

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

William Shakespeare

Directed by Michele Delattre

Curtain Theatre, Old Mill Park, 2024

CHARACTERS

The Court

Theseus	Duke of Athens
Hippolyta	Queen of the Amazons, Theseus' bride
Egeus	Athenian Courtier, father of Hermia
Hermia	Lover of Lysander, daughter of Egeus
Helena	A woman of Athens in love with Demetrius
Lysander	Young nobleman, in love with Hermia or Helena or both
Philostrate	Athenian Courtier, Master of Entertainments

The Mechanicals

Nick Bottom	A weaver who plays Pyramus in Pyramus & Thisbe (P&T)
Peter Quince	A carpenter who reads the Prologue to P&T
Francis Flute	A bellows-mender who plays Thisbe in P&T
Thomas Snout	A tinker who plays Wall in P&T
Snug	A joiner, who plays Lion in P&T
Robin Starveling	A tailor who plays Moonshine in P&T

Fairies

Oberon	King of the Fairies
Titania	Queen of the Fairies
Robin Goodfellow	A Puck
Titania's Fairies:	Peaseblossom; Cobweb; Mote; Mustardseed and others

ACT 1

Scene 1

Enter Theseus and Hippolyta

THESEUS

Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour
 Draws on apace. Four happy days bring in
 Another moon. But, O, methinks how slow
 This old moon wanes! She lingers my desires
 Like to a stepdame or a dowager
 Long withering out a young man's revenue.

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.

THESEUS

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

Enter Egeus and his daughter Hermia, Lysander and Demetrius.

EGEUS

Happy be Theseus, our renowned duke.

THESEUS

Thanks, good Egeus, What's the news with thee?

EGEUS

Full of vexation come I, with complaint
 Against my child, my daughter Hermia.
 Stand forth, Demetrius. My noble lord,
 This man hath my consent to marry her.
 Stand forth, Lysander. And, my gracious duke,
 This man hath bewitched the bosom of my child.
 Thou, Lysander, thou hast by moonlight
 At her window sung with feigning
 Voice verses of feigning love and stolen
 The impression of her fantasy with

Bracelets of thy hair, rings, gauds, conceits,
 Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweetmeats – messengers
 Of strong prevailment in unhardened youth.
 With cunning hast thou filched my daughter's heart,
 Turned her obedience, which is due to me,
 To stubborn harshness. And, my gracious duke,
 Be it so she will not here before your Grace
 Consent to marry with Demetrius,
 I beg the ancient privilege of Athens:
 As she is mine, I may dispose of her,
 Which shall be either to this gentleman
 Or to her death, according to our law
 Immediately provided in that case.

THESEUS

What say you, Hermia? Be advised, fair maid.
 To you, your father should be as a god.
 Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

HERMIA

So is Lysander.

THESEUS

In himself he is;
 But in this kind, wanting your father's voice,
 The other must be held the worthier.

HERMIA

I do entreat your Grace to pardon me.
 I know not by what power I am made bold,
 But I beseech your Grace that I may know
 The worst that may befall me in this case
 If I refuse to wed Demetrius.

THESEUS

Either to die the death or to abjure
 Forever the society of men.
 Therefore, fair Hermia, question your desires,
 Know of your youth, examine well your blood,
 Whether, if you yield not to your father's choice,
 You can endure the livery of a nun,
 For aye to be in shady cloister mew'd,
 To live a barren sister all your life.
 Take time to pause, and by the next new moon
 Upon that day either prepare to die

For disobedience to your father's will,
 Or else to wed Demetrius, as he would,
 Or on Diana's altar to protest
 For aye, austerity and single life.

DEMETRIUS

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

LYSANDER

You have her father's love, Demetrius.
 Let me have Hermia's. Do you marry him.

EGEUS

Scornful Lysander, true, he hath my love;
 And what is mine my love shall render him.

LYSANDER (*to Theseus*)

I am, my lord, as well derived as he,
 As well possessed. My love is more than his;
 And (which is more than all these boasts can be)
 I am beloved of beauteous Hermia.
 Demetrius, I'll avouch it to his head,
 Made love to Nedar's daughter Helena,
 And won her soul; and she, sweet lady, dotes,
 Devoutly dotes, dotes in idolatry,
 Upon this spotted and inconstant man.

THESEUS

... Aye. Demetrius, come,
 And come, Egeus; you shall go with me.
 I have some private schooling for you both.
 For you, fair Hermia, look you arm yourself
 To fit your fancies to your father's will,
 Or else the law of Athens yields you up
 To death or to a vow of single life.
 Come, my Hippolyta. What cheer, my love?
 Demetrius and Egeus, go along.

EGEUS

With duty and desire we follow you.

Exit all but Hermia and Lysander.

LYSANDER

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

HERMIA

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

LYSANDER

Ay me. For aught that I could ever read,
Could ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth.
But either it was different in blood ...

HERMIA

O cross. Too high to be enthralled to low.

LYSANDER

Or else misgrafted in respect of years ...

HERMIA

O spite. Too old to be engaged to young.

LYSANDER

Or else it stood upon the choice of friends.

HERMIA

O hell, to choose love by another's eyes.
If then true lovers have been ever crossed,
It stands as an edict in destiny.
Then let us teach our trial patience
Because it is a customary cross,
As due to love as thoughts and dreams and sighs,
Wishes and tears, poor fancy's followers.

LYSANDER

And will you hear me, Hermia:
I have a widow aunt, a dowager
Of great revenue, and she hath no child.
From Athens is her house remote seven leagues,
And she respects me as her only son.
There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee;
And to that place the sharp Athenian law
Cannot pursue us. If thou lovest me, then
Steal forth thy father's house tomorrow night,
And in the wood a league without the town
Where I did meet thee once with Helena
To do observance to a morn of May,

There will I stay for thee.

HERMIA

... My good Lysander,
 I swear to thee by Cupid's strongest bow,
 By his best arrow with the golden head,
 In that same place thou hast appointed me
 Tomorrow truly will I meet with thee.

LYSANDER

Keep promise, love. Look, here comes Helena.

Enter Helena.

HERMIA

Godspeed, fair Helena. Whither away?

HELENA

Call you me "fair"? That "fair" again unsay.
 Demetrius loves your fair. O happy fair.
 Your eyes are lodestars and your tongue's sweet air
 More tunable than lark to shepherd's ear.
 Sickness is catching. O, were favor so.
 Your words I catch, fair Hermia; ere I go,
 My ear should catch your voice, my eye your eye;
 My tongue should catch your tongue's sweet melody.
 Were the world mine, Demetrius being bated,
 The rest I'd give to be to you translated.
 O, teach me how you look and with what art
 You sway the motion of Demetrius' heart.

