

a midSummer night's dream

A Midsummer Night's Dream

Act I, Scene I

Inside Theseus' house, a living room, suggestions of a posh lifestyle

Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Philostrate

The. Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour
Draws on apace; four happy days bring in
Another moon: but O, methinks, how slow
This old moon wanes!

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

The. Go Philostrate,
Stir up the Athenian youth to merriments;
Awake the pert and nimble spirit of mirth;
Turn melancholy forth to funerals;
The pale companion is not for our pomp.

(exit Philostrate)

Hippolyta, 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 reveling.

Enter Egeus and his daughter Hermia, and 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 given her rhymes,
And interchang'd love-tokens with my child:
Thou hast by moonlight at her window sung
With faining voice verses of feigning love,
And stol'n the impression of her fantasy
With bracelets of thy hair, rings, gauds, conceits,
Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweetmeats (messengers
Of strong prevailment in unhardened youth):
With cunning hast thou filch'd my daughter's heart,
Turn'd her obedience (which is due to me)

To stubborn harshness.
 The. Be advised, 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 him his power
 To leave the figure, or disfigure it.
 Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.
 Her. So is Lysander.
 The. In himself he is;
 But in this kind, wanting your father's voice,
 The other must be held worthier.
 Her. I would my father look'd but with my eyes.
 The. Rather your eyes must with his judgment look.
 Her. I do entreat your Grace to pardon me.
 I know not by what power I am made bold,
 Nor how much 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, if you yield not to your father's choice,
 You can endure the livery of a nun,
 For aye to be in shady cloister mew'd
 To live a barren sister all your life,
 Chanting faint hymns to the cold fruitless moon.
 Her. So will I grow, so live, so die, my lord,
 Ere I will yield my virgin patent up
 Unto his lordship whose unwished yoke
 My soul consents not to give sovereignty.
 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, austerity 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;

Ege: Scornful Lysander, true, he hath my love;
And what is mine my love shall render him;
And she is mine, and all my right to 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 fortunes every 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, dotes,
Devoutly dotes, dotes in idolatry,
Upon this spotted and inconstant man.

The. I must confess that I have heard so much,
And with Demetrius thought to have spoke thereof;
But, being so full of self-affairs,
My mind did lose it.
For you, fair Hermia, look you arm yourself
To fit your fancies to your father's will;
Or else the law of Athens yields you up
To death, or to a vow of single life.
Come my Hippolyta; what cheer, my love?
Demetrius and Egeus, go along;
I must employ you in some business
Against our nuptial, and confer with you
Of something nearly that concerns yourselves.

Ege. With duty and desire we follow you.

Exit all but Lysander 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 my eyes.

Lys. 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;
Bet either it was different in blood—

Her. O cross! Too high to be enthall'd to low.

Lys. Or else misgaffed in respect of years –

Her. O spite! Too old to be engag'd to young.

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

Her. O hell! To choose love by another's eyes.

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 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.

Her. 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,
 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 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 lov'st me then,
 Steal forth thy father's house tomorrow night;
 And in the wood, a league without the town
 There will I stay for Thee.

Her. My good Lysander,
 By all the vows that ever men have broke
 (In number more than ever women spoke),
 In that same place thou hast appointed me,
 Tomorrow 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 your fair: O happy fair!
 Sickness is catching; O were favour so,
 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.
 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. O that your frowns would teach my smiles such skill!
 Her. I give him curses; yet he gives me love.
 Hel. O that my prayers 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 no fault of mine.
Hel. None but your beauty; would that fault were mine!
Her. Take comfort: he no more shall see my face;
Lysander and myself will fly this place.
Lys. Helen, to your our minds we will unfold:
Tomorrow 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),
Her. 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,
And good luck grant thee thy Demetrius!
Keep word, Lysander; we must starve our sight
From lovers' food, till morrow deep midnight.

Exit Hermia

Lys. I will, my Hermia. Helena, adieu;
As you on him, Demetrius dote on you!

Exit Lysander

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, doting on Hermia's eyes,
So I, admiring of his qualities.
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 is so oft beguil'd.
I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight:
Then to the wood will he, tomorrow night,
Pursue her; and for this intelligence
If I have thanks, it is a dear expense.
But herein mean I to enrich my pain,
To have his sight thither and back again.

Exit

Act I, Scene II

Outside the Club entrance

The Bouncers : *Quince, Snug, Bottom, Flute, Snout, Starveling*

Quin. Is all our company here?

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

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

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

Quin. Marry, our play is 'The most lamentable comedy, and most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisbe'.

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

Quin. Answer as I call you. Nick Bottom?

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 gallant 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' car
Shall shine from far
And make and mar
The foolish fates.

That 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?

Flu. Here, Peter Quince.

Quin. Flute, you must take Thisbe on you.

Flu. What is Thisbe? A wandering knight?

Quin. It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

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

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

Bot. And I may hide my face, let me play Thisbe too. I'll speak in a monstrous little voice: 'Thisbe, Thisne!' – 'Ah Pyramus, my lover dear! thy Thisbe dear and lady dear!'

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

Bot. Well, proceed.

Quin. Robin Starveling?

Star. Here, Peter Quince.

Quin. Robin Starveling, you must play Thisbe's mother.
Tom Snout?

Snout. Here, Peter Quince.

Quin. You, Pyramus' father; myself, Thisbe's father; Snug, 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.

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

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

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 and 'twere any nightingale.

Quin. 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.

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

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 beard, your perfect yellow.

Quin. 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, to con them by tomorrow night; and meet me in the palace wood, a mile without the town, by moonlight; there will we rehearse, for if we meet in the city, we shall be dogged with company, and our devices known. In the meantime I will draw a bill or properties, such as our play wants. I pray you fail me not.

