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SHAKESPEARE'S
MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

SHAKESPEARE'S
MIDSUMMER
NIGHT'S DREAM.

THE FIRST QUARTO,

1600:

A FAC-SIMILE IN PHOTO-LITHOGRAPHY,

BY

WILLIAM GRIGGS,

FOR 13 YEARS PHOTO-LITHOGRAPHER TO THE INDIA OFFICE.

WITH INTRODUCTION BY

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EDITOR OF "THE 'DROLLERIES' OF THE RESTORATION;" "THE BAGFORD
BALLADS;" "THE ROXEBURGHE BALLADS," ETC.



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TO HIS GRACE

The Duke of Devonshire :

CHANCELLOR OF CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY :

BY THE EDITOR.

[Shakspeare-Quarto Fac-similes, No. 3.]

INTRODUCTION

TO THE PHOTO-LITHOGRAPH OF

FISHER'S QUARTO EDITION, 1600:

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

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§ I. THE TWO QUARTOS OF 1600.

IN the Registers of the Stationers' Company, vol. C = 3, fol. 65 *verso*, is found the earliest known record of the publication in printed form of "A Midsummer Night's Dream:"—

[A.D. 1600.] 8 Octobris.

Thomas ffyssher Entred for his Copie vnder the handes of master
RODES / and the Wardens, A booke called *A
Mydsommer nightes Dreame* vj^d¹

Students require absolute fidelity in the reproduction of such rare originals. We therefore offer them this volume without any tamper-

¹ Edward Arber's *Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers, &c.*, iii., 174. This entry undoubtedly refers to the Quarto here reproduced in its integrity from an exemplar in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire. A few pages deficient in the original (viz. 18, 19, 20, 21; 58, 59, 60, 61 = eight pp.) are supplied in the photo-lithograph from Mr. Huth's own copy. The Bodleian Library and the Capell Collection, in Trinity College, Cambridge, possess the same edition. There is also another perfect exemplar in the British Museum, Case 34, k. 29.

ing whatever. Even the mutilated head-lines are left as they were shorn by some reckless bookbinder. The crease in the paper of the title-page (causing omission of two letters, *a* and *h*) is a defect in the Devonshire copy. Of course, the other broken or imperfectly-inked letters, etc., are in *fac-simile* of the original.

For purposes of reference it is sufficient that *we number the lines of the Quarto*, in fours, on the inside margin; and also *mark the division of Acts*, which is given in the Folio, but not in either Quarto. We add a list of characters, on a separate page, preceding the title, from a later edition.

Like others of the early typographers and publishers, Thomas Fisher indulged himself with a pictorial rebus and verbal synonyme on his own name. As may be seen in our reproduction of the title-page, he gives a King-fisher or Halcyon, "Alcione," with the motto "Motos soleo componere fluctus."¹

Another Quarto edition was issued, by James Roberts, bearing date of the same year, 1600; but of this publication no record is entered in the Stationers' Registers. For the Introduction to the photolithographic *fac-simile* of this other edition may well be reserved a consideration of the chief verbal differences between these two Quartos, and also the relation they bear to the first Folio of 1623; the editors whereof had certainly availed themselves of Roberts's printed copy, although they professed to have had access to some manuscript original, if we are to take their announcement literally.² At the best, they employed a playhouse copy, which was composed of Roberts's printed Quarto, with additional stage directions, etc., in manuscript. These statements are supported by proofs in our Introduction to the second Quarto.

¹ Fisher must have been proud of obtaining the favour of being allowed to print this play-book, his very earliest recorded publication, within a few months after gaining his freedom.

² Compare the address to the readers of the first Folio, 1623, signed by John Heminge and Henrie Condell: . . . "Where (before) you were abus'd with diuerse stolne, and surreptitious copies, maimed, and deformed by the frauds and stealthes of inuiourious impostors, that expos'd them: euen thofe, are now offer'd to your view cur'd, and perfect of their limbes; and all the rest, absolute in their numbers, as he conceiu'd them wee haue scarce receiued from him a blot in his papers." (Sheet sign. A 3.)

§ 2. MENTIONED BY MERES, 1598.

Two years earlier, at least, the comedy was known and popular on the stage. Francis Meres, in the memorable list contained in his *Palladis Tamia: Wits Treasury; being the Second part of Wits Commonwealth*, September, 1598, fol. 281-2, mentions "Shakespeare among English is the most excellent . . . for the stage; for Comedy witness . . . his *Midsummers nights dream*," etc. This is the earliest distinct reference to the play, which may have been several years before the public for anything yet shown to the contrary. It is the fifth comedy in the list of six; the others being almost certainly of earlier date than this.

§ 3. DATE OF THE COMEDY.

Among conjectural theories, one seemed plausibly to establish the date as immediately following the wet summer of 1594. Numerous are the contemporary accounts of the floods, the damaged fruit and endangered harvest of that year. Dr. Forman's Ashmolean MS., No. 384, gives such a description of the rainy season and the damage that ensued as might suffice anew for a meteorological diary of 1879. Stowe chronicles the same events, and the statement is copied into Penkethman's *Artachthos*, 1638. In the *Lectures on Jonah*, delivered at York in the same year, 1594, by the Rev. John King (afterwards D.D., 1601, and Bishop of London, 1611), are passages, often quoted, which refer to the unkind spring "by means of the abundance of rains that fell; our July hath been like to a February; our June even as an April;" and "such unseasonable weather and storms of rain among us, which if we will observe, and compare it with that which is past, we may say that the course of nature is very much inverted; our years are turned upside down; our summers are no summers; our harvests are no harvests; our seed-times are no seed-times; for a great space of time scant any day hath been seen that it hath not rained upon us; and the nights are like the days." (*Lectures upon Jonah*, delivered at York, in the year of our Lord 1594: by John King, afterwards Lord Bishop of London. Reprinted by

James Nichol. Edinburgh, 4to., 1864.) In the second Lecture he had said, and pointedly in reference to "the year of the Lord 1593, and 1595:"—"The months of the year have not yet gone about, wherein the Lord hath bowed the heavens, and come down amongst us with more tokens and earnestes of his wrath intended, than the agedest man of our land is able to recount of so small a time. For say if ever the winds, since they blew one against the other, have been more common, and more tempestuous, as if the four ends of heaven had conspired to turn the foundations of the world upside down; thunders and lightnings, neither seasonable for the time, and withal most terrible, with such effects brought forth," &c. (*Ibid.*, p. 21.) We agree with Thomas Kenney in believing that "The detailed enumeration made by Titania, in Act ii. sc. 1 [our p. 14, line 84, to p. 15, line 113], of the elemental convulsions which [had] followed her quarrel with Oberon, seems to contain an unmistakable allusion to the unseasonable and disastrous weather with which we know that England had been visited during that year." (*Life and Genius of Shakespeare*, 1864, p. 175.) The Rev. Alexander Dyce harshly designated the supposition of any such intended allusion to the weather of 1594 as "ridiculous," but he also thus characterized "not less so" any specific identification of the mourning by the thrice-three Muses,

"For the death
Of learning, late deceast in beggary."
(P. 53, lines 50, 51.)

§ 4. THE SUPPOSED ALLUSION TO GREENE, 1592.

Nevertheless, it is by no means improbable that Shakespeare did here refer to the blighted career and untimely death, in 1592, of that Robert Greene, who had made scurrilous allusion to his rival as "an absolute Johannes Fac-totum," and "in his owne conceit the onely Shake-scene in a countrie." (*Groatsworth of Wit*, p. 30.) It seems generally forgotten by book-learned critics, who are for the most part unfamiliar with the actual stage-management and the resources of dramatic authorship, that many a "telling" allusion to contemporary

events would be profitably foisted in (like a new verse on the day's occurrences in a "topical song") during the run of a drama, or on its revival.¹

Therefore, even when we are able with precision to determine that some particular allusion must have referred to an event of ascertained date, we are not materially helped to a discovery of the original date of the work itself; only to the fact of it being not later than the date thus established. Oberon's description may have been intentionally appropriated to the wet summer of 1594 (and in such case it was written and spoken before the "fair harvest" in August, mentioned by Stowe, had partly compensated for the previous floods). But this by no means proves that the fairy comedy could not have been acted earlier *without that description*; that it was so acted, although possible, is far from probable.²

"The thrice-three Muses mourning for the death of Learning," etc., cannot have been an allusion to Spenser's "Tears of the Muses," 1591; for, we are expressly told, "That is some *Satire* keene and critical, Not sorting with a nuptial ceremony:" a description inapplicable to the Spenserian complaint. Spenser's death was not until January, 1598.

The supposed imitation in "Doctor Dodypoll," 1600—

¹ In most cases this interpolation would be what is called the actor's "gag;" but where the author happened to be in connection with the theatre, a shareholder and performer, close at hand, he would himself occasionally add fresh lines when deemed expedient. Thus Hamlet intended to insert "a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines," in the Gonzago play. Some passage similarly dangerous or seditious may have been interpolated in "Richard the Second," at the time of Essex's ill-starred tumult in 1600.

² It need not be deemed conclusive against the supposition of Robert Greene having been thus indicated, that his death (in September, 1592) was an event too far back to be remembered by the audience. Greene had secured many admirers, and, as J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps shows, his miserable death "was a subject of general conversation for several years, and a reference to the circumstance, though indistinctly expressed, would have been well understood in literary circles at the time it is supposed the comedy was produced." (Privately-printed *Memoranda on the Midsummer Night's Dream*, p. 20, 1879.) In confirmation of this statement we must remember that even so late as 1598 Greene's name was still employed as a popular spell to enforce attention, for John Dickenson thus uses it in more than the title of his "*Greene in Concept: new raised from the Graue to write the Tragique Historie of faire Valeria of London.*" This novel was probably of later date than the production of Shakespeare's comedy. It was reprinted in 1879 by Dr. Grosart, among his valuable "Occasional Issues."

“’Twas I that lead you through the painted meades,
Where the light fairies daunst upon the flowers,
Hanging on every leafe an orient pearle,” etc.—

is of doubtful value in reference to date; although the comedy was mentioned, by Nash, in 1596: the language, moreover, may be deemed too loose and general to be cited as an imitation or parallel-passage.¹

§ 5. SPENSER’S FAERIE QUEENE, 1596.

A far more important clue is furnished by the ripe scholarship of J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps, in his valuable and most recent *Memoranda on the Midsummer Night’s Dream*, 1879. It is but fair to this life-long student of Shakespearian literature to quote the passage entire, the more especially as the *Memoranda* are privately printed for a very limited circulation:—

“There seems to be a certainty that Shakespeare, in the composition of the *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, had in one place a recollection of the sixth book of *The Faerie Queene*, published in 1596, for he all but literally quotes the following line from the eighth canto of that book,—‘*Through hils and dales, through bushes and through breres.*’ (*Faerie Queene*, ed. 1596, p. 460.) As the *Midsummer Night’s Dream* was not printed until the year 1600, and it is impossible that Spenser could have been present at any representation of the comedy before he had written the sixth book of *The Faerie Queene*, it may fairly be concluded that Shakespeare’s play was not composed at the earliest before the year 1596, in fact, not until some time after January the 20th, 1595-6, on which day the Second Part of *The Faerie Queene* was entered on the books of the Stationers’ Company. The sixth book of that poem was probably written as early as 1592 or 1593, certainly in Ireland, and at some considerable time before the month of November, 1594, the date of one entry of publication of the *Amoretti*, in the eightieth sonnet of which it is distinctly alluded

¹ To Puck the Fairy says (p. 12, lines 10, 11):—

“I must goe seeke some dew droppes here,
And hang a pearle in euery couslippes eare.”

So far as it proves anything, the resemblance in “Doctor Dodypoll” indicates that *Midsummer Night’s Dream* was not later than 1596.

to as having been completed previously to the composition of the latter work." (*Memoranda*, pp. 6, 7.)

We admit the virtual identity of the passage quoted from Spenser, with Puck's speech (our p. 12, line 2, Act ii. sc. 1) :

"Ouer hill, ouer dale, thorough bush, thorough brier."

If we could feel it to be certain that the Spenserian line (written before 1594) suggested the Shakespearian, the test would be decisive : to us it indicates anew the date 1594.

Malone attributed the date of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to 1594; Dr. Nathan Drake to 1593; Professor Delius to 1595; Chalmers to 1598. Recently, attempts have been made to claim so early a date as 1590-91 : which claim the present writer holds to be inadmissible, and in opposition to external evidence.¹ Fortunately, the garrulity of Meres has determined the latest possible date as being 1598. This leads us tolerably near to the real date: probably 1593-94, at earliest; and not later than 1596.²

§ 6. PYRAMUS AND THISBIE, 1584, ETC.

No material help in regard to the date of the comedy is afforded by consulting the possible sources of the Interlude. The story of the two lovers had for several years been popular, not only in direct translations of Ovid by Golding and others, but more especially in "A new Sonet of Pyramus and Thisbie : to the Tune of The Down-right Squier," beginning, "You Dames (I say) that climbe the mount

¹ We omit consideration of what are called "verse-tests." At present, the theories based on these are (in the opinion of scholars of established reputation, with whom we hold agreement,) often misleading. In passing, let it be remarked, only, that the *light-ending* or *weak-ending* lines are almost wholly absent; and so are the *run-on* lines. The continuity of rhyme, in many lines repeated, is remarkable in Titania's and Oberon's speeches, adding to their musical impressiveness.

² Two hitherto-unnoticed entries in the Stationers' Registers deserve attention, as indicating some connection with *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. To Thomas Creede (who published several of Shakespeare's plays, more or less irregularly) is entered, on the 14th of May, 1594, "a booke intituled the *Scottish story of JAMES the FOURTHE, slayne at Flodden, intermixed with a pleasant Comedie presented by OBORON Kinge of Fayres*." Again (as probably helping to suggest by contrast the name of Shakespeare's own comedy, which must have been in his mind, if not in great part written), to Edward White is entered, on the 22nd of May, 1594, "a booke intituled *a Wynters nightes pastime*." (Cf. *Transcript*, ii. 648, 650.)

of Helicon." It is by I. Thomson, and contained in Clement Robinson's *A Handefull of pleasant Delites; containing sundrie new Sonets and delectable Histories in diuers kindes of Meeter*. 1584. Than this there is scarcely a book of which clearer proof remains that it had been seen and was used by Shakespeare. An earlier edition of it was issued in 1565, but whether "Pyramus and Thisbie" be one of "the new additions of certain Songs to verie late deuised Notes," it would be difficult to prove. In any case, the one extant edition (a unique copy, and mutilated, sheet sign. B. vi. being defective,¹) is of too early a date to guide us, having been issued before Shakespeare is believed to have left Stratford.²

§ 7. NORTH'S PLUTARCH, 1579: THESEUS.

Howard Staunton repudiates the theory which assigned the groundwork of the fable to Chaucer's "Knight's Tale," declaring that "there is scarcely any resemblance whatever between Chaucer's

¹ The present Editor was fortunate enough to discover and identify a fragment (leaf D. 2) of the earlier edition in the Bagford Collection at the British Museum (Case 39 K. vol. i. p. 83), hitherto unknown: and to print it in the Ballad Society's *Bagford Ballads*, p. 43. In the Stationers' Registers is an entry to Rich. Iohnes of the very book, in 1564-5. The Shakespearian connection is indisputable. (*Ex. grat.* sheet sign. A. ii. *verso*, "Rosemarie is for remembrance," and "Fenel is for flatterers:" compare *Hamlet*, Act iv.) In this respect it is noteworthy that we find a silly blunder (on sheet sign. C. ii.), "At last they promised to meet at prime, by *Minus* well" (*sic*): which suggests the "*Ninnies* tomb" of Flute, as Thisbie of the Interlude.

² Long before Shakespeare's interlude, "a tedious briefe Scene of young *Pyramus* and his love *Thisbye*: very tragical mirth," there had been a similar entertainment offered to the press, and probably also on the stage. For we find an entry in the Stationers' Registers, at the beginning of the year between 22 July, 1567, and 22 July, 1568, "Recevyd of Rycharde Jonnes for his lycense for pryntinge of a boke intituled *yetragocall comodye of DAMONDE and PETHYAS* . . . iij^d." (See Arber's *Transcript*, 1875, i. 354.) And the phrase tickled the fancy of the public, for we find again, two years later, "Recevyd of John Alde for his lycense for pryntinge of an enterlude *a lamentable Tragedy full of pleasaunt myrth* . . . iij^d." (*Ibid.* i. 400, for 22 July, 1569, to 22 July, 1570.) We are not aware that these entries have been hitherto cited in illustration. It may also here be noted that, near the same time, when he had been writing or meditating *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Shakespeare himself introduced an allusion into *The Merchant of Venice* (but see J. W. E.'s forthcoming Introduction to it), act v. sc. 1:—

"In such a night
Did *Thisbie* fearfully o'ertrip the dew,
And saw the Lion's shadow ere himself,
And ran dismay'd away."

tale and Shakespeare's play, beyond that of the scene in both being laid at the Court of Theseus." He admits that the character of "the Duke" is founded on the account in North's Translation of Plutarch;¹ but he somewhat exaggerates in declaring that, "beyond one or two passing allusions, there is no attempt to individualize either the man or the country." As to the country we may concede the point, for the haunted wood more resembles the Wier-Brake of Warwickshire than any grove near Athens. Local colouring was unthought of, so long as events and characters were found interesting. But in the stately dignity of Theseus, with his large-hearted acceptance of the efforts made to please him, and the half-expressed repugnance to unreal sentiment or rhapsody, such as befitted a man of action and success in war,² we recognize his individuality. The delineation of Theseus, as a piece of art, is complete in its strength and beauty; although it is almost overlooked in any popular estimate of the wonderful fairy mythology. The lore of pedants³ could never have given to us this heroic figure—one whose every word still recalls, like the analogous sculpture by Phidias, that period of Grecian antiquity when gods walked the earth with man as with a friend. The nobility of Theseus is of a kind that none but a truly great mind could have conceived: it is nobility in repose. We have no opportunity of seeing him in his

¹ For which see Reeves and Turner's excellent *Shakespeare's Library*, second edition (being enlarged from J. P. Collier's, of 1841), 1875, vol. i. pp. 7 to 71. The full title of North's translation is, *The Lives of the noble Grecians and Romanes, compared together by that graw learned Philosopher and Historiographer, Plutarke of Chaeronea. . . .* By Thomas North. Imprinted at London by Thomas Vautroullier, dwelling in the Black Friers by Ludgate. 1579. In folio, 595 leaves. From this work certain names were directly borrowed for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, particularly, 1, *Egles* (from pp. 28, 41); 2, *Perigouna*, the daughter of Sinnis (p. 15); 3, *Egeus*, father of Theseus. These we find in the present Fisher's Quarto, printed or misprinted, as, 1, *Eagles* (intended for *Egle*, which, moreover, ought to have been *italicized*, on p. 14, line 75); 2, *Perigenia* (on same page, line 74); and, 3, a different *Egeus* (Acts i. and v.). There are also *Antiope*, *Hyppolita* (in North, as the same person: but in Shakespeare as distinct women), etc. The preceding offer a stronger clue.

