

I.1

Athens, the Place of Theseus

[Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Philostrate]

THESEUS: Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour draws near. Four happy days bring in another moon and our wedding. But, O, me thinks how slow this moon wanes.

HIPPOLYTA: Four days will quickly steep themselves into night, and four nights will quickly dream away the time. Then the new moon, like a silver bow, shall behold the night of our solemnities.

THESEUS: Go, Philostrate. Stir up the Athenian youth to merriment. Awake the pert and nimble spirit of mirth. *[Exit Philostrate]* Hippolyta, I wooed you with my sword. But I will wed you in another key with pomp, with triumph and with reveling.

[Enter Egeus, Hermia, Lysander and Demetrius]

EGEUS: Happy be Theseus, our renowned Duke!

THESEUS: Good Egeus. What news with thee?

EGEUS: Bad news, I fear. I come full of vexation with my daughter, Hermia. Stand forth, Demetrius. Sir, this man has my consent to marry Hermia. Stand forth, Lysander. This man has bewitched the bosom of my child. Lysander, you have given her rhymes and exchanged love-tokens with my daughter. You have sung at her window by moonlight and stolen the impression of her fantasy.

HIPPOLYTA: But why has this vexed you so?

EGEUS: He has turned her obedience, which is due to me, into stubborn harshness. She will not here before your grace consent to marry with Demetrius. My lord, I beg the ancient privilege of Athens. As her father, I may dispose of her either to this gentleman, or to her death.

THESEUS: That is your right under the ancient law, but what say you, Hermia? Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

HERMIA: So is Lysander.

THESEUS: In himself he is, but in your mind the other must be held the more worthy.

HERMIA: I would my father looked with my eyes.

THESEUS: Rather your eyes must look with his judgment.

HERMIA: I do entreat your grace to pardon me. I know not by what power I am made so bold, nor how it may concern my modesty. But I beseech your grace that I may know the worst that may befall me in this case should I refuse to wed Demetrius.

THESEUS: The Athenian law is clear. Either you accept to wed Demetrius or prepare for your death.

1 HIPPOLYTA: My dearest lord, Cupid has laid such a power mark upon her.
2 *[Whispers to Theseus]*

3 THESUS: You may abstain forever the society of men. Therefore, fair
4 Hermia, question your desires. If you yield not to your father's choice,
5 you will endure the life of a nun.

6 HERMIA: So will I live and so I will die, my lord.

7 THESUS: Take time to pause and by the next new moon, the sealing-day
8 betwixt my love and me, prepare either to die for disobedience to your
9 father's will to wed Demetrius, the man of your father's choosing, or
10 abandon all hope of life outside the convent, chanting hymns to the
11 cold fruitless moon.

12 EGEUS: If she will not take Demetrius and as I have the father's right to
13 choose her husband. How about . . .

14 HERMIA: *[ad lib, Too tall, too short . . .]* No one but Lysander.

15 DEMETRIUS: Relent, sweet Hermia.

16 LYSANDER: You have her father's love Demetrius. You can marry her and
17 I'm sure you both will be very happy.

18 EGEUS: Scornful, Lysander! True, he has my love and what is mine shall be
19 rendered to him. And as she is mine, all my right to her I do give to
20 Demetrius.

21 LYSANDER: I am my lord, as well derived as he. My fortunes are in every
22 way as fairly ranked as his. I am beloved by Hermia. Then why should
23 not I pursue my right? Demetrius has won the love of Nedar's
24 daughter, Helena. She devoutly dotes upon him.

25 HIPPOLYTA: I must confess that I have heard so much.

26 THESUS: Demetrius, Egeus come and go with me. I have some private
27 schooling for you both. For you fair Hermia, arm yourself to fit your
28 fancies to your father's will, or else the law of Athens yields you up to
29 death, or to a vow of single life. Come my Hippolyta. What cheer, my
30 love? Demetrius and Egeus come along.

31 EGEUS: With duty and desire we follow you.

32 *[Exeunt all but Hippolyta, Lysander and Hermia]*

34 I.2

36 *Same*

37 LYSANDER: How now my love! Why is your cheek so pale? How the
38 roses do fade so fast!

39 HERMIA: Perhaps they want of rain from the tempest of mine eyes.

1 HIPPOLYTA: Good Lysander fair Hermia. For all that I have read and
2 heard by tale or history, the course of true love never did run smooth.
3 You must fly far from Athens and never return.

4 LYSANDER: Hermia, I have a widowed aunt from Athens her house is a
5 mere seven leagues. There my love, I can marry you and in that place
6 the sharp Athenian law cannot pursue us.

7 HERMIA: My good Lysander! I swear to you by Cupid's strongest bow, I
8 will meet you.

9 LYSANDER: Keep promise love, my lady Hippolyta.

10 HIPPOLYTA: If true lovers have ever been crossed, it stands as an edict in
11 destiny. You must have patience in your trial and all happiness will be
12 yours. God's blessing on you.

13 HERMIA: And you. Thank you.

14 *[Exit Hippolyta]*

15 LYSANDER: Look, here comes Helena.

16 *[Enter Helena]*

17 HERMIA: God speed fair Helena! Whither you away?

18 HELENA: You call me fair? Demetrius loves your fair. Your eyes are lode-
19 stars and your tongue's sweet air more tunable than the lark to
20 shepherd's ear. Oh, were I so favored. Hermia, teach me how you
21 look and with what art you sway the motion of Demetrius' heart.

22 HERMIA: I frown upon him, yet he loves me still.

23 HELENA: O that your frowns would teach my smiles such skill!

24 HERMIA: I give him curses, yet he gives me love.

25 HELENA: O that my prayers could such affection move!

26 HERMIA: The more I hate, the more he follows me.

27 HELENA: The more I love, the more he hates me.

28 HERMIA: Tis his folly, Helena, and no fault of mine.

29 HELENA: None, but your beauty and would that fault were mine!

30 HERMIA: Take comfort he shall see my face no more. Lysander and myself
31 will fly this place.

32 LYSANDER: Helena, to you we will unfold our minds. Tomorrow night, we
33 will steal through Athens' gates.

34 HERMIA: And from Athens, turn away our eyes to forever seek new friends
35 and stranger companies. Farewell, sweet friend. Pray for us. God will
36 grant you your Demetrius. Lysander, we must starve our sight from
37 each other until tomorrow's deep midnight.

38 LYSANDER: I will, my Hermia. *[Exit Hermia]* Helena, adieu. As you on
39 him, I pray Demetrius dote on you!

40 *[Exit Lysander]*

1 HELENA: *[aside]* Throughout all Athens, I am thought as fair as Hermia.
2 But what of that? Demetrius thinks not so. He dotes on her as much as
3 I am admiring of his qualities. I will go tell him of his fair Hermia's
4 flight. Then to the wood will he pursue her tomorrow night. And for
5 this intelligence if I have his thanks it is a dear price to pay. But herein
6 I mean only to enrich my pain. To have his sight thither and back
7 again.

8 *[Exit Helena]*

10 I.3

11 *Athens. Quince's house.*

12 *[Enter Snug, Bottom, Flute, Starveling and Audience Members*
13 *ad Lib lines about theater and auditions]*

14 *[Enter Quince]*

15 QUINCE: Are we all here?

16 BOTTOM: You were best to call them generally man by man according to
17 the script.

18 QUINCE: My thanks to you all for auditioning today. All were wonderful,
19 but though as you know, only a few may join in the company.
20 Perchance if you are not cast, you will come again in the Fall when we
21 will present "Icaris and the Joy of Flight." A joyful romp about a
22 young man's quest for travel.

23 BOTTOM: Good Peter Quince. Say what our current play treats on, then
24 read the names of the actors and so grow to a point.

25 QUINCE: Merry, our play is, "The most lamentable comedy and most cruel
26 death of Pyramus and Thisby."

27 BOTTOM: A very good piece of work, I assure you. But now, good Peter
28 Quince, call forth your actors by the scroll. Masters, spread yourselves.

