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MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S

D R E A M.

By Mr. *WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.*



L O N D O N :

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MDCXXXIV.

Dramatis Personæ.

THESEUS, *Duke of Athens.*

Egeus, *an Athenian Lord.*

Lysander, *in love with Hermia.*

Demetrius, *in love with Hermia.*

Quince, *the Carpenter.*

Snug, *the Joiner.*

Bottom, *the Weaver.*

Flute, *the Bellows-mender.*

Snowt, *the Tinker.*

Starveling, *the Taylor.*

Hippolita, *Princess of the Amazons, betrothed to Theseus.*

Hermia, *Daughter to Egeus, in love with Lysander.*

Helena, *in love with Demetrius.*

Attendants.

Oberon, *King of the Fairies.*

Titania, *Queen of the Fairies.*

Puck, *or Robin-goodfellow, a Fairy.*

Peaseblossom,

Cobweb,

Moth,

Mustardseed,

} *Fairies,*

Other Fairies attending on the King and Queen.

SCENE *Athens, and a Wood not far*

from it.



A Midfumer-Night's

D R E A M.

A C T I.

A T H E N S.

Enter Theseus and Hippolita, with attendants.

T H E S E U S.



O W, fair *Hippolita*, our nuptial hour
Draws on apace ; four happy days
bring in
Another moon : but oh, methinks, how
slow
This old moon wanes ! she lingers my
desires

Like to a step-dame, or a dowager,
Long withering out a young man's revenue.

Hip. Four days will quickly sleep themselves in nights,
Four nights will quickly dream away the time :
And then the moon, like to a silver bow,
New bent in heaven, shall behold the night
Of our solemnities.

The. Go, *Philoftrate*,
Stir up th' *Athenian* youth to merriments,
Awake the pert and nimble spirit of mirth :
Turn melancholy forth to funerals.

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The pale companion is not for our pomp,
Hippolita, I woo'd thee with my sword,
 And won thy love, doing thee injuries :
 But I will wed thee in another key,
 With pomp, with triumph, and with revelling.

Enter Egeus, Hermia, Lysander, and Demetrius.

Ege. Happy be *Theseus*, our renowned Duke.

The. Thanks good *Egeus* ; what's the news with thee ?

Ege. Full of vexation, come I with complaint
 Against my child, my daughter *Hermia*.

Stand forth, *Demetrius*. My noble lord,

This man hath my consent to marry her.

Stand forth, *Lysander*. And, my gracious Duke,

This hath bewitch'd the bosom of my child :

'Thou, thou, *Lysander*, thou hast giv'n her rhimes,

And interchang'd love-tokens with my child :

'Thou hast by moon-light at her window sung,

With feigning voice, verses of feigning love,

And stol'n th' impression of her fantasie

With bracelets of thy hair, rings, gawds, conceits;

Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweat-meats, (messengers

Of strong prevailment in unharden'd youth)

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't 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.

The. What say you, *Hermia* ? be advis'd, fair maid,

To you your father should be as a God ;

One that compos'd your beauties ; yea and one

To whom you are but as a form in wax

By him imprinted ; and within his power

To leave the figure, or disfigure it :

Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

Her. So is *Lysander*.

The. In himself he is ;

But

But in this kind, wanting your father's voice,
The other must be held the worthier.

Her. I would my father look'd but with my eyes.

The. Rather your eyes must with his judgment look.

Her. I do intreat your Grace to pardon me:
I know not by what pow'r I am made bold,
Nor how it may concern my modesty
In such a presence here to plead my thoughts:
But I beseech your Grace, that I may know
The worst that may befall me in this case,
If I refuse to wed *Demetrius*.

The. Either to die the death, or to abjure
For ever the society of men.
Therefore, fair *Hermia*, question your desires,
Know of your youth, examine well your blood,
Whether, not yielding 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,
Chanting faint hymns to the cold fruitless moon?
Thrice blessed they that master so their blood,
To undergo such maiden pilgrimage!
But earlier happy is the rose distill'd,
Than that, which withering on the virgin thorn,
Grows, lives, and dies, in single blessedness.

Her. So will I grow, so live, so die, my lord,
Ere I will yield my virgin patent up
Unto his lordship, to whose unwish'd yoke
My soul consents not to give Sov'reignty.

The. Take time to pause, and by the next new moon,
(The sealing day betwixt my love and me,
For everlasting bond of fellowship)
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, austerly and single life.

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

Lys. You have her father's love, *Demetrius*;
Let me have *Hermia's*; do you marry him.

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Ege. Scornful *Lyfander*! true, he hath my love;
And what is mine, my love shall render him.
And she is mine, and all my right of her
I do estate unto *Demetrius*.

Lys. I am, my lord, as well deriv'd as he,
As well possess'd: My love is more than his:
My fortune's ev'ry way as fairly rank'd,
If not with vantage, as *Demetrius*:
And, which is more than all these boasts can be,
I am belov'd of beauteous *Hermia*.
Why should not I then prosecute my right?
Demetrius (I'll avouch it to his head)
Made love to *Nedar's* daughter, *Helena*,
And won her soul; and she, sweet lady, doats,
Devoutly doats, doats in idolatry,
Upon this spotted and inconstant man.

The. I must confess that I have heard so much,
And with *Demetrius* thought t' have spoke thereof;
But being over-full of self-affairs,
My mind did lose it. But *Demetrius* comes
And come *Egeus*, you shall go with me,
I have some private schooling for you both.
For you, fair *Hermia*, look you arm your self
To fit your fancies to your father's will;
Or else the law of *Athens* yields you up
(Which by no means we may extenuate)
'To death, or to a vow of single life.
Come, my *Hippolita*; what cheer, my love?
Demetrius and *Egeus* go along,
I must employ you in some business
Against our nuptials, and confer with you
Of something nearly that concerns your selves.

Ege. With duty and desire we follow you. [Exit.]

Manent Lyfander and Hermia.

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

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

Lys. *Hermia*, for ought that ever I could read,
Could ever hear by tale or history,

The

The course of true love never did run smooth,
But either it was different in blood—

Her. O cross! too high, to be enthrall'd to love.

Lys. Or else misgraffed, in respect of years—

Her. O spight! too old, to be engag'd too young.

Lys. Or else it stood upon the choice of friends—

Her. O hell! to chuse love by another's eye.

Lys. Or if there were a sympathy in choice,
War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it ;
Making it momentary as a sound,
Swift as a shadow, short as any dream,
Brief as the lightning in the collied night,
'That (in a spleen) unfolds both heav'n and earth ;
And ere a man hath power to say, Behold !
'The jaws of darkness do devour it up ;
So quick bright things come to confusion.

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

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

Her. My good *Lysander*,
I swear to thee by *Cupid's* strongest bow,
By his best arrow with the golden head,
By the simplicity of *Venus's* doves,
By that which knitteth souls, and prospers loves,
And by that fire which burn'd the *Carthage* Queen,

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When the false *Trojan* under sail was seen ;
By all the vows that ever men have broke,
In number more than ever women spoke ;
In that same place thou hast appointed me,
To-morrow truly will I meet with thee.

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

Enter Helena.

Her. God speed, fair *Helena*, whither away ?

Hel. Call you me fair ? that fair again unsay,
Demetrius loves you, fair ; O happy fair !
Your eyes are load-stars, and your tongue's sweet air
More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear,
When wheat is green, when haw-thorn buds appear.
Sickness is catching : oh were favour so,
Your words I'd 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'll give to be to you translated.

O teach me how you look, and with what art
You sway the motion of *Demetrius*' heart ?

Her. I frown upon him, yet he loves me still.

Hel. Oh that your frowns would teach my Smiles
such skill !

Her. I give him curses, yet he gives me love.

Hel. Oh that my pray'rs could such affection move ?

Her. The more I hate, the more he follows me.

Hel. The more I love, the more he hateth me.

Her. His Folly, *Helena*, is none of mine.

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

Her. Take comfort ; he no more shall see my face,
Lysander and my self will fly this place.

Before the time I did *Lysander* see,
Seem'd *Athens* like a Paradise to me.

O then, what graces in my love do dwell,
That he hath turn'd a heaven into hell !

Lys. *Helena*, to your minds we will unfold ;
To-morrow night, when *Phoebe* doth behold
Her silver visage in the wat'ry glass,
Decking with liquid pearl the bladed grass,

(A Time that lovers flights doth still conceal)
Through *Athens*' gate have we devis'd to steal.

