

A Midsummer Night's Dream
By William Shakespeare
Adapted by Gil Gonzalez for
Enceladus Theatre Company



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Characters

The Athenians

Theseus – Duke of Athens

Hippolyta – Queen of the Amazons, betrothed to Theseus

Philostrate – Master of the Revels

Egeus – father of Hermia, wants her to marry Demetrius

Hermia – in love with Lysander

Helena – in love with Demetrius

Lysander – in love with Hermia at first but later loves Helena

Demetrius – in love with Hermia at first but later loves Helena

The Fairies

Oberon – Titania's husband and King of the Fairies

Titania – Oberon's wife and Queen of the Fairies

Robin Goodfellow/Puck – servant to Oberon

Peaseblossom – fairy servant to Titania

Cobweb – fairy servant to Titania

Moth – fairy servant to Titania

Mustardseed – fairy servant to Titania

First Fairy, Second Fairy

The Mechanicals (An acting troupe)

Peter Quince – carpenter, leads the troupe and plays Prologue

Nick Bottom – weaver, plays Pyramus

Francis Flute – bellows-mender, plays Thisbe

Robin Starveling – tailor, plays Moonshine

Tom Snout – tinker, plays Wall

Snug – joiner, plays Lion

Our Company

Lysander, Cobweb, Flute (and Thisbe):

Hippolyta, Titania:

Helena, Mustardseed, Snug (and Lion):

Theseus, Oberon, Quince:

Puck/Philostrate:

Demetrius, Peaseblossom, Snout (and Wall):

Hermia, Moth, Starveling (Moon):

Egeus, Bottom (and Pyramus):

Prologue

An actor. Attention, masters, mistresses, ladies, gentlemen, lions et. al. We, the merry troupe of performers have the most fantastical play to present for you today. Tis Master Shakespeare's comedy of confusion, deceit, magic, tragedy, and the triumph of true love: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Another actor. That's the one with fairies in the play, right?

An actor. Tis, true, indeed.

Yet another actor. Why are you talking like that? "Tis, true, indeed."

An actor. 'Tis my intention to better acquaint the audience with the Queen's English: the language of the greatest playwright to have ever graced the boards: William Shakespeare. Perchance you have of him?

Another actor. I know who he is...was. Mainly the reason we are hear.

Yet another actor. Correct!

An actor. Moving on...as we set our play, the mighty Theseus is betrothed to the beautiful Hippolyta.

Another actor. And...

An actor. We learn the beautiful maiden Hermia is in love with Lysander. However, her father, Egeus prefers the noble lord Demetrius for his daughter. Egeus demands the ancient law of Athens be enacted for Hermia to marry Demetrius. Unwilling, Hermia and Lysander plan to flee to the forest, and are pursued by Demetrius and the lovely Helena, who is in love with Demetrius.

Yet another actor. It's there we find the magical fairy king, Oberon, and fairy queen, Titania are quarreling over a young mortal child. The lovers are caught in betwixt the crosshairs of the fairy battle. Spells of magic are placed by the knavish sprite called Robin Goodfellow, or Puck as he likes it, and people and fairy alike are found in love with the most strange combinations.

Another actor. And...

An actor. Oberon recognizing the mistakes, while Puck enjoys the errors of his ways, commands magic and Robin's help to restore order.

Another actor. And...

Yet another actor. A band of hard working, handicraft men of Athens perform a play for the Duke's wedding day at night...in Athens

Another actor. And...

Act I, Scene 1. Athens. The Palace of Theseus.

[Enter Theseus, Hippolyta]

Theseus. Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour draws on apace; four happy days bring in another moon.

Hippolyta. Four days will quickly steep themselves in night; four nights will quickly dream away the time; and then the moon, like to a silver bow new-bent in heaven, shall behold the night of our solemnities. *[Enter Egeus, Hermia, Lysander, and Demetrius]*

Egeus. Full of vexation come I, with complaint against my child, my daughter Hermia. Stand forth, Demetrius. My noble lord, this man hath my consent to marry her. Stand forth, Lysander. My gracious duke, this man hath bewitch'd the bosom of my child. With cunning hast

thou filch'd my daughter's heart, turn'd her obedience, which is due to me, to stubborn harshness. And, my gracious duke, be it so she; will not here before your grace consent to marry with Demetrius, I beg the ancient privilege of Athens, as she is mine, I may dispose of her: Which shall be either to this gentleman or to her death, according to our law immediately provided in that case.

Theseus. What say you, Hermia? -Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

Hermia. So is Lysander.

Theseus. Rather your eyes must with his judgment look.

Hermia. But I beseech your grace that I may know-the worst that may befall me in this case, ~~if~~ I refuse to wed Demetrius.

Theseus. Either to die the death, or to abjure forever the society of men. Know if you yield not to your father's choice, you can endure the livery of a nun.

Hermia. So will I grow, so live, so die, my lord, my soul consents not to give sovereignty.

Theseus. Take time to pause; and, by the next new moon—Either prepare to die for disobedience to your father's will, or else to wed Demetrius, as he would;

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

Lysander. You have her father's love, Demetrius; let me have Hermia's.

Egeus. Scornful Lysander! True, he hath my love, and she is mine, and all my right of her I do estate unto Demetrius.

Lysander. I am beloved of beauteous Hermia.-Why should not I then prosecute my right? Demetrius, I'll avouch it to his head, made love to Nedar's daughter, Helena, and won her soul; and she, sweet lady devoutly dotes, dotes in idolatry, upon this spotted and inconstant man.

Theseus. For you, fair Hermia, look you arm yourself to fit your fancies to your father's will, Or else the law of Athens yields you up—to death, or to a vow of single life.

Come, my Hippolyta: what cheer, my love? Demetrius and Egeus, go along. I must employ you in some business *[Exit all but Lysander and Hermia]*

Lysander. Ay me! The course of true love never did run smooth.

Hermia. If then true lovers have been ever cross'd, it stands as an edict in destiny.

Lysander. Hear me, Hermia. I have a widow aunt. From Athens is her house a remote seven leagues, and she respects me as her only son. There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee. Steal forth thy father's house to-morrow night, and in the wood, a league without the town, there will I stay for thee.

Hermia. My good Lysander! Tomorrow, truly, will I meet with thee. *[Enter Helena]*

Lysander. Keep promise, love. Look, here comes Helena.