² Compare *Julius Caesar*, Act iv., sc. 3: "What should the wars do with these jiggng fools?"

³ We have little need to disturb ourselves concerning anachronisms and incongruities, although we find Athenian Theseus declare "Saint Valentine is past" (p. 47); and Titania accuse Oberon of having been disguised as Corin, conversing "love to amorous Phillida." Dido, "the Carthage Queen," and Æneas (p. 7) belong to a later date than Theseus, whom Chaucer also had called a "Duke." These are trifles.

early enterprises as a redressor of wrongs and seeker after adventures. Although he tells his queen,

“Hippolita, I wooed thee with my sword,
And won thy love, doing thee injury,”

the struggle with her Amazons is ended before he appears in view; his battle with the Centaurs is only incidentally referred to (p. 52), “in glory of my kinsman Hercules.” There is no rebellious strife in the Athenian city to demand display of energy. Yet we feel, in his every word and movement, that here is indeed a man “equal to either fortune:” one whom prosperity cannot dazzle, or adversity humiliate and sour. Noteworthy is it how thoroughly Shakespeare portrays such heroes as this (and no dramatist can rise to lofty heights unless there be in himself true dignity)—the majestic grace of his speech, the genial warmth of sympathy with inferiors, entering without ostentation into their feelings, receiving their lame endeavours with kindly humour, and thus making complete what they imperfectly perform:

“And what poor duty cannot do
Noble respect takes it in might, not merit.”

He is unwilling to disappoint these

“hard-handed men that work in Athens here,
Who never laboured in their minds till now,
And now have toiled their unbreath'd memories
With this same play against his nuptials.”

This acceptance is evidently from consideration for “their intents, extremely stretch'd, and conned with cruel pain to do him service,” since he answers—

“I will hear this play,
For never any thing can be amiss
When simpleness and duty tender it.”

Again, afterwards, in reply to Hippolita's complaint that the dramatic interlude is “the silliest stuff” she ever heard, he reminds her—as an apology for any such shortcomings—“The best in this kind are but shadows: and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend

them."¹ But with all this willingness to accept such a "palpable gross play," his more keen delight is in the stirring chase, with his Amazonian bride, and his hounds that "are bred out of the Spartan kind: Slow in pursuit, but match'd in mouth like bells, each under each; a cry more tuneable was never halloed to, nor cheer'd with horn in Crete, in Sparta, nor in Thessaly." And this not only from love for the chase itself, but also to ascend

"The mountain's top,
And mark the musical confusion
Of hounds and echo in conjunction."

From him we gain that most lovely contrast between the wedded wife and Diana's chaste votary,

"In shady cloister mew'd,
To live a barren Sister all her life,
Chaunting faint hymns to the cold fruitless moon.
Thrice blessed they, that master so their blood,
To undergo such maiden pilgrimage;
But *earthlier happy* is the rose distill'd,
Than that which, withering on the virgin thorn,
Grows, lives, and dies in single blessedness."²

From Theseus also comes the magnificent passage, as philosophically exact as it is poetically beautiful, descriptive of Imagination; gaining additional value from the position which it occupies, and from the character of him who utters it.

Even here, elevated to a throne, unchallenged in dignity, victor in struggles that were soon to be accounted mythical; after all the vast experience of his youth, familiarized by converse with beings of superhuman might and loveliness, Theseus appears not to be conscious of his own superiority to ordinary men, or that near to him are working

¹ It will not be without service to contrast the unkind mockery and persistent humiliation of the actors who personate the Nine Worthies in *Love's Labour's Lost*—probably an earlier play—with the raillery that greets the far more ridiculous exhibition of *Pyramus and Thisbe*. Well may Holofernes make remonstrance: "This is not generous; not gentle; not humble."

² A picture elaborated, later, in the Isabella of *Measure for Measure*. As with Sir Walter Scott's Catherine, *The Fair Maid of Perth*, the intention of the author had probably been to preserve the virginal chastity of the heroine unblemished until death. In either case, her marriage is a concession made to popular prejudice, weakening the force of the character, and thus injurious.

unseen those spiritual agencies that influence mankind. His poetry of thought and of expression is but the common air that he breathes. To him there is forgetfulness of mere self, his deeds appearing nowise marvellous to one who, from an inner world, surveys the outer sphere of action. Despite all that he has seen, he is no Visionary. Like a commentary on the whole drama of this *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and on the creative power of Shakespeare's own imagination, as beheld and restrained by practical wisdom, flow his words:—

*"I never may believe
 These antique fables, nor these fairy toys:
 Lovers and madmen have such seething brains,
 Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend
 More than cool reason ever comprehends.
 The Lunatic, the Lover, and the Poet,
 Are of Imagination all compact:
 One sees more devils than vast Hell can hold;
 That is the Madman: the Lover, all as frantic,
 Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt:
 The Poet's eye, in a fine phrensy rolling,
 Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
 And, as Imagination bodies forth
 The forms of things unknown, the Poet's pen
 Turns them to shape, and gives to airy nothing
 A local habitation and a name."*

§ 8. THE FAIRIES: OBERON AND TITANIA.

Although into the stately presence of Theseus the fairies enter not, visibly, they love and revere him; as they mention during the quarrel between Oberon and Titania: thus their latest employment is to hallow his nuptial dwelling. Over the more youthful pairs of lovers their spells are potent, at first to perplex, and afterwards to reunite them. But it is upon the clowns—the men described as

*"A crew of Patches, rude mechanicals,
 That work for bread upon Athenian stalls,
 Who meet together to rehearse a play
 Intended for great Theseus' nuptial day"—*

that the elvish Puck, that lob of spirits,¹ most freely exercises his mis-

¹ "Farewell, thou Lobbe of spirits." (P. 12.)

"Then lies him down, the Lubber-fiend."—MILTON'S *L'Allegro*, 110.

"Lob lye-by-the-fire."—*Knight of the Burning Pestle*, Act iii. sc. 1.

chievous mirth. He confesses his belief, "What fools these mortals be!" The gambols of these tiny ministrants may well be regarded as the most perfect poem of its class that has ever appeared.¹ The lyrical melodiousness, and the profusion of floral or starry imagery never grow wearisome. They yield a clear, although a glowing revelation of the fairies' temperament. We see their sportive jealousies and fantastic vengeance; their gatherings on "the beached margin of the sea, to dance their ringlets to the whistling winds;" their drowsiness on banks of thyme, "o'er-canopied with sweet musk-roses and with eglantine;" their whimsical horror of intrusion from thorny hedgehogs, newts and blind-worms, spiders, snails, and beetles; their love of "music that brings sleep," and of the moonlit glades; their restless obligation to "trip after the moon's shade," "following darkness as a dream." We see the rollicking mirthfulness of Robin Goodfellow, to whom "things most pleasant be that befall preposterously."²

Amid this revelling in fancy there is a poetical completeness far beyond the requirements of any stage-effect. In our own time, at theatres, we may find the dramatic illusion heightened with set scenes, coloured lights and transparencies, the witcheries of graceful forms, fantastic costumes; and the loveliest melodies of Mendelssohn's

¹ Malone and, recently, J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps and W. C. Hazlitt, have shown that Michael Drayton's *Nymphidia* cannot be regarded as having in any way suggested the drama; for the *Nymphidia* was not only never printed until 1627, but is indicated as having been among the later poems of its author. See Malone's *Shakespeare*, edition 1821, v. 206; the Percy Society *Illustrations of Fairy Mythology*, 1845; and Reeves and Turner's *Fairy Tales illustrating Shakespeare*, 1875, p. 239, where the *Nymphidia* is reprinted complete. Also, the Robin Goodfellow ballad, attributed by Peck to Ben Jonson, "From Oberon, in fairyland," Roxb. Coll., i. 230; or *Roxburghe Ballads*, ii. 81.

² Commend we to the notice of all students a suggestive little volume on "*Shakespeare's Puck, and his Folklore*, illustrated from the Superstitions of All Nations:" By William Bell, Phil. Doct., 1852. In a forthcoming volume of the Ballad Society's reprint, *The Roxburghe Ballads*, the curious woodcuts of Robin Goodfellow will be given in *fac-simile* to Roxb. Coll., ii. 145. Professor Daniel Wilson's *Caliban: the Missing Link, and A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 1873, is one of the most valuable contributions to Shakespearian criticism. The name of *Oberon*, "the dwarfe king of fayryes," had already been made a household word by having appeared in the popular romance of *Huon of Bourdeaux*, a translation of which, by Lord Berners, had appeared about 1558. *Oberon* is guessed to be simply an adaptation of the original *Elberich*, or *Albrich*. The name *Titania* was borrowed from one of the synonymes of *Diana*, to whom it is applied by Ovid.

genius, to enhance the charm. But beyond all these additional adornments, giving pleasure to the eye and to the ear, remain unapproachable for realization that minuteness, that almost intangible evanescence, which belong to the fairy people of Shakespeare. Puck is native to our own folks-lore, although trace of him is found elsewhere. But Shakespeare, by several allusions, had carefully prepared us for welcoming the tiny monarchs as visitors from distant regions. Oberon has newly "Come from the farthest steppe of *India*," and Titania's favourite little changeling, the cause of strife, has been brought from his mother's land, where she had gossipt "in the spiced *Indian* air by night." These words, like Puck's boast, "I'll put a girdle round about the earth in forty minutes," or "I go, I go, swifter than arrow from the *Tartar's* bow," increase the impression of their swift travel and wide experiences; for although wanderers and foreign visitants, they are at home in every land, here as elsewhere. Thus the well-understood description of Queen Elizabeth,¹ "the imperiall Votress," "a fair Vestal, throned *in the West*," whom "young Cupid's fiery shaft" could not transpierce (p. 16), would inevitably bring back to the audience the remembrance that they were supposed to be at a distance from the England of their own time. Beyond these hints of remoteness, and a few antique names, disguise was scarcely attempted, to present the Athens of two thousand years ago.

§ 9. THE "CREW OF PATCHES:" "BOTTOM'S DREAM."

From the first, no doubt, the world welcomed the genuine humour of contrasting and intermingling with the fairy sprites these "hempen home-spuns" Peter Quince, the carpenter, manager, and Prologizer; Flute, the bellows-mender, who plays Thisbe, although he has a beard

¹ We attach no weight whatever to Warburton's supposition that by the "Mermaid on a Dolphin's back" Shakespeare glanced at Elizabeth's rival, Mary Queen of Scots. She was judicially murdered in 1587, and we may be sure that if the poet could have possibly descended to insult her, long after death, the attack would have been made as self-evident as was the flattering tribute to Elizabeth. It is one of the idle crotchets of those who are incapable of understanding true poetry. Thus attempts have been made to identify every character in *Hamlet* as portraits of Sir Philip Sidney, Essex, &c.

coming, but may do it in a mask ; Starveling, a tailor of melancholy anticipations, who loses temper when gibed at as the "Man in the Moon;" Snug, the joiner, who is slow of study, and methodical in all that he does or asks—an orderly man, and well to be depended on in other matters than the Lion's part, "which is nothing but roaring;" Snout, the tinker, who enacts Wall in public, and is generally content to chime in with suggestions of others, being unobtrusive by nature in private life. But in all circles is Bully Bottom the favourite.¹ Being a weaver by trade, thence comes his dictatorial habit; for your weaver is a contemplative man, a politician, and abstruse inquirer: he thinks much at his loom, as though it were that of Destiny, and, when he emerges from the stronghold of his treddles, he sometimes forgets that the sequences of his deductions and dogmas are not so logical as they had appeared. He is indisposed to remain hidden in the background. He likes to play first fiddle in all societies, does Bottom: he would willingly perform the Lover and the Tyrant; also Thisbe and the Lion. When his time comes, he will summon Pease-blossom as authoritatively as he had ordered his Athenian comrades; and will volunteer a special answer, in contradiction of Theseus himself, concerning Thisbe's cue, and, again, regarding the Epilogue. Bottom is self-consistent throughout. In him is exemplified the great truth that no fairyland enchantment of dreams, or love itself, can alter the inherent nature of a full-grown man (as Fielding declared concerning drunkenness, in *Tom Jones*); at most it intensifies, and develops what was latent. He is equally full of ignorant assumption

¹ It is worth noting, as it proves the continued popularity of Bully Bottom among readers and old theatre-lovers, that during the Cromwellian interregnum, whilst all stage-plays were prohibited, Francis Kirkman and Robert Cox maintained the performance of "The merry conceited Humors of Bottom the Weaver; as it hath been often publicly acted by some of his Majesties Comedians, and lately privately presented by several apprentices for their harmless recreation, with great applause." This was printed in 1661; reprinted in Kirkman's "*The Wits: or, Sport upon Sport. In Selected Pieces of DROLLERY.* 2nd Part. 1672." With Frontispiece, representing the Red Bull during performance of sundry Drolls. We need attach little weight to the opinion of Samuel Pepys, 29th September, 1662, that the *Midsummer Night's Dram* appeared to him "the most insipid ridiculous play that ever I saw in my life" (*Diary*, best edition, 1876, ii. 51); for the Secretary's critical judgment does him little credit in regard to poetry. What Hamlet says of Polonius (falsely, it appears,) is tolerably true of Pepys: "He's for a jig, or a tale of bawdry, or he sleeps."

when Titania proffers music or affection, as he had been in his self-estimates of ability before his transformation. Had he not really been "the shallowest thick-skin of that barren sort," we might have cherished the idea of his career becoming thereafter dignified by a remembrance of the fairy realm into which he, and he alone, had been for awhile admitted;¹ especially as we have, in our own possession, the original Greek ballad which Peter Quince was to have written thereon. But the memory of his Ass's ears was the only perennial bequest of his Midsummer Night's Dream.

§ 10. CONCLUSION: THE THREE-FOLD PLOT.

Simple though it appears, when acted, the interweaving of the three-fold plot might have tasked the ingenuity of any playwright. The fairies were to be kept quite distinct from influencing Theseus, his Amazonian bride, and their Court; yet it was specially to grace the nuptials that Oberon had journeyed so far, and the fairy benediction on the wedding-couch concludes the action of the play. The entanglements and misconceptions of the two pairs of lovers were to be caused by Puck and his enchantments of the magic juice; yet after all errors are happily dispersed, and the four friends made happy,—

"When they next wake, all this derision
Shall seem a dream and fruitless vision:" (p. 41.)

. . . "And think no more of this night's accidents,
But as the fierce vexation of a dream." (p. 45.)

Even thus it befalls. At first they believe "That yet we sleep, we dream;" and afterwards declare, "Let's follow him; And by the way, let us recount our dreams." Lastly, of the Athenian clowns, the handicraftsmen, none behold the fairy crew save only Bottom, the connecting-link, since fate will have it so, between the mortals and

¹ But see, in exemplification of this, Allan Park Paton's *Web of Life*, 1858, p. 261. The transformation is poetically conceived, and skilfully detailed; yet, after all, it is merely of modern false sentiment, opposed to the steadfastness of character that is shown by Shakespeare. We cannot gather figs from thistles: Bottom remains Bottom.

the ethereal company. Even while undergoing the enchantment he had confounded his own identity: he had longed for dry oats, a peck of provender, a handful or two of dried peas, a pottle of hay, "good hay, sweet hay, hath no fellow!" His long ears tickle him: "I must to the barber's; for methinks I am marvellous hairy about the face." But when he awakes he feels, "I have had a most rare vision. I have had a dream!"

No one need puzzle over the confused chronology of the drama. The action includes only three days and nights, dramatically; although we are told of four days to intervene between opening words and nuptial hour.¹ In the old drama, without change of scene, *without a marked distinction of the Acts* (such as we now recognize, both in printed books and at our theatres), there was seldom, if ever, a remembrance forced on the spectator of exact length of time. It was deemed sufficient if some conception arose of an extended duration—much beyond the real flight of minutes. For this the poet gave his hint. He found his audience apt, and far too wise to spoil enjoyment by labouring to detect his art. On the contrary, as Wordsworth writes, "*We murder to dissect.*" As Bully Bottom says,

"Man is but an ass, if he will go about to expound this dream."

