

Cursus Engelse taal 2007–2008

Vocale Afdeling Conservatorium Antwerpen B3,M1&M2

docent Andrew Wise

A Midsummer Night's Dream

Shakespeare/Britten

Inhoud

- Act 1 -- 1
- Act 2 -- 14
- Act 3 -- 31
- Korte samenvatting -- 45
- Uitspraak ouderwets Engels -- 46
- Handig om te weten . . . -- 48

-- ACT 1 --

SCENE 1 *The wood, deepening twilight*

FAIRIES

Over hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough brier,
Over park, over pale,
Thorough flood, thorough fire,
I do wander everywhere,
Swifter than the moon's sphere;
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,
In those freckles live their savours:
I must go seek some dewdrops here
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.

PUCK

How now, spirits!

FAIRY

Either I mistake your shape and making quite,
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite
Call'd Robin Goodfellow: are not you he
That frights the maidens of the villagery;
Skim milk, and sometimes labour in the quern
And bootless make the breathless housewife churn;

And sometime make the drink to bear no barm;
Mislead night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?
Those that Hobgoblin call you and sweet Puck.

PUCK

But room, fairies! Here comes Oberon.

FAIRIES

And here our mistress.

COBWEB

Would that he were gone.

Enter, from one side, OBERON, with his train; from the other, TYTANIA, with hers

PUCK

Oberon is passing fell and wrath,
Because that she as her attendant hath
A lovely boy, stolen from an Indian king;
She never had so sweet a changeling;
And jealous Oberon would have the child

OBERON

Ill met by moonlight, proud Tytania.

TYTANIA

What, jealous Oberon! Fairies, skip hence:
I have forsworn his bed and company.
The fairies hide.

OBERON

Therefore the winds have suck'd up from the sea
Contagious fogs

TYTANIA

Therefore the ox hath stretch'd his yoke in vain,

OBERON

The fold stands empty in the drowned field,

TYTANIA

The crows are fatted with the murrion flock;

OBERON, TYTANIA

The seasons alter: the spring, the summer
The childing autumn, the angry winter, change

Their wonted liveries, and the mazed world,
By their increase, now knows not which is which:
And this same progeny of evils comes
From our debate, from our dissention;
We are their parents and original.

OBERON

Do you amend it then; it lies in you:
I do but beg a little changeling boy,
To be my henchman.

TYTANIA

Set your heart at rest:
The fairy land buys not the child of me.
His mother was a votaress of my order,
But she, being mortal, of that boy did die;
And for her sake I will not part with him.

OBERON

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

TYTANIA

Not for thy fairy kingdom. Fairies, away!
Exit TYTANIA with her train

OBERON

Well, go thy way: thou shalt not from this grove
Till I torment thee for this injury.
My gentle Puck, come hither.
Thou rememberest
The herb I shew'd thee once:
The juice of it on sleeping eye-lids laid
Will make or man or woman madly dote
Upon the next live creature that it sees.
(Be it lion, bear, or wolf, or bull,
Or meddling monkey, or busy ape).
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.

He flies off

OBERON

Having once this juice,
I'll watch Tytania when she is asleep,
And drop the liquor of it in her eyes.
And ere I take this charm from off her sight,
I'll make her render up her page to me.

Oberon disappears. The wood is left empty. Lysander and Hermia enter separately and meet.

LYSANDER

How now, my love! why is your cheek so pale?
How chance the roses there do fade so fast?

HERMIA

Belike for want of rain, which I could well
Beteem them from the tempest of my eyes.

LYSANDER

Ay me! for aught that I could ever read,
Could ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth;
But, either it was different in blood,--

HERMIA

O cross! too high to be enthralld to low.

LYSANDER

Or else misgraffed in respect of years,--

HERMIA

O spite! too old to be engaged to young.

LYSANDER

Or else it stood upon the choice of friends,--

HERMIA

O hell! to choose love by another's eyes.

LYSANDER, HERMIA

If then true lovers have been ever cross'd,
It stands as an edict in destiny:

HERMIA

Then let us teach our trial patience,

LYSANDER

A good persuasion: therefore, hear me, Hermia.
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.
There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee;
And to that place the sharp Athenian law
(Compelling thee to marry with Demetrius)
Cannot pursue us. If thou lovest me then,
There will I go with thee.

HERMIA

My good Lysander!
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,
When the false Troyan under sail was seen,
By all the vows that ever men have broke,
In number more than ever women spoke,
I swear to thee, I swear . . .

They slowly leave. The wood is empty. Oberon appears

OBERON

(Be it on lion, bear, or wolf, or bull,
On meddling monkey, or on busy ape . . .)
But who comes here? I am invisible;
And I will overhear their conference.

Enter Demetrius, Helena pursuing him

DEMETRIUS

I love thee not, therefore pursue me not.
Where is Lysander and fair Hermia?
The one I'll slay, the other slayeth me.
Thou told'st me they were stolen unto this wood;
And here am I, and wode within this wood,
Because I cannot meet my Hermia.
Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.

HELENA

You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant;
Leave you your power to draw,
And I shall have no power to follow you.

DEMETRIUS

Do I entice you? do I speak you fair?
Or, rather, do I not in plainest truth
Tell you, I do not, nor I cannot love you?

HELENA

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:
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.

DEMETRIUS

Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit;
For I am sick when I do look on thee.

HELENA

And I am sick when I look not on you.

DEMETRIUS

I'll run from thee and hide me in the brakes,
And leave thee to the mercy of wild beasts.

He leaves

HELENA

I'll follow you and make a heav'n of hell
To die upon the hand I love so well.

OBERON

Fare thee well, nymph: ere he do leave this grove,
Thou shalt fly him and he shall seek thy love.

Re-enter Puck

Hast thou the flower there? Welcome, wanderer.

Puck gives Oberon the flower and lies at his feet

OBERON

I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,
Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses and with eglantine:
There sleeps Tytania sometime 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:

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
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.

They disappear. the wood is left empty. The six rustics enter cautiously

QUINCE

Is all our company here?

BOTTOM

You were best to call them generally, man by man, according to the scrip.

FLUTE

First, good Peter Quince, say what the play treats on.

QUINCE

Marry, our play is, The most lamentable comedy, and most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisby.

FLUTE, SNOOT, STARVELING, SNUG

Of Pyramus and Thisby

BOTTOM

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.

QUINCE

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

BOTTOM

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

QUINCE

You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus.

BOTTOM

What is Pyramus? a lover, or a tyrant?

QUINCE

A lover, that kills himself most gallant for love.

BOTTOM

My chief humour is for a tyrant: I could play Ercles rarely, or a part to tear a cat in, to make all split.