HERMIA

I frown upon him, yet he loves me still.

HELENA

O, that your frowns would teach my smiles such skill.

HERMIA

I give him curses, yet he gives me love.

HELENA

O, that my prayers could such affection move.

HERMIA

The more I hate, the more he follows me.

HELENA

The more I love, the more he hateth me.

HERMIA

His folly, Helena, is no fault of mine.

HELENA

None but your beauty. Would that fault were mine.

HERMIA

Take comfort: he no more shall see my face.

Lysander and myself will fly this place.

LYSANDER

Helen, to you our minds we will unfold.

Tomorrow night when Phoebe doth behold

Her silver visage in the watery glass,

Through Athens' gates have we devised to steal.

HERMIA

And in the wood where often you and I

Upon faint primrose beds were wont to lie

Emptying our bosoms of their counsel sweet,

There my Lysander and myself shall meet

And thence from Athens turn away our eyes

To seek new friends and strange companies.

Farewell, sweet playfellow. Pray thou for us,

And good luck grant thee thy Demetrius.

Keep word, Lysander.

LYSANDER

I will, my Hermia.

Hermia exits.

Helena, adieu.

As you on him, Demetrius dote on you.

Lysander exits.

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.

Love looks not with the eyes but with the mind,

And therefore is winged Cupid painted blind.

For, ere Demetrius looked on Hermia's eyes,

He hailed down oaths that he was only mine;

And when this hail some heat from Hermia felt,

So he dissolved, and showers of oaths did melt.

I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight.
Then to the wood will he tomorrow night
Pursue her. And, for this intelligence
If I have thanks, it is a dear expense.
But herein mean I to enrich my pain,
To have his sight thither and back again.

ACT 1, Scene 2

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

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

Marry, 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 proceed.

QUINCE

You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus.

BOTTOM

What is Pyramus? A lover or a tyrant?

QUINCE

A lover that kills himself most gallant for love.

BOTTOM

That will ask some tears in the true performing of it. If I do it, let the audience look to their eyes. I will move storms; I will condole in some measure. To the rest (*he indicates that Quince should speak to the other players*). Yet (*to himself and the audience*) my chief humor is for a tyrant. I could play Ercles rarely, or a part to tear a cat in, to make all split:

*The raging rocks
And shivering shocks*

*Shall break the locks
Of prison gates.
And Phibbus' car
Shall shine from far
And make and mar
The foolish Fates.*

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

QUINCE

Francis Flute, the bellows-mender?

FLUTE

Here, Peter Quince.

QUINCE

Flute, you must take Thisbe on you.

FLUTE

What is Thisbe? A wandering knight?

QUINCE

It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

FLUTE

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

QUINCE

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

BOTTOM

An I may hide my face, let me play Thisbe too. I'll speak in a monstrous little voice: "Thisne, Thisne!"; "Ah Pyramus, my lover dear. Thy Thisbe dear and lady dear!"

QUINCE

No, no, you must play Pyramus. And, Flute, you Thisbe.

BOTTOM

Well, proceed.

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. I will roar that I will do any man's heart good to hear me. I will roar that I will make the Duke say, "Let him roar again, let him roar again."

QUINCE

And you should do it too terribly, you would fright the Duchess and the ladies that they would shriek, and that were enough to hang us all.

ALL

That would hang us, every mother's son.

BOTTOM

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

QUINCE

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

BOTTOM

Well, I will undertake it.

QUINCE

Masters, here are your parts, (*he gives out the parts*) and I am to entreat you, request you, and desire you to con them by tomorrow night and meet me in the palace wood, a mile without the town, by moonlight. There will we rehearse, for if we meet in the city we shall be dogged with company, and our devices known. I pray you fail me not.

BOTTOM

We will meet, and there we may rehearse most obscenely and courageously. Take pains. Be perfit. Adieu.

QUINCE

At the Duke's Oak we meet.

Exeunt.

ACT 2

Scene 1

Enter a Fairy at one door and Robin Goodfellow/Puck at another.

Music & fairy dance crossing (storm)

ROBIN

How now, spirit? Whither wander you?

FAIRY

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

ROBIN

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

FAIRY

Either I mistake your shape and making, quite,
 Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite
 Called Robin Goodfellow. Are not you he
 That frights the maidens of the villagery,
 and misleads night wanderers, laughing at their harm?
 Those that "Hobgoblin" call you and "sweet Puck,"
 You do their work, and they shall have good luck?
 Are not you he?

ROBIN

... Thou speakest aright.
 I am that merry wanderer of the night.
 I jest to Oberon and make him smile
 When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,
 Neighing in likeness of a filly foal.
 The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,
 Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me;
 Then slip I from her bum, down topples she,
 And falls into a cough. But room, fairy.
 Here comes Oberon.

FAIRY

And here my mistress. Would that he were gone.

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

OBERON

Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania.

TITANIA

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

OBERON

Tarry, rash wanton. Am not I thy lord?

TITANIA

Then I must be thy lady. But I know
 When thou hast stolen away from Fairyland
 And in the shape of Corin sat all day
 Playing on pipes of corn and versing love
 To amorous Phillida. Why art thou here,
 Come from the farthest steep of India,

But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,
 Your buskined mistress and your warrior love,
 To Theseus must be wedded, and you come
 To give their bed joy and prosperity?

OBERON

How canst thou thus for shame, Titania,
 Glance at my credit with Hippolyta,
 Knowing I know thy love to Theseus?

TITANIA

The forgeries of jealousy;
 And never, since the middle summer's spring,
 Met we on hill, in dale, forest, or mead,
 By paved fountain or by rushy brook,
 Or in the beached margent of the sea,
 To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,
 But with thy brawls thou hast disturbed our sport.
 Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,
 As in revenge have sucked up from the sea
 Contagious fogs, which, falling in the land,
 Hath every pelting river made so proud
 That they have overborne their continents.
 The ox hath therefore stretched his yoke in vain,
 The plowman lost his sweat, and the green corn
 Hath rotted ere his youth attained a beard.
 The human mortals want their winter here.
 No night is now with hymn or carol blessed.
 Therefore the moon, the governess of floods,
 Pale in her anger, washes all the air,
 That rheumatic diseases do abound.
 And through this distemperature we see
 The seasons alter. The spring, the summer,
 The chiding autumn, angry winter, change
 Their wonted liveries, and the mazed world
 By their increase now knows not which is which.
 And this same progeny of evils comes
 From our debate, from our dissension;
 We are their parents and original.

OBERON

Do you amend it, then. It lies in you.
 Why should Titania cross her Oberon?

