

A MIDSUMMER NIGHTS DREAM

Written by

William Shakespeare

Abridged and written for the screen by

Coram Shakespeare Schools Foundation

1

INT. A GRAND HOUSE, ATHENS - DAY

1

THESEUS, the Duke of Athens and most powerful person in the Kingdom is holding court with:

HIPPOLYTA, the recently defeated Queen of the Amazons and Theseus' wife to be in just a few days. She is powerful in her own right, but much suppressed in this patriarchal society;

HERMIA, a young Athenian woman with a mind very much of her own;

EGEUS, Hermia's noble father who is overbearing and controlling of her;

DEMETRIUS, a fickle young gentleman of the court, who wants to marry Hermia and has Egeus' blessing;

And LYSANDER, a young Athenian nobleman who is Hermia's true love.

They are all present so Theseus can rule on who Hermia should marry - and his word is the law.

EGEUS

Happy be Theseus, our renowned Duke!

THESEUS

Thanks, good Egeus: what's the news with thee?

EGEUS

Full of vexation am I, with complaint
Against my child, my daughter
Hermia.
Stand forth Demetrius.

Demetrius steps forward with the confidence of a nobleman.

EGEUS (CONT'D)

My noble lord,
This man hath my consent to marry
her.
Stand forth Lysander;

Lysander steps forward with a little more humility.

EGEUS (CONT'D)

and my gracious Duke,
This man hath bewitched the bosom
of my child.

(MORE)

EGEUS (CONT'D)

(accusingly to Lysander)

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

THESEUS

What say you, Hermia? Be advised,
 fair maid.
 Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

HERMIA

So is Lysander.
 I beseech your Grace, that I may
 know
 The worst that may befall me in
 this case,
 If I refuse to wed Demetrius.

THESEUS

Either to die the death, or abjure
 For ever the society of men.
 Take time to pause, until the next
 new moon,
 The sealing-day betwixt my love and
 me.

While Hermia contemplates the horrible choice she has been given, Demetrius cockily demands she see reason.

DEMETRIUS

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

Again with more humility, Lysander fights his corner.

LYSANDER

I am, my Lord, as well derived as
 he.
 Why should not I then prosecute my
 right?
 Demetrius made love to Helena,
 And won her soul;

(MORE)

LYSANDER (CONT'D)
 and she, sweet lady, dotes
 Upon this inconstant man.

And this intrigues Theseus.

THESEUS
 I must confess that I have heard so
 much.
 Come, my Hippolyta; what cheer, my
 love ?

They all depart following Theseus, leaving just Lysander and Hermia behind. They affectionately embrace before planning - they are desperate to find a solution.

LYSANDER
 Ay me! For aught that I could ever
 read,
 Could ever hear by tale or history,
 The course of true love never did
 run smooth.

HERMIA
 If true lovers have been ever
 crossed,
 Then let us teach our trial
 patience.

LYSANDER
 A good persuasion; therefore hear
 me, Hermia:
 I have a widow aunt,
 From Athens is her house remote
 seven leagues,
 And to that place the sharp
 Athenian law
 Cannot pursue us. If thou lov'st
 me, then,
 Steal forth thy father's house
 tomorrow night;
 And in the wood, there will I stay
 for thee.

HERMIA
 My good Lysander!

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

Enter HELENA, Hermia's oldest friend. She is obsessed with Demetrius and devastated that he wants to marry her friend.

HERMIA

God speed, fair Helena! Wither
away?

She's not embarrassed to show how obsessed she is.

HELENA

Call you me fair? Demetrius loves
your fair.
O teach me how you look and with
what art
You sway the motion of Demetrius'
heart!

HERMIA

The more I hate, the more he
follows me.

Or how saddened.

HELENA

The more I love, the more he hateth
me.

HERMIA

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

LYSANDER

Tomorrow night, through Athens'
gates
We have devised to steal.

HERMIA

And in the wood,
There, my Lysander and myself shall
meet.
Keep word, Lysander; till tomorrow
deep midnight.

Hermia leaves.

LYSANDER

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

Lysander leaves.

Helena, now alone, ponders on why she should be left on the
shelf, it's all very unfair.

HELENA

Through Athens I am thought as fair
as she.
But what of that? Demetrius thinks
not so;
He will not know what all but he do
know.
I will go tell him of fair Hermia's
flight;
Then to the wood will he tomorrow
night
Pursue her.

