



A Midsummer Night's Dream

**Sample Pages from
A Midsummer Night's Dream**

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A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

A PLAY IN ONE ACT ADAPTED BY
Lindsay Price

FROM THE ORIGINAL BY
William Shakespeare



A Midsummer Night's Dream

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Printed in the USA

Characters

- Theseus:** Duke of Athens
Hippolyta: Queen of the Amazons
Egeus: Hermia's Father
Philostrate: Servant
Hermia: In love with Lysander
Lysander: In love with Hermia
Helena: In love with Demetrius
Demetrius: In love with Hermia
Nick Bottom: A Weaver
Peter Quince: A Carpenter
Francis Flute: A Bellows-mender
Tom Snout: A Tinker
Robin Starveling: A Tailor
Snug: A Joiner
Oberon: King of the Fairies
Titania: Queen of the Fairies
Puck (aka Robin Goodfellow): Oberon's attendant
Peaseblossom: Attendant to Titania
Cobweb: Attendant to Titania
Moth: Attendant to Titania
Mustardseed: Attendant to Titania

Author's Note

This is an adapted version of the full-length play *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare. It has been cut in length so that it runs approximately one hour. There are numerous stage directions to assist in deciphering the language through action. Every page features a side-bar with word definitions, character questions, and out-of-text exercises; all of which I hope will enhance your time with the play. Enjoy!

The Palace of Theseus

Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, and PHILOSTRATE, with others. THESEUS and HIPPOLYTA are talking about their wedding in four days' time.

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!**

HIPPOLYTA: Four days will quickly steep themselves in night,
Four nights 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: Go, Philostrate,
Stir up the Athenian youth to merriments.
Awake the **pert** and nimble spirit of mirth.
Turn melancholy forth to funerals.
The **pale companion** is not for our **pomp.**

PHILOSTRATE exits stage left with a bow. EGEUS brushes past PHILOSTRATE on his way in. EGEUS is very angry. He is dragging HERMIA, his daughter, and LYSANDER, her suitor. DEMETRIUS is following behind. When they all get to THESEUS, they bow.

EGEUS: Happy be Theseus, our renowne'd Duke.

THESEUS: Thanks, good Egeus. What's the news with thee?

EGEUS: *[Flinging HERMIA down to the ground]*
Full of **vexation** come I, with complaint
Against my child, my daughter Hermia.
[Gesturing to DEMETRIUS]
Stand forth Demetrius. My noble lord,
This man hath my consent to marry her.
[Flinging LYSANDER forward]
Stand forth Lysander. And, my gracious Duke,
This hath bewitched the bosom of my child.
Thou, thou, Lysander, **thou hast** given her rhymes,
And interchanged love tokens with my child.
With cunning hast thou **filched** my daughter's heart,
Turned her obedience which is due to me

Theseus has just conquered the Amazons and has taken the Queen of the Amazons, Hippolyta, as his wife. They are to be married when the new moon rises in four days.

Draws on apace: quickly approaches
methinks: I think
wanes: loses power

Is Hippolyta happy to be marrying Theseus?

solemnities: marriage rights

pert: lively

pale companion: sadness
pomp: celebrations (the upcoming wedding)

Egeus: pronounced e-GEE-us

Egeus is furious. Is he really thinking about Theseus' happiness? Keep that in mind when you say your first line.

vexation: anger

Is Demetrius proud here? Embarrassed? What does he think of Egeus? Why has Egeus chosen Demetrius over Lysander?

thou hast: you have

filched: stolen

Be it so: if

What does Lysander think about Egeus' speech? Does he take it seriously? What does Demetrius do during the speech?

Immediately: expressly

Be advised: consider with care

What kind of king is Theseus? Relaxed? Tyrant? Loved? Hated?

But in this kind wanting your father's voice: In this case, you must respect your father

Is Hermia calm? In a panic? Does she believe she might be put to death? Does she love her father? Does she look at her father?

beseech: beg

sealing: wedding **betwixt:** between

Diana: goddess of chastity

barren sister: a nun

Note: Theseus gives Hermia a third option of becoming a nun, even though Egeus mentioned only marriage or death.

crazed: flawed **title:** claim to possession

Is Lysander serious? Is he making a joke?

Why does Egeus hate Lysander so much? What has Lysander done to Egeus? This would be a good scene to improvise.

To stubborn harshness. And, my gracious Duke,
[*Bowing to THESEUS*]

Be it so she will not here before your grace
Consent to marry with Demetrius,
I beg the ancient privilege of Athens:
As she is mine, I may dispose of her,
Which shall be either to this gentleman
Or to her death, according to our law
Immediately provided in that case.

THESEUS: [*Helping HERMIA up*]
What say you, Hermia? **Be advised**, fair maid.
To you your father should be as a god,
Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

HERMIA: [*Brushing off her clothes*] So is Lysander.

THESEUS: In himself he is,
But in this kind, wanting your father's voice,
The other must be held the worthier.

HERMIA: I would my father looked but with my eyes.

THESEUS: Rather your eyes must with his judgment look.

HERMIA: I do entreat your grace to pardon me.
But I **beseech** your grace that I may know
The worst that may befall me in this case
If I refuse to wed Demetrius.

THESEUS: Take time to pause, and by the next new moon.
The **sealing** day **betwixt** my love and me
Upon that day either prepare to die
For disobedience to your father's will,
Or else to wed Demetrius, as he would,
Or on **Diana's** altar to protest
To live a **barren sister** all your life

DEMETRIUS: [*Rushing to HERMIA and grabbing her shoulders*]
Relent, sweet Hermia; and, Lysander, yield
Thy **crazed title** to my certain right.

LYSANDER: [*Pulling DEMETRIUS off HERMIA*]
You have her father's love, Demetrius;
Let me have Hermia's. Do you marry him.

EGEUS: [*Pulling LYSANDER off DEMETRIUS*]
Scornful Lysander! True, he hath my love;

And what is mine my love shall render him,
And she is mine, and all my right of her
I do **estate** unto Demetrius.

LYSANDER: [To *THESEUS*] I am, my lord, as **well derived** as he,
As **well possessed**. My love is more than his,
And which is more than all these boasts can be
I am beloved of beauteous Hermia.
Why should not I then **prosecute** my right?

THESEUS: Demetrius and Egeus, **go along**.
I must employ you in some business
For you, fair Hermia, look you arm yourself
To fit your fancies to your father's will,
Or else the law of Athens yields you up
To death or to a vow of single life.
Come, my Hippolyta; what cheer, my love?

EGEUS: With **duty and desire** we follow you.

All exit but LYSANDER and HERMIA. Once they have gone, LYSANDER and HERMIA rush into each others arms. LYSANDER speaks in hurried whispers.

LYSANDER: Hear me, Hermia.
I have a widow aunt, a dowager
Of great revenue, and she hath no child,
And she **respects** me as her only son.
From Athens is her house remote seven leagues.
There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee,
If thou **lov'st** me then, Steal **forth** thy father's
House tomorrow night, and in the wood,
There will I **stay** for thee.

HERMIA: In that same place thou hast appointed me
Tomorrow truly will I meet with thee.

LYSANDER picks up HERMIA and whirls her around. They laugh with joy.

LYSANDER: Keep promise, love. Look, here comes Helena.

HELENA enters slowly. She is very depressed. She sees LYSANDER and HERMIA holding hands and she emits a long drawn-out sigh.

HERMIA: God speed, fair Helena. **Whither away?**

HELENA: Call you me **fair**? That 'fair' again unsay.

estate: give

well derived: of equal birth
well possessed: as rich

prosecute: perish

go along: come with us

Why has Theseus allowed Hermia and Lysander to be alone?