I do but beg a little changeling boy
To be my henchman.

TITANIA

... Set your heart at rest:
The fairy land buys not the child of me.
His mother was a votaress of my order,
And in the spiced Indian air by night
Full often hath she gossiped by my side
And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands,
Marking the embarked traders on the flood,
When we have laughed to see the sails conceive
And grow big-bellied with the wanton wind,
Which she, with pretty and with swimming gait,
Following (her womb then rich with my young squire),
Would imitate and sail upon the land
To fetch me trifles and return again
As from a voyage, rich with merchandise.
But she, being mortal, of that boy did die,
And for her sake do I rear up her boy,
And for her sake I will not part with him.

OBERON

How long within this wood intend you stay?

TITANIA

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

OBERON

Give me that boy and I will go with thee.

TITANIA

Not for thy fairy kingdom. Fairies, away.
We shall chide downright if I longer stay.

Titania and her fairies exit.

OBERON

Well, go thy way. Thou shalt not from this grove
Till I torment thee for this injury.
My gentle Puck, come hither. Thou rememberest
Since once I sat upon a promontory

And heard a mermaid on a dolphin's back
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath
That the rude sea grew civil at her song.

ROBIN

I remember.

OBERON

That very time I saw (but thou couldst not),
Flying between the cold moon and the earth
Cupid, all armed. A certain aim he took
And loosed his love-shaft smartly from his bow;
Then marked I where the bolt of Cupid fell.
It fell upon a little western flower,
Before, milk-white, now purple with love's wound.
Fetch me that flower; the herb I showed thee once.
The juice of it on sleeping eyelids laid
Will make a man or woman madly dote
Upon the next live creature that it sees.
Fetch me this herb, and be thou here again
Ere the leviathan can swim a league.

ROBIN

I'll put a girdle round about the Earth
In forty minutes.

Robin Goodfellow exits.

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
She shall pursue it with the soul of love.
And ere I take this charm from off her sight
I'll make her render up her page to me.
But who comes here? ...

Enter Demetrius, Helena following him. (We see that Oberon is invisible when the lovers comically don't notice him.)

DEMETRIUS

I love thee not; therefore pursue me not.

Where is Lysander and fair Hermia?
Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.

HELENA

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

DEMETRIUS

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

HELENA

And even for that do I love you the more.
I am your spaniel, and, Demetrius,
The more you beat me I will fawn on you.
Use me but as your spaniel: spurn me, strike me,
Neglect me, lose me; only give me leave,
Unworthy as I am, to follow you.

DEMETRIUS

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

HELENA

And I am sick when I look not on you.

DEMETRIUS

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

HELENA

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

DEMETRIUS

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

HELENA

The wildest hath not such a heart as you.
Run when you will. The story shall be changed:
Apollo flies and Daphne holds the chase.

DEMETRIUS

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

Exit Demetrius.

HELENA

Ay, in the temple, in the town, the field,
You do me mischief. Fie, Demetrius.
Your wrongs do set a scandal on my sex.
We cannot fight for love as men may do.
We should be wooed, and were not made to woo.
I'll follow thee and make a heaven of hell
To die upon the hand I love so well.

Exit Helena.

OBERON

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

Enter Robin Goodfellow.

Hast thou the flower there? Welcome, wanderer.

ROBIN

Ay, there it is.

OBERON

I pray thee give it me.

Robin gives him the flower.

I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,
 Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,
 Quite overcanopied with luscious woodbine,
 With sweet muskroses, and with eglantine.
 There sleeps Titania sometime of the night,
 Lulled in these flowers with dances and delight.
 And there the snake throws her enameled skin,
 Weed wide enough to wrap a fairy in.
 And with the juice of this I'll streak her eyes
 And make her full of hateful fantasies.
 Take thou some of it, and seek through this grove.

He gives Robin part of the flower.

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

ROBIN

Fear not, my lord. Your servant shall do so.

Exeunt.

Act 2, Scene 2

Enter Titania, Queen of Fairies, with her train.

TITANIA

Come, now a roundel and a fairy song;
Sing me now asleep. Keep back
The clamorous owl that nightly hoots.
Then to your offices and let me rest.

Titania lies down. Fairies sing.

FIRST FAIRY

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

CHORUS

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

FIRST FAIRY

Weaving spiders, come not here.
Hence, you long-legged spinners, hence.
Beetles black, approach not near.
Worm nor snail, do no offence.

CHORUS

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

Titania sleeps.

SECOND FAIRY

Hence, away. Now all is well.
One aloof stand sentinel.

Exit Fairies.

Enter Oberon, who squeezes the nectar on Titania's eyelids.

OBERON

What thou seest when thou dost wake
Do it for thy true love take.
Love and languish for his sake.
Be it lynx, 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 Oberon.

Enter Lysander and Hermia.

LYSANDER

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

HERMIA

Be it so, Lysander. Find you out a bed,
For I upon this bank will rest my head.

LYSANDER

One turf shall serve as pillow for us both;
One heart, one bed, two bosoms, and one troth.

HERMIA

Nay, good Lysander. For my sake, my dear,
Lie further off yet. Do not lie so near.

LYSANDER

O, take the sense, sweet, of my innocence.
Love takes the meaning in love's conference.
I mean that my heart unto yours is knit,
So that but one heart we can make of it;
Two bosoms interchained with an oath,

So then two bosoms and a single troth.
Then by your side no bed-room me deny,
For lying so, Hermia, I do not lie.

HERMIA

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

LYSANDER

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

HERMIA

With half that wish the wisher's eyes be pressed.

Hermia and Lysander sleep.

Enter Robin Goodfellow.

ROBIN

Through the forest have I gone,
But Athenian found I none
On whose eyes I might approve
This flower's force in stirring love.

Robin Goodfellow sees Lysander.

Night and silence. Who is here?
Weeds of Athens he doth wear.
This is he, my master said
Despised the Athenian maid.
And here the maiden, sleeping sound
On the dank and dirty ground.
Pretty soul, she durst not lie
Near this lack-love, this kill-courtesy.
Churl, upon thy eyes I throw

All the power this charm doth owe.

Robin Goodfellow squeezes nectar on Lysander's eyelids

When thou wakest, let love forbid
Sleep his seat on thy eyelid.
So, awake when I am gone,
For I must now to Oberon.

Exit Robin Goodfellow.

Enter Demetrius and Helena, running.

HELENA

Stay, though thou kill me, sweet Demetrius.

DEMETRIUS

I charge thee: Hence, and do not haunt me thus.

HELENA

O, wilt thou darkling leave me? Do not so.

DEMETRIUS

Stay on thy peril. I alone will go.

Exit Demetrius.

