

Prologue

[Music: Jazz Prologue]

5

Quince. Merry met, gentlefolk. Assembled here are we
To witness a royal wedding and central actions three:
One, a love chase most heartbreaking and arduous
Starring Hermia, Helena, Lysander, and Demetrius.
10 Two, a strange, enchanted encounter between
Bottom, an aesthete, and Titania, the lovely fairy queen.
Third, a struggle with Titania and Oberon, her Fairy King,
Both enlisting puckish fairies to do their bidding.
In Athens, Georgia we set our scene,
15 Amongst roaring twenties and lush greenery,
For as we wise Athenians can plainly see,
“Reason and love keep little company.”

20

Act I, Scene 1

Athens, GA. 1920s.

[Music: Lover Theme; romantic and jazzy]

25

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

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

30

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

35

Hermia. O cross! too high to be enthral'd to low.

Lysander. Or else misgraffed in respect of years,—

40

Hermia. O spite! too old to be engaged to young.

Lysander. Or else it stood upon the choice of friends,—

Hermia. O hell! to choose love by another's eyes.

45

Lysander. 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;

50 Brief as the lightning in the collied night,
That, in a spleen, unfolds both heaven 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.

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

Lysander. A good persuasion: therefore, hear me, Hermia.
I have a widow aunt, a dowager
Of great revenue, and she hath no child:
65 From Athens is her house remote seven leagues;
And she respects me as her only son.
There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee;
And to that place the sharp Athenian law
Cannot pursue us. If thou lovest me then,
70 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 a morn of May,
There will I stay for thee.

75 **Hermia.** 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' doves,
80 By that which knitteth souls and prospers loves,
And by that fire which burn'd the Carthage queen,
When the false Trojan under sail was seen,
By all the vows that ever men have broke,
In number more than ever women spoke,
85 In that same place thou hast appointed me,
To-morrow truly will I meet with thee.

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

90 [Enter **HELENA**]

Hermia. God speed fair Helena! whither away?

95 **Helena.** Call you me fair? that fair again unsay.
Demetrius loves your fair: O happy fair!
Your eyes are lode-stars; and your tongue's sweet air

More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear,
When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear.
Sickness is catching: O, were favour so,
100 Yours would I catch, fair Hermia, ere I go;
My ear should catch your voice, my eye your eye,
My tongue should catch your tongue's sweet melody.
Were the world mine, Demetrius being bated,
The rest I'd give to be to you translated.
105 O, teach me how you look, and with what art
You sway the motion of Demetrius' heart.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

125 **Hermia.** Take comfort: he no more shall see my face;
Lysander and myself will fly this place.
Before the time I did Lysander see,
Seem'd Athens as a paradise to me:
O, then, what graces in my love do dwell,
That he hath turn'd a heaven unto a hell!

130 **Lysander.** Helen, to you our minds we will unfold:
To-morrow night, when Phoebe doth behold
Her silver visage in the watery glass,
Decking with liquid pearl the bladed grass,
135 A time that lovers' flights doth still conceal,
Through Athens' gates have we devised to steal.

140 **Hermia.** And in the wood, where often you and I
Upon faint primrose-beds were wont to lie,
Emptying our bosoms of their counsel sweet,
There my Lysander and myself shall meet;
And thence from Athens turn away our eyes,
To seek new friends and stranger companies.
Farewell, sweet playfellow: pray thou for us;

145 And good luck grant thee thy Demetrius!
Keep word, Lysander: we must starve our sight
From lovers' food till morrow deep midnight.

Lysander. I will, my Hermia.
150 [Exit HERMIA]
Helena, adieu:
As you on him, Demetrius dote on you!
[Exit]

155 **Helena.** How happy some o'er other some can be!
Through Athens I am thought as fair as she.
But what of that? Demetrius thinks not so;
He will not know what all but he do know:
And as he errs, doting on Hermia's eyes,
160 So I, admiring of his qualities:
Things base and vile, folding 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:
165 Nor hath Love's mind of any judgement taste;
Wings and no eyes figure unheedy haste:
And therefore is Love said to be a child,
Because in choice he is so oft beguiled.
As waggish boys in game themselves forswear,
170 So the boy Love is perjured every where:
For ere Demetrius look'd on Hermia's eyne,
He hail'd down oaths that he was only mine;
And when this hail some heat from Hermia felt,
So he dissolved, and showers of oaths did melt.
175 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 expense:
But herein mean I to enrich my pain,
180 To have his sight thither and back again.
[Exit]

185 **Act I, Scene 2**
Athens. QUINCE'S house.
[Music: Players/Fools Theme – 1920s screwball comedy]

190 [Enter **QUINCE, SNUG, BOTTOM, FLUTE, SNOUT, and STARVELING**]
Quince. Is all our company here?

