

Kath. Not so, my lord. A twelvemonth and a day
I'll mark no words that smooth-fac'd wooers say: 836
Come when the king doth to my lady come;
Then, if I have much love, I'll give you some.
Dum. I'll serve thee true and faithfully till then.
Kath. Yet swear not, lest you be forsworn again. 840
Long. What says Maria?
Mar. At the twelvemonth's end I'll change my black gown for a faithful friend.
Long. I'll stay with patience; but the time is long. 843
Mar. The liker you; few taller are so young.
Ber. Studies my lady? mistress, look on me. Behold the window of my heart, mine eye, What humble suit attends thy answer there; Impose some service on me for thy love. 848
Ros. Oft have I heard of you, my Lord Berowne, Before I saw you, and the world's large tongue Proclaims you for a man replete with mocks; Full of comparisons and wounding flouts, 852 Which you on all estates will execute That lie within the mercy of your wit: To weed this wormwood from your fruitful brain, And therewithal to win me, if you please,— 856 Without the which I am not to be won,— You shall this twelvemonth term, from day to day, Visit the speechless sick, and still converse With groaning wretches; and your task shall be, With all the fierce endeavour of your wit 861 To enforce the pained impotent to smile.
Ber. To move wild laughter in the throat of death? It cannot be; it is impossible: 864 Mirth cannot move a soul in agony.
Ros. Why, that's the way to choke a gibing spirit, Whose influence is begot of that loose grace Which shallow laughing hearers give to fools. A jest's prosperity lies in the ear 869 Of him that hears it, never in the tongue Of him that makes it: then, if sickly ears, Deaf'd with the clamours of their own dear groans, 872 Will hear your idle scorns, continue them, And I will have you and that fault withal; But if they will not, throw away that spirit, And I shall find you empty of that fault, 876 Right joyful of your reformation.
Ber. A twelvemonth! well, befall what will befall, I'll jest a twelvemonth in a hospital.
Prin. [To the KING.] Ay, sweet my lord; and so I take my leave. 880
King. No, madam; we will bring you on your way.
Ber. Our wooing doth not end like an old play; Jack hath not Jill; these ladies' courtesy Might well have made our sport a comedy. 884

King. Come, sir, it wants a twelvemonth and a day, And then 'twill end.
Ber. That's too long for a play.

Enter ARMADO.

Arm. Sweet majesty, vouchsafe me,— 888
Prin. Was not that Hector?
Dum. The worthy knight of Troy.
Arm. I will kiss thy royal finger, and take leave. I am a votary; I have vowed to Jaquenetta to hold the plough for her sweet love three years. But, most esteemed greatness, will you hear the dialogue that the two learned men have compiled in praise of the owl and the cuckoo? it should have followed in the end of our show. 896
King. Call them forth quickly; we will do so.
Arm. Holla! approach.

Re-enter HOLOFERNES, NATHANIEL, MOTH, COSTARD, and others.

This side is *Hiems*, Winter; this *Ver*, the Spring; the one maintained by the owl, the other by the cuckoo. *Ver*, begin. 901

SPRING

I
When daisies pied and violets blue
And lady-smocks all silver-white
And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue 904
Do paint the meadows with delight,
The cuckoo then, on every tree,
Mocks married men; for thus sings he, Cuckoo; 908
Cuckoo, cuckoo: O, word of fear,
Unpleasing to a married ear!

II
When shepherds pipe on oaten straws,
And merry larks are ploughmen's clocks, 912
When turtles tread, and rooks, and daws,
And maidens bleach their summer smocks,
The cuckoo then, on every tree,
Mocks married men; for thus sings he, Cuckoo; 916
Cuckoo, cuckoo: O, word of fear,
Unpleasing to a married ear!

WINTER

III
When icicles hang by the wall,
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail,
When blood is nipp'd, and ways be foul, 924
Then nightly sings the staring owl, Tu-who;
Tu-whit, tu-who—a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot. 928

IV
When all aloud the wind doth blow,
And coughing drowns the parson's saw,
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
And Marian's nose looks red and raw, 932
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl, Tu-who;
Tu-whit, tu-who—a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot. 936

Arm. The words of Mercury are harsh after the songs of Apollo. You, that way: we, this way. [Exeunt.]

A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

THESEUS, Duke of Athens.
EGEUS, Father to Hermia.
LYSANDER, in love with Hermia.
DEMETRIUS, in love with Hermia.
PHILOSTRATE, Master of the Revels to Theseus.
QUINCE, a Carpenter.
SNUG, a Joiner.
BOTTOM, a Weaver.
FLUTE, a Bellows-mender.
SNOUT, a Tinker.
STARVELING, a Tailor.
HIPPOLYTA, Queen of the Amazons, betrothed to Theseus.

HERMIA, Daughter to Egeus, in love with Lysander.
HELENA, in love with Demetrius.

