

At whose approach, ghosts, wandering here and there,  
Troop home to churchyards: damned spirits all,  
That in crossways and floods have burial,  
Already to their wormy beds are gone;  
For fear lest day should look their shames upon,  
They wilfully themselves exile from light  
And must for aye consort with black-brow'd night.

*Obe.* 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, 390  
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. [Exit.]

*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. 400

*Re-enter LYSANDER.*

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

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

*Lys.* I will be with thee straight.

*Puck.* Follow me, then,  
To plainer ground. [Exit Lysander, as following the voice.]

*Re-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 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 defiled 410  
That draws a sword on thee.

*Dem.* Yea, art thou there?

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

*Re-enter LYSANDER.*

*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. [Lies down.] Come, thou gentle day!  
For if but once thou show me thy grey light,  
I'll find Demetrius and revenge this spite. [Sleeps.]

*Re-enter PUCK and DEMETRIUS.*

*Puck.* Ho, ho, ho! Coward, why comest thou not? 421

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

*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 constraineth me  
To measure out my length on this cold bed.  
By day's approach look to be visited. 430  
[Lies down and sleeps.]

*Re-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 and sleeps.]

*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, 440  
Thus to make poor females mad.

*Re-enter HERMIA.*

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

*Puck.* On the ground  
Sleep sound:



I'll apply 450  
 To your eye,  
 Gentle lover, remedy.  
*[Squeezing the juice on Lysander's eyes.]*  
 When thou wakest,  
 Thou takest  
 True delight  
 In the sight  
 Of thy former lady's eye:  
 And the country proverb known,  
 That every man should take his own,  
 In your waking shall be shown: 460  
 Jack shall have Jill;  
 Nought shall go ill;  
 The man shall have his mare again, and all shall be well.

[Exit.]

## ACT IV.

SCENE I. *The same.* LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS, HELENA,  
 and HERMIA lying asleep.

*Enter* TITANIA and BOTTOM; PEASEBLOSSOM, COBWEB,  
 MOTH, MUSTARDSEED, and other Fairies attending;  
 OBERON behind unseen.

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

*Bot.* Where's Peaseblossom?

*Peas.* Ready.

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

*Cob.* Ready. 9

*Bot.* Monsieur Cobweb, good mounsieur, get you your  
 weapons in your hand, and kill me a red-hipped humble-bee  
 on the top of a thistle; and, good mounsieur, bring me the  
 honey-bag. Do not fret yourself too much in the action,  
 mounsieur; and, good monsieur, have a care the honey-bag  
 break not; I would be loth to have you overflown with a  
 honey-bag, signior. Where's Mounsieur Mustardseed?

*Mus.* Ready.

*Bot.* Give me your neaf, Mounsieur Mustardseed. Pray  
 you, leave your courtesy, good mounsieur.

*Mus.* What's your will? 20

*Bot.* Nothing, good mounsieur, but to help Cavalery Cob-  
 web to scratch. I must to the barber's, mounsieur; for me-  
 thinks I am marvellous 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.

*Tita.* Or say, sweet love, what thou desirest to eat.

*Bot.* Truly, a peck of provender: I could munch your good  
 dry oats. Methinks I have a great desire to a bottle of hay:  
 good hay, sweet hay, hath no fellow. 31

*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: I have an  
 exposition of sleep come upon me.

*Tita.* Sleep thou, and I will wind thee in my arms.

Fairies, be gone, and be all ways away. *[Exeunt fairies.]*

So doth the woodbine the sweet honeysuckle

Gently entwist; the female ivy so 40

Enrings the barky fingers of the elm.

O, how I love thee! how I dote on thee!

*[They sleep.]*

*Enter* PUCK.

*Obe.* *[Advancing]* 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 favours for this hateful fool,

I did upbraid her and fall out with her;

For she his hairy temples then had rounded

With coronet of fresh and fragrant flowers;

And that same dew, which sometime on the buds 50

Was wont to swell like round and orient pearls,

Stood now within the pretty flowerets' eyes

Like tears that did their own disgrace bewail.