HELENA

O, I am out of breath in this fond chase.
The more my prayer, the lesser is my grace.
Happy is Hermia, wheresoe'er she lies,
For she hath blessed and attractive eyes.
How came her eyes so bright? Not with salt tears;
If so, my eyes are oftener washed than hers.
No, no, I am as ugly as a bear,
For beasts that meet me run away for fear.
But who is here? Lysander, on the ground?
Dead or asleep? I see no blood, no wound.
Lysander, if you live, good sir, awake.

LYSANDER (*waking up*)

And run through fire I will for thy sweet sake,
Transparent Helena.
Where is Demetrius? O, how fit a word
Is that vile name to perish on my sword.

HELENA

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

LYSANDER

Content with Hermia? No, I do repent
The tedious minutes I with her have spent.
Not Hermia, but Helena I love.
Who will not change a raven for a dove?
The will of man is by his reason swayed,
And reason says you are the worthier maid.

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.

Exit Helena.

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 Lysander.

HERMIA (*waking up*)

Help me, Lysander, help me. Do thy best
To pluck this crawling serpent from my breast.
Ay me, for pity. What a dream was here.
Lysander, look how I do quake with fear.
Methought a serpent ate my heart away,
And you sat smiling at his cruel prey.
Lysander. What, removed? Lysander. Lord.
What, out of hearing? Gone? No sound, no word?

Alack, where are you? Speak, an if you hear.
Speak, of all loves. I swoon almost with fear.
No? Then I well perceive you are not nigh.
Either death or you I'll find immediately.

Exit Hermia.

ACT 3

Scene 1

With Titania still asleep onstage, enter the mechanicals: Bottom, Quince, Snout, Starveling, Snug, and Flute.

BOTTOM

Are we all met?

QUINCE

Pat, pat. And here's a marvellous convenient place for our rehearsal. This green plot shall be

our stage, and we will do it in action as we will do it before the Duke.

BOTTOM

Peter Quince?

QUINCE

What sayest thou, bully Bottom?

BOTTOM

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

SNOUT

By our ladykin, a parlous fear.

STARVELING

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

BOTTOM

Not a whit. I have a device to make all well. Write me a prologue, and let the prologue seem to say we will do no harm with our swords and that Pyramus is not killed indeed. And, for the more better assurance, tell them that I, Pyramus, am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver. This will put them out of fear.

SNOUT

Will not the ladies be afeard of the lion?

STARVELING

I fear it, I promise you.

BOTTOM

Masters, you ought to consider with yourself, to bring in (God shield us) a lion among ladies is a most dreadful thing. For there is not a more fearful wildfowl than your lion living, and we ought to look to it.

SNOUT

Therefore another prologue must tell he is not a lion.

BOTTOM

He himself must speak, saying thus, or to the same defect: "Ladies," or "Fair ladies, I would wish you," or "I would request you," or "I would entreat you not to fear, not to tremble. My life for yours. If you think I come hither as a lion, it were pity of my life. No, I am no such thing. I am a man as other men are." And there indeed let him name his name and tell them plainly he is Snug the joiner.

QUINCE

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

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

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

SNOUT

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

BOTTOM

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

QUINCE

If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit down every mother's son, and rehearse your parts. Pyramus, you begin. When you have spoken your speech, enter into that brake, and so everyone according to his cue.

Enter Robin Goodfellow, invisible to those onstage.

ROBIN (*aside*)

What hempen homespuns have we swaggering here
So near the cradle of the Fairy Queen?
What, a play toward? I'll be an auditor,
An actor too perhaps, if I see cause.

QUINCE

Speak, Pyramus. Thisbe, stand forth.

BOTTOM (*as Pyramus*)

Thisbe, the flowers of odious savors sweet ...

QUINCE

Odors, odors.

BOTTOM (*as Pyramus*)

... odors savors sweet.

So hath thy breath, my dearest Thisbe dear.

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

And by and by I will to thee appear.

Exit Bottom.

ROBIN (*aside*)

A stranger Pyramus than e'er played here.

Exit Robin Goodfellow.

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 (*as Thisbe*)

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

Oh. ... (*as Thisbe*) *As true as truest horse, that yet would never tire.*

Enter Robin Goodfellow and Bottom (as Pyramus) with the ass-head.

BOTTOM (*as Pyramus*)

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

QUINCE

O monstrous. O strange. We are haunted. Pray, masters, fly, masters. Help.

Exeunt Quince, Flute, Snout, Snug, and Starveling.

ROBIN

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

Exit Robin Goodfellow.

BOTTOM

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

Enter Snout.

SNOUT

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

BOTTOM

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

Exit Snout. Enter Quince.

QUINCE

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

Exit Quince.

BOTTOM

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

(He sings.)

The ouzel cock, so black of hue,
With orange-tawny bill,
The throstle with his note so true,
The wren with little quill.

TITANIA *(waking up)*

What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?

BOTTOM (*singing*)

The finch, the sparrow, and the lark,
The plainsong cuckoo gray,
Whose note full many a man doth mark
And dares not answer “nay”.

TITANIA

I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again.
Mine ear is much enamored of thy note,
So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape,
And thy fair virtue’s force perforce doth move me
On the first view to say, to swear, I love thee.

BOTTOM

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

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:
Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Mote, and Mustardseed.

Enter four Fairies: Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Mote, and Mustardseed.

PEASEBLOSSOM

Ready.

COBWEB

And I.

MOTE

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 apricocks and dewberries,
With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries;
The honey-bags steal from the humble-bees,
And for night-tapers crop their waxen thighs
And light them at the fiery glowworms' 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.

MOTE

Hail.

MUSTARDSEED

Hail.

BOTTOM

I cry your fairy mercy, heartily. I beseech your fairy name.

COBWEB

Cobweb.

BOTTOM

I shall desire you of more acquaintance, good Cobweb. If I cut my finger, I shall make bold with you. Your name, honest fairy?

PEASEBLOSSOM

Peaseblossom.

BOTTOM

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

MUSTARDSEED

Mustardseed.

BOTTOM

Good fairy Mustardseed, I know your patience well. I promise you, your kindred hath made my eyes water ere now. I desire you of more acquaintance, good 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 lover's tongue. Bring him silently.

Exeunt.

ACT 3, Scene 2

Enter Oberon, King of the Fairies.

OBERON

I wonder if Titania be awaked;
Then what it was that next came in her eye,
Which she must dote on in extremity.

Enter Robin Goodfellow.

Here comes my messenger. How now, mad spirit?
What night-rule now about this haunted grove?

ROBIN

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 entered in a brake.
When I did him at this advantage take,
An ass's nolle I fixed on his head.
So at his sight away his fellows tread,
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 latched the Athenian's eyes
With the love juice, as I did bid thee do?