Hermia. God speed fair Helena!

Helena. Call you me fair? That fair again unsay. Demetrius loves your fair: O happy fair! O, teach me how you look, and with what art. You sway the motion of Demetrius' heart.

Hermia. His folly, Helena, is no fault of mine.

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

Hermia. Take comfort: he no more shall see my face. Lysander and myself will fly this place.

Lysander. Helena, to you our minds we will unfold. Tomorrow night, through Athens' gates have we devised to steal.

Hermia. And thence from Athens turn away our eyes. Farewell, sweet playfellow: pray thou for us, -and good luck grant thee thy Demetrius! *[Exit]*

Lysander. Helena, adieu. As you on him, Demetrius dote on you! *[Exit]*

Helena. How happy some o'er other some can be!
Through Athens I am thought as fair as she.
But what of that? Demetrius thinks not so;
For ere Demetrius look'd on Hermia's eyne,
He hail'd down oaths that he was only mine.
I'll go tell Demetrius of Hermia's flight:
Then to the wood will I pursue him to-morrow night! *[Exit]*

Act I, Scene 2. Athens. Quince's house.

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

Quince. Is all our company here?

Bottom. You were best to call them generally, man by man, according to the scrip.

Quince. Here is the scroll of every man's name, which is thought fit, through all Athens, to play in our interlude before the duke and the duchess, on his wedding-day at night.

Bottom. First, good Peter Quince, say what the play treats on, then read the names of the actors, and so grow to a point.

Quince. Our play is "The most lamentable comedy, and most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisbe".

Bottom. A very good piece of work, I assure you, and a merry. Now, good Peter Quince, call forth your actors by the scroll. Masters, spread yourselves.

Quince. Answer as I call you. Nick Bottom, the weaver.

Bottom. Ready. Name what part I am for and precede.

Quince. You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus.

Bottom. What is Pyramus? A lover, or a tyrant?

Quince. A lover that kills himself most gallant for love.

Bottom. That will ask some tears in the true performing of it: if I do it, let the audience look to their eyes; I will move storms.

Quince. Francis Flute, the bellows-mender. Take Thisbe on you.

Flute. What is Thisbe? A wandering knight?

Quince. It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

Flute. Nay, faith let me not play a woman. I have a beard coming.

Quince. That's all one: you shall play it in a mask, and you may speak as small as you will.

Quince. Robin Starveling, the tailor.

Starveling. Here, Peter Quince.

Quince. Robin Starveling, you must play Thisbe's mother. Tom Snout, the tinker.

Snout. Here, Peter Quince.

Quince. You, Pyramus' father: myself, Thisbe's father: Snug, the joiner, you, the lion's part, and I hope, here is a play fitted.

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

Quince. You may do it extempore, for it is nothing but roaring.

Bottom. Let me play the lion too.

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

Bottom. Well, I will undertake it.

Quince. Masters, here are your parts: and I entreat you, meet me in the palace wood, a mile without the town, by moonlight; there will we rehearse. In the meantime I will draw a bill of properties, such as our play wants. I pray you, fail me not. *[Exit]*

Act II, Scene 1. A wood near Athens.

[Enter, from opposite sides, Moth and Puck]

Puck. How now, spirit! Whither wander you?

Moth. Over hill, over dale,
Over park, over pale,
I do wander everywhere,
And I serve the fairy queen,

Puck. The king doth keep his revels here tonight.
Take heed the queen come not within his sight.
A lovely boy, stolen from an Indian king,
She never had so sweet a changeling
And jealous is Oberon.

Moth. Either I mistake your shape and making quite,
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite
Call'd Robin Goodfellow?
Those that Hobgoblin call you and sweet Puck,
You do their work, and they shall have good luck:
Are not you he?

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

Moth. And here my mistress would that we were gone!

[Enter, from one side, Oberon, with his train; from the other, Titania, with hers]

Oberon. Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania.

Titania. What, jealous Oberon! Fairies, skip hence! I have forsworn his bed and company.

Oberon. Tarry, rash wanton: am not I thy lord?

Titania. Then I must be thy lady. Why art thou here? The bouncing Amazon, Hippolyta, to Theseus must be wedded, and you come to give their bed joy and prosperity.

Oberon. How canst thou thus for shame, Titania, glance at my credit with Hippolyta, knowing I know thy love to Theseus?

Titania. These are the forgeries of jealousy.

Oberon. Why should Titania cross her Oberon? I do but beg a little changeling boy to be my henchman.

Titania. Set your heart at rest: The fairyland buys not the child of me. His mother was a votaress of my order. But she, being mortal, of that boy did die, and for her sake do I rear up her boy, and for her sake I will not part with him.

Oberon. How long within this wood intend you stay?

Titania. Perchance till after Theseus' wedding-day.

Oberon. Give me that boy, and I will go with thee.

Titania. Not for thy fairy kingdom. Fairies, away!
We shall chide downright, if I longer stay. *[Exit Titania and fairies]*

Oberon. Well, go thy way: thou shalt not from this grove till I torment thee for this injury. My gentle Puck come hither. Thou rememberest once I sat upon a promontory, and heard a mermaid on a dolphin's back.

Puck. I remember.

Oberon. That very time I saw, flying between the cold moon and the earth, Cupid all arm'd. He loosed his fiery shaft and mark'd I where the bolt of Cupid fell. It fell upon a little western flower, before milk-white, now purple with love's wound, maidens call it love-in-idleness. Puck, fetch me that flower. The juice of it on sleeping eyelids laid will make or man or woman madly dote upon the next live creature that it sees. Fetch me this herb and we'll see what it doth sow.

Puck. I'll put a girdle round about the earth in forty minutes. *[Exit]*

Oberon. Having once this juice, I'll watch Titania when she is asleep, and drop the liquor of it in her eyes. The next thing then she waking looks upon, be it on lion, bear, or wolf, or bull, on meddling monkey, or on busy ape, she shall pursue it with the soul of love. And ere I take this charm from off her sight, as I can take it with another herb, I'll make her render up her page to me. But who comes here? I am invisible and I will overhear their conference. *[Enter Demetrius, Helena, following him]*

Demetrius. I love thee not, therefore pursue me not. Where are Lysander and fair Hermia? Thou told'st me they were stolen unto this wood, and here am I. Get thee gone, and follow me no more.

Helena. You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant, and I shall have no power to follow you.