When I had at my pleasure taunted her

And she in mild terms begg'd my patience,

I then did ask of her her changeling child;

Which 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:  
 Dian's bud o'er Cupid's flower  
 Hath such force and blessed power.

Now, my Titania; wake you, my sweet queen.

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

*Obe.* There lies your love.

*Tita.* How came these things to pass?  
 O, how mine eyes do loathe his visage now!

*Obe.* Silence awhile. Robin, take off this head.  
 Titania, music call; and strike more dead

Than common sleep of all these five the sense.

*Tita.* Music, ho! music, such as charmeth sleep! 80  
 [*Music, still.*]

*Puck.* Now, when thou wakest, with thine own fool's eyes  
 peep.

*Obe.* Sound, music! Come, my queen, take hands with  
 me,

And rock the ground whereon these sleepers be.

Now thou and I are new in amity

And will to-morrow midnight solemnly

Dance in Duke Theseus' house triumphantly

And bless it to all fair prosperity:

There shall the pairs of faithful lovers be

Wedded, with Theseus, all in jollity.

*Puck.* Fairy king, attend, and mark: 90  
 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 sleeping here was found  
 With these mortals on the ground. [*Exeunt.*]

[*Horns winded within.*]

*Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, EGEUS, and train.*

*The.* Go, one of you, find out the forester; 100  
 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.  
 Uncouple in the western valley; let them go:  
 Dispatch, I say, and find the forester. [*Exit an Attendant.*]  
 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 110  
 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.

*The.* My hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind,  
 So flew'd, so sanded, and their heads are hung  
 With ears that sweep away the morning dew;  
 Crook-knee'd, and dew-lapp'd like Thessalian bulls;  
 Slow in pursuit, but match'd in mouth like bells, 120  
 Each under each. A cry more tuneable  
 Was never holla'd to, nor cheer'd with horn,  
 In Crete, in Sparta, nor in Thessaly:  
 Judge when you hear. But, soft! what nymphs are these?

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

*The.* No doubt they rose up early to observe 130  
 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.

[*Horns and shout within. Lys., Dem., Hel., and Her.,  
 wake and start up.*]

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 his head.  
They would have stolen away; they would, Demetrius,  
Thereby to have defeated you and me,  
You of your wife and me of my consent,  
Of my consent that she should be your wife.

*Dem.* My lord, fair Helen told me of their stealth,  
Of this their purpose hither to this wood;  
And I in fury hither follow'd them,  
Fair 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, seems to me now  
As the remembrance of an idle gawd  
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 betroth'd ere I saw Hermia:  
But, like a 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.

*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 purposed hunting shall be set aside.  
Away with us to Athens; three and three,  
We'll hold a feast in great solemnity.  
Come, Hippolyta.

[*Exeunt The., Hip., Ege.,  
and train.*]

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

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

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

*Dem.* 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.

[*Exeunt.*  
*Bot.* [*Awaking*] 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 me-  
thought 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, be-  
cause it hath no bottom; and I will sing it in the latter end  
of a play, before the duke: peradventure, to make it the more  
gracious, I shall sing it at her death.

213 [*Exit.*]

SCENE II. Athens. QUINCE'S house.

*Enter QUINCE, FLUTE, SNOOT, and STARVELING.*

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

*Star.* He cannot be heard of. Out of doubt he is trans-  
ported.

*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. 10

*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! Thus hath he lost sixpence a day during his life; he could not have 'scaped sixpence a day: an the duke had not given him sixpence a day for playing Pyramus, I'll be hanged; he would have deserved it: sixpence a day in Pyramus, or nothing. 22

*Enter* BOTTOM.

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

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

*Bot.* Masters, I am to discourse wonders: but ask me not what; for if I tell you, I am no true Athenian. I will tell you every thing, right as it fell out. 29

*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 Thisby have clean linen; and let not him that plays the lion pare his nails, for they shall hang out for the lion's claws. And, most dear actors, eat no onions nor 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! 39 [*Exeunt.*]

# ACT V.

## SCENE I. Athens. The palace of THESEUS.

*Enter* THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, PHILOSTRATE, Lords, and Attendants.