Her. And in the wood, where often you and I
Upon faint primrose beds were wont to lye,
Emptying our bosoms of their counsels swell'd ;
There my *Lysander* and my self shall meet,
And thence from *Athens* turn away our eyes,
To seek new friends and strange companions.
Farewel sweet play-fellow ; pray thou for us,
And good luck grant thee thy *Demetrius* !
Keep word, *Lysander*, we must starve our sight
From lover's food, 'till morrow deep midnight.

[*Exit* *Hermia*.

Lys. I will, my *Hermia*. *Helena*, adieu,
As you on him, *Demetrius* doat on you ? [*Exit* *Lysand*.

Hel. 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 :
He will not know, what all but he do know.
And as he errs, doating on *Hermia*'s eyes,
So I, admiring of his qualities,
Things base and vile, holding no quantity,
Love can transpose to form and dignity :
Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind,
And therefore is wing'd *Cupid* painted blind ;
Nor hath love's mind of any judgment taste ;
Wings and no eyes figure unheedy haste.
And therefore is love said to be a child,
Because in choice he often is beguil'd.
As waggish boys themselves in game forswear,
So the boy Love is perjur'd every where.
For ere *Demetrius* look'd on *Hermia*'s eync,
He hail'd down oaths that he was only mine ;
And when this hail some heat from *Hermia* felt,
So he dissolv'd, and showers of oaths did melt.
I will go tell him of fair *Hermia*'s flight :
Then to the wood will he to-morrow night
Pursue her ; and for this intelligence,
If I have thanks, it is a dear expence.
But herein mean I to enrich my pain,
To have his sight thither, and back again.

[*Exit* :

Enter

Enter Quince, Snug, Bottom, Flute, Snowt, and Starveling.

Quin. IS all our company here?

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

Quin. Here is the scrowl of every man's name, which is thought fit through all *Athens*, to play in our Interlude before the Duke and Dutcheis, on his wedding-day at night.

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

Quin. Marry, our play is the most lamentable comedy, and most cruel death of *Pyramus* and *Thisby*.

Bot. A very good piece of work, I assure you, and a merry. Now, good *Peter Quince*, call forth your actors by the scrowl. Masters spread your selves.

Quin. Answer as I call you. *Nick Bottom* the weaver.

Bot. Ready: name what part I am for, and proceed.

Quin. You, *Nick Bottom*, are set down for *Pyramus*.

Bot. What is *Pyramus*, a lover, or a tyrant?

Quin. A lover that kills himself most gallantly for love.

Bot. That will ask some tears in the true performing of it; if I do it, let the audience look to their eyes; I will move storms; I will condole in some measure. To the rest yet, my chief humour is for a tyrant; I could play *Ercles* rarely, or a part to tear a cat in. To make all split the raging rocks, and shivering shocks shall break the locks of prison-gates—and *Phibbus* carr shall shine from far, and make and mar the foolish fates—This was lofty. Now name the rest of the players. This is *Ercles* vein, a tyrant's vein; a lover is more condoling.

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

Flu. Here *Peter Quince*.

Quin. You must take *Thisby* on you.

Flu. What is *Thisby*, a wand'ring Knight?

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

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

beard coming.

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

Bot. An I may hide my face, let me play *Thisby* too; I'll speak in a monstrous little voice, *Thisne*, *Thisne*; ah *Pyramus* my lover dear, thy *Thisby* dear, and lady dear.

Quin. No, no, you must play *Pyramus*; and *Flute* you *Thisby*.

Bot. Well, proceed.

Quin. *Robin Starvelin* the taylor.

Star. Here *Peter Quince*.

Quin. *Robin Starveling*, you must play *Thisby's* mother, *Tom Snout* the tinker.

Snout. Here *Peter Quince*.

Quin. You *Pyramus's* father; my self, *Thisby's* father; *Snug* the joiner, you the lion's part; I hope there is a play fitted.

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

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

Bot. Let me play the Lion too, I will roar, that 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.

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

All. That would hang us every mother's son.

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

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

Bot. Well, I will undertake it. What beard were I best to play it in?

Quin.

Quin. Why what you will.

Bot. I will discharge it in either your straw-colour beard, your orange-tawny beard, your purple-in-grain beard, or your *French-crown-colour'd* beard, your perfect yellow.

Quin. Some of your *French-crowns* have no hair at all, and then you will play bare-fac'd. But, masters, here are your parts, and I am to intreat you, request you, and desire you to con them by to-morrow night; and meet me in the palace-wood, a mile without the town, by moon-light, there we will rehearse; for if we meet in the city, we shall be dog'd with company, and our devices known. In the mean time I will draw a bill of properties, such as our play wants. I pray you fail me not.

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

Quin. At the Duke's oak we meet.

Bot. Enough, hold or cut bowstrings.

[*Exeunt.*]

A C T II.

Enter a Fairy at one door, and Puck, or Robin-goodfellow, at another.

Puck. **H** O W now, spirit, whither wander you?

Fai. Over hill, over dale,
Through bush, through briar,
Over park, over pale,
Through flood, through fire,
I do wander every where,
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 favours:
In those freckles live their favours:
I must go seek some dew-drops here,
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.

Farewell

Farewel thou lob of spirits, I'll be gone,
Our Queen and all her elves come here anon.

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

Fai. Or I mistake your shape and making quite,
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite
Call'd *Robin-goodfellow*. Are you not he,
That fright the maidens of the villagere,
Skim milk, and sometimes labour in the quern,
And bootless make the breathless huswife churn ;
And sometime make the drink to bear no barme,
Mis-lead night-wand'ers, laughing at their harm ?
Those that *Hobgoblin* call you, and sweet *Puck*,
You do their work, and they shall have good luck,
Are not you he ?

Puck. Thou speak'st aright ;
I am that merry wand'rer of the night :
I jest to *Oberon*, and make him smile
When I a fat a-bean-fed horse beguile,
Neighing in likeness of a silly foal :
And sometimes lurk I in a gossip's bowl,
In very likeness of a roasted crab,
And when she drinks, against her lips I bob,
And on her wither'd dewlap pour the ale.
The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,
Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me ;
'Then slip I from her bum, down topples she,
And tailor cries, and falls into a cough,
And then the whole quire hold their hips, and losse,

And

And waxen in their mirth, and neeze, and swear
A merrier hour was never wasted there.

But make room, fairy, here comes Oberon.

Fai. And here my mistress : would that he were gone.

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

Ob. Ill met by moon-light, proud *Titania*.

Queen. What, jealous *Oberon*? fairy, skip hence,
I have forsworn his bed and company.

Ob. Tarry, rash wanton, am not I thy lord?

Queen. Then I must be thy lady; but I know
When thou wast stol'n away from fairy land,
And in the shape of *Corin* sat all day,
Playing on pipes of corn, and versing love
To am'rous *Philida*. Why art thou here,
Come from the farthest steep of *India*?
But that forsooth the bouncing *Amazon*,
Your buskin'd mistress and your warrior Love,
To *Theseus* must be wedded; and you come
To give their bed joy and prosperity.

Ob. How can'st thou thus for shame, *Titania*,
Glance at my credit with *Hippolita*,
Knowing I know thy love to *Theseus*?
Didst thou not lead him through the glimmering night
From *Perigune*, whom he ravished,
And make him with fair *Egle* break his faith,
With *Ariadne*, and *Antiopa*?

Queen. These are 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 rusby brook,
Or on the beached margent of the sea,
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,
But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our Sport.
Therefore the winds piping to us in vain,
As in revenge have suck'd up from the sea
Contagious fogs; which falling in the land,
Have every pelting river made so proud,
That they have over-born their continents.
The ox hath therefore stretch'd his yokes in vain,

The Ploughman lost his sweat, and the green corn
Hath rotted, e'er its youth attain'd a Beard.

The fold stands empty in the drowned field,
And crows are fatten'd with the murrion flock;

The nine-mens morris is fill'd up with mud,
And the quaint mazes in the wanton green
For lack of tread are undistinguishable.

The human mortals want their winter here,
No night is now with hymn or carol blest;
Therefore the moon, the governess of floods,
Pale in her anger, washes all the air;
That rheumatick diseases do abound.