29 QUINCE: Here is the scroll of every man's name which is thought fit
30 throughout all of Athens to play in our interlude before the duke and
31 the duchess on their wedding day. Answer as I call you. Francis
32 Flute, the bellows-mender

33 FLUTE: Here, Peter Quince.

34 QUINCE: Flute, you must take Thisby on you.

35 FLUTE: What is Thisby, a wandering knight?

36 QUINCE: It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

37 FLUTE: So, I will take the lady upon me.

38 QUINCE: No, you are set to play Thisby.

39 FLUTE: Nay, in faith, let me not play a woman. I have a beard coming.

1 QUINCE: I see but one . . You may play it in a mask and speak as small as
2 you will.

3 BOTTOM: Let me play Thisby. I can hide my face and I'll speak in a
4 monstrous little voice "Ah, Pyramus, lover dear! I am Thisby, your
5 lady dear."

6 QUINCE: No. Flute must play Thisby.

7 BOTTOM: Very well, proceed.

8 QUINCE: Robin Starveling, the tailor.

9 STARVELING: Here, Peter Quince.

10 QUINCE: Robin, you will play Thisby's father.

11 STARVELING: The father?

12 QUINCE: Yes, for her father labors to keep the lovers apart.

13 BOTTOM: I can play the father. Go to your room! Why, when I was your
14 age, I would have never disobeyed my father. Children, nowadays.
15 Don't make me hike up my pants!

16 QUINCE: No. Robin is perfect for the father.

17 BOTTOM: Very well.

18 QUINCE: Snug, the joiner.

19 SNUG: Yes?

20 QUINCE: You shall have the lion's part of the play.

21 BOTTOM: The lion's share? Snug the joiner? My dear Quince, Snug has
22 not so much brain as ear wax. Is his head worth a hat or his chin a true
23 beard? See he can barely keep himself clean. His breath smells of
24 toasted cheese and three times his nose discharged against me. He
25 stands there as a mortar ready to blow. I pray you, how many plays
26 have I done? Don't you recall my Apollo in your "Apollo and the
27 Seven Muses?" They thought I truly was a God. And my Ercles. I
28 stunned the audience and remember that the fire was not my fault.

29 QUINCE: My dear Bottom.

30 BOTTOM: Look at him. Should we really let him play the lion's part of the
31 play?

32 QUINCE: Bottom, it is not the lion's part. It is the part of the lion.

33 BOTTOM: Oh. Very well then.

34 QUINCE: Snug?

35 SNUG: Have you the lion's part written? Pray you, if it be, give it to me for
36 I am slow of study.

37 QUINCE: You may do it extemporaneously, for it is nothing but roaring.

38 SNUG: Roaring?

39 QUINCE: Arrg!

40 SNUG: Arrg!

1 BOTTOM: If he wants it not, I'll play the lion. I will roar so that I will do
2 any man's heart good to hear. I will roar so that I will make the duke
3 say "Let him roar again. Let him roar again."
4 QUINCE: Yes and you should do it too well. You would so frighten the
5 duchess and the ladies that they would shriek and that would be enough
6 to hang us all.
7 SNUG: That would hang us, every mother's son.
8 QUINCE: Snug will be the perfect lion. Nick Bottom the weaver.
9 BOTTOM: Ready. Name what part I am for.
10 QUINCE: You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus.
11 BOTTOM: Pyramus of "Pyramus and Thisby?"
12 QUINCE: Yes.
13 BOTTOM: Oh thank you [*ad lib - Miss America, All applaude*] What is
14 Pyramus? A lover or a tyrant?
15 QUINCE: A lover who kills himself most gallantly for love.
16 BOTTOM: That will ask some tears in the true performing of it. I will move
17 storms in the eyes of the audience. This is lofty! I thought I was not to
18 be cast.
19 QUINCE: You can play no part but Pyramus
20 BOTTOM: Pyramus, the lead.
21 QUINCE: Pyramus is a sweet-faced man. A proper man as gentle as one
22 shall see in a summer's day. Therefore you must play Pyramus.
23 BOTTOM: Well, with your faith, I will undertake it. What beard were I best
24 to play it in?
25 QUINCE: Why, what you will.
26 BOTTOM: I can discharge it in either your straw-colored beard, your orange-
27 tawny beard, your gray-in-grain beard or your perfect yellow.
28 QUINCE: Some of your beards have no hair at all and then you will play
29 bare-faced. The rest, I thank you for coming and maybe next time.
30 [*Usher Audience Members to seats*] Masters, you have your parts. I
31 entreat you to learn them by tomorrow night. Meet me in the wood a
32 mile outside the town. There will we rehearse by moonlight for if we
33 meet in the city, we shall be dogged with company and our devices
34 known. In the meantime, I will draw a bill of properties such as our
35 play warrants. I pray you, fail me not.
36 BOTTOM: Adieu.
37 QUINCE: [*Call Remoove*]

38 [*Exeunt*]
39

40 II.1 41

1 *A wood near Athens*
2 *[Enter from opposite sides, Squash and Moth and Puck]*
3 PUCK: How now, spirits! Whither wander you?
4 FAIRY: Over hill, over dale, through bush, through brief.
5 MOTH: Over park, over pale, through flood, through fire.
6 FAIRY: We do wander everywhere, swifter than the moon's sphere.
7 MOTH: We serve the fairy queen to dew her orbs upon the green.
8 PUCK: The King doth keep his revels here tonight. Take heed your Queen
9 come not within his sight.
10 FAIRY: Either I mistake your shape or else you are that shrewd and knavish
11 sprite called Robin Goodfellow. Are you not he that frightens the
12 maidens of the village?
13 MOTH: Those that Hobgoblin call you Sweet Puck. You do their work and
14 they shall have good luck. Are not you he?
15 PUCK: Thou speak'st right. I am that merry wanderer of the night. I jest to
16 Oberon and make him smile. But make room fairies, here comes my
17 king, Oberon.
18 FAIRY: And here, our mistress.
19 MOTH: Would that he were gone!
20 *[Enter from one side, Oberon,*
21 *and from the other side, Titania, Cobweb,*
22 *Mustardseed and Peaseblossom]*
23 OBERON: We meet by moonlight, proud Titania.
24 TITANIA: What, jealous Oberon! Fairies, away. I have forsworn his bed
25 and company.
26 OBERON: Tarry rash wanton. Am not I thy lord?
27 TITANIA: If so, then I must be thy lady, but why art thou here? I know thou
28 hast stolen away from fairy land and hast sat all day playing on pipes
29 and versing love to amorous Phillida. Why art thou here? Oh yes!
30 Thesus must be wedded and you come to give them joy and prosperity.
31 OBERON: O for shame, Titania! Would you have me curse him, for I know
32 thy love for the mortal, Thesus?
33 TITANIA: This is a forgery of jealousy. Never since the middle summer's
34 spring have we met on hill or in dale to dance our ringlets to the
35 whistling wind.
36 OBERON: Will you amend it then? Why should Titania cross her Oberon?
37 TITANIA: Thy brawls hast disturbed our sport.
38 OBERON: How long within this wood do you intend to stay?
39 TITANIA: Perchance till after Thesus' wedding day. Fairies, away! We
40 shall chide downright if I stay here longer.
41 *[Exit Titania with her fairies]*