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

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

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

205 **Quince.** Marry, our play is, The most lamentable comedy, and
most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisby.

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

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

Bottom. Ready. Name what part I am for, and proceed.

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

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

220 **Quince.** A lover, that kills himself most gallant for love.

Bottom. That will ask some tears in the true performing of
it: if I do it, let the audience look to their
eyes; I will move storms, I will condole in some
measure. To the rest: 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' car
Shall shine from far
And make and mar
The foolish Fates.
This was lofty! Now name the rest of the players.
This is Ercles' vein, a tyrant's vein; a lover is
more condoling.

230

235

240 **Quince.** Francis Flute, the bellows-mender.

Flute. Here, Petra Quince.

245 **Quince.** Flute, you must take Thisby on you.

Flute. What is Thisby? a wandering knight?

Quince. It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

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

255 **Quince.** No, no; you must play Pyramus: and, Flute, you Thisby.

Bottom. Well, proceed.

260 **Quince.** Robin Starveling, the tailor.

Starveling. Here, Petra Quince.

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

Snout. Here, Petra Quince.

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

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

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

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

285 **Quince.** An you should do it too terribly, you would fright
the duchess and the ladies, that they would shriek;
and that were enough to hang us all.

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

Bottom. I grant you, friends, if that you should fright the

290 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.

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

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

Quince. Why, what you will.

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

310 **Quince.** Some of your French crowns have no hair at all, and
then you will play bare-faced. But, masters, here
are your parts: and I am to entreat you, request
you and desire you, to con them by to-morrow night;
and meet me in the palace wood, a mile without the
315 town, by moonlight; there will we rehearse, for if
we meet in the city, we shall be dogged with
company, and our devices known. In the meantime I
will draw a bill of properties, such as our play
wants. I pray you, fail me not.

320 **Bottom.** We will meet; and there we may rehearse most
obscenely and courageously. Take pains; be perfect: adieu.

Quince. At the duke's oak we meet.

325 **Bottom.** Enough; hold or cut bow-strings.
[Exeunt]

330 **Act II, Scene 1**
A wood near Athens.
[Music: Puck Intro – similar to Fairy Theme]

[Enter, from opposite sides, three **Fairies**, and **PUCK**]

335 **Puck.** How now, spirit! whither wander you?

First Fairy. Over hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough brier,
340 Over park, over pale,
Thorough flood, thorough fire,
I do wander everywhere,
Swifter than the moon's sphere;
And I serve the fairy queen,
345 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 savours:
350 I must go seek some dewdrops here
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.
Farewell, thou lob of spirits; I'll be gone:
Our queen and all our elves come here anon.

355 **Puck.** The king doth keep his revels here to-night:
Take heed the queen come not within his sight;
But, they do square, that all their elves for fear
Creep into acorn-cups and hide them there.

360 **Second Fairy.** Either I mistake your shape and making quite,
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite
Call'd Robin Goodfellow: are not you she
That frights the maidens of the villagery;
Those that Hobgoblin call you and sweet Puck,
365 You do their work, and they shall have good luck:
Are not you she?

Puck. Thou speak'st aright;
I am that merry wanderer of the night.
370 I jest to Oberon and make him smile
When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,
Neighing in likeness of a filly foal:
And sometime lurk I in a gossip's bowl,
In very likeness of a roasted crab,
375 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,
380 And 'tailor' cries, and falls into a cough;
And then the whole quire hold their hips and laugh,
And waxen in their mirth and neeze and swear
A merrier hour was never wasted there.
But, room, fairy! here comes Oberon.

385

Mustardseed. And here my mistress. Would that he were gone!

[Enter, from one side, **OBERON**, with his train; from the other, **TITANIA**, with hers]

390

Oberon. Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania.

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

395

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

Titania. Then I must be thy lady: but I know
When thou hast stolen away from fairy land,
And in the shape of Corin sat all day,
400 Playing on pipes of corn and versing love
To amorous Phillida. Why art thou here,
Come from the farthest Steppe of India?
But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,
Your buskin'd mistress and your warrior love,
405 To Theseus must be wedded, and you come
To give their bed joy and prosperity.