And thorough this distemperature, we see
The seasons alter; hoary headed frosts
Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose;
And on old *Hyem's* chin and icy crown
An od'rous chaplet of sweet summer buds,
Is as in mockery set. The spring, the summer,
The chiding autumn, angry winter, change
Their wonted liveries; and th' amazed world
By their increase now knows not which is which;
And this same progeny of evil comes
From our debate, from our dissention,
We are their parents and original.

Ob. 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.

Queen. Set your heart at rest,
The fairy-land buys not the child of me.
His mother was a votress of my order,
And in the spiced *Indian* air by night
Full often she hath gossip'd by my side;
And sat with me on *Neptune's* yellow sands,
Marking th' embarked traders of the flood,
When we have laugh'd to see the sails conceive,
And grow big-bellied with the wanton wind:
Which she with pretty and with swimming gate
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 merchandize.
 But she being mortal of that boy did die,
 And for her sake I do rear up her boy,
 And for her sake I will not part with him.

Ob. How long within this wood intend you stay?

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

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

Queen. Not for thy fairy kingdom. *Elves away!*
 We shall chide downright, if I longer stay. *[Exit.*

Ob. Well, go thy way; thou shalt not from this
 grove,

'Till I torment thee for this injury —

My gentle *Puck* come hither; thou remember'st
 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,
 And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,
 To hear the sea-maid's musick.

Puck. I remember.

Ob. That very time I saw, but thou could'st not,
 Flying between the cold moon and the earth,

Cupid all arm'd; a certain aim he took

At a fair vestal, throned by the west,

And loos'd his love-shaft smartly from his bow,

As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts;

But I might see young *Cupid's* fiery shaft

Quench'd in the chaste beams of the wat'ry moon,

And the Imperial votress passed on,

In maiden meditation, fancy-free.

Yet 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,

And maidens call it, love in idleness.

Fetch me that flow'r; the herb I shew'd thee once;

The juice of it on sleeping eye-lids laid,

Will make a man or woman madly doat

Upon the next live creature that it sees.

Fetch

Fetch me this herb, and be thou here again
Ere the *Leviathan* can swim a league.

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

[*Exit.*

Ob. Having once this juice,
I'll watch *Titania* when she is asleep,
And drop the liquor of it in her eyes:
The next thing which she waking looks upon,
(Be it on lyon, bear, or wolf, or bull,
Or meddling monkey, or on busy ape)
She shall pursue it with the soul of love:
And ere I take this charm off from 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 over-hear their conference.

Enter Demetrius, Helena following him.

Dem. I love thee not, therefore pursue me not.
Where is *Lysander*, and fair *Hermia*?
The one I'll stay, the other stayeth me.
Thou told'st me they were stol'n into this wood;
And here am I, and wood within this wood;
Because I cannot meet my *Hermia*.
Hence get thee gone, and follow me no more.

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

Dem. Do I entice you? do I speak you fair?
Or rather do I not in plainest truth
Tell you I do not and I cannot love you?

Hel. And ev'n for that do I love thee 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 woful place can I beg in your love,
(And yet a place of high respect with me)

Than

Than to be used as you use your dog?

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

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

Dem. 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.

Hel. 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?

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

Hel. The wildest hath not such a heart as you;
Run when you will, the story shall be chang'd:
Apollo flies, and *Daphne* holds the chase;
The dove pursues the griffin, the mild hind
Makes speed to catch the tyger. Bootless speed!
When cowardise pursues, and valour flies.

Dem. I will not stay thy questions; let me go:
Or if you follow me, do not believe
But I shall do the mischief in the wood.

Hel. Ay, in the temple, in the town and 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 shou'd be woo'd, and were not made to woo.
I follow thee, and make a heav'n of hell,
'To die upon the hand I love so well. [*Exeunt.*

Ob. Fare thee well, nymph; ere he doth leave this
grove
Thou shalt fly him, and he shalt seek thy love.
Hast thou the slow'r there? welcome wanderer.

Enter

Enter Puck.

Puck. Ay, there it is.

Ob. I pray thee give it me ;

I know a bank whereon the wild time blows,

Where oxslip and the nodding violet grows,

O'er-canopy'd with luscious woodbine,

With sweet musk roses, and with eglantine.

'There sleeps *Titania*, some time of the night,

Lull'd in these flow'rs, with dances and delight ;

And there the snake throws her enamell'd 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 ;

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 of her, than she upon her love ;

And look you meet me ere the first cock crow.

Puck. Fear not, my lord, your servant shall do so.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Queen of fairies, with her train.

Queen. Come, now a roundel, and a *Fairy* song :

Then for the third part of a minute hence,

Some to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds,

Some war with rear-mice for their leathern wings,

To make my small elves coats : and some keep back

The clamorous owl, that nightly hoots, and wonders

At our quaint spirits. Sing me now asleep,

'Then to your Offices, and let me rest.

Fairies sing.

You spotted snakes with double tongue,

Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen,

Newts and blind worms, do no wrong,

Come not near our fairy Queen.

Philomel

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

2 Fairy.

Weaving spiders come not here;
 Hence you long-leg'd spinners, hence:
 Beetles black approach not near,
 Worm nor sail do no offence.
 Philomel with melody, &c.

1 Fairy.

Hence away; now all is well:
 One aloof stand Centinel.

[Exit Fairies.]

Enter Oberon.

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

[Exit Oberon.]

Enter Lysander and Hermia.

Lys. Fair love, you faint with wandring in the wood;
 And to speak truth, I have forgot our way:
 We'll rest us, *Hermia*, if thou think it good,
 And tarry for the comfort of the day.

Her. Be't so, *Lysander*; find you out a bed,
 For I upon this bank will rest my head.

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

Her. Nay, good *Lysander*, for my sake, my dear,
 Lye further off yet, do not lye so near.

Lys. O take the sense, sweet, of my innocence,

Love

Love takes the meaning in love's conference ;
I mean, that my heart unto yours is knit,
So that but one heart can you 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 lye.

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

Lys. 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.

Her. With half that wish, the wisher's eyes be prest!
[*They Sleep.*]

Enter Puck.

Puck. Through the forest have I gone,
But *Athenian* find I none,
On whose eyes I might approve
This flower's force in stirring love :
Night and silence ! who is here ?
Weeds of *Athens* he doth wear ;
'This is he, my master said,
Despised the *Athenian* maid ?
And here the maiden sleeping found
On the dank and dirty ground.
Pretty soul ! she durst not lie
Near to this lack-love, this kill curtesie.
Churl, upon thy eyes I throw
All the pow'r this charm doth owe :
When thou wak'st, let love forbid
Sleep his seat on thy eye-lid :
So awake when I am gone,
For I must now to *Oberon*.

[*Exit.*
Enter]

Enter Demetrius and Helena running.

Hel. Stay, tho' thou kill me, sweet *Demetrius!*

Dem. I charge thee hence, and do not haunt me thus.

Hel. O wilt thou darkling leave me? do not so.

Dem. Stay on thy peril, I alone will go.

[*Exit Demetrius,*

Hel. O I am out of breath in this fond chace;
The more my prayer, the lesser is my grace.

Happy is *Hermia*, wheresoe'er she lyes;

For she hath blessed and attractive eyes.

How came her eyes so bright? not with salt tears,

If so, my eyes are oftner wash'd than hers,

No, no, I am as ugly as a bear;

For beasts that meet me run away for fear.

Therefore no marvel, tho' *Demetrius*

Do (as a monster) fly my presence thus.

What wicked and deffembling glafs of mine,

Made me compare with *Hermia's* sphery eyne?

But who is here? *Lysander* on the ground:

Dead or asleep? I see no blood, no wound:

Lysander, if you live, good Sir, awake.

Lys. And run thro' fire I will for thy sweet sake.

[*Waking.*

Transparent *Helen*, nature here shews art,

That through thy bosom makes me see thy heart.

Where is *Demetrius*? Oh how fit a word

Is that vile name, to perish on my sword?

Hel. Do not say so, *Lysander*, say not so;

What tho' he loves your *Hermia*? lord, what tho'?

Yet *Hermia* still loves you; then be content.

Lys. Content with *Hermia*? no: I do repent

The tedious minutes I with her have spent;

Not *Hermia*, but *Helena* I love:

Who will not change a raven for a dove?

The will of man is by his reason sway'd,

And reason says you are the worthier maid.

Things growing are not ripe until their season;

So I being young 'till now not ripe to reason,

And touching now the point of human skill,

Reason

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.