1 OBERON: My gentle Puck, come hither. There is a flower marked by
 2 Cupid's fiery shaft once milk-white now purple with love's wound.
 3 The maidens call it Love-In-Idleness. I need that flower. The juice of
 4 it when laid on sleeping eye-lids will make any man or woman madly
 5 dote upon the next live creature that it sees. Fetch me this herb.
 6 PUCK: I'll put a girdle round about the earth and return home in forty
 7 minutes.
 8 *[Exit Puck]*
 9 OBERON: *[aside]* Having once this juice, I'll watch Titania when she is
 10 asleep and drop the liquor of it in her eyes. Upon waking the next thing
 11 she looks upon, be it lion or bear or wolf or bull, she shall pursue it
 12 with the soul of love. But who comes here? I am invisible and I will
 13 overhear their conference.
 14 *[Enter Demetrius, Helena following him]*
 15 DEMETRIUS: I love you not, therefore pursue me not. Where is Lysander
 16 and fair Hermia? The one I'll slay while the other slays me. You told
 17 me they have stolen into this wood, but yet I cannot find them. Where
 18 are they?
 19 HELENA: Demetrius . . .
 20 DEMETRIUS: Follow me no more.
 21 HELENA: My love...
 22 DEMETRIUS: My love? Do I entice you? Do I speak fair to you? Or rather
 23 do I not in plainest truth, tell you that I do not nor I cannot ever love
 24 you?
 25 HELENA: And even for that do I love you the more. Neglect me. lose me,
 26 only give me leave, unworthy as I am, to follow you.
 27 DEMETRIUS: Do not tempt my hatred for you too much for I am sick when
 28 I look on you.
 29 HELENA: And I am sick when I look not upon you.
 30 DEMETRIUS: I'll run from you, hide in the brakes and leave you to the wild
 31 beasts.
 32 HELENA: The wildest beat has not such a cold heart as you.
 33 DEMETRIUS: I will not stay here. Let me go. If you follow me, I will do
 34 you great mischief in the wood.
 35 HELENA: Fie, Demetrius. Your wrongs do set a scandal on my sex. We
 36 cannot fight for love as men may do. We should be wooed. We were
 37 not meant to woo.
 38 DEMETRIUS: Not meant to woo? You are the bluntest wooer in all of
 39 Christendom.
 40 *[Exit Demetrius]*
 41 HELENA: I will follow you and make a heaven out of hell.

1 *[Exit Helena]*

2
3 **II.2**

4
5 *[Enter Puck alone with Love flower]*

6 PUCK: This is the flower my master hast requested. Yet I cannot see how it
7 can make one dote upon another. Perchance I could find a subject to
8 try it on. *[ad lib, Places on own eyes by accident, Sees Audience*
9 *Member, becomes running joke]*

10 *[Enter Oberon]*

11 OBERON: Has thou the flower there?

12 PUCK: Ay, here it is.

13 OBERON: I pray thee give it to me. *[ad lib to audience]* There sleeps
14 Titania sometime of the night. With this juice I streak her eyes and
15 make her full of hateful fantasies. There is also in this grove a sweet
16 Athenian lady who is in love with a disdainful youth. Take some of
17 this and anoint his eyes, but do it when the next thing he spies may be
18 the lady. Thou shalt know him by the Athenian garments he has on.

19 PUCK: Fear not my lord. Your servant shall do so.

20 *[Exit]*

21
22
23 **II.3**

24
25 *Another part of the wood.*

26 *[Enter Titania with her fairies]*

27 TITANIA: Come, help me now asleep. Then to your offices and let me rest.

28 SQUASH: You spotted snakes with double tongue. Thorny hedgehogs, be
29 not seen.

30 MOTH: Newts and blindworms do no wrong. Come not near our Fairy
31 Queen.

32 PEASEBLOSSOM: Philomel with melody sing in our lullaby.

33 COBWEB: Nevrr harm, nor spell, nor any charm come to our Lady nigh.

34 MUSTARDSEED: Weaving spiders come not here. Hence you long-legged
35 spinners, hence!

36 MOTH: Beetles black, approach not near. Worm nor snail, do no offense.

37 COBWEB: So, goodnight, our Queen.

38 SQUASH: Hence, away! Now all is well. Two sentinels stand aloof.

39 *[Titania sleeps]*

40 *[Exeunt Fairy, Mustardseed and Peaseblossom]*

41 *[Enter Oberon who squeezes the flower on Titania's eyelids]*

1 OBERON: What thou seest when thou dost wake do it for they true-love
2 take. Love and languish for his sake. When thou wakes, it is thy dear.
3 Wake when some vile thing is near.
4 *[Exit Oberon]*
5 *[Enter Lysander and Hermia]*
6 LYSANDER: Fair love, you faint with wandering in the wood. And to speak
7 my troth. I have lost our way. Let us rest, Hermia.
8 HERMIA: Be it so, Lysander. Find you a bed, for I will rest upon this bank.
9 LYSANDER: One turf can serve as pillow for us both. One heart, one bed
10 and one troth.
11 HERMIA: Nay, good Lysander. For my sake, dear love, do not lie so near.
12 Gentle friend, such separation as may well be said becomes a virtuous
13 bachelor and a maiden. So goodnight, sweet friend. May your love
14 never alter till our sweet lives end.
15 LYSANDER: Amen to that prayer, say I amen. I hope to end my life when I
16 end my loyalty to you.
17 HERMIA: Here is my bed. There is yours. Sleep give us all his rest.
18 *[They sleep.]*
19 *[Enter Puck]*
20 *[Enter Demetrius and Helena running]*
21 HELENA: Sweet Demetrius.
22 DEMETRIUS: I charge you do not haunt me so.
23 HELENA: Stay with me, though you kill me.
24 DEMETRIUS: Stay here on your own peril. I will go on alone.
25 *[Exit Demetrius]*
26 HELENA: O, I am out of breath from this chase! But who is here? Lysander
27 on the ground. Dead or asleep? I see no blood, no wound. Lysander,
28 if you live, good sir, awake!
29 LYSANDER: *[Awaking]* And run through fire I will for your sweet sake.
30 Where is Demetrius? O, hot fit a word is that vile name to perish upon
31 my sword!
32 HELENA: Do not say so, Lysander. Though he loves your Hermia, she still
33 loves you. So then be content.
34 LYSANDER: Content with Hermia? Ha! I do repent the tedious minutes I
35 have spent with her. It is not Hermia, but Helena I do love!
36 HELENA: What?!
37 LYSANDER: Who would not change a raven for a dove?
38 HELENA: Lysander! Why was I born to this mockery? When at your hands
39 did I deserve this scorn? It is not enough that I can never deserve a
40 sweet look from Demetrius' eye. But must you flaunt my
41 insufficiency?

1 *[Exit Helena]*
2 LYSANDER: She sees not Hermia sleeping there. And now may never
3 Lysander come near Hermia. Now all my powers address my love and
4 might to honor Helena and to be her knight.

5 *[Exit Lysander]*
6 HERMIA: *[Awaking]* Help me. Lysander, help me! Ay me, what a dream
7 was here. Lysander, look how I do quake with fear. Lysander!
8 Lysander! Gone? Where are you? Speak and if you hear, speak in the
9 name of love. I swoon almost with fear. No? Then I will perceive you
10 are not high. Either death or my love I'll find immediately. *[Call*
11 *Remoove]*

12 *[Exit Hermia]*
13

14 III.1

15
16 *The wood. Titania lying asleep.*
17 *[Enter Quince, Snug, Bottom, Starveling and Flute]*
18 BOTTOM: Are we all met?
19 QUINCE: Yes and here's a marvelous convenient place for our rehearsal.
20 This green plot shall be our stage. This hawthorn-brake our tiring-
21 house. We will do it in action as we will do it before the Duke.
22 BOTTOM: Peter Quince.
23 QUINCE: Yes?
24 BOTTOM: There are things in this comedy of Pyramus and Thisby that will
25 never please. First, Pyramus must draw a sword to kill himself which
26 the ladies cannot abide. How answer you to that?
27 STARVELING: I believe we must leave the killing out when all is done.
28 BOTTOM: No, not a whit! I have a device to make all well. Write me a
29 prologue and let the prologue seem to say we will do no harm with our
30 swords and that Pyramus is not killed indeed. And for the more better
31 assurance, tell them that I, Pyramus, am not Pyramus at all, but Bottom
32 the weaver, the actor last seen as the third fisherman in Orid's
33 "Neptune's Ocean."
34 QUINCE: My bully Bottom.
35 BOTTOM: A prologue that will put them out of fear.
36 QUINCE: Very well, we will have such a prologue.
37 SNUG: Will not the ladies be afraid of the lion?
38 FLUTE: I fear it. I promise you.
39 STARVELING: Therefore another prologue must tell he is not a lion.
40 BOTTOM: Yes! You must name his name and half his face must be seen
41 through the lion's neck. He himself must speak saying thus, or to the

1 same defect. 'Ladies' or 'Fair-ladies I would wish you,' or 'I would
2 request you' or 'I would entreat you not to fear, not to tremble. If you
3 think I come hither as a lion. I am no such thing.' I am a man as other
4 men are and there indeed let him name his name and tell them plainly
5 he is Sung the joiner.

