

HELENA (ACT I, Scene 1)

HELENA

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;
He will not know what all but he do know:
And as he errs, doting on Hermia's eyes,
So I, admiring of his qualities:
Things base and vile, folding no quantity,
Love can transpose to form and dignity:
Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind;
And therefore is wing'd Cupid painted blind:
Nor hath Love's mind of any judgment taste;
Wings and no eyes figure unheedy haste;
And therefore is Love said to be a child,
Because in choice he is so oft beguiled.
As waggish boys in game themselves forswear,
So the boy Love is perjured every where:
For ere Demetrius look'd on Hermia's eyne,
He hail'd down oaths that he was only mine;
And when this hail some heat from Hermia felt,
So he dissolved, and showers of oaths did melt.
I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight:
Then to the wood will he to-morrow night
Pursue her; and for this intelligence
If I have thanks, it is a dear expense:
But herein mean I to enrich my pain,
To have his sight thither and back again.

LYSANDER (Act I, Scene 1)

LYSANDER

I am, my lord, as well derived as he,
As well possess'd; my love is more than his;
My fortunes every way as fairly rank'd,
If not with vantage, as Demetrius';
And, which is more than all these boasts can be,
I am beloved of beauteous Hermia:
Why should not I then prosecute my right?

Demetrius, I'll avouch it to his head,
 Made love to Nedar's daughter, Helena,
 And won her soul; and she, sweet lady, dotes,
 Devoutly dotes, dotes in idolatry,
 Upon this spotted and inconstant man.

HERMIA (Act III, Scene 2)

HERMIA

Now I but chide; but I should use thee worse,
 For thou, I fear, hast given me cause to curse,
 If thou hast slain Lysander in his sleep,
 Being o'er shoes in blood, plunge in the deep,
 And kill me too.
 The sun was not so true unto the day
 As he to me: would he have stolen away
 From sleeping Hermia? I'll believe as soon
 This whole earth may be bored and that the moon
 May through the centre creep and so displease
 Her brother's noontide with Antipodes.
 It cannot be but thou hast murder'd him;
 So should a murderer look, so dead, so grim.

DEMETRIUS (Act IV, Scene 1)

DEMETRIUS

My lord, fair Helen told me of their stealth,
 Of this their purpose hither to this wood;
 And I in fury hither follow'd them,
 Fair Helena in fancy following me,
 But, my good lord, I wot not by what power,--
 But by some power it is,--my love to Hermia,
 Melted as the snow, seems to me now
 As the remembrance of an idle gaud
 Which in my childhood I did dote upon;
 And all the faith, the virtue of my heart,
 The object and the pleasure of mine eye,
 Is only Helena. To her, my lord,
 Was I betroth'd ere I saw Hermia:
 But, like in sickness, did I loathe this food;

But, as in health, come to my natural taste,
 Now I do wish it, love it, long for it,
 And will for evermore be true to it.

OBERON (Act II, Scene 1)

OBERON

I pray thee, give it me.
 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 Titania 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.
 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.

TITANIA (Act II, Scene 1)

TITANIA

These are the forgeries of jealousy:
 And never, since the middle summer's spring,
 Met we on hill, in dale, forest or mead,
 By paved fountain or by rushy brook,
 Or in the beached margent of the sea,
 To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,
 But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.

Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,
As in revenge, have suck'd up from the sea
Contagious fogs; which falling in the land
Have every pelting river made so proud
That they have overborne their continents:
The ox hath therefore stretch'd his yoke in vain,
The ploughman lost his sweat, and the green corn
Hath rotted ere his youth attain'd a beard;
The fold stands empty in the drowned field,
And crows are fatted with the murrian flock;
The nines men's morris is fill'd up with mud,
And the quaint mazes in the wanton green
For lack of tread are undistinguishable:
The human mortals want their winter here;
No night is now with hymn or carol blest:
Therefore the moon, the governess of floods,
Pale in her anger, washes all the air,
That rheumatic diseases do abound:
And thorough this distemperature we see
The seasons alter: hoary-headed frosts
Far in the fresh lap of the crimson rose,
And on old Hiems' thin and icy crown
An odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds
Is, as in mockery, set: the spring, the summer,
The chiding autumn, 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 dissension;
We are their parents and original.

PUCK (Act III, Scene 2)

PUCK

My mistress with a monster is in love.
 Near to her close and consecrated bower,
 While she was in her dull and sleeping hour,
 A crew of patches, rude mechanicals,
 That work for bread up on Athenian stalls,
 Were met together to rehearse a play
 Intended for great Theseus' nuptial-day.
 The shallowest thick-skin of that barren sort,
 Who Pyramus presented, in their sport
 Forsook his scene and enter'd in a brake
 When I did him at this advantage take,
 An ass's nbole I fixed on his head:
 Anon his Thisbe must be answered,
 And forth my mimic comes. When they him spy,
 As wild geese that the creeping fowler eye,
 Or russet-pated choughs, many in sort,
 RIsing and cawing at the gun's report,
 Sever themselves and madly sweep the sky,
 So, at his sight, away his fellows fly;
 And, at our stamp, here o'er and o'er one falls;
 He murder cries and help from Athens calls.
 Their sense thus weak, lost with their fears
 thus strong.
 Made senseless things begin to do them wrong:
 For brieres and thorns at their apparel snatch;
 Some sleeves, some hats, from yielders all
 things catch.
 I led them on in this distracted fear,
 And left sweet Pyramus translated there:
 When in that moment, so it came to pass,
 Titania waked and straightway loved an ass.

BOTTOM as PYRAMUS (Act V, Scene 1)

PYRAMUS

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!
Wall holds up his fingers
 Thanks, courteous wall: Jove shield thee well for this!
 But what see I? No Thisby do I see.
 O wicked wall, through whome I see no bliss!
 Cursed be they stones for thus deceiving me!

THESEUS

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

PYRAMUS

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.