Mr. J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps declares:² "What is absurdly termed æsthetic criticism is more out of place on this comedy than perhaps on any other of Shakespeare's plays. It deadens the 'native wood-notes wild,' that every reader of taste would desire to be left to their own influences. The *Midsummer Night's Dream* is too exquisite a composition to be dulled by the infliction of philosophical analysis."

¹ The flight of the lovers, and the rehearsal of the Interlude, take place on the night of the second day: the three weddings fall on the next night, "Tomorrow midnight." Thus we have (Act i.) part of a first day; (Acts ii., iii., iv.) the night of a second day; running on into (Act v.) the morning, noon, and night of a third day.

² That J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps did not intend by his words to deprecate all explanatory or introductory remarks on *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is proved conclusively by his own excellent labours (beyond those of all other men, in this department,) connected with the Fairy Mythology. At best, it is a thankless office to write Introductions, so long as they are exposed to captious and malicious criticism, from those who are intolerant of all opinions except their own.

(*Memoranda*, p. 13.) Nevertheless, we criticize, for this our age is perverted from simple tastes, and not only demands the "finger-post criticism," but listens to the perverse misdirection of so-called scientific anatomists. We accept thankfully the glowing summary: "Of the lyric or the prosaic part, the counterchange of loves and laughters, of fancy fine as air and imagination high as heaven, what need can there be for any one to shame himself by the helpless attempt to say one word not utterly unworthy?" We trust that blame attaches not to those among us who dare speak at all on the subject, whilst admitting that no pen can fitly celebrate the inexhaustible beauties of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

J. WOODFALL EBSWORTH.

MOLASH VICARAGE,
BY ASHFORD, KENT.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

[The two Quarto editions and the four Folio editions have no list of characters.
Rowe first added one, in 1709.]

THESEUS, *Duke of Athens.*

EGEUS, an Athenian *Lord, Father of Hermia.*

LYSANDER, } *in love with Hermia.*
DEMETRIUS, }

PHILOSTRATE, *Master of the Revels to Theseus.*

QUINCE, a *Carpenter ;*

SNUG, a *Joiner ;*

BOTTOM, a *Weaver ;*

FLUTE, a *Bellows-mender ;* } *Artizans of Athens.*

SNOUT, a *Tinker ;*

STARVELING, a *Tailor ;*

HIPPOLYTA, *Queen of the Amazons, betrothed to Theseus.*

HERMIA, *daughter of Egeus, in love with Lysander.*

HELENA, *in love with Demetrius.*

OBERON, *King of the Fairies.*

TITANIA, *Queen of the Fairies.*

PUCK, or ROBIN-GOODFELLOW, a *Fairy.*

PEAS-BLOSSOM, }

COBWEB, }

MOTH, }

MUSTARD-SEED, } *Fairies.*

PYRAMUS, }

THISBE, }

WALL, }

MOONSHINE, }


LION, }

Characters in the Interlude, performed by the Clowns.

Other Fairies attendant on Oberon and Titania.

Attendants on Theseus and Hippolyta.

SCENE varies, from the Palace of *Theseus at Athens*, and *Quince's house*, to a Wood in the neighbourhood.



A
Midfommer nights
dreame.

As it hath bene sundry times pub-
lickely acted, by the Right honoura-
ble, the Lord Chamberlaine his
seruants.

Written by William Shakespeare.



¶ Imprinted in London, for *Thomas Fisher*, and are to
be sold at his shoppe, at the Signe of the White Hart,
in *Fleetstreete.* 1600.



A MIDSOMMER NIGHTS DREAME.

Enter Theseus, Hippolita, with others.

Theseus.



Ow faire *Hippolita*, our nuptiall hower
Draws on apase : fower happy daies bring in
An other Moone; but oh, me thinks, how slow
This old Moone waues! She lingers my desires,
Like to a Stepdame, or a dowager,
Long withering out a yong mans reueneue.
Fower daies will quickly steepe themfelues in night:
Fower nights will quickly dreame away the time:
And then the Moone, like to a siluer bowe,
Now bent in heauen, shall beholde the night
Of our solemnities.

The. Goe Philostrate,

Stirre vp the *Athenian* youth to merriments,
Awake the peart and nimble spirit of mirth,
Turne melancholy foorth to funerals:

The pale companion is not for our pomp.
Hippolita, I woo'd thee with my sword,
And wonne thy loue, doing thee iniuries:
But I will wed thee in another key,

With pompe, with triumph, and with reueling.

*Enter Egeus and his daughter Hermia, and Lyfander
and Helena, and Demetrius.*

Ege. Happy be *Theseus*, our renowned duke.

The. Thankes good *Egeus*. Whats the newes with thee

Ege. Full of vexation, come I, with complaint

Qo.
Sci.

1

4

8

12

16

20

THE MARRIAGE OF HERMIA.

Against my childe, my daughter *Hermia*,
Stand forth *Demetrius*.

24

My noble Lord,
This man hath my consent to marry her,
Stand forth *Lysander*.

And my gracious Duke,
This man hath bewitcht the bosome of my childe.

28

Thou, thou *Lysander*, thou hast giuen her rimes,
And interchang'd loue tokens with my childe:
Thou hast, by moone-light, at her window sung,

32

With faining voice, verses of faining loue,
And stolne the impression of her phantasie:
With bracelets of thy haire, rings, gawdes, conceites,
Knackes, trifles, nosegayes, sweete meates (messengers
Of strong preuailement in vnhardened youth)

36

With cunning hast thou filcht my daughters heart,
Turn'd her obedience (which is due to mee)
To stubborne harshnesse. And, my gracious Duke,
Be it so, she will not here, before your Grace,
Consent to marry with *Demetrius*.

40

I beg the auncient priuiledge 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 lawe,
Immediately provided, in that case,

44

The, What say you, *Hermia*? Be aduic'd, faire maid,
To you, your father should be as a God:
One that compos'd your beauties: yea and one,
to whome you are but as a forme in wax,
By him imprinted, and within his power,
To leaue the figure, or disfigure it:

48

52

Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

Her, So is *Lysander*. *The*, In himselfe he is:
But in this kinde, wanting your fathers voice,
The other must be held the worthier.

56

Her.

A Midfommer nightes dreame.

57 *Her.* I would my father lookt but with my eyes.

The. Rather your eyes must, with his iudgement, looke,

Her. I doe intreat your grace, to pardon mee.

I know not by what power, I am made bould;

61 Nor how it may concerne my modesty,

In such a presence, here to plead my thoughts;

But I beseech your Grace, that I may knowe

The worst that may befall mee in this case,

65 If I refuse to wed *Demetrius*.

The. Either to dy the death, or to abiure,

For euer, the society of men.

Therefore, faire *Hermia*, question your desires,

69 Knowe of your youth, examine well your blood,

Whether (if you yeelde not to your fathers choyce)

You can endure the liuery of a Nunne,

For aye to be in shady cloyster, mew'd

73 To liue a barraine sister all your life,

Chaunting faint hymnes, to the colde fruitlesse Moone.

Thrise blessed they, that master so there bloode,

To vndergoe such maiden pilgrimage:

77 But earthlyer happy is the rose distild,

Then that, which, withering on the virgin thorne,

Growes, liues, and dies, in single blessednesse.

Her. So will I growe, so liue, so die my Lord.

81 Ere I will yield my virgin Patent, v

Vnto his Lordshippe, whose vnwilled yoake

My soule consents not to giue fouerainty.

The. Take time to pause, and by the next newe moone,

85 the sealing day, betwixt my loue and mee,

For euerlasting bond of fellowshippe,

Vpon that day either prepare to dye,

For disobedience to your fathers will,

89 Or else to wed *Demetrius*, as he would,

Or on *Dianes* altar to protest,

For aye, austeritie and single life.

A 3

Deme.

Deme. Relent, sweete *Hermia*, and, *Lysander*, yeeld
Thy crazed title to my certaine right.

Lys. You haue her fathers loue, *Demetrius*:
Let me haue *Hermias*: doe you marry him,

Egeus, Scornefull *Lysander*, true, he hath my loue:
And what is mine, my loue shall render him.

And she is mine, and all my right of her
I doe estate vnto *Demetrius*,

Lysand, I am my Lord, as well deriu'd as hee,
As well possest: my loue is more than his:

My fortunes euery way as fairely rankt
(If not with vantage) as *Demetrius*:

And (which is more then all these boastes can be)
I am belou'd of beautious *Hermia*.

Why should not I then prosecute my right?

Demetrius, Ile auouch it to his heade,
Made loue to *Nedars* daughter, *Helena*,
and won her soule: and she (sweete Ladie) dotes,
Deuoutly dotes, dotes in Idolatry,
Vpon this spotted and inconstant man.

the, I must confesse, that I haue heard so much;
And, with *Demetrius*, thought to haue spoke thereof;
But, being ouer full of selfe affaires,

My minde did loose it, But *Demetrius* come,
And come *Egeus*, you shall goe with mee:

I haue some priuate schooling for you both.
For you, faire *Hermia*, looke you arme your selfe,
To fit your fancies, to your fathers will;

Orelse, the Law of *Athens* yeelds you vp
(Which by no meanes we may extenuate)

To death, or to a vowe of single life,
Come my *Hippolita*: what cheare my loue?

Demetrius and *Egeus*, goe along:

I must employ you in some businesse,
Against our nuptiall, and conferre with you

Of

A Midfommer nightes dreame.

127 Of some thing, nerely that concernes your selues.
Ege. With duety and desire, we follow you, *Exeunt.*
Lyfand. How now my loue? Why is your cheeke so pale?
 how chance the roses there doe fade so fast?

131 *Her.* Belike, for want of raine : which I could well
 Betee me them, from the tempest of my eyes.

Lif. Eigh me : for aught that I could euer reade,
 Could euer here by tale or history,
 135 The course of true loue neuer did runne smoothe;
 But either it was different in bloud;

Her. O crosse! too high to be intrald to loue.

Lif. Or else misgraffed, in respect of yeares;

139 *Her.* O spight! too olde to be ingag'd to young,

Lif. Or else, it stooode vpon the choyce of fricnds;

Her. O hell, to choose loue by anothers eyes!

Lif. Or, if there were a sympathy in choyce,
 143 Warre, death or sicknesse, did lay siege to it;
 Making it momentany, as a sound,
 Swift, as a shadowe; short, as any dreame;
 Brieft, as the lightning in the collid night,
 147 That (in a spleene) vnfolde both heauen and earth;
 and, ere a man hath power to say, beholde,
 The iawes of darkenesse do deuoure it vp:
 So quicke bright things come to confusion.

151 *Her.* If then true louers haue bin euer crost,
 It stands as an edict, in destiny:

Then let vs teach our triall paciencie:

Because it is a customary crosse,

155 as dewe to loue, as thoughts, and dreames, and sighes,
 Wisnes, and teares; poore Fancies followers.

Lif. A good perswasion : therefore heare mee, *Hermia:*

I haue a widowe aunt, a dowager,
 159 Of great reueneu, and she hath no childe:
 From *Athenis* is her house remote, seauen leagues:
 And she respectes mee, as her only sonne:

A4

There,

A Midsummer nightes dreame.

There, gentle *Hermia*, may I marry thee:
 And to that place, the sharpe *Athenian* law
 Can not pursue vs. If thou louest mee, then
 Steale forth thy fathers house, to morrow night:
 And in the wood, a league without the towne
 (Where I did meeete thee once with *Helena*
 To do obseruance to a morne of May)
 There will I stay for thee.

her. My good *Lysander*,
 I sweare to thee, by *Cupids* strongest bowe,
 By his best arrowe, with the golden heade,
 By the simplicitie of *Venus* doues,
 By that which knitteth soules, and prospers loues,
 And by that fire which burnd the *Carthage* queene,
 When the false *Troian* vnder saile was seene,
 By all the voves that euer men haue broke,
 (In number more then euer women spoke)
 In that same place thou hast appointed mee,
 To morrow truely will I meeete with thee.

Lys. Keepe promise loue: looke, here comes *Helena*.

Enter Helena.

her. God speed faire *Helena*: whither away?

Hel. Call you mee faire? That faire againe vsay.

Demetrius loues your faire: ô happy faire!

Your eyes are loadstaries, and your tongues sweete aire
 More tunable then larke, to sheepeheards eare,
 When wheat is greene, when hauthorne buddes appeare.
 Sicknesse is catching: O, were fauour so,
 Your words I catch, faire *Hermia*, ere I goe,
 My eare should catch your voice, my eye, your eye,
 My tongue should catch your tongues sweete melody.
 Were the world mine, *Demetrius* being bated,
 The restile giue to be to you translated.
 O, teach mee how you looke, and with what Art,
 You sway the motion of *Demetrius* heart.

A Midfommer nightes dreame.

196 *Her.* I frowne vpon him; yet hee loues mee still.
Hel. O that your frowns would teach my smiles such skil.

Her. I giue him curses; yet he giues mee loue.

Hel. O that my prayers could such affection mooue.

200 *Her.* The more I hate, the more he followes mee.

Hel. The more I loue, the more he hateth mee.

Her. His folly, *Helena*, is no fault of mine.

Hel. None but your beauty; would that fault were mine.

204 *Her.* Take comfort: he no more shall see my face;

Lysander and my selfe will fly this place.

Before the time I did *Lysander* see,

Seem'd *Athens* as a Paradise to mee.

208 O then, what graces in my loue dooe dwell,

That hee hath turnd a heauen vnto a hell!

Lys. *Helena*, to you our mindes wee will vnfold;

To morrow night, when *Phoebe* doth beholde

212 Her siluer visage, in the watty glasse,

Decking, with liquid pearle, the bladed grasse

(A time, that louers flights doth still conceale)

Through *Athens* gates, haue wee deuif'd to steale.

216 *Her.* And in the wood, where often you and I,

Vpon faint Primrose beddes, were wont to lye,

Emptying our bosomes, of their counsell sweld,

There my *Lysander*, and my selfe shall meete,

220 And thence, from *Athens*, turne away our eyes,

To seeke new friends and strange companions,

Farewell, sweete playfellow: pray thou for vs:

And good lucke graunt thee thy *Demetrius*.

224 Keepe word *Lysander*: we must starue our sight,

From louers foode, till morrow deepe midnight.

Exit Hermia,

Lys. I will my *Hermia*, *Helena* adieue:

As you on him, *Demetrius* dote on you, *Exit Lysander.*

228 *Hele.* How happie some, ore othersome, can be;

Through *Athens*, I am thought as faire as shee.

B

But

A Midfommer nightes dreame.

But what of that? *Demetrius* thinkes not for
 He will not knowe, what all, but hee doe know. 230
 And as hee erres, doting on *Hermias* eyes:
 So I, admiring of his qualities.
 Things base and vile, holding no quantitie, 234
 Loue can transpose to forme and dignitie.
 Loue lookes not with the eyes, but with the minde:
 And therefore is wingd *Cupid* painted blinde.
 Nor hath loues minde of any iudgement taste: 238
 Wings, and no eyes, figure, vnheedy haste.
 And therefore is loue said to bee a childe:
 Because, in choyce, he is so oft beguil'd.
 As waggish boyes, in game, themselues forswear:
 So the boy, Loue, is periur'd euery where. 242
 For, ere *Demetrius* lookt on *Hermias* eyen,
 Hee hayld downe othes, that he was onely mine.
 And when this haile some heate, from *Hermia*, felt,
 So hee dissolued, and shouers of oathes did melt, 246
 I will goe tell him of faire *Hermias* sight:
 Then, to the wodde, will he, to mortow night,
 Pursue her: and for this intelligence, 250
 If I haue thanks, it is a deare expenses
 But herein meane I to enrich my paine,
 To haue his sight thither, and back againe. *Exit.*

*Enter Quince, the Carpenter; and Snugge, the Ioyner; and
 Bottom, the Weaver; and Flute, the Bellows mender; &
 Snout, the Tinker; and Starueling the Tayler.*

Quin. Is all our company heere?

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

Quin. Here is the scrowle of euery mans name, which is thought fit, through al *Athens*, to play in our Enterlude, before the Duke, & the Dutches; on his wedding day at night.
Bot. First good *Peeter Quince*, say what the Play treats on: then read the names of the Actors: & so grow to a point.

Quin,

A Midfommer nightes dreame.

9 *Quin.* Mary, our Play is the most lamentable comedy,
and most cruell death of *Pyramus* and *Thisby*.

12 *Bot.* A very good peece of worke, I assure you, & a merry. Now good *Peeter Quince*, call forth your Actors, by the scrowle, Masters, spreade your selues.

Quin. Answere, as I call you *Nick Bottom*, the Weauer?

Bot. Readie: Name what part I am for, and proceede.

16 *Quin.* You, *Nick Bottom* are set downe for *Pyramus*.

Bot. What is *Pyramus*? A louer, or a tyrant?

Quin. A louer that kills himselfe, most gallant, for loue.

20 *Bot.* That will aske some teares in the true performing
of it. If I doe it, let the Audience looke to their eyes: I wil
mooue stormes: I will condole, in some measure. To the
rest yet, my chiefe humour is for a tyrant. I could play *Er-
cles* rarely, or a part to teare a Cat in, to make all split the
24 raging rocks: and shiuering shocks, shall breake the locks
of prison gates, and *Phibbus* carre shall shine from farre,
and make & marre the foolish Fates. This was lostie. Now,
name the rest of the Players. This is *Ercles* vaine, a tyrants
28 vaine: A louer is more condoling.

Quin. *Francis Flute*, the Bellowes mender.

Flu. Here *Peeter Quince*.