Hcl. Wherefore was I to this keen mock'ry 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?
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:
Oh, that a lady of one man refus'd,
Should of another therefore be abus'd! -

[*Exit.*]

Lys. She sees not *Hermia*; *Hermia* sleep thou there,
And never may't thou come *Lysander* near;
For as a surfeit of the sweetest things
The deepest loathing to a stomach brings;
Or as the heresies that men do leave
Are hated most of those they did deceive;
So thou, my surfeit and my heresie,
Of all be hated, but the most of me,
And my pow'rs address your love and might
To honour *Helen*, and to be her Knight.

[*Exit.*]

Her. 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 eat my heart away,
And you sat smiling at his cruel prey:

Lysander! what remov'd? *Lysander*, lord!
What, out of hearing, gone? no sound, no word?
Alack, where are you? speak, and if you hear,
Speak of all loves; I swoon almost with fear.

No, then I well perceive you are not nigh,
Or death or you I'll find immediately.

[*Exit.*]

A C T



A C T III.

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

The Queen of Fairies lying asleep.

B O T T O M.

ARE we all met?

Quin. Pat, pat; and here's a marvellous convenient place for our rehearsal. 'This green plot shall be our stage, this hauthorn-brake our trying house, and we will do it in Action, as we will do it before the Duke.

Bot. Peter Quince.

Quin. What say'st thou, burly *Bottom*?

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

Snowt. By'raken, a parlous fear!

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

Bot. Not a whit, I have a device to make all well; write me a prologue, and let the prologue seem to say, we will do no harm with our Swords, and that *Pyramus* is not kill'd indeed; and for more better assurance tell them, that I *Pyramus* am not *Pyramus* but *Bottom* the Weaver; this will put them out of fear.

Quin.

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

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

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

Star. I fear it, I promise you.

Bot. Masters, you ought to consider with your selves; to bring in, God shield us, a lion among ladies, is a most dreadful thing; for there is not a more fearful wild-fowl than your lion living; and we ought to look to it.

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

Bot. Nay, you must name his name, and half his face must be seen through the lion's neck, and he himself must speak through, saying thus or to the same defect; Ladies, or fair ladies, I would wish you, or I would request you, or I would intreat 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.

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

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

Bot. A kalendar, a kalendar! look in the almanack; find out moon-shine, find out moon-shine.

Quin. Yes, it doth shine that night.

Bot. 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.

Quin. Ay, or else one must come in with a bush of thorns and a lanthorn; and say he comes to disfigure or to present the person of Moon-shine. Then there is another thing, we must have a wall in the great chamber, for *Pyramus* and *Thisby* (says the story) did talk through the chink of a wall.

Snug. You can never bring in a wall. What say you,
Bottom? B *Bot,*

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Bot. Some man or other must present Wall, and let him have some plaister, or some lome, or some rough-cast about him, to signify wall: Or let him hold his fingers thus; and through the cranny shall *Pyramus* and *Thisby* whisper.

Quin. 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 every one according to his cue.

S C E N E II.

Enter Puck.

Puck. What hempen home-spuns have we swag-gering here,
So near the cradle of the fairy Queen?
What, a play tow'rd; I'll be an auditor;
An actor too perhaps, if I see cause.

Quin. Speak *Pyramus*; *Thisby* stand forth.

Pyr. *Thisby*, the flower of odious favour's sweet.

Quin. Odours, odours.

Pyr. Odours favours sweet,

So doth thy breath, my dearest *Thisby* dear:
But hark, a voice! stay thou but here a while,
And by and by I will to thee appear, [*Exit Pyr.*

Puck. A stranger *Pyramus* than e'er plaid here! [*Aside.*

This. Must I speak now?

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

This. Most radiant *Pyramus*, most lilly white-of hue,
Of colour like the red rose on triumphant bryer,
Most brisky *Juvenile*, and eke most lovely *Jew*,
As true as truest horse, that yet would never tire,
I'll meet thee, *Pyramus*, at *Ninny's* tomb.

Quin. *Ninus's* 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.

Enter Pyramus.

This. O, as true as truest horse, that yet would never tire.

Pyr.

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Pyr. If I were fair, *Thisby*, I were only thine.

Quin. O monstrous! O strange! we are haunted;
pray masters, fly masters, help. [*The Clowns exeunt.*]

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

Sometimes a horse I'll be, sometimes a hound,

A hog, a headless bear, sometimes a fire,
And neigh, and bark, and grunt, and roar, and burn,
Like horse, hound, hog, bear, fire, at every turn. [*Exit.*]

Enter Bottom with an Ass head.

Bot. Why do they run away? this is a knavery of
them to make me afraid.

Enter Snout.

Snout. O *Bottom*, thou art chang'd; what do I see
on thee?

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

Enter Quince.

Quin. Bless thee *Bottom*, bless thee, thou art trans-
lated. [*Exit.*]

Bot. 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. [*Sings.*]

The Ousel-cock, so black of hue,

With orange-tawny bill,

The throstle with his note so true,

The wren with little quill.

Queen. What angel wakes me from my flowry bed?
[*Sings awaking.*]

Bot. The finch, the sparrow, and the lark,

The plain-song cuckow gray,

Whose note full many a man doth mark,

And dares not answer nay.

For indeed, who would set his wit to so foolish a
bird; who would give a bird the lye, tho' he cry
cuckow never so?

Queen. I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again,
Mine ear is much enamour'd of thy note

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On the first view to say, to swear, I love thee
So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape,
And thy fair virtue's force (perforce) doth move me.

Bot. Methinks mistress you should have little reason for that: and yet, to say the truth, reason and love keep little company together now-a-days. The more the pity, that some honest neighbours will not make them friends. Nay, I can † glee upon occasion.

Queen. Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.

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

Queen. 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.

S C E N E III.

Enter Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Moth, Mustardseed,
and four Fairies.

1 *Fair.* Ready.

2 *Fair.* And I.

3 *Fair.* And I.

4 *Fair.* And I, where shall we go?

Queen. Be kind and courteous to this gentleman.
Hop in his walks, and gambole 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 glow-worm's eyes,
'To have my love to bed, and to arise:
And pluck the wings from painted butterflies,
'To fan the moon-beams from his sleeping eyes.

† joke, or scoff.

Nod

No¹ to him elves, and do him courtesies.

1 *Fair.* Hail mortal, hail.

2 *Fair.* Hail.

3 *Fair.* Hail.

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

Cob. *Cobweb.*

Bot. I shall desire of you more acquaintance, good master *Cobweb*; if I cut my finger, I shall make bold with you. Your name, honest Gentleman?

Pease. *Peaseblossom.*

Bot. I pray you commend me to mistress *Squash* your mother, and to master *Peasecod* your father. Good master *Peaseblossom*, I shall desire of you more acquaintance too. Your name I beseech you, Sir?

Mus. *Mustardseed.*

Bot. Good master *Mustardseed*, I know your patience well: that same cowardly giant-like Ox-beef hath devour'd many a gentleman of your house. I promise you your kindred hath made my eyes water ere now. I desire more of your acquaintance, good master *Mustardseed*.

Queen. Come wait upon him, lead him to my bower.

The moon, methinks, looks with a watry eye,
And when she weeps, weep ev'ry little flower,

Lamenting some enforced chastity.

Tie up my love's tongue, bring him silently. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E IV.

Enter King of Fairies solus.

Ob. I wonder if *Titania* be awak'd:

Then what it was that next came in her eye,
Which she must doat on in extremity?

Enter Puck.

Here comes my messenger! how now, mad sprite,
What night-rule now about this haunted grove?

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,

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Were met together to rehearse a play,
 Intended for great *Theseus'* nuptial day.
 The shallow'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 nose I fixed on his head;
 Anon his *Thisby* must be answered,
 And forth my minnock 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 briars 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 wak'd, and straitway lov'd an ass.

Ob. 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 wakes of force she must be ey'd.

S C E N E V.

Enter Demetrius and Hermia.

Ob. Stand close, this is the same *Athenian*.

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

Dem. O why rebuke you him that loves you so?
 Lay breath so bitter on your bitter foe.

Her. Now I but chide, but I should use thee worse,
 For thou, I fear, hast giv'n 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

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The sun was not so true unto the day,
As he to me. Would he have stoll'n away
From sleeping *Hermia*? I'll believe as soon
This whole earth may be bor'd, and that the moon
May through the center creep, and so displesic
Her brother's noon-tide with th' *Antipodes*.
It cannot be but thou hast murder'd him,
So should a murtherer look, so dread, so grim.