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.
This was lofty! Now name the rest of the players.

QUINCE

Francis Flute.

BOTTOM

This is Ercles' vein, a tyrant's vein; a lover is more condoling.

QUINCE

Francis Flute, bellows mender.

FLUTE

Here, Peter Quince.

QUINCE

Flute, you must take Thisby on you.

FLUTE

What is Thisby? a wandering knight?

QUINCE

It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

FLUTE

Nay, faith, let me not play a woman; I have a beard coming.

QUINCE

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

BOTTOM

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

QUINCE

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

BOTTOM

Well, proceed.

FLUTE

practising to himself

'Ah Pyramus, my lover dear, thy Thisby dear, and . . .'

QUINCE

Robin Starveling, the tailor.

STARVELING

Here, Peter Quince.

QUINCE

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

SNOUT

Here, Peter Quince.

QUINCE

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

SNUG

Have you the lion's part written? pray you, if it be, give it me, for I am slow of study.

QUINCE

You may do it extempore, for it is nothing but roaring.

BOTTOM

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.'

QUINCE

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.

ALL

That would hang us, every mother's son.

BOTTOM

But I will aggravate my voice so that I will roar you as gently as any sucking dove; I will roar you an 'twere any nightingale.

QUINCE

You can play no part but Pyramus; for Pyramus is a sweet-faced man; a proper man, a most lovely gentleman-like man: therefore you must needs play Pyramus.

BOTTOM

Well, I will undertake it.

QUINCE

But, masters, here are your parts: and I am to entreat you, request you and desire you, to con them by to-morrow night; here we will rehearse at noon.

BOTTOM

We will meet; and there we may rehearse most obscenely and courageously. Take pains; be perfect: adieu.

QUINCE

At the duke's oak we meet.

The leave. The wood is left empty. Enter LYSANDER and HERMIA

LYSANDER

Fair love, you faint with wandering in the wood;
And to speak troth, I have forgot our way:
We'll rest us, Hermia, if you think it good,
And tarry for the comfort of the day.

HERMIA

Be it so, Lysander: find you out a bed;
For I upon this bank will rest my head.

LYSANDER

One turf shall serve as pillow for us both;
One heart, one bed, two bosoms and one troth.

HERMIA

Nay, good Lysander; for my sake, my dear,
Lie further off yet, do not lie so near.
So far be distant, and good night, sweet friend;
Thy love ne'er alter till thy sweet life end.

LYSANDER

Amen, amen, to that fair prayer, say I;
And then end life when I end loyalty!

They sleep. Puck appears

PUCK

Through the forest have I gone.
But Athenian found I none,
On whose eyes I might approve
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;
Churl, upon thy eyes I throw
All the power this charm doth owe.
So awake when I am gone;
For I must now to Oberon.

He leaves. Enter DEMETRIUS and HELENA, running

HELENA

Stay, though thou kill me, sweet Demetrius.

DEMETRIUS

I charge thee, hence, and do not haunt me thus.

HELENA

O, wilt thou darkling leave me? do not so.

DEMETRIUS

running out

Stay, on thy peril: I alone will go.

HELENA

O, I am out of breath in this fond chase!
The more my prayer, the lesser is my grace.
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.
No, no, I am as ugly as a bear;
For beasts that meet me run away for fear:
Therefore no marvel though Demetrius
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!
Dead? or asleep? I see no blood, no wound.
Lysander if you live, good sir, awake.

LYSANDER

waking

And run through fire I will for thy sweet sake.
Transparent Helena! Nature shows art,
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!

HELENA

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.

LYSANDER

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.

HELENA

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 refused.
Should of another therefore be abused!

running out

LYSANDER

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 tie 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,

running out

To honour Helen and to be her knight.

HERMIA

starting up

Help me, Lysander, 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 pray.

looking around

Lysander! what, removed? 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 swoon almost with fear.

Exit. TYTANIA approaches with Cobweb, Peaseblossom, Mustardseed, Moth and fairies

TYTANIA

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

She lies down with her fairies around her

FAIRIES

You spotted snakes with double tongue,
Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen;
Newts and blind-worms, do no wrong,
Come not near our fairy queen.
Philomel, with melody
Sing in our sweet lullaby;
Lulla, lulla, lullaby, lulla, lulla, lullaby:
Never harm,
Nor spell nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh;
So, good night, with lullaby.

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.

TYTANIA sleeps

COBWEB

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

The fairies slip away. Oberon appears

OBERON

What thou seest when thou dost wake,
Do it for thy true-love take,
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
When thou wakest, it is thy dear:
Wake when some vile thing is near.

He slowly disappears

-- ACT 2 --

The wood. Tytania lies asleep. Enter the six rustics.

BOTTOM

Are we all met?

QUINCE

Pat, pat; and here's a marvellous convenient place for our rehearsal.

BOTTOM

Peter Quince!

QUINCE

What sayest thou, bully Bottom?

BOTTOM

There are things in this comedy of Pyramus and Thisby that will never please. First, Pyramus must draw a sword to kill himself; which the ladies cannot abide.

THE OTHERS

By'r lakin, a parlous fear.

FLUTE

I believe we must leave the killing out, when all is done.

BOTTOM

Not a whit: I have a device to make all well. Write me a prologue; tell them that I, Pyramus, am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver: this will put them out of fear.

SNOUT

Will not the ladies be afeard of the lion?

STARVELING

I fear it, I promise you.

BOTTOM

Therefore another prologue must tell them plainly he is not a lion but Snug the joiner.

QUINCE

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?

BOTTOM

A calendar, a calendar! look in the almanac; find out moonshine, find out moonshine.

BOTTOM

Or else one must come in with a bush of thorns and a lanthorn, and say he comes to present, the person of Moonshine.

QUINCE

Then, there is another thing: we must have a wall in the great chamber.

SNOUT

You can never bring in a wall. What say you, Bottom?

BOTTOM

Some man or other must present Wall: and let him hold his fingers thus, and through that cranny shall Pyramus and Thisby whisper.

QUINCE

Then all is well. Come, sit down, every mother's son, and rehearse your parts, every man according to his cue.. Pyramus, you begin.

Puck flies in

PUCK

What hempen home-spuns have we swaggering here,
So near the cradle of the fairy queen?

QUINCE

Speak, Pyramus. Thisby, stand forth.

BOTTOM

Thisby, the flowers of odious savours sweet,--

QUINCE

Odours, odorous!

BOTTOM

--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 Bottom

PUCK

I'll follow you, I'll lead you about a round
He follows Bottom.

FLUTE

Must I speak now?

QUINCE

Ay, marry, must you; for you must understand he goes but to see a noise that he heard, and is to come again.