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

Quin. At the Duke's oak we meet.

Bot. Enough: hold, or cut bow-strings.

Exit, curtain.

Act I

Scene III

Open up to Club Soulstice, DJ is warming up, Puck at the bar cleaning glasses, a Dancer sits down momentarily.

Puck. How now, spirit! Whither wander you?
Pease. Over hill, over dale,
 Thorough bush, thorough briar,
Over park, over pale,
 Thorough flood, thorough fire,
I do wander everywhere,
Swifter than the moon's sphere;
And I serve the Fairy Queen,
To dew her orbs upon the green.
The cowslips tall her pensioners be,
In their gold coats spots you see;
Those be rubies, fairy flavours,
In those freckles live their savours.
I must go seek some dew-drops here,
And hang a pearl in every cowslips ear.
Farewell, 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 tonight;
Take heed the Queen come not within his sight;
For Oberon is passing fell and wrath,
Because that she as her attendant hath
A lovely boy, 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 perforce withholds the loved boy,
Crowns him with flowers, and makes him all
Her joy.
Moth. 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,
And sometime make the drink to bear no barm,
Mislead night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?
Those that Hobgoblin call you, and sweet Puck,
You do their work, and they shall have good luck.
Are you not she?
Puck. Thou speak'st aright;
I am that merry wanderer of the night.

I jest to Oberon, and make him smile
When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,
Neighing in likeness of a filly foal;
And sometime lurk I in a gossip's bowl
In the very likeness of a roasted crab,
And when she drinks, against her lips I bob,
And on her wither'd dewlap pour the ale.
But room fairy! Here comes Oberon.

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

Enter Oberon, the owner of Solstice, from his upstairs office. Enter Titania, his wife, onto the empty dance floor. She is warming up. Her "Fairies" accompany her and follow her lead.

Obe. Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania.

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

Obe. Tarry, rash wanton; am not I thy lord?

Tita. Then I must be thy lady; but I know
When thou hast stol'n away from fairy land,
And in the shape of Corin, sat all day
Playing on pipes of corn, and versing love
To amorous Phillida. Why art thou here,
Come from the farthest step 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?

Obe. How canst thou thus, for shame Hippolyta,
Knowing I know thy love to Theseus?

Tita. 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,
Or in the beached margent of the sea,
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,
But with thy brawls thou has 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,
Hath every pelting river made so proud
That they have overborne their continents.
The human mortals want their winter cheer:
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 rheumatic diseases do abound.
And thorough the distemperature we see

The seasons alter: hoary-headed frosts
Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose;
And on old Heims' thin and icy crown;
An odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds
Is, as in mockery, set; the spring, the summer,
The childing autumn, angry winter, change
Their wonton liveries; and the mazed world,
By their increase, now knows not which is which.
And this same progeny of evils comes
From our debate, from our dissension;
We are the parents and original.

Obe. 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 henchmen.

Tita. 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 hath she gossip'd by my side;
But she, being mortal, of that boy did die;
And for her sake do I rear up her boy;
And for her sake I will not part with him.

Obe. How long within this wood intend you stay?
Tita Not for thy fairy kingdom. Fairies, away!
We shall chide downright if I longer stay.

Exit Titania and her Fairies

Obe. Well, go thy way; thou shalt not from this grove
Till I torment thee for they injury.
My gentle Puck, come hither. Thou rememb'rest
Since once I say 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 music?

Puck. I remember.
Obe. That very time I saw (but thou couldst 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.
Yet mark'd I where the bold 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 flower; the herb I show'd thee once.
The juice of it, on sleeping eyelids laid,
Will make or man or woman madly dote
Upon the next live creature that it sees.
Fetch me this herb.

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

Puck Exits

Obe. Having once this juice,
I'll watch Titania when she is asleep,
And drop the liquor of it in her eyes:
The next thing then she waking looks upon
She shall pursue it with the soul of love.
And ere I take this charm from off her sight
(As I can take it with another herb)
I'll make her render up her page to me.
But who comes here? I am invisible;
And I will overhear their conference.

Enter Demetrius, Helena following him

Dem. I love thee not, therefore pursue me not.
Where is Lysander and fair Hermia?
This one I'll slay, the other slayeth me.
Thou told'st me they were stol'n unto this wood;
And here am I, and wood within this wood
Because I cannot meet my Hermia.

Hel. Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.
You draw me, you heard hearted adamant –
Bet yet you draw not iron, for my heart
Is true as steel. Leave you your power to draw,
And I shall have no power to follow you.

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

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

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;

Dem. Then how can it be said I am alone,
When all the world is here to look on me?
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.

Dem. 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.

Hel. Ay, in the temple, in the tow, the field,
You do me mischief. Fie, Demetrius!
Your wrongs do set a scandal on my sex.
We cannot fight for love, as men may do;
We should be woo'd, and were not made to woo.

Demetrius exits the dance floor in frustration.

Helena watches after him, smiling to herself, then softly, sadly

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

Exits with Fairies in a dancing frenzy

Obe. *(With much admiration)* Fare thee well, nymph; ere he do leave this grove
Thou shalt fly him, and he shall seek thy love.

Enter Puck

Hast thou the flower there? Welcome, wanderer.

Puck Ay, there it is.

Obe. 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.
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,
And make her full of hateful fantasies.
Take thou some of it, and seek through this grove:
A sweet Athenian lady is in love
With a disdainful youth; anoint his eyes;
But do it when the next thing he espies
May be the lady. Thou shalt know the man
By the Athenian garments he hath on.
Effect it with some care, that he may prove
More fond on her than she upon her love:
And look thou meet me ere the first cock crow.