6 SNUG: Will this prologue be written or must I speak ex. . extim. . . extpor . .
7 without a scroll?

8 QUINCE: No, it will be written.

9 SNUG: Thanks, Peter Quince.

10 QUINCE: Well, it shall be so. But there are two hard things. That is to bring
11 the moonlight into a chamber. For as you know, Pyramus and Thisby
12 meet by moonlight.

13 STARVELING: Does the moon shine that night we play our play?

14 QUINCE: Yes, it does shine that night.

15 BOTTOM: Why then, you may leave a window open where we play so the
16 moon may shine in.

17 QUINCE: Ay, or else one must come in and say he comes to present the
18 Moon. Then there is another thing. We must have a wall in the great
19 chamber for Pyramus and Thisby so says the story, did talk through the
20 chink of a wall.

21 FLUTE: We can never bring in a wall. What say you, Bottom?

22 BOTTOM: Some man or other must present the Wall. Let him hold his
23 fingers thus and through that cranny shall Pyramus and Thisby whisper.
24 *[Enter Puck behind]*

25 QUINCE: If that may be, then all is well. Come every mother's son and
26 rehearse your parts. [Actors warm-up] Pyramus, you begin. When you
27 have spoken your speech, enter into that brake and so every one
28 according to his cue.

29 PUCK: What hempen home-spuns have we swaggering here so near the
30 cradle of the Fairy Queen? What a play! I'll play a critic. An actor
31 too, if I see cause.

32 QUINCE: Speak Pyramus, Thisby, stand close.

33 BOTTOM: Thisby, the flowers of odious savors sweet.

34 QUINCE: Odors! The word is odors.

35 BOTTOM: Odors savors sweet. So hath thy breath my dearest Thisby, dear.
36 But hark a voice! Stay thou here but awhile and by and by I will to
37 thee appear.
38 *[Exit Bottom]*

39 PUCK: A stranger Pyramus there never played here.
40 *[Exit Puck]*

41 FLUTE: Must I speak now?

1 QUINCE: Ay merry, you must. For you understand he goes to find a noise
2 that he heard and is to come again.

3 FLUTE: Most radiant Pyramus, most lilly-white of hue, or color like the red
4 rose on triumphant briar. As true as truest horse that yet would never
5 tire, I'll meet thee, Pyramus, at Ninny's tomb.

6 QUINCE: 'Ninus' tomb' man. But you must not speak that yet. That you
7 answer to Pyramus. You spoke all your part at once, cues and all.
8 Pyramus enter. Your cue is past. It is 'never tire.'

9 BOTTOM: Heaven's fire?

10 QUINCE: Never tire! Never tire! Use your ears!

11 FLUTE: O, as true as truest horse, that yet would never tire.

12 *[Enter Puck and Bottom with an ass's head]*

13 BOTTOM: If I were fair Thisby, I were only thine.

14 QUINCE: O monstrous! O strange! We are haunted. Pray, masters! Fly,
15 masters! Help!

16 PUCK: *[laughs]*

17 *[Exit Puck]*

18 BOTTOM: Why do you run away? What is this? It is a knavery.

19 STARVELING: O Bottom, you are changed!

20 FLUTE: What do I see on you?

21 BOTTOM: What do you see? You see an asshead of your own, do you?

22 *[Exit Snug, Starveling and Flute]*

23 QUINCE: Bless you, Bottom! Bless you! You are transformed.

24 *[Exit Quince]*

25 BOTTOM: I see their knavery. This is to make an ass of me, to frighten me,
26 if they could. But I will not stir from this place. I will walk up and
27 down here and I will sing so that they shall hear I am not afraid.

28 *[Sings]*

29 The woosel cock so black of hue.
30 With orange-tawny bill,
31 The throttle with his note so true.
32 The wren with little quill. - -

33 TITANIA: *[Awaking]* What angle wakes me from my flowery bed?

34 BOTTOM: *[Sings]*

35 The finch, the sparrow and the lark,
36 The plain-song cuckoo gray.
37 Whose note full many a man doth mark
38 And dares not answer nay - -

39 TITANIA: I pray thee gentle mortal, sing again. Mine ear is much
40 enamoured of thy note. So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape. Thy

1 fair virtue's force doth move me on the first view to say, nay, to swear I
2 love thee.
3 BOTTOM: I think mistress you should have little reason for that. Yet, to say
4 the truth, reason and love keep little company together nowadays.
5 TITANIA: Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.
6 BOTTOM; Not so, if only I had wit enough to get out of this wood.
7 TITANIA: No, out of this wood do not desire to go. Thou shalt remain here.
8 I am a spirit of no common rate and I do love thee. Therefore, come
9 with me and I'll give thee fairies to attend thee.

III.2

Another part of the wood.

[Enter Oberon]

15 OBERON: I wonder if Titania has awakened. Then, what it was that next
16 came in her eye, which she must eternally dote upon. *[Enter Puck]*
17 Here comes my messenger. How now, mad spirit! What say you?

18 PUCK: My mistress is in love with a monster.

19 OBERON: This falls out better than I could devise. Hast thou yet latched the
20 Athenian's eyes with the love-juice as I did bid thee do?

21 PUCK: I took him while he was sleeping, so that is finished too. The
22 Athenian woman was by his side, so that when he wakes she must be
23 eyed.

[Enter Hermia and Demetrius]

25 DEMETRIUS: Hermia.

26 OBERON: Who comes here? Stand close.

27 PUCK: This is the Athenian woman, but that is not the man.

28 DEMETRIUS: O, why rebuke him that loves you so?

29 HERMIA: Demetrius, if you have slain Lysander in his sleep, then kill me
30 too. The sun is not so true unto the day as he is to me. It cannot be.
31 You have murdered him. And so should his murderer look, so dead
32 and so grim.

33 DEMETRIUS: Yea, so should the murdered look and so should I. For I am
34 pierced through the heart with your stern cruelty. Yet you, the
35 murderer, look as bright and clear as the morrow.

36 HERMIA: What's this to my Lysander? Where is he? Ah, good Demetrius,
37 wouldn't you give him to me?

38 DEMETRIUS: I had rather give his carcass to my hounds. No, I am not
39 guilty of Lysander's blood. Nor is he dead for ought that I can tell.

40 HERMIA: I pray you tell me that he is well then.

41 DEMETRIUS: And if I could, what should I get then?

1 HERMIA: The privilege to never see me anymore. You've no answer? Then
2 from your hated presence I do part.
3 *[Exit Hermia]*
4 DEMETRIUS: There is no following her in this fierce vein. Here therefore, I
5 will remain. My sorrow's heaviness grows heavier still and for its
6 tender, here I make my sleep.
7 *[Lies down and sleeps]*
8 OBERON: [head slap] What hast thou done? Thou hast quite mistakenly
9 laid the love-juice on some other true-love's sight. Some true love
10 turned false and not a false one turned true.
11 PUCK: Then fate over-rules.
12 OBERON: *[head slap]* About the wood, go swifter than the wind. Helena
13 of Athens, look thou find. All fancy-sick she is and pate of sheer. By
14 some illusion bring her here.
15 PUCK: I go, I go. Look how I go. Swifter than arrow.
16 *[Exit Puck]*
17 OBERON: Flower of this purple dye hit with Cupid's archery, sink in the
18 apple of his eye. When his true love he doth spy, let her shine as
19 gloriously as Venus in the sky.
20 *[Enter Puck]*
21 PUCK: Captain of our fairy band, Helena is here at hand. The youth mistook
22 by me, follows pleading for a lover's fee. Shall we their fond pageant
23 see? Lord, what fools these mortals be!
24 OBERON: Stand aside. The noise they make will cause Demetrius to awake.
25 *[Enter Lysander and Helena]*
26 LYSANDER: Why should you think that I should woo you in scorn?
27 HELENA: You do advance your cunning more and more. These vows are
28 Hermia's.
29 LYSANDER: I had no judgment when I swore to her.
30 HELENA: Nor none, in my mind, now that you give her over.
31 LYSANDER: Demetrius loves her and he loves you not.
32 DEMETRIUS: *[Awaking]* Oh what is here? *[Demetrius awakes, rubs eyes*
33 *and moves to audience. Oberon and Puck spin him around to look at*
34 *Helena.]* O, Helena, goddess, perfection divine! To what, my love,
35 shall I compare you? O, your lips, your lips. Those kissing cherries
36 tempting grow. O, let me kiss them, sweet Princess.
37 HELENA: O, spite! O, hell! I see you all are bent to set against me for your
38 own merriment. If you were civil and knew courtesy, you would not do
39 me this much injury. How can you not hate me, as I know you do.
40 Must you join in souls to mock me too? If you were men, as men you
41 are in show. You would not use a gentle lady so. I am sure you hate

1 me with your hearts. You are both rivals and love Hermia. But now
2 both rivals join to mock Helena.