2 EXT. OUTSIDE THESEUS' PALACE - DAY

2

A group of players 'The Rude Mechanicals' gather, they are led by PETER QUINCE, a simple man, a carpenter, obsessed with theatre who dreams of putting on a play for the Duke. His other players are:

SNUG, a joiner who is not the brightest and knows as much, but is excited about the opportunities that may arise from this.

NICK BOTTOM, an egotistical weaver whose overconfidence far exceeds his talent.

FRANCIS FLUTE, a bellows mender who is more meek and more willing to let others take the limelight. He has a thick stubble.

TOM SNOOT, a tinker who lacks both intelligence and imagination.

ROBIN STARVELING, a tailor who is introverted, sensitive and prone to cowardice.

Quince has them assembled ahead of him and consults a scroll.

QUINCE

Is all our company here?
Here is the scroll of every man's
name, which is thought fit, through
all Athens, to play before the Duke
and the Duchess on his wedding-day
at night.

BOTTOM

First, good Peter Quince, say what
the play treats on.

QUINCE

Marry, our play is: 'The most lamentable comedy and most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisbe.'

BOTTOM

A very good piece of work, I assure you. Now, good Peter Quince, call forth your actors by the scroll.

QUINCE

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

BOTTOM

Ready. Name what part I am for, and proceed.

QUINCE

You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus.

BOTTOM

What is Pyramus? A lover or a tyrant?

QUINCE

A lover, that kills himself most gallant for love.

BOTTOM

That will ask some tears in the true performing of it.

QUINCE

Francis Flute, the bellows-mender?

FLUTE

Here, Peter Quince.

QUINCE

Flute, you must take Thisbe on you.

FLUTE

What is Thisbe? A wandering knight?

QUINCE

It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

FLUTE

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

BOTTOM

Let me play Thisbe too. I'll speak
in a monstrous little voice:

(he adopts a deep voice
for Pyramus)

'Thisne, Thisne.'

(and switches instantly to
a high pitched one for
Thisbe)

'Ah Pyramus, my lover dear! Thy
Thisbe dear, and lady dear!'

QUINCE

No, no, you must play Pyramus; and
Flute, you Thisbe.

BOTTOM

Well, proceed.

QUINCE

Snug, the joiner?

SNUG

Here, Peter Quince.

QUINCE

You must play the lion's part.

SNUG

Have you the lion's part written?
For I am slow of study .

QUINCE

You may do it extempore, for it is
nothing but roaring.

BOTTOM

Let me play the lion too. I will
roar, that I will make the Duke
say, 'Let him roar again, let him
roar again!'

QUINCE

You can play no part but Pyramus.

Quince hands out the scrolls of the play to the players.

QUINCE (CONT'D)

Masters, here are your parts;
tomorrow night meet me in the
palace wood. There will we
rehearse. I pray you, fail me not.

But Bottom cannot let another have the last word.

BOTTOM

Take pains; be perfect; adieu!

3 EXT. A WOOD NEAR ATHENS - LATER

3

We see PUCK, a fun loving and mischievous woodland sprite.

Puck is joined by a FAIRY, a magical being that looks down on Puck as unsophisticated.

PUCK

How now, spirit, wither wander you?

FAIRY

Our Queen and all her elves come here anon.

This is not good.

PUCK

The King doth keep his revels here tonight;
Take heed the queen come not within his sight;
For Oberon is passing fell and wrath,
Because that she as her attendant hath
A lovely boy stolen from an Indian king .
Make room, fairy! Here comes Oberon.

FAIRY

And here my mistress! Would that he were gone !

OBERON and TITANIA along with their FAIRIES meet in the centre having approached from different directions.

OBERON is the King of the Fairies who can be kind or cruel depending on his mood and treats the emotions of others as a plaything dependent on his whim.

TITANIA is his wife and the Fairy Queen, she is strong willed, equally magical and independent.

Their FAIRIES serve them without question.

It is apparent from the first words spoken that they are in the middle of a falling out.

OBERON

Ill met by moonlight, proud
Titania.

TITANIA

What, jealous Oberon? Fairies, skip
hence: I have forsworn his bed and
company.

OBERON

Why should Titania cross her
Oberon?
I do but beg a little changeling
boy
To be my henchman.

TITANIA

The fairy land buys not the child
of me.

