

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM – Abridged version for schools

By William Shakespeare

Abridged/adapted by Altaire Gural

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A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM – Abridged version for schools – grade 6 and up

By William Shakespeare

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(the script contains explanations and stage directions in brackets in bold text).

Author's note: Our production had far more girls than boys in the cast, and so I altered Oberon's role from King of the Fairies, and husband to Titania, into Aubra who is co-ruler of the Fairies with her sister, Titania. Peter Quince became Petra Quince for the same reason, as did Egeus, Hermia's father who became Iara, Hermia's mother instead. The dialogue reflects these changes. HOWEVER, the original version with Oberon may be provided as well.

CAST

Members of the ROYAL COURT of Athens:

THESEUS DUKE OF ATHENS –

A noble and fair ruler. Is happiest when all his subjects are happy. Engaged to ...

HIPPOLYTA –

Fierce and majestic Queen of the Amazons.

IARA –

Courtly mother of Hermia. Controlling, overbearing, social snob.

HERMIA –

An Athenian girl beloved by both Lysander (true) and Demetrius (ego). Best Friends like, FOREVER, with Helena.

HELENA –

An Athenian girl completely in love with Demetrius. Totally depressed that Demetrius (who was flirting with HELENA last week) is now chasing HERMIA.

DEMETRIUS –

An Athenian nobleman. Kind of a jerk. (not very nice to insist that a girl marry you when she doesn't love you, don't you think)?

LYSANDER –

An Athenian nobleman (maybe not as high ranking as Demetrius, but still respectable). Truly loves Hermia. Is willing to give up everything to be with her.

PHILOSOPHA – Mistress of revels at court. A bit of an intellectual snob.

The FAIRIES:

PUCK – a hobgoblin

... is crazy. And hyper. And a HUGE troublemaker. Kind of like a gremlin, really.

AUBRA –

Strong willed and vengeful co-ruler of the Fairies with her sister ...

TITANIA –

Proud and temperamental Queen of the Fairies.

Her sibling rivalry with her sister, Aubra, is the cause of floods, earthquakes, heat waves, thunderstorms, etc you will see characters mentioning the changes in weather, though they don't know what is causing it.

MOONBEAM –

A dreamy and easily distracted fairy.

COBWEB –

A very curious and bold fairy.

MOTH –

A beautiful, floaty-moving fairy.

MUSTARDSEED –

A wild and spicy fairy.

PEASEBLOSSOM –

A fairy so sweet and cute she should be a stuffy.

The MECHANICALS: (labourers/tradespeople of Athens)

NICK BOTTOM THE WEAVER –

Me. Me. Me. I'M the star. It's all about ME! The big personality of the Mechanicals.

PETRA QUINCE THE CARPENTER –

The bookish wanna-be-playwright. True leader of the Mechanicals. The ONLY person who can keep Nick Bottom in check. Really, they don't pay her enough for THAT job.

ROBIN STARVELING THE TAILOR –

A Mechanical. A loyal if exasperated member of the group.

FRANCIS FLUTE THE BELLOWS MENDER –

A Mechanical. A shy young man who is very reluctant to play the part given him in Petra Quince's play.

SNUG THE JOINER –

The laid back and kind hearted member of the Mechanicals. Easily overwhelmed.

TOM SNOUT THE TINKER –

A sensible and thoughtful member of the Mechanicals. Perceives possible pitfalls others might have missed.

ACT I, the court – The Wedding day of Theseus and Hippolyta is very near

Enter Theseus, Hippolyta and Philostrate

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.

Enter Iara and her daughter, Hermia, and Lysander, and Demetrius.

IARA

Happy be Theseus, our renowned Duke.

THESEUS

Thanks, lovely Iara. What's the news with thee?

IARA

Full of vexation come I, with complaint
Against my child, my daughter Hermia.
Stand forth, Demetrius! My noble lord,
This man hath my consent to marry her.
Stand forth, Lysander! – And, my gracious Duke,
This man hath bewitched the heart 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
To stubborn harshness. And, my gracious Duke,
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

THESEUS

What say you, Hermia? Be advised, fair maid:
To you your mother should be as a god!
Demetrius IS a worthy gentleman.