3 LYSANDER: Demetrius, you love Hermia. This you know that I know.
4 And here, with all my good will, with all my heart, I yield you up
5 Hermia's love. In turn, your love of Helena you will give to me. I do
6 love her and will do till my death.

7 DEMETRIUS: Lysander, keep your Hermia. I will have none of her. If ever
8 I loved her, all that love is gone. My heart to her was but a sojourned.
9 Now to Helena it is returned home and there it will remain. Look, here
10 comes your love.

11 *[Enter Hermia]*

12 HERMIA: Lysander! I've found you. My ear, I thank it, brought me to the
13 sound of your voice. But why did you leave me so?

14 LYSANDER: Why should I stay when love presses me to go?

15 HERMIA: What love could press Lysander from my side?

16 LYSANDER: Fair Helena calls my love to her side.

17 HERMIA: You speak not as you think. It cannot be.

18 HELENA: Lo, she is one of this confederacy! Now I perceive how they have
19 conjoined all three to fashion this false sport in spite of me. Oh,
20 injurious Hermia. Have you conspired with them to bait me with this
21 foul derision? Is all the counsel that we two have shared, the sisters'
22 vows, the hours that we have spent, all forgotten? Have you joined
23 with men in scorning your poor friend?

24 HERMIA: I am amazed at your passionate words. I scorn you not. No,
25 rather it seems that you scorn me.

26 HELENA: Have you not set Lysander to follow me and praise my eyes and
27 face? And made your other love, Demetrius call me goddess and
28 divine? Why should he speak this to me whom he hates? Why would
29 Lysander deny your love so rich within his soul? Why should he tender
30 me his affection, if not by your own consent?

31 HERMIA: I cannot understand what you mean by this.

32 HELENA: Aye, yes, I do! Counterfeit sad looks, make mouths upon me
33 when I turn my back. Wink at each other, hold the sweet jest up. This
34 sport well carried shall be chronicled. If you have any pity, grace or
35 manners you would not make me such an argument. But fare you
36 well. 'Tis partly my own fault which death shall soon remedy.

37 LYSANDER: Stay, gentle Helena. Hear my excuse. My love, my life, my
38 soul, my air is Helena!

39 HELENA: O, excellent!

40 HERMIA: Sweet, do not scorn her so.

41 DEMETRIUS: If she cannot entreat, I can compel.

1 LYSANDER: You can't compel anymore than she will entreat. Helena, I
2 love you, by my life, I do.
3 DEMETRIUS: I say I love you more than he can.
4 LYSANDER: Truly?
5 DEMETRIUS: Do not test me.
6 LYSANDER: If you say so, withdraw and prepare to prove it.
7 DEMETRIUS: To die by your hand is but to die in jest.
8 HERMIA: Lysander?
9 LYSANDER: Hang off you cat, you burr, vile thing, let loose or I will shake
10 you from me like a serpent.
11 HERMIA: Why have you grown so rude? What change is this? Sweet love.
12 LYSANDER: Your love. Ha!
13 HERMIA: Do you not jest?
14 LYSANDER: Demetrius, I will keep my word with you.
15 DEMETRIUS: I hope I have your bond for I perceive a weak bond holds you
16 now. I'll not trust your word.
17 LYSANDER: What, should I hurt her, strike her, kill her dead? Although I
18 hate her and the idea has merit, I'll not harm her so.
19 HERMIA: What, can you do me greater harm than hate? Hate me! Shy?
20 Am I not Hermia? Are not you Lysander? I am as fair now as I was
21 before.
22 LYSANDER: I never desire to see you again. Tis no jest that I do hate you
23 and love Helena.
24 HERMIA: O! You juggler! You canker-blossom! You disease of a friend!
25 You thief of love! What have you come by night and stolen my love's
26 heart from him?
27 HELENA: Fine, in faith, I see what you are! You have no modesty, no
28 maiden's shame. Your heart, once filled with love is now crammed
29 with arrogancy and pride.
30 LYSANDER: Sweet Helena, she has lost all her wits. For her pity, let us
31 leave this minion of the moon to Demetrius.
32 HERMIA: Have you grown so high in his esteem because I am now so
33 dwarfish and so low? How low am I? Speak! How low am I? I am
34 not yet so low that my nails cannot reach to your eyes.
35 HELENA: I pray you gentlemen though you mock me, let her not hurt me. I
36 was never crust to her. I have no gift at all in shrewishness. Let her not
37 strike me.
38 HERMIA: You drone! You snail! You slug and sot! You are the great spot
39 upon our sex. I shall never see your face again, but when I think of
40 hell's fire.
41 LYSANDER: Helena! Be not afraid! She shall not harm you.

1 DEMETRIUS: How will you defend her? There is no more valor in you than
2 in a wild duck.

3 LYSANDER: Get you gone, you dwarf. You bead, you acorn. There will be
4 little courage die the day you are hanged. I will save you, my Helena.

5 DEMETRIUS: You are too officious on her behalf since she scorned your
6 services. Let her alone. Speak not of Helena. Take not her part for
7 you do offer so little love to her.

8 LYSANDER: Now Hermia holds me not. Now follow, if you dare, to try
9 whose right, your or mine, is most in Helena.

10 DEMETRIUS: Follow! Nay, I'll go with you, cheek by jowl.
11 [Exeunt Lysander and Demetrius]

12 HERMIA; You mistress, all this trouble is because of you. Come hither.

13 HELENA: I will not trust you. Nor will I longer stay in your crust company.
14 *[Exit Helena]*

15 HERMIA: Helena, what a disgrace it is to remember your name.
16 *[Exit Hermia]*

17 OBERON: This is thy negligence *[Missed head slap]*

18 PUCK: Believe me, king of shadows, I mistook. Did not you tell me that I
19 should know the man by the Athenian garment he had on? I have
20 anointed an Athenian's eyes.

21 OBERON: Thou see'st these lovers seek a place to fight. Lead these testy
22 rivals so far astray as one come not within another's way. Frame thy
23 tongue as Lysander, then stir Demetrius up with bitter wrong. And
24 then rail thou like Demetrius. And from each other lead them till o'er
25 their brows death-counterfeiting sleep doth creep. Then crush this herb
26 into Lysander's eye. When he next wakes, all this derision shall seem a
27 dream and fruitless vision. Back to Athens shall the lovers wind.
28 Whilst I in this affair do thee employ, I'll to my queen and release her
29 charmed eye from the monster's view.

30 PUCK: My fairy lord, this must be done with haste. For night's swift
31 dragons cut the clouds full fast and yonder shines Aurora's harbinger.