*Hip.* 'Tis strange, my Theseus, that 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 is, 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 supposed a bear!

*Hip.* But all the story of the night told over,

And all their minds transfigured so together,

More witnesseth than fancy's images

And grows to something of great constancy;

But, howsoever, strange and admirable.

*The.* Here come the lovers, full of joy and mirth.

*Enter* LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS, HERMIA, and HELENA.

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?



Where is our usual manager of mirth?  
 What revels are in hand? Is there no play,  
 To ease the anguish of a torturing hour?  
 Call Philostrate.

*Phil.* Here, mighty Theseus.

*The.* Say, what abridgement have you for this evening?  
 What masque? what music? How shall we beguile 40  
 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.

[*Giving a paper.*]

*The.* [*Reads*] "The battle with the Centaurs, to be sung  
 By an Athenian eunuch to the harp".

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

[*Reads*] "The riot of the tipsy Bacchanals,  
 Tearing the Thracian singer in their rage".

That is an old device; and it was play'd 50  
 When I from Thebes came last a conqueror.

[*Reads*] "The thrice three Muses mourning for the death  
 Of Learning, late deceased in beggary".

That is some satire, keen and critical,  
 Not sorting with a nuptial ceremony.

[*Reads*] "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.

How shall we find the concord of this discord? 60

*Phil.* 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 rehearsed, I must confess,

Made mine eyes water; but more merry tears 70  
 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 unbreathed memories  
 With this same play, against your nuptial.

*The.* And we will hear it.

*Phil.* No, my noble lord;

It is not for you: I have heard it over,  
 And it is nothing, nothing in the world;  
 Unless you can find sport in their intents,  
 Extremely stretch'd and conn'd with cruel pain, 80  
 To do you service.

*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.

[*Exit Philostrate.*]

*Hip.* I love not to see wretchedness o'ercharged  
 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. 90  
 Our sport shall be to take what they mistake:

And what poor duty cannot do, noble respect  
 Takes it in might, not merit.

Where I have come, great clerks have purposed  
 To greet me with premeditated welcomes;

Where I have seen them shiver and look pale,  
 Make periods in the midst of sentences,

Throttle their practised accent in their fears  
 And in conclusion dumbly have broke off,

Not paying me a welcome. Trust me, sweet, 100  
 Out of this silence yet I pick'd a welcome;

And in the modesty of fearful duty  
 I read as much as from the rattling tongue

Of saucy and audacious eloquence.  
 Love, therefore, and tongue-tied simplicity

In least speak most, to my capacity.

*Re-enter PHILOSTRATE.*

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

*The.* Let him approach. [*Flourish of trumpets.*]

*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, 110  
 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 rid his prologue like a rough colt; he knows  
not the stop. A good moral, my lord: it is not enough to  
speak, but to speak true. 121

*Hip.* Indeed he hath played on his prologue like a child on  
a recorder; a sound, but not in government.

*The.* His speech was like a tangled chain; nothing im-  
paired, but all disordered. Who is next?

*Enter PYRAMUS and THISBE, WALL, MOONSHINE,  
and LION.*

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

This man is Pyramus, if you would know;

This beauteous lady Thisby is certain.

This man, with lime and rough-cast, doth present 30

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 hight by name,

The trusty Thisby, coming first by night,

Did scare away, or rather did affright; 140

And, as she fled, her mantle she did fall,

Which Lion vile with bloody mouth did stain.

Anon comes Pyramus, sweet youth and tall,

And finds his trusty Thisby's mantle slain:

Whereat, with blade, with bloody blameful blade,

He bravely broach'd his boiling bloody breast;

And Thisby, tarrying in mulberry shade,

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

Let Lion, Moonshine, Wall, and lovers twain

At large discourse, while here they do remain. 150

[*Exeunt 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 Thisby,  
Did whisper often very secretly.

This loam, this rough-cast and this stone doth show 160

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.

*Re-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, 170

I fear my Thisby'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 holds up his fingers.*]

Thanks, courteous wall: Jove shield thee well for this!