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

Act I

Scene IV

Titania's Dressing Room.

Tita. Come, now a roundel and a fairy song.
 Sing me now to asleep;
 Then to your offices, and let me rest.

Song plays, Fairies dance

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

Fairies scurry away to dance floor

Oberon enters, takes out an eye dropper, put a drop on her eyelids and her lips. Titania, stirring, licks them immediately and turns away from him.

Obe. (*softly*) What thou seest when thou dost wake,
 Do it for thy true love take;
 Love and languish for his sake.
 In thy eye that shall appear
 When thou wak'st, it is thy dear.
 Wake when some vile thing is near.

Oberon exits, lights down on Titania.

Lights up on Lysander and Hermia, making their way through the club, looking for someplace, any place to sit. They are exhausted.

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

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

Settles into a comfy sofa, Lysander sidles up next to her, despite another sofa located nearby.

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,
 Lie further off yet; do not lie so near.

Lys. O take the sense, sweet, of my innocence!
 Love takes the meaning in love's conference.
 I mean that my heart unto yours is knit,
 So that but one heart we can make of it.

Her. Lysander riddles very prettily.
 But, gentle friend, for love and courtesy,
 Lie further off, in human modesty;
 Such separations as may well be said
 Becomes a virtuous bachelor and a maid.

Lys. (*moving to the couch nearby*)

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.

They sleep.

Puck enters, holding a tray full of used glasses. She's got the bottle dropper in her other hand.

Puck. Through the forest have I gone;
But Athenian found I none
On whose eye 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 sound.
Churl, upon thy eyes I throw
All the power this charm doth owe:
When thou wak'st, let love forbid
Sleep his seat on thy eyelid.
So awake when I am gone;
For now I must to Oberon.

Puck exits

Lights up on Helena, still dancing. The fairies have crowded around her, clearly enjoying themselves. After a moment, Helena collapses in a chair next to the sleeping Lysander. She does not notice him at first.

Hel. 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.
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. (*waking*) And run through fire I will for thy sweet sake!
Transparent Helena! Nature show art,
That through my bosom makes me see thy heart.
Where is Demetrius? O how fit a word
Is that vile name to perish on my sword!

Hel. Do not say so, Lysander, say no so.
What though he love your Hermia? Lord, what though?
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:
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:

And, touching now the point of human skill,
Reason becomes the marshal to my will,
And leads me to your eyes, where I o'erlook
Love's stories, written in love's richest book.
Hel. Wherefore was I to this keen mockery born?
When at your hands did I deserve this scorn?
Good troth, you do me wrong, good sooth, you do,
In such disdainful manner me to woo.
But fare you well; perforce I must confess
I thought you lord of more true gentleness.
O that a lady, of one man refus'd,
Should of another therefore be abus'd!

Exits

Lys. She sees not Hermia. Hermia, sleep thou there,
And never mayst thou come Lysander near!
And, all my powers, address your love and might
To honour Helena, and to be her knight!

Exits after Helena

Her. (*waking*) Help me, Lysander, help me! Do thy best
To pluck this crawling serpent from my breast!
Ay me, for pity! What a dream was here!
Lysander, look how I do quake with fear.
Methought a serpent ate my heart away,
And you sat smiling at his cruel prey.
Lysander! What 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 night.
Either death or you I'll find immediately.

Exits

Curtain.

Act I

Scene V

Quince, Bottom, Snug, Flute, Snout, and Starveling on break at back of the club. Close to Titania's dressing room. Light should be up on her room during this scene so we can see she is still asleep.

Bot. Are we all met?

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

Bot. Peter Quince!

Quin. What sayest thou, Bully Bottom?

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

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 killed indeed; and for the more better assurance, tell them that, I, Pyramus, am not Pyramus, but Bottom. This will put them out of fear.

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 afeared of the lion?

Star. I fear it, I promise you.

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

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 entreat you, not to fear, not to tremble: my life for yours! If you think I come hither as a lion, it were pity of my life. No, I am no such thing; I am a man as other men are' : and there, indeed, let him name his name, and tell them plainly he is Snug the joiner.

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 Thisbe meet by moonlight.

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

Bot. A calendar, a calendar! Find out moonshine, find out moonshine!

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 lantern, 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 Thisbe, says the story, did talk through the chink of a wall.

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

Bot. 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 Thisbe whisper.

Quin. If that may be, then all is well. Come sit down, every mother's son, and rehearse your parts. Pyramus, you being: when you have spoken your speech, enter into that brake; and so every one according to his cue.

Enter Puck, from the bar, this time with a bucket of ice

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

Quin. Speak, Pyramus; Thisbe, stand forth.

Bot. *Thisbe, the flowers of odious savours sweet –*

Quin. 'Odorous'! 'Odorous'!

Bot. *Odorous savours sweet;
So hark thy breath, my dearest Thisbe dear.
But hark, a voice! Stay thou but here awhile,
And by and by I will to thee appear.*

Exits

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

Exits

Flu. 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.

Flu. *Most radiant Pyramus, most lily-white of hue,
Of colour like the red rose on triumphant briar,
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.*

Quin. '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'.

Flu. O – *As true as truest horse that yet would never tire.*

Enter Puck and Bottom, with the ass-head on

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

Quin. *(fed up)* O monstrous! O strange! We are haunted! Pray, masters! Fly masters! Help!

Exit Quince, the others except Bottom and Puck follow him.

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

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.

Follows the Rudes out into the Club, clearly intending to make mischief.

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

Enter Snout

Snout (*with reason*)

O Bottom, thou art changed! That do I see on thee?