OBERON

How long within this wood intend
you stay?

TITANIA

Perchance till after Theseus'
wedding-day.

OBERON

Give me that boy.

TITANIA

Not for thy fairy kingdom. Fairies,
away!

Titania and her Fairies leave.

Oberon summons Puck to come close.

OBERON

My gentle Puck, come hither. Thou
rememb'rest
A little western flower, called
'Love-in-idleness'?
Fetch me that flower.
The juice of it on sleeping eyelids
laid
Will make or man or woman madly
dote
Upon the next live creature that it
sees.

PUCK

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

Puck excitedly leaves.

Oberon plots aloud, delighted by his own mischievousness.

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 -
On meddling monkey, or on busy ape
-
She shall pursue it with the soul
of love.
And ere I take this charm from off
her sight,
I'll make her render up her page
to me.
But who comes here? I am invisible,
And I will overhear their
conference.

Oberon makes himself all but invisible to our eyes as
Demetrius enters, with Helena trailing desperately behind.

Demetrius is frustrated by his pursuer.

DEMETRIUS

I love thee not, therefore pursue
me not.
I am sick when I do look on thee.

But even these cruel words don't stop her talking with
uninhibited praise and adoration.

HELENA

And I am sick when I look not on
you.

DEMETRIUS

Let me go;
Or, if thou follow me, do not
believe
But I shall do thee mischief in the
wood.

Demetrius leaves, in a huff.

HELENA

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

Helena follows, devoted as ever.

Oberon makes himself visible again, he is excited about the game he can play with Demetrius and Helena.

OBERON

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

Puck returns.

OBERON (CONT'D)

Hast thou the flower there?
Welcome, wanderer.

Puck proudly presents the flower.

PUCK

Ay, there it is.

He hands it to Oberon.

OBERON

I pray thee give it me.
With the juice of this I'll streak
Titania's eyes,
And make her full of hateful
fantasies.

Oberon returns some of the petals to Puck.

OBERON (CONT'D)

Take thou some of it, and seek
through this grove:
A sweet Athenian lady is in love
With a disdainful youth: anoint
his eyes,
But do it when the next thing he
espies
May be the lady. Thou shalt know
the man
By the Athenian garments he hath
on.

PUCK

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

4 EXT. A DIFFERENT PART OF THE WOOD - NIGHT 4

Titania is lying in bed, surrounded by her Fairies.

TITANIA

Come, sing me now asleep.

The Fairies sing.

FAIRIES

You spotted snakes with double
tongue,
Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen;
Newts and blind-worms , do no
wrong,
Come not near our fairy queen.

Titania falls quickly asleep and the Fairies leave.

No sooner have they gone than Oberon approaches and squeezes
the juice of the flower onto Titania's eyelids and talks to
her quietly, but as if she were awake.

OBERON

What thou seest when thou dost
wake,
Do it for thy true love take.

5 EXT. A SMALL CLEARING IN THE WOOD - NIGHT 5

Lysander and Hermia, a little lost and tired from their trek,
are about to settle for the night.

LYSANDER

Fair love, I have forgot our way.
We'll rest us.

HERMIA

Be it so, Lysander; find you out a
bed,
For I upon this bank will rest my
head.

Hermia lies with her head upon a slightly raised bit of
grassy, mossy ground. Lysander lays next to her.

LYSANDER

One turf shall serve as pillow for
us both;
One heart, one bed, two bosoms, and
one troth.

HERMIA

Nay, good Lysander; for my sake, my
dear,
Lie further off yet, do not lie so
near.

Reluctantly gets up and moves further away to lie down. They quickly fall asleep.

And Puck enters, he surveys the scene - it is everything Oberon said it would be.

PUCK

This is he my master said
Despised the Athenian maid:
And here the maiden, sleeping
sound,
On the dank and dirty ground.

Puck drops the magic flower on Lysander's eyelids.

Demetrius enters the scene, with Helena once again following closely behind. They do not notice Hermia or Lysander, and Puck has made himself invisible to them.

HELENA

Stay, though thou kill me, sweet
Demetrius.

DEMETRIUS

I charge thee hence, and do not
haunt me thus.

Demetrius can't stand this. He stomps off in frustration.

As she moves to pursue Helena catches a glimpse of Lysander and goes to investigate, she doesn't see Hermia who is obscured from her view.