OBERON, King of the Fairies.
TITANIA, Queen of the Fairies.
PUCK, or Robin Goodfellow.
PEASE-BLOSSOM,
COBWEB,
MOTH,
MUSTARD-SEED, } Fairies.

Other Fairies attending their King and Queen. Attendants on Theseus and Hippolyta.

SCENE.—Athens, and a Wood near it.

ACT I

SCENE I.—Athens. The Palace of THESEUS.

Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, PHILOSTRATE, and Attendants.

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; she lingers my desires, 4 Like to a step-dame, or a dowager Long withering out a young man's revenue.
Hip. Four days will quickly steep themselves in night; Four nights will quickly dream away the time; 8 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; 12 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, 16 And won thy love doing thee injuries; But I will wed thee in another key, With pomp, with triumph, and with revelling.

Enter EGEUS, HERMIA, 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. 24 Stand forth, Demetrius. My noble lord, This man hath my consent to marry her. Stand forth, Lysander: and, my gracious duke, This man hath bewitch'd the bosom of my child: Thou, thou, Lysander, thou hast given her rimes, And interchang'd love-tokens with my child; 29 Thou hast by moonlight at her window sung, With feigning voice, verses of feigning love;

And stol'n the impression of her fantasy 32 With bracelets of thy hair, rings, gawds, conceits, Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweetmeats, messengers Of strong prevailment in unhardened youth; With cunning hast thou filch'd my daughter's heart; 36 Turn'd her obedience, which is due to me, To stubborn harshness. And, my gracious duke, Be it so she will not here before your Grace Consent to marry with Demetrius, 40 I beg the ancient privilege of Athens, As she is mine, I may dispose of her; Which shall be either to this gentleman, Or to her death, according to our law 44 Immediately provided in that case.

The. What say you, Hermia? be advis'd, 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 49 By him imprinted, and within his power To leave the figure or disfigure it. Demetrius is a worthy gentleman. 52

Her. So is Lysander.
The. In himself he is; But, in this kind, wanting your father's voice, The other must be held the 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 it may concern my modesty 60 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. 64
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.
Thrice blessed they that master so their blood,
To undergo such maiden pilgrimage;
But earthlier happy is the rose distill'd,
Than that which withering on the virgin thorn
Grows, lives, and dies, in single blessedness.

Her. So will I grow, so live, so die, my lord,
Ere I will yield my virgin patent up
Unto his lordship, whose unwish'd 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's: do you marry him.

Ege. Scornful Lysander! true, he hath my
love,

And what is mine my love shall render him; 96
And she is mine, and all my right of 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; 100
My fortunes every way as fairly rank'd
If not withantage, as Demetrius';

And, which is more than all these boasts can be,
I am belov'd of beauteous Hermia. 104

Why should not I then prosecute my right?
Demetrius, I'll vouch 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, 109
Upon this spotted and inconstant man.

The. I must confess that I have heard so
much,

And with Demetrius thought to have spoke
thereof; 112

But, being over-full of self-affairs,
My mind did lose it. But, Demetrius, come;
And come, Egeus; you shall go with me,
I have some private schooling for you both. 116

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,
Which by no means we may extenuate, 120
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 124
Against our nuptial, and confer with you
Of something nearly that concerns yourselves.

Ege. With duty and desire we follow you.
[*Exeunt THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, EGEOUS,*

DEMETRIUS, and Train.

Lys. How now, my love! Why is your cheek
so pale? 128

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 mine eyes.
Lys. Ay me! for aught that ever I could
read, 132

Could ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth;
But, either it was different in blood,—
Her. O cross! too high to be enthrall'd to
low. 136

Lys. Or else misgraffed 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,— 139

Her. O hell! to choose love by another's eye.
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, 144
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: 148
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, 152
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. 156

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. 160

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 to-morrow night,
And in the wood, a league without the town, 165
Where I did meet thee once with Helena,
To do observance to a morn of May,
There will I stay for thee.

Her. My good Lysander! 168
I swear to thee by Cupid's strongest bow,
By his best arrow with the golden head,
By the simplicity of Venus' doves,
By that which knitteth souls and prospers loves,
And by that fire which burn'd the Carthage
queen, 173
When the false Trojan under sail was seen,
By all the vows that ever men have broke,—
In number more than ever women spoke,— 176
In that same place thou hast appointed me,
To-morrow 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!
Your eyes are lode-stars! and your tongue's
sweet air

More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear, 184
When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds
appear.

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. 189

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. 193

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. 197

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! 201

Her. Take comfort: he no more shall see my
face;
Lysander and myself will fly this place.
Before the time I did Lysander see, 204
Seem'd Athens as a paradise to me:
O! then, what graces in my love do dwell,
That he hath turn'd a heaven unto a hell.

Lys. Helen, to you our minds we will unfold.
To-morrow night, when Phoebe doth behold
Her silver visage in the wat'ry glass, 210
Decking with liquid pearl the bladed grass,—
A time that lovers' flights doth still conceal,—
Through Athens' gates have we devis'd to steal.