What has Hippolyta done during the last scene? What does she think of what has happened?

duty and desire: with eagerness to serve

Does Egeus really want to leave Hermia and Lysander alone?

These two characters are really in love. Rehearse the scene a couple of different ways: really exaggerated (like a soap opera), very subdued. See which way you like best.

respects: regards

Is this the first time Lysander has mentioned marriage? How does Hermia react?

lov'st: love **forth:** out from home

stay: wait

Notice that Hermia's lines rhyme. Who else has rhyming lines? Why have they been written that way?

Have you ever been in the situation where you love someone who doesn't love you? That's exactly how Helena feels.

Do Lysander and Hermia really want to talk to Helena right now? Is Helena always depressed? Has she ever been happy?

Whither away: Where are you going?

fair: beautiful

happy: lucky

lodestars: objects of pursuit

tuneable: tuneful

What do Lysander and Hermia do during this speech? Are they paying attention to Helena?

bated: excepted

translated: transformed into you (Hermia)

art: skill

motion: desire

How does Lysander react to Hermia spilling the news about the two of them running away together? Did he want it to be kept a secret or did he want Helena to know as well?

Phoebe: the moon

glass: the sea

devised: decided

Does Helena want to know these things?

What does this tell you about the relationship between Helena and Hermia?

thence: from that time forward

stranger companies: the company of strangers

Does Helena take Hermia and Lysander seriously?

Keep word: keep your promise

starve our sight: not see each other

adieu: goodbye

Hermia and Lysander are stereotypical lovers. Research "the lover" through paintings, music and poetry. Try and incorporate traditional love gestures into the roles.

How happy some o'er other some can be: Some people are so much happier than others.

Demetrius loves your fair... O **happy** fair!
Your eyes are **lodestars**, and your tongue's sweet air
More **tuneable** than lark to shepherd's ear
When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear
My ear should catch your voice, my eye your eye,
My tongue should catch your tongue's sweet melody.
Were the world mine, Demetrius being **bated**,
The rest I'd give to be to you **translated**.
O, teach me how you look, and with what **art**
You sway the **motion** of Demetrius' heart.

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

LYSANDER: [*Taking HELENA's hand and showing her the moon*]
Helen, to you our minds we will unfold.
Tomorrow night, when **Phoebe** doth behold
Her silver visage in the wat'ry **glass**,
Decking with liquid pearl the bladed grass
A time that lovers' sleights doth still conceal
Through Athens' gates have we **devised** to steal.

HERMIA: [*Taking HELENA's hand and pointing out the wood*]
And in the wood where often you and I
Upon faint primrose beds were wont to lie,
Emptying our bosoms of their counsel sweet,
There my Lysander and myself shall meet,
And **thence** from Athens turn away our eyes
To seek new friends and **stranger companies**.
[*Kissing HELENA on the cheek*]
Farewell, sweet playfellow. Pray thou for us,
And good luck grant thee thy Demetrius...
[*Taking LYSANDER's hands and looking into his eyes*]
Keep word, Lysander. We must **starve our sight**
From lovers' food till morrow deep midnight.

LYSANDER: I will, my Hermia.
Helena, **adieu**.
As you on him, Demetrius dote on you.

HERMIA exits backwards never taking her eyes off of LYSANDER. LYSANDER exits backwards never taking his eyes off HERMIA.

HELENA: [*Watching the two exit*]
How happy some o'er other some can be!
Through Athens I am thought as fair as she.
But what of that? Demetrius thinks not so.
[*Turns away so she doesn't have to watch the lovers*]

He will not know what all but he do know.
I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight.
Then to the wood will he tomorrow night
Pursue her, and for this **intelligence**
If I have thanks it is a **dear expense**.
But **herein** mean I to enrich my pain,
To have his **sight thither** and back again.

HELENA runs off to find DEMETRIUS.

Peter QUINCE's House

QUINCE the carpenter, SNUG the joiner, BOTTOM the weaver, FLUTE the bellows-mender, SNOOT the tinker, and STARVELING the tailor enter.

QUINCE: Is all our company here?

BOTTOM: [*Scampering beside QUINCE*] **You were best** to call them **generally**, man by man, according to the script.

QUINCE: [*Holding up scroll as everyone takes their seat*] Here is the scroll of every man's name which is thought fit through all Athens to play in our **interlude** before the Duke and the Duchess on his wedding day at night.

BOTTOM: [*Jumping up*] First, good Peter Quince, say what the play **treats on**; then read the names of the actors; and so **grow to a point**. [*Sitting down again*]

QUINCE: **Marry**, our play is The Most Lamentable Comedy and Most Cruel Death of Pyramus and Thisbe.

BOTTOM: [*Jumping up and applauding*] 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.

BOTTOM waves the others back so they are not crowding QUINCE.

QUINCE: Answer as I call you. Nick Bottom, the weaver?

BOTTOM: [*Jumping up in QUINCE's face*] Ready. **Name what part** I am for, and proceed.

Note: In this speech Helena says that Demetrius has said he loved her until he felt heat from Hermia. What does that say about Demetrius? Or Hermia?

intelligence: information

dear expense: painful gain

herein: in this matter

sight thither: the sight of him

This is the moment Helena decides to tell on Hermia. How can she let the audience know she has come to the decision in the middle of her speech?

This scene takes place in Peter Quince's house. They are rehearsing the play they will perform at the wedding of Theseus and Hippolyta.

All of the "mechanicals" get their names from their work. Quince is based on "quines" which is a block of wood used for building. Bottom is a skein on which yarn is wound. Research the names of this group and see how their jobs can compliment their characters.

You were best: It would be best for you

generally: Bottom means specifically. *Note: Bottom often makes these blunders.*

interlude: brief play

What kind of character is Quince? Is he serious about his job? Is he smart? How old is he?

treats on: is about

grow to a point: come to a conclusion

Marry: an oath

What do you think about the title of the play? How can it be a 'comedy' about a 'cruel death'?

Bottom is very excited about the play. Put that enthusiasm into the character.

Note: Even though the audience won't take the play very seriously, the actors in the play must treat the matter as though it were a great drama.

Name what part: Tell me what part

Quince is the leader of the group. Is he an effective leader?

Are all of the characters excited about the play?

Do you think Lysander might kill himself for love? Is he that kind of character? Can you name another of Shakespeare's plays where a lover kills himself for love?

What is Thisbe: What sort of man is Thisbe?

How do the other characters react when it is announced that Flute must play a girl? Note: In Shakespeare's time women were not allowed on the stage. It was common practice for young boys to play female parts.

Bottom is blundering again. Something that is monstrous is not little. What do the other characters think of Bottom when he makes these mistakes. Do they know they are mistakes or do they think that Bottom is a very wise person?

Is Quince starting to get annoyed with Bottom?

Is Starveling excited or disappointed with this part? How can he let the audience know?

Here is another male character playing a female part. How does he react to the news?

In some modern productions, the mechanicals are played by both men and women. How will they be cast in your production?

play fitted: properly cast

What type of character is Snug if he is "properly cast as a lion?"

extempore: improvised

I will roar that: I will roar so that

QUINCE: *[Reading the scroll]*
You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus.

BOTTOM: *[Trying to read the scroll over QUINCE's shoulder]*
What is Pyramus? A lover or a tyrant?

QUINCE: A lover, that kills himself most gallant for love.
[Looking around at the group]
Francis Flute, the bellows-mender?

FLUTE: *[Waves hat from his seat]* Here, Peter Quince.

QUINCE: Flute, you must take Thisbe on you.

FLUTE: **What is Thisbe?** A wandering knight?

