

## **A Midsummer Night's Dream – Roles and Audition Sides**

THESEUS, Duke of Athens

HIPPOLYTA, Queen of the Amazons, betrothed to Theseus

EGEUS, Father to Hermia

LYSANDER, a young courtier, in love with Hermia

DEMETRIUS, a young courtier, in love with Hermia

PHILOSTRATE, Master of the Revels to Theseus

HERMIA, Daughter to Egeus, in love with Lysander

HELENA, in love with Demetrius

The Mechanicals (workmen and amateur actors):

QUINCE, a Carpenter

SNUG, a Joiner

BOTTOM, a Weaver

FLUTE, a Bellows-mender

SNOUT, a Tinker

STARVELING, a Tailor

The Fairies:

OBERON, King of the Fairies

TITANIA, Queen of the Fairies

PUCK, or Robin Goodfellow, serves Oberon

PEASE-BLOSSOM, COBWEB, MOTH, MUSTARD-SEED, serve Titania

Other Fairies attending on their King and Queen

**#1 (EGEUS, THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, HERMIA)**

**THESEUS**

Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour  
Draws on apace; four happy days bring in  
Another moon: but, O, methinks, how slow  
This old moon wanes! she lingers my desires.

**HIPPOLYTA**

Four days will quickly steep themselves in night;  
Four nights will quickly dream away the time;  
And then the moon, like to a silver bow  
New-bent in heaven, shall behold the night  
Of our solemnities.

**THESEUS**

Hippolyta, I woo'd thee with my sword,  
And won thy love, doing thee injuries;  
But I will wed thee in another key,  
With pomp, with triumph and with revelling.

*Enter EGEUS, HERMIA, LYSANDER, and DEMETRIUS*

**EGEUS**

Happy be Theseus, our renowned duke!

**THESEUS**

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

**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,  
With cunning hast thou filch'd my daughter's heart,  
Turn'd 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,  
As she is mine, I may dispose of her:  
Which shall be either to this gentleman  
Or to her death, according to our law.

**THESEUS**

What say you, Hermia? be advised fair maid:  
To you your father should be as a god.  
Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

**HERMIA**

So is Lysander.

**THESEUS**

In himself he is;  
But in this kind, wanting your father's voice,  
The other must be held the worthier.

**HERMIA**

I would my father look'd but with my eyes.

**THESEUS**

Rather your eyes must with his judgment look.

**HERMIA**

I do entreat your grace to pardon me.

But I beseech your grace that I may know

The worst that may befall me in this case,

If I refuse to wed Demetrius.

**THESEUS**

Either to die the death or to abjure

For ever the society of men.

Therefore, fair Hermia, question your desires;

Know of your youth, examine well your blood,

Whether, if you yield not to your father's choice,

You can endure the livery of a nun,

To live a barren sister all your life.

**HERMIA**

So will I grow, so live, so die, my lord,

Ere I will my virgin patent up

Unto his lordship.

**THESEUS**

Take time to pause; and, by the next new moon--

The sealing-day betwixt my love and me,

Upon that day either prepare to die

For disobedience to your father's will,

Or else to wed Demetrius, as he would;

Or on Diana's altar to protest

For aye austerity and single life.

**#2 (HELENA, HERMIA)**

**HERMIA**

God speed fair Helena! whither away?

**HELENA**

Call you me fair? that fair again unsay.  
Demetrius loves your fair: O happy fair.  
My ear should catch your voice, my eye your eye,  
My tongue should catch your tongue's sweet melody.  
Were the world mine, Demetrius being bated,  
The rest I'd give to be to you translated.  
O, teach me how you look, and with what art  
You sway the motion of Demetrius' heart.

**HERMIA**

I frown upon him, yet he loves me still.

**HELENA**

O that your frowns would teach my smiles such skill!

**HERMIA**

I give him curses, yet he gives me love.

**HELENA**

O that my prayers could such affection move!

**HERMIA**

The more I hate, the more he follows me.

**HELENA**

The more I love, the more he hateth me.

**HERMIA**

His folly, Helena, is no fault of mine.

**HELENA**

None, but your beauty: would that fault were mine!