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

Exit Snout

Enter Quince

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

Exit Quince

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 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—*

Titania awakens

Tita. What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?

Bot. [sings] *The finch, the sparrow, and the lark,
 The plain-song cuckoo 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 lie, though the cry 'cuckoo' never so?

Tita. 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
On the first view to say, to swear, I love thee.

Bot. Methinks, mistress, you should have little reason for that. And yet, to say the truth, reason and love keep little company together nowadays. The more the pity that some honest neighbours will not make them friends. Nay, I can gleek upon occasion.

Tita. Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.

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

Tita. 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 they mortal grossness so,
That thou shalt like an airy spirit go.
Peaseblossom! Cobweb! Moth! and Mustardseed!

Enter her entourage

Peas. Ready.

Cob. And I.

Moth And I.

Mus. And I.

All. Where shall we go?

Tita. Be kind and courteous to this gentleman;
Hop in his walks, and gambol in his eyes;
Feed him with apricocks and dewberries,
With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries;
And pluck the wings from painted butterflies
To fan the moonbeams from his sleeping eyes.
Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies.

Peas. Hail, mortal!

Cob. Hail!

Moth. Hail!

Mus. Hail!

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

Cob. Cobweb.

Bot. I shall desire you of more acquaintance good Master Cobweb: if I cut my
finger, I shall make bold with you. You name, honest gentlewoman?

Peas. Peaseblossom.

Bot. Good Mistress Peaseblossom, I shall desire you of 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 hath devoured many a gentleman of your house: I
promise you, your kindred hath made my eyes water ere now. I desire you
of more acquaintance, good Master Mustardseed.

Tita. Come, wait upon him; lead him to my bower.
The moon, methinks, looks with a watery eye,
And when she weeps, weeps every little flower,
Lamenting some enforced chastity.
Tie up my love's tongue, bring him silently.

Act I

Scene VI
Oberon's Office

Enter Oberon

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

Enter Puck

Puck. How now, mad spirit?
What night-rule now about this haunted grove?
My mistress with a monster is in love.
Near to her close and consecrated bower,
While she was in her dull and sleeping hour,
A crew of patches, rude mechanicals,
That work for bread upon Athenian stalls,
Were met together to rehearse a play
Intended for great Theseus' nuptial day.
The shallowest thick-skin of that barren sort,
Who Pyramus presented in their sport,
Forsook his scene, and enter'd in a brake,
When I did him at this advantage take:
An ass's nole I fixed on his head.
Anon, his Thisbe must be answered,
And forth my mimic comes. When they him spy—
As wild geese that the creeping fowler eye,
Or russet-pated choughs, many in sort,
Rising and cawing at the gun's report,
Sever themselves, and madly sweep the sky
So, at his sight, away his fellows fly;
And at our stamp, here o'er and o'er one falls:
He murder cries, and help from Athens calls.
Their sense thus weak, lost with their fears thus strong,
Made senseless things begin to do them wrong:
For 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 straightway lov'd an ass.
Obe. 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 wak'd of force she must be eye'd.

Demetrius and Hermia appear below

Obe. Stand close: this is the same Athenian.

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

They move closer to listen

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 sue thee worse,
For thou, I fear, hast given me cause to curse.
If thou has slain Lysander in his sleep,
Being o'er shoes in blood, plunge in the deep,
And kill me too.

Begins to exit into the busy crowd, but thinks better of it.

Dem. It cannot be but thou hast murder'd him:
So should a murderer look, so dead, so grim.
So should the murder'd look, and so should I,
Pierc'd through the heart with your stern cruelty;
Yet you, the murderer, look as bright, as clear,
As yonder Venus in her glimmering sphere.

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

Dem. I had rather give his carcase 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; 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?

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

Her. (*desperate*) 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 be dead or no.

Hermia stalks off

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.

Collapses on one of the sofas, shuts his eyes.

Obe. What hast thou done? Thou hast mistaken quite,
 And laid the love-juice on some true love's sight;
 Of thy misprision must perforce ensue
 Some true love 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.

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

Puck. I go, I go, look how I go!
 Swifter than arrow from the Tarter's bow.

Exits

Music swells, Oberon takes out the eyedropper again and puts three drops on Demetrius' eyelids and one on his lips.

Obe. 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 it 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!

The two move aside as Lysander and Helena enter

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.

Hel. How can these things in me seem scorn to you,
 Bearing the badge of faith to prove them true?
 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. (*waking, loudly*) O Helen, goddess, nymph, perfect, divine!
 To what, my love, shall I compare thine eyne?
 Crystal is muddy. O how ripe in show
 Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow!
 That pure congealed white, high Taurus' snow,
 Fann'd with the eastern wind, turns to a crow
 When thou holds't up thy hand. O let me kiss
 This princess of pure white, this seal of bliss!
 Hel. 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.
 If you were men, as men you are in show,
 You would not use a gentle lady so:
 You both are rivals, and love Hermia;
 And now both rivals to mock Helena.
 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;
 And yours of Helena to me bequeath,
 Whom I do love, and will do till my death.
 Hel. Never did mockers waste more idle breath.
 Dem. Lysander, keep thy Hermia; I will none.
 If ere I lov'd 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,
 There to remain.
 Lys. Helen, it is not so.
 Dem. Disparage not the faith thou dost not know,
 Lest to thy peril thou aby it dear.
 Look where thy love comes; yonder is thy dear.