HERMIA

So is Lysander!

THESEUS

But in this kind, wanting your mother's voice,
The other MUST be held the worthier.

HERMIA

I would my mother looked but with MY eyes.
... I do entreat your grace to pardon me.
I know not by what power I am made bold,
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

Either to die the death, or to abjure
Forever the society of men. (**Hermia, Lysander, Demetrius and Hippolyta react
astonished**) ... Take time to pause ...

DEMETRIUS

Relent, sweet Hermia! and, Lysander, yield
Thy crazed title to MY certain right.

LYSANDER

You have her **mother's** love, Demetrius –
Let me have Hermia's. Do you marry Iara!

THESEUS

Iara, Demetrius, go along;
I must employ you in some business.

IARA

With duty and desire we follow you.

(exeunt all but Lysander and Hermia)

LYSANDER

Hear me, Hermia:
I have a widow aunt,
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
Cannot pursue us. If thou lovest me, then
Steal forth thy mother's house tomorrow night,
And in the wood
Where I did meet thee once with Helena
- there will I stay for thee

HERMIA

My good Lysander,
I swear to thee by Cupid's strongest bow
In that same place thou hast appointed me
Tomorrow truly will I meet with thee!

LYSANDER

Look – here comes Helena.

enter Helena (**feeling very sorry for herself**)

HERMIA

Godspeed, fair Helena! Whither away?

HELENA

Call you **me** fair? That “fair” again unsay.
Demetrius loves YOUR fair. O happy fair!
O, teach me how you look, and with what art
You sway the motion of Demetrius’ heart?

HERMIA

I frown upon him, yet he loves me still!

HELENA

O that your frowns would teach MY smiles such skill!

HERMIA

I give him CURSES, yet he gives me love.

HELENA

O that my prayers could such affection MOVE!

HERMIA

The more I hate ... the more he follows me!

HELENA

The more I love, the more he HATETH me.

HERMIA

His folly, Helena, is no fault of mine!

HELENA

None but your beauty! Would that fault were mine! **(sniffs pathetically)**.

HERMIA

(Hermia looks to Lysander who nods. Hermia excitedly tells their secret). Take
comfort. He no more shall see my face.
Lysander and myself will fly this place!

LYSANDER

Helen, to you our minds we will unfold.
Tomorrow night
A time that lovers’ flights doth still conceal –
Through Athens gates have we devised to steal!

HERMIA

Lysander and myself shall meet,
And thence from Athens turn away our eyes
To seek new friends and stranger companies.
Farewell, sweet playfellow. Pray thou for us;
And good luck grant thee thy Demetrius!

exit Hermia and Lysander. Helena is astonished. And jealous.

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 all but he do know! **(she kicks at a flower).**
Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind,
And therefore is winged cupid painted blind
Because in choice he is so oft beguiled.
As waggish boys in games THEMSELVES forswear,
So the boy, Love, is perjured everywhere; **(meaning people say they love each other far too easily).**

For ere Demetrius looked on Hermia's eyne
He hailed 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.
(Helen gets the worst idea a "best friend" could get)
... 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. **(meaning if she loses her best friend by telling, it's worth it in her eyes. She'll regret this later).**

Helena runs off.

ACT 1, Scene 2

enter the Mechanicals, clapping each other on the back and chatting excitedly)

QUINCE

Is all our company here?

BOTTOM

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

QUINCE

Here is the scroll of every man's name to play in our interlude before the Duke and the Duchess on their wedding day ... at night.

BOTTOM

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

QUINCE

Merry! Our play is *The most lamentable comedy and most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisbe*.

BOTTOM

A very good piece of work, I assure you!
Now, good Petra 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

That will ask some tears in the true performing of it. I will move **storms!**
To the rest – **(walking away, and then whirling back, continuing to talk, driving Petra crazy)**
... Yet my chief humour is for a tyrant:
The raging rocks
And shivering shocks
Shall break the locks
Of prison gates,
And Phibbus' car **(the chariot of Apollo, meaning the sun)**
Shall SHINE from FAR
And make and mar
The FOOLISH fates. **(the mechanicals clap)**
... this was lofty! – now name the rest of the players.