**HERMIA**

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

**LYSANDER**

Helen, to you our minds we will unfold:  
To-morrow night, when Phoebe doth behold  
Her silver visage in the watery glass,  
Decking with liquid pearl the bladed grass,  
A time that lovers' flights doth still conceal,  
Through Athens' gates have we devised to steal.

**HERMIA**

And in the wood, where often you and I  
Upon faint primrose-beds were wont to lie,  
Emptying our bosoms of their counsel sweet,  
There my Lysander and myself shall meet;  
And thence from Athens turn away our eyes,  
To seek new friends and stranger companies.  
Farewell, sweet playfellow: pray thou for us;  
And good luck grant thee thy Demetrius!  
Keep word, Lysander: we must starve our sight  
From lovers' food till morrow deep midnight.

**LYSANDER**

I will, my Hermia.

*Exit HERMIA*

Helena, adieu:  
As you on him, Demetrius dote on you!

*Exit*

**HELENA**

How happy some o'er other some can be!  
Through Athens I am thought as fair as she.  
But what of that? Demetrius thinks not so;  
He will not know what all but he do know:  
And as he errs, doting on Hermia's eyes,  
So I, admiring of his qualities:  
Things base and vile, folding no quantity,  
Love can transpose to form and dignity:  
Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind;  
And therefore is wing'd Cupid painted blind:  
I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight:  
Then to the wood will he to-morrow night  
Pursue her; and for this intelligence  
If I have thanks, it is a dear expense:  
But herein mean I to enrich my pain,  
To have his sight thither and back again.

*Exit*

### #3 (FAIRIES, PUCK)

#### PUCK

How now, spirit! whither wander you?

#### Fairy

Over hill, over dale,  
Thorough bush, thorough brier,  
Over park, over pale,  
Thorough flood, thorough fire,  
I do wander everywhere,  
Swifter than the moon's sphere;  
And I serve the fairy queen,  
To dew her orbs upon the green.  
The cowslips tall her pensioners be:  
In their gold coats spots you see;  
Those be rubies, fairy favours,  
In those freckles live their savours:  
I must go seek some dewdrops here  
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.  
Farewell, thou lob of spirits; I'll be gone:  
Our queen and all our elves come here anon.

#### PUCK

The king doth keep his revels here to-night:  
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;  
She never had so sweet a changeling;  
And jealous Oberon would have the child  
Knight of his train, to trace the forests wild;  
But she perforce withholds the loved boy,  
Crowns him with flowers and makes him all her joy:  
And now they never meet in grove or green,  
By fountain clear, or spangled starlight sheen,  
But, they do square, that all their elves for fear  
Creep into acorn-cups and hide them there.

#### Fairy

Either I mistake your shape and making quite,  
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite  
Call'd Robin Goodfellow: are not you he  
That frights the maidens of the villagery;  
Skim milk, and sometimes labour in the quern  
And bootless make the breathless housewife churn;  
And sometime make the drink to bear no barm;  
Mislead night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?  
Those that Hobgoblin call you and sweet Puck,  
You do their work, and they shall have good luck:  
Are not you he?

#### PUCK

Thou speak'st aright;  
I am that merry wanderer of the night.  
I jest to Oberon and make him smile

When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,  
Neighing in likeness of a filly foal:  
And sometime lurk I in a gossip's bowl,  
In very likeness of a roasted crab,  
And when she drinks, against her lips I bob  
And on her wither'd dewlap pour the ale.  
The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,  
Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me;  
Then slip I from her bum, down topples she,  
And 'tailor' cries, and falls into a cough;  
And then the whole quire hold their hips and laugh,  
And waxen in their mirth and neeze and swear  
A merrier hour was never wasted there.  
But, room, fairy! here comes Oberon.

**Fairy**

And here my mistress. Would that he were gone!

**#4 (OBERON, TITANIA, PUCK)**

**OBERON**

Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania.

**TITANIA**

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

**OBERON**

Tarry, rash wanton: am not I thy lord?

**TITANIA**

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 corn and versing love  
To amorous Phillida. Why art thou here,  
Come from the farthest Steppe of India?  
But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,  
Your buskin'd mistress and your warrior love,  
To Theseus must be wedded, and you come  
To give their bed joy and prosperity.