Dem. So should the * murther'd look, and so should I,
Pierc'd through the heart with your stern cruelty:
Yet you the murtherer look as bright and clear
As yonder *Venus* in her glimm'ring sphere.

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

Dem. I'd rather give his carcass to my hounds.

Her. Out dog, out cur! thou driv'st me past the bounds
Of maiden's patience. Hast thou slain him then?
Henceforth be never number'd among men.
O! once tell true, and even for my sake,
Durst thou have look'd upon him, being awake?
And hast thou kill'd him sleeping? O brave touch!
Could not a worm, an adder do so much?
An adder did it, for with double tongue
Than thine, thou serpent, never adder stung.

Dem. You spend your passion on a mispris'd mood;
I am not guilty of *Lysander's* blood,
Nor is he dead for ought that I can tell.

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

Dem. And if I could, what should I get therefore?

Her. A privilege never to see me more;
And from thy hated presence part I so:
See me no more, whether he's dead or no. [Exit.

Dem. There is no following her in this fierce vein,
Here therefore for a while I will remain:
So sorrow's heaviness doth heavier grow
For debt that bankrupt sleep doth sorrow owe,
Which now in some slight measure it will pay,
If for his Tender here I make some stay. [Lies down.

S C E N E VI.

Ob. What hast thou done? thou hast mistaken quite,
B 4 And

* the murtherer.

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And laid thy love-juice on some true love's sight :
Of thy misprision must perforce ensue
Some true love turn'd, and not a false turn'd true.

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

Ob. About the wood go swifter than the wind,
And *Helena* of *Athens* see 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 doth appear.

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

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

Enter Puck.

Puck. 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 !

Ob. 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 prepos'trously.

S C E N E VII.

Enter Lyfander and Helena.

Lys. 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 :

How

How can these things in me seem scorn to you?

Bearing the badge of faith to prove them true.

Hel. You do advance your cunning more and more,
When truth kills truth, O devilish holy fray!

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.

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

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

Lys. *Demetrius* loves her, and he loves not you.

Dem. [*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!

That pure congealed white, high *Taurus* snow,

Fann'd with the eastern wind, turns to a crow

When thou hold'st up thy hand. O let me kiss

This Princess of pure white, this seal of bliss.

Hel. O spight, O hell! I see you all are bent

To set against me for your merriment:

If you were civil, and knew courtesie,

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 are 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*.

A trim exploit, a manly enterprize,

To conjure tears up in a poor maid's eyes

With your derision: none of noble sort

Would so offend a virgin, and extort

A poor soul's patience, all to make you sport.

Lys. 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;

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And yours of *Helena* to me bequeath,
Whom I do love, and will do to my death.

Hel. Never did mockers waste more idle breath.

Dem. *Lysander*, keep thy *Hermia*, I will none;
If e'er I lov'd her, all that love is gone.

My heart to her but as guest-wife sojourn'd,
And now to *Helen* it is home return'd,
There ever to remain.

Lys. It is not so.

Dem. Disparage not the faith thou dost not know,
Lest to thy peril thou abide it dear.
Look where thy love comes, yonder is thy dear.

S C E N E VIII.

Enter Hermia.

Her. Dark night, that from the eye his function takes,
The ear more quick of apprehension makes:
Wherein it doth impair the seeing sense,
It pays the hearing double recompence.
Thou art not by mine eye, *Lysander*, found,
Mine ear, I thank it, brought me to thy sound.
But why unkindly didst thou leave me so?

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

Her. What love could press *Lysander* from my side?

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

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

Hel. Lo, she is one of this confed'racy;
Now I perceive they have conjoin'd all three,
To fashion this false sport in spite of me.
Injurious *Hermia*, most ungrateful maid,
Have you conspir'd, have you with these contriv'd
To bait me with this foul derision?

• Is all the counsel that we two have shar'd,
• The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent,
• When we have chid the hasty-footed time
• For parting us: O! and is all forgot?

‘ All school-days friendship, childhood innocence ?
‘ We, *Hermia*, like two artificial gods,
‘ Created with our needles both one flower,
‘ Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion ;
‘ Both warbling of one song, both in one key ;
‘ As if our hands, our sides, voices, and minds
‘ Had been incorp’rate. So we grew together,
‘ Like to a double cherry, seeming parted,
‘ But yet an union in partition ;

Two lovely berries molded on one stem,
So with two seeming bodies, but one heart,
Two of the first life, coats in heraldry,
Due but to one, and crowned with one crest.
And will you rend our ancient love afunder,
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.

Her. *Helen* I am amazed at your words :
I scorn you not ; it seems that you scorn me.

Hel. Have you not set *Lysander* as in scorn
To follow me, and praise my eyes and face ?
And made your other love, *Demetrius*,
(Who even but now did spurn me with his foot)
To call me goddess, nymph, divine, and rare,
Precious, celestial ? wherefore speaks he this
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 ?
What though I be not so in grace as you,
So hung upon with love, so fortunate ;
But miserable most, to love unlov’d ?
This you should pity rather than despise.

Her. I understand not what you mean by this.

Hel. 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

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But fare ye well, 'tis partly mine own fault,
Which death or absence soon shall remedy.

Lys. Stay gentle *Helena*, hear my excuse;
My love, my life, my soul, fair *Helena*.

Hel. O excellent!

Her. Sweet, do not scorn her so.

Dem. If she cannot entreat, I can compel.

Lof. Thou canst compel no more than she entreat,
Thy threats have no more strength than her weak praise.

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

I swear by that which I will lose for thee,

To prove him false that says I love thee not.

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

Lys. If thou say so, withdraw and prove it too.

Dem. Quick, come.

Her. *Lysander*, whereto tends all this?

Lys. Away, you *Ethiops*.

Dem. No, no, he'll seem

To break away, take on as he would follow,

But yet come not; you are a tame man, go.

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

Her. Why are you grown so rude? what change is this?
Sweet love!

Lys. Thy love? out tawny *Tartar*, out;
Out loathed medicine; hated poison, hence.

Her. Do you not jest?

Hel. Yes fool, and so do you.

Lys. *Demetrius*, I will keep my word with thee.

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

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

Her. What, can you do me greater harm than hate?
Hate me! wherefore? O me! what news, my love?

Am not I *Hermia*? are not you *Lysander*?

I am as fair now as I was ere-while.

Since night you lov'd me; yet since night you left me:

Why then you left me (O the gods forbid!).

In earnest, shall I say?

Lys. Ay, by my life,

And

And never did desire to see thee more.
Therefore be out of hope, of question, doubt ;
Be certain, nothing truer ; 'tis no jest,
That I do hate thee and love *Helena*.

Her. O me, you jugler, oh you canker blossom,
You thief of love ; what, have you come by night,
And stol'n my love's heart from him ?

Hel. Fine, i' faith !
Have you no modesty, no maiden shame,
No touch of bashfulness ? what, will you tear
Impatient answers from my gentle tongue ?
Fie, fie, you counterfeit, you puppet you.

Her. Puppet ! why so ? ay, that ways go the game.
Now I perceive that she hath made compare
Between our statures ; she hath urg'd her height,
And with her personage, her tall personage,
Her height, forsooth, she hath prevail'd with him.
And are you grown so high in his esteem,
Because I am so dwarfish and so low ?
How low am I, thou painted maypole ? speak,
How low am I ? I am not yet so low,
But that my nails can reach unto thine eyes.

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

Her. Lower ! hark again.

Hel. Good *Hermia* do not be so bitter with me,
I evermore did love you, *Hermia*,
Did ever keep your counsels, never wrong'd you,
Save that, in love unto *Demetrius*,
I told him of your stealth into the wood :
He follow'd you, for love I follow'd him,
But he hath chid me hence, and threaten'd 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.

Her. Why get you gone; who is't that hinders you?

Hel. A foolish heart that I leave here behind.

Her. What, with *Lysander*?

Hel. With *Demetrius*.

Lys. Be not afraid, she will not harm thee, *Helena*.

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

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

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

Lys. Get you gone you dwarf,
You *Minimus*, of hind'ring knot-grafs made,
You bead, you acorn.

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

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

Dem. Follow? nay I'll go with thee cheek by jowl.

[*Exeunt Lysander and Demetrius.*]

Her. You mistress, all this coyl is long of you:
Nay, go not back.