QUINCE

Francis Flute, the bellows-mender?

FLUTE

Here, Petra 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.

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 Thisbe too! I'll speak in a monstrous little voice:
"Thisne, Thisne!" "Ah, Pyramus, my lover dear; thy Thisbe dear, and lady dear."

QUINCE

NO, NO; you. Must. Play. PYRAMUS! And Flute, you Thisbe!

BOTTOM

... well. Proceed.

QUINCE

Robin Starveling, the tailor?

STARVELING

... here, Petra Quince.

QUINCE

Robin Starveling, you must play Thisbe's father. Tom Snout, the tinker?

SNOUT

Here, Petra Quince.

QUINCE

You, Pyramus' father. Myself, Thisbe's mother; Snug, the joiner, you the lion's part; and I hope here is a play fitted.

SNUG

(very nervous) 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 make the Duke say "Let him roar again; let him roar again!"

QUINCE

An you should do it too terribly you would fright the ladies that they would shriek!

BOTTOM

But I will aggravate my voice so that I will roar you as gently as any dove. **(whispers roar)**

QUINCE

You can play no part but Pyramus!!!

BOTTOM

Well. **(pouting)** I will undertake it.

QUINCE

Tomorrow night meet me in the palace wood a mile without the town by moonlight. There will we rehearse. I pray you, fail me not.

BOTTOM

We will meet. Take pains, be perfect. Adieu!

Mechanicals exit, and then ...

ACT 2, Scene 1

enter Moonflower, Cobweb, Moth. They are putting lights on trees. Then enter Puck

PUCK

How now spirits; wither wander you?

MOONFLOWER

Over hill, over dale
Thorough bush, thorough briar,

Over park, over pale,
Thorough flood, thorough fire –
I do wander EVERYWHERE
Swifter than the moon's sphere
And I serve my fairy Queen,
... to dew her orbs upon the green ...

COBWEB

The cowslips tall her pensioners be;
In their gold coats spots you see-
Those be rubies, fairy favours;
In those freckles live their savours.

MOTH

I must go seek some dewdrops here,
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.
Farewell, thou lob of spirits; I'll be gone.
Our Queen and all her elves come here anon.

exit Moth

PUCK

MY Queen doth keep her revels here tonight.
Take heed YOUR Queen come not within her sight,
For Aubra is passing fell and wrath
For Titania as her attendant hath
A lovely boy stolen from an Indian King.
She never had so sweet a changeling!
And jealous Aubra would have the child
Knight of her train, to trace the forests wild.

COBWEB

Either I mistake your shape and making quite
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite
Called Robin Goodfellow!

MOONFLOWER

Are not you he
That frights the maidens of the villagery?
Make the drink to bear no barm? **(meaning no foam on the drink).**
Mislead night wanderers, laughing at their harm? **(he lures travelers into creeks and ditches, etc. because he thinks its funny).**

COBWEB

Those that "Hobgoblin" call you, and "sweet Puck",
You do their work, and they shall have good luck!
Are not you HE???

PUCK

Thou speakest aright!
I AM that merry wanderer of the night.
I jest to Aubra, and make her smile
When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,
Oh! The wisest aunt telling the saddest tale
Sometime for a threefoot stool mistaketh me;
Then slip I from her bum. Down topples she!
and then ...
But room, Fairies: here comes Aubra anon!

MOONFLOWER

And here OUR mistress! Would that we were gone!

AUBRA

Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania!

TITANIA

What! Jealous Aubra? Fairies, skip hence
I have forsworn her company.

AUBRA

Tarry, rash fairy! Am not I thy mother's daughter?

TITANIA

Then I must be thy sister.

AUBRA

I do but beg a little changeling boy
To be my henchman.

TITANIA

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 do I rear up her boy;
And for her sake I will not part with him.

AUBRA

How long within this wood intend you stay?

TITANIA

Perchance till after Theseus' wedding day.
If you will patiently dance in our round
And see our moonlight revels, go with us.
If not, shun me, and I will spare your haunts.

AUBRA

Give me that boy and I will go with thee.

