

fraught with consequences disastrous to the inhabitants of Earth—  
is in the highest degree lofty:

*Obe.* Ill met by moon-light, proud Titania.

*Tita.* What! jealous Oberon? Fairy, 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 steep 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, Titania,  
Glance at my credit with Hippolyta,  
Knowing I know thy love to Theseus?  
Didst thou not lead him through the glimmering night  
From Perigenia, whom he ravished?  
And make him with fair Ægle break his faith,  
With Ariadne, and Antiopa?

*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 on the beachy margent of the sea,  
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,  
But with thy brawls thou hast 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,  
Have every pelting river made so proud,  
That they have overborne their continents:

\* \* \* \* \*  
And this same progeny of evils comes  
From our debate, from our dissension;  
We are their 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 henchman.

*Tita.* Set your heart at rest—

The fairy land buys not the child of me.

His mother was a vot'ress of my order;

And, in the spiced Indian air, by night,

Full often hath she gossip'd by my side,

And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands,

Marking the embarked traders on the flood.

But she, being mortal, of that boy did die;

And, for her sake, I do rear up her boy;

And, for her sake, I will not part with him.

It is as unnecessary to comment on the mean selfishness of Oberon's answer to her appeal in behalf of the distressed earth, as on the generosity and faithful friendship that distinguish Titania's concluding remarks. Let us peep at the fairy queen in love:

*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 now-a-days.

\* \* \* \* \*

*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 thy mortal grossness so,



That thou shalt like an airy spirit go.—  
Peas-blossom! Cobweb! Moth! and Mustard-seed!

\* \* \* \* \*

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;  
The honey bags steal from the humble bees;  
And, for night-tapers, crop their waxen thighs,  
And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes,  
To have my love to bed, and to arise;  
And pluck the wings from painted butterflies,  
To fan the moon-beams from his sleeping eyes:  
Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies.

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.

\* \* \* \* \*

Or say, sweet love, what thou desir'st 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.

*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, begone—and be all ways away.  
So doth the woodbine, the sweet honeysuckle,  
Gently entwist—the female ivy so  
Enrings the barked fingers of the elm.  
O, how I love thee! how I dote on thee!

One glance at the household habits of a fairy court, and then  
we shall have awakened from this Midsummer Night's Dream,

which is “like wandering through a grove by moonlight,” and  
“breathes a sweetness, like odors thrown from beds of flowers:”

*Obe.* I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows,  
Where ox-lips and the nodding violet grows—  
Quite over-canopied with lush woodbine,  
With sweet musk-roses, and with eglantine;  
There sleeps Titania, some time 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.

*Tita.* Come, now a roundel, and a fairy song;  
Then, for the third part of a minute, hence:  
Some to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds;  
Some war with rear-mice for their leathern wings,  
To make my small elves coats; and some keep back  
The clamorous owl, that nightly hoots, and wonders  
At our quaint spirits. Sing me now asleep;  
Then to your offices, and let me rest.

## SONG.

## I.

*You spotted snakes with double tongue,  
Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen;  
Newts, and blind-worms, do no wrong;  
Come not near our fairy queen!*

## CHORUS.

*Philomel, with melody,  
Sing in our sweet lullaby:  
Lulla, lulla, lullaby! lulla, lulla, lullaby!  
Never harm, nor spell, nor charm,  
Come our lovely lady nigh;  
So, good night, with lullaby!*



## II.

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

## CHORUS.

*Philomel, with melody,  
Sing in our sweet lullaby :  
Lulla, lulla, lullaby ! lulla, lulla, lullaby !  
Never harm, nor spell, nor charm,  
Come our lovely lady nigh ;  
So, good night, with lullaby !*