QUINCE: It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

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

BOTTOM: *[Running over to QUINCE]* Let me play Thisbe too, I'll speak in a monstrous little voice, *[Performs the two parts by jumping from left to right]* "Thisbe, Thisbe!" "Ah Pyramus, my lover dear!"

QUINCE: *[Shooing BOTTOM away]* No, No; you must play Pyramus. Robin Starveling, the tailor?

STARVELING: *[Standing]* Here, Peter Quince.

QUINCE: Robin Starveling, you must play Thisbe's mother. Tom Snout, the tinker?

SNOUT: Here, Peter Quince.

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

SNUG: *[Coming over to QUINCE]* 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: *[Jumping up]* 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'.

BOTTOM begins to roar in the faces of the others until he is stopped by QUINCE.

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.

BOTTOM: But I will **aggravate** my voice so that I will roar you as gently as any nightingale. [*Roars like a gentle nightingale*]

QUINCE: You can play no part by Pyramus! [*Handing out scripts*] But masters, here are your parts, and I am to entreat you, request you, and desire you to learn them by tomorrow night, and meet me in the palace wood a mile without the town by moonlight.

BOTTOM: We will meet, and there we may rehearse most **obscenely** and courageously. Take pains; be perfect. Adieu.

They all exit with much talking and laughter.

The woods outside of Athens

PEASEBLOSSOM and MOTH enter from one side of the stage, PUCK enters from another.

PUCK: [*Calling across the stage*]
How now, spirits, whither wander you?

PEASEBLOSSOM and MOTH dance over to PUCK.

PEASEBLOSSOM: Over hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough brier,

MOTH: Over park, over pale,
Thorough flood, thorough fire:

BOTH: We do wander everywhere
Swifter than the moon's **sphere**,
And we serve the Fairy Queen
To dew her **orbs** upon the green.

PUCK: [*Moves centre stage past the fairies, trying to clean the stage*]
The King doth keep his revels here tonight.
Take heed the Queen come not within his sight,

The main aim of this scene is that everybody have fun. The mechanicals should be having fun. The audience should be having fun and the scene should be full of life and action.

How does Quince say these lines? Is he upset? Or is he just being practical?

aggravate: Bottom means modify
Another Bottom mistake. Nightingales don't roar

Quince says here that the players must learn all of their lines by tomorrow night. This is the way plays were learned in Shakespeare's time. Actors might have to learn 800 lines a week!

How are Bottom and Quince different? Can you show that in their actions as well as words?

obscenely: Bottom means obscurely

This would be a good place to add music or a lighting change as the magic of the fairies takes over.

What do the fairies look like? How do they talk? How do they walk? There are many pictures and videos of the fairies in this play. There are also numerous stories and legends about the fairy world in England. Do some research.

How is Puck different from these fairies?

Thorough: through

Do the fairies speak or sing these lines? Do these characters say their rhyming lines differently than the lovers in the earlier scenes?

sphere: globe (the shape of the moon)

orbs: fairy rings

Puck is a household fairy. He is often sent ahead to tidy up before Oberon arrives. He is also a very mischievous fairy.

passing fell: very angry

changeling: a child stolen by a fairy

perforce: by force

How much do the fairies know about what Puck is saying? Do they agree or disagree. How can they show that? Are they afraid of Oberon? Are they afraid of their Queen?

making: form

shrewd: mischievous

Why does Puck have more than one name?

villag'ry: village

quern: hand mill for corn

bootless: in vain

What does this speech say about Puck's character?

What do these fairies think of each other? They serve different bosses, do they like each other? Are they just being polite? Where did they meet?

When these two enter it should have a very regal atmosphere. All of the fairies should jump to attention and rush to their respective sides.

TITANIA: Pronounced ti-TAN-i-a

How are Oberon and Titania dressed?

Titania and Oberon have loved each other in the past and this is their first meeting since they started fighting. What do they do when they first see each other? Do they still love each other? Do they miss each other?

What is Titania thinking? Is she deliberately trying to hurt Oberon?

Who is in control of this scene? Oberon or Titania? Are these two acting like adults or children?

For Oberon is **passing fell** and wroth
Because that she, as her attendant, hath
A lovely boy stol'n from an Indian king.
She never had so sweet a **changeling**;
And jealous Oberon would have the child
Knight of his train, to trace the forests wild.
But she **perforce** withholds the love'd boy,
Crowns him with flowers, and makes him all her joy.

MOTH and PEASEBLOSSOM sit and stretch out their wings.

MOTH: Either I mistake your shape and **making** quite
Or else you are that **shrewd** and knavish sprite
Called Robin Goodfellow.

PEASEBLOSSOM: Are not you he
That frights the maidens of the **villag'ry**,
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?

MOTH: Those that 'hobgoblin' call you, and 'sweet puck',
You do their work, and they shall have good luck.
Are not you he?

PUCK: [*Bowing*] Thou speak'st aright;
I am that merry wanderer of the night.
But make room, fairy: here comes Oberon.

Enter OBERON, the King of Fairies with his train, and TITANIA the Queen of Fairies, with hers.

PEASEBLOSSOM: And here my mistress. Would that he were gone.

The fairies run to their respective sides. OBERON and TITANIA speak from opposite sides of the stage.

OBERON: Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania.

TITANIA: What, jealous Oberon? Why art thou here
Come from the farthest step of India,
But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,
Your buskin'd mistress and your warrior love,
To Theseus must be wedded, and you come
To give their bed joy and prosperity?

<p>OBERON: <i>[Crossing angrily to TITANIA]</i> How canst thou thus for shame, Titania, Glance at my credit with Hippolyta, Knowing I know thy love to Theseus?</p>	<p>TITANIA: <i>[Walking casually away from him]</i> These are the forgeries of jealousy...</p>	<p>OBERON: <i>[Coming up behind her]</i> Why should Titania cross her Oberon? I do but beg a little changeling boy To be my henchman.</p>	<p>TITANIA: <i>[Turning placing a hand on his chest]</i> Set your heart at rest. The fairyland buys not the child of me. <i>[OBERON walks away fuming]</i> His mother was a vot'ress of my order, But she, being mortal, of that boy did die; <i>[She walks over to face OBERON]</i> And for her sake do I rear up her boy; And for her sake I will not part with him.</p>	<p>OBERON: <i>[Turning away from her]</i> How long within this wood intend you stay?</p>	<p>TITANIA: <i>[She tickles OBERON]</i> Perchance till after Theseus' wedding day. If you will patiently dance in our round, <i>[Walks around to face OBERON]</i> And see our moonlight revels, go with us. If not, shun me, and I will spare your haunts.</p>	<p>OBERON: <i>[Taking her shoulder]</i> Give me that boy and I will go with thee.</p>	<p>TITANIA: <i>[Wrenching herself away]</i> Not for thy fairy kingdom! Fairies, away. We shall chide downright if I longer stay.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>TITANIA exits, laughing with her train.</i></p>	<p>OBERON: <i>[Yelling after her]</i> Well, go thy way. <i>[Talking to himself]</i> Thou shalt not from this grove Till I torment thee for this injury. <i>[Gesturing to PUCK]</i> My gentle puck, come hither. Fetch me that herb</p>	<p><i>What did Titania say to make Oberon so mad?</i></p> <p>Glance at my credit: attack my reputation</p> <p>forgeries: false statements</p> <p>cross: go against</p> <p>henchman: page <i>Why is Oberon trying to change his tactics? His words and tone should be very soft here. Does Titania fall for it?</i></p> <p>Set your heart: give up The fairyland...: your whole land cannot buy the child</p> <p>vot'ress: worshiper</p> <p><i>How does Titania feel about the boy's mother?</i> <i>Is this the only reason Titania wants the boy?</i></p> <p><i>Has Oberon lost? Why is he changing the subject?</i></p> <p>Perchance: maybe</p> <p><i>What type of power games are being played in this scene? Who is winning?</i></p> <p>spare: avoid haunts: company</p> <p><i>Why does Oberon want the boy? Is it because he wants something that Titania has, or is there something more?</i></p> <p>chide: fight</p> <p>from: leave injury: insult</p> <p>hither: here</p>
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leviathan: whale

or man or woman: both men and women

Oberon is deciding how to punish Titania. What is his mood like as he makes this speech?