HELENA

But who is here?
Lysander on the ground!
Dead or asleep? I see no blood, no
wound.
Lysander, if you live, good sir,
awake!

Lysander wakes up, takes on glance at Helena and instantly falls madly in love with her. He begins waxing lyrical almost before he is fully awake.

LYSANDER

And run through fire I will for thy
sweet sake!
Not Hermia, but Helena I love:
Who will not change a raven for a
dove?

Helena assumes he is mocking her.

HELENA

O, that a lady of one man refused
Should of another therefore be
abused!

She leaves. Lysander, so certain in his love for Helena, goes to relieve himself of his obligations to Hermia.

LYSANDER

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

He emotionlessly moves away from Hermia and gives himself a pep talk.

LYSANDER (CONT'D)

And, all my powers, address your
love and might
To honour Helen, and to be her
knight.

Lysander leaves in pursuit of Helena.

Quickly after Hermia wakes from a nightmare.

HERMIA

Help me, Lysander, help me!

She looks around, but he is nowhere to be seen. She is very concerned.

HERMIA (CONT'D)

Lysander! What, removed? Lysander!
Lord!
What, out of hearing? Gone? No
sound, no word?
No? Then I will perceive you are
not nigh.

(MORE)

HERMIA (CONT'D)
 Either death or you I'll find
 immediately.

Hermia sets off in pursuit of Lysander, though she has no idea which direction he went.

6 EXT. A DIFFERENT PART OF THE WOOD - LATER 6

Titania is still sleeping and is not woken by the arrival of all six of the Mechanicals.

Bottom immediately tries to take over.

BOTTOM
 Are we well met?

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

Quince indicates a piece of overgrown wall.

QUINCE (CONT'D)
 We must have a wall in the great
 chamber; for Pyramus and Thisbe,
 says the story, did talk through
 the chink of a wall.

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

BOTTOM
 Some man or other must present
 Wall; and let him hold his fingers
 thus;

He makes a 'V' with his fingers to indicate his meaning.

BOTTOM (CONT'D)
 and through that cranny shall
 Pyramus and Thisbe whisper.

QUINCE
 If that may be, then all is all.
 Pyramus, you begin; when you have
 spoken your speech, enter into that
 brake.

Puck appears behind them unseen, and mischievously spies on the group.

PUCK

What hempen home-spuns have we
swaggering here,
So near the cradle of the fairy
queen?
What, a play toward? I'll be an
auditor.

The group begin to perform their play. They are not good.

QUINCE

Speak, Pyramus. Thisbe, stand
forth.

BOTTOM

(with the deep Pyramus
voice)
Thisbe! Thisbe!

Bottom moves behind the wall, Puck follows him, grinning.

PUCK

A stranger Pyramus than e'er played
here!

FLUTE

Must I speak now?

QUINCE

Ay, marry, must you.

FLUTE

(high pitched, as Thisbe)
Most radiant Pyramus, most lily-
white of hue,
Of colour like the red rose on
triumphant briar,
As truest horse, that yet would
never tire.
I'll meet thee, Pyramus, at Ninny's
tomb.

So early into the play and Quince is already exacerbated by the performance of the players.

QUINCE

'Ninus' tomb', man! You speak all
your part at once! Pyramus, enter:
your cue is past; it is 'never
tire.'

FLUTE

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

Bottom re-enters, but now he has an Ass's head. He is completely unaware of this development.

BOTTOM
 (deep voiced as Pyramus)
 If I were fair, Thisbe, I were only
 thine.

Quince is horrified and terrified by this sight, as are the rest of the players.

QUINCE
 O monstrous! O strange! We are
 haunted; pray, masters, fly!
 Masters, help!

The rest flee, leaving just Bottom and Quince.

BOTTOM
 (innocently)
 Why do they run away?

QUINCE
 (still scared)
 Bless thee Bottom, bless thee! Thou
 art translated!

Quince considers for a moment but then also flees.

Believing they are playing a prank, Bottom becomes belligerent.

BOTTOM
 I see their knavery: this is to
 make an ass of me, to fright me. I
 will sing, that they shall hear I
 am not afraid.
 (singing)
 The ousel cock, so black of hue,
 With orange-tawny bill -

The singing wakes Titania and the first thing she sees is Bottom - she of course falls instantly in love with him.

TITANIA
 What angel wakes me from my
 flowery bed?