Quin. *Flute*, you must take *Thisby*, on you.

32 *Flu.* What is *Thisby*? A wandring knight?

Quin. It is the Lady, that *Pyramus* must loue. (ming)

Flu. Nay faith: let not me play a womā: I haue a beard cō-

36 *Quin.* Thats all one: you shall play it in a Maske; and you
may speake as small as you will.

Bot. And I may hide my face, let me play *Thisby* to: Ile
speake in a monstrous little voice; *Thisne, Thisne*, ah *Py-
ramus*, my louer deare, thy *Thisby* deare, & Lady deare.

40 *Qu.* No, no you must play *Pyramus* & *Flute*, you *Thisby*.

Bot. Well, proceede, *Qui.* *Robin Starueling*, the Tailer?
Star. Here *Peeter Quince*.

Quin. *Robin Starueling*, you must play *Thisbyes* mother:

Tom Snowte, the Tinker?

Snowt. Here *Peter Quince*,

Quin. You, *Pyramus* father; my selfe, *Thisbies* father;
Snugge, the Ioyner, you the Lyons part: And I hope here
is a Play fitted.

Snug. Haue you the Lyons part written? Pray you, if it
bee, giue it mee; for I am slowe of studie.

Quin. You may doe it, *extempore*: for it is nothing but
roaring.

Bot. Let mee play the Lyon to. I will roare, that I will
doe any mans heart good to heare mee. I will roare, that
I will make the Duke say; Let him roare againe: let him
roare againe.

Quin. And you should doe it too terribly, you would fright
the Dutcheffe, and the Ladies, that they would shriek: and
that were inough to hang vs all,

All. That would hang vs, euery mothers sonne.

Bot. I grant you, friends, if you should fright the Ladies
out of their wits, they would haue no more discretion, but
to hang vs; but I will aggravate my voice so, that I wil
roare you as gently, as any sucking doue: I will roare you,
and 'twere any Nightingale.

Quin. You can play no part but *Piramus*: for *Piramus* is a
sweete fac't man; a proper man as one shall see in a fom-
mers day; a most louely gentlemanlike man: therefore
you must needs play *Piramus*:

Bot. Well: I will vndertake it. What beard were I best
to play it in?

Quin. Why? what you will.

Bot. I wil discharge it, in either your straw colour beard,
your Orange tawnie bearde, your purple in graine beard,
or your french crowne colour beard, your perfit yellow,

Quin. Some of your french crownes haue no haire at all,
and then you will play bare fac't. But maisters here are
your parts, and I am to intreat you, request you, and desire
you

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A Midfommer nightes dreame.

79 you, to con them by to morrow night : and meete mee in
the palace wood, a mile without the towne, by Moon-
light; there will wee rehearse : for if wee meete in the city,
83 wee shal be dogd with company, and our deuises known.
In the meane time, I will draw a bill of properties, such as
our play wants. I pray you faile me not.

Bot Wee will meete, & there we may rehearse most ob-
scenely, and coragiously. Take paines, bee perfit : adieu.

87 *Quin.* At the Dukes oke wee meete.

Bot. Enough: holde, or cut bowstrings. *Exeunt.*

II.i. *Enter a Fairie at one doore, and Robin goodfellow
at another.*

1 *Robin.* How now spirit, whither wander you?

Fa. Ouer hill, ouer dale, thorough bush, thorough brier,

Ouer parke, ouer pale, thorough flood, thorough fire:

4 I do wander euery where; swifter than the Moons sphere:

And I serue the Fairy Queene, to dew her orbs vpon the

The cowslippes tall her Pensioners bec, (greene,

In their gold coats, spottes you see:

8 Those be Rubies, Fairie fauours:

In those freckles, liue their fauours,

I must goe seeke some dew droppes here,

And hang a pearle in euery coulippes care.

12 Farewell thou Lobbe off spirits: Ile be gon.

Our Queene, and all her Elues come here anon.

Rob. The king doth keepe his Reuels here to night.

Take heede the Queene come not within his sight,

16 For *Oberon* is passing fell and wrath:

Because that she, as her attendant, hath

A louely boy stollen, from an Indian king:

She neuer had so sweete a changeling.

20 And ialous *Oberon* would haue the childe,

Knight of his traine, to trace the forrests wilde.

But shee, perforce, withholds the loued boy,

Crownes him with flowers, and makes him all her ioy.

A Midfommer nightes dreame.

And now, they neuer meete in groue, or greene,
By fountaine cleare, or spangled starlight sheene,
But they doe square, that all their Elues, for feare,
Creepe into acorne cups, and hide them there.

Fa. Either I mistake your shape, and making, quite,
Or els you are that shrewde and knauish sprite,
Call'd *Robin goodfellow*. Are not you hee,
That frights the maidens of the Villagere,
Skim milke, and sometimes labour in the querne,
And bootlesse make the breathlesse hufwife cherne,
And sometime make the drinke to beare no barme,
Misselead nightwanderers, laughing at their harme?
Those, that Hobgoblin call you, and sweete Puck,
You doe their worke, and they shall haue good luck.
Are not you hee?

Rob. Thou speakest aright; I am that merry wanderer of
I easte to *Oberon*, and make him smile, (the night,
When I a fat and beane-fed horse beguile;
Neyghing, in likenesse of a filly sole,
And sometime lurke I in a gossippes bole,
In very likenesse of a rosted crabbe,
And when she drinks, against her lips I bob,
And on her withered dewlop, poure the ale.
The wisest Aunt, telling the saddest tale,
Sometime, for three foote stoole, mistaketh mee;
Then slippe I from her bumme, downe topples she,
And tailour cryes, and falles into a coffe;
And then the whole Quire hould their hippes, and losse,
and waxen in their myrth, and neeze, and sweare
a merrier hower was neuer waste d there.
But roome *Faery*: here comes *Oberon*.

Fa. And here, my mistresse, Would that he were gon.
Enter the King of Fairies, at one doore, with his traine;
and the Queene, at another, with hers.

Ob. Ill met by moonelight, proud *Tytania*.

Qu.

A Midsummer nightes dreame.

57 *Qu.* What, Iealous *Oberon*? Fairy skippe hence,
 I haue forsworne his bedde, and company.
Ob. Tarry, rash wanton. Am not I thy Lord?
 60 *Qu.* Then I must be thy Lady: but I know
 When thou hast stolen away from Fairy land,
 And in the shape of *Corin*, sat all day,
 Playing on pipes of corne, and versing loue,
 64 To amorous *Phillida*, Why art thou here
 Come from the farthest steppe of *India*?
 But that, forsooth, the bounding *Amason*,
 Your buskind mistresse, and your warriour loue,
 68 To *Thesens* must be wedded; and you come,
 To giue their bedde, ioy and prosperitie.
Ob. How canst thou thus, for shame, *Tytania*.
 Glance at my credit, with *Hippolita*?
 72 Knowing, I know thy loue to *Thesens*,
 Didst not thou lead him through the glimmering night,
 From *Perigenia*, whom he rauished?
 And make him, with faire Eagles, breake his faith
 76 With *Ariadne*, and *Antiopa*?
Quee. These are the forgeries of ieaoufies:
 And neuer, since the middle Sommers spring,
 Met we on hill, in dale, Forrest, or meade,
 80 By paued fountaine, or by rushie brooke,
 Or in the beached margent of the Sea,
 To daunce our ringlets to the whistling winde,
 But with thy brawles thou hast disturbd our sport.
 84 Therefore the windes, pyping to vs in vaine,
 As in reuenge, haue suckt vp, from the Sea,
 Contagious fogges: which, falling in the land,
 Hath euery pelting riuer made so proude,
 88 That they haue ouerborne their Continents,
 The Oxe hath therefore stretcht his yoake in vaine,
 The Ploughman lost his sweat, and the greene corne
 Hath rotted, ere his youth attainde a bearde:

A MIDDWINTER NIGHTS DREAM.

The fold lands empty, in the drowned field,
And crows are fatt'd with the murrion flocke,
The nine mens Morris is fill'd vp with muddle:
And the quaint Mazes, in the wanton greene,
For lacke of tread, are vndistinguishable.

92

The humane mortals want their winter heere
No night is now with hymne or carroll blest.
Therefore the Moone (the gouernesse of floods)
Pale in her anger, washes all the aire;
That Rheumaticke diseases doe abound.

96

And, thorough this distemperature, wee see
The seasons alter: hoary headed frosts

100

Fall in the fresh lappe of the Crymson rose,
And on old *Hyems* chinne and Icy crowne,

104

An odorous Chaplet of sweete Sommer budde
Is, as in mockery, set The Spring, the Sommer,

The childing Autumne, angry Winter change
Their wonted Liueries; and the mazed worlde,

108

By their increafe, now knowes not which is which;
And this same progeny of euils,

Comes from our debate, from our dissention;
We are their Parents and originall.

112

Oberon. Doe you amend it then; it lyes in you.
Why should *Titania* crosse her *Oberon*?

I doe but begge a little Changeling boy,
To be my Henchman.

116

Queene. Set your heart at rest.
The Faery Land buies not the childe of mee,

His mother was a Votresse of my order:
And in the spiced *Indian* ayer, by night,

120

Full often hath she gossip'd by my side,
And sat, with me on *Neptunes* yellow sands

Marking th'embarked traders on the flood;
When we haue laught to see the sailes conceaue,

124

And grow bigge bellied, with the wanton winde;

Which

A Midfommer nightes dreame.

127 Which she, with prettie, and with swimming gate,
Following (her wombe then rich with my young squire)
Would imitate, and faile vpon the land,
To fetch me trifles, and returne againe,
131 As from a voyage, rich with marchandise.
But she, being mortall, of that boy did dye,
And, for her sake, doe I reate vp her boy:
And, for her sake, I will not part with him.

135 *Ob.* How long, within this wood, intend you stay?

Quee. Perchaunce, till after *Theseus* wedding day.

If you will patiently daunce in our Round,
And see our Moonelight Reuelles, goe with vs:
139 If not, shunne me, and I will spare your haunts.

Ob. Giue mee that boy, and I will goe with thee.

Quee. Not for thy Fairy kingdome. Fairies away.

We shall chide downeright, if I longer stay. *Exeunt.*

143 *Ob.* Well: goe thy way. Thou shalt not from this groue,
Till I torment thee, for this iniury.

My gentle *Pucke* come hither: thou remembrest,

Since once I sat vpon a promontory,

147 And heard a Mearemaide, on a Dolphins backe,

Vttering such dulcet and hermonious breath,

That the rude sea grewe ciuill at her song,

And certaine starres shot madly from their Spheares,

151 To heare the Sea-maids musicke.

Puck. I remember.

Ob. That very time, I saw (but thou could'st not)

Flying betweene the colde Moone and the earth,

155 *Cupid*, all arm'd: a certaine aime he rooke

At a faire Vestall, throned by west,

And loof'd his loue-shaft smartly, from his bowe,

As it should pearce a hundred thousand hearts:

159 But, I might see young *Cupids* fiery shaft

Quencht in the chaste beames of the watty Moone:

And the imperiall Votresse passed on,

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In

A Midfommer nightes dreame.

In maiden meditation, fancy free.
 Yet mark I, where the bolt of *Cupid* fell.
 It fell vpon a lirtle westerne flower;
 Before, milke white; now purple, with loues wound,
 And maidens call it, Loue in idleneffe.
 Fetch mee that flowre: the herbe I shewed thee once.
 Theiewce of it, on sleeping eyeliddes laide,
 Will make or man or woman madly dote,
 Vpon the next liue creature that it sees.
 Fetch mee this herbe, and be thou here againe
 Ere the *Leuiathan* can swimme a league.
 Pu. He put a girdle, roud about the earth, in forty minutes.

Oberon. Hauing once thisiuice,
 He watch *Titania*, when she is a sleepe,
 And droppe the liquor of it, in her eyes:
 The next thing then she, waking, lookes vpon
 (Be it on Lyon, Beare, or Wolfe, or Bull,
 On medling Monky, or on busie Ape)
 She shall pursue it, with the soule of Loue.
 And ere I take this charme, from of her sight
 (As I can take it with another herbe)
 He make her render vp her Page, to mee,
 But, who comes here? I am inuisible,
 And I will ouerheare their conference.

Enter Demetrius, Helena following him.

Deme. I loue thee not: therefore pursue me not,
 Where is *Lysander*, and faire *Hermia*?
 The one He stay: the other stayeth me.
 Thou toldst me, they were stolne vnto this wood:
 And here am I, and wodde, within this wood:
 Because I cannot meete my *Hermia*.
 Hence, get the gone, and follow mee no more.

Hel. You draw mee, you hard hearted Adamant:
 But yet you draw not Iron. For my heart
 Is true as Steele. Leauē you your power to draw,

And

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A Midfommer nightes dreame.

196 And I shall haue no power to follow you.

Deme. Doe I entife you? Doe I speake you faire?
Or rather doe I not in plainest truthes,
Tell you I doe not, not I cannot loue you?

200 *Hele.* And euen, for that, do I loue you, the more:

I am your Spaniell: and, *Demetrius*,
The more you beat mee, I will fawne on you.

204 Vse me but as your Spaniell: spurne me, strike mee,

Neglect mee, loose me: onely giue me leaue

(Vnworthie as I am) to follow you.

208 What worfer place can I begge, in your loue

(And yet, a place of high respect with mee)

Then to be vsed as you vse your dogge.

Deme. Tempt not, too much, the hatred of my spirit.
For I am sick, when I do looke on thee.

Hele. And I am sick, when I looke not on you.

212 *Deme.* You doe impeach your modestie too much,

To leaue the citie, and commit your selfe,

216 To trust the opportunitie of night,

And the ill counsell of a desert place,

With the rich worth of your virginie.

Hel. Your vertue is my priuiledge: For that
It is not night, when I doe see your face.

220 Therefore, I thinke, I am not in the night,

Nor doth this wood lacke worlds of company.

For you, in my respect, are all the world.

224 Then, how can it be saide, I am alone,

When all the world is here, to looke on mee?

Deme. Ile runne from thee, and hide me in the brakes,
And leaue thee to the mercy of wilde beastes.

Hel. The wildest hath not such a heart as you.

228 Runne when you will: The story shall be chaung'd:

Apollo flies and *Daphne* holds the chase:

The *Doue* pursues the *Griffon*: the milde *Hinde*

A Midsummer nightes dreame.

Makes speede to catch the Tigre. Bootelesse speede,
When cowardise pursues, and valour flies.

231

Demet. I will not stay thy questions, Let me goe:
Or if thou followe mee, do not beleeeue,
But I shall doe thee mischief, in the wood.

235

Hel. I, in the Temple, in the towne, the ficlde,
You doe me mischief. Fy *Demetrius.*

Your wrongs doe set a scandall on my sex:
We cannot fight for loue, as men may doe:
We should be woo'd, and were not made to wooc.
He follow thee and make a heauen of hell,
To dy vpon the hand I loue so well.

239

Ob. Fare thee well Nymph, Ere he do leaue this groue,
Thou shalt fly him, and he shall seeke thy loue.
Hast thou the flower there? Welcome wanderer.

243

Enter Pucke.

Puck. I, there it is.

Ob. I pray thee giue it mee.

247

I know a banke where the wilde time blowes,
Where Oxlips, and the nodding Violet growes,
Quite ouercanopi'd with lushious woodbine,
With sweete muske roses, and with Eglantine:
There sleepes *Tytania*, sometime of the night,
Luld in these flowers, with daunces and delight:
and there the snake throwes her enammeld skinne,
Weed wide enough to wrappe a Fairy in,
and, with the iuyce of this, He streake her eyes,
and make her full of hatefull phantasies.
Take thou some of it, and seeke through this groue:
A sweete *Athenian* Lady is in loue,
With a disdainefull youth: annoint his eyes.
But doe it, when the next thing he espies,
May be the Ladie. Thou shalt know the man,
By the *Athenian* garments he hath on,
Effect it with some care; that he may prooue

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More

Ii.

A Midfommer nightes dreame.

265 More fond on her, then she vpon her loue:
and looke thou meete me ere the first Cocke crowe.

Pa. Feare not my Lord: your seruant shall do so. *Exeunt,*

Enter Tytania Queene of Fairies, with her traine.

1 *Quee.* Come, now a Roundell, and a Fairy song:

Then, for the third part of a minute hence,
4 Some to kill cankers in the musk rose buds,
Some warre with Reremise, for their lethten wings,
To make my small Elues coates, and some keepe backe
The clamorous Owle, that nightly hootes and wonders
at our queint spirits: Sing me now a sleepe:
8 Then to your offices, and let mee rest.

Fairies sing.

You spotted Snakes, with double tongue,
Thorny Hedgehogges be not seene,
Newts and blindewormes do no wrong,
12 Come not neere our Fairy Queene.

Philomele, with melody,
Sing in our sweete Lullaby,
Lulla, iulla, lullaby, lulla, lulla, lullaby,
16 Neuer harme, nor spell, nor charme,
Come our louely lady nigh.
So good night, with lullaby.

1. *Fai.* Weauing Spiders come not heere:
20 Hence you long legd Spinners, hence:
Beetles blacke approach not neere:
Worme nor snaille doe no offence.

Philomele with melody, &c.

2. *Fai.* Hence away: now all is well:
24 One aloofe, stand Centinell.

Enter Oberon.

28 *Ob.* What thou seeft, when thou doest wake,
Doe it for thy true loue take:
Loue and languish for his sake.
Be it Ounce, or Catte, or Beare,

C 3

Pard,

A Midfommer nightes dreame.