I'll put a girdle round the earth in forty minutes:

Puck is saying that he will be back in no time.

Oberon has decided to put some juice into Titania's eyes which will make her fall in love with the first person she sees. We have already met the person she will fall in love with. Can you guess who it is?

I am invisible: for the benefit of the audience

Helena has told Demetrius that Lysander and Hermia are running away. Demetrius is frantic to catch them. Why is that? Why is Demetrius so in love with Hermia? Note that Demetrius and Helena are both in love with people that don't love them. In what way are they similar? Different?

they were stol'n: they ran away

wood: mad with love

Look at the language in this scene. Who is more frantic? Helena or Demetrius? Who controls this scene?

adamant: magnet

Note the difference in the words they use. Helena is poetic. Demetrius is harsh.

Do I speak you fair: Do I speak courteously to you?

Why does Helena love Demetrius so much?

Tempt: put to the test

We already know Demetrius has said that he loved Helena at one time. Does he feel at all guilty for what he is saying in this scene? Can he be that cruel?

I showed thee once and be thou here again
Ere the **leviathan** can swim a league.
The juice of it on sleeping eyelids laid
Will make **or man or woman** madly dote
Upon the next live creature that it sees.

PUCK:

I'll put a girdle round about the earth
In forty minutes.

PUCK exits on the run.

OBERON:

Having once this juice
I'll watch Titania when she is asleep,
And drop the liquor of it in her eyes.
[Sees **DEMETRIUS** and **HELENA**]
But who comes here? **I am invisible**,
And I will overhear their conference.

DEMETRIUS enters with HELENA following. They are both out of breath.

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 stol'n** unto this wood,
And here am I, and **wood** within this wood
Because I cannot meet my Hermia.
Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.

He collapses onto the ground. HELENA tries to catch her breath and fix her appearance.

HELENA:

You draw me, you hard-hearted **adamant**,
But yet you draw not iron; for my heart
Is true as steel. 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.

DEMETRIUS:

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

HELENA:

[*Kneels down beside DEMETRIUS*]
And I am sick when I look not on you.

DEMETRIUS: *[Scrambles away from her and trips over himself]*
I'll run from thee, and hide me in the **brakes**,
And leave thee to the mercy of wild beasts.

HELENA: *[Tries to help him up]*
The wildest hath not such a heart as you.

DEMETRIUS: I will **not stay thy questions**. Let me go;
Or if thou follow me, do not believe
But I shall do thee mischief in the wood.

HELENA: I'll follow thee, and make a heaven of hell,
To die **upon** the hand I love so well.

DEMETRIUS exits with HELENA following him.

OBERON: *[Watching them leave]*
Fare thee well, nymph. **Ere** he do leave this grove
Thou shalt fly him, and he shall seek thy love.
[PUCK enters]
Hast thou the flower there? Welcome, wanderer.

PUCK: *[Giving flower to OBERON]* Ay, there it is.

OBERON: *[Holding flower high, creates magic ritual]*
There sleeps Titania **sometime of the night**,
Lulled in these flowers with dances and delight;
And with the juice of this I'll streak her eyes,
And make her full of hateful fantasies.
[Giving some of the flower to PUCK]
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.
Effect it with some care, that he may prove
More fond on her than she upon her love;
And look thou meet me ere the first cock crow.

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

PUCK exits. OBERON hides. TITANIA enters with the FAIRIES.

TITANIA: Come, now a **roundel**; sing me now asleep;
Then to your **offices**, and let me rest.

brakes: branches

Is Helena determined or blinded by love?

not stay thy question: not listen to you

What does this mean? Is Demetrius so desperate that he would hurt Helena?

upon: by

Ere: before

Why does Oberon decide to help Helena? Oberon doesn't have to do anything he doesn't want to, so you should decide what it is in the scene which makes Oberon want to help.

sometime of the: sometimes during the

Note: with the same juice Oberon wants to hinder Titania, and help Helena. What does that tell about Oberon's character?

espies: sees

More fond on her: foolishly in love with her

What does Puck think of Oberon?

How do the fairies enter? Are they quiet? Are they dancing and singing?

roundel: dance in a circle

offices: duties

She lies down. The FAIRIES sing and dance.

double tongue: forked tongues

blindworms: small snakes thought to be poisonous

Philomel was transformed into a nightingale

What type of music do the fairies play? Do some research on the music and instruments of the Elizabethan era.

sentinel: guard

What is the guard doing while Oberon puts the juice in Titania's eyes. Does Oberon charm the guard?

How does Oberon put the juice into Titania's eyes. Is he casting a spell?

languish: grow feeble

ounce: lynx

Pard: leopard

It is obvious Oberon wants to make a fool of Titania. Why?

The lovers have been traveling through the forest in the dead of night. They have lost their way.

What do they look like when they enter? How have they changed from the top of the play?

tarry: wait

These two aren't using the same loving language they did when we first met them.

MUSTARDSEED: You spotted snakes with **double tongue**,
Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen;
Newts and **blindworms**, do no wrong;
Come not near our Fairy Queen.

FAIRIES: *[Dancing]* 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.

TITANIA sleeps.

COBWEB: Hence, away. Now all is well.
One aloof stand **sentinel**.

All exit but TITANIA and the guard.

OBERON comes from his hiding place. He drops the juice on TITANIA's eyelids.

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 wak'st, it is thy dear.
Wake when some vile thing is near.

OBERON exits laughing.

*LYSANDER and HERMIA enter, confused and tired.
LYSANDER is trying to read a map.*

LYSANDER: Fair love, you faint with wand'ring in the wood,
And, to speak truth, 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.

She lies down.

LYSANDER: *[Coming to lie down beside her]*
 One turf shall serve as pillow for us both;
 One heart, one bed; two bosoms, and **one troth**.

HERMIA: *[Pushing him away]*
 Nay, good Lysander; for my sake, my dear,
 Lie further off yet; do not lie so near.

LYSANDER: Here is my bed; sleep give thee all his rest.

Picking a spot farther away, he lies down.

HERMIA: With half that wish the **wisher's eyes be pressed**.

They sleep apart.

PUCK enters. He has been tramping through the forest as well and sits down with a frustrated thump.

PUCK: Through the forest have I gone,
 But Athenian found I none
[Hears LYSANDER snoring]
 Who is here?
[Goes to stand over LYSANDER]
Weeds of Athens he doth wear.
 This is he my master said
Despise'd the Athenian maid
[Going over to HERMIA]
 And here the maiden, sleeping sound
 On the **dank** and dirty ground.
[LYSANDER snores again]
Churl, upon thy eyes I throw
 All the power this charm doth **owe**.

He drops the juice on LYSANDER's eyelid and exits.

Enter DEMETRIUS and HELENA, running, more out of breath than before.

HELENA: *[She staggers and falls]*
 Stay, though thou kill me, sweet Demetrius.

DEMETRIUS: *[Puts his hands on his knees and tries to catch his breath]*
 I charge thee hence, and do not **haunt** me thus.

HELENA: O, wilt thou **darkling** leave me? Do not so.

DEMETRIUS: Stay, on thy **peril**; I alone will go.