BOTTOM (CONT'D)
 (still singing)
 The throstle with his note so
 true,
 The wren with little quill -

TITANIA (CONT'D)
 (interrupting, enraptured)
 I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing
 again;

(MORE)

TITANIA (CONT'D)

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

BOTTOM

Methinks, mistress, you should have
little reason for that.

TITANIA

Thou art as wise as thou art
beautiful.

She summons her Fairies

TITANIA (CONT'D)

Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Moth, and
Mustardseed!

Enter PEASEBLOSSOM, COBWEB, MOTH and MUSTARDSEED, Titania's
inner circle of Fairies.

PEASEBLOSSOM

Ready.

COBWEB

And I.

MOTH

And I.

MUSTARDSEED

And I.

ALL FAIRIES

Where shall we go?

TITANIA

(indicating Bottom)

Be kind and courteous to this
gentleman.

The Fairies are immediately awed as instructed.

PEASEBLOSSOM

Hail, mortal!

COBWEB

Hail!

MOTH

Hail!

MUSTARDSEED

Hail!

TITANIA

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

Bottom unwittingly makes a noisy bray, Titania may be in
love, but she's not a fan of that.

TITANIA (CONT'D)

Tie up my love's tongue, bring him
silently.

7

EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE WOOD - LATER

7

Oberon is itching to know how his plan is progressing.

OBERON

I wonder if Titania be awaked.

He sees Puck approaching.

OBERON (CONT'D)

Here comes my messenger. How now,
mad spirit!

PUCK

A crew of patches , rude
mechanicals ,
Were met together to rehearse a
play
Intended for great Theseus' nuptial-
day.
The shallowest thick-skin of that
barren sort,
Who Pyramus presented, in their
sport
Forsook his scene and entered in a
brake ;
When I did him at this advantage
take,
An ass's nole I fixed on his head.
When in that moment, so it came to
pass,
Titania waked, and straightaway
loved an ass.

The pair are both amused by their prank, but Oberon is
especially pleased.

OBERON

This falls out better than I could
devise.
But hast thou yet latched the
Athenian eyes
With the love-juice, as I did bid
thee do?

PUCK

I took him sleeping - that is
finished too -

Just then Demetrius enters this part of the wood, followed by
Hermia. Oberon and Puck make themselves invisible once more.

OBERON

Stand close: this is the same
Athenian.

PUCK

This is the woman, but not this the
man.

DEMETRIUS

(to Hermia)
O, why rebuke you him that loves
you so?

HERMIA

If thou hast slain Lysander kill me
too.

Demetrius has no idea what she's talking about.

DEMETRIUS

I am not guilty of Lysander's
blood;
Nor is he dead, for aught that I
can tell.

HERMIA

(calling out)
Lysander! Alack where are you?

Hermia flees into the woods, Demetrius is at a loss.

DEMETRIUS

There is no following her in this
fierce vein.

He lies down to sleep. Oberon doesn't like mistakes, he wants
this rectified quickly.

OBERON

Thou hast mistaken quite,
 And laid the love-juice on some
 true-love's sight.
 About the wood go swifter than the
 wind,
 And Helena of Athens look thou
 find.
 By some illusion see thou bring her
 here;
 I'll charm his eyes against she do
 appear.

Puck is eager to make amends.

PUCK

I go, I go, look how I go!
 Swifter than arrow from the
 Tartar's bow .

Puck leaves.

Oberon squeezes the juice onto Demetrius' eyes.

True to his word, Puck returns in seconds.

PUCK (CONT'D)

Captain of our fairy band,
 Helena is here at hand,
 And the youth, mistook by me.
 Shall we their fond pageant see ?
 Lord, what fools these mortals be!

Puck and Oberon move to a good vantage point and become invisible.

Helena enters, followed by a desperate Lysander.

LYSANDER

(pleading)

I had no judgement when to Hermia I
 swore.

HELENA

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

The noise wakens Demetrius, who takes one look at Helena and falls instantly in love with her - and can't help but express it.

DEMETRIUS

O Helen, goddess, nymph, perfect
 divine!

But Helena is so used to rejection she believes this to be more fun at her expense.

HELENA

O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent
To set against me for your merriment.
You both are rivals, and love Hermia;
And now both rivals, to mock Helena.

And Lysander sees an opportunity to win favour.