TITANIA

Not for the fairy kingdom! Fairies away.
We shall chide downright if I longer stay.

exit Titania and her train

AUBRA

Well, go thy way. Thou shalt not from this grove
Till I torment thee for this injury.
My gentle Puck, come hither. Thou rememberest
Where a bolt of Cupid fell upon
a little western flower
And maidens call it "love in idleness".
Fetch me that flower –
The juice of it on sleeping eyelids laid
Will make a man or woman madly dote
Upon the next live creature that it sees.
Fetch me this herb.

PUCK

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

AUBRA

Having once this juice
I'll watch Titania when she is asleep,
And drop the liquor of it in her eyes.
The next thing then she, waking, looks upon-
Be it on lion, bear, wolf, or bull
She shall pursue it with the soul of love
But who comes here? I am invisible,
And I will overhear their conference.

enter Demetrius followed by Helena

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 toldest me they were stolen 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!

HELENA

You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant!

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

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.

HELENA

The wildest hath not such a heart as you.
Run when you will. The story SHALL be changed:
APOLLO flies, and DAPHNE holds the chase;

(Demetrius runs off)

HELENA

We cannot fight for love, as men may do;
We should be wooed, and were not made to woo. **(exits).**

AUBRA

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

(enter Puck)

Hast thou the flower there? Welcome, wanderer!

PUCK

Ay, there it is!

AUBRA

I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,
Where oxslips and the nodding violet grows.
There sleeps Titania some time of the night,
Lulled in these flowers with dances and delight.
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.
And look thou meet me ere the first cock crow

PUCK

Fear not, my lady; your servant shall do so.

(they exit)

Act 2, Scene 2

(enter Titania and her retinue)

TITANIA

Come, now a roundel and a fairy song.
Sing me now asleep;
Then to your offices, and let me rest.

(fairies sing Titania to sleep)

MOTH

Hence, away! Now all is well.

One aloof stand sentinel!

(exit fairies, save one who stands guard. Enter Aubra behind fairy, waving her hand so that the guard sleeps. Then Aubra squeezes the flower on Titania's eyes)

AUBRA

What thou seest when thou doest wake,
Do it for thy true love take;
Love and languish for his sake.
When thou wakest, it is thy dear.
Wake when some vile thing is near!

(enter Lysander and Hermia)

LYSANDER

Fair love, you faint with wandering 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.

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 they sweet life end.

(they sleep in separate spots. Enter Puck)

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 mistress said
Despised the Athenian maid;
And here the maiden, sleeping sound
On the dank and dirty ground.
Pretty soul, **(Puck kicks Lysander)** she durst not lie
Near this lack-love, this kill-courtesy.
Upon thy eyes I throw
All the power this charm doth owe.
So, awake when I am gone;
For I must now to Aubra on.

(exit Puck. Enter Demetrius and Helena, running).

HELENA
STAY though though 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
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.
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
(wakes)
And run through fire I will for thy sweet sake!
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???

HELENA

(gasping) ... 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?
O, that a lady of one man refused
Should of another therefore be abused!

(exit Helena, crying loudly)

LYSANDER

She sees not Hermia. Hermia – sleep thou there!
And never mayst thou come Lysander near!

(exit Lysander)

HERMIA

(waking from a nightmare. Notice that her dream mirrors what's happening)

Help me, Lysander, help me!!! Do thy best
To pluck this crawling serpent from my breast!
... ay me, for pity! - what a DREAM was here!
Lysander, look how I do quake with fear!
Methought a serpent ate my heart away,
And you sat smiling at his cruel prey.
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.
No? then I well perceive you are not nigh.
Either death or you I'll find immediately.

Hermia runs off.

Act 3, Scene 1
Enter Mechanicals

QUINCE

Here's a marvelous convenient place for our rehearsal!

BOTTOM

Petra Quince

QUINCE

(Sighing. She knows that's coming). What sayest thou, Bully Bottom?

BOTTOM

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?

SNOUT

A parlous fear!

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. This will put them out of fear.

QUINCE

Well, we will have such a prologue.

SNOUT

Will not the ladies be afeard of the lion?

STARVELING

I fear it, I promise you!

SNOUT

Therefore another prologue must tell he is not a lion.