Her. And in the wood, were 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; 217
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! 221
Keep word, Lysander: we must starve our sight
From lovers' food till morrow deep midnight.

Lys. I will, my Hermia.—[*Exit HERMIA.*]
Helena, adieu: 224
As you on him, Demetrius dote on you! [*Exit.*]
Hel. How happy some o'er other some can
be! 227

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; 229
And as he errs, doting on Hermia's eyes,
So I, admiring of his qualities.

Things base and vile, holding no quantity, 232
Love can transpoise to form and dignity.
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: 237

And therefore is Love said to be a child,
Because in choice he is so oft beguill'd.
As waggish boys in game themselves forswear,
So the boy Love is perjur'd every where; 241
For ere Demetrius look'd on Hermia's eyne,
He hail'd down oaths that he was only mine;
And when this hail some heat from Hermia felt,
So he dissolv'd, and showers of oaths did melt.
I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight: 246
Then to the wood will he to-morrow night
Pursue her; and for this intelligence
If I have thanks, it is a dear expense:
But herein mean I to enrich my pain, 250
To have his sight thither and back again. [*Exit.*]

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SCENE II.—*The Same. A Room in QUINCE'S
House.*

*Enter QUINCE, SNUG, BOTTOM, FLUTE, SNOUT,
and STARVELING.*

Quin. Is all our company here?
Bot. You were best to call them generally,
man by man, according to the scrip.

Quin. Here is the scroll of every man's name,
which is thought fit, through all Athens, to play
in our interlude before the duke and the duchess
on his wedding-day at night. 7

Bot. First, good Peter Quince, say what the
play treats on; then read the names of the
actors, and so grow to a point. 10

Quin. Marry, our play is, The most lament-
able comedy, and most cruel death of Pyramus
and Thisby. 13

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. 17

Quin. Answer as I call you. Nick Bottom,
the weaver. 21

Bot. Ready. Name what part I am for, and
proceed. 25

Quin. You, Nick Bottom, are set down for
Pyramus. 28

Bot. What is Pyramus? a lover, or a tyrant?
Quin. A lover, that kills himself most gal-
lantly for love. 26

Bot. That will ask some tears in the true per-
forming 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 Eracles
rarely, or a part to tear a cat in, to make all
split. 33

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. 40

This was lofty! Now name the rest of the
players. This is Eracles' vein, a tyrant's vein; a
lover is more condoling. 44

Quin. Francis Flute, the bellows-mender.

Flu. Here, Peter Quince.

Quin. You must take Thisby on you. 47

Flu. What is Thisby? 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. 51

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

Bot. An I may hide my face, let me play Thisby too. I'll speak in a monstrous little voice, 'Thisne, Thisne!' Ah, Pyramus, my lover dear; thy Thisby dear, and lady dear! 57

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

Bot. Well, proceed. 60

Quin. Robin Starveling, the tailor.

Star. Here, Peter Quince.

Quin. Robin Starveling, you must play Thisby's mother. Tom Snout, the tinker. 64

Snout. Here, Peter Quince.

Quin. You, Pyramus's father; myself, Thisby's father; Snug, the joiner, you the lion's part; and, I hope, here is a play fitted. 68

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. 72

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.' 76

Quin. An 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. 80

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

Bot. I grant you, friends, if that 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 as 'twere any nightingale. 87

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. 92

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. 99

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 you, to con them by to-morrow 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 of properties, such as our play wants. I pray you, fail me not. 110

Bot. We will meet; and there we may re-

hearse more obscenely and courageously. Take pains; be perfect; adieu.

Quin. At the duke's oak we meet.

Bot. Enough; hold, or cut bow-strings. 115
[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II

SCENE I.—A Wood near Athens.

Enter a Fairy on one side, and PUCK on the other.

Puck. How now, spirit! whither wander you?

Fai. Over hill, over dale,

Thorough bush, thorough brier,

Over park, over pale, 4

Thorough flood, thorough fire,

I do wander every where,

Swifter than the moone's sphere; 8

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 favours, 12

In their freckles live their savours:

I must go seek some dew-drops here,

And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.

Farewell, thou lob of spirits: I'll be gone; 16

Our queen and all her elves come here anon.

Puck. The king doth keep his revels here to-

night.

Take heed the queen come not within his sight;

For Oberon is passing fell and wrath, 20

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 24

Knight of his train, to trace the forests wild;

But she, perforce, withholds the loved boy,

Crowns him with flowers, and makes him all 28

her joy.

And now they never meet in grove, or green, 28

By fountain clear, or spangled starlight sheen,

But they do square; that all their elves, for 32

fear,

Creep into acorn-cups and hide them there.