410

Oberon. How canst thou thus for shame, Titania,
Glance at my credit with Hippolyta,
Knowing I know thy love to Theseus?
Didst thou not lead him through the glimmering night
From Perigenia, whom he ravished?
And make him with fair Aegles break his faith,
With Ariadne and Antiopa?

415

Titania. 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 rushy brook,
420 Or in the beached margent of the sea,
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,
But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.
And this same progeny of evils comes
From our debate, from our dissension;
425 We are their parents and original.

430

Oberon. Do you amend it then; it lies in you:
Why should Titania cross her Oberon?
How long within this wood intend you stay?

Titania. Perchance till after Theseus' wedding-day.
If you will patiently dance in our round

And see our moonlight revels, go with us;
If not, shun me, and I will spare your haunts.

435

Oberon. Give me your oath, and I will go with thee.

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

440

[Exit **TITANIA** with her train]

Oberon. Well, go thy way: thou shalt not from this grove
Till I torment thee for this injury.

445

My gentle Puck, come hither. Thou rememberest
Since once I sat upon a promontory,
And heard a mermaid on a dolphin's back
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath

450

That the rude sea grew civil at her song
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,
To hear the sea-maid's music.

Puck. I remember.

455

Oberon. Fetch me that flower; the herb I shew'd thee once:
The juice of it on sleeping eye-lids laid
Will make or man or woman madly dote
Upon the next live creature that it sees.
Fetch me this herb; and be thou here again
Ere the leviathan can swim a league.

460

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

465

Oberon. Having once this juice,
I'll watch Titania when she is asleep,
And drop the liquor of it in her eyes.
The next thing then she waking looks upon,
Be it on lion, bear, or wolf, or bull,
On meddling monkey, or on busy ape,
She shall pursue it with the soul of love:
And ere I take this charm from off her sight,
As I can take it with another herb,
I'll make her render up her oath to me.

470

475

But who comes here? I am invisible;
And I will overhear their conference.

[Enter **DEMETRIUS, HELENA**, following him]

480 **Demetrius.** I love thee not, therefore pursue me not.
Where is Lysander and fair Hermia?
The one I'll slay, the other slayeth me.
Thou told'st me they were stolen unto this wood;
And here am I, and wode within this wood,
485 Because I cannot meet my Hermia.
Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.

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

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

Helena. And even for that do I love you the more.

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

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

Demetrius. You do impeach your modesty too much,
505 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
510 With the rich worth of your virginity.

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

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

Helena. The wildest hath not such a heart as you.
Run when you will, the story shall be changed:
Apollo flies, and Daphne holds the chase;
525 The dove pursues the griffin; the mild hind
Makes speed to catch the tiger; bootless speed,
When cowardice pursues and valour flies.

530 **Demetrius.** I will not stay thy questions; let me go:
Or, if thou follow me, do not believe
But I shall do thee mischief in the wood.

Helena. Ay, in the temple, in the town, the field,
You do me mischief. Fie, Demetrius!
535 Your wrongs do set a scandal on my sex:
We cannot fight for love, as men may do;
We should be wood and were not made to woo.
[Exit **DEMETRIUS**]

540 I'll follow thee and make a heaven of hell,
To die upon the hand I love so well.
[Exit]

Oberon. Fare thee well, nymph: ere he do leave this grove,
Thou shalt fly him and he shall seek thy love.
545 [Re-enter **PUCK**]
Hast thou the flower there? Welcome, wanderer.

Puck. Ay, there it is.

550 **Oberon.** I pray thee, give it me.
I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,
Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses and with eglantine:
555 There sleeps Titania sometime of the night,
Lull'd in these flowers 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,
560 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
565 May be the lady: thou shalt know the man
By the Athenian garments he hath on.
Effect it with some care, that he may prove
More fond on her than she upon her love:
And look thou meet me ere the first cock crow.

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

575 **Act II, Scene 2**

Another part of the wood.
[Music: Fairy Theme]

[Enter **TITANIA**, with her train]

580

Titania. 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 rere-mice for their leathern wings,
585 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.

590

[The Fairies sing: Reminiscent of Fairy Theme]
Peaseblossom. You spotted snakes with double tongue,
Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen;
Newts and blind-worms, do no wrong,
Come not near our fairy queen.