Pard, or Boare with bristled haire,
 In thy eye that shall appeare,
 When thou wak'st, it is thy deare:
 Wake, when some vile thing is neere.

Enter Lyfander: and Hermia.

Lys. Faire loue, you fainte, with wandring in the wood:
 And to speake troth I haue forgot our way.
 Weele rest vs *Hermia*, if you thinke it good,
 And tarry for the comfor of the day.

Her. Bet it so *Lysander*: finde you out a bedde:
 For I, vpon this banke, will rest my head.

Lys. One turfe shall serue, as pillow, for vs both,
 One heart, one bedde, two bosomes, and one troth.

Her. Nay god *Lysander*: for my sake, my deere
 Ly further off, yet; doe not lye so neere.

Lys. O take the sense, sweete, of my innocence.
 Loue takes the meaning, in loues conference,
 I meane that my heart vnto yours it knit;
 So that but one heart wee can make of it:
 Two bosomes interchained with an oath:
 So then two bosomes, and a single troth.
 Then, by your side, no bed-roume me deny:
 For lying so, *Hermia*, I doe not lye.

Her. *Lysander* riddles very prettily.
 Now much beshrewe my manners, and my pride,
 If *Hermia* meant to say, *Lysander* lye d.
 But gentle friend, for loue and curtesie,
 Ly further off, in humane modesty:
 Such separation, as may well be said
 Becomes a vertuous batcheler, and a maide,
 So farre be distant, and good night sweete friend:
 Thy loue nere alter till thy sweete life end.

Lys. Amen, amen, to that faire prayer, say I,
 And then end life, when I end loyalty,
 Heere is my bed: sleepe giue thee all his rest.

VVith

A Midfommernightes dreame.

64 *Her.* With halfe that wish, the wishers eyes be prest,

Enter Pucke.

Puck. Through the Forrest haue I gone.

But *Athenian* found I none,

On whose eyes I might approue

68 This flowers force in stirring loue.

Night and silence .Who is heere?

Wee des of *Athens* he doth weare:

This is hee (my master saide)

72 Despised the *Athenian* maide:

And here the maiden, sleeping found,

On the danke and dirty ground.

Pretty fowle, she durst not lye,

76 Neere this lack-loue, this kil-curtisie.

Chutle , vpon thy eyes I throwe

All the power this charme doth owe:

When thou wak'st, let loue forbidde

80 Sleepe, his seat, on thy eye lidde.

So awake, when I am gon:

For I must now to *Oberon*,

Exit.

Enter Demetrius and Helena running.

Hel. Stay; though thou kill mee, sweete *Demetrius*.

84 *De.* I charge thee hence, and doe not haunt mee thus.

Hele. O, wilt thou darkling leaue me? doe not so,

De. Stay, on thy perill: I alone will goe.

Hel. O, I am out of breath, in this fond chase,

88 The more my prayer, the lesse is my grace.

Happie is *Hermia*, wherefoere she lies:

For she hath blessed, and attractiue eyes.

How came her eyes so bright? Not with salt teares,

92 If so, my eyes are oftner washt then hers.

No, no: I am as vgly as a Beare:

For beastes that meete mee, runne away, for feare.

Therefore, no maruaile, though *Demetrius*

96 Doe, as a monster, fly my presence, thus.

A Midsummer nightes dreame.

What wicked and dissembling glasse, of mine,
 Made me compare with *Hermias* spherie eyes?
 But, who is here? *Lysander*, on the ground?
 Dead, or a sleeper? I see no blood, no wound,
Lysander, if you liue, good sir awake.

Lys. And runne through fire, I will for thy sweete sake.
 Transparent *Helena*, nature shewes arte,
 That through thy bosome, makes me see thy heart.
 Where is *Demetrius*? Oh how fit a word
 Is that vile name, to perish on my sworde!

Hel. Do not say so, *Lysander*, say not so,
 What though he loue your *Hermia*? Lord, what though?
 Yet *Hermia* still loues you: then be content.

Lys. Content with *Hermia*? No: I doe repent
 The tedious minutes, I with her haue spent.
 Not *Hermia*, but *Helena* I loue.

Who will not change a Rauen for a doue?
 The will of man is by his reason swai'd:
 And reason saies you are the worthier maide.
 Things growing are not ripe, vntill their season:
 So I, being young, till now ripe not to reason,
 And touching now, the point of humane skill,
 Reason becomes the Marshall to my will,
 And leads mee to your eyes; where I orelooke
 Loues stories, written in loues richest booke.

Hel. Wherefore was I to this keene mockery borne?
 When, at your hands, did I deserue this scorne?
 Ist not enough, ist not enough, young man,
 That I did neuer, no nor neuer can,
 Deserue a sweete looke from *Demetrius* eye,
 But you must flout my insufficiency?

Good troth you doe mee wrong (good sooth you doe)
 In such disdainfull manner, mee to wooe,
 But, fare you well: perforce, I must confesse,
 I thought you Lord of more true gentlenesse,

O,

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II.ii

A Midfommer nightes dreame.

132 O, that a Ladie, of one man refus'd,
Should, of another, therefore be abus'd! *Exit.*

Lys. She sees not *Hermia*. *Hermia*, sleepest thou there,
And neuer maist thou come *Lysander* neere.

136 For, as a surfer of the sweetest things
The deepest loathing, to the stomacke brings:
Or, as the heresies, that men doe leaue,
Are hated most of those they did deceiue:
140 So thou, my surfer, and my heresie,
Of all bee hated; but the most, of mee:
And all my powers addressse your loue and might,
To honour *Helen*, and to be her knight. *Exit.*

144 *Her.* Helpe mee *Lysander*, helpe mee: do thy best
To pluck this crawling serpent, from my brest.
Aymee, for pittie. What a dreame was here?
Lysander looke, how I doe quake with feare.
148 Me thought, a serpent eate my heart away,
And you sate smiling at his cruell pray.
Lysander what, remou'd? *Lysander*, Lord,
What, out of hearing, gon? No sound, no word?
152 Alacke where are you? Speake, and if you heare:
Speake, of all loues. I swoune almost wick feare,
No, then I well perceiue, you are not ny:
Either death, or you, Ile finde immediatly. *Exit.*

Enter the Clownes.

Bot. Are wee all met?

Quin. Pat, pat: and heres a maruailes conuenient place,
for our rehearfall. This greene plot shall be our stage, this
hauthorne brake our tyring house, and wee will doe it in
action, as wee will doe it before the Duke.

Bot. Peeter Quince?

Quin. What saiest thou, bully, *Bottom*?

Bot. There are things in this Comedy, of *Pyramus* and
Thisby, that will neuer please. First, *Pyramus* must draw
a sword, to kill himselfe; which the Ladies cannot abide,

D

How

III.i

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A Midfommer nightes dreame.

How answere you that?

Snout. Berlakin, a parlous feare.

Star. I beleeeue, we must leaue the killing, out, when all is done.

Bot. Not a whit : I haue a deuise to make all well. Write me a Prologue, and let the Prologue seeme to say, we wil do no harme, with our swords, and that *Pyramus* is not kild indeede : and for the more better assurance, tel them, that I *Pyramus* am not *Pyramus*, but *Bottom* the weauer: this will put them out of feare.

Quin. Well: wee will haue such a Prologue, and it shall be written in eight and six.

Bot. No: make it two more: let it be written in eight & eight.

Snout. Will not the ladies be afeard of the Lyon?

Star. I feare it, I promise you.

Bot. Masters, you ought to consider with your selfe, to bring in (God shielde vs) a Lyon among Ladies, is a most dreadfull thing. For there is not a more fearefull wilde soule then your Lyon liuing : & we ought to looke toote.

Sn. Therefore, another Prologue must tel, he is not a Lion.

Bot. Nay: you must name his name, and halfe his face must be seene through the Lions necke, and he himselte must speake through, saying thus, or to the same defect; Ladies, or faire Ladies, I would wish you, or I would request you, or I wold intreat you, not to feare, not to treble: my life for yours If you thinke I come hither as a Lyon, it were pittie of my life. No : I am no such thing : I am a man as other men are: & there indeed, let him name his name, and tell them plainely he is *Snugge*, the loyner.

Quin. Well: it shall be so : but there is two hard things: that is, to bring the Moone-light into a chamber: for you know, *Pyramus* and *Thisby* meete by Moone-light

Sn. Doth the Moone shine, that night, we play our Play?

Bot.

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43

A Midfommer nightes dreame.

46 *Bo.* A Calender, a Calender: looke in the Almanack: finde out Moone-shine, finde our Moone-shine.

Quin. Yes: it doth shine that night.

50 *Cet.* Why then, may you leaue a casement of the great chamber window (where we play) open; and the Moone may shine in at the casement.

54 *Quin.* I: or els, one must come in, with a bush of thorns, & a lantern, and say he comes to disfigure, or to present the person of Moone-shine. Then, there is another thing; we must haue a wal in the great châber: for *Pyramus & Thisby* (saies the story) did talke through the chinke of a wall-

58 *Sno.* You can neuer bring in a wal. What say you *Bottom*?

62 *Bot.* Some man or other must present wall: and let him haue some plaster, or som lome, or some rough cast, about him, to signifie wall; or let him holde his fingers thus: and through that crany, shall *Pyramus* and *Thisby* whisper.

66 *Quin.* If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit downe euery mothers sonne, and rehearse your parts. *Pyramus*, you beginne: when you haue spoken your speech, enter into that Brake, and so euery one according to his cue,

Enter Robin

Ro. What hempen homespunnes haue we swagging here, So neere the Cradle of the Fairy Queene?

70 What, a play toward? Ile be an Auditor,

An Actor to perhappes, if I see cause,

Quin. Speake *Pyramus*: *Thisby* stand forth.

Pyra. *Thisby* the flowers of odious sauours sweete,

Quin. Odours, odorous,

74 *Py.* Odours sauours sweete.

So hath thy breath, my dearest *Thisby* deare,

But harke, a voice: stay thou but heere a while,

And by and by I will to thee appeare. *Exit.*

78 *Quin.* A stranger *Pyramus*, then ere played heere,

Thisby. Must I speake now?

A Midfommer nightes dreame.

Quin. I marry must you. For you must vnderstād, he goes but to see a noyse, that he heard, and is to come againe. 80

Thys. Most radiant *Pyramus*, most lillie white of hewe,
Of colour like the redrose, on triumphant bryer,
Most brisky Iuuenall, and eeke most louely Iewe, 84
Astrue as truest horse, that yet would neuer tyre,
Ile meete thee *Pyramus*, at *Ninnies* tounbe.

Quin. *Ninus* tounbe, man. Why? you must not speake
That yet, That you answere to *Pyramus*. You speake 88
Al your part at once, cues, and, all. *Pyramus*, enter: your cue
is past: It is; neuer tire.

Thys. O, as true as truest horse, that yet would neuertyre.

Py. If I were faire, *Thysby*, I were onely thine. 92

Quin. O monstrous! O strange! We are haunted. Pray ma-
sters fly masters: helpe.

Rob. Ile follow you: Ile leade you about a Round,
Through bogge, through bush, through brake, through 96
Sometime a horse Ile be, sometime a hound, (bryer:
A hogge, a headelesse Beare, sometime a fier,
And neigh, and barke, and grunt, and rore, and burne,
Like horse, hound, hogge, beare, fire, at euery turne. *Exit.* 100

Bot. Why doe they runne away? This is a knauety of
them to make mee afeard. *Enter Snowte.*

Sn. O *Bottom*, thou art chaung'd. What do I see on thee?

Bot. What doe you see? You see an Assfe head of your
owne. Do you? 104

Enter Quince. *(Exit.*

Quin Blesse thee *Bottom*, blesse thee. Thou art trāslated.

Bot. I see their knauery. This is to make an asse of mee, to
fright me, if they could: but I wil not stirre from this place 108
do what they can, I will walke vp and downe heere, and
will sing that they shall heare I am not afraide,
The Woolfell cock, so blacke of hewe,
With Orange tawny bill, 112

The

A Midsummer nightes dreame.

113 The Throfile, with his note so true,
 The Wren, with little quill,
Tytania. What Angell wakes me from my flowry bed?
Bot. The Fynch, the Sparrowe, and the Lark,
 117 The plain song Cuckow gray:
 Whose note, full many a man doth marke,
 And dares not answere, nay,
 For indeede, who would set his wit to so foolish a bird?
 121 Who would giue a bird the ly, though hee cry Cuckow,
 neuer so?

Tita. I pray thee, gentle mortall, sing againe.
 Myne eare is much enamoured of thy note:
 125 So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape,
 And thy faire vertues force (perforce) doth moouie mee,
 On the first viewe to say, to sweare, I loue thee.

Bot. Me thinks mistresse, you should haue little reason
 129 for that. And yet, to say the truth, reason and loue keepe
 little company together, now a daies. The more the pittie,
 that some honest neighbours will not make them friends.
 Nay I can gleeke, vpon occasion.

133 *Tyta.* Thou art as wise, as thou art beautifull.

Bot. Not so neither: but if I had wit enough to get out
 of this wood, I haue enough to serue mine owe turne.

Tyta. Out of this wood, doe not desire to goe:
 137 Thou shalt remaine here, whether thou wilt or no,
 I am a spirit, of no common rate:
 The Sommer, still, doth tend vpon my state,
 And I doe loue thee: therefore goe with mee.
 141 He giue thee Fairies to attend on thee:
 And they shall fetch thee Iewels, from the deepe,
 And sing, while thou, on pressed flowers, dost sleepe:
 And I will purge thy mortall grossenesse so,
 That thou shalt, like an ayery spirit, goe.

145 *Peace-blossome, Cobweb, Moth, and Mustard-seede?*

Enter foure Fairies,

D 3

Fai-

A MIDDIMMER NIGHTES dreame.

Fairies. Readie: and I, and I, and I. Where shall we goe?

146

Tita. Be kinde and curteous to this gentleman,
Hop in his walkes, and gambole in his eyes,
Feede him with Apricocks, and Dewberries,
With purple Grapes, greene figges, and Mulberries,
The hony bagges steale from the humble Bees,
And for night tapers, crophe their waxen thighes,
And light them at the fiery Glowe-wormes eyes,
To haue my loue to bedde, and to arise,
And pluck the wings, from painted Butterflies,
To fanne the Moone-beames from his sleeping eyes,
Nod to him Elues, and doe him curtesies,

150

151

1. *Fai.* Haile mortall, haile.

152

2. *Fai.* Haile.

3. *Fai.* Haile.

Bot. I cry your worships mercy, hartily : I beseech your worshippes name,

162

Cob. Cobwebbe.

Bot. I shall desire you of more acquaintance, good master *Cobweb*: if I cut my finger, I shall make bolde with you, Your name honest gentleman?

166

Pea. Pease-blossome.

Bot. I pray you commend mee to mistress *Squash*, your mother, and to master *Peascod*, your father. Good master *Pease-blossome*, I shall desire you of more acquaintance, to. Your name I beseech you sir?

170

Must. Mustardseede.

Bot. Good master *Mustardseede*, I know your patience well. That same cowardly, gyantlike, Ox-beefe hath deuour'd many a gentleman of your house. I promise you, your kindred hath made my eyes water, ere now. I desire you more acquaintance, good master *Mustardseede*.

174

Tita. Come waite vpon him : leade him to my bower.
The Moone, me thinkes, lookes with a wary eye:
And when shee weepes, weepes euery little flower.

178

Lamen-

III.i.

A Midfommer nightes dreame.

Lamenting some enforced chastitie.

Ty vp my louers tongue, bring him silently *Exit.**Enter King of Fairies, and Robin goodfellow.**Ob.* I wonder if *Titania* be awakt;Then what it was, that next came in her eye,
Which she must dore on, in extremitie.Here comes my messenger. How now, mad spirit?
What nightrule now about this haunted groue?*Puck.* My mistresse with a monster is in loue,
Ncere to her close and consecrated bower.While she was in her dull, and sleeping hower,
A crew of patches, rude Mechanicals,That worke for bread, vpon *Athenian* stalles,
Were met together to rehearse a play,Intended for great *Thefeus* nuptiall day:The shallowest thickskinne, of that barraine sort,
Who *Pyramus* presented, in their sport,

Forfooke his Scene, and entred in a brake,

VVhen I did him at this aduantage take:

An Asses nole I fixed on his head.

Anon his *Thisbie* must be answered,

And forth my Minnick comes, When they him spy;

As wilde geese, that the creeping Foulereye,

Or ruffet pated choughes, many in sort

(Ryding, and cawing, at the gunnes report)

Seuer themselues, and madly sweepe the sky:

So, at his sight, away his fellowes fly,

And at our stampe, here ore and ore, one falles:

He murther cryes, and helpe from *Athens* calls

Their sense, thus weake, lost with their feares, thus strong

Made senselesse things begin to doe them wrong

For, briers and thornes, at their apparell, snatch:

Some sleeues, some hats; from yeelders, all things catch,

I led them on, in this distracted feare,

And left sweete *Pyramus* translated there:

D 4

VVhen

A MIDWINTER NIGHTS DREAM.

When in that moment (so it came to passe)
Tytania wak't, and straight way loud an Ass.

Ob. This faller out better, then I could deuise,
 But hast thou yet latched the *Athenians* eyes,
 With the loue iuice, as I did bid thee doe?

Rob. I tooke him sleeping (that is finisht to)
 And the *Athenian* woman, by his side;
 That when he wak't, of force she must be ey'd,

Enter Demetrius and Hermia.

Ob. Stand close: this is the same *Athenian*.

Rob. This is the woman: but not this the man.