32 OBERON: Then make no delay. We may effect this business yet before the
33 day.
34 *[Exit Oberon]*

35 PUCK: Up and down, up and down, I will lead them up and down. Here
36 comes one.
37 *[Enter Lysander]*

38 LYSANDER: Where are you, proud Demetrius? Speak now.

39 PUCK: Here, villain, drawn and stand ready. Where are you?

40 LYSANDER: I will be with you straightaway.

41 PUCK: Follow me then to plainer ground.

1 *[Exit Lysander, as following the voice]*
2 *[Enter Demetrius]*
3 DEMETRIUS: Lysander! Speak again. You run away, you coward. Have
4 you fled? Speak! Where do you hide your head?
5 PUCK: You're the coward. Are you bragging to the stars? Come, come, you
6 child. I'll whip you with a rod.
7 DEMETRIUS: Are you here?
8 PUCK: Follow my voice. We wouldn't try your manhood here.
9 *[Exeunt]*
10 *[Enter Lysander]*
11 LYSANDER: He goes before me and still dares me on. When I come where
12 he calls, then he is gone. The villain is much lighter-heeled than I. I
13 followed fast, but faster he did fly. So here will I rest. *[Lies down,*
14 *Sleeps]*
15 *[Enter Puck and Demetrius]*
16 PUCK: Ho, ho, ho! Coward, why don't you come?
17 DEMETRIUS: Abide me, if you dare. You dare not stand and look me in the
18 face. Where are you now?
19 PUCK: Come hither. I am here.
20 DEMETRIUS: Nay, then you mock me. You shall pay for this dearly if ever
21 I see your face by daylight. But now, go your way, faintness constrains
22 me to measure out my length on this cold bed. By day's approach look
23 to be visited.
24 *[Lies down and sleeps]*
25 *[Enter Helena]*
26 HELENA: O, weary night. O, long and tedious night. Shine new comforts
27 from the east that I may find my way back to Athens by daylight.
28 Sleep that sometimes shuts up sorrow's eye, steal me awhile from mine
29 own company.
30 *[Lies down and sleeps]*
31 PUCK: Yet but three? Come one more. Two of both kinds make up four.
32 Here she comes curst and sad.
33 *[Enter Hermia]*
34 HERMIA: Never so weary, never so in woe. I can crawl no further. My legs
35 can keep no pace with my desires. Here will I rest me till the break of
36 day.
37 *[Lies down and sleeps]*
38 PUCK: On the ground sleep sound. I'll apply to your eye, gentle lover, the
39 remedy. *[Squeezing the juice on Lysander's eyes]* When thou wakest,
40 thou takest true delight in the sight of thy former lady's eye. *[Call*
41 *Remoove]*

[Exit Puck]

IV.1

The same. Lysander, Demetrius, Helena and Hermia lying asleep.

[Enter Titania and Bottom, Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Moth and Mustardseed.

Oberon behind, unseen]

TITANIA: Come, sit thee down upon this flowery bed while I kiss thy fair,
large ears, my gentle joy. Fairies all.

PEASEBLOSSOM: Ready.

COBWEB: And I.

MOTH: And I.

MUSTARDSEED: And I.

SQUASH: And I.

TITANIA: Be kind and courteous to this gentleman. Hop in his walks and
gamble in his eyes. Feed him with apricots and dew berries. Steal the
honey bags from the humble bees and for his night tapers crop their
waxen thighs. Pluck the wings from the painted butterflies to hold the
moonbeams from his sleeping eyes.

ALL: Hail mortal. Hail.

BOTTOM: I cry your worship's mercy. I beseech your name.

PEASEBLOSSOM: Peaseblossom.

BOTTOM: I shall desire you of more acquaintance. Scratch my head, good
Peaseblossom.

PEASEBLOSSOM: About the ear?

BOTTOM: A little lower.

PEASEBLOSSOM: About the ear?

BOTTOM: If I cut my finger, I shall make bold with you. What's your
name?

COBWEB: I am Cobweb.

BOTTOM: Cobweb. Good Cobweb. Get your weapons in your hand and kill
me a bumble bee on the top of a thistle.

COBWEB: Would thou want a red hipped or yellow stripped bumble bee?

BOTTOM: Which do you recommend?

COBWEB: The red hipped are far tastier.

BOTTOM: Then red hipped it is. I beseech you. What is your name?

MUSTARDSEED: Mustardseed and I am ready. What is your will?

BOTTOM: Good Mustardseed, I know your patience well. The cowardly
giant-like ox has devoured many a gentlemen of your house. My wish
is nothing, but to help Cobweb to scratch. I must be to the barber's for

1 I think I am marvelously hairy about he face and I am such a tender ass.
2 If my hair do but tickle me. I must scratch.
3 TITANIA: Wilt thou hear some music, my sweet love?
4 BOTTOM: I have a reasonable good ear in music. Let's have the tongs and
5 the bones.
6 TITANIA: Or say sweet love, what thou desirest to eat?
7 BOTTOM: Truly, I could munch your good dry oats.
8 TITANIA: Moth, bring my love a bunch of the best dry oats.
9 MOTH: Yes, my queen.
10 BOTTOM: I think I have a great desire to a bottle of hay, good hay, sweet
11 hay.
12 TITANIA: I have a venturous fairy who shall seek the squirrel's hoard and
13 fetch thee new nuts.
14 BOTTOM: I would rather have a handful or two of dried peas. But, I pray
15 you, let none of your people stir me. I have an exposition of sleep
16 come upon me.
17 TITANIA: Sleep thou and I will wind thee in my arms. Fairies, be gone and
18 be always away. [Exeunt fairies] O, how I love thee! How I dote on
19 thee!
20 *[They sleep]*
21 *[Enter Puck]*
22 OBERON: *[Advancing]* Welcome, good Robin. See'st thou this sweet
23 sight? I do begin to pity her dotage on this mortal. I have had my
24 pleasure and taunted her. She in mild terms begged my patience. I will
25 undo this hateful imperfection of her eyes. Gentle Puck, take this
26 transformed scalp from off the head of this Athenian mortal. He will
27 awaken when the other do. Then they to Athens will repair and think
28 no more of this night's accidents but as the fierce vexation of a dream.
29 But first I will release my fairy queen. Be as thou was first to be. See
30 as thou was first to see. Now my Titania, awaken my sweet queen.
31 TITANIA: My Oberon! What visions have I seen! I thought I was
32 enamoured of an ass!
33 OBERON: There lies your love.
34 TITANIA: How came these things to pass?
35 OBERON: Silence awhile. Robin, take off this head.
36 PUCK: Now, when thou wakest with thine own fool's eyes peep.
37 OBERON: Come my queen, take hands with me.
38 PUCK: Fairy king, attend, I do hear the morning lark.
39 OBERON: Then my queen in sad silence, trip we after the night's shade.
40 TITANIA: Yes, my lord, and in our flight, tell me how it came this night that
41 I sleeping here was found with these mortals on the ground.

[Exeunt]

IV.2

The woods.

[Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Egeus and Others]

THESUS: Now that our observation is performed and since we have the vanguard of the day, my love shall hear the music of my hounds. Uncouple them in the western valley. We will, fair queen, go up to the mountain's top and mark the musical confusion of hounds and echo in conjunction.

EGEUS: Aye, my Lord.

HIPPOLYTA: I was with Hercules and Cadmus once in a wood of Crete when they bayed a bear. Never did I hear such gallant chiding, so musical a discord, such sweet thunder.

THESUS: My hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind. Their heads are hung with ears that sweep away the morning dew. No cry was ever hollowed in Crete or in Sparta. But judge when you hear. But soft, what nymphs are these?

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

HIPPOLYTA: No doubt they rose up early to observe the rite of May, and came here in grace and solemnity.

THESUS: Egeus, is this not the day that Hermia should give the answer of her choice?

EGEUS: It is, my lord.

THESUS: Go, bid them wake,

EGEUS: Lysander! Hermia!

LYSANDER: Pardon, my lord.

THESUS: I pray you all, stand up. Lysander. Demetrius. I know you two are rival enemies for the love of Hermia. How comes this gentle accord in the world. To sleep by hate and fear no enmity?

LYSANDER: My lord, I cannot truly say how I came here. But I think I came here with Hermia. Our intent was to steal away from Athens where we might live without the peril of the Athenian law.