595

Second Fairy. Philomel, with melody
Sing in our sweet lullaby;
Lulla, lulla, lullaby, lulla, lulla, lullaby:

600

Fairies. Never harm,
Nor spell nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh;
So, good night, with lullaby.

605

Peaseblossom. Weaving spiders, come not here;
Hence, you long-legg'd spinners, hence!
Beetles black, approach not near;
Worm nor snail, do no offence.

610

Second Fairy. Philomel, with melody,
Sing in our sweet lullaby.
Lulla, lulla, lullaby, lulla, lulla, lullaby.

615

Fairies. Never harm
Nor spell nor charm
Come our lovely lady nigh.
So good night with lullaby.
[**TITANIA** sleeps.]

620

Second Fairy. Hence, away! now all is well:
One aloof stand sentinel.
[Exeunt Fairies.]

[Enter **OBERON** and squeezes the flower on **TITANIA's** eyelids]

625

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

635

[Enter **LYSANDER** and **HERMIA**]

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

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

645

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

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

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

660

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

670

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

675 **Hermia.** With half that wish the wisher's eyes be press'd!
[They sleep]

[Enter **PUCK**]

680 **Puck.** Through the forest have I gone.
But Athenian found 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:
685 This is he, my master said,
Despised the Athenian maid;
And here the maiden, sleeping sound,
On the dank and dirty ground.
Pretty soul! she durst not lie
690 Near this lack-love, this kill-courtesy.
Churl, upon thy eyes I throw
All the power this charm doth owe.
When thou wakest, let love forbid
Sleep his seat on thy eyelid:
695 So awake when I am gone;
For I must now to Oberon.
[Exit]

[Enter **DEMETRIUS** and **HELENA**, running]

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

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

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

Demetrius. Stay, on thy peril: I alone will go.
[Exit]

710 **Helena.** O, I am out of breath in this fond chase!
The more my prayer, the lesser is my grace.
Happy is Hermia, wheresoe'er she lies;
For she hath blessed and attractive eyes.
How came her eyes so bright? Not with salt tears:
715 If so, my eyes are oftener wash'd than hers.
But who is here? Lysander! on the ground!
Dead? or asleep? I see no blood, no wound.
Lysander if you live, good sir, awake.

720 **Lysander.** [Awaking] And run through fire I will for thy sweet sake.
Transparent Helena! Nature shows art,
That through thy bosom makes me see thy heart.
Where is Demetrius? O, how fit a word
Is that vile name to perish on my sword!

725 **Helena.** Do not say so, Lysander; say not so
What though he love your Hermia? Lord, what though?
Yet Hermia still loves you: then be content.

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

Helena. Wherefore was I to this keen mockery born?
When at your hands did I deserve this scorn?
745 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,
750 In such disdainful manner me to woo.
But fare you well: perforce I must confess
I thought you lord of more true gentleness.
O, that a lady, of one man refused.
Should of another therefore be abused!
755 [Exit]

Lysander. She sees not Hermia. Hermia, sleep thou there:
And never mayst thou come Lysander near!
And, all my powers, address your love and might
760 To honour Helen and to be her knight!
[Exit]

Hermia. [Awaking] Help me, Lysander, help me! do thy best
To pluck this crawling serpent from my breast!
765 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 pray.
Lysander! what, removed? Lysander! lord!
770 What, out of hearing? gone? no sound, no word?
Alack, where are you speak, an if you hear;
Speak, of all loves! I swoon almost with fear.
No? then I well perceive you all not nigh
Either death or you I'll find immediately.
775 [Exit]

Act III, Scene 1
The wood. TITANIA lying asleep.
[Music: Players/Fools Theme]

780 [Enter **QUINCE**, **SNUG**, **BOTTOM**, **FLUTE**, **SNOUT**, and **STARVELING**]

785 **Bottom.** Are we all met?

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

Bottom. Petra Quince,—

795 **Quince.** What sayest thou, bully Bottom?

Bottom. 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?
800

Snout. By'r lakin, a parlous fear.

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

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

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

815

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

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

820

Starveling. I fear it, I promise you.

Bottom. Masters, you ought to consider with yourselves: 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 't.

825

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

830

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

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

835

Bottom. A calendar, a calendar! look in the almanac; find out moonshine, find out moonshine.

Quince. Yes, it doth shine that night.