Demet. O, Why rebuke you him, that loues you so?
 Lay breath so bitter, on your bitter foe,

Her. Now I but chide; but I should vie thee worse,
 For thou (I feare) hast giuen me cause to curse.
 If thou hast slaine *Lysander*, in his sleepe; (to,
 Being ore shooes in blood, plunge in the deepe, & kill mee
 The Sunne was not so true vnto the day,
 As hee to mee, Would hee haue stollen away,
 Frow sleeping *Hermia*? Ile belecue, as soone,
 This whole earth may be bor'd, and that the Moone
 May through the Center creepe, and so displeafe
 Her brothers noonetide, with th' *Antipodes*.

It cannot be, but thou hast mured him.

So should a murderer looke; so dead, so grimme,

Dem. So should the murdered looke, and so should I,
 Pearst through the heart, with your sterne cruelty,
 Yet you, the murderer, looke as bright, as cleere,
 As yonder *Venus*, in her glimmering spheare.

Her. Whats this to my *Lysander*? Where is hee?
 Ah good *Demetrius*, wilt thou giue him mee?

Deme. I had rather giue his carcasse to my hounds.

Her. Out dog, out curre; thou driu'st me past the bounds
 Of maidens patience. Hast thou slaine him then?
 Henceforth be neuer numbred among men.

O,

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A Midfommer nightes dreame.

- 67 O, once tell true: tell true, euen for my sake:
 Durst thou haue lookt vpon him, being awake?
 And hast thou kill'd him, sleeping? O braue catch:
 Could not a worme, an Adder do so much?
- 71 An Adder did it: For with doubler tongue
 Then thyne (thou serpent) neuer Adder stung.
Deme. You spende your passion, on a mispris'd mood;
 I am not guilty of *Lysanders* blood:
 Nor is he deade, for ought that I can tell.
- Her.* I pray thee, tell mee then, that he is well.
De. And if I could, what should I get therefore?
Her. A priuiledge, neuerto see mee more:
 And from thy hated presence part I: see me no more;
 Whether he be dead or no. *Exit.*
- Deme.* There is no following her in this fierce vaine.
 Heere therefore, for a while, I will remaine.
 So sorrowes heauinesse doth heauier growe:
 For debt that bankrout slippe doth sorrow owe:
 Which now in some flight measure it will pay;
 If for his tender here I make some stay, *Ly doune.*
- 87 *Ob.* What hast thou done? Thou hast mistaken quite,
 And laid the loue iuice on some true loues sight,
 Of thy misprision, must perforce ensue
 Some true loue turnd, and not a false turnd true.
- 91 *Robi.* Then fate orerules, that one man holding troth,
 A million faile, confounding oath on oath.
Ob. about the wood, goe swifter then the winde,
 And *Helena of Athens* looke thou finde.
- 95 All fancy sicke she is and pale of cheere,
 With sighes of loue, that costs the fresh blood deare,
 By some illusion see thou bring her here:
 Ile charme his eyes, against she doe appeare,
- 99 *Rabin.* I goe, I goe, looke how I goe,
 Swifter then arrow, from the *Tartars* bowe.
Ob. Flower of this purple dy,
- E hit

A Midsummer nightes dreame.

Hit with *Cupid's* archery,
 Sinke in apple o' his eye,
 When his loue he doth espy,
 Let her shine as gloriously
 As the *Venus* of the sky.
 When thou wak'st, if she be by,
 Begge of her, for remedy.

Enter Puck.

Puck, Captaine of our Fairy band,
Helena is heere at hande,
 And the youth, mistooke by mee,
 Pleading for a louers fee
 Shall wee their fond pageant see?
 Lord, what fooles these mortals bee!

Ob, Stand aside. The noyse, they make,
 Will cause *Demetrius* to awake,

Pa. Then will two, at once, wooe one:
 That must needes be sport alone.
 And those things do best please mee,
 That befall prepost'rously.

Enter Lysander, and Helena.

Lys. Why should you think, that I should wooe in scorne?
 Scorne, and derision, neuer come in teares.

Looke when I vow, I weepe: and vowes so borne,
 In their natiuitie all truth appeares,

How can these things, in mee, seeme scorne to you?
 Beating the badge of faith to prooue them true,

Hel, You doe aduance your cunning, more, and more,
 When truth killes truth, ð diuelish holy fray!

These vowes are *Hermias*. Will you giue her ore?
 Weigh oath, with oath, and you will nothing waigh.
 Your vowes to her, and mee (put in two scales)
 Will euen weigh: and both as light as tales.

Lys. I had no iudgement, when to her I swore.

Hel. Nor none, in my minde, now you giue her ore.

Lys.

102

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134

A Midsummer nightes dreame.

Lys. *Demetrius* loues her: and he loues not you.

Deme. O *Helen*, goddesse, nymph, perfect diuine,

To what, my loue, shall I compare thine eyne?

Christall is muddy. O, how ripe, in showe,

Thyllippes, those kissing cherries, tempting growe!

That pure coniealed white, high *Taurus* snow,

Fand with the Easterne winde, turnes to a crowe,

When thou holdst vp thy hand, O let me kisse

This Princesse of pure white, this seale of blisse.

Hel. O spight! O hell! I see, you all are bent

To set against mee, for your merriment,

If you were ciuill, and knew curtesie,

You would not doe mee thus much iniury.

Can you not hate mee, as I know you doe,

But you must ioyne, in soules, to mocke mee to?

If you were men, as men you are in showe,

You would not vse a gentle Lady so;

To vowe, and sweare, and superpraise my parts,

When I am sure, you hate mee with your hearts,

You both are Riuals, and loue *Hermia*;

And now both Riualles, to mock *Helena*.

A trim exploit, a manly enterprise,

To coniure teares vp, in a poore maides eyes,

With your derision None, of noble sort,

Would so offend a virgine, and extort

A poore soules patience, all to make you sport.

Lysand. You are vnkinde, *Demetrius*: be not so.

For you loue *Hermia*: this you know I know

And heare, with all good will, with all my heart,

In *hermias* loue I yeelde you vp my part:

And yours of *Helena*, to mee bequeath:

Whom I doe loue, and will do till my death.

Hel. Neuer did mockers waste more idle breath.

Deme. *Lysander*, keepe thy *Hermia*: I will none.

If ere I lou'd her, all that loue is gone.

A Midlommer nightes dreame.

My heart to her, but as guestwise, soiournd:
and now to *Helena*, is it home returnd,
There to remaine.

Lys. *Helena*, it is not so.

Deme. Disparage not the faith, thou dost not know;
Leaft to thy perill, thou aby it deate.
Looke where thy loue comes: yonder is thy deare.

Enter Hermia.

Her. Darke night, that from the eye, his function takes,
The eare more quicke of apprehension makes,
Whercin it doth impaire the seeing sense,
It payes the hearing double recompence.
Thou art not, by myne eye, *Lysander*, found:
Mine eare, I thanke it, brought me to thy found.
But why, vnkindly, didst thou leaue mee so?

Lys. Why should he stay, whom loue doth presse to go?

Her. What loue could presse *Lysander*, from my side?

Lys. *Lysanders* loue (that would not let him bide)

Faire *Helena*: who more engilds the night
Then all yon fiery oes, and eyes of light.
Why seek'st thou me? Could not this make thee know,
The hate I bare thee, made mee leaue thee so?

Her. You speake not as you thinke: It cannot bee.

Hel. Lo: she is one of this confederacy.

Now I perceiue, they haue conioynd all three,
To fashion this false sport, in spight of mee.
Iniurious *Hermia*, most vngratefull maide,
Haue you conspir'd, haue you with these contriu'd
To baite mee, with this soule derision?
Is all the counsell that we two haue shar'd,
The sisters voves, the howers that we haue spent,
When we haue chid the hastie footed time,
For parting vs; O, is all forgot?
All schooldaies friendshippe, childhood innocence?
VVe, *Hermia*, like two artificiall gods,

haue

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A Midfommer nightes dreame.

204 Haue with our needles, created both one flower,
 Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,
 Both warbling of one song, both in one key;
 208 As if our hands, our sides, voyces, and mindes
 had bin incorporate. So wee grewe together,
 Like to a double cherry, seeming parted;
 But yet an vnion in partition,
 Two louely berries moulded on one stemme;
 212 So with two seeming bodies, but one heart,
 Two of the first life coats in heraldry,
 Due but to one, and crowned with one creaff.
 and will you rent our auncient loue afunder,
 216 To ioyne with men, in scorning your poore friend?
 It is not friendly, tis not maidenly.
 Our sex, as well as I, may chide you for it;
 Though I alone doe fele the iniury.

220 *Her.* I am amazed at your words:
 I scorne you not. It seemest that you scorne mee,
 Hel. haue you not set *Lysander*, as in scorne,
 To follow mee, and praise my eyes and face?
 224 And made your other loue, *Demetrius*
 (Who euen but now did spurne mee with his foote)
 To call mee goddesse, nymph, diuine, and rare,
 Pretious celestiall? VVherefore speakes he this,
 228 To her he hates? And wherefore doth *Lysander*
 Deny your loue (so rich within his soule)
 And tender mee (forsooth) affection,
 But by your setting on, by your consent?
 232 VVhar, though I be not so in grace as you,
 So hung vpon with loue, so fortunate?
 (But miserable most, to loue vnlo'd)
 This you should pittie, rather then despise.

236 *Her.* I vnderstand not, what you meane by this,
 Hel. I doe. Perseuer, counterfait sad lookes:
 Make mouthes vpon mee, when I turne my back:

A Midfommer nightes dreame.

Winke each at other, holde the sweete ieast vp,
This sport well carried, shall bee chronicled.

239

If you haue any pittie, grace, or manners,
You would not make mee such an argument.

But fare ye well: tis partly my owne fault:
Which death, or absence soone shall remedy.

243

Lys. Stay, gentle *Helena*: heare my excuse,
My loue, my life, my soule, faire *Helena*.

Hel. O excellent!

247

Herm. Sweete, doe not scorne her so,

Dem. If she cannot entreat, I can compell,

Lys. Thou canst compell no more, then she intreat.

Thy threats haue no more strength then her weake praise.

251

helen, I loue thee, by my life I doe:

Ifswear by that which I will loose for thee;

To prooue him false, that saies I loue thee not.

Dem. I say, I loue thee more then he can do,

255

Lys. If thou say so, withdrawe, and proouc it to.

Dem. Quick come,

Her. *Lysander*, wheret o tends all this?

Lys. Away, you *Ethiop*.

259

Dem. No, no: heele

Seeme to breake loose: take on as you would follow;

But yet come not. You are a tame man, go.

Lys. Hang of thou cat, thou bur: vile thing let loose;

263

Or I will shake thee from mee, like a serpent.

Her. Why are you growne so rude? What change is this,
Sweete loue?

Lys. Thy loue? Our tawny *Tartar*, out:

267

Out loathed medicine: ô hated potion hence.

Her. Doe you notie ast?

Hel. Yes sooth: and so doe you.

Lys. *Demetrius*, I will keepe my word, with thee.

271

Dem. I would I had your bond, For I perceiue,
A weake bond holds you. Ile not trust your word.

Lys.

A Midfommer nightes dreame.

- 274 *Lys.* What? should I hurt her, strike her, kill her dead?
 Although I hate her, Ile not harme her so,
her. What? Can you do me greater harme, then hate?
 Hate mee, wherefore? O me, what newes, my loue?
 278 Am not I *hermia*? Are not you *Lysander*?
 I am as faire now, as I was ere while.
 Since night, you lou'd mee; yet since night, you left mee,
 Why then, you left mee (ô the gods forbid)
 282 In earnest, shall I say?
Lys I, by my life:
 And neuer did desire to see thee more.
 Therefore be out of hope, of question, of doubt;
 286 Be certaine: nothing truer: tis no least
 That I doe hate thee, and loue *helena*.
her. O mee, you iuggler, you canker blossome,
 You theefe of loue: what, haue you come by night,
 290 And stolne my louses heart, from him?
hel. Fine, I faith.
 Haue you no modesty, no maiden shame,
 No touch of bashfulnesse? What, will you reare
 294 Impatient answeres, from my gentle tongue?
 Fy, fy, you counterfait, you puppet, you,
her. Puppet? Why so? I, that way goes the game,
 298 Now I perceiue that she hath made compare,
 Betweene our statures, she hath vrg'd her height,
 And with her personage, her tall personage,
 her height (forsooth) she hath preuaild with him.
 And are you growne so high in his esteeme,
 302 Because I am so dwarfish and so lowe?
 how lowe am I, thou painted May-pole? Speake:
 how lowe am I? I am not yet so lowe,
 But that my nailes can reach vnto thine eyes.
 306 *hel.* I pray you, though you mocke me, gentleman,
 Let her not hurt me, I was neuer curst:
 I haue no gift at all in shrewishnesse;

A RIGHT MAID IN HIS COWARDIZE.

I am a right maid, for my cowardize:
Let her not strike mee. You perhaps, may thinke,
Because she is something lower then my selfe,
That I can match her.

Her. Lower? harke againe.

Hel. Good *Hermia*, do not be so bitter with mee,
I euermore did loue you *Hermia*,

Did euer keepe your counsels, neuer wrongd you;

Saue that in loue, vnto *Demetrius*,

I tould him of your stealth vnto this wood.

He followed you: for loue, I followed him.

But he hath chid me hence, and threatned mee

To strike mee, spurne mee; nay to kill mee to,

And now, so you will let me quiet goe,

To *Athens* will I beare my folly backe,

And follow you no further, Let me goe.

You see how simple, and how fond I am,

Herm. Why? get you gon. Who is't that hinders you?

Hel. A foolish heart, that I leaue here behind,

Her. What, with *Lysander*?

Hel. With *Demetrius*.

Lys. Be not afraid: she shall not harme thee *Helena*,

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

Hel. O, when she is angry, she is keene and shrewd,

She was a vixen, when she went to schoole:

And though she be but little, she is fierce.

Her. Little againe? Nothing hut low and little?

Why will you suffer her to floute me thus?

Let me come to her.

Lys. Get you gon, you dwarfe;

You *minimus*, of hindring knot grasse, made;

You bead, you acorne.

Deme. You are too officious,

In her behalfe, that scornes your seruices.

Let her alone: speake not of *Helena*,

Take

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A Midfommer nightes dreame.

344 Takenot her part . For ifthou dost intcnd
 Neuer so little shewe of loue to her,
 Thou shalt aby it.

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

Deme. Follow? *Nay*: Ile go with thee, checke by iowle.
her. You, mistresse, all this coyle is long of you.

352 *Nay*: goe not backe.
hel. I will not trust you, I,
 Nor longer stay in your curst company.
 Your hands, than mine, are quicker for a fray:
 356 My legges are longer though, to runne away.
her. I am amaz'd, and know not what to say. *Exeunt*.

Ob. This is thy negligence: still thou mistak'st,
 Or else commitst thy knaueries wilfully.

360 *Puck*. Beleeue mee, king of shadowes, I mistooke.
 Did not you tell mee, I shoud know the man.
 By the *Athenian* garments, he had on?
 And, so farr eblamelesse prooues my enterprise,
 364 That I haue nointed an *Athenians* eyes:
 And so farre am I glad, it so did sort,
 As this their iangling I esteeme a sport.

Ob. Thou seest, these louers seeke a place to fight;
 368 Hy therefore *Robin*, ouercast the night,
 The starry welkin couer thou anon,
 With drooping fogge as blacke as *Acheron*,
 And lead these teasty Riuals so astray,
 372 As one come not within anothers way.
 Like to *Lysander*, sometime frame thy tongue:
 Then stirre *Demetrius* vp, with bitter wrong:
 And sometime raile thou like *Demetrius*:
 376 And from each other, looke thou lead them thus,
 Till ore their browes, death-counterfaiting, sleepe,
 With leaden legs, and Batty wings doth creepe:

F

Then

A Midfommer nightes dreame,

Then crush this hearbe into *Lysanders* eye;
 Whose liquor hath this vertuous property,
 To take from thence all errour, with his might,
 And make his eyebalsroule with wonted fight,
 When they next wake, all this derision
 Shall seeme a dreame, and fruitlesse vision,
 And backe to *Athens* shall the louers wend,
 With league, whose date, till death shall neuer end,
 Whiles I, in this affaire, doe thee imploy,
 Ile to my Queene and beg her *Indian* boy:
 And then I will her charmed eye release
 From monsters viewe, and all things shall be peace.

Puck. My Fajery Lord, this must be done with haste.
 For nights swift Dragons cut the clouds full fast,
 And yonder shines *Auroras* harbinger:
 At whose approach, Ghosts, wandring here and there,
 Troope home to Churchyards: damned spirits all;
 That in crosse waies and floods haue buriall,
 Already to their wormy beds are gone:
 For feare least day should looke their shames vpon,
 They wilfully themselues exile from light.
 And must for aye confort with black browed night,

Ober. But we are spirits of another sort,
 I, with the mornings loue, haue oft made sport,
 And like a forrester, the groues may tread
 Euen till the Easterne gate all fiery red,
 Opening on *Neptune*, with faire blessed beames,
 Turnes, into yellow golde, his salt greene streames,
 But notwithstanding, haste, make no delay:
 We may effect this businesse, yet ere day.

Pu. Vp & down, vp & down, I will lead them vp & down.
 I am feard in field & town. *Goblin*, lead them vp & downe.
 Here comes one. *Enter Lysander.*

Lys. Where art thou, proud *Demetrius*? Speak thou now,
Rob. Here villaine, drawne & ready. Where art thou?

Lys.

A Midfommer nightes dreame.

414 *Lys.* I will be with thee straight.