Fai. Either I mistake your shape and making 32

quite,

Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite

Call'd Robin Goodfellow: are you not he

That frights the maidens of the villagery;

Skim milk, and sometimes labour in the quern,

And bootless make the breathless housewife 37

churn;

And sometime make the drink to bear no barm;

Mislead night-wanderers, laughing at their 41

harm?

Those that Hobgoblin call you and sweet Puck,

You do their work, and they shall have good 41

luck:

Are you not he?

Puck. Fairy, thou speak'st aright;

I am that merry wanderer of the night.

I jest to Oberon, and make him smile 44

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 very likeness of a roasted crab; 48

And, when she drinks, against her lips I bob

And on her wither'd dewlap pour the ale.

The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale, 52

Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me;

Then slip I from her bum, down topples she,

And 'tailor' cries, and falls into a cough;

And then the whole quire hold their hips and 56

loff;

And waxen in their mirth, and neeze, and

swear

A merrier hour was never wasted there.

But, room, fairy! here comes Oberon.

Fai. And here my mistress. Would that he

were gone!

Enter OBERON from one side, with his Train;

and TITANIA from the other, with hers.

Obe. Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania. 60

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, 65

And in the shape of Corin sat all day,

Playing on pipes of corn, and versing love

To amorous Phillida. Why art thou here, 68

Come from the furthest steppe of India?

But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,

Your buskin'd mistress and your warrior love,

To Theseus must be wedded, and you come 72

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? 76

Didst thou not lead him through the glimmer-

ing night

From Perigouna, whom he ravished?

And make him with fair Ægle break his faith,

With Ariadne, and Antiopa? 80

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, 84

Or in the beached margin of the sea,

To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,

But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our 88

sport.

Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain, 88

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 overcome their continents: 92

The ox hath therefore stretch'd his yoke in vain,

The ploughman lost his sweat, and the green corn

Hath rotted ere his youth attain'd a beard:

The fold stands empty in the drowned field, 96

And crows are fatted with the murrion flock;

The nine men's morris is fill'd up with mud,

And the quaint mazes in the wanton green

For lack of tread are undistinguishable: 100

The human mortals want their winter here:

No night is now with hymn or carol blest:

Therefore the moon, the governess of floods, 104

Pale in her anger, washes all the air,

That rheumatic diseases do abound:

And thorough this distemperature we see

The seasons alter: hoary-headed frosts

Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose, 108

And on old Hiems' 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 112

Their wonted liveries, and the mazed world,

By their increase, now knows not which is which.

And this same progeny of evil comes

From our debate, from our dissension: 116

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, 120

To be my henchman.

Tita. Set your heart at rest;

The fairy land buys not the child of me.

His mother was a votaress of my order:

And, in the spiced Indian air, by night, 124

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;

When we have laugh'd to see the sails conceive

And grow big-bellied with the wanton wind;

Which she, with pretty and with swimming gait

Following,—her womb then rich with my young 132

squire,—

Would imitate, and sail upon the land,

To fetch me trifles, and return again,

As from a voyage, rich with merchandise.

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

And for her sake I do rear up her boy, 136

And for her sake I will not part with him.

Obe. How long within this wood intend you

stay?

Tita. Perchance, till after Theseus' wedding-

day.

If you will patiently dance in our round, 140

And see our moonlight revels, go with us;

If not, shun me, and I will spare your haunts.

Obe. Give me that boy, and I will go with

thee.

Tita. Not for thy fairy kingdom. Fairies,

away! 144

We shall chide downright, if I longer stay.

[*Exit TITANIA with her Train.*]

Obe. Well, go thy way: thou shalt not from

this grove

Till I torment thee for this injury.

My gentle Puck, come hither. Thou remem-

ber'st 148

Since once I sat 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, 152

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 157

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;
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft 161
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the wat'ry
moon,
And the imperial votaress passed on,
In maiden meditation, fancy-free. 164
Yet mark'd I where the bolt 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. 168
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. 172
Fetch me this herb; and be thou here again
Ere the leviathan can swim a league.
Puck. I'll put a girdle round about the earth
In forty minutes. [Exit.]
Obe. Having once this juice 176
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,
Be it on lion, bear, or wolf, or bull, 180
On meddling monkey, or on busy ape,
She shall pursue it with the soul of love:
And ere I take this charm off from her sight,
As I can take it with another herb, 184
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? 189
The one I'll slay, the other slayeth me.
Thou told'st me they were stol'n into this wood;
And here am I, and wood within this wood, 192
Because I cannot meet my Hermia.
Hence! get thee gone, and follow me no more.
Hel. You draw me, you hard-hearted ad-
amant:
But yet you draw not iron, for my heart 196
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 200
Tell you I do not nor I cannot love you?
Hel. And even for that do I love you the more.
I am your spaniel; and, Demetrius,
The more you beat me, I will fawn on you: 204
Use me but as your spaniel, spurn me, strike me,
Neglect me, lose me; only give me leave,
Unworthy as I am, to follow you.
What worse place can I beg in your love, 208
And yet a place of high respect with me,
Than to be used as you use your dog?
Dem. Tempt not too much the hatred of my
spirit,
For I am sick when I do look on you. 212
Hel. And I am sick when I look not on you.
Dem. You do impeach your modesty too
much,
To leave the city, and commit yourself
Into the hands of one that loves you not; 216