840

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

845

Quince. 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 Moonshine. 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.

850

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

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

855

Quince. If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit down, every mother's son, and rehearse your parts. Pyramus, you begin: when you have spoken your

860

speech, enter into that brake: and so every one
according to his cue.

865

[Enter **PUCK** behind]

Puck. What hempen home-spuns have we swaggering here,
So near the cradle of the fairy queen?
What, a play toward! I'll be an auditor;
An actor too, perhaps, if I see cause.

870

Quince. Speak, Pyramus. Thisby, stand forth.

Bottom. Thisby, the flowers of odious savours sweet,—

875

Quince. Odours, odours.

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

880

[Exit]

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

885

[Exit]

Flute. Must I speak now?

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

890

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

895

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

900

Flute. O,—As true as truest horse, that yet would
never tire.

905

[Re-enter **PUCK**, and **BOTTOM** with an ass's head]

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

Quince. O monstrous! O strange! we are haunted. Pray,
masters! fly, masters! Help!

910

[Exeunt **QUINCE**, **SNUG**, **FLUTE**, **SNOUT**, and **STARVELING**]

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

920 **Bottom.** Why do they run away? this is a knavery of them to
make me afeard.
[Re-enter **SNOUT**]

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

Bottom. What do you see? you see an asshead of your own, do
you?
[Exit **SNOUT**]

930 [Re-enter **QUINCE**]

Quince. Bless thee, Bottom! bless thee! thou art
translated.
[Exit]

935 **Bottom.** I see their knavery: this is to make an ass of me;
to fright me, if they could. But I will not stir
940 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.

[**Music: Fairy Theme**]

945 **Titania.** [Awaking] What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?
I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again:
Mine ear is much enamour'd of thy note;
So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape;
And thy fair virtue's force perforce doth move me
950 On the first view to say, to swear, I love thee.

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

Titania. Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.

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

Titania. Out of this wood do not desire to go:
Thou shalt remain here, whether thou wilt or no.
I am a spirit of no common rate;
965 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;
970 And I will purge thy mortal grossness so
That thou shalt like an airy spirit go.
Peaseblossom! Cobweb! Moth! and Mustardseed!
[Enter **PEASEBLOSSOM**, **COBWEB**, **MOTH**, and **MUSTARDSEED**]

975 **Peaseblossom.** Ready.

Cobweb. And I.

980 **Moth.** And I.

Mustardseed. And I.

All. Where shall we go?

985 **Titania.** Come, wait upon him; lead him to my bower.
[Exeunt]

990 **Act III, Scene 2**
Another part of the wood.
[Music: Fairy Theme]

[Enter **OBERON**]

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

[Enter **PUCK**]

Here comes my messenger.
How now, mad spirit!
1000 What night-rule now about this haunted grove?

Puck. My mistress with a monster is in love.

1005 **Oberon.** This falls out better than I could devise.
But hast thou yet latch'd the Athenian's eyes
With the love-juice, as I did bid thee do?

1010 **Puck.** I took him sleeping,—that is finish'd too,—
And the Athenian woman by his side:
That, when he waked, of force she must be eyed.

[Enter **HERMIA** and **DEMETRIUS**]

1015 **Oberon.** Stand close: this is the same Athenian.

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

1020 **Demetrius.** O, why rebuke you him that loves you so?
Lay breath so bitter on your bitter foe.

Hermia. Now I but chide; but I should use thee worse,
For thou, I fear, hast given me cause to curse,
If thou hast slain Lysander in his sleep,
Being o'er shoes in blood, plunge in the deep,
1025 And kill me too.

Demetrius. So should the murder'd look, and so should I,
Pierced through the heart with your stern cruelty:
Yet you, the murderer, look as bright, as clear,
1030 As yonder Venus in her glimmering sphere.

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

1035 **Demetrius.** I had rather give his carcass to my hounds.

Hermia. Out, dog! out, cur! thou drivest me past the bounds
Of maiden's patience. Hast thou slain him, then?
Henceforth be never number'd among men!
1040 O, once tell true, tell true, 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 doubler tongue
1045 Than thine, thou serpent, never adder stung.

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

1050 **Hermia.** I pray thee, tell me then that he is well.