ROBIN

I took him sleeping. That is finished, too,
And the Athenian woman by his side,
That, when he waked, of force she must be eyed.

Enter Demetrius and Hermia.

Oberon and Robin Goodfellow step aside.

OBERON

Stand close. This is the same Athenian?

ROBIN

This is the woman, but not this the man.

DEMETRIUS

O, why rebuke you him that loves you so?

HERMIA

Thou, I fear, hast given me cause to curse.
If thou hast slain Lysander in his sleep,
Being o'er shoes in blood, plunge in the deep
And kill me too.
The sun was not so true unto the day
As he to me. Would he have stolen away
From sleeping Hermia?
It cannot be but thou hast murdered him.
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. Hast thou slain him, then?
Henceforth be never numbered among men.
O, once tell true, tell true, even for my sake.
And hast thou killed him sleeping? O brave touch.
Could not a worm, an adder, do so much?

DEMETRIUS

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

HERMIA

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

DEMETRIUS

An if I could, what should I get therefor?

HERMIA

A privilege never to see me more.
And from thy hated presence part I so.
See me no more, whether he be dead or no.

Exit Hermia.

DEMETRIUS

There is no following her in this fierce vein.
Here, therefore, for a while I will remain.

Demetrius lies down and sleeps. Oberon and Robin Goodfellow come forward.

OBERON

What hast thou done? Thou hast mistaken quite
And laid the love juice on some true-love's sight.
Of thy misprision must perforce ensue
Some true-love turned, and not a false turned true.
About the wood go swifter than the wind,
And Helena of Athens look thou find.
All fancy-sick she is and pale of cheer
With sighs of love that costs the fresh blood dear.
By some illusion see thou bring her here.
I'll charm his eyes against she do appear.

ROBIN

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

Exit Robin Goodfellow.

OBERON (*applying the nectar to Demetrius' eyes*)

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 wake'st, if she be by,
Beg of her for remedy.

Enter Robin Goodfellow.

ROBIN

Captain of our fairy band,
Helena is here at hand,

And the youth, mistook by me,
Pleading for a lover's fee.
Shall we their fond pageant see?
Lord, what fools these mortals be.

OBERON

Stand aside. The noise they make
Will cause Demetrius to awake.

ROBIN

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

*Oberon and Robin Goodfellow step aside.
Enter Lysander and Helena.*

LYSANDER

Why should you think that I should woo in scorn?
Scorn and derision never come in tears.
Look when I vow, I weep; and vows so born
In their nativity all truth appears.

HELENA

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

LYSANDER

I had no judgment when to her I swore.

HELENA

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

LYSANDER

Demetrius loves her, and he loves not you.

DEMETRIUS (*waking up*)

O Helen, goddess, nymph, perfect, divine,
To what, my love, shall I compare thine eyne?
Crystal is muddy. O, how ripe in show
Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow.

HELENA

O spite, o hell, I see you all are bent
To set against me for your merriment.

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

LYSANDER

You are unkind, Demetrius. Be not so,
For you love Hermia; this you know I know.
And here with all good will, with all my heart,
In Hermia's love I yield you up my part.

HELENA

Never did mockers waste more idle breath.

DEMETRIUS

Lysander, keep thy Hermia; I will none.
If e'er I loved her, all that love is gone.
My heart to her but as guestwise sojourned,
And now to Helen is it home returned,
There to remain.

LYSANDER

Helen, it is not so.

Enter Hermia.

HERMIA (*to Lysander*)

Lysander, 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

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

HERMIA

You speak not as you think. It cannot be.

HELENA

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

HERMIA

I am amazed at your unlovely words.
I scorn you not. It seems that you scorn me.

HELENA

Have you not set Lysander, as in scorn,
To follow me and praise my eyes and face,
And made your other love, Demetrius,
Who even now did spurn me with his foot,
To call me goddess, nymph, divine and rare,
Precious, celestial? Wherefore speaks he this
To her he hates? And wherefore doth Lysander
Deny your love, so rich within his soul,
And tender me, forsooth, affection,
But by your setting on, by your consent?

HERMIA

I understand not what you mean by this.

HELENA

I do. Persever, 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 you 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 (*to Lysander*)

Sweet, do not scorn her so.

DEMETRIUS (*to Lysander*)

If she cannot entreat, I can compel.

LYSANDER

Thou canst compel no more than she entreat.
Thy threats have no more strength than her weak prayers.
Helen, I love thee.

DEMETRIUS

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

LYSANDER

If thou say so, withdraw and prove it too.

DEMETRIUS

Quick, come.

HERMIA

Lysander, whereto tends all this?

Hermia takes hold of Lysander.

LYSANDER (*to Hermia*)

Hang off, thou cat, thou burr! Vile thing, let loose,
Or I will shake thee from me like a serpent.

HERMIA

Do you not jest?

HELENA

Yes, sooth, and so do you.

LYSANDER

Demetrius, I will keep my word with thee.

DEMETRIUS

I would I had your bond, for I perceive
A weak bond holds you. I'll not trust your word.

LYSANDER

What? Should I hurt her, strike her, kill her dead?
Although I hate her, I'll not harm her so.

HERMIA

What, can you do me greater harm than hate?
Hate me? Wherefore? O me, what news, my love?
Am not I Hermia? Are not you Lysander?
I am as fair now as I was erewhile.
Since night you 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 turns him loose.

HERMIA (*to Helena*)

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

Fine, in faith.
Have you no modesty, no maiden shame,
No touch of bashfulness? What, will you tear
Impatient answers from my gentle tongue?
Fie, fie, you counterfeit, you puppet, you.

HERMIA

Puppet? Why so? Ay, that way goes the game.
Now I perceive that she hath made compare
Between our statures; she hath urged her height,
And with her personage, her tall personage,
Her height, forsooth, she hath prevailed with him.
And are you grown so high in his esteem
Because I am so dwarfish and so low?

How low am I, thou painted maypole? Speak,
How low am I? I am not yet so low
But that my nails can reach unto thine eyes.

HELENA

I pray you, though you mock me, gentlemen,
Let her not hurt me. I was never curst;
I have no gift at all in shrewishness.
I am a right maid for my cowardice.
Let her not strike me. You perhaps may think
Because she is something lower than myself
That I can match her.

HERMIA

Lower? Hark, again.

HELENA

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

HERMIA

Why, get you gone. Who is it 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 is angry, she is keen and shrewd.
She was a vixen when she went to school,
And though she be but little, she is fierce.

HERMIA

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

LYSANDER

Get you gone, you dwarf,
You minimus, of hindering knotgrass made,
You bead, you acorn.