FLUTE

Most radiant Pyramus, most lily-white of hue,
Of colour like the red rose on triumphant brier,
Most brisky juvenal and eke most lovely Jew,
As true as truest horse that yet would never tire,
I'll meet thee, Pyramus, at Ninny's tomb.

QUINCE

Why, you must not speak that yet; that you answer to Pyramus: you speak all your part at once, cues and all. Pyramus enter: your cue is past; it is, 'never tire.'

FLUTE

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

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

BOTTOM

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

QUINCE

O monstrous! O strange! we are haunted. Pray, masters! fly, masters! Help!
The run off

BOTTOM

Why do they run away? this is a knavery of them to make me afeard.
Flute reappears

FLUTE

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

BOTTOM

What do you see? you see an ass-head of your own, do you?
The rustics reappear from behind the trees

ALL

Bless thee, Bottom! bless thee! thou art translated.
They disappear

BOTTOM

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, and I will sing, that they shall hear I am not afraid.
sings

The ousel cock so black of hue,
With orange-tawny bill,
The throstle with his note so true,
The wren with little quill,--

TYTANIA

awaking

What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?

BOTTOM

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.

TYTANIA

I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again:

Mine ear is much enamour'd of thy note;
So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape;
Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.

BOTTOM

Not so, neither: but if I had wit enough to get out of this wood . . .

TYTANIA

Out of this wood do not desire to go,
Thou shalt remain here, whether thou wilt or no.
I am a spirit of no common rate;
I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee.

Peaseblossom! Cobweb! Moth! and Mustardseed!

Enter PEASEBLOSSOM, COBWEB, MOTH, and MUSTARDSEED

PEASEBLOSSOM

Ready.

COBWEB

And I.

MOTH

And I.

MUSTARDSEED

And I.

ALL

Where shall we go?

TYTANIA

Be kind and courteous to this gentleman;
Hop in his walks and gambol in his eyes;
Feed him with apricocks and dewberries,
With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries;
The honey-bags steal from the humble-bees,
And for night-tapers crop their waxen thighs
And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes,
To have my love to bed and to arise;
Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies.

PEASEBLOSSOM

Hail, mortal!

COBWEB

Hail!

MOTH

Hail!

MUSTARDSEED

Hail!

BOTTOM

I cry your worship's mercy, heartily: I beseech your worship's name.

COBWEB

Cobweb.

BOTTOM

I shall desire you of more acquaintance, good Master Cobweb. Your name, honest gentleman?

PEASEBLOSSOM

Peaseblossom.

BOTTOM

I pray you, commend me to Mistress Squash, your mother, and to Master Peascod, your father. Your name, I beseech you, sir?

MUSTARDSEED

Mustardseed.

BOTTOM

Your kindred had made my eyes water ere now. I desire your more acquaintance, good Master Mustardseed.

TYTANIA

Come, sit thee down upon this flowery bed,
While I thy amiable cheeks do coy,
And stick musk-roses in thy sleek smooth head,
And kiss thy fair large ears, my gentle joy.
Tytania and Bottom settle down on the bank

BOTTOM

Where's Peaseblossom?

PEASEBLOSSOM

Ready.

BOTTOM

Scratch my head Peaseblossom. Where's Mounseur Cobweb?

COBWEB

Ready.

BOTTOM

Mounseur Cobweb, good mounseur, get you your weapons in your hand, and kill me a red-hipped humble-bee, and, good mounseur, bring me the honey-bag. Where's Mounseur Mustardseed?

MUSTARDSEED

Ready.

BOTTOM

Give me your neaf, Mounseur Mustardseed. Pray you, leave your courtesy, good mounseur.

MUSTARDSEED

What's your Will?

BOTTOM

Nothing, good mounseur, but to help Cavalery Cobweb to scratch. I am such a tender ass, if my hair do but tickle me, I must scratch.

TYTANIA

What, wilt thou hear some music, my sweet love?

BOTTOM

I have a reasonable good ear in music. Let's have the tongs and the bones. But, I pray you, let none of your people stir me: I have an exposition of sleep come upon me.

TYTANIA

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

Fairies, begone, and be all ways away.

The fairies disappear

So doth the woodbine the sweet honeysuckle

Gently entwist; the female ivy so

Enrings the barky fingers of the elm.

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

They sleep and it grows dark

OBERON

How now, mad spirit?

What night-rule now about this haunted grove?

PUCK

My mistress with a monster is in love.

OBERON

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?

Enter HERMIA and DEMETRIUS

Stand close: this is the same Athenian.

PUCK

This is the woman, but not this the man.

DEMETRIUS

O, why rebuke you him that loves you so?

HERMIA

If thou hast slain Lysander in his sleep,
Plunge in the deep, and kill me too.
Ah, good Demetrius, wilt thou give him me?

DEMETRIUS

I had rather give his carcass to my hounds.

HERMIA

Out, dog! out, cur! Hast thou slain him, then?

DEMETRIUS

I am not guilty of Lysander's blood.

HERMIA

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

DEMETRIUS

An if I could, what should I get therefore?

HERMIA

A privilege never to see me more.
And from thy hated presence part I so:
See me no more, whether he be dead or no.

She rushes out

DEMETRIUS

There is no following her in this fierce vein:
Here therefore for a while I will remain.
So sorrow's heaviness doth heavier grow.

He lies down

OBERON

What hast thou done? thou hast mistaken quite
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

I go, I go; look how I go,
Swifter than arrow from the Tartar's bow.

He flies off

OBERON

Flower of this purple dye,
Hit with Cupid's archery,
Sink in apple of his eye.
When his love he doth espy,
Let her shine as gloriously
As the Venus of the sky.
When thou wakest, if she be by,
Beg of her for remedy.

Puck flies in

PUCK

Captain of our fairy band,
Helena is here at hand;
And the youth, mistook by me;
Shall we their fond pageant see?
Lord, what fools these mortals be!

They stand aside as Helena enters, followed by Lysander

LYSANDER

Why should you think that I should woo in scorn?

HELENA

These vows are Hermia's: will you give her o'er?

LYSANDER

I had no judgment when to her I swore.

HELENA

Nor none, in my mind, now you give her o'er.

LYSANDER

Demetrius loves her, and he loves not you.

DEMETRIUS

waking

O Helena, goddess, nymph, perfect, divine!
To what, my love, shall I compare thine eyne?
Crystal is muddy. O, how ripe in show
Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow!
That 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
This princess of pure white, this seal of bliss!

HELENA

O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent
To set against me for your merriment.

LYSANDER

You are unkind, Demetrius; be not so;
For you love Hermia; this you know I know.

DEMETRIUS

Look, where thy love comes; yonder is thy dear.