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

1055 **Hermia.** A privilege never to see me more.
 And from thy hated presence part I so:
 See me no more, whether he be dead or no.
 [Exit]

1060 **Demetrius.** 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,
 1065 If for his tender here I make some stay.
 [Lies down and sleeps]

Oberon. What hast thou done? thou hast mistaken quite
 And laid the love-juice on some true-love's sight:
 1070 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.
 1075

Oberon. About the wood go swifter than the wind,
 And Helena of Athens look thou find:
 All fancy-sick she is and pale of cheer,
 With sighs of love, that costs the fresh blood dear:
 1080 By some illusion see thou bring her here:
 I'll charm his eyes against she do appear.

Puck. I go, I go; look how I go,
 Swifter than arrow from the Tartar's bow.
 1085 [Exit]

Oberon. Flower of this purple dye,
 Hit with Cupid's archery,
 Sink in apple of his eye.
 1090 When his love he doth espy,
 Let her shine as gloriously
 As the Venus of the sky.
 When thou wakest, if she be by,
 Beg of her for remedy.
 1095 [Re-enter **PUCK**]

Puck. Captain of our fairy band,
 Helena is here at hand;
 And the youth, mistook by me,
 1100 Pleading for a lover's fee.
 Shall we their fond pageant see?
 Lord, what fools these mortals be!

1105 **Oberon.** Stand aside: the noise they make
Will cause Demetrius to awake.

1110 **Puck.** Then will two at once woo one;
That must needs be sport alone;
And those things do best please me
That befall preposterously.

[Music: Lover Theme]

1115 [Enter **LYSANDER** and **HELENA**]

Lysander. Why should you think that I should woo in scorn?
Scorn and derision never come in tears:
Look, when I vow, I weep; and vows so born,
In their nativity all truth appears.
1120 How can these things in me seem scorn to you,
Bearing the badge of faith, to prove them true?

1125 **Helena.** 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.

1130 **Lysander.** I had no judgment when to her I swore.

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

1135 **Lysander.** Demetrius loves her, and he loves not you.

Demetrius. [Awaking] O Helena, goddess, nymph, perfect, divine!
To what, my love, shall I compare thine eyne?
Crystal is muddy. O, how ripe in show
Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow!
1140 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!

1145 **Helena.** O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent
To set against me for your merriment:
If you were civil and knew courtesy,
You would not do me thus much injury.
Can you not hate me, as I know you do,
1150 But you must join in souls to mock me too?

Lysander. You are unkind, Demetrius; be not so;
For you love Hermia; this you know I know:
And here, with all good will, with all my heart,
1155 In Hermia's love I yield you up my part;
And yours of Helena to me bequeath,
Whom I do love and will do till my death.

Helena. Never did mockers waste more idle breath.

1160
Demetrius. Lysander, keep thy Hermia; I will none:
If e'er I loved her, all that love is gone.
My heart to her but as guest-wise sojourn'd,
And now to Helen is it home return'd,
1165 There to remain.

Lysander. Helen, it is not so.

Demetrius. Disparage not the faith thou dost not know,
1170 Lest, to thy peril, thou aby it dear.
Look, where thy love comes; yonder is thy dear.

[Re-enter **HERMIA**]

1175
Hermia. 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 recompense.
Thou art not by mine eye, Lysander, found;
1180 Mine ear, I thank it, brought me to thy sound
But why unkindly didst thou leave me so?

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

1185
Hermia. What love could press Lysander from my side?

Lysander. Lysander's love, that would not let him bide,
Fair Helena, who more engilds the night
Than all you fiery oes and eyes of light.
1190 Why seek'st thou me? could not this make thee know,
The hate I bear thee made me leave thee so?

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

1195
Helena. Lo, she is one of this confederacy!
Now I perceive they have conjoin'd all three
To fashion this false sport, in spite of me.
Injurious Hermia! most ungrateful maid!

1200 Have you conspired, have you with these contrived
To bait me with this foul derision?

Hermia. I am amazed at your passionate words.
I scorn you not: it seems that you scorn me.

1205 **Helena.** Have you not set Lysander, as in scorn,
To follow me and praise my eyes and face?
And made your other love, Demetrius,
Who even but now did spurn me with his foot,
To call me goddess, nymph, divine and rare,
1210 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?

1215 **Hermia.** I understand not what you mean by this.

Helena. Ay, do, persevere, counterfeit sad looks,
Make mouths upon me when I turn my back;
1220 Wink each at other; hold the sweet jest up:
This sport, well carried, shall be chronicled.
If you have any pity, grace, or manners,
You would not make me such an argument.
But fare ye well: 'tis partly my own fault;
1225 Which death or absence soon shall remedy.