Rob. Follow me then to plainer ground.

Enter Demetrius.

Deme. Lysander, speake againe,

Thou runaway, thou coward, art thou fled?

418 Speake in some bush. Where dost thou hide thy head?

Rob. Thou coward art thou bragging, to the starres,
Telling the bushes that thou look'st for warres,
And wilt not come? Come recreant, come thou childe,
422 Ile whippe thee with a rodde. He is defild,
That drawes a sword on thee,

De. Yea, art thou there?

Ro. Follow my voice: weele try no manhood here. *Exeunt.*

426 *Lys.* He goes before me, and still dares me on:

When I come where he calles, then he is gon.

The villaine is much lighter heel'd then I;

I followed fast: but faster he did fly;

430 That fallen am I in darke vneauen way,

And here will rest me. Come thou gentle day,

For if but once, thou shewe me thy gray light,

Ile finde *Demetrius*, and reuenge this spight.

Robin, and Demetrius.

434 *Robi.* Ho, ho, ho: Coward, why comst thou not?

Deme. Abide me, if thou dar'st. For well I wot,

Thou runst before mee, shifting euery place,

And dar'st not stand, nor looke me in the face,

438 Where art thou now?

Rob. Come hither: I am here.

De. Nay then thou mockst me. Thou shalt buy this dear,
If euer I thy face by day light see.

442 Now, goe thy way. Faintnesse constraineth mee,

To measure, out my length, on this cold bed:

By daies approach looke to be visited.

Enter Helena.

Hele. O weary night, O long and tedious night,

Abate thy houres, shine comforts, from the east;
 That I may backe to *Athens*, by day light,
 From these that my poore company detest:
 And sleepe, that sometimes shuts vp sorrowes eye,
 Steale mee a while from mine owne companie. *Sleepe.*

446

Rob. Yet but three? Come one more,
 Two of both kindes makes vp sower,
 Heare shee comes, curst and sadde.

450

Cupid is a knauish ladde,
 Thus to make poore females madde,

454

Her. Neuer so weary, neuer so in woe,
 Bedabbled with the deaw, and torne with briers:
 I can no further crawle, no further goe:
 My legges can keepe no pafe with my desires,
 Here will I rest mee, till the breake of day:
 Heauens shielde *Lyfander*, if they meane a fray.

458

Rob. On the ground, sleepe sound:
 Ile apply your eye, gentle louer, remedy.
 When thou wak'st, thou tak'st
 True delight, in the sight, of thy former ladies eye:
 And the country prouerbe knowne,
 That euery man should take his owne,
 In your waking shall be showne,

462

Iacke shall haue *Ill*: nought shall goe ill:
 The man shall haue his mare again, & all shall be well,

466

*Enter Queene of Faeries, and Clowne, and Faeries: and
 the king behinde them.*

470

Tita. Come sit thee downe vpon this flowry bed,
 While I thy amiable cheekes doe coy,
 And stick musk roses in thy sleeke smooth head,
 And kisse thy faire large eares, my gentle ioy.

1

Clown. Where's *Pease-blossome*?

4

Pea. Ready,

Clow. Scratch my head, *Pease-blossome.* Where's *Moun-
 ficut Cobweb*? *Cob.* Ready,

8

Clow.

A MIDWINTER NIGHTS DREAM.

9 *Clo.* Mounſieur *Cobweb*, good Mounſieur, get you your
 weapons in your hand, and kill me a red hipt Humble Bee,
 on the toppe of a thistle : and good Mounſieur, bring mee
 the hony bagge. Doe not fret your ſelfe too much, in the
 13 action, Mounſieur : and good Mounſieur haue a care, the
 hony bagge breake not, I wold be loath to haue you ouer-
 flowen with a honibag *ſignior*. Where's Mounſieur *Maſ-*
ſardſeede?

17 *Muſt.* Readie.

Clo. Giue me your neaſe, Mounſieur *Maſſardſeede*. Pray
 you, leaue your curſie, good Mounſieur,

Muſt. what's your will?

21 *Clo.* Nothing good Mounſieur, but to helpe Cauallery
Cobwebbe, to ſcratch, I muſt to the Barbers, Mounſieur.
 For me thinkes I am maruailes hairy about the face, And I
 am ſuch a tender *Aſſe*, if my haire doe but tickle mee, I
 25 muſt ſcratch.

Tyta. What, wilt thou heare ſome muſique, my ſweete
 loue?

29 *Clo.* I haue a reaſonable good care in muſique. Lets
 haue the tongs, and the bones.

Tyta. Or, ſay ſweete loue, what thou deſireſt to eate.

Clo. Truly a pecke of prouander. I could mounch your
 good dry Oates, Me thinkes, I haue a great deſire to a bor-
 33 tle of hay. Good hay, ſweete hay hath no fellow. (hoord,

Ty. I haue a venturous Fairy, that ſhall ſecke the Squirils
 And fetch thee newe nuts.

37 *Clo.* I had rather haue a handfull, or two of dried peaſe.
 But, I pray you, let none of your people ſtirre me: I haue an
 expoſition of ſleepe come vpon mee,

Tyta. Sleepe thou, and I will winde thee in my armes,
 Faeries be gon, and be alwaies away.

41 So doth the woodbine, the ſweete Honiſuckle,

Gently entwiſt: the female Iuyſo

Enrings the barky fingers of the Elme,

Now I loue thee! how I dote on thee!

Enter Robin goodfellow.

Ob. Welcome good *Robin*, Seest thou this sweete sight
Her dotage now I doe beginne to pittie.

For meeting her of late, behinde the wood,
Seeking sweete fauours for this hatefull foole,
I did vpbraid her, and fall out with her.

For she his hairy temples then had rounded,
With coronet offresh and fragrant flowers,
And that same deawe which sometime on the buddes,

Was wont to swell, like round and orient pearles;
Stood now within the pretty flouriets eyes,
Like teares, that did their owne disgrace bewaile.

When I had, at my pleasure, taunted her,
And she, in milde termes, begd my patience,
I then did aske of her, her changeling childe:
Which straight she gaue mee, and her Fairy sent
To beare him, to my bower, in Fairie land.

And now I haue the boy, I will vndoe
This hatefull imperfection of her eyes.

And, gentle *Puck*, take this transformed scalpe,
From of the heade of this *Athenian* swaine;

That hee, awaking when the other do,
May all to *Athens* backe againe repaire,
And thinke no more of this nights accidents,

But as the feerce vexation of a dreame,
But first I will release the Fairy Queene.

Be, as thou wast wont to bee:

See, as thou wast wont to see.

Dians budde, or *Cupids* flower,

Hath such force, and blessed power.

Now, my *Titania*, wake you, my sweete Queene.

Tita. My *Oberon*, what visions haue I seene?

Me thought I was enamour'd of an Ass.

Ob. There lyes your loue.

Tita.

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A Midsummer nightes dreame.

78

Tita. How came these things to passe?

O, how mine eyes doe loath his visage now!

Ob. Silence a while. *Robin*, take off this head:

Titania, musicke call, and strike more dead

82

Then common sleepe: of all these, fine the sense.

Ti. Musick, howe musick: such as charmeth sleepe. (peepe,

Rob. Now, when thou wak'st, with thine own fools eyes

86

Ob. Sound Musick: come, my queen, take hands with me,
and rocke the ground whereon these sleepers be.

Now, thou and I are new in amitie,

and will to morrow midnight, solemnely

Daunce, in Duke *Theseus* house triumphantly,

90

and blesse it to all faire prosperitie.

There shall the paires of faithfull louers be

Wedded, with *Theseus*, all in iollitie.

Rob. Fairy King, attend, and marke:

94

I do heare the morning Larke.

Ob. Then my Queene, in silence sad,

Trippe we after nights shade:

We, the Globe, can compasse soone,

98

Swifter then the wandring Moone.

Tita, Come my Lord, and in our flight,

Tell me how it came this night,

That I sleeping here was found,

102

With these mortals on the ground.

Enter Theseus and all his traine.

Exeunt.

Winde borne,

The. Goe one of you, finde out the forrester:

For now our obseruation is performde.

and since we haue the vaward of the day,

106

My loue shall heare the musicke of my hounds,

Vncouple, in the westerne vallie, let them goe:

Dispatch I say, and finde the forrester,

Wee will, faire Queene, vp to the mountaines toppe,

110

and marke the musickall confusion

Of hounds and Echo in coniunction.

A Mid sommer nightes dreame.

Hip. I was with *Hercules* and *Cadmus*, once,
When in a wood of *Creete* they bayed the Beare,
With hounds of *Sparta*: neuer did I heare
Such gallant chiding. For besides the groues,
The skyes, the fountaines, euery region neare
Seeme all one mutuall cry, I neuer heard
So musicall a discord, such sweete thunder.

Thef. My hounds are bred out of the *Spartane* kinde:
So flew'd, so fanded: and their heads are hung
VVith eares, that sweepe away the morning dewe,
Crooke kneed, and deawlapt, like *Thessalian* Bulls:
Slowe in pursuit; but matcht in mouth like bells,
Each vnder each. A cry more tunable
Was neuer hollowd to, nor cheerd with horne,
In *Creete*, in *Sparta*, nor in *Thessaly*.

Iudge when you heare, But soft, What nymphes are these?

Egeus. My Lord, this my daughter heere a sleepe,
And this *Lysander*, this *Demetrius* is,
This *Helena*, old *Nedars Helena*.
I wonder of their being here together.

The. No doubt, they rose vp earely, to obserue
The right of May: and hearing our intent,
Came heere, in grace of our solemnitie.
But speake, *Egeus*, is not this the day,
That *Hermia* should giue answer of her choyce?

Egeus. It is, my Lord, (horne,

Thef. Goe, bid the huntsmen wake them with their
Shoute within: they all start vp, Winde hornes.

The. Good morrow, friends. *Saint Valentine* is past.
Begin these woodbirds but to couple, now?

Lys. Pardon, my Lord.

The. I pray you all, stand vp.
I know, you two are Riual enemies,
How comes this gentle concord in the worlde,
That hatred is so farre from ieaalousie,

To

A Midsummer nighes dreame.

146 To sleepe by hate, and feare no enmitie,

Lys. My Lord, I shal reply amazedly,

Halfe sleepe, halfe waking, But, as yet. I sweare,

I cannot truely say how I came here.

150 But as I thinke (for truely would I speake)

And now I doe bethinke mee, so it is;

I came with *Hermia*, hither, Our intent

Was to be gon from *Athens*: where we might

154 Without the perill of the *Athenian* lawe,

Ege. Enough, enough my Lord: you haue enough.

I begge the law, the law, vpon his head:

They would haue stolne away, they would, *Demetrius*,

158 Thereby to haue defeated you and me:

You of your wife, and mee, of my consent:

Of my consent, that she should be your wife.

Deme. My Lord, faire *Helen* told me of their stealth,

162 Of this their purpose hither, to this wood,

And I in fury hither followed them;

Faire *Helena*, in fancy following mee.

But my good Lord, I wore not by what power

166 (But by some power it is) my loue,

To *Hermia* (melted as the snowe)

Seemes to me now as the remembrance of an idle gaude,

Which in my childehoode I did dote vpon:

170 And all the faith, the vertue of my heart,

The obiect and the pleasure of mine eye,

Is onely *Helena*. To her, my Lord,

Was I betrothed, ere I see *Hermia*:

174 But, like a sicknesse, did I loath this foode.

But, as in health, come to my naturall taste,

Now I doe wish it, loue it, long for it,

And will for euermore be true to it.

178 *The.* Faire louers, you are fortunately met,

Of this discourse, we more will here anon.

G

Egeus,

-- ANTONIO MORGAN --

Egeus, I will ouerbeare your will:
 For in the Temple, by and by, with vs,
 These couples shall eternally be knit.
 And, for the morning now is something worne,
 Our purpos'd hunting shall be set aside.
 Away, with vs, to *Athens*. Three and three,
 Weele holde a feast, in great solemnitie. Come *Hippolita*.
Deme, These things seeme small and vndistinguishable,
 Like farre off mountaines turned into clouds.
Her, Me thinks I see these things, with parted eye,
 When euery thing seemes double.
Hel. So mee thinkes:
 And I haue found *Demetrius*, like a iewell,
 Mine owne, and not mine owne.
Dem. Are you sure
 That we are awake? It seemes to me,
 That yet we sleepe, we dreame Do not you thinke,
 The Duke was here, and bid vs follow him?
Her. Yea, and my father.
Hel. And *Hippolita*.
Lys. And he did bid vs follow to the Temple.
Dem. Why then, we are awake: lets follow him, and by
 the way lets recount our dreames.
Clo. When my cue comes, call mee, and I will answere.
 My next is, most faire *Pyramus*, Hey ho, *Peeter Quince*?
Flute, the bellowes menders *Snout* the tinker? *Starueling*?
 Gods my life! Stolne hence, and lest mee a sleeper? I haue
 had a most rare vision. I haue had a dreame, past the wit
 of man, to say; what dreame it was, Man is but an Affe, if
 hee goe about expound this dreame. Me thought I was,
 there is no man can tell what, Me thought I was, and me
 thought I had, But man is but patcht a foole, If hee will
 offer to say, what mee thought I had. The eye of man
 hath not heard, the eare of man hath not. scene, mans
 hand

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IV.i.

A Midsummer nights dream.

214 hand is not able to taste, his tongue to conceiue, nor his
 hearte to report, what my dreame was, I will get *Pe-*
ter Quince to write a Ballet of this dreame : it shall be
 218 call'd *Bottoms Dreame*; because it hath no bottome : and
 I will sing it in the latter end of a Play, before the Duke,
 Peradventure, to make it the more gracious, I shall sing
 it at her death.

IV.ii.

Enter Quince, Flute, Thisby and the rabble.

1 *Quin.* Haue you sent to *Bottoms* house? Is he come
 home, yet?

4 *Flut.* Hee cannot be heard of, Out of doubt he is trans-
 ported.

Thisb. If hee come not, then the Play is mard. It goes
 not forward. Doth it?

8 *Quin.* It is not possible. You haue not a man, in all *A-*
thens, able to discharge *Pyramus*, but he.

Thisb. No, hee hath simply the best wit of any handy-
 craft man, in *Athens*.

12 *Quin.* Yea, and the best person to, and hee is a very
 Paramour, for a sweete voice.

Thisb. You must say, Paragon. A Paramour is (God
 blese vs) a thing of nought,

Enter Snug, the Ioyner.

16 *Snug.* Masters, the Duke is comming from the Tem-
 ple, and there is two or three Lords and Ladies more
 married. If our sport had gon forward, wee had all
 beenc made men,

20 *Thisb.* O sweete bully *Bottom*. thus hath hee lost six
 pence a day, during his life: hee coulde not haue scaped
 six pence a day. And the Duke had not giuen him six
 pence a day, for playing *Pyramus*, Ile be hanged.
 He would haue deserued it, Six pence a day, in *Pyramus*,

or nothing,

Enter Bottom.

Bot. Where are these lads? Where are these harts?

Quin, Bottom, ô most courageous day! O most happy
houre:

Bot. Masters, I am to discourse wonders: but aske me
not what. For if I tell you, I am not true *Athenian*. I will
tell you euery thing right as it fell out.

Quin. Let vs heare, sweete *Bottom*,

Bot. Not a word of mee, All that I will tell you, is, that
the Duke hath dined. Get your apparrell together, good
strings to your beardes, new ribands to your pumpes,
meete presently at the palace, euery man looke ore his part.
For, the short and the long is, our play is preferd. In any
case let *Thisby* haue cleane linnen: and let not him, that
plaies the Lyon, pare his nailes: for they shall hang out
for the Lyons clawes. And most deare Actors, eate no On-
ions, nor garlicke: for we are to vtter sweete breath: and
I do not doubt but to hear them say, it is a sweete Comedy.
No more wordes. Away, go away.

Enter Theseus, Hyppolita, and Philostrate.

Hy. Tis strange, my *Theseus*, that these louers speake of.

The. More strange then true. I neuer may beleeue

These antique fables, nor these Fairy toyes,

Louers, and mad men haue such seething braines,

Such shaping phantasies, that apprehend more,

Then coole reason euer comprehends. The lunaticke,

The louer, and the Poet are of imagination all compact.

One sees more diuels, then vast hell can holde:

That is the mad man, The louer, all as frantick,

Sees *Helens* beauty in a brow of *Egypt*.

The Poets eye, in a fine frenzy, rolling, doth glance

From heauen to earth, from earth to heauen. And as

Imagination bodies forth the formes of things

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V.i.

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A Midsummer nights dream.

14 Vnknowne: the Poets penne turns them to shapes,
 And giues to ayery nothing, a locall habitation,
 And a name. Such trickes hath strong imagination,
 That if it would but apprehend some ioy,
 18 It comprehends some bringer of that ioy.
 Or in the night, imagining some feare,
 How easie is a bush suppos'd a Beare?

22 *Hypp.* But, all the story of the night told ouer,
 And all their mindstransfigur'd so together,
 More witnesseth than fancies images,
 And growes to something of great constancy:
 But howsoeuer, strange and admirable.

*Enter Louers; Lyfander, Demetrius, Hermia and
 Helena.*

26 *the.* here come the louers, full of ioy and mirth.
 Ioy, gentle friends, ioy and fresh daies
 Of loue accompany your hearts,

30 *Lyf.* More then to vs, waite in your royall walkes, your
 boorde, your bedde. (haue,

34 *the.* Come now: what maskes, what daunces shall wee
 To weare away this long age of three hours, betweene
 Or after supper, & bed-time? Where is our vsuall manager
 Of mirth? What Reuels are in hand? Is there no play,
 To ease the anguish of a torturing hower? Call *Philoftrate*.

