

Helena: How happy does Hermia seem to 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 err, admiring of his qualities.
Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind;
And therefore is winged 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 beguiled.
Before Demetrius looked on Hermia's eyes,
He hailed down oaths that he was only mine;
And when this hail some heat from Hermia felt,
So he dissolved, and showers of oaths did melt.
I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight:
Then to the wood will he to-morrow night
Pursue her; and I will also go, pursuing him!
I will betray my friend Hermia, because I have no choice.
My love for Demetrius is so strong it makes me weak!
And in the woods my true love I will seek!

Hermia: Take comfort: he no more shall see my face;

 Lysander and myself will escape this place.

Helen, to you our minds we will unfold:

 Tomorrow night, when darkness comes

 Through Athens' gates have we devised to run away.

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.

Puck:

My mistress with a monster is in love.
Near to her close and consecrated bower,
While she was in her dull and sleeping hour,
A crew of patches, rude mechanicals,
That work for bread upon Athenian stalls,
Were met together to rehearse a play
Intended for great Theseus' nuptial-day.
The shallowest thick-skin of that barren sort,
Who Pyramus presented, in their sport
Forsook his scene and entered in a brake
When I did him at this advantage take,
An ass's nole I fixed on his head:
Anon his Thisbe must be answered,
And forth my mimic comes. When they him spy,
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 briers 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 waked and straightway loved an ass.

Oberon: Welcome, good Robin.
See'st thou this sweet sight?
Her dotage now I do begin to pity:
For, meeting her of late behind the wood,
Seeking sweet favors from this hateful fool,
I did upbraid her and fall out with her;
For she his hairy temples then had rounded
With a coronet of fresh and fragrant flowers.
When I had at my pleasure taunted her
And she in mild terms begged my patience,
I then did ask of her her changeling child;
Which straight she gave me, and her fairy sent
To bear him to my bower in 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 awaking when the other do,
May all to Athens back again repair
And think no more of this night's accidents
But as the fierce vexation of a dream.
But first I will release the fairy queen.
Be as thou wast wont to be;
See as thou wast wont to see:
Now, my Titania; wake you, my sweet queen.

Demetrius/Lysander:

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

Bottom: There are things in this comedy of Pyramus and Thisbe that will never please. First, Pyramus must draw a sword to kill himself; which the ladies cannot abide. I have a device to make all well. Write me a prologue; and let the prologue seem to say, we will do no harm with our swords, and that Pyramus is not killed indeed; and, for the more better assurance, tell them that I, Pyramus, am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver: this will put them out of fear. 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. 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.

Titania: (Awaking.) What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?

I pray thee, gentle mortal, speak again:

Mine ear is much enamored of thy voice;

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.

Out of this wood do not desire to go:

Thou shalt remain here, whether thou wilt or no.

I am a spirit of no common rate;

The summer still doth tend upon my state;

And I do love thee: therefore, go with me;

I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee,

And they shall fetch thee jewels from the deep,

And sing while thou on pressed flowers dost sleep;

And I will purge thy mortal grossness so

That thou shalt like an airy spirit go.