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

1230 **Helena.** O excellent!

Hermia. Sweet, do not scorn her so.

Demetrius. If she cannot entreat, I can compel.
1235

Lysander. Thou canst compel no more than she entreat:
Thy threats have no more strength than her weak prayers.
Helen, I love thee; by my life, I do:
I swear by that which I will lose for thee,
1240 To prove him false that says I love thee not.

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

Lysander. If thou say so, withdraw, and prove it too.
1245

Demetrius. Quick, come!

Hermia. Lysander, whereto tends all this?

1250 **Lysander.** Away, you Ethiopel!

Demetrius. No, no; he'll
Seem to break loose; take on as you would follow,
But yet come not: you are a tame man, go!

1255 **Lysander.** Hang off, thou cat, thou burr! vile thing, let loose,
Or I will shake thee from me like a serpent!

1260 **Hermia.** Why are you grown so rude? what change is this?
Sweet love,—

Lysander. Thy love! out, tawny Tartar, out!
Out, loathed medicine! hated potion, hence!

1265 **Hermia.** Do you not jest?

Helena. Yes, sooth; and so do you.

1270 **Lysander.** Demetrius, I will keep my word with thee.

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

1275 **Lysander.** What, should I hurt her, strike her, kill her dead?
Although I hate her, I'll not harm her so.

Hermia. What, can you do me greater harm than hate?
Hate me! wherefore? O me! what news, my love!
Am not I Hermia? are not you Lysander?
I am as fair now as I was erewhile.
Since night you loved me; yet since night you left me:
Why, then you left me—O, the gods forbid!—
In earnest, shall I say?

1285 **Lysander.** Ay, by my life;
And never did desire to see thee more.
Therefore be out of hope, of question, of doubt;
Be certain, nothing truer; 'tis no jest
That I do hate thee and love Helena.

1290 **Hermia.** O me! you juggler! you canker-blossom!
You thief of love! what, have you come by night
And stolen my love's heart from him?

1295
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Helena. 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!

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

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

Hermia. Lower! hark, again.

Helena. Good Hermia, do not be so bitter with me.

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

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

Hermia. What, with Lysander?

Helena. With Demetrius.

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

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

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

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

1345 **Lysander.** Get you gone, you dwarf;
You minimus, of hindering knot-grass made;
You bead, you acorn.

1350 **Demetrius.** 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 show of love to her,
Thou shalt aby it.

1355 **Lysander.** Now she holds me not;
Now follow, if thou darest, to try whose right,
Of thine or mine, is most in Helena.

1360 **Demetrius.** Follow! nay, I'll go with thee, cheek by jole.
[Exeunt **LYSANDER** and **DEMETRIUS**]

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

1365 **Helena.** I will not trust you, I,
Nor longer stay in your curst company.
Your hands than mine are quicker for a fray,
My legs are longer though, to run away.
[Exit]

1370 **Hermia.** I am amazed, and know not what to say.
[Exit]

1375 **Oberon.** This is thy negligence: still thou mistakest,
Or else committ'st thy knaveries wilfully.

1380 **Puck.** Believe me, king of shadows, I mistook.
Did not you tell me I should know the man
By the Athenian garment be had on?
And so far blameless proves my enterprise,
That I have 'nointed an Athenian's eyes;
And so far am I glad it so did sort
As this their jangling I esteem a sport.

1385 **Oberon.** Thou see'st 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
1390 As one come not within another's way.

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.
1395 Whiles I in this affair do thee employ,
I'll to my queen and beg her loving oath;
And then I will her charmed eye release
From monster's view, and all things shall be peace.

1400 **Puck.** My fairy lord, this must be done with haste,
For night's swift dragons cut the clouds full fast.

Oberon. But we are spirits of another sort:
I with the morning's love have oft made sport,
1405 And, like a forester, the groves may tread,
Even 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:
1410 We may effect this business yet ere day.
[Exit]

Puck. Up and down, up and down,
I will lead them up and down:
1415 I am fear'd in field and town:
Goblin, lead them up and down.

1420 **Restoring Amends**
[Music: Jazz Prologue encore]

[Enter **Quince**, who directs **Puck** and others thru their actions]

1425 **Quince.** And now the play is almost ended,
Our players must be well amended.
First the lovers are set aright: heart with heart, like with like.
Fierce Hermia is returned her brave Lysander,
While doting Demetrius follows the fair Helena...