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

* *Her.* I am amaz'd, and know not what to say.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E IX.

Enter Oberon and Puck.

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

Puck. Believe me, King of shadows, I mislook.
Did not you tell me I should know the man,

* *Edit. prim.*

By the *Athenian* garments he hath on?
And so far blameless proves my enterprize,
That I have 'nointed an *Athenian's* eyes;
And so far am I glad it did so fort,
As this their jangling I esteem a sport.

Ob. Thou seest these lovers seek a place to fight;
Hie therefore, *Robin*, overcast the night,
The starry welkin cover thou anon
With drooping fog as black as *Acheron*,
And lead these testy rivals so astray,
As one come not within another's way.
Like to *Lysander* sometime frame thy tongue,
Then stir *Demetrius* up with bitter wrong;
And sometime rail thou like *Demetrius*;
And from each other look thou lead them thus,
'Till o'er their brows death-counterfeiting sleep
With leaden legs and batty wings doth creep;
Then crush this herb into *Lysander's* eye,
Whose liquor hath this virtuous property,
To take from thence all error with its might,
And make his eye-balls rowl with wonted sight.
When they next wake, all this derision
Shall seem a dream and fruitless vision;
And back to *Athens* shall the lovers wend
With league, whose date 'till death shall never end,
Whiles I in this affair do thee imploy,
I'll to my Queen, and beg her *Indian* boy;
And then I will her charmed eye release
From monsters view, and all things shall be peace.

Puck. My fairy lord, this must be done with haste,
For night's swift dragons cut the clouds full fast,
And yonder shines *Aurora's* harbinger;
At whose approach ghosts wandring here and there
Troop home to church-yards; damned spirits all,
That in cross-ways and floods have burial,
Already to their wormy beds are gone,
For fear lest day should look ther shames upon,
'They wilfully exile themselves from light,
And must for aye consort with black-brow'd night.

Ob. But we are spirits of another sort;
With the morning-light have oft made sport,

And

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And like a forester the groves may tread,
 Ev'n 'till the eastern gate all fiery red,
 Opening on *Neptune* with fair blessed beams,
 Turns into yellow gold his salt-green streams.
 But notwithstanding haste, make no delay,
 We may effect this business yet ere day. [*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.

Enter Lysander.

Lys. Where art thou, proud *Demetrius*? speak thou
 now.

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

Lys. I will be with thee straight.

Puck. Follow me then to plainer ground.

Enter Demetrius.

Dem. *Lysander*, speak again;

Thou run-away, thou coward, art thou fled?
 Speak in some bush: where dost thou hide thy head?

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

Dem. Yea, art thou there?

Puck. Follow my voice, we'll try no manhood here.
 [*Exeunt.*]

Lys. He goes before me, and still dares me on;
 When I come where he calls me, then he's gone.
 The villain is much lighter-heel'd than I:
 I follow'd fast, but faster he did fly; [*Shifting places.*]
 That fall'n am I in dark uneven way,
 And here will rest me. Come thou gentle day:
 [*Lies down.*]

For if but once thou shew me thy gray light,
 I'll find *Demetrius*, and revenge this spight.

Enter Puck and Demetrius.

Puck. Ho, ho, ho, coward why com'st thou not?

* *begging.*

Dem.

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

Puck. Come thou hither, I am here.

Dem. Nay then thou mock'st me; thou shalt buy
this dear,
If ever I thy face by day-light 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. [*Lies down.*

S C E N E X.

Enter Helena.

Hel. O weary night, O long and tedious night,
Abate thy hours; shine comforts from the East,
That I may back to *Athens* by day-light,
From these that my poor company detest;
And sleep, that sometimes shuts up sorrow's eye,
Steal me a while from mine own company. [*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.

Enter Hermia.

Her. Never so weary, never so in woe,
Bedabbled with the dew, and torn with briars,
I can no further crawl, no further go;
My legs can keep no pace with my desires:
Here will I rest me 'till the break of day.
Heav'n's shield *Lysander*, if they mean a fray. [*Lies down.*

Puck. On the ground, sleep sound,
I'll apply, to your eye, gentle lover, remedy.
[*Squeezing the juice on Lysander's eye.*

When thou wak'st, thou tak'st
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 be well.

[*Exit Puck.* [*They sleep.*

A C T.

A C T IV. S C E N E I.

The Wood.

*Enter Queen of Fairies, Bottom, Fairies attending,
and the King behind them.*

Q U E E N.

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

Bot. Where's *Peaseblossom*?

Pease. Ready.

Bot. Scratch my head, *Peaseblossom*. Where's mon-
sieur *Cobweb*?

Cob. Ready.

Bot. Monsieur *Cobweb*, good monsieur get your wea-
pons in your hand, and kill me a red-hipt humblebee
on the top of a thistle, and good monsieur bring
me the honey-bag. Do not fret your self too much in
the action, monsieur; and good monsieur have a care
the honey-bag break not; I should be loth to have you
overflown with a honey-bag, signior. Where's mon-
sieur *Mustardseed*?

Must. Ready.

Bot. Give me thy † neafe, monsieur. *Mustardseed*;
pray you leave your curtesie, good monsieur.

Must. What's your will?

Bot. Nothing, good monsieur, but to help *Cavalero
Cobweb* to scratch. I must to the barber's, monsieur,
for methinks I am marvellous hairy about the face.
And I am such a tender ass, if my hair doth but
tickle me, I must scratch.

Queen. What; wilt thou hear some musick, my
sweet love?

Bot.

† neafe (Yorkshire) for fist.

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Bot. I have a reasonable good ear in musick, let us have the tongs and the bones.

Musick. Tongs, rural musick.

Queen. Or say, sweet love, what thou desir'st to eat.

Bot. 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.

Queen. I have a venturous Fairy that shall seek the squirrels hoard, and fetch thee new nuts.

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

Queen. Sleep thou, and I will wind thee in my arms; Fairies be gone, and be always away: So doth the woodbine the sweet hony-suckle Gently entwist; the female ivy so Enrings the barky fingers of the elm. O how I love thee! how I doat on thee!

Enter Puck.

Ob. 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 favours 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 that same dew which sometime on the buds Was wont to swell like round and orient pearls, Sood now within the pretty flouriet's eyes, Like tears that did their own disgrace bewail. When I had at my pleasure taunted her, And she in mild terms begg'd my patience, I then did ask of her her changeling child, Which strait she gave me, and her Fairy sent To bear him to my bower in Fairy land. 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

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That he awaking when the others do,
 May all to *Athens* back again repair,
 And think no more of this night's accidents,
 But as the fierce vexation of a dream.

But first I will release the Fairy Queen :

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

Now my *Titania*, wake you my sweet Queen.

Queen. My *Oberon*! what visions have I seen!
 Methought I was enamour'd of an ass.

Ob. There lies your love.

Queen. How came these things to pass?
 Oh how mine eyes do loath this visage now!

Ob. Silence a while; *Robin* take off his head,
Titania, musick call, and strike more dead
 Than common sleep. Of all these fine the sense.

Queen. Musick, ho musick; such as charmeth sleep.
Musick still.

Puck. When thou awak't with thine own fool's
 eyes peep.

Ob. Sound musick, come my Queen, take hand
 with me,

And rock the ground whereon these sleepers be.
 Now thou and I are new in amity;

And will to-morrow midnight solemnly
 Dance in Duke *Theseus*' house triumphantly,
 And bless it to all fair posterity :

There shall the pairs of faithful lovers be
 Wedded with *Theseus* all in jollity.

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

Ob. Then my Queen, in silence sad,
 Trip we after the night's shade;
 We the globe can compass soon,
 Swifter than the wand'ring moon.

Queen. 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.

[*Sleepers lie still.*

[*Exeunt.*

[*Wind horns.*

SCENE

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S C E N E II.

Enter Theseus, Egeus, Hippolita, and all his train.

Thes. Go one of you, find out the forester,
For now our observation is perform'd;
And since we have the vaward of the day,
My love shall hear the musick of my hounds.
Uncouple in the western valley, go,
Dispatch I say, and find the forester.
We will, fair Queen, up to the mountain's top,
And mark the musical confusion
Of hounds and echo in conjunction.

