

SIDE 11 – Lysander, Helena

HELENA

O, I am out of breath in this fond chase.  
The more my prayer, the lesser is my grace. 95  
Happy is Hermia, wheresoe'er she lies,  
For she hath blessèd 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, 100  
For beasts that meet me run away for fear.  
Therefore no marvel though Demetrius  
Do as a monster fly my presence thus.  
What wicked and dissembling glass of mine  
Made me compare with Hermia's sphery eyne? 105  
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! Nature shows art, 110  
That through thy bosom makes me see thy heart.  
Where is Demetrius? O, how fit a word  
Is that vile name to perish on my sword!

HELENA

Do not say so. Lysander, say not so.  
What though he love your Hermia? Lord, what 115  
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. 120  
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.  
Things growing are not ripe until their season;  
So I, being young, till now ripe not to reason. 125  
And touching now the point of human skill,  
Reason becomes the marshal to my will  
And leads me to your eyes, where I o'erlook  
Love's stories written in love's richest book.

HELENA

Wherefore was I to this keen mockery born? 130  
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? 135  
Good troth, you do me wrong, good sooth, you do,  
In such disdainful manner me to woo.  
But fare you well. Perforce I must confess  
I thought you lord of more true gentleness.  
O, that a lady of one man refused 140  
Should of another therefore be abused! *She exits.*

LYSANDER

She sees not Hermia.—Hermia, sleep thou there,  
And never mayst thou come Lysander near.  
For, as a surfeit of the sweetest things  
The deepest loathing to the stomach brings, 145  
Or as the heresies that men do leave  
Are hated most of those they did deceive,  
So thou, my surfeit and my heresy,  
Of all be hated, but the most of me!  
And, all my powers, address your love and might 150  
To honor Helen and to be her knight.