **murther(er)** to **murder(er)** everywhere:  
3.2.31, 70, 74.
4. modernize **lanthorn** to **lantern** everywhere:  
5.1.338, 345, 349, 365, 368.

### Act I, Scene i.

1. line 11: emend **Now bent** to **New-bent**.
2. line 165: omit **Ay me.**\*
3. line 170: emend **to love** to **to low**.
4. line 176: emend **friends** to **merit.**\*
5. line 200: emend **remote** to **removed.**\*
6. line 235: emend **Your words I['d] catch** to **yours**

*would I catch.*

7. line 239: emend *I'll* to *I'd*.
8. line 255: emend *Helena* to *Helen* (or)  
emend *is no fault of mine* to *is none of mine*.\*
9. line 275: emend *swelled* to *sweet*.
10. line 278: emend *strange companions* to *stranger companies*.

Act I, Scene ii.

1. line 108: modernize *shrike* to *shriek*.
2. line 132: modernize *perfit* to *perfect*.\*
3. line 147: modernize *perfit* to *perfect*.\*

Act II, Scene i.

1. line 51: emend *filly foal* to *silly foal*.\*
2. line 55: modernize *dewlop* to *dewlap*.
3. line 60: modernize *loffe* to *laugh*.
4. line 82: emend *steppe* to *steep*.\*
5. line 106: emend *pelting* to *petty*.\*
6. line 112: modernize *murrion* to *murrain*.
7. line 124: emend *chin* to *thin*.
8. line 226: emend *stay* and *stayeth* to *slay* and *slayeth*.
9. line 293: emend *I'll* to *I*.\*
10. line 303: the original line as printed is:

*Hast thou the flower there? Welcome, wanderer.*

Optional change 1: reverse the clauses:

*Welcome, wanderer. Hast thou the flower there?*

Option change 2: revise the punctuation:

*Hast thou the flower there, welcome wanderer?*

Act II, Scene ii.

1. line 4: modernize *leathren* to *leather*.
2. line 75: emend *we can make of it* to *can you make of it*.\*
3. line 76: emend *interchained* to *interchanged*.\*
4. line 102: emend *found* to *find*.\*
5. line 212: modernize *swoun* to *swoon*.

Act III, Scene i.

1. line 43: emend *toote* to *to 't*.\*
2. line 76: emend *lantern* to *lanthorn*.\*
3. line 87: emend *or* to *and*.

Act III, Scene ii.

1. line 24: modernize *minnick* to *mimic*.
2. line 109: modernize *bankrout* to *bankrupt*.
3. line 510: emend *night's swift* to *night-swift*.\*
4. line 554: repunctuate "Speak in some bush." to "Speak!  
[pause] In some bush?"
4. line 596: modernize *shat* to *shalt*.\*
5. line 635: emend *Your eye* to *To your eye*.

Act IV, Scene i.

1. line 32: emend *Cobweb* to *Pease-blossom*.
2. line 44: modernize *mounch* to *munch*.\*
3. line 52: emend *stirt* to *stir*.\*
4. line 56: emend *always* to *all ways*.
5. line 73: emend *flavours* to *savours*.\*
6. line 79: modernize *flouriets* to *flowerets*.
7. lines 265-6: omit *Are you sure / That we are awake?*\*
8. line 298: emend *a play* to *our play*.
9. line 300: emend *at her death* to *after death*.

Act IV, Scene ii.

1. line 52: modernize *ribands* to *ribbons*.

Act V, Scene i.

1. line 47: emend *Philostrate* to *Egeus*.\*
2. Reassign the speeches of lines 49, 55, 82, 95, 102, and 143 to Egeus.\*
3. line 55: emend *ripe* to *rife*.\*
4. Reassign the following pairs of lines to Lysander: 61-62; 66-67; 71-72; 76-77.\*
5. line 78: emend *strange snow* to *strange black snow*.
6. line 117: modernize *duery* to *duty*.\*
7. line 185: emend *lantern* to *lanthorn*.\*
8. line 189: modernize *grizly* to *grisly*.
9. line 261: emend *knit now again* to *knit now in thee*.\*
10. line 293: emend *moon used* to any of:
  - (a) *mural down*;
  - (b) *mure all down*; or
  - (c) *wall down*.
11. lines 346, 350 and 365: emend *ith* to *i' th'*.
12. line 390: modernize *mouzed* to *moused*.\*
13. line 400: emend *glittering beams* to *glittering gleams*.
14. line 401: emend *take* to *taste*.\*
15. lines 465-6: omit *he for a man...God bless us*.\*
16. line 490: modernize *threed* to *thread*.\*
17. Reassign the speech beginning at line 507 to Bottom.\*
18. line 536: emend *beholds* to *behowls*.