HERMIA

entering

Ah, Lysander, why unkindly didst thou leave me so?

HELENA

Injurious Hermia! most ungrateful maid!
Have you conspired, have you with these contrived
To bait me with this foul derision?
Is all the counsel that we two have shared,
The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent,
When we have chid the hasty-footed time
For parting us,--O, is it all forgot?
All school-days' friendship, childhood innocence?
We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,
Have with our needles created both one flower,
Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,
Both warbling of one song, both in one key,
Two lovely berries moulded on one stem;
So, with two seeming bodies, but one heart;
And will you rent our ancient love asunder,
To join with men in scorning your poor friend?

It is not friendly, 'tis not maidenly:

HERMIA

I am amazed at your passionate words.
I scorn you not: it seems that you scorn me.

HELENA

Ay, do, persevere, counterfeit sad looks,
Make mouths upon me when I turn my back;
Wink each at other; hold the sweet jest up.
But fare ye well: 'tis partly my own fault;
Which death or absence soon shall remedy.

LYSANDER

Stay, gentle Helena; hear my excuse:
My love, my life my soul, fair Helena!

HELENA

O excellent!

HERMIA

Sweet, do not scorn her so.

DEMETRIUS

If she cannot entreat, I can compel.

LYSANDER

Thou canst compel no more than she entreat.

DEMETRIUS

I say I love thee more than he can do.

LYSANDER

If thou say so, withdraw, and prove it too.

DEMETRIUS

Quick, come!

HERMIA

Lysander, whereto tends all this?

LYSANDER

Away, you Ethiopel!

DEMETRIUS

No, no, sir, seem to break loose:
You are a tame man, go!

LYSANDER

Hang off, thou cat, thou burr! vile thing, let loose,
Or I will shake thee from me like a serpent!

HERMIA

Why are you grown so rude? what change is this?
Sweet love?

DEMETRIUS

Seem to break loose, take one as you would follow.

LYSANDER

Thy love! out, tawny Tartar, out!

HERMIA

Do you not jest?

HELENA

Yes, sooth; and so do you.

LYSANDER

Demetrius, I will keep my word with thee.

DEMETRIUS

I would I had your bond, I'll not trust your word.

LYSANDER

What, should I hurt her, strike her, kill her dead?
Although I hate her, I'll not harm her so.

HERMIA

What, can you do me greater harm than hate?
Am not I Hermia? are not you Lysander?

DEMETRIUS

Lysander, keep thy Hermia; I will none.
If e'er I loved her, all that love is gone.

LYSANDER

Ay, by my life; be certain, 'tis no jest,
That I do hate thee and love Helena.

HELENA

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

HERMIA

O me! you juggler! you canker-blossom!
You thief of love!

HELENA

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

HERMIA

Puppet? why so? ay, that way goes the game.
Now I perceive that she hath made compare
Between our statures; she hath urged her height;
And with her personage, her tall personage,
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
But that my nails can reach unto thine eyes.

HELENA

I pray you, though you mock me, gentlemen,
Let her not hurt me; You perhaps may think,
Because she is something lower than myself,
That I can match her.

HERMIA

Lower! hark, again.

HELENA

O, when she's angry, she is keen and shrewd!
She was a vixen when she went to school;
And though she be but little, she is fierce.

HERMIA

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

HELENA

Get you gone, you dwarf;
You minimus, of hindering knot-grass made.

HERMIA

to Lysander

Why will you suffer her to flout me thus?

HELENA

You bead.

HERMIA

Hark, again!

HELENA

You acorn!

LYSANDER

Be not afraid; she shall not harm thee, Helena.

DEMETRIUS

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

LYSANDER

You are too officious
In her behalf that scorns your services.

DEMETRIUS

Let her alone: speak not of Helena.

LYSANDER

Now follow, if thou darest.

DEMETRIUS

Nay, I'll go with thee, cheek by jowl . . .

LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS

to try whose right,
Of thine or mine, is most in Helena.

They leave

HERMIA

You, mistress, all this coil is 'long of you:
Nay, go not back.

HELENA

I will not trust you, I,
Nor longer stay in your curst company.
Your hands than mine are quicker for a fray,
My legs are longer though, to run away.

She runs out followed by Hermia. Oberon comes forward in a rage, dragging Puck

OBERON

This is thy negligence: still thou mistakest,
Or else committ'st thy knaveries wilfully.

PUCK

Believe me, king of shadows, I mistook.

OBERON

Thou see'st these lovers seek a place to fight:
Hie therefore, Robin, overcast the night;
The starry welkin cover thou anon
With drooping fog as black as Acheron,
And lead these testy rivals so astray
As one come not within another's way.
Till o'er their brows death-counterfeiting sleep
With leaden legs and batty wings doth creep:
Then crush this herb into Lysander's eye.
When they next wake, all this derision
Shall seem a dream and fruitless vision.
Haste, Robin, haste, make no delay;
We may effect this business yet, ere day.

Oberon vanishes. It becomes misty

PUCK

Up and down, up and down,
I will lead them up and down:
I am fear'd in field and town:
Goblin, lead them up and down.
Here comes one.

Re-enter LYSANDER

LYSANDER

Where art thou, proud Demetrius? speak thou now.

PUCK

Here, villain; drawn and ready. Where art thou?
Follow me, then to plainer ground.

DEMETRIUS

Lysander! speak again:
Thou runaway, thou coward, art thou fled?

PUCK

imitating Lysander

Art bragging to the stars, and wilt not come?

DEMETRIUS

Yea, art thou there?

PUCK

Follow my voice: we'll try no manhood here.

He disappears. Enter Lysander

LYSANDER

He goes before me and still dares me on:

When I come where he calls, then he is gone.

That fallen am I in dark uneven way,

And here will rest me. Come, thou gentle day!

For if but once thou show me thy grey light,

I'll find Demetrius and revenge this spite.

He sleeps. Puck appears

PUCK

Ho, ho, ho! Coward, why comest thou not?

DEMETRIUS

Abide me, if thou darest. Where art thou now?

PUCK

Come hither: I am here.

DEMETRIUS

Nay, then, thou mock'st me. Thou shalt buy this dear,

If ever I thy face by daylight see:

Now, go thy way. Faintness constraineth me

To measure out my length on this cold bed.

By day's approach look to be visited.

He sleeps. Enter Puck followed by Helena

HELENA

O weary night, O long and tedious night,

Abate thy hour! Shine comforts from the east,

And sleep, that sometimes shuts up sorrow's eye,

Steal me awhile from mine own company.

She sleeps

PUCK

Yet but three? Come one more;
Two of both kinds make up four.
Here she comes, curst and sad:
Cupid is a knavish lad,
Thus to make poor females mad.