Demetrius. Do I entice you? Do I speak you fair? Or, rather, do I not in plainest truth tell you, I do not, nor I cannot love you?

Helena. And even for that do I love you the more. I am your spaniel; and, Demetrius, The more you beat me, I will fawn on you. Use me but as your spaniel, spurn me, strike me, neglect me, lose me; only give me leave, unworthy as I am, to follow you. What worser place can I beg in your love—and yet a place of high respect with me—than to be used as you use your dog?

Demetrius. Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit for I am sick when I do look on thee.

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

Demetrius. I'll run from thee and hide me in the brakes, and leave thee to the mercy of wild beasts. *[Exit Demetrius]*

Oberon. Fare thee well, nymph: ere he do leave this grove, thou shalt fly him and he shall seek

thy love. *[Re-enter Puck]*

Welcome, wanderer.

Hast thou the flower there?

Puck. Ay, there it is.

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

Puck. Fear not, my lord, your servant shall do so. *[Exit]*

Act II, Scene 2. Another part of the wood.

[Enter Titania, with her train]

Titania. Come, now a fairy song. Sing me now asleep, then to your offices and let me rest. *[The Fairies sing]*

Moth. Hence, away! Now all is well-one aloof stand sentinel. *[Exit Fairies. Titania sleeps]*
[Enter Oberon and squeezes the flower on Titania's eyelids]

Oberon. What thou seest when thou dost wake,
Do it for thy truelove take,
Love and languish for his sake.
Be it ounce, or cat, or bear,
Pard, or boar with bristled hair.
In thy eye that shall appear
When thou wakest, it is thy dear:
Wake when some vile thing is near. *[Exit]* *[Enter Lysander and Hermia]*

Lysander. I have forgot our way. We'll rest us, Hermia, if you think it good,

Hermia. Find you out a bed, for I upon this bank will rest my head.

Lysander. One turf shall serve as pillow for us both.

Hermia. Nay, good Lysander; for my sake, my dear, lie further off yet, do not lie so near.

Lysander. O, take the sense, sweet, of my innocence! Love takes the meaning in love's conference.

Hermia. Lysander riddles very prettily.
But, gentle friend, for love and courtesy
Lie further off in human modesty.
Such separation as may well be said
Becomes a virtuous bachelor and a maid,
So far be distant; and, good night, sweet friend:
Thy love ne'er alter till thy sweet life end!

Lysander. Amen, amen, to that fair prayer, say I. Here is my bed: sleep give thee all his rest!
[They sleep]

[Enter Puck]

Puck. Night and silence.—Who is here?
Weeds of Athens he doth wear:
This is he, my master said,
Despised the Athenian maid. *[Exit]* *[Enter Demetrius and Helena, running]*

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

Demetrius. I charge thee, hence, and do not haunt me thus. I alone will go. *[Exit]*

Helena. O, I am out of breath in this fond chase!
But who is here? Lysander! On the ground!
Dead? Or asleep? I see no blood, no wound.
Lysander if you live, good sir, awake.

Lysander. *[Awaking]* And run through fire I will for thy sweet sake.
Transparent Helena! Nature shows art,

Lysander. I do repent the tedious minutes
I have here with Hermia spent.
Tis not Hermia but Helena I love:
Who will not change a raven for a dove?
The will of man is by his reason sway'd;

Helena. Wherefore was I to this keen mockery born?
When at your hands did I deserve this scorn?
Is't not enough, is't not enough, young man,
That I did never, no, nor never can,
Deserve a sweet look from Demetrius' eye,
But you must flout my insufficiency?
But fare you well: perforce I must confess
I thought you lord of more true gentleness.
O, that a lady, of one man refused.
Should of another therefore be abused! *[Exit]*

Lysander. She sees not Hermia. Hermia, sleep thou there:

And never mayst thou come Lysander near!
And, all my powers, address your love and might
To honor Helen and to be her knight! *[Exit]*

Hermia. *[Awaking]* Lysander! What, removed? Lysander! Lord!
What, out of hearing? Gone? No sound, no word?
Alack, where are you speak, an if you hear;
Speak, of all loves! I swoon almost with fear.
No? Then I well perceive you all not nigh
Either death or you I'll find immediately. *[Exit]*

Act III, Scene 1. The wood. Titania lying asleep.

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

Quince. And here's a marvelous convenient place for our rehearsal.

Bottom. Peter Quince—

Quince. What sayest thou, bully Bottom?

Bottom. First, Pyramus must draw a sword to kill himself; which the ladies cannot abide. How answer you that?

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

Bottom. Not a whit! Write me a prologue; and let the prologue seem to say, we will do no harm with our swords, and that Pyramus is not killed indeed; this will put them out of fear.

Quince. Well, we will have such a prologue; and it shall be written in eight and six.

Bottom. No, make it two more; let it be written in eight and eight.

Snout. Will not the ladies be afeard of the lion?

Starveling. I fear it, I promise you.

Bottom. Masters, a lion among ladies, is a most dreadful thing.

Snout. Therefore another prologue must tell he is not a lion.

Bottom. Nay, you must name his name, and half his face must be seen through the lion's neck: 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 tell them plainly he is Snug the joiner.

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

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

Bottom. A calendar, a calendar! Look in the almanac! Find out moonshine, find out moonshine!

Quince. Yes, it doth shine that night.

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

Quince. Ay; or else one must come in with a bush of thorns and a lantern, and say he comes to disfigure, or to present, the person of Moonshine. Then, we must have a wall in the great chamber; for Pyramus and Thisbe says the story, did talk through the chink of a wall.

Snout. You can never bring in a wall.

Bottom. Some man or other must present Wall.

Quince. If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit down, every mother's son, and rehearse your parts. [*Enter PUCK behind*]

Puck. What hempen homespuns have we swaggering here, so near the cradle of the fairy queen?

Quince. Speak, Pyramus. Thisbe, stand forth.

Bottom. Thisbe, the flowers of odious savors sweet,—

Quince. Odors, odors.

Bottom. —Odors savors sweet:
 So hath thy breath, my dearest Thisby dear.
But hark, a voice! Stay thou but here awhile,
 And by and by I will to thee appear. [*Exit*]

Puck. A stranger Pyramus than e'er played here. [*Exit*]

Flute. Must I speak now?

