

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.