

## **A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM**

### **ACT 1, SCENE 1**

#### **Egeus**

Full of vexation come I, with complaint  
Against my child, my daughter Hermia. --  
Stand forth, Demetrius. -- My noble lord,  
This man hath my consent to marry her. --  
Stand forth, Lysander. -- And my gracious Duke,  
This man hath bewitch'd the bosom of my child.  
Thou, thou, Lysander, thou hast given her rhymes,  
And interchanged love-tokens with my child.  
Thou hast by moonlight at her window sung  
With feigning voice verses of feigning love,  
And stolen the impression of her fantasy.  
With cunning hast thou filched my daughter's heart,  
Turned her obedience, which is due to me,  
To stubborn harshness. And, my gracious Duke,  
Be it so she will not here before your grace  
Consent to marry with Demetrius,  
I beg the ancient privilege of Athens,  
As she is mine, I may dispose of her:  
Which shall be either to this gentleman  
Or to her death, according to our law  
Immediately provided in that case.

### **ACT 2, SCENE 1**

#### **Titania**

These are the forgeries of jealousy:  
And never, since the middle summer's spring,  
Met we on hill, in dale, forest or mead,  
By paved fountain or by rushy brook,  
Or in the beached margent of the sea,  
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,  
But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.  
The human mortals want their winter cheer.  
No night is now with hymn or carol blessed.  
Therefore the moon, the governess of floods,  
Pale in her anger, washes all the air,  
That rheumatic diseases do abound:  
And thorough this distemperature we see  
The seasons alter: the spring, the summer,

The childing autumn, angry winter, change  
Their wonted liveries, and the mazèd world,  
By their increase, now knows not which is which;  
And this same progeny of evils comes  
From our debate, from our dissension.  
We are their parents and original.

**Oberon**

Do you amend it then; it lies in you:  
Why should Titania cross her Oberon?  
I do but beg a little changeling boy,  
To be my henchman.

**Titania**

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

**Oberon**

Well, go thy way: thou shalt not from this grove  
Till I torment thee for this injury.  
My gentle Puck, come hither. Thou rememberest  
That very time I saw, but thou couldst not,  
Flying between the cold moon and the earth,  
Cupid all arm'd: a certain aim he took  
At a fair vestal throned by the west,  
And loosed his love-shaft smartly from his bow,  
As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts.  
It fell upon a little western flower,  
Before milk-white, now purple with love's wound,  
And maidens call it love-in-idleness.  
Fetch me that flower; the herb I shew'd thee once:  
The juice of it on sleeping eye-lids laid  
Will make or man or woman madly dote  
Upon the next live creature that it sees.  
Fetch me this herb; and be thou here again  
Ere the leviathan can swim a league.

**Robin**

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

**A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM**  
**By William Shakespeare**

**Oberon**

Having once this juice,  
I'll watch Titania when she is asleep,  
And drop the liquor of it in her eyes.  
The next thing then she waking looks upon,  
Be it on lion, bear, or wolf, or bull,  
On meddling monkey, or on busy ape,  
She shall pursue it with the soul of love.

**ACT 3, SCENE 2**

**HELENA**

These vows are Hermia's. Will you give her o'er?

**LYSANDER**

I had no judgment when to her I swore.

**HELENA**

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

**LYSANDER**

Demetrius loves her, and he loves not you.

**DEMETRIUS**

*waking up*

O Helen, goddess, nymph, perfect, divine!  
To what, my love, shall I compare thine eyne?

**HELENA**

O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent  
To set against me for your merriment.  
To vow and swear and superpraise my parts,  
When, I am sure, you hate me with your hearts.

**LYSANDER**

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

**DEMETRIUS**

Lysander, keep thy Hermia. I will none.

If e'er I loved her, all that love is gone.

**HERMIA**

Thou art not by mine eye, Lysander, found;  
Mine ear, I thank it, brought me to thy sound.  
But why unkindly didst thou leave me so?

**LYSANDER**

Why should he stay whom love doth press to go?

**HERMIA**

What love could press Lysander from my side?

**LYSANDER**

Lysander's love, that would not let him bide.  
Why seek'st thou me? Could not this make thee know  
The hate I bear thee made me leave thee so?

**HERMIA**

You speak not as you think. It cannot be.

**HELENA**

Lo, she is one of this confederacy!  
Now I perceive they have conjoined all three  
To fashion this false sport in spite of me.—  
Injurious Hermia, most ungrateful maid,  
Is all the counsel that we two have shared,  
The sisters' vows—O, is all forgot?  
And will you rent our ancient love asunder,  
To join with men in scorning your poor friend?

**HERMIA**

I am amazèd at your words.  
I scorn you not. It seems that you scorn me.