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 220
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: 224
Then how can it be said I am alone,
When all the world is here to look on me?
Dem. I'll run from thee and hide me in the
brakes,
And leave thee to the mercy of wild beasts. 228
Hel. The wildest hath not such a heart as you.
Run when you will, the story shall be chang'd;
Apollo flies, and Daphne holds the chase;
The dove pursues the griffin; the mild hind 232
Makes speed to catch the tiger: bootless speed,
When cowardice pursues and valour flies.
Dem. I will not stay thy questions: let me go;
Or, if thou follow me, do not believe 236
But I shall do thee mischief in the wood.
Hel. Ay, in the temple, in the town, the field,
You do me mischief. Fie, Demetrius!
Your wrongs do set a scandal on my sex. 240
We cannot fight for love, as men may do;
We should be woo'd and were not made to woo.
[Exit DEMETRIUS.]
I'll follow thee and make a heaven of hell,
To die upon the hand I love so well. [Exit.]
Obe. Fare thee well, nymph: ere he do leave
this grove, 245
Thou shalt fly him, and he shall seek thy love.

Re-enter PUCK.

Hast thou the flower there? Welcome, wanderer.
Puck. Ay, there it is.
Obe. I pray thee, give it me. 248
I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows
Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses, and with eglantine: 252
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: 256
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 260
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. 264
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. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—Another Part of the Wood.

Enter TITANIA, with her Train.

Tita. Come, now a roundel and a fairy song;
Then, for the third of a minute, hence;

Some to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds,
Some war with rere-mice for their leathern
wings, 4
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. 8

The Fairies sing.

I
You spotted snakes with double tongue,
Thorny hedge-hogs, be not seen;
Newts, and blind-worms, do no wrong;
Come not near our fairy queen.
Philomel, with melody, 12
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. 16

II
Weaving spiders come not here;
Hence, you long-legg'd spinners, hence!
Beetles black, approach not near;
Worm nor snail, do no offence.
Philomel, with melody, &c. 24

Fai. Hence, away! now all is well.
One aloof stand sentinel.

[Exeunt Fairies. TITANIA sleeps.]

Enter OBERON, and squeezes the flower on
TITANIA'S eyelids.

Obe. What thou seest when thou dost wake,
Do it for thy true-love take; 28
Love and languish for his sake:
Be it ounce, or cat, or bear,
Pard, or boar with bristled hair,
In thy eye that shall appear 32
When thou wak'st, it is thy dear.
Wake when some vile thing is near. [Exit.]

Enter LYSANDER and HERMIA.

Lys. Fair love, you faint with wandering in the
wood;
And to speak troth, I have forgot our way: 36
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. 40
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. 44
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; 48
Two bosoms interchain'd with an oath;
So then two bosoms and a single troth.
Then by your side no bed-room me deny,
For, lying so, Hermia, I do not lie. 52
Her. Lysander riddles very prettily:
Now much beshrew my manners and my pride,
If Hermia meant to say Lysander lied.

But, gentle friend, for love and courtesy 56
Lie further off; in human modesty,
Such separation as may well be said
Becomes a virtuous bachelor and a maid,
So far be distant; and, good night, sweet friend.
Thy love ne'er alter till thy sweet life end! 61
Lys. Amen, amen, to that fair prayer, say I;
And then end life when I end loyalty!
[Retires a little distance.]
Here is my bed: sleep give thee all his rest! 64
Her. With half that wish the wisher's eyes be
press'd! [They sleep.]

Enter PUCK.

Puck. Through the forest have I gone,
But Athenian found I none,
On whose eyes I might approve 68
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; 72
And here the maiden, sleeping sound,
On the dank and dirty ground.
Pretty soul! she durst not lie 76
Near this lack-love, this kill-courtesy.
[Squeezes the flower on LYSANDER'S
eyelids.]
Churl, upon thy eyes I throw
All the power this charm doth owe.
When thou wak'st, let love forbid 80
Sleep his seat on thy eyelid:
So awake when I am gone;
For I must now to Oberon. [Exit.]

Enter DEMETRIUS and HELENA, running.