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

Flute. Most radiant Pyramus, most lily-white of hue,
 Of color like the red rose on triumphant brier,
 As true as truest horse that yet would never tire,
I'll meet thee, Pyramus, at Ninny's tomb.

Quince. 'Ninus' tomb,' man: why, you must not speak that yet; that you answer to Pyramus: you speak all your part at once, cues and all Pyramus enter: your cue is past; it is, 'never tire.'

Flute. O,—As true as truest horse, that yet would never tire. [*Re-enter Puck, and Bottom with an ass' head*]

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

Quince. O monstrous! O strange! We are haunted. Pray, masters! Fly, masters! Help! [*Exit Snug, Flute, and Starveling*]

Puck. I'll follow you! I'll lead you about a round, through bog, through bush, through brake,

through brier. *[Exit]*

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

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

Quince. Bless thee Bottom! Bless thee! Thou art translated. *[Exit Quince and Snout]*

Bottom. I see their knavery: this is to make an ass of me. To fright me, if they could. I will sing, that they shall hear I am not afraid. *[Sings]*

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

Bottom. *[Sings]*

Titania. I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again. On the first view to say, to swear, I love thee.

Bottom. Methinks, mistress, you should have little reason for that: and yet, to say the truth, reason and love keep little company together nowadays.

Titania. Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.

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

Titania. Out of this wood do not desire to go.
Thou shalt remain here, whether thou wilt or no.
I am a spirit of no common rate;
The summer still doth tend upon my state;
And I do love thee: therefore, go with me;
I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee,
And they shall fetch thee jewels from the deep,
And sing while thou on pressed flowers dost sleep;
And I will purge thy mortal grossness so
That thou shalt like an airy spirit go.
Peaseblossom! Cobweb! Moth! and Mustardseed! *[Enter Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Moth, and Mustardseed]*

Peaseblossom. Ready.

Cobweb. And I.

Moth. And I.

Mustardseed. And I.

All. Where shall we go?

Titania. Be kind and courteous to this gentleman;
Hop in his walks and gambol in his eyes;
Feed him with apricots and dewberries,

With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries;
The honey-bags steal from the humblebees,
And for night-tapers crop their waxen thighs
And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes,
To have my love to bed and to arise;
And pluck the wings from Painted butterflies
To fan the moonbeams from his sleeping eyes:
Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies.

Peaseblossom. Hail, mortal!

Cobweb. Hail!

Moth. Hail!

Mustardseed. Hail!

Bottom. I cry your worship's mercy, heartily: I beseech your worship's name.

Cobweb. Cobweb.

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

Peaseblossom. Peaseblossom.

Bottom. I pray you, commend me to Mistress Squash, your mother, and to Master Peascod, your father. Good Master Peaseblossom, I shall desire you of more acquaintance too. Your name, I beseech you, sir?

Mustardseed. Mustardseed.

Bottom. Good Master Mustardseed, I know your patience well: that same cowardly, giant-like ox-beef hath devoured many a gentleman of your house: I promise you your kindred had made my eyes water ere now. I desire your more acquaintance, good Master Mustardseed.

Titania. Come, wait upon him; lead him to my bower.

The moon methinks looks with a watery eye;
And when she weeps, weeps every little flower,
Lamenting some enforced chastity.
Tie up my love's tongue bring him silently. *[Exit]*

Act III, Scene 2. Another part of the wood.

[Enter Oberon]

Oberon. I wonder if Titania be awaked. *[Enter Puck]*
Here comes my messenger.
How now, mad spirit!

Puck. My mistress with a monster is in love.

Near to her close and consecrated bower,
While she was in her dull and sleeping hour,
A crew of patches, rude mechanicals,
That work for bread upon Athenian stalls,
Were met together to rehearse a play
Intended for great Theseus' nuptial-day.
The shallowest thick-skin of that barren sort,
Who Pyramus presented, in their sport
Forsook his scene and enter'd in a brake
When I did him at this advantage take,
An ass's nolle I fixed on his head:
Anon his Thisbe must be answered,
And forth my mimic comes. When they him spy,
As wild geese that the creeping fowler eye,
Or russet-pated choughs, many in sort,
Rising and cawing at the gun's report,
Sever themselves and madly sweep the sky,
So, at his sight, away his fellows fly;
And, at our stamp, here o'er and o'er one falls;
He murder cries and help from Athens calls.
Their sense thus weak, lost with their fears thus strong,
Made senseless things begin to do them wrong;
For briers and thorns at their apparel snatch;
Some sleeves, some hats, from yielders all things catch.
I led them on in this distracted fear,
And left sweet Pyramus translated there:
When in that moment, so it came to pass,
Titania waked and straightway loved an ass.

Oberon. This falls out better than I could devise.
But hast thou yet latch'd the Athenian's eyes
With the love-juice, as I did bid thee do?

Puck. I took him sleeping,—that is finish'd too,—
And the Athenian woman by his side:
That, when he waked, of force she must be eyed. [*Enter Hermia and Demetrius*]

Oberon. Stand close: this is the same Athenian.

Puck. This is the woman, but not this the man.

Demetrius. O, why rebuke you him that loves you so?

Hermia. If thou hast slain Lysander in his sleep,
Being o'er shoes in blood, plunge in the deep,
And kill me too.
The sun was not so true unto the day
As he to me: would he have stolen away
From sleeping Hermia?
What's this to my Lysander? where is he?
Ah, good Demetrius, wilt thou give him me?

Demetrius. I had rather give his carcass to my hounds.

Hermia. Out, dog! Out, cur! Thou drivest me past the bounds of maiden's patience.

Demetrius. I am not guilty of Lysander's blood, nor is he dead, for aught that I can tell.

Hermia. I pray thee, tell me then that he is well.

Demetrius. An if I could, what should I get therefore?

Hermia. A privilege never to see me more. *[Exit]*

Demetrius. There is no following her in this fierce vein. Here therefore for a while I will remain.
[Lies down and sleeps]

Oberon. What hast thou done? Thou hast mistaken quite and laid the love-juice on some truelove's sight.

Puck. Then fate overrules, that, one-man holding troth, a million fail, confounding oath on oath.

Oberon. About the wood go swifter than the wind,
And Helena of Athens look thou find:
By some illusion see thou bring her here:
I'll charm his eyes against she do appear.