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 recompense.
 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

Her. Than all yon fiery oes and eyes of light.
 You speak not as you think; it cannot be!
 Hel. Lo, she is one of this confederacy!
 Now I perceive they have conjoin'd all three
 To fashion this false sport in spite of me.
 Injurious Hermia! Most ungrateful maid!
 Have you 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, is all forgot?
 All school-days' friendship, childhood innocence?
 We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,
 Have with our needles created 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 incorporate. So we grew together,
 Like to a double cherry, seeming parted,
 But yet a union in partition,
 Two lovely berries moulded on one stem;
 So, with two seeming bodies, but one heart;
 Two of the first, like coats in heraldry,
 Due but to one, and crowned with one crest.
 And will you rent our ancient love asunder
 To join with men in scorning your poor friend?
 It is not friendly, 'tis not maidenly;
 Our sex, as well as I, may chide you for it,
 Though I alone do feel the injury.
 Her. I am amazed at your passionate words:
 Hel. 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?
 Her. I understand not what you mean by this.
 Hel. Ay, do! Persever: counterfeit sad looks,
 Make mouths upon me when I turn my back,
 Wink each at other; hold the sweet jest up;
 This sport, well carried, shall be chronicled.
 If you have any pity, grace or manners,
 You would not make me such an argument.

Helena attempts to exit, Lysander jumps in front of her.

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.

Lys. 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
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!
Take on as you would follow,
But yet come not! You are a tame man, go!

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

Her. Why are you grown so rude? What change is this,
Sweet love?

Lys. Thy love? Out tawney Tarter, out!

Hel. Do you not jest?

Hel. Yes sooth, 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 I not Hermia? Are not you Lysander?
I am as fair now as I was erewhile.
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 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.

Her. O me! [*To **Helena***] You juggler! 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 way goes 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. (*trying to keep the peace, but done with all of them*)
 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 unto this 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.
 Lys. Be not afraid; she shall not harm thee, Helena.
 Dem. No sir, she shall not, though you take her part.
 Hel. O, when she is angry, she is keen and shrewd;
 She was a vixen when she went to school,
 And though she be but little, she is fierce.
 Her. "Little" again?
 [*fighting off both men who are now holding her back*]
 Why will you suffer her to flout me thus?
 Let me come to her!
 Lys. Get you gone, you dwarf;
 You minimus, of hindering knot-grass 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 show 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.

The two run off together

Her. (*seething*) You, mistress, all this coil 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.

Helena exits

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

Hermia exits. Oberon and Puck come forward.

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

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

Obe. Thou seest these lovers seeks 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 they 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 his might,
And make his eyeballs roll with wonted sight.
When they next wake, all this derision
Shall seem a dream and fruitless vision;
And back to Athens shall the lovers wend,
With league whose date till death shall never end.
Whiles I in this affair do thee employ,
I'll to my queen, and beg her Indian boy;
And then I will her charmed eye release
From monster's view, and all things shall be peace.

Puck. My fairy lord, this must be done with haste,
For night's swift dragons cut the clouds full fast;
And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger,

At whose approach, ghosts wandering here and there
Troop home to churchyards. Damned spirits all,
That in cross-ways and floods have burial,
Already to their wormy beds are gone,
For fear lest day should look their shames upon:
They willfully themselves exil'd from light,
And must for aye consort with black-brow'd night.
But we are spirits of another sort:
I with the Morning's love have oft made sport;
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;
We may effect this business yet ere day.

Obe.

Oberon exits

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 are thou?

Lys.

I will be with thee straight.

Puck.

Follow me then

To plainer ground. [*Lysander exits, following the voice*]

Enter Demetrius

Dem.

Lysander, speak again.

Thou runaway, thou coward, art thou fled?

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

Puck.

Thou coward, art thou, 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.

Both exit

Lysander enters

Lys.

He goes before me, and still dares me on;

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

The villain is much lighter-heel'd than I:

I follow'd fast; but faster he did fly,

That fallen am I in dark uneven way,

And here will rest me.

Rests upon a sofa

Enter Puck and Demetrius

Puck. Ho, ho, ho! Coward, why com'st thou not?
They dodge each other, playing with the crowd and the rest of the dance, the music is building. Finally, Demetrius is trapped and cannot move.

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 are thou ?

Puck. Come hither; I am here.
Dem. Nay, then, thou mock'st me; thou shalt buy this dear
If ever I thy face by daylight see:
Now go thy way. Faintness constrainth me
To measure out my length on this cold bed.

[Gets away from the crowd, lies down]

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 daylight,
From these that my poor company detest.
And sleep, that sometimes shuts up sorrow's eye,
Steal me awhile from mine own company.

[Lies down]

Puck. Yet but three? Come one more,
Two of both kinds makes up four.
Here she comes, curst and sad:
Cupid is a knavish lad
Thus to make poor females mad!

Enter Hermia

Her. Never so wear, 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.

[Lies down]

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

[Take out Oberon's eyedropper, squeezes it onto Lysander's eyelids]

When thou waks't
Thou tak'st
True delight
In the sight
Of my former lady's eye;
And the country proverb known,

That every man should take his own,
In your waking shall be shown:
[exits]

End Act I

INTERMISSION

Act II

Scene I

Lysander, Demetrius, Helena, and Hermia still lying asleep

The night is at peak The DJ is now playing atmospheric progressive music. The crowd is loving it. The lovers, however, are oblivious.

Enter Titania and Bottom and her entourage, Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Moth, Mustardseed. Oberon watches her from above, unseen by her.

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

Bot. Where's Peaseblossom?

Peas. Ready.

Bot. Scratch my head, Peaseblossom. Where's Mademoiselle
Cobweb?

Cob. Ready.

Bot. Mademoiselle Cobweb, good madame, get you your
weapons in you hand, and kill me a red-hipped humble-bee
on the top of a thistle; and good madame, bring me the
honey-bag. Where's Madamemoiselle Moth?

Moth. Ready.