Philoftrate. Here mighty *Theseus*.

38 *the.* Say, what abridgement haue you for this euening?
 What maske, what musicke? how shall we beguile
 The lazy tyme, if not with some delight?

Philof. There is a brieft, how many sports are ripe.
 Make choyce, of which your highnesse will see first.

42 *the.* The battell with the *centaures* to be sung,
 By an *Athenian* Euauche, to the harpe?
 Weele none of that, That haue I tolde my loue,
 In glory of my kinsman *Hercules*,
 46 The ryot of the tiplic *Bachanales*,

A PLAY IN THREE ACTS

Tearing the *Thracian* finger, in their rage?
That is an olde deuife: and it was plaid,
When I from *Thebes* came last a conquerer.
The thrife three *Muses*, mourning for the death
Of learning, late deceaft, in beggery?
That is fome *Satire* keene and criticall,
Not sorting with a nuptiall ceremony.
A tedious brieve Scene of young *Pyramus*
And his loue *Thisby*; very tragicall mirth?
Merry, and tragicall? Tedious, and brieve? That is hot *Ise*,
And wodrous strange fnow. How fhall we find the cōcord
Of this difcord?

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Philof. A Play there is, my Lord, fome ten words long;
Which is as brieve, as I haue knowne a play:
But, by ten words, my Lord it is too long:
Which makes it tedious. For in all the Play,
There is not one word apt, one player fitted,
And tragicall, my noble Lord, it is. For *Pyramus*,
Therein, doth kill himfelfe. Which when I faw
Rehearft, I muft confesse, made mine eyes water;
But more merry teares the paffion of loud laughter
Neuer fhed.

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Thefe. What are they, that doe play it?

Phil. Hard handed men, that worke in *Athens* here,
Which neuer labour'd in their minds till now:
And now haue toyled their vnbreathed memories,
With this fame Play, againft your nuptiall,

71

The. And wee will heare it.

Phi. No, my noble Lord, it is not for you. I haue heard
It ouer, and it is nothing, nothing in the world;
Vnleffe you can finde sport in their intents,
Extreamely stretch, and cond with cruell paine,
To do you feruice.

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The. I will heare that play. For neuer any thing
Can be amiffe, when simpleneffe and duty tender it.

Goe

A MIDDLEMERE HIGHES ORATIONS.

82 Goe bring them in, and take your places, Ladies.

Hip. I loue not to see wretchednesse orecharged;
And ducty, in his seruice, perishing.

The. Why, gentle sweete, you shall see no such thing.

86 *Hip.* He sayes, they can doe nothing in this kinde.

The. The kinder we, to giue them thanks, for nothing.

Our sport shall be, to take what they mistake.

And what poore duty cannot doe, noble respect

90 Takes it in might, not merit.

Where I haue come, great Clerkes haue purposed

To greete me, with premeditated welcomes;

Where I haue seene them shiner and looke pale,

94 Make periods in the midst of sentences,

Throttle their practiz'd accent in their feares,

And in conclusion dumbly haue broke off,

Not paying mee a welcome. Trust me, sweete,

98 Out of this silence, yet, I pickt a welcome:

And in the modesty of fearefull duty,

I read as much, as from the rattling tongue

Of saucy and audacious eloquence.

102 Loue, therefore, and tong-tide simplicity,

In least, speake most, to my capacity.

Philosf. So please your Grace, the Prologue is adrest,

Duk. Let him approach.

Enter the Prologue.

106 *Pro.* If wee offend, it is with our good will,

That you should thinke, we come not to offend,

But with good will. To shew our simple skill,

That is the true beginning of our end.

110 Consider then, we come but in despight.

We doe not come, as minding to content you,

Our true intent is. All for your delight,

Wee are not here, that you should here repent you,

114 the actors are at hand: and, by their shewe,

You shall know all, that you are like to knowe,

the. This fellow doth not stand vpon points.

Lys. He hath rid his Prologue, like a rough Colte: hee knowes not the stoppe. A good morall my I ord. It is not enough to speake; but to speake true.

Hyp. Indeed he hath plaid on this Prologue, like a child on a Recorder, a sound; but not in gouernement.

the. his speach was like a tangled Chaine; nothing impaired, but all disordered. Who is next?

Enter Pyramus, and Thisby, and Wall, ana Moone-shine, and Lyon.

Prologue. Gentles, perchance you wonder at this show
But, wonder on, till truthe make all things plaine.

This man is *Pyramus*, if you would knowe:

This beauctious *Lady Thisby* is certaine.

This man, with lyme and rough cast, doth present

Wall, that vile wall, which did these louers sunder:

And through wals chinke, poore soules, they are content
To whisper. At the which, let no man wonder.

This man, with lanterne, dogge, and bush of thorne,

Presenteth moone-shine. For if you will know,
By moone-shine did these louers thinke no scorne

To meete at *Ninus* tombe, there, there to wooe:

This grizly beast (which *Lyon* hight by name)

the trusty *Thisby*, comming first by night,

Did scarre away, or rather did affright:

And as she fled, her mantle she did fall:

Which *Lyon* vile with bloody mouth did staine.

Anon comes *Pyramus*, sweete youth, and tall,

And findes his trusty *Thisbyes* mantle staine:

Whereat, with blade, with bloody blamefull blade,

he brauely broacht his boyling bloody breast.

And *Thisby*, tarying in Mulberry shade,

his dagger drewe, and dyed. For all the rest,

Let *Lyon*, *Moone-shine*, *Wall*, and louers twaine,

At large discourse, while here they doe remaine,

The.

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A Midfommer nightes dreame.

The. I wonder, if the Lyon be to speake.

Demet. No wonder, my Lord. One Lyon may, when many Asses doe.

Exit Lyon, Thysby, and Moonefhine.

Wall. In this same enterlude it doth befall,

That I, one *Flute* (by name) present a wall:

And such a wall, as I would haue you thinke

That had in it a cranied hole or chinke:

Through which the louers, *Pyramus*, and *Thisby*,

Did whisper often, very secretly.

This lome, this roughcast, and this stone doth showe,

That I am that same wall: the truth is so.

And this the cranie is, right and sinister,

Through which the fearefull louers are to whisper.

The. Would you desire lime and haire to speake better?

Deme. It is the wittiest partition, that euer I heard discourse, my Lord.

The. *Pyramus* drawes neare the wall: silence.

Py. O grim lookt night, o night, with hue so blacke,

O night, which euer art, when day is not:

O night, O night, alacke, alacke, alacke,

I feare my *Thisbyes* promise is forgot.

And thou o wall, o sweete, o louely wall,

That standst betweene her fathers ground and mine,

Thou wall, o wall, O sweete and louely wall,

Showe mee thy chinke, to blink through, with mine eyne,

Thankes curteous wall. *Ioue* shield thee well, for this.

But what see I? No *Thisby* doe I see.

O wicked wall, through whome I see no blisse,

Curst be thy stones, for thus deceiuing mee,

The. The wall mee thinks, being sensible, should curse againe.

Py. No, in truth Sir, he should not. *Deceiuing mee* is

Thisbyes cue: she is to enter now, and I am to spy

Her through the wall. You shall see it will fall

H

Pat

A MIDDWINTERNIGHTS DREAM.

Pat as I told you : yonder she comes, *Enter Thisby.*

Thisby. O wall, full often hast thou heard my mones,
For parting my faire *Pyramus*, and mee.

My cherry lips haue often kist thy stones;
Thy stones, with lime and hayire knit now againe.

Pyra. I see a voice : now will I to the chinke,
To spy and I can heare my *Thisbyes* face. *Thisby?*

Thisby. My loue thou art, my loue I thinke.

Py. Thinke what thou wilt, I am thy louers Grace:
And, like *Limander*, am I trusty still,

Thisby. And I, like *Helen*, till the fates me kill,

Pyra. Not *Shafalus*, to *Procrus*, was so true.

Thisby. As *Shafalus* to *Procrus*, I to you.

Pyra. O kisse mee, through the hole of this vilde wall-

Thisby. I kisse the walles hole; not your lips at all,

Pyra. Wilt thou, at *Ninnies* tombe, meete me straight way?

Thisby. Tide life, tyde death, I come without delay.

Wal. Thus haue I, *Wall*, my part discharged so;
And, being done, thus wall away doth goe.

Duk. Now is the Moon vsed between the two neighbors,

Deme. No remedy, my Lord, when wals are so wilfull, to
heare without warning.

Dutch. This is the silliest stufte, that euer I heard.

Duke. The best, in this kinde, are but shadowes : and
the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them.

Dutch. It must be your imagination, then; & not theirs.

Duke. If we imagine no worse of them, then they of the-
selues, they may passe for excellent men. Here come two
noble beasts, in a man and a Lyon.

Enter Lyon, and Moone-shine.

Lyon. You Ladies, you, (whose gentle hearts do feare
The smallest monstrous mouse, that creepes on floore)

May now, perchance, both quake and tremble here,

When Lyon rough, in wildest rage, doth roare.

Then know that I, as *Snug* the loyner am

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A Midsummer nightes dreame.

- 217 A Lyon fell, nor else no Lyons damme,
For, if I should, as Lyon, come in strife,
Into this place, 'twere pittie on my life.
- Duk.* A very gentle beast, and of a good conscience.
- 221 *Deme.* The very best at a beast, my Lord, that ere I saw.
- Lys.* This Lyon is a very fox, for his valour.
- Duk.* True : and a goose for his discretion.
- 225 *De.* Not so my Lord. For his valour cannot carry his discretion : and the fox carries the goose.
- Duk.* His discretion, I am sure, cannot carry his valour. For the goose carries not the fox. It is well : leaue it to his discretion, and let vs listen to the Moone.
- 229 *Moone.* This lanthorne doth the horned moone present.
- Deme.* He should haue worne the hornes, on nis head.
- Duk.* He is no crescent, and his hornes are inuisible, with-
in the circumference.
- 233 *Moone.* This lanthorne doth the horned moone present,
My selfe, the man ith Moone, doe seeme to be.
- Duke.* this is the greatestt errour of all the rest; the man should be put into the lanthorne, How is it else the man ith Moone?
- 237 *Deme.* He dares not come there, for the candle . For, you see, it is already in snuffe. (change.
- Dutch.* I am awearie of this Moone . Would hee woulde
- 241 *Duke.* It appears, by his small light of discretion , that hee is in the wane : but yet in curtesie , in all reason, wee must stay the time,
- Lysan.* Proceede, Moone.
- 245 *Moone.* All that I haue to say, is to tell you , that the lanthorne is the Moone, I the man ith Moone, this thorne bush my thorne bush, and this dogge my dogge.
- 249 *Deme.* Why? All these should be in the lanthorne : for all these are in the Moone, But silence : here comes *Thisby*.
- Enter Thisby.*
- Th.* This is ould *Ninies* tumber. Where is my loue? *Lyon.* Oh,

A Midsummer nightes dreame.

Dem. Well roard, Lyon.

Duke. Well runne, *Thisby*.

Dutchesse. Well shone *Moone*. truly, the *Moone* shines,
with a good grace.

Duk. Well mouz'd, *Lyon*.

Dem. And then came *Pyramus*.

Lys. And so the *Lyon* vanisht.

Enter Pyramus.

Pyr Sweete *Moone*, I thanke thee, for thy sunny beams.
I thanke thee, *Moone*, for shining now so bright.

For by thy gracious golden, glittering beames,

I trust to take of truest *Thisby* light.

But stay : ô spight! but marke, poore knight,

What dreadfull dole is here?

Eyes do you see! How can it bee!

O dainty duck, o deare!

Thy mantle good, what, staine with blood?

Approach ye *Furies* fell,

O fates come, come, cut thread and thrumme,

Quaile, crush, conclude, and quell.

Duke. This passion, & the death of a deare friend would
goe neere to make a man looke sad.

Dutch. Beshrewe my heart, but I pittie the man.

Pyr. O, wherefore, *Nature*, didst thou *Lions* frame?
Since *Lyon* vilde hath here deflour'd my deare.

Which is, no, no : which was the fairest dame

That liu'd, that lou'd, that lik't, that look't with cheere.

Come teares, confound, out sword, and wound

The pappe of *Pyramus*:

I, that left pappe, where heart doth hoppe.

Thus dy I, thus, thus, thus.

Now am I dead, now am I fled, my soule is in the sky.

Tongue loose thy light, *Moon* take thy flight,

Now dy, dy, dy, dy, dy.

Dem. No Die, but an ace for him. For he is but one,

Lys.

A Midfommer nightes dreame.

285 *Lys.* Lesse then an ace, man. For he is dead, he is nothing.
Duke. With the helpe of a Surgeon, he might yet reco-
 uer, and yet prooue an Ass.

289 *Dut.* How chance Moone-shine is gone before? *Thisby*
 comes backe, and findes her louer,

Duk. Shee will finde him, by starre-light. Here shee
 comes, and her passion ends the Play.

293 *Dus.* Me thinkes, she should not vse a long one, for such
 a *Pyramus*: I hope, she will be brieft.

Demet. A moth will turne the ballance; which *Pyramus*,
 which *Thisby* is the better: he for a man; God warnd vs:
 she, for a woman; God bleffe vs.

297 *Lys.* She hath spied him already, with those sweete eyes.

Deme. And thus she meanes, *videlicet*,

This. A sleepe my loue? What, dead my doue?

O *Pyramus*, arise,

301 Speake, speake. Quite dumbe? Dead, dead? A tumber

Must couer thy sweete eyes.

These lilly lippes, this cherry nose,

These yellow cowslippe cheekes

305 are gon, are gon: louers make mone:

his eyes were greene, as leekes,

O sisters three, come, come, to mee,

With hands as pale as milke,

309 Lay them in gore, since you haue shore

With sheeres, his threede of silke.

tongue, not a word: come trusty sword,

Come blade, my breast imbrew:

313 and farewell friends: thus *Thisby* ends:

adieu, adieu, adieu.

Duke. *Moone-shine* and *Lyon* are left to bury the dead,

Deme. I, and *Wall* to.

317 *Lyon.* No, I assure you, the wall is downe, that parted
 their fathers. Will it please you, to see the Epilogue, or to
 heare a Bergomaske daunce, between two of our cōpany?

A Midfommer nights dreame.

Duke. No Epilogue, I pray you. For your Play needs no excuse. Neuer excuse: For when the Players are all dead, there neede none to be blamed. Mary, if hee that writ it, had playd *Pyramus*, and hangd himselfe in *Thisbies* garter, it would haue bene a fine tragedy: and so it is truely, and very notably discharg'd. But come your Burgomaske: let your Epilogue alone.

The iron tongue of midnight hath tolde twelue,
Louers to bed, tis almost Fairy time.

I feare we shall outleepe the comming morne,
As much as wee this night haue ouerwatcht,
This palpable grosse Play hath well beguil'd
The heauie gate of night. Sweete friends, to bed.
A fortnight holde we this solemnitie,
In nightly Reuels, and new iollity.

Exeunt.

Enter Pucke.

Puck. Now the hungry Lyons roares,
And the wolfe beholds the Moone;
Whilst the heauie ploughman snores,
All with weary taske fore doone,
Now the wadded brands doe glowe,
Whilst the scricch-owle, scricching lowd,
puts the wretch, that lyes in woe,
In remembrance of a shrowde.
Now it is the time of night,
That the graues, all gaping wide,
Euery one lets forth his spright,
In the Churchway paths to glide.
And wee Fairies, that doe ruane,
By the triple *Hecates* teame,
From the presence of the Sunne,
Following darkeness like a dreame,
Now are frolick: not a mouse
Shall disturbe this hallowed house.
I am sent, with broome, before,

To

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A Midsummer nightes dreame.

354 to sweepe the dust, behinde the dore.
Enter King and Queene of Fairies, with all their traine.
Ob. through the house giue glimmering light,
 By the dead and drowisie fier,
 Euery Elfe and Fairy spright,
 358 Hop as light as birde from brier,
 And this dittie after mee, Sing, and daunce it trippingly,
Tita. First rehearse your song by rote,
 to each word a warbling note.
 362 Hand in hand, with Fairy grace,
 Will we sing and blesse this place.
Ob. Now, vntill the breake of day,
 through this house, each Fairy stray.
 366 to the best bride bed will wee:
 Which by vs shall blessed be:
 And the issue, there create,
 Euer shall be fortunate:
 370 So shall all the couples three
 Euer true in louing be:
 And the blots of natures hand
 Shall not in their issue stand.
 374 Neuer mole, hare-lippe, nor scarre,
 Nor marke prodigious, such as are
 Despised in natiuitie,
 Shall vpon their children be.
 378 With this field deaw consecrate,
 Euery Fairy take his garte,
 And each seuerall chamber blesse,
 through this palace, with sweete peace,
 382 Euer shall in safety rest,
 And the owner of it blest.
 trippe away: make no stay:
 Meete me all, by breake of day. *Exeunt.*
 386 *Robin.* If we thadowes haue offended,
 thinke but this (and all is mended)

A Midtommer nightes dreame.

that you haue but slumbred here,
 While these visions did appeare,
 And this weake and idle theame,
 No more yielding but a dreame,
 Gentles, doe not reprehend.
 If you pardon, wee will mend,
 And, as I am an honest *Puck*,
 If we haue vnearned luck,
 Now to scape the Serpents tongue,
 We will make amends, ere long:
 Else, the *Puck* a lyer call.
 So, good night vnto you all.
 Giue me your hands, if we be friends:
 And *Robin* shall restore amends,

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