What is Lysander thinking?

one troth: pledged faith

Why is Hermia being so chaste? Remember they are in the woods in the middle of the night and they have to sleep outside, on the cold ground.

Is Lysander disappointed?

wisher's eyes be pressed: may half of all sleep's rest be yours.

Weeds: clothes

Despise'd: who despised

dank: cold and damp

Churl: rude person

owe: own

Why is Helena so persistent? She must know how Demetrius feels.

How are Helena and Demetrius different from when we saw them last?

haunt: follow persistently

darkling: leave me in the dark

peril: at your own risk

Is Helena serious here? Or does she laugh at her predicament?

fond: foolish

my grace: good fortune

What does Helena think of Lysander? Does she like him? Does she think that he is a good person? Perhaps she doesn't like him at all. How would that affect the way she acts when she sees him lying on the ground?

Lysander is under the influence of the magic juice. The first person he sees is Helena, so he is in love with her.

Transparent: radiant **shows art:** shows her art

How has Lysander changed?

Remember Helena doesn't know Lysander has been enchanted. What does she think of Lysander's speech? Does she think that Lysander is serious?

What though: what does it matter that

The audience has to be convinced that Lysander now loves Helena, even though we have seen him express his love for Hermia. What can Lysander do to show this?

Hermia is supposed to have dark hair while Helena is fair.

Good troth: indeed

Perforce: unfortunately

gentleness: gentleman

Helena thinks she is being tricked. Has a person you thought was a friend deceived you in some way? How did it make you feel? What did you do? Is that person still your friend?

never...Lysander near: don't ever come near Lysander

address: apply

DEMETRIUS lurches off.

HELENA: *[Picks herself up and dusts herself off]*
O, I am out of breath in this **fond** chase.
The more my prayer, the lesser is **my grace**.
[Sees LYSANDER, walks to him]
But who is here? Lysander, on the ground?
[Kneels down] Dead, or asleep? I see no blood, no wound.
[Shakes him] Lysander, if you live, good sir, awake.

LYSANDER: *[Awaking]* And run through fire I will for thy sweet sake.
Transparent Helena, nature **shows art**
That through thy bosom makes me see thy heart.
[Leaping up] Where is Demetrius? O, how fit a word
Is that vile name to perish on my sword!

He is about to rush off but HELENA stops him.

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.
[Taking HELENA by the hands]
Not Hermia but Helena I love.
Who will not change a raven for a dove?

Goes to kiss her hand. HELENA pulls away and crosses downstage.

HELENA: *[Almost in tears]*
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!

HELENA exits.

LYSANDER: *[Stands over HERMIA]*
She sees not Hermia. Hermia, sleep thou there,
And **never mayst thou come Lysander near**;
And all my powers, **address** your love and might
To honour Helen, and to be her knight.

LYSANDER exits after HELENA.

HERMIA: *[Awaking from a bad dream]*
 Help me, Lysander, help me! Do thy best
 To pluck this crawling serpent from my breast!
 Ay me, for pity. What a dream was here?
[Becoming annoyed that LYSANDER hasn't come to her side]
 Lysander, look how I do quake with fear.
[Looking around]
 Alack, where are you? Speak an if you hear,
Speak, of all loves. I swoon almost with fear.
[Stands to look further]
 No? Then I well perceive you are not **nigh**.
 Either death or you I'll find immediately.

HERMIA exits.

QUINCE, SNUG, FLUTE, SNOOT, and STARVELING enter. They are carrying props and set these up during the scene.

BOTTOM: *[Running in from the opposite side of the others]*
 Are we all met?

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

BOTTOM: *[Approaches QUINCE with his script]* Peter Quince?

QUINCE: What sayst thou, **bully** Bottom?

BOTTOM: *[Waving his script]* There are things in this comedy of Pyramus and Thisbe that will never please. First, Pyramus must draw a sword to kill himself, which the ladies cannot abide. How answer you that?

STARVELING: 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, and let the prologue seem to say we will do no harm with our swords, and that Pyramus is not killed indeed; and for the more better assurance, tell them that I, Pyramus, am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver. This will put them out of fear.

QUINCE: *[Not really paying attention]* Well, we will have such a prologue; and it shall be written in **eight and six**.

BOTTOM: No, make it two more: let it be written in eight

Hermia really wants Lysander to come to her rescue and she is annoyed when he doesn't jump up immediately.

What does Hermia really love about Lysander?

Speak of all loves: speak for the sake of love
swoon: fainting fit

nigh: nearby

Is Hermia being serious or dramatic?

The mechanicals are back to rehearse their play. Again, this scene should have lots of laughter and lots of fun.

Pat, pat: exactly right

Why is Quince in such a good mood?

bully: fine fellow

How long did Bottom study his script?

Is Starveling sad that the killing must be left out?

when all is done: after all

Not a whit: not at all **device:** plan

Bottom is extremely proud of coming up with this. How long did it take for him to figure it out?

eight and six: a common form of poetry

Does Snout want the ladies to be afraid?

What does Puck think of the mechanicals?

Note: wild-fowls are not very fearful.

to't: into it

defect: he means effect

I would wish you: I pledge my life in defence of yours

hither: towards you

What is Puck doing in this scene before he speaks? Is he creating his own spell?

every mother's son: everybody

brake: bush

hempen homespuns: simpletons

swagg'ring: blustering about

toward: about to take place

How is Pyramus different from Bottom?

How does Quince react to Bottom's blunder?

How does Bottom react to being corrected? Does Bottom think he is a good actor?

by and by: shortly

and eight.

SNOUT: Will not the ladies be afeard of the lion?

STARVELING: I fear it, I promise you.

PUCK enters. He is invisible to the other characters.

BOTTOM: A lion among ladies is a most dreadful thing; for there is not a more fearful wild-fowl that your lion living; and we ought to look **to't**.

SNOUT: Therefore another prologue must tell he is not a lion.

BOTTOM: Nay, you must name his name, and half his face must be seen through the lion's neck; and he himself must speak through, saying thus or to the same **defect**, [*Speaks to SNOUT as an eloquent LION*] - "Ladies" or "Fair Ladies, I **would wish you**," or "I would request you not to fear, not to tremble my life for yours. "If you think I come **hither** as a lion, it were pity of my life: no I am no such thing; I am a man as other are."

BOTTOM gives a long eloquent bow. SNOUT applauds him madly.

QUINCE: If that may be, then all is well. [*Clapping his hands for quiet*] Come, sit down **every mother's son**, and rehearse your parts. Pyramus, you begin. [*BOTTOM races over to QUINCE*] When you have spoken your speech, enter into that **brake**, [*Pointing offstage*] and so everyone according to his cue.

PUCK: [*Aside*] What **hempen homespuns** have we **swagg'ring** here So near the cradle of the Fairy Queen? What, a play **toward**? I'll be an auditor. An actor, too, perhaps, if I see cause.

QUINCE: Speak, Pyramus. Thisbe, stand forth.

BOTTOM: [*As PYRAMUS*] Thisbe, the flowers of odious savours sweet.

QUINCE: Odours, odours.

BOTTOM: [*As PYRAMUS*] Odours savours sweet. So hath thy breath, my dearest Thisbe dear. But hark, a voice. Stay thou but here a while, And **by and by** I will to thee appear.

BOTTOM turns dramatically and walks dramatically offstage.

PUCK: *[Aside and laughing]*
A stranger Pyramus than e'er played here.

PUCK sneaks out after BOTTOM imitating BOTTOM's walk.

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: O As true as truest horse, that yet would never tire
I'll meet thee Pyramus at Ninny's tomb

QUINCE: "Ninus" tomb man. Pyramus enter: your cue is past.

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

PUCK leads BOTTOM onstage. BOTTOM is now wearing a donkey's head.