Re-enter HERMIA

HERMIA

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

Lies down and sleeps

FAIRIES

On the ground
Sleep sound:
He'll apply
To your eye,
Gentle lover, remedy.
When thou wakest,
Thou takest
True delight
In the sight
Of thy former lady's eye:
And the country proverb known,
That every man should take his own,
In your waking shall be shown:
Jack shall have Jill;
Nought shall go ill;
The man shall have his mare again, and all shall be well.

The fairies leave. Puck squeezes the juice on Lysander's eyes and disappears.

-- ACT 3 --

The wood, early next morning. Tytania with Bottom, and the four lovers lie asleep. Puck and Oberon appear.

OBERON

observing Tytania

My gentle Robin, see'st thou this sweet sight?
Her dotage now I do begin to pity;
And now I have the boy, I will undo
This hateful imperfection of her eyes.
Be as thou wast wont to be;
See as thou wast wont to see:
Dian's bud o'er Cupid's flower
Hath such force and blessed power.
Now, my Tytania; wake you, my sweet queen.

TYTANIA

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

OBERON

There lies your love.

TYTANIA

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

OBERON

Silence awhile. Robin, take off this head.
Tytania, music call; and strike more dead
Than common sleep of all these five the sense.

TYTANIA

Music, ho! music, such as charmeth sleep!
Enter some fairies

OBERON

Sound, music! Come, my queen, take hands with me,
And rock the ground whereon these sleepers be.
They dance
Now thou and I are new in amity,
And will to-morrow midnight solemnly
Dance in Duke Theseus' house triumphantly,
And bless it to all fair prosperity:

There shall the pairs of faithful lovers be
Wedded, with Theseus, all in jollity.

PUCK

Fairy king, attend, and mark:

I do hear the morning lark.

He disappears. Oberon, Tytania and the fairies depart, still dancing. Horns sound in the distance.

DEMETRIUS

waking

Helena!

LYSANDER

waking

Hermia!

HELENA

waking

Demetrius!

HERMIA

waking

Lysander!

DEMETRIUS

Are you sure that we are awake? It seems to me

That yet we sleep, we dream.

HERMIA

Methinks I see these things with parted eye,

When every thing seems double.

DEMETRIUS

These things seem small and undistinguishable.

Like far-off mountains turned into clouds.

HELENA

So methinks:

And I have found Demetrius like a jewel,

Mine own, and not mine own.

HERMIA

And I have found Lysander like a jewel,

Mine own, and not mine own.

ALL FOUR

Why then, we are awake; let's go
And by the way let us recount our dreams.
The lovers leave

BOTTOM

slowly waking

When my cue comes, call me, and I will answer: my next is, 'Most fair Pyramus.' Heigh-ho! Peter Quince! Flute, the bellows-mender! Snout, the tinker! Starveling! God's my life, stolen hence, and left me asleep! I have had a most rare vision. I have had a dream, past the wit of man to say what dream it was: Methought I was--there is no man can tell what. Methought I was,--and methought I had,--but man is but a patched fool, if he will offer to say what methought I had. The eye of man hath not heard, the ear of man hath not seen, man's hand is not able to taste, his tongue to conceive, nor his heart to report, what my dream was. I will get Peter Quince to write a ballad of this dream: it shall be called Bottom's Dream, because it hath no bottom; and I will sing it in the latter end of a play, before the duke. Peradventure, to make it the more gracious, I shall sing it at her death.

He leaves. Enter QUINCE, FLUTE, SNOOT, and STARVELING, gloomily

QUINCE

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

STARVELING

He cannot be heard of. Out of doubt he is transported.

FLUTE

If he come not, then the play is marred: it goes not forward, doth it?

QUINCE

It is not possible: you have not a man in all Athens able to discharge Pyramus but he.

FLUTE

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

QUINCE

Yea and the best person too.

Enter SNUG

SNUG

Masters, the duke is coming from the temple. If our sport had gone forward, we had all been made men.

FLUTE

O sweet bully Bottom! Thus hath he lost sixpence a day during his life; he could not have 'scaped sixpence a day: an the duke had not given him sixpence a day for playing Pyramus, I'll be

hanged; he would have deserved it: sixpence a day in Pyramus, or nothing.

BOTTOM

distant

Where are these lads? where are these hearts?

THE OTHERS

Bottom! O most courageous day! O most happy hour!

BOTTOM

Masters, I am to discourse wonders: but ask me not what.

THE OTHERS

Let us hear, sweet Bottom.

BOTTOM

Not a word of me. All that I will tell you is, that the duke hath dined and our play is preferred.

THE OTHERS

Our play is preferred. In any case, Most dear actors, get your apparel together, good strings to your beards, new ribbons to your pumps, and every man look o'er his part. Let Thisby have clean linen; and let not him that plays the lion pare his nails, eat no onions nor garlic, that they may say, it is a sweet comedy.

BOTTOM

No more words, no more words.

THE OTHERS

It is a sweet comedy.

BOTTOM

pushes them out

Go, go away, go!

They all leave excitedly. Theseus' palace. Theseus and Hippolyta enter with their court.

THESEUS

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,
Like to a step-dame or a dowager
Long withering out a young man revenue.

HIPPOLYTA

This day will quickly steep itself in night;

This night will quickly dream away the time;
And then the moon, like to a silver bow
New-bent in heaven, shall behold the night
Of our solemnities.

THESEUS

Hippolyta, I woo'd thee with my sword,
And won thy love, doing thee injuries;
But I will wed thee in another key,
With pomp, with triumph and with revelling.

LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS, HELENA, and HERMIA enter and kneel before Theseus

HELENA, HERMIA, DEMETRIUS, LYSANDER

Pardon, my lord.

THESEUS

I pray you all, stand up.
I know you two are rival enemies:
How comes this gentle concord in the world,

LYSANDER

My lord, I shall reply amazedly,
I went with Hermia thither: our intent
Was to be gone from Athens, where we might,
Without the peril of the Athenian law . . .

DEMETRIUS

My lord, fair Helen told me of their stealth,
And I in fury hither follow'd them,
Fair Helena in fancy following me.
But, my good lord . . .

THESEUS

Fair lovers,
Of this discourse we more will hear anon.
Hermia, I will overbear your father's will;
For in the temple by and by with us
These couples shall eternally be knit.

THESEUS

Joy, gentle friends! joy and fresh days of love
Accompany your hearts!
The lovers embrace

THESEUS

Come now; what masques, what dances shall we have,
To wear away this long age of three hours
Between our after-supper and bed-time?

Quince enters with a play bill. He hands it to Hippolyta and bows.