**OBERON**

How canst thou thus for shame, Titania,  
Glance at my credit with Hippolyta,  
Knowing I know thy love to Theseus?  
Didst thou not lead him through the glimmering night  
From Perigenia, whom he ravished?  
And make him with fair AEgle break his faith,  
With Ariadne and Antiopa?

**TITANIA**

These are the forgeries of jealousy:  
And never, since the middle summer's spring,  
Met we on hill, in dale, forest or mead,  
By paved fountain or by rushy brook,  
Or in the beached margent of the sea,  
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,  
But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.  
Therefore the 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 mazed world,  
By their increase, now knows not which is which:  
And this same progeny of evils comes  
From our debate, from our dissension;  
We are their parents and original.

**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:  
And, in the spiced Indian air, by night,  
Full often hath she gossip'd by my side,  
And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands,  
Marking the embarked traders on the flood,  
When we have laugh'd to see the sails conceive  
And grow big-bellied with the wanton wind;  
Which she, with pretty and with swimming gait  
Following,--her womb then rich with my young squire,--  
Would imitate, and sail upon the land,  
To fetch me trifles, and return again,  
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**

How long within this wood intend you stay?

**TITANIA**

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

**OBERON**

Give me that boy, and I will go with thee.

**TITANIA**

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

**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  
Since once I sat upon a promontory,  
And heard a mermaid on a dolphin's back  
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath  
That the rude sea grew civil at her song  
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,  
To hear the sea-maid's music.

**PUCK**

I remember.

**OBERON**

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;  
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft  
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the watery moon,  
And the imperial votaress passed on,  
In maiden meditation, fancy-free.

Yet mark'd I where the bolt of Cupid fell:  
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.

**PUCK**

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

*Exit*

**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:  
And ere I take this charm from off her sight,  
As I can take it with another herb,  
I'll make her render up her page to me.  
But who comes here? I am invisible;  
And I will overhear their conference.

**#5 (TITANIA, BOTTOM)**

**BOTTOM**

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

**QUINCE**

O monstrous! O strange! we are haunted. Pray,  
masters! fly, masters! Help!

**BOTTOM**

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

**SNOOT**

O Bottom, thou art changed! what do I see on thee?

**BOTTOM**

What do you see? you see an asshead of your own, do  
you?

**QUINCE**

Bless thee, Bottom! bless thee! thou art  
translated.

*Exit*

**BOTTOM**

I see their knavery: this is to make an ass of me;  
to fright me, if they could. But I will not stir  
from this place, do what they can: I will walk up  
and down here, and I will sing, that they shall hear  
I am not afraid.

*Sings*

The ousel cock so black of hue,  
With orange-tawny bill,  
The throstle with his note so true,  
The wren with little quill,--

**TITANIA**

[Awaking] What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?

**BOTTOM**

[Sings]

The finch, the sparrow and the lark,  
The plain-song cuckoo gray,  
Whose note full many a man doth mark,  
And dares not answer nay;--  
for, indeed, who would set his wit to so foolish  
a bird? who would give a bird the lie, though he cry  
'cuckoo' never so?

**TITANIA**

I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again:  
Mine ear is much enamour'd of thy note;  
So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape;  
And thy fair virtue's force perforce doth move me  
On the first view to say, to swear, I love thee.

**BOTTOM**

Methinks, mistress, you should have little reason  
for that: and yet, to say the truth, reason and  
love keep little company together now-a-days; the  
more the pity that some honest neighbours will not  
make them friends. Nay, I can gleek upon occasion.

**TITANIA**

Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.

**BOTTOM**

Not so, neither: but if I had wit enough to get out  
of this wood, I have enough to serve mine own turn.

**TITANIA**

Out of this wood do not desire to go:  
Thou shalt remain here, whether thou wilt or no.  
I am a spirit of no common rate;  
The summer still doth tend upon my state;  
And I do love thee: therefore, go with me;  
I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee,  
And they shall fetch thee jewels from the deep,  
And sing while thou on pressed flowers dost sleep;  
And I will purge thy mortal grossness so  
That thou shalt like an airy spirit go.  
Peaseblossom! Cobweb! Moth! and Mustardseed!