Hel. Stay, though thou kill me, sweet Deme-
trius. 84
Dem. I charge thee, hence, and do not haunt
me thus.
Hel. O! wilt thou darkling leave me? do
not so.
Dem. Stay, on thy peril: I alone will go.
[Exit DEMETRIUS.]
Hel. O! I am out of breath in this fond chase.
The more my prayer, the lesser is my grace. 89
Happy is Hermia, wheresoe'er she lies;
For she hath blessed and attractive eyes.
How came her eyes so bright? Not with salt
tears:
If so, my eyes are oftener wash'd than hers. 93
No, no, I am as ugly as a bear;
For beasts that meet me run away for fear;
Therefore no marvel though Demetrius 96
Do, as a monster, fly my presence thus.
What wicked and dissembling glass of mine
Made me compare with Hermia's sphery eyne?
But who is here? Lysander! on the ground! 100
Dead? or asleep? I see no blood, no wound.
Lysander, if you live, good sir, awake.
Lys. [Awaking.] And run through fire I will
for thy sweet sake.
Transparent Helena! Nature shows art, 104
That through thy 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 not 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:

Who will not change a raven for a dove?

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;

So I, being young, till now ripe not to reason;

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?

Is't not enough, is't not enough, young man,

That I did never, no, nor never can,

Deserve a sweet look from Demetrius' eye,

But you must flout my insufficiency?

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. *[Exit.]*

Lys. She sees not Hermia. Hermia, sleep

thou there;

And never mayst thou come Lysander near.

For, as a surfeit of the sweetest things

The deepest loathing to the stomach brings;

Or, as the heresies that men do leave

Are hated most of those they did deceive:

So thou, my surfeit and my heresy,

Of all be hated, but the most of me!

And, all my powers, address your love and

might

To honour Helen, and to be her knight. *[Exit.]*

Her. *[Awaking.]* 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 eat 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, an if you hear;

Speak, of all loves! I swoond almost with fear.

No! then I well perceive you are not nigh:

Either death or you I'll find immediately.

[Exit.]

ACT III

SCENE I.—A Wood. TITANIA lying asleep.

Enter QUINCE, SNUG, BOTTOM, FLUTE, SNOOT, and STARVELING.

Bot. Are we all met?

Quin. Pat, pat; and here's a marvellous 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 sayst thou, bully Bottom?

Bot. There are things in this comedy of

Pyramus and Thisby that will never please.

First, Pyramus must draw a sword to kill him-

self, which the ladies cannot abide. How answer

you that?

Snout. By'r lakin, a parlous fear.

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 the

weaver: 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 afeard of the

lion?

Star. I fear it, I promise you.

Bot. 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 it.

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

Thisby meet by moonlight.

Snout. Doth the moon shine that night we

play our play?

Bot. A calendar, a calendar! look in the

almanack; find out moonshine, find out moon-

shine.

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 case-

ment.

Quin. Ay; or else one must come in with a

bush of thorns and a lanthorn, and say he comes

to disfigure, or to present, the person of Moon-

shine. Then, there is another thing: we must

have a wall in the great chamber: for Pyramus

and Thisby, says the story, did talk through the

chink of a wall.

Snug. 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 Thisby whisper.

Quin. If that may be, then all is well. Come,

sit down, every mother's son, and rehearse your

parts. Pyramus, you begin: when you have

spoken your speech, enter into that brake; and

so every one according to his cue.

Enter PUCK, behind.

Puck. What hempen home-spuns have we

swaggering here,

So near the cradle of the fairy queen?

What! a play toward; I'll be an auditor;

An actor too perhaps, if I see cause.

Quin. Speak, Pyramus.—Thisby, stand forth.

Bot. Thisby, the flowers have odious savours

sweet,—

Quin. Odorous, odorous.

Bot.—odours savours sweet:

So hath thy breath, my dearest Thisby dear.

But hark, a voice! stay thou but here awhile,

And by and by I will to thee appear. *[Exit.]*

Puck. A stranger Pyramus than e'er play'd

here! *[Exit.]*

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 brier,

Most briskly juvenal, and eke most lovely Jew,

As true as truest horse that yet would never

tire,

I'll meet thee, Pyramus, at Ninus's tomb.

Quin. 'Ninus' tomb,' man. Why, you must

not speak that yet; that you answer to Pyra-

mus: 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.

Re-enter PUCK, and BOTTOM with an ass's head.

Bot. If I were, fair Thisby, I were only

thine.

Quin. O monstrous! O strange! we are

haunted.

Pray, masters! fly, masters!—Help!

[Exit Clowns.]

Puck. I'll follow you, I'll lead you about a

round,

Through bog, through bush, through brake,

through brier:

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.

Bot. Why do they run away? this is a knavery

of them to make me afeard.

Re-enter SNOOT.

Snout. O Bottom, thou art changed! what do I see on thee?

Bot. What do you see? you see an ass-head of your own, do you? *[Exit SNOOT.]*

Re-enter QUINCE.

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

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 walk up and down here, and I will sing,

that they shall hear I am not afraid.

The ousel-cock, so black of hue,

With orange-tawny bill,

The throstle with his note so true,

The wren with little quill.

Tita. *[Awaking.]* What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?

Bot. 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 he

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

now-a-days. 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 wit 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, where 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.