HIPPOLYTA

reading

'A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus
And his love Thisby; very tragical mirth.'

DEMETRIUS

Merry and tragical! tedious and brief!

LYSANDER

That is, hot ice and wondrous strange snow.

THESEUS

What are they that do play it?

HIPPOLYTA

Hard-handed men that work in Athens here,
Which never labour'd in their minds till now.

THESEUS

I will hear that play

Exit Quince

For never anything can be amiss,
When simpleness and duty tender it.
Take your places, ladies.

Theseus, Hippolyta and the court take their places. The rustics enter as a Prologue

RUSTICS

If we offend, it is with our good will.
That you should think, we come not to offend,
But with good will. To show our simple skill,
That is the true beginning of our end.
Consider then we come but in despite.
We do not come as minding to contest you,
Our true intent is. All for your delight
We are not here. That you should here repent you,
The actors are at hand and by their show
You shall know all that you are like to know.

THESEUS

These fellows do not stand upon points.

HIPPOLYTA

Their speech, was like a tangled chain; nothing impaired, but all disordered.

LYSANDER

They have rid their prologue like a rough colt; they know not the stop.

HIPPOLYTA

Indeed, they have played on their prologue like a child on a recorder.

HELENA

A sound, but not in government.

HERMIA

It is not enough to speak, but to speak true.

QUINCE

Gentles, Gentles . . .

THESEUS

Who is next?

PROLOGUE

Gentles, perchance you wonder at this show;
But wonder on, till truth make all things plain.
This man is Pyramus, if you would know;
This beauteous lady Thisby is certain.
This man, with lime and rough-cast, doth present
Wall, that vile Wall which did these lovers sunder;
This man, with lanthorn, dog, and bush of thorn,
Presenteth Moonshine; This grisly beast
is Lion hight by name. For all the rest,
Let Lion, Moonshine, Wall, and lovers twain
At large discourse, while here they do remain.

He pushes all the others out except Wall.

HELENA

I wonder if the lion be to speak?

DEMETRIUS

No wonder, fair lady: one lion may, when many asses do.

Wall (SNOUT)

In this same interlude it doth befall
That I, one Snout by name, present a wall;

And such a wall, as I would have you think,
That had in it a crannied hole or chink:

He holds up two fingers

And this the cranny is, right and sinister,
Through which the fearful lovers are to whisper.

HERMIA

Would you desire lime and hair to speak better?

LYSANDER

It is the wittiest partition that ever I heard discourse;

Enter Pyramus

THESEUS

Pyramus draws near the wall: silence!

Pyramus (BOTTOM)

O grim-look'd night! O night with hue so black!
O night, which ever art when day is not!
O night, O night! alack, alack, alack,
I fear my Thisby's promise is forgot!
And thou, O wall, O sweet, O lovely wall,
That stand'st between her father's ground and mine!
Thou wall, O wall, O sweet and lovely wall,
Show me thy chink, to blink through with mine eyne!
Thanks, courteous wall: Jove shield thee well for this!
But what see I? No Thisby do I see.
O wicked wall, through whom I see no bliss!
Cursed be thy stones for thus deceiving me!

THESEUS

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

BOTTOM

No, in truth, sir, he should not. 'Deceiving me' is Thisby's cue: she is to enter now, and I am to spy her through the wall. You shall see, it will fall pat as I told you. Yonder she comes.

Enter Thisby

Thisby (FLUTE)

O wall, full often hast thou heard my moans,
For parting my fair Pyramus and me!
My cherry lips have often kiss'd thy stones,
Thy stones with lime and hair knit up in thee.

Pyramus

I see a voice: now will I to the chink,
To spy an I can hear my Thisby's face. Thisby?

Thisby

My love thou art, my love I think.

Pyramus

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

Thisby

My love thou art, my love, I think.

Pyramus

O kiss me through the hole of this vile wall!

Thisby

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

Pyramus

Wilt thou at Ninny's tomb meet me straightway?

Thisby

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

Exeunt Pyramus and Thisby

Wall

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

Exit

HIPPOLYTA

This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard.

THESEUS

The best in this kind are but shadows; and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them.
Here come two noble beasts in, a man and a lion.

Enter Lion and Moonshine

Lion (SNUG)

You, ladies, you, whose gentle hearts do fear
The smallest monstrous mouse that creeps on floor,
Should know that I, one Snug the joiner, am
A lion-fell, nor else no lion's dam.

THESEUS

A very gentle beast, of a good conscience.

DEMETRIUS

The very best at a beast, my lord, that e'er I saw.

THESEUS

But let us listen to the moon.

Moonshine (STARVELING)

This lanthorn doth the horned moon present.

DEMETRIUS

He should have worn the horns on his head.

Moonshine

Myself the man i' the moon do seem to be.

THESEUS

The man should be put into the lanthorn. How is it else the man i' the moon?

LYSANDER

He dares not come there for the candle.

THESEUS

Proceed, Moon.

Moonshine

All that I have to say, is, to tell you that the lanthorn is the moon; I, the man in the moon; this thorn-bush, my thorn-bush; and this dog, my dog.

HIPPOLYTA

I am awearry of this moon: would he would change!

THE OTHERS

But, silence! here comes Thisby.

Enter Thisby

Thisby

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

Lion

[Roaring] Oh--

The lion chases Thisby out. She drops her mantle.

DEMETRIUS

Well roared, Lion.

THESEUS

Well run, Thisby.

LYSANDER

Well moused, Lion.

HIPPOLYTA

Well shone, Moon.

HELENA

Truly, the moon shines with a good grace.

Enter Pyramus

Pyramus

Sweet Moon, I thank thee for thy sunny beams;
I thank thee, Moon, for shining now so bright;
But stay, O spite!
But mark, poor knight,
What dreadful dole is here!
Eyes, do you see?
How can it be?
O dainty duck! O dear!
Thy mantle good,
What, stain'd with blood!
Approach, ye Furies fell!
O Fates, come, come,
Cut thread and thrum;
Quail, crush, conclude, and quell!

HIPPOLYTA

Beshrew my heart, but I pity the man.

Pyramus

O wherefore, Nature, didst thou lions frame?
Since lion vile hath here deflower'd my dear:
Which is--no, no--which was the fairest dame
Come, tears, confound;
Out, sword, and wound
The pap of Pyramus;

He stabs himself

Thus die I, thus, thus, thus.

He dies, then raises himself

Now am I dead,

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

Exit Moonshine

DEMETRIUS

With the help of a surgeon he might yet recover, and prove an ass.

THESEUS

Here comes Thisby and her passion ends the play.

HIPPOLYTA

I hope she will be brief.