**#6 (DEMETRIUS, HELENA)**

**DEMETRIUS**

I love thee not, therefore pursue me not.  
Where is Lysander and fair Hermia?  
The one I'll slay, the other slayeth me.  
Thou told'st me they were stolen unto this wood;  
And here am I, and wode within this wood,  
Because I cannot meet my Hermia.  
Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.

**HELENA**

You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant;  
But yet you draw not iron, for my heart  
Is true as steel: leave you your power to draw,  
And I shall have no power to follow you.

**DEMETRIUS**

Do I entice you? do I speak you fair?  
Or, rather, do I not in plainest truth  
Tell you, I do not, nor I cannot love you?

**HELENA**

And even for that do I love you the more.  
I am your spaniel; and, Demetrius,  
The more you beat me, I will fawn on you:  
Use me but as your spaniel, spurn me, strike me,  
Neglect me, lose me; only give me leave,  
Unworthy as I am, to follow you.  
What worser place can I beg in your love,--  
And yet a place of high respect with me,--  
Than to be used as you use your dog?

**DEMETRIUS**

Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit;  
For I am sick when I do look on thee.

**HELENA**

And I am sick when I look not on you.

**DEMETRIUS**

You do impeach your modesty too much,  
To leave the city and commit yourself  
Into the hands of one that loves you not;  
To trust the opportunity of night  
And the ill counsel of a desert place  
With the rich worth of your virginity.

**HELENA**

Your virtue is my privilege: for that  
It is not night when I do see your face,  
Therefore I think I am not in the night;  
Nor doth this wood lack worlds of company,  
For you in my respect are all the world:  
Then how can it be said I am alone,  
When all the world is here to look on me?

**DEMETRIUS**

I'll run from thee and hide me in the brakes,  
And leave thee to the mercy of wild beasts.

**HELENA**

The wildest hath not such a heart as you.  
Run when you will, the story shall be changed:  
Apollo flies, and Daphne holds the chase;  
The dove pursues the griffin; the mild hind  
Makes speed to catch the tiger; bootless speed,  
When cowardice pursues and valour flies.

**DEMETRIUS**

I will not stay thy questions; let me go:  
Or, if thou follow me, do not believe  
But I shall do thee mischief in the wood.

**HELENA**

Ay, in the temple, in the town, the field,  
You do me mischief. Fie, Demetrius!  
Your wrongs do set a scandal on my sex:  
We cannot fight for love, as men may do;  
We should be wood and were not made to woo.

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

**#7 (LYSANDER, HERMIA)**

**LYSANDER**

Fair love, you faint with wandering in the wood;  
And to speak troth, I have forgot our way:  
We'll rest us, Hermia, if you think it good,  
And tarry for the comfort of the day.

**HERMIA**

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

**LYSANDER**

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

**HERMIA**

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

**LYSANDER**

O, take the sense, sweet, of my innocence!  
Love takes the meaning in love's conference.  
I mean, that my heart unto yours is knit  
So that but one heart we can make of it;  
Two bosoms interchained with an oath;  
So then two bosoms and a single troth.  
Then by your side no bed-room me deny;  
For lying so, Hermia, I do not lie.

**HERMIA**

Lysander riddles very prettily:  
Now much beshrew my manners and my pride,  
If Hermia meant to say Lysander lied.  
But, gentle friend, for love and courtesy  
Lie further off; in human modesty,  
Such separation as may well be said  
Becomes a virtuous bachelor and a maid,  
So far be distant; and, good night, sweet friend:  
Thy love ne'er alter till thy sweet life end!

**LYSANDER**

Amen, amen, to that fair prayer, say I;  
And then end life when I end loyalty!  
Here is my bed: sleep give thee all his rest!

**HERMIA**

With half that wish the wisher's eyes be press'd

**#8 (HELENA, HERMIA, LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS)**

**HELENA**

Have you not set Lysander, as in scorn,  
To follow me and praise my eyes and face?  
And made your other love, Demetrius,  
Who even but now did spurn me with his foot,  
To call me goddess, nymph, divine and rare,  
Precious, celestial?

**HERMIA**

I understand not what you mean by this.

**HELENA**

Ay, do, persevere, counterfeit sad looks,  
Make mouths upon me when I turn my back;  
Wink each at other; hold the sweet jest up:  
But fare ye well: 'tis partly my own fault;  
Which death or absence soon shall remedy.