Bot. Give me your neaf, Madame Moth.

Moth. What's your will.

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

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

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

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.

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

Bot. I had rather have a handful or two of dried peas.
But I pray you, let none of your people stir me:

Tita. I have an exposition of sleep come upon me.
Sleep thou, and I will wind thee in my arms.
Fairies be gone, and be all ways away.

Fairies exit

So doth the woodbine the sweet honeysuckle
Gently entwist; the female ivy so
Enrings the barky fingers of the elm.
O how I love thee! How I dote on thee!

They curl up together, Titania (for once) oblivious to the crowd

Enter Puck

Obe.

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;
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 straight 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 he waking when the other do,
May all to Athens back again repair,
And think no more of this night's accidents
But as the fierce vexation of a dream.
But first I will release the fairy queen.

[Lifts up her head, gives her water]

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

Tita. *[waking]* Now, my Titania, wake you, my sweet queen.
My Oberon! What visions I have seen!

Obe. Methought I was enourmr'd of an ass.

Obe. There lies your love.

Tita. How came these things to pass?

Obe. O how mine eyes do loathe his visage now!

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

Tita. Titania, music call; and strike more dead
Than common sleep, of all these five the sense.

Tita. Music, ho, music, such as charmeth sleep!

*The music build and **Titania** and the **Fairies** dance around the sleeping lovers
Puck takes the ass-head off **Bottom***

Puck. Now when thou wak'st
With thine own fool's eyes peep.
Obe. Sound, music! [*cues the DJ*]
Come my queen, take hands with me,
And rock the ground whereon these sleepers be.

***Oberon and Titania** dance*

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 prosperity.
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.
Obe. Then my queen, in silence sad,
Trip we after night's shade:
We the globe can compass soon,
Swifter than the wandering moon.
Tita. Come, my lord, and in our flight
Tell me how it came this night
That I was sleeping here was found
With these mortals on the ground.

*Exit. The **four lovers** and **Bottom** still passed out.*

*Loud bass booms, the crowd cheers and, at that moment, **Theseus, Hippolyta, Egeus**
enter the Club, looking quite out of place.*

The. 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 music of my hounds.
We will, fair queen, up to the mountain's top,
And mark the musical confusion
Of hounds and echo in conjunction.
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, every region near
Seem'd all one mutual cry; I never heard
So musical a discord, such sweet thunder.
Ege. My lord, this is my daughter here asleep,
And this is Lysander; this Demetrius is,
This Helena, old Nedar's Helena.
I wonder of their being here together.
The. 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.
 The. Go, bid the huntsmen wake them with their horns.
[Puck signals the DJ again and loud bass booms reverberate throughout the club, the lovers, startled, awake]

Good-morrow friends. Saint Valentine is past:
 Begin these wood-birds but to couple now?
 Lys. Pardon, my lord.
 The. 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 bethink me, so it is:
 I came with Hermia hither; our intent
 Was to be gone from Athens, where we might,
 Without the peril of the Athenian law—
 Ege. Enough, enough, my lord; you have enough!
 I beg the law, the law upon my 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 this stealth,
 Of this their purpose hither to this wood;
 And I in fury hither follow'd them,
 Fair Helena in fancy following me.
 But my good lord, I wot not by what power—
 But by some power it is—my love to Hermia
 Melted as the snow, and all the faith,
 The virtue of my heart,
 The object and the pleasure of mine eye,
 Is only Helena.
 The. Fair lovers, you are fortunately met;
 Of this discourse we more will hear anon.
 Egeus, I will overbear your will;
 For in the temple, by and by, with us,
 These couples shall eternally be knit.
 And, for the morning now is something worn,

Our purpos'd hunting shall be set aside.
Away, with us, to Athens: three and three,
We'll hold a feast in great solemnity.
Come, Hippolyta.

Exit Theseus, Hippolyta, Egeus

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

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

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

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

Her. Yea, and my father.

Hel. And Hippolyta.

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

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

All leave the club

Bot. *[waking]*

When my cue comes, call me and I will answer. My next is 'Most fair Pyramus'. Heigh-ho! Peter Quince? Flute, the bellows-mender? Snout, the tinker? Starveling? God's my life! Stolen hence, and left me asleep! I have had a most rare vision. I have had a dream, past the wit of man to say what dream it was. Man is but an ass if he go about to expound this dream. Methought I was—there is no man can tell what. Methought I was—and Methought I had—but man is but a patched fool if he will offer to say what methought I had. The eye of man hath not heard, the ear of man hath not seen, man's hand is not able to taste, his tongue to conceive, nor his heart to report, what my dream was. I will get Peter Quince to write a ballad of this dream: it shall be called "Bottom's Dream", because it hath no bottom; and I will sing it in the latter end of a play, before the Duke. Peradventure, to make it more gracious, I shall sing it at her death.

Bottom exits

Act II

Scene II

Club Exterior, Quince, Flute, Snout and Starveling stand outside. Morning has come.

- 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.
Flu. If he come not, then the play is marred: 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.
Flu. No, he hath simply the best wit of any handicraft man in Athens.
Quin. Yea, and the best person too; and he is a very paramour for a sweet voice.
Flu. You must say paragon. A paramour is, God bless us, a thing of naught.
Enter Snug
Snug. Masters, the Duke is coming from the temple, and there is two or three lords and ladies more married. If our sport had gone forward, we had all been made men.
Flu. O sweet bully Bottom! That hath he lost a sixpence a day during his life; he could not have 'scaped sixpence a day. And the Duke had not given his sixpence a day for playing Pyramus, I'll be hanged. He would have deserved it: sixpence a day in Pyramus, or nothing.