Puck. I go, I go; look how I go,
Swifter than arrow from the Tartar's bow. *[Exit]*

Oberon. Flower of this purple dye,
Hit with Cupid's archery,
Sink in apple of his eye.
When his love he doth espy,
Let her shine as gloriously
As the Venus of the sky.
When thou wakest, if she be by,
Beg of her for remedy. *[Re-enter PUCK]*

Puck. Captain of our fairy band,
Helena is here at hand;

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

Puck. Then will two at once woo one.
That must needs be sport alone.
And those things do best please me
That befall preposterously. *[Enter Lysander and Helena]*

Lysander. How can these things in me seem scorn to you, bearing the badge of faith, to prove them true?

Helena. These vows are Hermia's: will you give her o'er?

Lysander. I had no judgment when to her I swore.

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

Lysander. Demetrius loves her, and he loves not you.

Demetrius. *[Awaking]* O Helena, goddess, nymph, perfect, divine!
To what, my love, shall I compare thine eyne?
Crystal is muddy. O, how ripe in show
Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow!

Helena. O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent
To set against me for your merriment:
If you were civil and knew courtesy,
You would not do me thus much injury.
Can you not hate me, as I know you do,
But you must join in souls to mock me too?

Lysander. Helen, it is not so.

Demetrius. Disparage not the faith thou dost not know,
Lest, to thy peril, thou aby it dear.
Look, where thy love comes; yonder is thy dear. *[Re-enter Hermia]*

Hermia. Why unkindly didst thou leave me so?

Lysander. Why should he stay, whom love doth press to go?

Hermia. What love could press Lysander from my side?

Lysander. Fair Helena, who more engilds the night
Than all you fiery oes and eyes of light.

Hermia. You speak not as you think: it cannot be.

Helena. Lo, she is one of this confederacy!
Now I perceive they have conjoin'd all three
To fashion this false sport, in spite of me.
Injurious Hermia! most ungrateful maid!
Have you conspired, to bait me with this foul derision?
Is all the counsel that we two have shared,
The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent,
When we have chid the hasty-footed time
For parting us,—O, is it all forgot?
And will you rent our ancient love asunder,
To join with men in scorning your poor friend?
It is not friendly, 'tis not maidenly:
Our sex, as well as I, may chide you for it,
Though I alone do feel the injury.

Hermia. I understand not what you mean by this.

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

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

Helena. O excellent!

Hermia. Sweet, do not scorn her so.

Lysander. Helen, I love thee; by my life, I do.

Demetrius. I say I love thee more than he can do.

Hermia. -Am not I Hermia? Are not you Lysander?-I am as fair now as I was erewhile.-Since night you loved me; yet since night you left me.-Why, then you left me—O, the gods forbid!—In earnest, shall I say?

Lysander. Ay, by my life. And never did desire to see thee more. Therefore be out of hope, of question, of doubt be certain, nothing truer; 'tis no jest that I do hate thee and love Helena.

Hermia. O me! You juggler! You canker-blossom! You thief of love! What, have you come by night and stolen my love's heart from him?

Helena. Have you no modesty, no maiden shame, ~~no~~ touch of bashfulness? -Fie, fie! you counterfeit, you puppet, you!

Hermia. Puppet? Why so? Ay, that way goes the game. Now I perceive that she hath made compare between our statures; she hath urged her height. And with her personage, her tall personage, her height, forsooth, she hath prevail'd with him. And are you grown so high in his esteem because I am so dwarfish and so low? How low am I, thou painted maypole? Speak! How low am I? I am not yet so low but that my nails can reach unto thine eyes.

Helena. I pray you, though you mock me, gentlemen, let her not hurt me. Let her not strike me. You perhaps may think because she is something lower than myself that I can match her.

Hermia. Lower!

Helena. Good Hermia, do not be so bitter with me. And now, so you will let me quiet go to Athens will I bear my folly back and follow you no further: let me go: You see how simple and how fond I am.

Hermia. Why, get you gone: who is't that hinders you?

Helena. A foolish heart, that I leave here behind.

Hermia. What, with Lysander?

Helena. With Demetrius.

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

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

Helena. O, when she's angry, she is keen and shrewd! And though she be but little, she is fierce.

Hermia. 'Little' again! nothing but 'low' and 'little'! Why will you suffer her to flout me thus?

Lysander. Get you gone, you dwarf;

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

Demetrius. Follow! Nay, I'll go with thee, cheek by cheek. *[Exit Lysander and Demetrius]*

Hermia. You, mistress, all this coil is 'long of you: nay, go not back.

Helena. I will not trust you. Your hands than mine are quicker for a fray, my legs are longer though, to run away. *[Exit]*

Hermia. I am amazed, and know not what to say. *[Exit]*

Oberon. This is thy negligence: still thou mistakest, or else committ'st thy knaveries wilfully.

Puck. Believe me, king of shadows, I mistook.
Did not you tell me I should know the man
By the Athenian garment be had on?
And so far blameless proves my enterprise,
That I have 'nointed an Athenian's eyes;
And so far am I glad it so did sort
As this their jangling I esteem a sport.

Oberon. Thou see'st these lovers seek a place to fight:
Hie therefore, Robin, overcast the night;
And lead these testy rivals so astray
Then stir Demetrius up with bitter wrong;
And sometime rail thou like Demetrius;
And from each other look thou lead them thus,
Till o'er their brows death-counterfeiting sleep
With leaden legs and batty wings doth creep:
Then crush this herb into Lysander's eye;
Whose liquor hath this virtuous property,
To take from thence all error with his might,
And make his eyeballs roll with wonted sight.

When they next wake, all this derision
Shall seem a dream and fruitless vision,
And back to Athens shall the lovers wend,
Whiles I in this affair do thee employ,
I'll to my queen and beg her Indian boy;
And then I will her charmed eye release
From monster's view, and all things shall be peace.

Puck. My fairy lord, this must be done with haste. *[Exit Oberon]*

Puck. Up and down, up and down,
I will lead them up and down:
I am fear'd in field and town:
Goblin, lead them up and down.
Here comes one. *[Re-enter Lysander]*

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

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

Lysander. I will be with thee straight.

Puck. Follow me, then, to plainer ground. *[Exit Lysander, as following the voice] [Re-enter Demetrius]*

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

Puck. Thou coward, art thou bragging to the stars,
Telling the bushes that thou look'st for wars,
And wilt not come? Come, come, thou child;
I'll whip thee with a rod:

Demetrius. Yea, art thou there?