DEMETRIUS

You are too officious
In her behalf that scorns your services.
Let her alone. Speak not of Helena.

LYSANDER

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 jowl.

Exit Demetrius and Lysander.

HERMIA

You, mistress, all this coil is long of you.

Helena retreats.

Nay, go not back.

HELENA

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

Exit Helena.

HERMIA

I am amazed and know not what to say.

Exit Hermia.

OBERON (*to Robin*)

This is thy negligence. Still thou mistakest,
Or else committest thy knaveries willfully.

ROBIN

Believe me, king of shadows, I mistook.
Did not you tell me I should know the man
By the Athenian garments he had on?

OBERON

Thou seest these lovers seek a place to fight.
Hie, therefore, Robin, overcast the night;
And lead these testy rivals so astray
As one come not within another's way.
Like to Lysander sometime frame thy tongue;
Then stir Demetrius up with bitter wrong.
And sometime rail thou like Demetrius.
And from each other look thou lead them thus
Till o'er their brows death-counterfeiting sleep
With leaden legs and batty wings doth creep.
Then crush this herb into Lysander's eye,

Oberon hands a flower to Robin.

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.
Whiles I in this affair do thee employ,
I'll to my queen and beg her Indian boy;
And then I will her charmed eye release
From monster's view, and all things shall be peace.

Exit Oberon.

ROBIN

Up and down, up and down,
I will lead them up and down.

I am feared in field and town.
Goblin, lead them up and down.
Here comes one.

Enter Lysander.

LYSANDER

Where art thou, proud Demetrius? Speak thou now.

ROBIN (*mimicking Demetrius' voice*)

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

LYSANDER

I will be with thee straight.

ROBIN (*in Demetrius' voice*)

Follow me, then, to plainer ground.

Exit Lysander.

Enter Demetrius.

DEMETRIUS

Lysander, speak again.

Thou runaway, thou coward, art thou fled?

Speak. In some bush? Where dost thou hide thy head?

ROBIN (*mimicking Lysander's voice*)

Thou coward, art thou bragging to the stars,

Telling the bushes that thou look'st for wars,

And wilt not come? Come, recreant! Come, thou child.

DEMETRIUS

Yea, art thou there?

ROBIN (*in Lysander's voice*)

Follow my voice. We'll try no manhood here.

Exit Robin and Demetrius.

Enter Lysander.

LYSANDER

He goes before me and still dares me on.

When I come where he calls, then he is gone.

The villain is much lighter-heeled than I.

I followed fast, but faster he did fly,
That fallen am I in dark uneven way,
And here will rest me:

Lysander lies down and sleeps.

Enter Robin and Demetrius.

ROBIN (*in Lysander's voice*)

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

DEMETRIUS

Abide me, if thou darest, for well I wot
Thou run'st before me, shifting every place,
And darest not stand nor look me in the face.
Where art thou now?

ROBIN (*in Lysander's voice*)

Come hither. I am here.

DEMETRIUS

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

Demetrius lies down and sleeps.

Enter Helena.

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.

Helena lies down and sleeps.

ROBIN

Yet but three? Come one more.
Two of both kinds makes up four.
Here she comes, curst and sad.

Cupid is a knavish lad
Thus to make poor females mad.

Enter Hermia.

HERMIA

Never so weary, never so in woe,
Bedabbled with the dew and torn with briers,
I can no further crawl, no further go.
My legs can keep no pace with my desires.
Here will I rest me till the break of day.
Heavens shield Lysander if they mean a fray.

Hermia lies down and sleeps.

ROBIN

On the ground
Sleep sound.
I'll apply
To your eye,
Gentle lover, remedy.

Robin applies the nectar to Lysander's eyelids.

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;
Naught shall go ill;
The man shall have his mare again, and all shall be well.

Exit Robin Goodfellow.

ACT 4

Scene 1

With the four lovers still asleep onstage, enter, unseen by those on stage, Titania, Queen of Fairies, Bottom and Fairies, and Oberon.

TITANIA

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

BOTTOM

Where's Peaseblossom?

PEASEBLOSSOM

Ready.

BOTTOM

Scratch my head, Peaseblossom. Where's Fairy Cobweb?

COBWEB

Ready.

BOTTOM

Cobweb, good Fairy, get you your weapons in your hand and kill me a red-hipped humble-bee on the top of a thistle, and, good fairy, bring me the honey-bag. Do not fret yourself too much in the action, Cobweb, and have a care the honey-bag break not; I would be loath to have you overflown with a honey-bag.

Exit Cobweb.

Where's Mustardseed?

MUSTARDSEED

Ready. What's your will?

BOTTOM

Nothing, good Fairy, but to help our gallante Cobweb to scratch. I must to the barber's, lass, for methinks I am marvels hairy about the face. And I am such a tender ass, if my hair do but tickle me, I must scratch.

TITANIA

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

BOTTOM

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

TITANIA

Or say, sweet love, what thou desirest to eat.

BOTTOM

Truly, a peck of provender. I could munch your good dry oats. Methinks I have a great desire to a bottle of hay. Good hay, sweet hay, hath no fellow.

TITANIA

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

BOTTOM

I had rather have a handful or two of dried peas. But, I pray you, let none of your people stir me; I have an exposition of sleep come upon me.

TITANIA

Sleep thou, and I will wind thee in my arms.
Fairies, begone, and be all ways away.

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.

Bottom and Titania sleep.

Enter Robin Goodfellow.

OBERON

Welcome, good Robin. Seest thou this sweet sight?
Her dotage now I do begin to pity.
For, meeting her of late behind the wood,
Seeking sweet favors for this hateful fool,
I did upbraid her and fall out with her;
For she his hairy temples then had rounded
With coronet of fresh and fragrant flowers;
And she in mild terms begged my patience,
I then did ask of her her changeling child,
Which straight she gave me, and her fairy sent
To bear him to my bower in Fairyland.
And now I have the boy, I will undo
This hateful imperfection of her eyes.
And, gentle Puck, take this transformed scalp
From off the head of this Athenian swain,
That he, awaking when the other do,

May all to Athens back again repair
And think no more of this night's accidents
But as the fierce vexation of a dream.
But first I will release the Fairy Queen.

Oberon applies the nectar to her eyes.

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 (*waking*)

My Oberon, what visions have I seen.
Methought I was enamored of an ass.

OBERON

There lies your love.

TITANIA

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

OBERON

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

TITANIA

Music, ho, music such as charmeth sleep.

ROBIN (*removing the ass-head from Bottom*)

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

OBERON

Sound music.

Music.