Hip. I was with *Hercules* and *Cadmus* once,
When in a wood of *Crete* they bay'd the bear
With hounds of *Sparta*; never did I hear
Such gallant chiding. For besides the groves,
The skies, the fountains, ev'ry region near
Seem'd all one mutual cry. I never heard
So musical a discord, such sweet thunder.

Thes. My hounds are bred out of the *Spartan* kind,
So flew'd, so fanded, and their heads are hung
With ears that sweep away the morning dew;
Crook-knee'd, and dew-lap'd, like *Thessalian* bulls,
Slow in pursuit, but match'd in mouth like bells,
Each under each. A cry more tuneable
Was never hollow'd to, nor cheer'd with horn,
In *Crete*, in *Sparta*, nor in *Thessaly*:
Judge when you hear. But soft, what nymphs are these?

Ege. My lord, this is my daughter here asleep,
And this *Lysander*, this *Demetrius* is,
This *Helena*, old *Nedar's* *Helena*;
I wonder at their being here together.

Thes. 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?

Ege. It is, my lord.

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

Horns, and they awake. Shout within, they all start up.

Thes. Good morrow friends; Saint *Valentine* is past:
Begin

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Begin these wood-birds but to couple now ?

Lys. Pardon, my lord,

Thef. I pray you all stand up :

I know you two are rival enemies.

How comes this gentle concord in the world,

That hatred is so far from jealousy,

To sleep by hate, and fear no enmity ?

Lys. My lord, I shall reply amazedly,
Half sleep, half waking. But as yet I swear

I cannot truly say how I came here :

But as I think, (for truly would I speak,)

And now I do methink me, so it is ;

I came with *Hermia* hither. Our intent

Was to be gone from *Athens*, where we might be

Without the peril of th' *Athenian* law.

Ege. Enough, enough, my lord, you have enough ;
I beg the law, the law upon his head :

They would have stol'n away, they would, *Demetrius*,

Thereby to have defeated you and me,

You of your wife, and me of my consent ;

Of my consent that she should be your wife.

Dem. My lord, fair *Helen* told me of their stealth,

Of this their purpose hither to this wood ;

And I in fury hither follow'd them ;

Fair *Helen* in fancy follow'd me :

But, my good lord, I wot not by what power,

But by some power it is, my love to *Hermia*

Is melted as the snow, seems to me now

As the remembrance of an idle † gaude,

Which in my childhood I did doat upon :

And all the faith, the virtue of my heart,

The object and the pleasure of mine eye,

Is only *Helen*. To her, my lord,

Was I betrothed ere I *Hermia* saw ;

But like a sickness did I loath this food ;

But as in health come to my natural taste,

Now do I wish it, love it, long for it,

And will for evermore be true to it.

Thef. Fair lovers you are fortunately met :

Of this discourse we shall hear more anon.

Egeus, I will over-bear your will,

For

† Gaude, or Bawble.

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For in the temple, by and by with us,
These couples shall eternally be knit ;
And for the morning now is something worn,
Our purpos'd hunting shall be set aside.

Away with us to *Athens*, three and three,
We'll hold a feast in great solemnity.

Come *Hippolita*. [Ex. Duke and Lords.

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

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

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

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

Her. Yea, and my father.

Hel. And *Hippolita*.

Lys. And he bid us to follow to the temple.

Dem. Why then we are awake ; let's follow him,
And by the way let us recount our dreams. [Exeunt.
[Bottom wakes.

S C E N E III.

Bot. 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 ! stol'n hence, and left me asleep. I have had a most rare vision. I 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 patch'd 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 call'd *Bottom's Dream*, because it hath no bottom ;
and

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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.

S C E N E IV.

Enter Quince, Flute, Snout, and Starveling.

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

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

Flute. If he be come not, then the play is marr'd. It goes not forward, doth it?

Quin. 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 handy-craft man in *Athens*.

Quin. 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 nought.

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 six-pence a-day during his life; he could not have 'scaped six-pence a-day; an the Duke had not given him six-pence a-day for playing *Pyramus*, I'll be hang'd: he would have deserv'd it. Six-pence a-day in *Pyramus*, or nothing.

Enter Bottom.

Bot. Where are these lads? where are these hearts?

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

Bot. 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 as it fell out.

Quin. Let us hear, sweet *Bottom*.

Bot. Not a word of me; all I will tell you is, that the Duke hath dined. Get your apparel together, good

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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 linnen, 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 garlick, for we are to utter sweet breath; and I do not doubt to hear them say, it is a sweet comedy. No more words; away, go away. [Exeunt.]

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter Theseus, Hippolita, Egeus and his Lords.

HIPPOLITA.

TIS strange, my *Theseus*, what these lovers speak of.
Thes. More strange than true. I never may believe

These antick fables, nor these Fairy toys;
Lovers and madmen have such seething brains,
Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend more
Than cooler reason ever comprehends;
The lunatick, the lover, and the poet,
Are of imagination all compact:
One sees more devils than vast hell can hold;
The madman. While the lover, all as frantick,
Sees *Helen's* beauty in a brow of *Egypt*.
The poet's eye in a fine frenzy rowling,
Doth glance from heav'n to earth, from earth to heav'n;
And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shape, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.
Such tricks hath strong imagination,
That if he would but apprehend some joy,
It comprehends some bringer of that joy:

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Or in the night imagining some fear,
How easie is a bush suppos'd a bear?

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

Enter Lysander, Demetrius, Hermia *and* Helena.

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

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

Thes. Come now, what masks, what dances shall we
have.

To wear away this long age of three hours,
Between our after-supper and bed-time?
Where is our usual manager of mirth?
What revels are in hand? is there no play
To ease the anguish of a torturing hour?
Call *Philostrate*.

Enter Philostrate.

Philost. Here, mighty *Theseus*.

Thes. Say, what abridgment have you for this
evening?

What mask? what musick? how shall we beguile
The lazy time, if not with some delight?

Philost. There is a brief how many sports are rife:
Make choice of which your highness will see first.

Lys. The battle with the Centaurs, to be sung
By an *Athenian* eunuch to the harp.

Thes. We'll none of that. That have I told my
love,
In glory of my kinsman *Hercules*.

Lys. The riot of the tipsie *Bacchanals*,
Tearing the *Thracian* singer in their rage.

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

Lys. The thrice three Muses mourning for the death
Of learning, late deceas'd in beggary.

Thes. That is some satyr keen and critical,

Not

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Not sorting with a nuptial ceremony.

Lys. A tedious brief scene of young *Pyramus*,
And his love *Thisbe* ; very tragical mirth.

Thes. Merry and tragical? tedious and brief?
How shall we find the concord of this discord?

Philost. 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,
Which makes it tedious: for in all the play
There is not one word apt, one player fitted.
And tragical, my noble lord, it is :
For *Pyramus* therein doth kill himself,
Which when I saw rehears'd, I must confess
Made mine eyes water ; but more merry tears
The passion of loud laughter never shed.

Thes. What are they that do play it ?

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

Thes. And we will hear it.

Philost. No, my noble lord,
It is not for you. I have heard it over,
And it is nothing, nothing in the world ;
Unless you can find sport in their intents,
Extremely stretch'd and conn'd with cruel pain,
To do you service.

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

[*Ex. Phil.*

Hip. I love not to see wretchedness o'ercharg'd,
And duty in his service perishing.

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

Hip. He says, they can do nothing in this kind.

Thes. The kinder we, to give them thanks for nothing.
Our sport shall be to take what they mistake ;
And what poor duty cannot do, noble respect
Takes it in might, not merit.

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Where I have come, great clerks have purposed
To greet me with premeditated welcomes;
Where I have seen them shiver and look pale,
Make periods in the midst of sentences,
Throttle their practis'd accent in their fears,
And in conclusion dumbly have broke off,
Not paying me a welcome Trust me, sweet,
Out of this silence yet I pick'd a welcome:
And in the modesty of fearful duty
I read as much, as from the rattling tongue
Of saucy and audacious eloquence.
Love therefore, and tongue-ty'd simplicity,
In least, speak most, to my capacity.

Enter Philomon.

Phil. So please your Grace, the prologue is address'd.

Thef. Let him approach. [*Flor. Tr. 1477.*]

S C E N E II.

Enter Quince for the prologue.

Pro. If we offend, it is with our good will.

That you should think we come not to offend,
But with good will. To shew 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.

Thef. This fellow doth not stand upon points.

Lys. He hath rid his prologue, like a rough colt;
he knows not the stop. A good moral, my lord. It
is not enough to speak, but to speak true.