Puck. Follow my voice: we'll try no manhood here. *[Exit] [Re-enter LYSANDER]*

Lysander. He goes before me and still dares me on:
When I come where he calls, then he is gone. *[Lies down]*
Come, thou gentle day! *[Sleeps] [Re-enter PUCK and DEMETRIUS]*

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

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

Puck. Come hither: I am here.

Demetrius. Nay, then, thou mock'st me. –By day's approach look to be visited. –*[Lies down and*

sleeps] [Re-enter Helena]

Helena. O weary night, O long and tedious night, Abate thy hour! Shine comforts from the east,
That I may back to Athens by daylight. *[Lies down and sleeps]*

Puck. Yet but three? Come one more;
Two of both kinds make up four.
Here she comes, curst and sad:
Cupid is a knavish lad,
Thus to make poor females mad. *[Re-enter Hermia]*

Hermia. Never so weary, never so in woe,
Here will I rest me till the break of day.
Heavens shield Lysander, if they mean a fray! *[Lies down and sleeps]*

Puck. On the ground
Sleep sound:
I'll apply
To your eye,
Gentle lover, remedy. *[Squeezing the juice on Lysander's eyes]*
When thou wakest,
Thou takest
True delight
In the sight
Of thy former lady's eye:
And the country proverb known,
That every man should take his own,
In your waking shall be shown:
Jack shall have Jill;
Nought shall go ill;
The man shall have his mare again, and all shall be well. *[Exit]*

Act IV, Scene 1. *The same.*

[Lysander, Demetrius, Helena, and Hermia lying asleep.]

[Enter Titania and Bottom; Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Moth, Mustardseed, and other Fairies. Oberon behind unseen.]

Titania. Come sit thee down upon this flowery bed, while I thy amiable cheeks do coy.

Bottom. Where's Peaseblossom?

Peaseblossom. Ready.

Bottom. Scratch my head Peaseblossom. Where's Monsieur Cobweb?

Cobweb. Ready.

Bottom. Monsieur Cobweb, good monsieur, get you your weapons in your hand, and kill me a red-hipped humble-bee on the top of a thistle; and, good monsieur, bring me the honey-bag. Do not fret yourself too much in the action, monsieur; and, good monsieur, have a care the honey-

bag break not; I would be loath to have you overflown with a honey-bag, signior. Where's Monsieur Mustardseed?

Mustardseed. Ready.

Bottom. Give me your neaf, Monsieur Mustardseed. Pray you, leave your courtesy, good monsieur.

Mustardseed. What's your will?

Bottom. Nothing good monsieur, but to help Cavalry Cobweb to scratch. I must to the barber's, monsieur; for methinks I am marvelous hairy about the face; and I am such a tender ass, if my hair do but tickle me, I must scratch.

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

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

Titania. I have a venturous fairy that shall seek the squirrel's hoard, and fetch thee new nuts.

Bottom. I had rather have a handful or two of dried peas. have an exposition of sleep come upon me.

Titania. Sleep thou, and I will wind thee in my arms. Fairies, begone, and be all ways away. *[Exit fairies]* So doth the woodbine the sweet honeysuckle gently entwist; the female ivy so enrings the barky fingers of the elm. O, how I love thee! how I dote on thee!

[They sleep]

[Enter Puck]

Oberon. *[Advancing]*—Her dotage now I do begin to pity:

Be as thou wast wont to be;
See as thou wast wont to see:
Dian's bud o'er Cupid's flower
Hath such force and blessed power.

Now, my Titania; wake you, my sweet queen.

Titania. My Oberon! What visions have I seen! Methought I was enamour'd of an ass.

Oberon. There lies your love.

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

Oberon. Silence awhile. Robin, take off this head.

Puck. Fairy king, attend, and mark. *[Horns]* I do hear the morning lark.

Titania. Come, my lord, and in our flight tell me how it came this night. *[Exit] [Enter Thesus, Hippolyta, Egeus.]*

Egeus. My lord, this is my daughter here asleep. And this, Lysander; this Demetrius is, this Helena. I wonder of their being here together.

Theseus. Is not this the day that Hermia should give answer of her choice?

Egeus. It is, my lord. [*Horns again. Lysander, Demetrius, Helena, and Hermia wake and start to wake up*]

Theseus. Good morrow, friends. Saint Valentine is past: begin these wood-birds but to couple now?

Lysander. Pardon, my lord.

Theseus. I pray you all, stand up. I know you two are rival enemies. How comes this gentle concord in the world, that hatred is so far from jealousy, to sleep by hate, and fear no enmity?

Lysander. My lord, I shall reply amazedly, half sleep, half waking: but as yet, I swear, I cannot truly say how I came here, but, as I think—for truly would I speak, and now do I bethink me, so it is—I came with Hermia hither: our intent was to be gone from Athens.

Egeus. Enough, enough, my lord; you have enough. They would have stolen away! They would, Demetrius, thereby to have defeated you and me; you of your wife and me of my consent, of my consent that she should be your wife.

Demetrius. But, my good lord, I know not by what power—but by some power it is,—my love to Hermia, melted as the snow.—The object and the pleasure of mine eye is only Helena.

Theseus. Fair lovers, you are fortunately met. Egeus, I will overbear your will, for in the temple by and by with us these couples shall eternally be knit, and for the morning now is something worn, our purposed hunting shall be set aside. Away with us to Athens; three and three, we'll hold a feast in great solemnity. Come, Hippolyta. [*Exit Theseus, Hippolyta, Egeus*]

Hermia. Methinks I see these things with parted eye when every thing seems double.

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

Demetrius. Are you sure that we are awake? Do not you think the duke was here, and bid us follow him?

Hermia. Yes, and my father.

Lysander. And he did bid us follow to the temple.

Demetrius. Why, then, we are awake: let's follow him and by the way let us recount our dreams. [*Exit*]

Bottom. [*Awaking*] When my cue comes, call me, and I will answer: my next is, 'Most fair Pyramus.' Heigh-ho! Peter Quince! Flute, the bellows-mender! Snout, the tinker! Starveling! God's my life, stolen hence, and left me asleep! I have had a most rare vision. I have had a dream, past the wit of man to say what dream it was: man is but an ass, if he go about to expound this dream. Methought I was—there is no man can tell what. Methought I was,—and methought I

had,—but man is but a patched fool, if he will offer to say what methought I had. The eye of man hath not heard, the ear of man hath not seen, man's hand is not able to taste, his tongue to conceive, nor his heart to report, what my dream was. I will get Peter Quince to write a ballad of this dream: it shall be called Bottom's Dream, because it hath no bottom; and I will sing it in the latter end of a play, before the duke: peradventure, to make it the more gracious, I shall sing it at her death. [Exit]

Act IV, Scene 2. Athens. Quince's house.