BOTTOM: If I were fair, Thisbe, I were only thine.

QUINCE: O monstrous! O strange! We are haunted. Pray,
masters; fly, masters: help!

The mechanicals all exit chased by PUCK.

BOTTOM: *[As the others run around him]* Why do they run away?
This is a knavery of them to make me afraid.

SNOUT & QUINCE enter, falling over each other to stay away from BOTTOM.

SNOUT: 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?

QUINCE: Bless thee, Bottom, bless thee. Thou art **translated**.

They exit, babbling over each other.

e'er: ever

Does Flute want this part? How can he show the audience how he feels about playing a girl?

How is Thisbe different from Flute? What should Flute do with his voice?

Puck has turned Bottom's head into a donkey. Remember Bottom doesn't know this.

fair: handsome were: would be

What do the mechanicals do when they see Bottom? This kind of thing would not have been normal. Do they think they see a devil? Do the various mechanicals react differently?

Bottom must never let on that there is anything different with his head, although he has several lines that could be drawn out to sound like braying.

ass-head of your own: something dreamed in your own asinine head

translated: transformed

What type of head does Bottom have? Is his entire head changed or just certain features? Look for some pictures of different productions to see how they handle the transformation.

Is Bottom singing quietly to himself or really loudly to try and annoy his friends? Is he afraid of the way his friends are acting?

ousel: blackbird

throstle: thrush

quill: musical pipe

Titania is also enchanted by the magic juice. The first person she sees is Bottom with his donkey head. She is now completely in love with him. How does she act now? Has her behaviour changed from when we first met her?

plainsong: song without variation

Try having Bottom "neigh" like a donkey here.

How does Bottom react to this fairy who is head over heels for him? Is he calm? Does he believe what is happening to him?

perforce: forces

There could be a tug of war here as Bottom tries to get his hands back but Titania won't let go.

Does Bottom know Titania is a fairy? Has Bottom ever seen a fairy before? Does Bottom believe in fairies?

Titania must be very serious when she says this line.

serve my own turn: to serve myself with

What does Bottom think of the way Titania is acting?

whether thou wilt or no: whether you want to or not

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, do what they can. I will walk up and down here, 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**.

TITANIA: [Awaking] What angel wakes me from my flow'ry bed?

She stands and comes up slowly behind BOTTOM.

BOTTOM: [Sings] The finch, the sparrow, and the lark,
The **plainsong** cuckoo grey,
Whose note full many a man doth mark,
And dares not answer 'Nay'...

TITANIA: [Kneeling in front of BOTTOM]
I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again.
Mine ear is much enamoured of thy note;
So is mine eye enthralle'd to thy shape;
And thy fair virtue's force **perforce** doth move me
On the first view to say, to swear, I love thee.

TITANIA takes BOTTOM's hands and holds them to her heart. BOTTOM tries to take his hands back.

BOTTOM: Methinks, mistress, you should have little reason for that. And yet, to say the truth, reason and love keep little company together nowadays.

TITANIA: Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.

She starts to kiss his hands, while BOTTOM continues on quite unaware.

BOTTOM: Not so, neither; but if I had wit enough to get out of this wood, I have enough to **serve mine own turn**.

She stands up, pulling BOTTOM with her.

TITANIA: Out of this wood do not desire to go.
Thou shalt remain here, **whether thou wilt or no**.
And I will purge thy mortal grossness so
That thou shalt like an airy spirit go.
[Calling offstage]

Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Moth, and Mustardseed!

The Fairies enter, each posing in front of TITANIA.

PEASEBLOSSOM: Ready.

COBWEB: And I.

MOTH: And I.

MUSTARDSEED: And I.

ALL FOUR: Where shall we go?

TITANIA: *[Bringing BOTTOM forward]*
Be kind and courteous to this gentleman.

Each of the fairies bow to BOTTOM

PEASEBLOSSOM: Hail, mortal.

COBWEB: **Hail.**

MUSTARDSEED: Hail.

MOTH: Hail.

TITANIA: *[To the Fairies]* Come, wait upon him, lead him to my **bower**.
The moon, methinks, looks with a **wat'ry eye**,
And when she weeps, weeps every little flower,
Lamenting some enforce'd chastity.
Tie up my love's tongue; bring him silently.

They all exit

OBERON and PUCK enter, in the middle of conversation.

PUCK: ...When in that moment, so it came to pass,
Titania waked and straightway loved an ass.

OBERON: *[Laughing and clapping PUCK on the back]*
This falls out better than I could devise.
But hast thou yet **latched** the Athenian's eyes
With the love juice, as I did bid thee do?

PUCK: I took him sleeping; that is finished, too.

HERMIA enters, chased by DEMETRIUS.

What is the significance of giving these names to the fairies?

How do the fairies react to Titania? Do they follow her without question? How do they move and speak? Do they look at each other and wonder why their mistress is in love with Bottom? Have the fairies decide amongst themselves how they will act.

What do the fairies think of this? Do they think their mistress is crazy, or do they just obey orders?

Hail: hello - an address made by a lower-class person to a higher-class person.

bower: private chamber
wat'ry eye: watery eye

Why does Titania want the fairies to travel with Bottom silently?

Puck has been telling his story with great excitement and animation. Try and have that come across from the second Puck enters the stage

latched: fastened

Puck is very proud of what he has done. Make sure the character reflects this.

Hermia has been searching all night for Lysander but has not found him. Demetrius has found Hermia but she does not want him.

How does Demetrius chase Hermia? Is it similar to the way Helena chases Demetrius?

foe: enemy

chide: criticize

How does Hermia feel about Demetrius?

Being o'er shoes in blood: your shoes being covered in blood
plunge in the deep: plunge your knife deep in me

give him me: give him to me

passion on a misprised mood: your passionate outburst in mistaken anger

How does this scene differ from the one between Demetrius and Helena? Does Hermia treat Demetrius the same way that Demetrius treats Helena? What is difference between the two scenes?

What does Demetrius want when he asks this question?

What does Hermia think he wants?

Hermia has quite a temper. Is she a different person with Lysander?

fierce vein: angry mood

Oberon is chastising Puck for placing the love juice on Lysander's eyes instead of on Demetrius'.

What type of relationship do Oberon and Puck have?

OBERON: Stand close. This is the same Athenian.

PUCK: This is the woman, but not this the man.

They hide.

DEMETRIUS: *[Calling after HERMIA]*
O, why rebuke you him that loves you so?
Lay breath so bitter on your bitter **foe**.

HERMIA: Now I but **chide**, but I should use thee worse;
For thou, I fear, hast given me cause to curse.
[Turning on DEMETRIUS]
If thou hast slain Lysander in his sleep,
Being o'er shoes in blood, plunge in the deep,
And kill me too.
[Putting on the charm]
Where is he? Ah, good Demetrius,
Wilt thou **give him me**?

DEMETRIUS: *[Brooding and turning away]*
You spend your **passion on a misprised mood**.
I am not guilty of Lysander's blood,
Nor is he dead, for aught that I can tell.

HERMIA: *[Now going after DEMETRIUS]*
I pray thee, tell me then that he is well.

DEMETRIUS: *[Trying to hold her hand]*
And if I could, what should I get therefore?

HERMIA: *[Slapping him]* 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 stalks out.

DEMETRIUS: *[Goes to follow her then decides against it]*
There is no following her in this **fierce vein**.
Here therefore for a while I will remain.

He lies down and sleeps.

OBERON: *[Grabbing onto PUCK's ear and pulling him]*
What hast thou done? Thou hast mistaken quite,
And laid the love juice on some true love's sight.
[Pushing him away, thinks for a second]
About the wood go swifter than the wind,
And Helena of Athens look thou find.