Come, my queen, take hands with me,
And rock the ground whereon these sleepers be.

Titania and Oberon dance.

ROBIN

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

OBERON

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

TITANIA

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

Exeunt Oberon, Robin, and Titania.

Wind horn. Enter Theseus and all his train, Hippolyta and Egeus.

THESEUS

My love shall hear the music of my hounds.
We will, fair queen, up to the mountain's top
And mark the musical confusion
Of hounds and echo in conjunction.

HIPPOLYTA

I was with Hercules and Cadmus once,
When in a wood of Crete they bayed the bear
With hounds of Sparta. Never did I hear
Such gallant chiding, for, besides the groves,
The skies, the fountains, every region near
Seemed all one mutual cry. I never heard
So musical a discord, such sweet thunder.

THESEUS

My hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind,
Slow in pursuit, but matched in mouth like bells,
Each under each. A cry more tunable
Was never holloed to, nor cheered with horn;
Judge when you hear. But soft, what nymphs are these?

EGEUS

My lord, this is my daughter here asleep,
And this Lysander; this Demetrius is,

This Helena, old Nedar's Helena.
I wonder of their being here together.

HIPPOLYTA

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

EGEUS

It is, my lord.

THESEUS (*to band*)

Go, wake them with your horns.

The lovers all wake and start up.

THESEUS

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

Demetrius, Helena, Hermia, and Lysander kneel.

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 I do bethink me, so it is,
I came with Hermia hither. Our intent
Was to be gone from Athens, where we might
Without the peril of the Athenian law ...

EGEUS

Enough, enough. My lord, you have enough.
 I beg the law, the law, upon his head.
 They would have stolen away. They would,
 Demetrius, thereby to have defeated you and me:
 You of your wife and me of my consent,
 Of my consent that she should be your wife.

DEMETRIUS

My lord, fair Helen told me of their stealth,
 Of this their purpose hither to this wood,
 And I in fury hither followed them,
 Fair Helena in fancy following me.
 But, my good lord, I wot not by what power
 (But by some power it is) my love to Hermia,
 Melted as the snow, seems to me now
 As the remembrance of an idle gaud
 Which in my childhood I did dote upon,
 And all the faith, the virtue of my heart,
 The object and the pleasure of mine eye,
 Is only Helena. To her, my lord,
 Was I betrothed ere I saw Hermia.
 But like in sickness did I loathe this food.
 But as in health, come to my natural taste,
 Now I do wish it, love it, long for it,
 And will forevermore be true to it.

THESEUS

Fair lovers, you are fortunately met.
 Of this discourse we more will hear anon.
 Egeus, I will overbear your will,
 For in the temple by and by, with us,
 These couples shall eternally be knit.
 And, for the morning now is something worn,
 Our purposed hunting shall be set aside.
 Away with us to Athens. Three and three,
 We'll hold a feast in great solemnity.
 Come, Hippolyta.

Exeunt Theseus and his train, including Hippolyta and Egeus.

DEMETRIUS

These things seem small and undistinguishable,
Like far-off mountains turned into clouds.

HERMIA

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

HELENA

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

DEMETRIUS

... Are you sure
That we are awake? It seems to me
That yet we sleep, we dream. Do not you think
The Duke was here and bid us follow him?

HERMIA

Yea, and my father.

HELENA

And Hippolyta.

LYSANDER

And he did bid us follow to the temple.

DEMETRIUS

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

Exeunt lovers.

BOTTOM (*waking*)

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. 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 Bottom

Act 4, Scene 2

Enter Quince, Flute, Snout, and Starveling.

QUINCE

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

STARVELING

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

FLUTE

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

QUINCE

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

FLUTE

No, he hath simply the best wit of any handicraftman in Athens.

SNOUT

And he is a very paramour for a sweet voice.

QUINCE

You must say paragon. A paramour is (God bless us) a thing of naught.

Enter Snug the joiner.

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 not true Athenian. I will tell you everything right as it fell out.

QUINCE

Let us hear, sweet Bottom.

BOTTOM

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

Exeunt.

ACT 5

Scene 1

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

HIPPOLYTA

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

THESEUS

More strange than true. I never may believe
These antique fables nor these fairy toys.
Lovers and madmen have such seething brains,
Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend
More than cool reason ever comprehends.
The lunatic, the lover, and the poet
Are of imagination all compact.
And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.

HIPPOLYTA

But all the story of the night told over,
And all their minds transfigured so together,
... something of great constancy
But somehow strange and admirable.

Enter Lovers: Lysander, Demetrius, Hermia, and Helena.

THESEUS

Joy, gentle friends! Joy and fresh days of love
Accompany your hearts. Come now,
What masques, what dances shall we have
To wear away this long age of three hours
Between our after-supper and bedtime?
Call Philostrate.

PHILOSTRATE (*coming forward*)

Here, mighty Theseus.

THESEUS

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

PHILOSTRATE (*giving Theseus a paper*)

Herewith “The Riot of the tipsy Bacchanals,
Tearing the Thracian singer in their rage” ...

THESEUS

That is an old device, and it was played
When I from Thebes came last a conqueror.

PHILOSTRATE

“The thrice-three Muses mourning for the death
Of learning, late deceased in beggary.”

THESEUS

That is some satire, keen and critical,
Not sorting with a nuptial ceremony.

PHILOSTRATE:

“A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus
And his love Thisbe: very tragical mirth.”

THESEUS

Merry and tragical? Tedious and brief?

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 labored in their minds till now.

THESEUS

And we will hear it.

PHILOSTRATE

No, my noble lord,
It is not for you. I have heard it over,
And it is nothing, nothing in the world.

THESEUS

I will hear that play,
For never anything can be amiss
When simpleness and duty tender it.
Go, bring them in. And take your places, ladies.

Philostrate fetches the players who line up to the side.

PHILOSTRATE

So please your Grace, the Prologue is addressed.

THESEUS

Let him approach.

Enter Peter Quince as Prologue.

PROLOGUE

If we offend, it is with our goodwill.

That you should think we come not to offend,
But with goodwill. To show our simple skill,

That is the true beginning of our end.
Consider, then, we come but in despite.

We do not come, as minding to content you,
Our true intent is. All for your delight

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

Exit Quince as Prologue.

THESEUS

This fellow doth not stand upon points.

HIPPOLYTA

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

Enter Pyramus (Bottom), Thisbe (Flute), Wall (Snout), Moonshine (Starveling), Lion (Snug), and Prologue (Quince).

QUINCE (*Prologue*)

Anon comes Pyramus, sweet youth and tall,
And finds his trusty Thisbe's mantle slain:
Whereat with blade, with bloody blameful blade,
He bravely broached his boiling bloody breast,
And Thisbe, tarrying in mulberry shade,
His dagger drew; and died ...