[Enter Quince, Flute, Snout, Starveling]

Quince. Have you sent to Bottom's house? Is he come home yet?

Starveling. He cannot be heard of. Out of doubt he is transported.

Flute. If he come not, then the play is marred: it goes not forward, doth it?

Quince. It is not possible: you have not a man in all Athens able to discharge Pyramus but he.

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

Quince. Yea and the best person too; and he is a very paramour for a sweet voice.

Flute. You must say 'paragon:' a paramour is, God bless us, a thing of naught. *[Enter Snug]*

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

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

Bottom. Where are these lads? Where are these hearts?

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

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

Quince. Let us hear, sweet Bottom.

Bottom. Not a word of me. All that I will tell you is, that the duke hath dined. Get your apparel together, good strings to your beards, new ribbons to your pumps; meet presently at the palace; every man look o'er his part; for the short and the long is, our play is preferred. In any case, let Thisby have clean linen; and let not him that plays the lion pair his nails, for they shall hang out for the lion's claws. And, most dear actors, eat no onions nor garlic, for we are to utter sweet breath; and I do not doubt but to hear them say, it is a sweet comedy. No more words: away! go, away! *[Exit]*

Act V, Scene 1. Athens. The palace of Theseus.

[Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Philostrate]

Hippolyta. 'Tis strange my Theseus, that these lovers speak of.

Theseus. More strange than true. I never may believe lovers and madmen have such seething brains. Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend more than cool reason ever comprehends. Such tricks hath strong imagination, that if it would but apprehend some joy it comprehends some bringer of that joy, or in the night, imagining some fear how easy is a bush supposed a bear!

Hippolyta. And all their minds transfigured so together, but, howsoever, strange and admirable.

Theseus. Here come the lovers, full of joy and mirth. *[Enter Lysander, Demetrius, Hermia, and Helena]*

Theseus. Come now; what masques, what dances shall we have. Where is our usual manager of mirth? What revels are in hand? Call Philostrate.

Philostrate. Here, mighty Theseus.

Theseus. Say, what abridgement have you for this evening? What mask? What music?

Philostrate. *[Giving Theseus a paper]* Make choice of which your highness will see first.

Theseus. *[Reads]*-A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus and his love Thisbe. A very tragical mirth.-Merry and tragical! tedious and brief!-That is, hot ice and wondrous strange snow.-How shall we find the concord of this discord?

Philostrate. A play there is, my lord, some ten words long, which is as brief as I have known a play, but by ten words, my lord, it is too long.

Theseus. What are they that do play it?

Philostrate. Hard-handed men that work in Athens here, which never labor'd in their minds till now.

Theseus. And we will hear it.

Philostrate. No, my noble lord; it is not for you.

Theseus. I will hear that play. Go, bring them in: and take your places. *[Exit Theseus]*

Philostrate. The Prologue is address'd. *[Flourish of trumpets]* *[Enter Quince for the Prologue]*

Quince. If we offend, it is with our good will.
That you should think, we come not to offend,
But with good will. To show our simple skill,
That is the true beginning of our end.
Consider then we come but in despite.
We do not come as minding to contest you,
Our true intent is. All for your delight

We are not here. That you should here repent you,
The actors are at hand and by their show
You shall know all that you are like to know.

Hippolyta. This fellow doth not stand upon points.

Hermia. He hath rid his prologue like a rough colt; he knows not the stop. A good moral, my lady: it is not enough to speak, but to speak true.

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

Hippolyta. His speech, was like a tangled chain; nothing impaired, but all disordered. Who is next? *[Enter Pyramus and Thisbe, Wall, Moonshine, and Lion]*

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

Theseus. I wonder if the lion be to speak.

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

Snout. In this same interlude it doth befall
That I, one Snout by name, present a wall;
And such a wall, as I would have you think,
That had in it a crannied hole or chink,
Through which the lovers, Pyramus and Thisbe,
Did whisper often very secretly.

This loam, this rough-cast and this stone doth show
That I am that same wall; the truth is so:
And this the cranny is, right and sinister,
Through which the fearful lovers are to whisper.

Theseus. Would you desire lime and hair to speak better?

Hippolyta. It is the wittiest partition that ever I heard discourse, my lord. *[Enter Pyramus]*

Theseus. Pyramus draws near the wall: silence!

Bottom. O grim-look'd night! O night with hue so black!
O night, which ever art when day is not!
O night, O night! alack, alack, alack,
I fear my Thisby's promise is forgot!
And thou, O wall, O sweet, O lovely wall,
That stand'st between her father's ground and mine!
Thou wall, O wall, O sweet and lovely wall,
Show me thy chink, to blink through with mine eyne! *[Wall holds up his fingers]*
Thanks, courteous wall: Jove shield thee well for this!
But what see I? No Thisbe do I see.
O wicked wall, through whom I see no bliss!
Cursed be thy stones for thus deceiving me!

Theseus. The wall, methinks, being sensible, should curse again.

Bottom. No, in truth, sir, he should not. 'Deceiving me' is Thisbe's cue: she is to enter now, and I am to spy her through the wall. You shall see it will fall pat as I told you. Yonder she comes.
[Enter Thisbe]

Flute. *[as Thisbe]* O wall, full often hast thou heard my moans,
For parting my fair Pyramus and me!
My cherry lips have often kiss'd thy stones,
Thy stones with lime and hair knit up in thee.

Bottom. I see a voice: now will I to the chink,
To spy an I can hear my Thisbe's face. Thisbe!

Flute. *[as Thisbe]* My love thou art, my love I think.

Bottom. Think what thou wilt, I am thy lover's grace;
And, like Limander, am I trusty still.

Flute. *[as Thisbe]* And I like Helen, till the Fates me kill.

Bottom. O kiss me through the hole of this vile wall!

Flute. *[as Thisbe]* I kiss the wall's hole, not your lips at all.