Enter Bottom

- Bot. Where are these lads? Where are these hearts?
Quin. Bottom! O most dangerous day! O most happy hour!
Bot. 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.
Quin. Let us hear sweet Bottom.
Bot. Not a word of me. All that I will tell you is, that the Duke hath dined. Get your apparel together, good strings to your beards, new ribbons to your pumps; meet presently at the palace; every man look o'er his part: for the short and the long is, our play is preferred. In any case, let Thisbe have clean linen; and let not him that plays the lion bare his nails, for they shall hang out for the lion's claws. And most dear actors, eat no onions nor garlic, for we are to utter sweet breath; and I do not doubt but to hear them say, it is a sweet comedy. No more words. Away! Go, away!!

Act III

Scene III

Theseus' House, again a posh setting

Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Philostrate

Hip. "Tis strange, my Theseus, what these lovers speak of.
The. More strange than true. I never may believe
These antique fables, nor these fairy toys.
Lovers and madmen have such seething brains,
Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend
More than cool reason ever comprehends.
The lunatic, the lover and the poet
Are of imagination all compact:
One sees more devils than vast hell can hold;
That I, the madman: the lover, all as frantic
Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt:
The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.
Such tricks hath strong imagination,
That if it would but apprehend some joy,
It comprehends some bringer of that joy:
Or, in the night, imagining some fear,
How easy is a bush 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 Demetrius, Helena, Lysander, Hermia

The. 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 in your royal walks, your board, your bed!

The. Come now; what masques, what dances shall we have,

To wear away this long age of three hours
Between our after-supper and bed-time?
Call Philostrate.

Phil.

Here, mighty Theseus.

The.

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

Phil.

There is a brief how many sports are ripe:
Make choice of which your Highness will see first.

Hands him a list of the choices

The.

“The battle of the Centaurs, to be sung
By an Athenian ennuich to the harp?”
We’ll none of that; that have I told my love
In glory of my kinsmen Hercules.
“The riot of the tipsy Bacchanals,
Tearing the Thracian singer in their rage?”
That is an old device, and it was play’d
When I from Thebes came last a conqueror.
“The thrice three Muses mourning for the death
Of learning, late deceas’d in beggary??”
That is some satire, keen and critical,
Not sorting with a nuptial ceremony.
“A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus
And his love Thisbe, very tragical mirth?”
Merry and tragical? Tedious and brief?
That is hot ice, and wondrous strange snow!

Phil.

How shall we find the concord of this discord?
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.

The.

What are they that do play it?

Phil.

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 nuptial.
And we will hear it.

The.

Phil.

No, my noble lord,

It is not for you.

The.

I will hear that play

For never anything can be amiss
When simpleness and duty tender it.
Go bring them in; and take your places, ladies

Philostrate exits

Hip.

I love not to see wretchedness o'er chang'd
And duty in his service perishing.

The.

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

Hip.

He says they can do nothing in this kind.

The.

The kinder we, to give them thanks for nothing.

Enter Philostrate

Phil.

So please your grace, the Prologue is address'd.

The.

Let him approach.

Music and 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 show our simple skill,
That is the true beginning of our end.
Consider then, we come but in despite.
We do not come, as minding to content you,
Our true intent is. All for your delight,
We are not here. That you should here repent you,
The actors are at hand; and by their show,
You shall know all, that you are like to know.*

The.

This fellow doth not stand upon points.

Lys.

He hath ride 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 played on this prologue like a child.
on a recorder; a sound, but not in government.

The.

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

*Music and enter Bottom as Pyramus, Flute as Thisbe, Snout as Wall, Starveling as
Moonshine and Snug as Lion*

Pro.

*Gentles, perchance you wonder at this show;
But wonder on, till truth make all things plain.
This man is Pyramus, if you would know;
This beauteous lady Thisbe is certain.
This man, with lime and rough-cast, doth present
Wall, that vile wall which did these lovers sunder;
And through Wall's chink, poor souls, they are content
To whisper. At the which let no man wonder.
This man, with lantern, dog, and bush of thorn,
Presenteth Moonshine; for, if you will know,
By moonshine did these lovers think no scorn
To meet at Ninus' tomb, there, there to woo.
This grisly beast, which Lion height by name,*

*The trusty Thisbe, coming first by night,
Did scare away, or rather did affright;
And as she fled, her mantle she did fall,
Which Lion vile with bloody mouth did stain.
Anon come Pyramus, sweet youth and tall,
And finds his trusty Thisbe's mantle slain;
Whereat with blade, with bloody blameful blade,
He bravely broach'd his boiling bloody breast;
And Thisbe, tarrying in mulberry shade,
His dagger drew, and died. For all the rest.
Let Lion, Moonshine and Wall, and lovers twain
At large discourse, while here they do remain.*

Exit Prologue, Pyramus, Thisbe, Lion and Moonshine.

The. I wonder if the lion be to speak?
Dem. No wonder, my lord; one lion may when many asses do.
Wall. *In this same interlude it doth befall
That I, one Snout by name, present a wall;
And such a wall as I would have you think
That had in it a crannied hole, or chink,
Through which the lovers, Pyramus and Thisbe,
Did whisper often, very secretly.
This loam, this rough-cast, and this stone doth show
That I am that same wall; the truth is so:
And this the cranny is, right and sinister,
Through which the fearful lovers are to whisper.*
The. Would you desire lime and hair to speak better?
Dem. It is the wittiest partition that ever I heard discourse, my
lord.