EGEUS: Enough, enough, my lord. You have heard enough. I beg the law, the law upon his head. They would have stolen away. They would have defeated us all. You, my lord, of your authority, Demetrius of your wife, and me of my consent that she should be his wife.

1 DEMETRIUS: My lord, fair Helena told me of their stealth and I in a fury
2 followed them. Fair Helena, in fancy, followed me. But, my good lord,
3 my love to Hermia has melted as the snow. The object and the pleasure
4 of mine eye is now only to Helena. To her, my lord, I should be
5 betrothed, not Hermia. In sickness, did I loathe this food. But now in
6 health, it comes to my natural taste. Now I do wish it, love it, long for
7 it, and will for evermore be true to it.

8 THESUS: Fair lovers, you are fortunately met. We will hear more of this
9 discourse anon. Egeus, I must overbear your will. For in the temple,
10 by and by with us these two couples shall eternally be knit. Away with
11 us to Athens, three and three. Come.

12 *[Exeunt]*

13 BOTTOM: *[Waking]* When my cue comes, call me and I will answer. My
14 next line is "Most fair Pyramus." Hey-ho! Peter Quince? Flute?
15 Snug? Robin Starveling? God's my life! I have had a most rare
16 vision. I have had a dream past the wit of a man to say what a dream
17 truly is. A man is but an ass if he goes about expounding this dream. I
18 thought I was . . . no there is no man who can tell what I was . . . I
19 thought I had . . . a man is a fool if he will offer to say what I thought I
20 had. The eye of man has not seen, the ear has not heard what my
21 dream was. I will get Peter Quince to write a ballad on my dream. I
22 shall be called "Bottom's Dream" I will sing it in the latter end of the
23 play before the duke.
24

25 IV.3

26 *Athens, Quince's house.*

27 *[Enter Quince, Flute, Starveling]*

29 QUINCE: Have you sent to Bottom's house? Is he come home yet?

30 STARVELING: He has not been heard of. Out of doubt, he is transported.

31 QUINCE: Then the play cannot go forward. It is not possible. There is not a
32 man in all of Athens able to discharge Pyramus but he.

33 FLUTE: No, he hath simply the best wit of any handicraft man in Athens.

34 *[Enter Snug]*

35 SNUG: Masters, the Duke is coming from the temple and are two or three
36 lords and ladies more married. If our sport had gone forward, we had
37 all been made men.

38 FLUTE: O, sweet bully Bottom!

39 SNUG: Is there anyone else that could play a finer Pyramus?

40 QUINCE: No, not in all Athens. We are finished.

41 FLUTE: But it is for the Duke.

1 STARVELING: Truly and if we can play for the Duke.

2 QUINCE: How about ...? *[ad lib with audience, using info from Act I on*
3 *Pyramus]*

4 *[Enter Bottom]*

5 BOTTOM: Where are my lads? Where are my hearts?

6 QUINCE: Bottom! O most courageous day! O most happy hour!

7 BOTTOM: Masters, I am to discourse wonders but ask me not what, for if I
8 tell you I am no true Athenian. I will tell you everything right as it fell
9 out.

10 FLUTE: Let us hear, sweet Bottom.

11 BOTTOM: Not a word of me. All that I will tell you is that the Duke hath
12 dined. Get your apparel together, good strings to your beards, new
13 ribbons to your pumps. Meet presently at the palace. Every man look
14 over his part for the long and the short is . . . our play is preferred. In
15 any case, let Thisby have clean linen. Let not him that plays the lion
16 trim his nails, for they shall hang out for the lion's claws. And most
17 dear actors, eat no onions nor garlic, for we are to utter sweet breath. I
18 do not doubt but to hear them say it is a sweet comedy. No more
19 words, away!

20 *[Call Remoove}*

21 *[Exeunt]*

22 23 V.1

24
25 *Athens, the Palace of Thesus*

26 *[Enter Thesus, Hippolyta, Philostrate]*

27 HIPPOLYTA: 'Tis strange, my Thesus, these things that these lovers speak
28 of.

29 THESUS: More strange than true. I never may believe these antique fables
30 nor fairy stories. What say you, Philostrate?

31 PHILOSTRATE: I could not say, my lord. But such shaping fantasies
32 apprehend more than cool reason. The lunatic, the lover and the poet
33 are completely made of imagination. One can see more devils than all
34 of hell can hold.

35 THESUS: In truth, the poet's pen turns forms of things unknown to shapes
36 and gives to airy nothing a local habitation and a name. Some tricks
37 have a strong imagination. How easy is a bush supposed to be a bear.

38 HIPPOLYTA: But all the details of the night told over and over, and their
39 minds so transfigured, so together. The story grows to something of
40 great consistency.

1 THESUS: Here come the lovers, full of joy and mirth. [*Enter Lysander,*
2 *Demetrius, Hermia and Helena*] Joy, gentle friends! Joy and fresh
3 days of love accompany your hearts!

4 LYSANDER: May your joy be at least half of that we feel.

5 THESUS: Philostrate, what masques shall we have to wear away this long
6 age of three hours between our after supper and bed-time? You are our
7 usual manager of mirth. What revels are in hand? Is there no play to
8 ease the anguish of the torturing hours?

9 PHILOSTRATE: Here is a brief of the many sports that are ripe. Please
10 make a choice of which your highness will see first. [*Giving a paper*]

11 THESUS: [*Reads*] "The battle with the Centaurs to be sung by an Athenian
12 eunuch." A eunuch. . .

13 MEN: Ooooo. . .

14 THESUS: No, we'll have none of that.

15 HIPPOLYTA: [*Taking paper*] "The riot of the Bacchanals. " This is an old
16 device.

17 THESUS: "A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus and his love Thisby. A
18 very tragical mirth." Merry and tragical, tedious and brief?

19 HIPPOLYTA: That is hot ice and wondrous strange snow.

20 THESUS: This we will see.

21 PHILOSTRATE: No, my noble lord, it is not for you. I have heard it over
22 and it is a mere ten words long. But by ten words, my lord, it is too
23 long.

24 THESUS: Who are they that play it?

25 PHILOSTRATE: They are some hard-handed men that work in Athens, none
26 of which have ever labored in their minds till now.

27 THESUS: Shall we hear the play?

28 ALL: [*ad lib, Yes, etc.*]

29 PHILOSTRATE: It is nothing, my lord, nothing in the world unless you can
30 find some sport in their intent.

31 THESUS: I will hear the play. Go, bring them in.

32 PHILOSTRATE: So please your grace. [*Exit and Re-Enter Philostrate*] The
33 Prologue is addressed.

34 THESUS: Let him approach.

35 [*Enter Quince*]

36 QUINCE: If we offend, it is with our good will. That you should think we
37 come not to offend, but with good will. Our true end is to show our
38 simple skill. Our true intent is. All for your delight we are not here.
39 That you should here repent you the actors are at hand and by their
40 show you shall know all that you are likely to know. [*Enter Starveling,*
41 *Pyramus and Thisby, Wall, Moon and Lion*] Gentles, perchance you