Bottom. Wilt thou at Ninny's tomb meet me straightway?

Flute. *[as Thisbe]* 'Tide life, 'tide death, I come without delay. *[Exit Pyramus and Thisbe]*

Snout. [*as Wall*] Thus have I, Wall, my part discharged so;
And, being done, thus Wall away doth go. [*Exit*]

Theseus. Now is the mural down between the two neighbors.

Hippolyta. This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard.

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

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

Theseus. If we imagine no worse of them than they of themselves, they may pass for excellent men. Here come two noble beasts in, a man and a lion. [*Enter Lion and Moonshine*]

Snug. [*as Lion*] You, ladies, you, whose gentle hearts do fear
The smallest monstrous mouse that creeps on floor,
May now perchance both quake and tremble here,
When lion rough in wildest rage doth roar.
Then know that I, one Snug the joiner, am
A lion-fell, nor else no lion's dam;
For, if I should as lion come in strife
Into this place, 'twere pity on my life.

Theseus. A very gentle beast, of a good conscience.

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

Hippolyta. This lion is a very fox for his valor.

Theseus. True; and a goose for his discretion.

Demetrius. Not so, my lord; for his valor cannot carry his discretion; and the fox carries the goose.

Theseus. His discretion, I am sure, cannot carry his valor; for the goose carries not the fox. It is well: leave it to his discretion, and let us listen to the moon.

Starveling. [*as Moonshine*] This lantern doth the horned moon present;—

Demetrius. He should have worn the horns on his head.

Theseus. He is no crescent, and his horns are invisible within the circumference.

Starveling. [*as Moonshine*] This lantern doth the horned moon present. Myself the man-in-the moon do seem to be.

Theseus. This is the greatest error of all the rest: the man should be put into the lantern. How is it else the man-in-the moon?

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

Hippolyta. I am aweary of this moon: would he would change!

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

Hippolyta. Proceed, Moon.

Starveling. *[as Moonshine]* All that I have to say, is, to tell you that the lantern is the moon; I, the man in the moon; this thorn-bush, my thorn-bush; and this dog, my dog.

Demetrius. Why, all these should be in the lantern; for all these are in the moon. But, silence! here comes Thisbe. *[Enter Thisbe]*

Flute. *[as Thisbe]* This is old Ninny's tomb. Where is my love?

Snug. *[as Lion] [Roaring]* Oh— *[Thisbe runs off]*

Demetrius. Well roared, Lion.

Theseus. Well run, Thisbe.

Hippolyta. Well shone, Moon. Truly, the moon shines with a good grace. *[The Lion shakes Thisbe's mantle, and exit]*

Theseus. Well moused, Lion.

Hippolyta. And so the lion vanished. *[Enter Pyramus]*

Demetrius. And then came Pyramus.

Bottom. Sweet Moon, I thank thee for thy sunny beams;
I thank thee, Moon, for shining now so bright;
For, by thy gracious, golden, glittering gleams,
I trust to take of truest Thisbe sight.
But stay, O spite!
But mark, poor knight,
What dreadful dole is here!
Eyes, do you see?
How can it be?
O dainty duck! O dear!
Thy mantle good,
What, stain'd with blood!
Approach, ye Furies fell!
O Fates, come, come,
Cut thread and thrum;
Quail, crush, conclude, and quell!

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

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

Bottom. O wherefore, Nature, didst thou lions frame?

Since lion vile hath here deflower'd my dear:
Which is—no, no—which was the fairest dame
That lived, that loved, that liked, that look'd
with cheer.
Come, tears, confound;
Out, sword, and wound
The pap of Pyramus;
Ay, that left pap,
Where heart doth hop: [*Stabs himself*]
Thus die I, thus, thus, thus.
Now am I dead,
Now am I fled;
My soul is in the sky:
Tongue, lose thy light;
Moon take thy flight: [*Exit Moonshine*]
Now die, die, die, die, die. [*Dies*]

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

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

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

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

Theseus. She will find him by starlight. Here she comes; and her passion ends the play. [*Re-enter Thisbe*]

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

Demetrius. A mote will turn the balance, which Pyramus, which Thisbe is the better; he for a man, God warrant us; she for a woman, God bless us.

Hippolyta. She hath spied him already with those sweet eyes.

Demetrius. And thus she means, videlicet...

Flute. [*as Thisbe*] Asleep, my love?
What, dead, my dove?
O Pyramus, arise!
Speak, speak. Quite dumb?
Dead, dead? A tomb
Must cover thy sweet eyes.
These My lips,
This cherry nose,
These yellow cowslip cheeks,
Are gone, are gone:
Lovers, make moan:
His eyes were green as leeks.
O Sisters Three,
Come, come to me,

With hands as pale as milk;
Lay them in gore,
Since you have shore
With shears his thread of silk.
Tongue, not a word:
Come, trusty sword;
Come, blade, my breast imbrue:
[Stabs herself]
And, farewell, friends;
Thus Thisbe ends:
Adieu, adieu, adieu. *[Dies]*

Theseus. Moonshine and Lion are left to bury the dead.

Demetrius. Ay, and Wall too.

Bottom. *[Starting up]* Will it please you to see the epilogue?

Theseus. No epilogue, I pray you; for your play needs no excuse. Never excuse; for when the players are all dead, there needs none to be blamed.

The iron tongue of midnight hath told twelve:
Lovers, to bed; 'tis almost fairy time.
I fear we shall out-sleep the coming morn
As much as we this night have overwatch'd.
The heavy gait of night. Sweet friends, to bed. *[Exit] [Enter PUCK]*

Puck. Not a mouse
Shall disturb this hallow'd house:
I am sent with broom before,
To sweep the dust behind the door.

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

Oberon. Through this house each fairy stray.
To the best bride-bed will we,
Which by us shall blessed be;
And the issue there create
Ever shall be fortunate.

Titania. So shall all the couples three
Ever true in loving be;
And the blots of Nature's hand
Shall not in their issue stand;
Never mole, hare lip, nor scar,
Nor mark prodigious, such as are
Despised in nativity,
Shall upon their children be.

Oberon. With this field-dew consecrate,
Every fairy take his gait;
And each several chamber bless,
Through this palace, with sweet peace;
And the owner of it blest
Ever shall in safety rest.
Trip away; make no stay;
Meet me all by break of day.

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