LYSANDER

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

Demetrius sees Hermia approaching - might this be his chance?

DEMETRIUS

Lysander, look where thy love comes; yonder is thy dear.

Hermia enters and is delighted to see her Lysander alive, she hurries to him.

HERMIA

Lysander, why unkindly didst thou leave me so?

Lysander is not so bothered.

LYSANDER

Why should he stay whom love doth press to go?

Hermia is, to say the least, confused.

HERMIA

What love could press Lysander from my side?

LYSANDER

Fair Helena.
My love, my life, my soul, fair Helena!

This betrayal swiftly brings Hermia to a fury.

HERMIA

(to Helena)

You canker-blossom , you thief of
love! What, have you come by night
and stolen my love's heart from
him?

HELENA

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

HERMIA

Puppet? Why so!
Because I am so dwarfish and so
low?
How low am I? I am not yet so low
But that my nails can reach unto
thine eyes.

Enraged, Hermia rushes to attack Helena, who in turn is
scared and looks to her two devoted men for help.

HELENA

Let her not strike me: you perhaps
may think,
Because she is something lower than
myself,
That I can match her.

HERMIA

'Lower'! Hark, again!

Between them the men hold Hermia back as she struggles
fiercely to get to Helena.

HELENA

Though she be but little, she is
fierce.

HERMIA

'Little' again? Nothing but 'low'
and 'little'?
Let me come to her!

Lysander casts Hermia aside, believing that insulting her
height will win him Helena's favour.

LYSANDER

Get you gone, you dwarf,
You minimus, you bead, you acorn.

Hermia chases Helena from the scene.

Lysander turns his attention to his love rival Demetrius.

Now follow, if thou dar'st, to try
 whose right,
 Of thine or mine, is most in
 Helena.

DEMETRIUS

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

Demetrius and Lysander leave together, each jostling the
 other to get in front.

Oberon and Puck reappear.

Puck is apologetic.

PUCK

Believe me, king of shadows, I
 mistook.

OBERON

Thou seest these lovers seek a
 place to fight.
 Lead these testy rivals so astray
 As one come not within another's
 way.
 Till o'er their brows death-
 counterfeiting sleep
 With leaden legs and batty wings
 doth creep ;
 Then crush this herb into
 Lysander's eye.
 When they next wake, all this
 derision
 Shall seem a dream, and fruitless
 vision.

PUCK

My fairy lord, this must be done
 with haste.

Oberon leaves and we follow Puck as he searches for the men.

PUCK (CONT'D)

Up and down, up and down,
 I will lead them up and down -
 Here comes one.

He finds Lysander

LYSANDER

(shouting)
 Where art thou, proud Demetrius?

Puck hides himself and adopts Demetrius' voice.

PUCK
Here, villain! Follow me to plainer
ground.

Lysander disappears into the woods in pursuit of the false Demetrius.

Immediately after, Demetrius appears in the same spot.

DEMETRIUS
(shouting)
Lysander! Where dost thou hide?

Puck hides in a different place and adopts Lysander's voice.

PUCK
Follow my voice; we'll try no
manhood here.

Demetrius leaves in pursuit of the false Lysander.

8 EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

8

We can see Puck overlooking the scene.

We see Lysander run in, exhausted. He stops. He can go no further.

LYSANDER
The villain is much lighter-heeled
than I:
I followed fast, but faster did he
fly,
That fallen am I in dark uneven
way,
And here will rest me.

Lysander flops down to the floor where he stands, he falls asleep almost instantly.

Soon after Demetrius runs in, he too is exhausted and can go no further. He is just metres from Lysander but cannot see him.

DEMETRIUS
Faintness constraineth me.
By day's approach, Lysander, look
to be visited.

Demetrius flops down to the floor where he stands, he falls asleep almost instantly.

Now Helena enters, she is shattered. She cannot see the others.

HELENA

O weary night, o long and tedious
night.

She lies down and sleeps.

Puck is pleased that his plan is working.

PUCK

Yet but three? Come one more.
Two of both kinds makes up four.

After a brief wait Hermia arrives, she too is exhausted and fails to see the others.

HERMIA

Heavens shield Lysander, if they
mean a fray!

She looks around and finds a comfortable looking place, lays down and goes to sleep. Puck springs into action.

PUCK

I'll apply
To your eye
Gentle lover, remedy.