By some illusion see thou bring her here.
I'll charm his eyes **against** she do appear.

PUCK: *[Bowling]* I go, I go... look how I go,
Swifter than arrow from the **Tartar's bow**.

PUCK exits.

OBERON: Flower of this purple dye,
Hit with Cupid's archery,
Sink in apple of his eye.

OBERON drops the juice on DEMETRIUS' eyelids.

PUCK enters.

PUCK: Captain of our fairy band,
Helena is here at hand,
And the youth mistook by me,
Pleading for a **lover's fee**.
Shall we their **fond pageant** see?
Lord, what fools these mortals be!

OBERON: Stand aside. The noise they make
Will cause Demetrius to awake.

HELENA enters with LYSANDER following her.

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: *[Awaking]* O Helen, 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!

HELENA: *[Now standing between LYSANDER and DEMETRIUS]*
O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent
To set against me for your merriment.

LYSANDER: *[Going to face DEMETRIUS]*
You are unkind, Demetrius. Be not so.
For you love Hermia; this you know I know.
And here with all good will, with all my heart,
In Hermia's love I yield you up my part;
And yours of Helena to me **bequeath**,

against: in preparation for her coming

Tartar's Bow: proverbial for swiftness

What does Oberon do when he casts this spell? Does he make any gestures? Does he sing these lines?

Oberon has placed the love juice on Demetrius' eyes. Do you think Helena will be the first person he sees?

lover's fee: right

fond pageant: foolish show

Lysander has been following Helena around telling her how much he loves her. How does this make Helena act differently from when we last saw her?

o'er: over

Now Demetrius (who recently swore he did not love Helena) is telling Helena that he loves her. How does that make Helena feel?

eyne: eye

ripe in show: appearance

kissing cherries: cherry lips

Helena does not know about the love juice. What does she think of the way the two men are acting?

How do the two men react towards each other? Is it similar or different from when we first met them?

bequeath: leave (as in leave to me)

idle: vain

I will none: I will have none of her (Hermia)

Note: Even though Shakespeare uses a lot of rhyme in this play, some words do not sound like they rhyme (e.g. "none" and "gone." This is because words had different pronunciations in Shakespeare's time. When you say these words, don't try and make them rhyme, say the words as you know them.

aby: pay for

How does Demetrius act under the love juice?

Hermia has been searching all night for Lysander what is the first thing she does when she sees him?

press: take

How do Lysander and Demetrius act towards Hermia now?

The love of Hermia's life has just told her that he hates her. What does Hermia do? How does she react to the news? Does she believe it?

Helena thinks Hermia is in on the joke as well. This is very hurtful to Helena because she always considered Hermia to be a good friend.

conjoined: join

Injurious: Insulting

contrived: planned with skill

rend: tear

amaze'd: bewildered

How does Hermia feel about Helena's outburst? Has Helena ever spoken this way before?

even but now: just now

spurn: reject

Whom I do love, and will do till my death.

HELENA: *[Walking away from both of them]*
Never did mockers waste more **idle** breath.

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

LYSANDER: *[Kneels in front of HELENA]* Helen, it is not so.

DEMETRIUS: Disparage not the faith thou dost not know,
Lest to thy peril thou **aby** it dear.
[HERMIA enters]
Look where thy love comes; yonder is thy dear.

HERMIA: *[Running to LYSANDER]* Lysander, found;
Mine ear, I thank it, brought me to thy sound.
But why unkindly didst thou leave me so?

LYSANDER: *[Coldly]* Why should he stay whom love doth **press** to go?

HERMIA: *[Trying to hug him]*
What love could press Lysander from my side?

LYSANDER: *[Breaking away to stand beside HELENA]*
Lysander's love, that would not let him bide:
Why seek'st thou me? Could not this make thee know
The hate I bare thee made me leave thee so?

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

HELENA: *[Aside]* Lo, she is one of this confederacy.
Now I perceive they have **conjoined** all three
To fashion this false sport in spite of me.
Injurious Hermia, most ungrateful maid,
Have you conspired, have you with these **contrived**
To bait me with this foul derision?
Will you **rend** our ancient love asunder,
To join with men in scorning your poor friend?

HERMIA: I am **amaze'd** at your passionate words.
I scorn you not. It seems that you scorn me.

HELENA: *[Crossing away from them]*
Have you not set Lysander, as in scorn,
To follow me, and praise my eyes and face?
And made your other love, Demetrius
Who **even but now** did **spurn** me with his foot
To call me goddess, nymph, divine, and rare?

HERMIA: I understand not what you mean by this.

HELENA: *[Turning on them]* Ay, do. **Persever**, counterfeit sad looks,
Make mouths upon me when I turn my back,
Wink each at other, hold the sweet jest up.

LYSANDER: *[Kneeling and catching HELENA's hand]*
Stay, gentle Helena, hear my excuse,
My love, my life, my soul, fair Helena.

HELENA: O excellent!

HERMIA: *[To LYSANDER]* Sweet, do not scorn her so.

LYSANDER: Helen, I love thee; by my life I do.
I swear by that which I will lose for thee
To prove him false that says I love thee not.

DEMETRIUS: *[Coming to the other side of HELENA]*
I say I love thee more than he can do.

LYSANDER: *[Standing]* If thou say so, withdraw, and prove it too.

DEMETRIUS: Quick, come.

HERMIA: Lysander, **whereto tends all this?**

She takes him by the arm.

LYSANDER: *[Shaking her off]*
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?

LYSANDER: Thy love? Out, tawny Tartar, out;
Out, loathe'd med'cine; O hated potion, hence.

HERMIA: Do you not jest?

HELENA: Yes, **sooth**, and so do you.

LYSANDER: Be certain, nothing truer; 'tis no jest
That I do hate thee and love Helena.

HERMIA: *[Attacking HELENA]* O me, you juggler, you **canker blossom**,
You thief of love... what, have you come by night
And stol'n my love's heart from him?

Persever: fake

Make...back: make faces at me behind my back

Does Helena mean "excellent" as something good or something bad?

Lysander is using the same language with Helena that he used previously with Hermia. How does Hermia react?

Lysander and Demetrius are willing to fight for Helena. What does Helena think of this? Does she still believe it is a joke? What is Hermia thinking?

whereto tends all this: why don't you love me anymore?

Hang off: get away from me

It takes Hermia quite a long time to fully understand what is happening. Don't let her peak too quickly or else the lines won't make sense.

sooth: truly

canker blossom: worm that destroys the flower

Notice who Hermia blames for the problems. Not Lysander who has just said horrible things to her but Helena.

curst: shrewish

Everyone is very emotional in this scene. Make sure you stay true to the characters and focus on objectives and motivations. Don't "play angry." Three-dimensional characters are more interesting to watch than one-dimensional characters.

too officious: too eager to give unwelcome advice

aby: pay for

cheek by jowl: side by side

coil is long of you: uproar was caused by you

What type of girl is Hermia? In other scenes she is very demur but here she is ready to attack Helena.

fray: fight

amazed: confused

Why does Oberon care that the lovers are all mixed up?

am I glad it so did sort: I'm glad it turned out this way
jangling: fighting

Why is Puck glad that the lovers are mixed up?

HELENA: *[Running to hide behind DEMETRIUS and LYSANDER]*
I pray you, though you mock me, gentlemen,
Let her not hurt me. I was never **curst**.

DEMETRIUS and LYSANDER each grab one of HERMIA's arms. She continues to struggle.

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

DEMETRIUS: You are **too officious**
In her behalf that scorns your services.
Let her alone. Speak not of Helena.
Take not her part. For if thou dost intend
Never so little show of love to her,
Thou shalt **aby** it.