SNOUT (*Wall*)

In this same interlude it doth befall
That I, one Snout by name, present a Wall;

And such a Wall as I would have you think
 That had in it a crannied hole or chink,
 Through which the lovers, Pyramus and Thisbe,
 Did whisper often, very secretly.
 This loam, this roughcast, 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.

THESEUS

Pyramus draws near the Wall. Silence.

BOTTOM (*Pyramus*)

O grim-looking night, o night with hue so black,
 O night, which ever art when day is not.
 O night, o night, alack, alack, alack.
 I fear my Thisbe's promise is forgot.
 And thou, O Wall, O sweet, O lovely Wall,
 That standest 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.
 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).

FLUTE (*Thisbe*)

O Wall, full often hast thou heard my moans
 For parting my fair Pyramus and me.

My cherry lips have often kissed thy stones,
Thy stones with lime and hair knit up in thee.

BOTTOM (*Pyramus*)

I see a voice. Now will I to the chink to spy and I can hear my Thisbe's face. Thisbe?

FLUTE (*Thisbe*)

My love. Thou art my love, I think.

BOTTOM (*Pyramus*)

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

FLUTE (*Thisbe*)

And I like Helen, till the Fates me kill.

BOTTOM (*Pyramus*)

O kiss me through the hole of this vile Wall.

FLUTE (*Thisbe*)

I kiss the Wall's hole, not your lips at all.

BOTTOM (*Pyramus*)

Wilt thou at Ninny's tomb meet me straightway?

QUINCE (*aside*)

Ninus'. Ninus'.

FLUTE (*Thisbe*)

Betide life, 'tide death, I come without delay.

Exeunt Bottom and Flute.

SNOUT (*Wall*)

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

Exit Snout.

THESEUS

Now is the wall 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. Here come two noble beasts in, a moon and a lion.

Enter Lion (Snug) and Moonshine (Starveling).

SNUG (*Lion*)

You ladies, you whose gentle hearts do fear
The smallest monstrous mouse that creeps on floor,
May now perchance both quake and tremble here,
When lion rough in wildest rage doth roar.
Then know that I, as Snug the joiner, am
No 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, and of a good conscience. Let us listen to the Moon.

STARVELING (*Moonshine*)

This lanthorn doth the horned moon present. Myself, the man in the moon do seem to be.

THESEUS

He should have worn the horns on his head.

HIPPOLYTA

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

THESEUS

This is a great error; the man should be put into the lanthorn. How is it else *the man in the moon*?

STARVELING (*Moonshine*)

All that I have to say is to tell you that the lanthorn is the moon, I the man in the moon, this thornbush my thornbush, and this dog my dog.

Enter Thisbe (Flute).

HIPPOLYTA

Silence. Here comes Thisbe.

FLUTE (*Thisbe*)

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

SNUG (*Lion*)

O... (*Roars*)

Thisbe runs off, dropping her mantle.

DEMETRIUS

Well roared, Lion.

THESEUS

Well run, Thisbe.

HIPPOLYTA

Well shone, Moon. Truly, the Moon shines with a good grace.

Lion shakes Thisbe's mantle.

THESEUS

Well moused, Lion.

Enter Pyramus (Bottom).

DEMETRIUS

And then came Pyramus.

Exit Lion.

LYSANDER

And so the lion vanished.

BOTTOM (*Pyramus*)

Sweet Moon, I thank thee for thy sunny beams.

I thank thee, Moon, for shining now so bright,

For by thy gracious, golden, glittering gleams,

I trust to take of truest 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, stained 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 (*Pyramus*)

O, wherefore, Nature, didst thou lions frame,
Since lion vile hath here deflowered my dear,
Which is – no, no, which was – the fairest dame
That lived, that loved, that liked, that looked with cheer?
Come, tears, confound!
Out, sword, and wound
The pap of Pyramus;
Ay, that left pap,
Where heart doth hop.
Thus die I, thus, thus, thus.

Pyramus stabs himself.

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.

Pyramus falls.

DEMETRIUS

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

LYSANDER

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

THESEUS

With the help of a surgeon he might yet recover, and yet 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.

Enter Thisbe (Flute).

HIPPOLYTA

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

FLUTE (*Thisbe*)

Asleep, my love?
What, dead, my dove?
O Pyramus, arise.
Speak, speak. Quite dumb?
Dead? Dead? A tomb
Must cover thy sweet eyes.
These lily lips,
This cherry nose,
These yellow cowslip cheeks
Are gone, are gone.
Lovers make moan;
His eyes were green as leeks.
O Sisters three,
Come, come to me
With hands as pale as milk.
Lay them in gore,
Since you have shore
With shears his thread of silk.
Tongue, not a word.
Come, trusty sword,
Come, blade, my breast imbrue.

Thisbe stabs herself.

And farewell, friends.
Thus Thisbe ends.
Adieu, adieu, adieu.

Thisbe falls.

THESEUS

Moonshine and Lion are left to bury the dead.

DEMETRIUS

Ay, and Wall too.

Bottom and Flute arise.

BOTTOM

No, I assure you, the wall is down that parted their fathers. Will it please you to see the Epilogue or to hear a Bergomask dance between two of our company?

THESEUS

No epilogue, I pray you. For your play needs no excuse. Never excuse. For when the players are all dead, there need none to be blamed. But, come, your Bergomask. Let your epilogue alone.

Mechanicals Dance, and the players exit.

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

Exeunt.

Enter Robin Goodfellow.

ROBIN

Now the hungry lion roars,
And the wolf behowls the moon,
Whilst the heavy plowman snores,
All with weary task fordone.
Now the wasted brands do glow,
Whilst the screech-owl, screeching loud,
Puts the wretch that lies in woe
In remembrance of a shroud.
Now it is the time of night
That the graves, all gaping wide,
Every one lets forth his sprite
In the church-way paths to glide.
And we fairies, that do run
By the triple Hecate's team
From the presence of the sun,
Following darkness like a dream,
Now are frolic. Not a mouse
Shall disturb this hallowed house.
I am sent with broom before,
To sweep the dust behind the door.

Enter Oberon and Titania with all their train.

Oberon leads the Fairies in song and dance.

OBERON

Now, until the break of day,
Through this house each fairy stray.
To the best bride-bed will we,
Which by us shall blessed be ...

TITANIA

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.

Exit or freeze all but Robin.

ROBIN

If we shadows have offended,
Think but this and all is mended:
That you have but slumbered 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 evening to you all.
Give me your hands, if we be friends,
And Robin shall restore amends.

Exit Robin.