1 wonder at this show. But wonder on till truth makes all things plain.
 2 This man is Pyramus. This beauteous lady, Thisby. This man, with
 3 lime and rough-cast, doth present Wall. That wile Wall which made
 4 these lovers suffer. And through Wall's chink, these poor souls were
 5 content to whisper. This man presents Moonshine, for as you know, by
 6 moonshine did these lovers plan to meet at Ninus' tomb and there to
 7 woo. This grisly beast, which is Lion by name. The trusty Thisby,
 8 coming first that night, was scared away. As she fled her mantle did
 9 fall, which vile Lion with bloody mouth did stain. Along comes
 10 Pyramus, sweet youth and tall. He finds Thisby's bloodied mantle.
 11 Believing Thisby slain, with blade, with bloody, blameful blade, he
 12 bravely broached his boiling breast.
 13 BOTTOM: Oh, that was good. Now try this one: 'I saw Susie sitting in a
 14 Shoe Shine Store.'
 15 QUINCE: Thisby, coming from mulberry shade, drew his dagger and died.
 16 For all the rest, let Lion, Moonshine, Wall and lovers twain at large
 17 discourse, while here try do remain.
 18 *[Exeunt Prologue, Thisby, Lion and Moonshine.]*
 19 *[Enter Pyramus]*
 20 THESUS: Pyramus draws near.
 21 PYRAMUS: O grim-looking night! O night with hue so black! O night,
 22 which is when day is not! O night! O night! Alack, alack, alack . . .
 23 THESUS: Pyramus seems to lack a lot!
 24 PYRAMUS: I fear my Thisby's promise is forgotten. And thou wall, o sweet
 25 lovely wall, that stand'st between her father's ground and mine. O
 26 wall, show me thy chink to blink through with mine eye. Thanks,
 27 courteous wall. But what see I? No Thisby do I see. O wicked all,
 28 through whom I see no bliss! Cursed by thy stones for deceiving me
 29 thus.
 30 THESUS: The wall me thinks being sensible should curse again.
 31 PYRAMUS: No, in truth sir, he should not. Deceiving me is Thisby's cue.
 32 She is to enter now and I am to spy her through the wall. You shall see.
 33 Yonder she comes.
 34 *[Enter Thisby]*
 35 THISBY: O wall, often hast thou heard my moans for parting my fair
 36 Pyramus and me. My cherry lips have often kissed thy stones.
 37 PYRAMUS: I see a voice. Now will I to the chink to spy and hear my
 38 Thisby's face. Thisby!
 39 THISBY: My love, thou art my love, I think.
 40 PYRAMUS: Think what thou wilt. I am thy lover's grace.
 41 THISBY: If thou could grace me, thy lover's kiss.

1 PYRAMUS: O, kiss me through the hole in this vile wall!
 2 THISBY: I kiss the wall's hole, not your lips at all.
 3 PYRAMUS: Wilt thou at Ninny's tomb?
 4 STARVELING: Nina's tomb.
 5 PYRAMUS: Nina's tomb! Meet me straightaway?
 6 THISBY: Tide life, tide death, I come without delay.
 7 *[Exeunt Pyramus and Thisby.]*
 8 STARVELING: Thus the Wall, having discharged it's part, away it will go.
 9 *[Exit Wall.]*
 10 THESUS: Now is the mural down between the two neighbors.
 11 DEMETRIUS: No remedy, my lord. When walls are so willful to hear
 12 without warning.
 13 HIPPOLYTA: This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard.
 14 THESUS: If we imagine no worse of them than they of themselves, then they
 15 may pass for excellent men. Here come two noble beasts in one – a
 16 man and a lion.
 17 *[Enter Lion and Moon]*
 18 LION: You ladies, whose gentle hearts do fear the smallest monstrous mouse
 19 that creeps on floor, may now perchance both quake and tremble here,
 20 when lion rough in wildest rage, doth roar. Then know that I am one
 21 Snug, the joiner, not a real lion as I am today.
 22 THESUS: A very gentle beast, and one of a good conscience.
 23 HIPPOLYTA: The very best at a beast, my lord, that ever I saw.
 24 LYSANDER: This lion is a very fox for his valor.
 25 THESUS: It is well. Let us listen to the moon.
 26 MOON: I am the Moon.
 27 THESUS: Well spoke, Moon.
 28 MOON: I am the Moon.
 29 THESUS: Yes, we know.
 30 MOON: I am the Moon.
 31 HIPPOLYTA: I am weary of this moon. Would he would change?
 32 THESUS: It appears by his small light of discretion, that he is in the wane.
 33 LYSANDER: Proceed Moon.
 34 MOON: I am the Moon.
 35 DEMETRIUS: It is so rare to find a actor of only four words.
 36 HIPPOLYTA: Look, our Thisby approaches.
 37 *[Enter Thisby]*
 38 THISBY: This is old Ninny's tomb.
 39 QUINCE: Nina's tomb.
 40 THISBY: Nina's tomb. Where is my love?
 41 LION: *[Roaring]* Oh . . .

1 *[Thisby runs off]*
2 DEMETRIUS: Well roared, Lion.
3 THESUS: Well run, Thisby.
4 HIPPOLYTA: Well shone, Moon. Truly the moon shines with a good grace.
5 *[The Lion shakes Thisby's mantle and exits]*
6 THESUS: Well moused, Lion.
7 LYSANDER: And so the lion vanished.
8 DEMETRIUS: And then came Pyramus.
9 *[Enter Pyramus]*
10 PYRAMUS: Sweet Moon, I thank thee for thy sunny beams. I thank thee
11 Moon for shining now so bright. For by thy gracious golden glittering
12 gleams I find my Thisby. But stay, what mark is here? Eyes do you
13 see? How can it be? O dear! Thy mantle, what . . stained with blood!
14 O fates, o dreaded fate.
15 THESUS: This passion and the death of a dear friend would go near to make
16 a man look sad.
17 HIPPOLYTA: Beshrew my heart, but I pity the man
18 PYRAMUS: O Nature, why didst thou lion's frame? Since vile lion hath
19 here devoured my dear. Which is - - no, no - - which was the fairest
20 dame that lived...
21 QUINCE: No.
22 PYRAMUS: ... that looked with cheer ...
23 QUINCE: There you go.
24 PYRAMUS: Come tears confound. Out sword. Out and wound the pap of
25 Pyramus. Ay, that left pap, where heart doth hop. *[Stabs himself]*
26 Thus die I. Thus, thus, thus. Now I am dead. Now am I fled. My soul
27 is in the sky. Tongue, lose thy light. Moon take thy flight. Moon take
28 thy flight. *[Exit Moon]* Now die, die, die, die. *[Dies]*
29 THESUS: With the help of a god surgeon, he might yet recover.
30 HIPPOLYTA: How by chance Moonshine is gone before Thisby comes back
31 and finds her lover?
32 THESUS: She will have to find him by starlight. *[Enter Moon]* Here she
33 comes and her passion ends the play.
34 *[Enter Thisby]*
35 THISBY: Asleep, my love? What, my dove? O, Pyramus, arise! Speak,
36 speak. Quite dumb? Dead, dead? A tomb must cover thy sweet eyes.
37 These lily lips, this cherry nose, these yellow cheeks are gone, are
38 gone. Lovers make moan. His eyes are green as leeks. O, Sisters
39 three, come, come to me with hands as pale as milk. Lay them in gore
40 since you have shore with shears his thread of silk. Tongue, not a

1 word. Come trusty spoon, my breast impale. *[Stabs herself]* And
2 farewell friends, thus Thisby ends. Adieu, adieu, adieu. *[Dies]*

3 THESUS: Moonshine and Lion are left to bury the dead.

4 DEMETRIUS: Aye, and Wall too.

5 BOTTOM: *[Sitting up]* No, I assure you. The Wall is down that parted their
6 families. Will it please you to see the epilogue of our story?

7 THESUS: No epilogue, I pray you. For your play needs no addendum or
8 excuse. There is no need for it when the players are all dead. There are
9 none left to be blamed. Marry, if he that had written it had Pyramus
10 hung himself in Thisby's garter, it would have been a fine tragedy.
11 And so, it is truly and very notably discharged. *[Applause, players*
12 *exit]* Sweet friends, tis almost fairy time. I fear we shall outsleep the
13 coming morn. So on to bed.

14 *[Exeunt]*

15 *[Enter Puck]*

16 PUCK: *[aside]* Now is that time of night that we fairies do run from the
17 presence of the sun. Every elf and fairy sprite hop as light as bird from
18 briar by the dead and drowsy fire. Very fairy take his gait. Through
19 this palace, with sweet peace, shall in saftey rest, meet em all by the
20 break of day. But if we shadows have offended, think but this and all is
21 mended. That you have but slumbered here while these visions did
22 appear. And this weak and idle theme is no more than but a dream.
23 Gentles, do not reprehend. If you'll pardon, we will mend. And, as I
24 am an hoest Puck, we will make amends e'er long, else the Puck a liar
25 called. So, goodnight unto you all. Give me your hands, if we be
26 friends. And Robin shall restore amends.

27 *[Exit]*