Puck squeezes the antidote on Lysander's eyes.

PUCK (CONT'D)

Jack shall have Jill
Naught shall go ill
The man shall have his mare again,
and all shall be well.

9 EXT. WOODS - LATER

9

It is the same section of wood where the sleeping lovers lie, but they are not yet seen.

Titania enters with Bottom and her Fairies. She is unaware that Oberon is following just behind. She sits and flirts with Bottom.

TITANIA

Come, sit thee down upon this
flowery bed,
While I thy amiable cheeks do coy.

BOTTOM

I must to the barber's, for
methinks I am marvellous hairy
about the face.

TITANIA

O say, sweet love, what thou
desirest to eat.

BOTTOM

Methinks I have a great desire to a
bottle of hay: good hay, sweet hay,
hath no fellow.

He brays as he yawns.

BOTTOM (CONT'D)

But I pray you, let none of your
people stir me; I have an
exposition of sleep come upon me.

Titania gently embraces him.

TITANIA

Sleep thou, and I will wind thee in
my arms.
Fairies, be gone, and be always
away.

The Fairies leave, and Titania whispers to Bottom.

TITANIA (CONT'D)

O, how I love thee! How I dote on
thee!

They both sleep.

Puck enters the scene and heads to Oberon, who is happy.

OBERON

Welcome, good Puck: seest thou this
sweet sight?
Meeting her of late behind the
wood,
I did ask of her her changeling
child;
Which straight she gave me.
And now I have the boy, I will undo
This hateful imperfection of her
eyes.

Oberon drops the antidote onto Titania's eyes. It causes her
to wake and rise.

She reacts as if it were all a dream.

TITANIA
My Oberon! Methought I was
enamoured of an ass.

OBERON
(indicating Bottom)
There lies your love.

TITANIA
O, how mine eyes do loathe his
visage now!

OBERON
Silence awhile. Puck, take off this
head.

Puck goes over and returns Bottom's head to it's original
state.

PUCK
Now, when thou wak'st, with thine
own fool's eyes peep.

The magical beings all leave, only the four lovers and bottom
remain, all deeply asleep.

10 EXT. WOODS - MORNING

10

Theseus, Hippolyta and Egeus walk into the section of
woodland that is littered with their fellow Athenians.

Egeus is the first to notice anyone, seeing Hermia.

EGEUS
My lord, this is my daughter here
asleep,

And it's as if scales have fallen from his eyes, suddenly he
can see everyone.

EGEUS (CONT'D)
And this Lysander, this Demetrius
is,
This Helena;
I wonder of their being here
together.

THESEUS
Is not this the day
That Hermia should give answer of
her choice?

EGEUS
It is, my lord.

THESEUS
(loud enough to wake them
all)
Good morrow, friends.

They all begin to wake.

LYSANDER
Pardon, my lord.

THESEUS
I pray you all, stand up.

As the scene unfolds they all begin to wake properly and stand.

LYSANDER
My lord, I cannot truly say how I
came here.
I came with Hermia hither: our
intent
Was to be gone from Athens -

EGEUS
(interrupting)
Enough, enough, my lord.
I beg the law, the law upon his
head!

DEMETRIUS
The object and the pleasure of mine
eye,
Is only Helena. To her, my lord,
Was I betrothed ere I saw Hermia.

Theseus is relieved at this convenient turn of events.

THESEUS
Fair lovers, you are fortunately
met;
Egeus, I will overbear your will,
These couples shall eternally be
knit.
Away with us to Athens; three and
three,
We'll hold a feast in great
solemnity.
Come, Hippolyta.

The couples unite and all leave together, only bottom remains.

Bottom remains asleep until all have left, and when he awakes he believes he is still at the rehearsal he left the day before.

BOTTOM

When my cue comes, call me, and I will answer. God's my life! I have had a most rare vision. I will get Peter Quince to write a ballad of this dream; it shall be called 'Bottom's Dream', because it hath no bottom.

Bottom realises that something is not right and exits.

11 EXT. A GRAND HOUSE, ATHENS - DAY

11

Quince, Flute, Snout and Starveling are ready to perform and in costume.

QUINCE

Have you sent to Bottom's house? Is he come home yet?

Snug rushes in.

SNUG

Masters! The Duke is coming from the temple, and there is two or three lords and ladies more married.