**LYSANDER**

Stay, gentle Helena; hear my excuse:  
My love, my life my soul, fair Helena!

**HELENA**

O excellent!

**HERMIA**

Sweet, do not scorn her so.

**DEMETRIUS**

If she cannot entreat, I can compel.

**LYSANDER**

Thou canst compel no more than she entreat:  
Thy threats have no more strength than her weak prayers.  
Helen, I love thee; by my life, I do:  
I swear by that which I will lose for thee,  
To prove him false that says I love thee not.

**DEMETRIUS**

I say I love thee more than he can do.

**LYSANDER**

If thou say so, withdraw, and prove it too.

**DEMETRIUS**

Quick, come!

**HERMIA**

Lysander, whereto tends all this?

**LYSANDER**

Away, you antelope.

**DEMETRIUS**

No, no; he'll  
Seem to break loose; take on as you would follow,  
But yet come not: you are a tame man, go!

**LYSANDER**

Hang off, thou cat, thou burr! vile thing, let loose,  
Or I will shake thee from me like a serpent!

**HERMIA**

Why are you grown so rude? what change is this?  
Sweet love,--



**LYSANDER**

Thy love! Out, loathed medicine! hated potion, hence!

**HERMIA**

Do you not jest?

**HELENA**

Yes, sooth; and so do you.

**LYSANDER**

Demetrius, I will keep my word with thee.

**DEMETRIUS**

I would I had your bond, for I perceive

A weak bond holds you: I'll not trust your word.

**LYSANDER**

What, should I hurt her, strike her, kill her dead?

Although I hate her, I'll not harm her so.

**HERMIA**

What, can you do me greater harm than hate?

Hate me! wherefore? O me! what news, my love!

Am not I Hermia? are not you Lysander?

I am as fair now as I was erewhile.

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.

Therefore be out of hope, of question, of doubt;

Be certain, nothing truer; 'tis no jest

That I do hate thee and love Helena.

**HERMIA**

O me! you juggler! you canker-blossom!

You thief of love! what, have you come by night

And stolen my love's heart from him?

**HELENA**

Fine, i'faith!

Have you no modesty, no maiden shame,

No touch of bashfulness? What, will you tear

Impatient answers from my gentle tongue?

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 prevail'd 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**

I pray you, though you mock me, gentlemen,  
Let her not hurt me: I was never curst;  
I have no gift at all in shrewishness;  
I am a right maid for my cowardice:  
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.

**#9 (QUINCE, BOTTOM , FLUTE, SNOUT, SNUG, STARVELING)**

**QUINCE**

Is all our company here?

**BOTTOM**

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

**QUINCE**

Here is the scroll of every man's name, which is thought fit, through all Athens, to play in our interlude before the duke and the duchess, on his wedding-day at night.

**BOTTOM**

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

**QUINCE**

Marry, our play is, The most lamentable comedy, and most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisby.

**BOTTOM**

A very good piece of work, I assure you, and a merry. Now, good Peter Quince, call forth your actors by the scroll. Masters, spread yourselves.

**QUINCE**

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

**BOTTOM**

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

**QUINCE**

You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus.

**BOTTOM**

What is Pyramus? a lover, or a tyrant?

**QUINCE**

A lover, that kills himself most gallant for love.

**BOTTOM**

That will ask some tears in the true performing of it: if I do it, let the audience look to their eyes; I will move storms, I will condole in some measure. To the rest: yet my chief humour is for a tyrant: I could play Ercles rarely, or a part to tear a cat in, to make all split.

The raging rocks

And shivering shocks

Shall break the locks

Of prison gates;

And Phibbus' car

Shall shine from far

And make and mar

The foolish Fates.

This was lofty! Now name the rest of the players.

This is Ercles' vein, a tyrant's vein; a lover is more condoling.

**QUINCE**

Francis Flute, the bellows-mender.

**FLUTE**

Here, Peter Quince.

**QUINCE**

Flute, you must take Thisby on you.

**FLUTE**

What is Thisby? a wandering knight?

**QUINCE**

It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

**FLUTE**

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

**QUINCE**

That's all one: you shall play it in a mask, and you may speak as small as you will.

**BOTTOM**

An I may hide my face, let me play Thisby too, I'll speak in a monstrous little voice. 'Thisne, Thisne;' 'Ah, Pyramus, lover dear! thy Thisby dear, and lady dear!'