LYSANDER: Now she holds me not.
Now follow, if thou dar'st, to try whose right,
Of thine or mine, is most in Helena.

DEMETRIUS: Follow? Nay, I'll go with thee, **cheek by jowl**.

LYSANDER and DEMETRIUS exit.

HERMIA turns and advances slowly towards HELENA.

HERMIA: You, mistress, all this **coil is long of you**.

HELENA: *[Backing away]* 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.

HELENA exits on the run.

HERMIA: I am **amazed**, and know not what to say.

HERMIA exits after LYSANDER. OBERON and PUCK come forward.

OBERON: This is thy negligence. Still thou mistak'st,
Or else commit'st thy knaveries wilfully.

PUCK: Believe me, king of shadows, I mistook.
And so far **am I glad it so did sort**
As this their **jangling** I esteem a sport.

OBERON: Thou seest these lovers seek a place to fight.
Hie therefore, Robin, overcast the night;

And lead these testy rivals so astray
As one come not within **another's way**.
Then crush this herb into Lysander's eye
Whose **liquor** hath this **virtuous** property,
Whiles I in this affair do thee employ,
I'll to my queen and beg her Indian boy;
And then I will her charmed eye release
From monster's view, and all things shall be peace.

OBERON exits.

PUCK: Up and down, up and down,
I will lead them up and down.
I am feared in field and town.
Goblin, lead them up and down.
Here comes one.

LYSANDER enters with his sword drawn.

LYSANDER: Where art thou, proud Demetrius? Speak thou now.

PUCK: *[Running around LYSANDER]*
Here, villain, **drawn and ready**. Where art thou?

LYSANDER: I will be with thee **straight**.

PUCK: *[Shifting place]* Follow me then to **plainer ground**.

LYSANDER exits. DEMETRIUS enters with his sword drawn.

DEMETRIUS: *[Shifting place]* Lysander, speak again.
Thou runaway, thou coward, art thou fled?
Speak! In some bush? Where dost thou hide thy head?

PUCK: *[Shifting his place]*
Come, **recreant**; come, thou child,
I'll whip thee with a rod. He is defiled
That draws a sword on thee.

DEMETRIUS: *[Turning around]* Yea, art thou there?

PUCK: *[Shifting place]*
Follow my voice; we'll **try no manhood here**.

PUCK exits followed by DEMETRIUS. LYSANDER enters. He is out of breath.

LYSANDER: The villain is much lighter-heeled than I.

another's way: one another's way

liquor: magic juice **virtuous**: potent

NOTE: Oberon remarks that things will be at peace. What he means is that everything will be under his control again. What kind of character does this make Oberon?

Goblin: Hobgoblin, one of Puck's names.

Lysander can't see where he is going and thinks he is hearing Demetrius' voice. What can Puck do to make his voice more like Demetrius'?

drawn and ready: with sword drawn

straight: immediately

plainer ground: more level ground

Again, Demetrius cannot see where he is going and thinks that he hears Lysander.

Now Puck sounds like Lysander
recreant: coward

What kind of swordsman is Demetrius? Does he hold his sword steadily or does he flail it around?

try no manhood here: not test their courage here

What is it like to run as fast as you can and be out of breath? Would the lines sound differently?

uneven: rough

While Demetrius is completely out of breath, Puck is having a very good time. Show this in his character.

Puck is playing Lysander

by this dear: pay dearly for this

To measure out: to stretch out

look to be visited: I'll search you out

Helena has had a very tough night. The stage directions say that she is all out of breath but remember she is not in the same mood as Demetrius and Lysander. How does she enter and say her lines?

Hermia has also had a bad day. How has she changed from the "lover" we first met?

Notice Hermia still wants Lysander kept safe even though he has said terrible things to her.

fray: fight

The lovers lie sleeping through the next scene

Lysander has the antidote in his eyes, but Demetrius is still under the spell of the magic juice.

Titania is also under the spell of the magic juice.

amiable: lovely

coy: caress

How has Bottom changed since he was first introduced to the fairies? Is he enjoying himself? Does he feel he deserves all of this attention?

I followed fast, but faster he did fly.
That fallen am I in dark **uneven** way,
And here will rest me [*Lies down*] Come, thou gentle day!

PUCK and DEMETRIUS enter. DEMETRIUS is out of breath.

PUCK: Come hither I am here.

DEMETRIUS: Nay, then, thou mock'st me. Thou shalt **by this dear** if ever I thy face by daylight see.
Now, go thy way. [*Yawns*] Faintness constraineth me
To measure out my length on this cold bed.
By day's approach **look to be visited**.

HELENA enters out of breath.

HELENA: O weary night, O long and tedious night,
Let sleep, that sometimes shuts up sorrow's eye
Steal me awhile from mine own company.

She lies down and falls asleep. HERMIA enters yawning and walking slowly.

HERMIA: Never so weary, never so in woe;
I can no further crawl, no further go:
Here will I rest me till the break of day.
Heavens shield Lysander, if they mean a **fray!**

PUCK: On the ground
Sleep sound
I'll apply
To your eye
Gentle lover, remedy

PUCK squeezes the juice onto LYSANDER's eye and exits.

TITANIA and BOTTOM enter with the Fairies.

TITANIA: [*To BOTTOM*] Come, sit thee down upon this flow'ry 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.

BOTTOM: Where's Peaseblossom?

PEASEBLOSSOM: Ready.

BOTTOM: Scratch my head, Peaseblossom. Where's Monsieur Mustardseed?

MUSTARDSEED: What's your will?

BOTTOM: Nothing, good monsieur, but to help **Cavalery** Peaseblossom to scratch. I must to the barber's, monsieur, for methinks I am marvellous hairy about the face; and I am such a tender ass, if my hair do but tickle me I must scratch.

TITANIA: 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**.
[*Music plays*]
But I pray you, let none of your people stir me. I have an **exposition** of sleep come upon me.

TITANIA: Sleep thou, and I will wind thee in my arms.
Fairies, be gone, and be **all ways away**.
[*The Fairies exit*]
So doth the woodbine the sweet honeysuckle
Gently **entwist**; the female ivy so
Enrings the barked fingers of the elm.
O how I love thee, how I dote on thee!

They sleep.

PUCK and OBERON enter. They watch TITANIA and BOTTOM.

OBERON: Welcome, good Robin. Seest 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.
And, gentle Puck, take this **transforme'd scalp**
From off the head of this Athenian **swain**,
That he, awaking when the other do,
May all to Athens back again **repair**,
And think no more of this night's **accidents**
But as the **fierce** vexation of a dream.
But first I will release the Fairy Queen.

He drops the juice on TITANIA's eyelids.

TITANIA: [*Awaking*] My Oberon, what visions have I seen!
Methought I was enamoured of an ass.

Bottom is trying to be fancy. Instead of saying "Mister," he uses the French term. What does this tell us about Bottom?

Cavalery: Bottom means "cavalier" (carefree)

NOTE: Bottom does not know his head has been changed. Reflect that in the way that Bottom says these lines.

tong and bones: rustic musical instruments. Tongs were struck with a key like a triangle. The bones were rattled between the fingers like clappers.

exposition: Bottom means disposition

all ways away: off in all directions

entwist: twist

Is Oberon happy with the way that Titania is acting?

Does Oberon really think that this is a "sweet sight?"

dotage: doting affection

Titania gave the boy to Oberon because she was so preoccupied with Bottom.

transforme'd scalp: the donkey head

swain: young lover

Oberon calls Bottom a young lover. Is he being serious?

repair: return

accidents: events

but: except

fierce: wild

How has Titania changed now that she has been released from the spell? Has Titania forgotten all about the feud between her and Oberon? Notice she calls him "my Oberon."



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