QUINCE

Well, it shall be so. Also ... Pyramus and Thisbe meet by moonlight ...

SNUG

Doth the moon shine that night we play our play?

QUINCE

Yes, it doth shine that night ... or else one must come in with a bush of thorns and a lantern, and say he comes to present Moonshine. AND ... Pyramus and Thisbe, says the story, did talk through the chink of a wall.

SNOUT

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

BOTTOM

Some man or other must present Wall; and let him have some plaster, or some loam, or some roughcast about him to signify Wall; and let him hold his fingers thus, and through that cranny shall Pyramus and Thisbe whisper.

QUINCE

If that may be, then all is well. Come and rehearse your parts. Pyramus, you begin. When you have spoken your speech, enter into that brake; and so everyone according to his cue.

(enter Puck)

PUCK

What hempen homespuns have we swaggering here
So near the cradle of the Fairy Queen?
What? A play toward? I'll be an auditor!
An actor too, perhaps, if I see cause.

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 awhile,
And by and by I will to thee appear.

(exit)

PUCK

A stranger Pyramus than e'er played here.

(exit)

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 *as Thisbe in a very high voice*

Most radiant pyramus, most lilywhite of hue,
Of colour like the red rose on triumphant briar,
As true as truest horse that yet would never tire
I'll meet thee, Pyramus, at Ninny's tomb –

QUINCE

"Ninus" tomb, man! – 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 Thisbe

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

(enter Puck, and Bottom with an ass's head)

BOTTOM *as Pyramus*

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

QUINCE

O monstrous! O strange! We are haunted! Pray, masters! Fly, masters! Help!

(exeunt Quince, Snug, Flute, Snout, and Starveling).

PUCK

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

(exit)

BOTTOM

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

(enter Snout)

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?

(exit Snout. Enter Quince)

QUINCE

Bless thee, Bottom! Bless thee! Thou art translated!

(exit Quince)

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

(wakes)

What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?

BOTTOM

(sings)

The finch, the sparrow, and the lark,
The plainsong cuckoo grey,
Whose note full many of man doth mark
And dares not answer "Nay"

TITANIA

I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again!
Mine ear is much enamoured of thy note.
So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape,

And thy fair virtue's force perforce doth move me
On the first view to say, to swear, I love thee.

BOTTOM

Methinks, mistress, you should have little reason for that. And yet, to say the truth,
reason and love keep little company together nowadays – the more the pity that some
honest neighbours will not make them friends.

TITANIA

Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful!

BOTTOM

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

TITANIA

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.
The summer still doth tend upon my state, **(she's keeping it warm because she feels like it).**

And I do love thee. Therefore go with me.
I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee,
And they shall fetch thee jewels from the deep,
And sing while thou on pressed flowers dost sleep;
And I will purge thy mortal grossness so
That thou shalt like an airy spirit go.
Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Moth, and Mustardseed!

(fairies appear)

PEASEBLOSSOM

Ready!

COBWEB

And I!

MOTH

And I!

MUSTARDSEED

And I!

MOTH

Where shall we go?

TITANIA

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.
Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies.

PEASEBLOSSOM

Hail, mortal!

COBWEB

Hail!

MOTH

Hail!

MUSTARDSEED

Hail!

BOTTOM

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

COBWEB

Cobweb.

BOTTOM

I shall desire you of more acquaintance, good Master Cobweb – if I cut my finger I shall make bold with you! – YOUR name, honest gentleman?

PEASEBLOSSOM

Peaseblossom.

BOTTOM

I pray you commend me to Mistress Squash, your mother, and to Master Peascod, your father. Good Master Peaseblossom, I shall desire you of more acquaintance, too. – YOUR name, I beseech you, sir?

MUSTARDSEED

Mustardseed.

BOTTOM

GOOD MASTER MUSTARDSEED, I know your patience WELL!!! I promise you, your kindred hath made my eyes water ere now. I desire you more acquaintance, good

Master Mustardseed.

TITANIA

Come, wait upon him. Lead him to my bower.

(Bottom brays)

Tie up my lover's tongue; bring him silently.

(exit Titania, Bottom and fairies)