**QUINCE**

No, no; you must play Pyramus: and, Flute, you Thisby.

**BOTTOM**

Well, proceed.

**QUINCE**

Robin Starveling, the tailor.

**STARVELING**

Here, Peter Quince.

**QUINCE**

Robin Starveling, you must play Thisby's mother.

Tom Snout, the tinker.

**SNOUT**

Here, Peter Quince.

**QUINCE**

You, Pyramus' father: myself, Thisby's father:

Snug, the joiner; you, the lion's part: and, I

hope, here is a play fitted.

**SNUG**

Have you the lion's part written? pray you, if it be, give it me, for I am slow of study.

**QUINCE**

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

**BOTTOM**

Let me play the lion too: I will roar, that I will do any man's heart good to hear me; I will roar, that I will make the duke say 'Let him roar again, let him roar again.'

**QUINCE**

An you should do it too terribly, you would fright  
the duchess and the ladies, that they would shriek;  
and that were enough to hang us all.

**ALL**

That would hang us, every mother's son

**#10 (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.

**#11 QUINCE (Prologue), PYRAMUS AND THISBY, MOON, WALL, LION (play within a play)**

**Prologue**

Gentles, perchance you wonder at this show;  
But wonder on, till truth make all things plain.  
This man is Pyramus, if you would know;  
This beauteous lady Thisby is certain.  
This man, with lime and rough-cast, doth present  
Wall, that vile Wall which did these lovers sunder;  
And through Wall's chink, poor souls, they are content  
To whisper. At the which let no man wonder.  
This man, with lanthorn, dog, and bush of thorn,  
Presenteth Moonshine; for, if you will know,  
By moonshine did these lovers think no scorn  
To meet at Ninus' tomb, there, there to woo.  
This grisly beast, which Lion hight by name,  
The trusty Thisby, coming first by night,  
Did scare away, or rather did affright;  
And, as she fled, her mantle she did fall,  
Which Lion vile with bloody mouth did stain.  
Anon comes Pyramus, sweet youth and tall,  
And finds his trusty Thisby's mantle slain:  
Whereat, with blade, with bloody blameful blade,  
He bravely broach'd his boiling bloody breast;  
And Thisby, tarrying in mulberry shade,  
His dagger drew, and died. For all the rest,  
Let Lion, Moonshine, Wall, and lovers twain  
At large discourse, while here they do remain.

**Wall**

In this same interlude it doth befall  
That 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 Thisby,  
Did whisper often very secretly.

**Pyramus**

O grim-look'd night! O night with hue so black!  
O night, which ever art when day is not!  
O night, O night! alack, alack, alack,  
I fear my Thisby's promise is forgot!  
And thou, O wall, O sweet, O lovely wall,  
That stand'st between her father's ground and mine!  
Thou wall, O wall, O sweet and lovely wall,  
Show me thy chink, to blink through with mine eyne!

Thanks, courteous wall: Jove shield thee well for this!  
But what see I? No Thisby do I see.  
O wicked wall, through whom I see no bliss!  
Cursed be thy stones for thus deceiving me!

*Enter Thisbe*

**Thisbe**

O wall, full often hast thou heard my moans,  
For parting my fair Pyramus and me!  
My cherry lips have often kiss'd thy stones,  
Thy stones with lime and hair knit up in thee.

**Pyramus**

I see a voice: now will I to the chink,  
To spy an I can hear my Thisby's face. Thisby!

**Thisbe**

My love thou art, my love I think.

**Pyramus**

O kiss me through the hole of this vile wall!

**Thisbe**

I kiss the wall's hole, not your lips at all.

**Pyramus**

Wilt thou at Ninny's tomb meet me straightway?

**Thisbe**

'Tide life, 'tide death, I come without delay.

*Exeunt Pyramus and Thisbe*

**Wall**

Thus have I, Wall, my part discharged so;  
And, being done, thus Wall away doth go.

*Exit/Enter Lion and Moonshine*

**Lion**

You, ladies, you, whose gentle hearts do fear  
The smallest monstrous mouse that creeps on floor,  
May now perchance both quake and tremble here,  
When lion rough in wildest rage doth roar.  
Then know that I, one Snug the joiner, am  
A lion-fell, nor else no lion's dam;  
For, if I should as lion come in strife  
Into this place, 'twere pity on my life.