Hip. Indeed he hath play'd on his prologue, like a
child on the recorder; a sound, but not in govern-
ment.

Thef. His speech was like a tangled chain; nothing
impair'd, but all disorder'd. Who is the next?

*Enter Pyramus, and Thisbe, Wall, Moonshine,
and Lion.*

Pro. Gentles, perchance you wonder at this show,
But wonder on, 'till truth make all things plain.

This

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This man is *Pyramus*, if you would know;

This beauteous lady, *Thisby* is certain.

This man with lime and rough-cast, doth present

Wall, the 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 lanthorn, dog, and bush of thorn,

Presenteth Moon-shine: For if you will know,

By moon-shine did these lovers think no scorn

To meet at *Ninus* tomb, there, there to woo.

This grizly beast, which *Lion* hight by name,

The trusty *Thisby*, coming first by night,

Did scare away, or rather did affright:

And as she fled, her mantle she let fall;

Which *Lion* vile with bloody mouth did stain:

Anon comes *Pyramus*, sweet youth and tall,

And finds his trusty *Thisby's* mantle slain;

Whereat, with blade, with bloody blameful blade,

He bravely broach'd his boiling bloody breast.

And *Thisby*, carrying in the mulberry shade,

His dagger drew, and died. For all the rest,

Let *Lion*, *Moon-shine*, *Wall*, and lovers twain,

At large discourse, while here they do remain.

[*Exeunt all but Wall.*]

This. I wonder if the *Lion* be to speak.

Dem. No wonder, my lord; one *Lion* may, when
many ass's do.

Wall. In this same interlude it doth befall;

That I, one *Flute* 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 *Thisby*,

Did whisper often very secretly.

This loam, this rough-cast, and this stone doth shew,

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:

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

Dem. It is the wittiest partition that ever I heard
discourse, my lord.

This. *Pyramus* draws near the wall: silence!

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Enter Pyramus.

Pyr. O grim-look'd night ! O night with hue so black !
 O night, which ever art when day is not !
 O night, O night, alack, alack, alack,
 I fear my *Thisby's* promise is forgot.
 And thou, O wall, O sweet and lovely wall,
 That stands between her father's ground and mine,
 Thou wall, O wall, O sweet and lovely wall,
 Shew me thy chink, to blink through with mine cyne.
 Thanks, courteous wall, *Jove* shield thee well for this.
 But what see I? no *Thisby* do I see.
 O wicked wall, through whom I see no bliss,
 Curst be thy stones for thus deceiving me.
Thes. The wall, methinks, being sensible, should curse
 again.

Pyr. No in truth, Sir, he should not. *Deceiving*
me, is *Thisby's* cue ; she is to enter, and I am to spy
 her through the wall. You shall see it will fall pat as I
 told you. Yonder she comes.

Enter Thisby.

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

Pyr. I see a voice ; now will I to the chink,
 To spy an I can hear my *Thisby's* face.

Thisby !

This. My love thou art, my love, I think.

Pyr. Think what thou wilt, I am thy lover's grace.
 And like *Limandea* am I trusty still.

This. And I like *Helen*, 'till the fates me kill.

Pyr. Not *Shafalus* to *Procrus* was so true.

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

Pyr. O kiss me through the hole of this vile wall.

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

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

This. Tide life, tide death, I come without delay.

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

[*Exit.*

Thes.

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Thes. Now is the † Mural down between the two neighbours.

Dem. No remedy, my Lord; when walls are so wilful to hear without warning.

Hip. This is the silliest stuff that e'er I heard.

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

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

Thes. If we imagine no worse of them than they of themselves, they may pass for excellent men. Here come two noble beasts in, a man and a lion.

Enter Lion and Moon-shine.

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
No Lion fell, nor else no Lion's dam:
For if I should as Lion come in strife
Into this place, 'twere pity of my life.

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

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

Lys. This Lion is a very fox for his valour.

Thes. True, and a goose for his discretion.

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

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

Moon. This lanthorn doth the horned moon present.

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

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

Moon. This lanthorn doth the horned moon present:
My self the man i'th' moon doth seem to be.

Thes.

† Now is the † Moral down between the two neighbours.

Old Edit.

————— Now is the Moon used.

Another Edit.

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Thes. This is the greatest error of all the rest; the man should be put into the lanthorn: how is it else the man i'th' moon?

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

Hip. I am weary of this moon; would he would change.

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

Lys. Proceed, *Moon*.

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

Dem. Why all these should be in the lanthorn; for they are in the moon. But silence; here comes *Thisby*.

Enter Thisby.

This. This is old *Ninny's* tomb; where is my love?

Lion. Oh. [*The Lion roars, Thisby runs off.*]

Dem. Well roar'd *Lion*.

Thes. Well run *Thisby*.

Hip. Well shone *Moon*.

Truly the *Moon* shines with a good grace.

Thes. Well mouth'd *Lion*.

Dem. And then came *Pyramus*.

Lys. And so the *Lion* vanish'd.

Enter Pyramus.

Pyr. Sweet *Moon*, I thank thee for thy sunny beams;

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

For by thy gracious, golden, glittering streams,

I trust to taste of truest *Thisby's* sight.

But stay: O spight

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 you furies fell:

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O fates! come, come:

Cut thread and thrum,

Quail, crush, conclude, and quell.

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

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

Pyr. O wherefore, nature, didst thou Lions frame?
Since Lion vile hath here deflour'd my dear:
Which is—no, no—which was the fairest dame,
That liv'd, that lov'd, that lik'd, that look'd with
cheer.

Come tears, confound: out sword, and wound

The pap of *Pyramus*.

Ay, that left pap, where heart doth hop:

Thus die I, thus, thus, thus.

Now am I dead, now am I fled, my soul is in the sky;
Tongue lose thy light, moon take thy flight,
Now die, die, die, die, die.

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

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

Thef. With the help of a Surgeon he might yet re-
cover, and prove an aîs.

Hip. How chance the *Moon-shine* is gone, before
Thisby comes back and finds her lover?

Enter Thisby.

Thef. She will find him by star-light!

Here she comes; and her passion ends the play.

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

Dem. A moth will turn the ballance, which *Pyra-
mus*, which *Thisby* is the better.

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

Dem. And thus she means, *videlicet*,

This. Asleep, my love?

What dead, my dove?

O *Pyramus* arise:

Speak, speak. Quite dumb?

Dead, dead? a tomb

Must cover thy sweet eyes.

These lilly lips, this cherry nose,

These

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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 sheers this thread of silk.
 Tongue not a word:
 Come trusty sword;
 Come blade, my breast imbrue:
 And farewell friends,
 Thus *Thisby* ends;
 Adieu, adieu, adieu.

Thes. Moon shine and *Lion* are left to bury the dead.

Dem. Ay, and *Wall* too.

Bot. 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?

Thes. 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 blam'd. Marry, if he that writ it had play'd *Pyramus*, and hung himself in *Thisby's* garter, it would have been a fine tragedy: and so it is truly, and very notably discharg'd. But come, your bergomask; let your epilogue alone.

[*Here a dance of Clowns.*]

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 over-watch'd.
 This palpable gross play hath well beguil'd
 The heavy gait of night. Sweet friends to bed,
 A fortnight hold we this solemnity,
 In nightly revel and new jollity.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E

S C E N E III.

Enter Puck.

Puck. Now the hungry lion roars,
And the wolf beholds the moon:
Whilst the heavy Ploughman snoars,
All with weary task fore-done.
Now the wasted brands do glow,
Whilst the scritch-owl, scritch'ing 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 spright,
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 frolick, not a mouse
Shall disturb this hallowed house.
I am sent with broom before,
To sweep the dust behind the door.

Enter the King and Queens of Fairies, with their train.

Ob. Through the house give glimmering light,
By the dead and drowsie fire,
Every elf and fairy sprite,
Hop as light as bird from brier,
And this ditty after me
Sing and dance it trippingly.

Queen. First rehearse this song by rote,
To each word a warbling note.
Hand in hand, with fairy grace,
Will we sing and bless this place.

The S O N G.

*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:*

And

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*And the issue there create,
Ever shall be fortunate;
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.
With this field-dew consecrate,
Every Fairy take his gate,
And each several chamber bless,
Through this palace with sweet peace:
Ever shall it safely rest;
And the owner of it blest.
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 slumbred 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 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.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]



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