1430 **[The LOVERS come together, still groggy from their sleepy enchantment]**

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

1435 **Hermia.** Methinks I see these things with parted eye,
When every thing seems double.

Helena. So methinks:

1440 And I have found Demetrius like a jewel.
Mine own, and not mine own.

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

1445 **Hermia.** Yea, and my father.

Helena. And Hippolyta.

1450 **Lysander.** And he did bid us follow to the temple.

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

1455 **Quince.** Now Titania is awoken from her enchanted dream,
Reunited with Oberon, her oath given to Fairy King...

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

1460 **Quince.**
Her erstwhile love, Bottom, no longer transformed,
Joins his fellow actors and his company reformed...

1465 **[The PLAYERS – save Bottom – mill around in anxious agony]**

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

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!

1475 **[Enter BOTTOM.]**

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

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

1480 **Bottom.** Masters, I am to discourse wonders:
but ask me not what; for if I tell you, I am not true Athenian.
I will tell you everything, right as it fell out.

1485 **Snout.** Let us hear, sweet Bottom.

Bottom. Not a word of me. All that I will tell you is,
that the duke hath dined. Get your apparel together;
good strings to your beards, new ribbons to your pumps;
1490 meet presently at the palace; every man look over his part;
for the short and the long is, our play is preferred.
In any case, let Thisby have clean linen; and let not him
that plays the lion pare his nails, for they shall hang out for the lion's claws.
And, most dear actors, eat no onions nor garlick,
1495 for we are to utter sweet breath;
and I do not doubt but to hear them say it is a sweet comedy.
No more words: away! go; away!

Quince.
1500 As Athens gathers for a joyous ceremony,
Duke and Duchess joined in holy matrimony,
Perchance you wonder and mourn most dearly
To witness the heartbreaking tale of Pyramus and Thisby...

1505 **[Bottom gives his Prologue at last! The players all mime their parts as Bottom describes them]**

Bottom. Gentles, perchance you wonder at this show;
But wonder on, till truth make all things plain.
This man is Pyramus, if you would know;
1510 This beauteous lady Thisby is certain.
This man, with lime and rough-cast, doth present
Wall, that vile Wall which did these lovers sunder;
And through Wall's chink, poor souls, they are content
To whisper, at the which let no man wonder.
1515 This man, with lanthorn, dog, and bush of thorn,
Presenteth Moonshine: for, if you will know,
By moonshine did these lovers think no scorn
To meet at Ninus' tomb, there, there to woo.
This grisly beast, which by name Lion hight,
1520 The trusty Thisby, coming first by night,
Did scare away, or rather did affright;
And as she fled, her mantle she did fall;
Which Lion vile with bloody mouth did stain:
Anon comes Pyramus, sweet youth, and tall,
1525 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, tarrying in mulberry shade,
His dagger drew, and died. For all the rest,
1530 Let Lion, Moonshine, Wall, and lovers twain,
At large discourse while here they do remain.

Quince. My tale complete, I take my leave, but be it well behoove,

1535 "The course of true love never did run smooth."

Act V, Scene 2
The wood.
[Music: Puck Intro]

1540

[Enter **PUCK**]

1545

Puck. Now it is the time of night
That the graves all gaping wide,
Every one lets forth his sprite,
In the church-way paths to glide:
And we fairies, that do run
By the triple Hecate's team,
From the presence of the sun,
1550 Following darkness like a dream,
Now are frolic: not a mouse
Shall disturb this hallow'd house:
I am sent with broom before,
To sweep the dust behind the door.

1555

[Enter **OBERON** and **TITANIA** with their **Fairies**]

[Song and dance: Fairy Theme]

1560

Oberon. Now, until the break of day,
Through this house each fairy stray.
To the best bride-bed will we,
Which by us shall blessed be;
And the issue there create
1565 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;
1570 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,
1575 Every fairy take his gait;
And each several chamber bless,
Through this palace, with sweet peace;
And the owner of it blest
Ever shall in safety rest.
1580 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,
1585 That you have but slumber'd here
While these visions did appear.
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream,
Gentles, do not reprehend:
1590 if you pardon, we will mend:
And, as I am an honest Puck,
If we have unearned luck
Now to 'scape the serpent's tongue,
We will make amends ere long;
1595 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.