**THESEUS**

A very gentle beast, of a good conscience.

**THESEUS**

It is well:  
leave it to his discretion, and let us listen to the moon.

**Moonshine**

This lanthorn doth the horned moon present;--

**DEMETRIUS**

He should have worn the horns on his head.

**THESEUS**

He is no crescent, and his horns are  
invisible within the circumference.

**Moonshine**



This lanthorn doth the horned moon present;  
Myself the man i' the moon do seem to be.

**HIPPOLYTA**

I am awearry of this moon: would he would change!

**LYSANDER**

Proceed, Moon.

**Moonshine**

All that I have to say, is, to tell you that the  
lanthorn is the moon; I, the man in the moon; this  
thorn-bush, my thorn-bush; and this dog, my dog.

*Enter Thisbe*

**Thisbe**

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

**Lion**

[Roaring]

*Thisbe runs off, The Lion shakes Thisbe's mantle, and exit*

*Enter Pyramus*

**Pyramus**

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 Thisby 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.

*Dies*

*Re-enter Thisbe*

**Thisbe**

Asleep, my love?  
What, dead, my dove?  
O Pyramus, arise!  
Speak, speak. Quite dumb?  
Dead, dead? A tomb  
Must cover thy sweet eyes.  
These My lips,  
This cherry nose,  
These yellow cowslip cheeks,  
Are gone, are gone:  
Lovers, make moan:  
His eyes were green as leeks.  
O Sisters Three,  
Come, come to me,  
With hands as pale as milk;  
Lay them in gore,  
Since you have shore  
With shears his thread of silk.  
Tongue, not a word:  
Come, trusty sword;  
Come, blade, my breast imbrue:

*Stabs herself*

And, farewell, friends;  
Thus Thisby ends:  
Adieu, adieu, adieu.

**#12 (PHILOSTRATE, THESEUS)**

**THESEUS**

Come now; what masques, what dances shall we have,  
To wear away this long age of three hours  
Between our after-supper and bed-time?  
Where is our usual manager of mirth?  
What revels are in hand? Is there no play,  
To ease the anguish of a torturing hour?  
Call Philostrate.

**PHILOSTRATE**

Here, mighty Theseus.

**THESEUS**

Say, what abridgement have you for this evening?  
What masque? what music? How shall we beguile  
The lazy time, if not with some delight?

**PHILOSTRATE**

There is a brief how many sports are ripe:  
Make choice of which your highness will see first.

*Giving a paper*

**THESEUS**

[Reads] 'The battle with the Centaurs, to be sung  
By an Athenian eunuch to the harp.'  
We'll none of that: that have I told my love,  
In glory of my kinsman Hercules.

*Reads*

'The riot of the tipsy Bacchanals,  
Tearing the Thracian singer in their rage.'  
That is an old device; and it was play'd  
When I from Thebes came last a conqueror.

*Reads*

'The thrice three Muses mourning for the death  
Of Learning, late deceased in beggary.'  
That is some satire, keen and critical,  
Not sorting with a nuptial ceremony.

*Reads*

'A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus  
And his love Thisbe; very tragical mirth.'  
Merry and tragical! tedious and brief!  
That is, hot ice and wondrous strange snow.  
How shall we find the concord of this discord?

**PHILOSTRATE**

A play there is, my lord, some ten words long,  
Which is as brief as I have known 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 tragical, my noble lord, it is;  
For Pyramus therein doth kill himself.  
Which, when I saw rehearsed, I must confess,  
Made mine eyes water; but more merry tears  
The passion of loud laughter never shed.

**THESEUS**

What are they that do play it?

**PHILOSTRATE**

Hard-handed men that work in Athens here,  
Which never labour'd in their minds till now,  
And now have toil'd their unbreathed memories  
With this same play, against your nuptial.

**THESEUS**

And we will hear it.

**PHILOSTRATE**

No, my noble lord;  
It is not for you: I have heard it over,  
And it is nothing, nothing in the world;  
Unless you can find sport in their intents,  
Extremely stretch'd and conn'd with cruel pain,  
To do you service.