**HELENA**

Ay, do. Persever, counterfeit sad looks,  
Make mouths upon me when I turn my back,  
Wink each at other, hold the sweet jest up.

**LYSANDER**

Helen, I love thee. By my life, I do.

**DEMETRIUS**

I say I love thee more than he can do.

**LYSANDER**

If thou say so, withdraw and prove it too.

**HERMIA**

Am not I Hermia? Are not you Lysander?  
Since night you loved me; yet since night you left me.  
Why, then, you left me—O, the gods forbid!—  
In earnest, shall I say?

**LYSANDER**

Ay, by my life,  
And never did desire to see thee more.  
Be certain, nothing truer, 'tis no jest  
That I do hate thee and love Helena. *Hermia turns him loose*

**HERMIA**

O me! You juggler, you cankerblossom,  
You thief of love! What, have you come by night  
And stol'n my love's heart from him?

**HELENA**

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

**HERMIA**

"Puppet"? Why so? Ay, that way goes the game.  
Now I perceive that she hath made compare  
Between our statures; she hath urged her height,  
And with her personage, her tall personage,  
Her height, forsooth, she hath prevailed with him.  
And are you grown so high in his esteem  
Because I am so dwarfish and so low?  
How low am I, thou painted maypole? Speak!  
How low am I? I am not yet so low  
But that my nails can reach unto thine eyes.

**HELENA**

Good Hermia, do not be so bitter with me.  
I evermore did love you, Hermia,  
Did ever keep your counsels, never wronged you—  
Save that, in love unto Demetrius,  
I told him of your stealth unto this wood.  
He followed you; for love, I followed him.  
But he hath chid me hence and threaten'd me;  
And now, so you will let me quiet go,

To Athens will I bear my folly back.

**LYSANDER**

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

**DEMETRIUS**

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

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

**HERMIA** 'Little' again! nothing but 'low' and 'little'!  
Why will you suffer her to flout me thus?  
Let me come to her.

**LYSANDER**

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

**DEMETRIUS** Let her alone: speak not of Helena;

**LYSANDER** Now she holds me not;  
Now follow, if thou darest, to try whose right,  
Of thine or mine, is most in Helena.

**DEMETRIUS** Follow! nay, I'll go with thee, cheek by jole.

*LYSANDER and DEMETRIUS exit*

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

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

*HELENA exits*

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

*HERMIA exits*

**Robin**

My fairy lord, this must be done with haste,  
For night's swift dragons cut the clouds full fast,  
And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger;  
At whose approach, ghosts, wandering here and there,  
Troop home to churchyards: damned spirits all,  
That in crossways and floods have burial,  
Already to their wormy beds are gone;  
For fear lest day should look their shames upon,  
They willfully themselves exile from light  
And must for aye consort with black-brow'd night.

**ACT 4, SCENE 1****BOTTOM***Awaking*

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

**ACT 5, SCENE 1****Bottom**

Sweet Moon, I thank thee for thy sunny beams.  
I thank thee, Moon, for shining now so bright;  
For, by thy gracious, golden, glittering gleams  
I trust to take of truest Thisbe sight.  
But stay, O spite!  
But mark, poor knight,  
What dreadful dole is here!  
Eyes, do you see?  
How can it be?  
O dainty duck! O dear!  
Thy mantle good,

What, stain'd with blood!  
Approach, ye Furies fell!  
O Fates, come, come,  
Cut thread and thrum;  
Quail, crush, conclude, and quell!  
O wherefore, Nature, didst thou lions frame?  
Since lion vile hath here deflower'd my dear? ---  
Which is -- no, no, which was -- the fairest dame  
That lived, that loved, that liked, that look'd  
with cheer.  
Come, tears, confound;  
Out, sword, and wound  
The pap of Pyramus.  
Ay, that left pap,  
Where heart doth hop.  
Thus die I, thus, thus, thus.  
Now am I dead,  
Now am I fled;  
My soul is in the sky:  
Tongue, lose thy light;  
Moon take thy flight,  
Now die, die, die, die, die.

## **ACT 5, SCENE 1**

### **Robin**

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

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

...

If we shadows have offended,  
Think but this, and all is mended,  
That you have but slumber'd here  
While these visions did appear.  
And this weak and idle theme,  
No more yielding but a dream,  
Gentles, do not reprehend:  
if you pardon, we will mend:  
And, as I am an honest Puck,  
If we have unearned luck  
Now to 'scape the serpent's tongue,  
We will make amends ere long;  
Else the Puck a liar call;  
So, good night unto you all.  
Give me your hands, if we be friends,  
And Robin shall restore amends.

**END**