But what see I? No Thisby do I see.

O wicked wall, through whom I see no bliss!

Cursed be thy stones for thus deceiving me!

*The.* The wall, methinks, being sensible, should curse  
again. 181

*Pyr.* No, in truth, sir, he should not. "Deceiving me" is  
Thisby'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.

*Re-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, 190

To spy an I can hear my Thisby's face.

Thisby!

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

*Pyr.* Think what thou wilt, I am thy lover's grace;

And, like Limander, am I trusty still.

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



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

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

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

*This.* I kiss the wall's hole, not your lips at all. 200

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

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

[*Exeunt Pyramus and Thisbe.*]

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

*The.* Now is the mural down between the two neighbours.

*Dem.* No remedy, my lord, when walls are so wilful to hear without warning.

*Hip.* This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard.

*The.* The best in this kind are but shadows; and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them. 210

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

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

*Re-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, one Snug the joiner, am  
A lion-fell, nor else no lion's dam; 220

For, if I should as lion come in strife

Into this place, 't were 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. 231

*Moon.* This lanthorn doth the horned moon present;—

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

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

*Moon.* This lanthorn doth the horned moon present:

Myself the man if the moon do seem to be.

*The.* This is the greatest error of all the rest: the man

should be put into the lanthorn. How is it else the man if the moon? 240

*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 tell you that the lanthorn is the moon; I, the man in the moon; this thorn-bush, my thorn-bush; and this dog, my dog. 250

*Dem.* Why, all these should be in the lanthorn; for all these are in the moon. But, silence! here comes Thisbe.

*Re-enter THISBE.*

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

*Lion.* [*Roaring*] Oh— [*Thisbe 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 Thisbe's mantle, and exit.*]

*The.* Well moused, Lion.

*Lys.* And so the lion vanished. 260

*Dem.* And then came Pyramus.

*Re-enter PYRAMUS.*

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

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

For, by thy gracious, golden, glittering 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? 270

O dainty duck! O dear!

Thy mantle good,

What, stain'd 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. 280  
*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 lived, that loved, that liked, 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. 290  
 Thus die I, thus, thus, thus.

Now am I dead,  
 Now am I fled;  
 My soul is in the sky:  
 Tongue, lose thy light;  
 Moon, take thy flight: [Exit Moonshine.  
 Now die, die, die, die. [Dies.

*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. 300

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

*The.* She will find him by starlight. Here she comes; and  
 her passion ends the play.

*Re-enter THISBE.*

*Hip.* 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 for  
 a woman, God bless us.

*Lys.* She has spied him already with those sweet eyes. 310

*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: 320

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: 330

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.* [Starting up] No, I assure you; the wall is down  
 that parted their fathers. Will it please you to see the  
 epilogue, or to hear a Bergomask dance between two of our  
 company? 341

*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. But, come, your Bergomask: let your  
 epilogue alone. [A dance.

The iron tongue of midnight hath told twelve:

Lovers, to bed; 't is almost fairy time. 350

I fear we shall out-sleep the coming morn

As much as we this night have overwatch'd.

This palpable-gross play hath well beguiled

The heavy gait of night. Sweet friends, to bed.

A fortnight hold we this solemnity.

In nightly revels and new jollity. [Exeunt.

*Enter PUCK.*

*Puck.* Now the hungry lion roars,

And the wolf behowls the moon;

Whilst the heavy ploughman snores,

All with weary task fordone. 360

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.

370

*Enter OBERON and TITANIA with their train.*

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

380

*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. [*Song and dance.*]

*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.

390

400

Trip away; make no stay;  
Meet me all by break of day.

[*Exeunt Oberon, Titania, and train.*]

*Puck.* If we shadows have offended,  
Think but this, and all is mended,  
That you have but slumber'd here  
While these visions did appear.  
And this weak and idle theme,  
No more yielding but a dream,  
Gentles, do not reprehend:  
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, good night unto you all.  
Give me your hands, if we be friends,  
And Robin shall restore amends.

410

420

[*Exit.*]