Enter Thisby

Thisby

Asleep, my love?
What, dead, my dove?
O Pyramus, arise!
Speak, speak. Quite dumb?
Dead, dead? A tomb
Must cover thy sweet eyes.
These My lips,
This cherry nose,
These yellow cowslip cheeks,
Are gone, are gone:
Lovers, make moan:
His eyes were green as leeks.
Tongue, not a word:
Come, trusty sword;
Come, blade, my breast imbrue:
And, farewell, friends;
Thus Thisby ends:
Adieu, adieu, adieu.

She stabs herself.

THESEUS

Moonshine and Lion are left to bury the dead.

DEMETRIUS

Ay, and Wall too.

BOTTOM

raising himself

No assure you; the wall is down that parted their fathers. Will it please you to see the epilogue, or to hear a Bergomask dance?

THESEUS

No epilogue, I pray you; for your play needs no excuse. Come, your Bergomask.
The other rustics come in, arrange themselves and dance. Midnight sounds. They stop dancing, bow deeply to the Duke, Hippolyta and the court, and leave. The others rise.

THESEUS

The iron tongue of midnight hath told twelve:
Lovers, to bed; 'tis almost fairy time.
I fear we shall out-sleep the coming morn
As much as we this night have overwatch'd.
Sweet friends, to bed.

Enter Cobweb, Mustardseed, Peaseblossom and Moth

COBWEB, MUSTARDSEED, PEASEBLOSSOM, MOTH

Now the hungry lion roars,
And the wolf howls the moon;
Whilst the heavy ploughman snores,
All with weary task fordone.
Now the wasted brands do glow,
Whilst the screech-owl, screeching loud,
Puts the wretch that lies in woe
In remembrance of a shroud.
Now it is the time of night
That the graves all gaping wide,
Every one lets forth his sprite,
In the church-way paths to glide:
And we fairies, that do run
By the triple Hecate's team,
From the presence of the sun,
Following darkness like a dream,
Now are frolic: not a mouse
Shall disturb this hallow'd house:

PUCK

I am sent with broom before,
To sweep the dust behind the door.

He arrives with a broom and chases the fairies. Oberon and Tytania and the other fairies appear.

OBERON

Through the house give gathering light,
Every elf and fairy sprite;

Sing this ditty, after me,
Sing and dance it trippingly.

TYTANIA

First, rehearse your song by rote
To each word a warbling note.

OBERON, TYTANIA

Hand in hand, with fairy grace,
Will we sing, and bless this place.

OBERON, TYTANIA, FAIRIES

Now, until the break of day,
Through this house each fairy stray.
To the best bride-bed will we,
Which by us shall blessed be;
And the issue there create
Ever shall be fortunate.
So shall all the couples three
Ever true in loving be.
With this field-dew consecrate,
Every fairy take his gait;
And each several chamber bless,
Through this palace, with sweet peace;
And the owner of it blest
Ever shall in safety rest.

OBERON

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

All disappear but Puck

PUCK

If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended,
That you have but slumber'd here
While these visions did appear.
Gentles, do not reprehend:
if you pardon, we will mend;
Else the Puck a liar call.
So, good night unto you all.
Give me your hands, if we be friends,
And Robin shall restore amends.

Korte samenvatting van het toneelstuk van Shakespeare

Het verhaal kent drie verschillende verhaallijnen die aan elkaar verbonden worden door de viering van het huwelijk van hertog Theseus met de amazonekoningin Hippolyta.

In de beginscène zien we Hermia in een discussie met haar vader Egeus; haar vader wil dat ze huwt met zijn favoriete kandidaat Demetrius, maar Hermia weigert. Als reactie citeert Egeus een oude Atheense wet, die stelt dat de dochter verplicht is de vrijer te huwen die de vader kiest, of anders de doodstraf kan krijgen, of tot een levenslange kuisheid veroordeeld wordt, en dient de godin Diana te aanbidden als een non. Hermia en haar geliefde Lysander besluiten daarop om te gaan vluchten, door het bos bij nacht. Hermia licht haar beste vriendin Helena in omtrent haar plannen, maar Helena is recent aan het herstellen van een liefdesweigering van Demetrius, en Helena vat het plan op om Demetrius voor zich te winnen, door de plannen van Hermia te verraden aan Demetrius. Demetrius volgt Helena en gaat achter Hermia aan. Demetrius gaat op zoek en jaagt op Hermia, die op haar beurt op zoek gaat naar Lysander waarvan ze gescheiden is geraakt.

Ondertussen arriveren Oberon, de koning van de feeën, en zijn vrouw Titania, koningin van de feeën, in hetzelfde bos, om het huwelijk tussen Theseus en Hippolyta bij te wonen. Oberon en Titania zijn van elkaar vervreemd omdat Titania weigert haar knecht aan Oberon af te staan, om Oberons schildknaap te zijn. Omdat de moeder van de jongen een van de aanbidsters was van Titania, zoekt Oberon Titania straffen voor haar ongehoorzaamheid jegens zijn verzoek. Hij recruteert de kapoen Puck (ook wel bekend als Robin Goodfellow, of Hobgoblin) om hem te helpen een magisch sap te verkrijgen van een bloem. Het sap zorgt ervoor dat het slachtoffer verliefd wordt op het eerste levende wezen dat het ziet, wanneer het wakker wordt. Oberon zorgt ervoor dat het sap opgenomen wordt door Titania, zodat Titania afgeleid wordt, en hij haar kan dwingen de knaap af te geven.

De zaken worden nog complexer wanneer Oberon kennismaakt met de Atheense geliefden, hij geeft Puck de opdracht om de magische bloem ook te gebruiken op hen, om hen te helpen. Door Pucks vergissing zijn de twee geliefden van Hermia op slag verliefd op Helena, en zien ze Hermia niet meer staan. De vier geliefden maken heel de nacht ruzie met elkaar, ze raken elkaar bijna kwijt in het donker, en zijn verloren in het net van de liefde.

Ondertussen dienen zich een paar brutale arbeiders aan, om een gemeen toneelspel op te voeren over Pyramus en Thisbe voor Theseus' huwelijk, en ze gaan aan de rand van het bos het stuk instuderen. Nick Bottom, een wever met weinig geluk, wordt opgemerkt door Puck, Puck verandert Nick Bottoms hoofd in de kop van een ezel. Titania wordt wakker door het gezang van Nick Bottom, en wordt onmiddellijk verliefd op hem. Ze behandelt hem alsof hij een nobele en respectabele heer is, ze baadt hem in haar liefde. Terwijl ze in dit stadium van devotie verkeert, komt ze Oberon tegen, en geeft hem heel gewoontjes de jonge knaap.