Enter Pyramus

The. Pyramus draws near the wall; Silence!
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 Thisbe's promise is forgot!
And thou, O wall, O sweet, O lovely wall,
That stand'st between her father's ground and mine;
Thou wall, O wall, O sweet and lovely wall,
Show me thy chink, to blink through with mine eyne.*

Wall spreads its legs, Bottom ducks through them

*Thanks courteous wall: Jove shield thee well for this!
But what see I? No Thisbe do I see.
O wicked wall, through whom I see no bliss,
Curs'd be thy stones for thus deceiving me!*
The. The wall, methinks, being sensible, should curse again.
Pyr. No, in truth sir, he should not. "Deceiving me" is Thisbe's
cue: she is to enter now, and I am to spy her through

the wall. You shall see it will fall pat as I told you:
yonder she comes.

Enter Thisbe
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 and I can hear my Thisbe's face.
Thisbe?*

This. *My love thou art, my I think!*
Pyr. *Think what thou wilt, I am thy lover's grace;
And like Limander am I trusty still.*

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

Exit Pyramus and Thisbe
Wall. *Thus have I, Wall, my part discharged so;
And being done, thus Wall away doth go.*

Wall exits
The. Now is the mure rased between two neighbors.
Dem. No remedy my lord, when walls are so willful to hear
without warning.

Hip. This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard.
The. 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.
The. If we imagine no worse of them that they of themselves,
they may pass for excellent men. Here come two noble
beasts in, a man and a lion.

Enter Lion and Moonshine
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 am Snug the joiner am
A lion fell, nor else no lion's dam;
For if I should as lion come in strife
Into this place, 'twere pity on my life.*

The. 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.
The. 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.

The. 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 listen to the moon.

Moon. *This lantern doth the horned moon present—*

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

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

Moon. *The lantern doth the horned moon present;
Myself the Man i'th'Moon do seem to be.*

The. This is the greatest error of all the rest; the man should be
put into the lantern. How is it else the Man i'the
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!

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

Lys. Proceed, Moon.

Moon. All that I have to say is, to the you that the lantern is the
moon; I the Man i'the'Moon; this thornbush my
thorn- bush; and this dog my dog.

Dem. Why, all these should be in the lantern, for all these are in
the moon. But silence: here come Thisbe.

Enter Thisbe

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

Lion. *O--!*

The Lion roars, and Thisbe, dropping her skirts runs off.

Dem. Well roared, Lion!

The. Well run, Thisbe!

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

The Lion shakes, claws and chews on Thisbe's skirts. He drops them and exits.

Enter Pyramus

Pyr. *Sweet Moon, I thank thee for thy sunny beam;
I thank thee, Moon, for shining now so bright;
For by thy gracious, golden, glittering gleams,
I trust to take of truest Thisbe sight.
But stay! O spite!
But mark, poor knight,
What dreadful dole is here?
Eyes, do you see?
How can it be?
O dainty duck! O dear!
They mantle good,*

*What stained with blood?
Approach, ye Furies fell!
O Fates, come, come!
Cut thread and thrum:
Quail, crush, conclude and quell.*

The. 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 deflower'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: [stabs himself]
Thus die I, thus, thus, thus!
Now am I dead,
Now am I fled;
My soul is in the sky.
Tongue, lose they light;
Moon, take thy flight [Exit **Moonshine**]
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.
The. With the help of a surgeon he might yet recover,
and prove an ass.

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

The. She will find him by starlight.
Enter Thisbe

Hip. Here she come, and her passion ends the play.
Methinks she should not use a long one for such a
Pyramus; I hope she will be brief.

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

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 lily lips,
This cherry nose,
These yellow cowslip cheeks,
Are gone, are gone!
Lovers, make moan;
His eyes were green as leeks.
O Sisters Three,
Come, come to me,
With hands as pale as milk;
Lay them in gore,
Since you have shore
With shears his thread of silk.
Tongue, not a word:
Come, trusty sword,
Come, blade, my breast imbrue! [Stabs herself]
And farewell, friends;
Thus Thisbe ends.
Adieu, adieu, adieu! [Dies]*

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

Dem. Ay and Wall too.

Bot. [*rising up*]No, I assure you; the wall is down that parted their father. [*Flute rises*]
Will it please you to see the epilogue, or to hear a Bergomask dance
between two of our company?

The. No epilogue, I pray you; for your play needs no excuse. Never excuse; for
when the players are all dead, there need none to be blamed. Marry, if he
that writ it had played Pyramus, and hanged himself in Thisbe's garter, it
would have been a fine tragedy—and so it is, truly, and very notably
discharged. Let your epilogue alone.

*Enter the rest of the **Players** who join **Bottom** in a dance and then exit*

The iron tongue of midnight hath told twelve.
Lovers, to bed; tis almost fairy time.
I fear we shall outsleep the coming morn.
As much as we this night have overwatch'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 revels and new jollity.

*During this monologue his living room begins to fade from the set and
slowly the Club scene opens up again, with **Puck** at the bar readying for
the night. The music soft at first, begins to build.*

Puck. Now the hungry lion roars,
And the wolf behowls the moon;
Whilst the heavy ploughman snores,
All with weary task fordone.
Now the wasted brands do glow,
Whilst the screech-owl, screeching loud,

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

Oberon appears atop the scene, outside his office, overlooking the dance floor. Titania enters, looks up and sees him watching

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

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

Oberon makes his way down to the dance floor. Meets Titania there.

Obe. 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
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 gait,
And each several chamber bless
Through this palace with sweet peace:
And the owner of it blest,

Ever shall in safety rest.
Trip away; make no stay;
Meet me all by break of day.

*Lifts **Titania** up and carries her back upstairs, exit into his office, door closes.*

Puck [climbs up to the DJ Booth] and to the “crowd”

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

*Music explodes, all **Fairies** have entered the crowd and the night is fully underway.*