FLUTE

O sweet bully Bottom! If he come not, then the play goes not forward.

Bottom hurries in.

BOTTOM

Where are these lads?

QUINCE

Bottom! O, most happy hour!

BOTTOM

Masters, the Duke hath dined. Get your apparel together - our play is preferred.

12

INT. A GRAND HOUSE, ATHENS - LATER

12

Theseus, Hippolyta and their Attendants are present with PHILOSTRATE, the Duke's party planner. He is fastidious and cannot abide slapdash-ery.

Hippolyta and Theseus are discussing the tales they've been told.

HIPPOLYTA

'Tis strange, my Theseus, that
these lovers speak of.

THESEUS

More strange than true.

Lysander and Hermia enter together, as do Demetrius and Helena, they are both now married couples. They sit alongside their hosts.

THESEUS (CONT'D)

Come now, what revels are in hand?

The Philostrate steps forward. He does not want the play to go on.

PHILOSTRATE

A play there is, my lord, some ten
words long,
But by ten words, my lord, it is
too long.

THESEUS

I will hear that play. Go bring
them in.

A disappointed Philostrate leaves briefly, re-entering with Snout who is in costume and character as 'Wall'. He takes his place in front of the gathered guests.

SNOUT

I, one Snout by name, present a
wall:
And such a wall, as I would have
you think,
That had in it a crannied hole or
chink,
Through which the lovers, Pyramus
and Thisbe,
Did whisper often, very secretly.

Enter Bottom, as Pyramus.

THESEUS

Pyramus draws near the wall.

BOTTOM

O thou O wall, O sweet, O lovely
wall,
Show me thy chink, to blink through
with mine eyne.

Snout holds up his fingers in a V shape.

BOTTOM (CONT'D)

Thanks, courteous wall.
But what see I? No Thisbe do I see.
Cursed be thy stones for thus
deceiving me!

Enter Flute, as Thisbe.

FLUTE

O wall, full often hast thou heard
my moans,
My cherry lips have often kissed
thy stones.

BOTTOM

I see a voice; I hear my Thisbe's
face.
Thisbe!

FLUTE

My love! Thou art my love, I think.

BOTTOM

Wilt thou at Ninny's tomb meet me
straightaway?

FLUTE

I come without delay.

Bottom and Flute leave the stage.

Snug enters as a Lion, Starveling as 'moonlight'

Once they are set Flute returns as Thisbe.

FLUTE (CONT'D)

This is old Ninny's tomb. Where is
my love?

Snug roars.

Flute runs off dropping her cloak.

Snug paws at the cloak then exits.

Bottom comes back on stage as Pyramus. He addresses Starveling, the moon.

BOTTOM
Sweet Moon, I thank thee for thy
sunny beams.

He notices Thisbe's torn cloak.

BOTTOM (CONT'D)
What dreadful dole is here?
Eyes, do you see?
How can it be?
O dainty duck! O dear!
Thy mantle good,
What! Stained with blood?

Bottom draws his sword and stabs himself.

BOTTOM (CONT'D)
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!

Starveling - the moon - exits.

BOTTOM (CONT'D)
Now die, die, die, die, die.

Flute returns to the stage as Thisbe.

FLUTE
Asleep, my love?
What, dead, my dove?
O Pyramus arise!

Flute picks up the sword

FLUTE (CONT'D)
Farewell, friends;
Thus Thisbe ends:

Flute/Thisbe stabs herself and dies.

THESEUS
Moonshine and Lion are left to bury
the dead.

DEMETRIUS

Ay, and Wall too.

Bottom miraculously returns from the dead - leaping from the floor and coming out of character.

BOTTOM

No, I assure you, the wall is down.
Will it please you to see the
epilogue?

Theseus couldn't bare it.

THESEUS

No epilogue, I pray you.
Music strikes up.
Lovers, to bed; 'tis almost fairy
time.
Sweet friends to bed.

Exhausted from a full day, they all leave.

With the room empty Oberon and Titania come in, joined by Puck and Fairies.

OBERON

Now until the break of day,
Through this house each fairy
stray.
Trip away, make not stay;
Meet me all by break of day.

They all head off in different directions, other than Puck who remains and speaks directly to camera.

PUCK

If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended,
That you have but slumbered here,
While these visions did appear.
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream.

Smiling a mischievous smile, Puck leaves.

FADE TO BLACK.