Nu Oberon zijn doel bereikt heeft, laat hij Titania vrij en geeft Puck het bevel dat hij de ezelskop van het hoofd van Bottom moet verwijderen. De magische uitwerking van de bloem op Lysander wordt verbroken, maar wordt toegestaan om nog door te werken op Demetrius zodat Demetrius zijn liefde voor Helena kan doen opflakkeren. De feeën verdwijnen dan, en Theseus en Hippolyta doen hun opwachting in het bos, tijdens een vroege jacht. Ze wekken de geliefden en omdat Demetrius niet meer van Hermia houdt, verbreekt Theseus Egeus' eis, en organiseert een groepshuwelijk. De geliefden beslissen dan maar dat de gebeurtenissen van de nacht ervoor een droom moet geweest zijn. Nadat ze allen het bos verlaten wordt Nick Bottom wakker, en ook hij beslist dat hij een droom meegemaakt heeft, waar geen man een redelijke verklaring voor kan geven.

In Athene kijken Theseus, Hippolyta en de geliefde naar de opvoering van Pyramus en Thisbe. Het is onnozel

en slecht opgevoerd, maar het doet iedereen ontspannen, en nadat de arbeiders de Bergomask een rustieke dans hebben opgevoerd, gaat iedereen slapen. Eindelijk, als de nacht valt, zegenen Oberon en Titania het huis, zijn bewoners en de toekomstige kinderen van de pasgetrouwden.

Uitspraak Engels -- ouderwetse woorden

ca. 1600 Shakespeare, Elizabethaans, Bijbel Engels, daarna gestileerd, dichterlijk, romantisch Engels

- ouderwetse teksten worden als modern Engels uitgesproken, ondanks spelling: vb. "Go christall teares & weepe into thy Ladies brest . . ."
- of rijmklankers die niet meer rijmen: vb. "speak ((i:) -- break (ei) en move (U:) -- prove (U:) -- grove (oU) -- love (V) -- dove (V)

Wel moeten we soms een lettergreep blijven uitspreken, omdat het metrum van een gedicht of een aparte noot in de muziek dit vereist:

- vb. "he stretchèd forth the knife . . ."
"haste then sweet love, our wishèd flight .. ."
"and who shall stand when He appearèth?"

Typisch is de oude Gij-vorm die nog per naamval verbogen wordt:

1e naamval	"Thou art the God" (Gij zijt . . .)	thou (θAU)
2e naamval	"Thy kingdom come"	thy/thine (al)
3e naamval	"dance with thee I will, and sing"	thee
4e naamval	"oh, have I ketched thee?"	thee
zelfstandig	"my heart is thine" (het Uwe)	thine

En de oude Gij-vorm voor het meervoud:

- vb. "ye gods on high" (ji:)

Het hulpwerkwoord do/did/doth = does werd vroeger vaak in een positieve zin gebruikt, zonder dat er nadruk mee gegeven moet worden; dus licht lezen en niet vertalen:

- vb. "the thirst that from the soul doth rise (=rises) doth ask a drink divine . . ." (dλθ)

Oude werkwoorduitgang op -t werd gebruikt voor de tweede persoon enkelvoud:

- vb. "thou art" (gij zijt) (a:t)
"thou hast" (gij hebt) (hæst)
"thou shalt" (gij zult) (fælt)
"thou shan't" (gij zult niet) (fa:nt)
"thou takest" enz; "gij neemt)

Oude uitgang op -th voor derde persoon enkel (hij-vorm):

- vb. "he hath" (hæθ)
"saith the Lord" (seθ)
"he taketh" ('teukεθ)
"it doth" (dλθ)
"he standeth" ('stændəθ)

"when he appeareth" (əpɪərɛθ)

Oude plaatsaanduidingen:

- vb. "in yonder green valley . . ." (jɒndə)
- "whence comes this heavenly sound?" (hwens)
- "thence" (ðens)
- "hence, away we must fly!" (hens)
- "whither runneth my sweetheart?" (hwiðə)
- "thither, sweet love, let us hie . . ." (ðiðə)
- "hither" (hiðə)

Oude betekenis vaak in

- vb. "still" = alsmaar, voortdurend
- "air" = wijsje, liedje, aria
- "part" = rol, partij
- "ground" = baslijn, basso ostinato

Ook vaak oude betekenis in

- vb. "base" (beis) = gemeen, laag
- "wretched" ('rtʃɪd = ellendig
- "I'm undone" = het is met mij gedaan

Wees altijd bedacht op woorden als

- "ere" (ɛə) = vooraleer
- "e'er" (ɛə) = altijd
- "aye" (ei) = altijd
- "aye" = (aɪ) ja
- "yea" (jei) = ,ja,
- "ye" = (ji:) gij (meervoud)
- "thou" (ðau) = gij (enkelvoud)
- "though" (ðou) = hoewel
- "lo!" (lou) = zie! kijk!
- "behold!" (bihould) = zie! aanschouw!
- "hark!" (ha:k) = hoor!
- "fie!" (fai) = foei!
- "foe" (fou) = vijand
- "woe(s)" (wouz) = wee, smarten
- "to woo" (wu:) = vrijen, naar iemands hand dingen
- "to cease" (si:s) = ophouden
- "bosom" = (buzəm) boezem
- "womb" (wu:m) = baarmoeder, moederschoot
- "tomb" = (tu:m) graftombe
- "wreath" = (ri:θ) krans, bloemenkrans, erekrans, grafkrans
- "wrath" = (rɒθ) wrok, woede
- "vow" (vau) = belofte, gelofte, gelofte doen
- "bow" (bau) = buigen, buiging
- "lass" (læs) = meisje
- "lad" (læd) = jongen

Handig om te weten . . .

grammar : grammatica

noun : zelfstandig naamwoord

pronoun : voornaamwoord

verb : werkwoord

adjective : bijvoeglijk naamwoord

adverb : bijwoord

preposition : voorzetsel

conjunction : voegwoord

prefix : voorvoegsel

suffix : achtervoegsel

conjugation : vervoeging

subject : onderwerp

direct object: lijdend voorwerp

indirect object : meewerkend voorwerp

sentence : volzin

main clause: hoofdzin

subordinate clause : bijzin

conditional : voorwaardelijk

leestekens : *punctuation*

dubbele punt : *colon*

puntkomma : *semicolon*

uitroepteken : *exclamation mark*

vraagteken : *question mark*

komma : *comma*

punt : *full stop*

alineea : *paragraph*

koppelteken : *hyphen*

aanhalings tekens : *inverted commas*

streep : *dash*

hoofdletter : *capital*

bovenkast : *in capitals*

case : naamval

nominative : eerste naamval

genitive : tweede naamval

dative : derde naamval

accusative : vierde naamval