Pease-blossom! Cobweb! Moth! and Mustard-

seed!

Enter Four Fairies.

Peas. Ready.

Cob. And I.

Moth. And I.

Mus. And I.

All Four. Where shall we go?

Tita. Be kind and courteous to this gentle-

man;

Hop in his walks, and gambol in his eyes; 172
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 moonbeams from his sleeping eyes:
Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies. 181

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. Your name, honest gentleman? 192

Peas. Pease-blossom.

Bot. I pray you, commend me to Mistress Squash, your mother, and to Master Peascod, your father. Good Master Pease-blossom, I shall desire you of more acquaintance too. Your name, I beseech you, sir? 198

Mus. Mustard-seed.

Bot. Good Master Mustard-seed, I know your patience well: that same cowardly, giant-like ox-beef 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 Mustard-seed.

Tia. Come, wait upon him; lead him to my bower. 206

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. 210

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—Another Part of the Wood.

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.
Here comes my messenger.

Enter PUCK.

How now, mad spirit! 4
What night-rule now about this haunted grove?

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, 8
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. 12

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; 16
An ass's now I fixed on his head:

Anon his Thisbe must be answered,

And forth my mimick comes. When they him spy,

As wild geese that the creeping fowler eye, 20
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, 24
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, 27

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; 32
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? 37

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 ey'd.

Enter DEMETRIUS and HERMIA.

Obe. Stand close: this is the same Athenian.
Puck. This is the woman; but not this the man.

Dem. O! why rebuke you him that loves you so?

Lay breath so bitter on your bitter foe. 44

Her. Now I but chide; but I should use thee worse,

For thou, I fear, hast given me cause to curse.
If thou hast slain Lysander in his sleep,
Being o'er shoes in blood, plunge in knee deep,
And kill me too. 49

The sun was not so true unto the day
As he to me. Would he have stol'n away
From sleeping Hermia? I'll believe as soon 52
This whole earth may be bor'd, and that the moon

May through the centre creep, and so displease
Her brother's noontide with the Antipodes.

It cannot be but thou hast murder'd him; 56
So should a murderer look, so dead, so grim.

Dem. 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. 61

Her. What's this to my Lysander? where is he?

Ah! good Demetrius, wilt thou give him me?

Dem. I had rather give his carcass to my hounds. 64

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, e'en for my sake; 68
Durst thou have look'd upon him being awake,

Enter LYSANDER and HELENA.

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. 125

How can these things in me seem scorn to you,
Bearing the badge of faith to prove them true?

Hel. You do advance your cunning more and more. 128

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. 133

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. 136

Dem. [Awaking.] O Helen! goddess, nymph, perfect, divine!

To what, my love, shall I compare thine eye?
Crystal is muddy. O! how ripe in show 139

Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow;
This pure congealed white, high Taurus' snow,
Fann'd with the eastern wind, turns to a crow
When thou hold'st up thy hand. O! let me kiss 143

That 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. 148

Can you not hate me, as I know you do,
But you must join in souls to mock me too?

If you were men, as men you are in show,
You would not use a gentle lady so; 152

To vow, and swear, and superpraise my parts,
When I am sure you hate me with your hearts.

You both are rivals, and love Hermia,
And now both rivals, to mock Helena: 156

A trim exploit, a manly enterprise,
To conjure tears up in a poor maid's eyes

With your derision! none of noble sort
Would so offend a virgin, and extort 160

A poor soul's patience, all to make you sport.

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; 165

And yours of Helena to me bequeath,
Whom I do love, and will do to my death.

Hel. Never did mockers waste more idle breath.

Dem. Lysander, keep thy Hermia; I will none:

If e'er I lov'd her, all that love is gone.
My heart with her but as guest-wise sojourn'd,

And now to Helen it is home return'd, 172
There to remain.

Lys. Helen, it is not so.

Dem. Disparage not the faith thou dost not know,

And hast thou kill'd him sleeping? O brave touch!

Could not a worm, an adder, do so much?
An adder did it; for with doubler tongue 72

Than thine, thou serpent, never adder stung.

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. 76

Her. I pray thee, tell me then that he is well.

Dem. An if I could, what should I get therefore?

Her. A privilege never to see me more.
And from thy hated presence part I so; 80

See me no more, wh'er he be dead or no. [*Exit.*]

Dem. There is no following her in this fierce vein:

Here therefore for awhile I will remain.
So sorrow's heaviness doth heavier grow 84

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.

[*Lies down and sleeps.*]

Obe. What hast thou done? thou hast mistaken quite, 88

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, 92

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 96
With sighs of love, that cost 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; 100
Swifter than arrow from the Tartar's bow.

[*Exit.*]

Obe. Flower of this purple dye,
Hit with Cupid's archery,

Sink in apple of his eye. 104
When his love he doth espy,
Let her shine as gloriously
As the Venus of the sky.

When thou wak'st, if she be by, 108
Beg of her for remedy.

Re-enter PUCK.

Puck. Captain of our fairy band,
Helena is here at hand,

And the youth, mistook by me, 112
Pleading for a lover's fee.

Shall we their fond pageant see?
Lord, what fools these mortals be!

Obe. Stand aside: the noise they make 116
Will cause Demetrius to awake.

Puck. Then will two at once woo one;
That must needs be sport alone;

And those things do best please me 120
That befall preposterously.

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. 180
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
Than all yon fiery oes and eyes of light. 183

Why seek'st thou me? could not this make thee know,

The hate I bear thee made me leave thee so?

Her. You speak not as you think: it cannot be.

Hel. Lo! she is one of this confederacy. 192
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 196

To bait me with this foul derision?

Is all the counsel that we two have shar'd,
The sister-vows, the hours that we have spent,

When we have chid the hasty-footed time 200
For parting us, O! is it all forgot?

All school-days' friendship, childhood innocence?

We, Hermia, like two artificial gods, 203
Have with our needls 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, 209

But yet an 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, 213

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: 217
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.
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,— 224
Who even but now did spurn me with his foot,—

To call me goddess, nymph, divine and rare,
Precious, celestial? Wherefore speaks he this

To her he hates? and wherefore doth Lysander

Deny your love, so rich within his soul, 229
And tender me, forsooth, affection,
But by your setting on, by your consent?

What though I be not so in grace as you, 232
So hung upon with love, so fortunate,
But miserable most to love unlov'd?

This you should pity rather than despise.

Her. I understand not what you mean by this. 236

Hel. Ay, do, persevere, 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. 240

If you have any pity, grace, or manners,
You would not make me such an argument.

But, fare ye well: 'tis partly mine own fault,
Which death or absence soon shall remedy. 244

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: 249

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, 252

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!

Her. Lysander, whereto tends all this?

Lys. Away, you Ethiop!

Dem. No, no, he'll . . . 257
Seem to break loose; take on, as you would follow,

But yet come not: you are a tame man, go!

Lys. [To HERMIA.] Hang off, thou cat, thou burr! vile thing, let loose, 260

Or I will shake thee from me like a serpent.

Her. Why are you grown so rude? what change is this,

Sweet love,—

Lys. Thy love! out, tawny Tartar, out!

Out, loathed medicine! hated poison, hence!

Her. 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. 268

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? 272

Am not I 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; 277
And never did desire to see thee more.

Therefore be out of hope, of question, doubt;
Be certain, nothing truer: 'tis no jest, 280

That I do hate thee and love Helena.

Her. O me! 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, 285

No touch of bashfulness? What! will you tear
Impatient answers from my gentle tongue?

Fie, fie! you counterfeit, you puppet you! 288

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, 292
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 297

But that my nails can reach unto thine eyes.

Hel. I pray you, though you mock me, gentlemen,

Let her not hurt me: I was never curst; 300
I have no gift at all in shrewishness;

I am a right maid for my cowardice:
Let her not strike me. You perhaps may think,

Because she is something lower than myself, 304

Than I can match her.

Her. Lower! hark, again.

Hel. Good Hermia, do not be so bitter with me.

I evermore did love you, Hermia,
Did ever keep your counsels, never wrong'd 308

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 312

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: let me go: 316

You see how simple and how fond I am.

Her. Why, get you gone. Who is't that hinders you?

Hel. A foolish heart, that I leave here behind.

Her. What! with Lysander?

Hel. With Demetrius.

Lys. Be not afraid: she shall not harm thee, Helena. 321

Dem. No, sir; she shall not, though you take her part.

Hel. O! when she's angry, she is keen and shrewd.

She was a vixen when she went to school: 324

And though she be but little, she is fierce.

Her. 'Little' again! nothing but 'low' and 'little'!

Why will you suffer her to flout me thus?
Let me come to her.

Lys. Get you gone, you dwarf; 328
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; 332
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,
Or thine or mine, is most in Helena. 337

Dem. Follow! nay, I'll go with thee, cheek by jole.

[*Exeunt LYSANDER and DEMETRIUS.*

Her. You, mistress, all this coil is 'long of you:

Nay, go not back.

Hel. I will not trust you, I, 340
Nor longer stay in your curst company.

Your hands than mine are quicker for a fray,
My legs are longer though, to run away. [*Exit.*

Her. I am amaz'd, and know not what to say. [*Exit.*

Obe. This is thy negligence: still thou mistak'st, 345

Or else commit'st thy knaveries wilfully.

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? 349

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, 352
As this their jangling I esteem a sport.

Obe. Thou see'st these lovers seek a place to fight:

Hie therefore, Robin, overcast the night;
The starry welkin cover thou anon 356

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 thy tongue,

Then stir Demetrius up with bitter wrong; 361
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, 367

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, 372
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 376
From monster's view, and all things shall be peace.