

A Midsummer Night's Dream

2.2

Enter Titania, Queen of Fairies, with her train

TITANIA

Come, now a roundel and a fairy song,
Then for the third part of a minute hence:
Some to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds,
Some war with reremice for their leathern wings
To make my small elves coats, and some keep back 5
The clamorous owl, that nightly hoots and wonders
At our quaint spirits. Sing me now asleep;
Then to your offices, and let me rest.

She lies down. Fairies sing

[FIRST FAIRY]

You spotted snakes with double tongue,
Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen; 10
Newts and blindworms, do no wrong;
Come not near our Fairy Queen.

[CHORUS] *[dancing]*

Philomel with melody,
Sing in our sweet lullaby;
Lulla, lulla, lullaby; lulla, lulla, lullaby. 15
Never harm
Nor spell nor charm
Come our lovely lady nigh.
So good night, with lullaby.

FIRST FAIRY

Weaving spiders, come not here; 20
Hence, you long-legged spinners, hence;
Beetles black, approach not near;
Worm nor snail do no offence.

[CHORUS] *[dancing]*

Philomel with melody,
Sing in our sweet lullaby; 25
Lulla, lulla, lullaby; lulla, lulla, lullaby.
Never harm
Nor spell nor charm
Come our lovely lady nigh.

So good night, with lullaby. 30

Titania sleeps

SECOND FAIRY

Hence, away. Now all is well.

One aloof stand sentinel.

Exeunt all but Titania [and the sentinel]

Enter Oberon. He drops the juice on Titania's eyelids

OBERON

What thou seest when thou dost wake,

Do it for thy true love take;

Love and languish for his sake. 35

Be it ounce, or cat, or bear,

Pard, or boar with bristled hair,

In thy eye that shall appear

When thou wak'st, it is thy dear.

Wake when some vile thing is near. 40

Exit

Enter Lysander and Hermia

LYSANDER

Fair love, you faint with wand'ring in the wood,

And, to speak truth, I have forgot our way.

We'll rest us, Hermia, if you think it good,

And tarry for the comfort of the day.

HERMIA

Be it so, Lysander. Find you out a bed; 45

For I upon this bank will rest my head.

[She lies down]

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. 50

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 interchaineÁd with an oath; 55

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 60
If Hermia meant to say Lysander lied.
But, gentle friend, for love and courtesy,
Lie further off, in humane modesty.
Such separation as may well be said
Becomes a virtuous bachelor and a maid, 65
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. 70
He lies down

HERMIA

With half that wish the wisher's eyes be pressed.
They sleep apart.
Enter Robin Goodfellow the puck

ROBIN

Through the forest have I gone,
But Athenian found I none
On whose eyes I might approve
This flower's force in stirring love. 75
Night and silence. Who is here?
Weeds of Athens he doth wear.
This is he my master said
DespiseÁd the Athenian maid±±
And here the maiden, sleeping sound 80
On the dank and dirty ground.
Pretty soul, she durst not lie
Near this lack-love, this kill-courtesy.
Churl, upon thy eyes I throw
All the power this charm doth owe. 85
He drops the juice on Lysander's eyelids
When thou wak'st, let love forbid
Sleep his seat on thy eyelid.
So, awake when I am gone.

For I must now to Oberon.

Exit

Enter Demetrius and Helena, running

HELENA

Stay, though thou kill me, sweet Demetrius. 90

DEMETRIUS

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

HELENA

O, wilt thou darkling leave me? Do not so.

DEMETRIUS

Stay, on thy peril; I alone will go.

Exit

HELENA

O, I am out of breath in this fond chase.
The more my prayer, the lesser is my grace. 95

Happy is Hermia, wheresoe'er she lies;
For she hath blesseÁd and attractive eyes.
How came her eyes so bright? Not with salt tears±±
If so, my eyes are oft'ner washed than hers.

No, no; I am as ugly as a bear, 100
For beasts that meet me run away for fear.

Therefore no marvel though Demetrius
Do, as a monster, fly my presence thus.
What wicked and dissembling glass of mine
Made me compare with Hermia's sphery eyne! 105
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 (*awaking*)

And run through fire I will for thy sweet sake.
Transparent Helena, nature shows art 110
That through thy bosom makes me see thy heart.
Where is Demetrius? O, how fit a word
Is that vile name to perish on my sword!

HELENA

Do not say so, Lysander; say not so.
What though he love your Hermia? Lord, what
though? 115

Yet Hermia still loves you; then be content.

LYSANDER

Content with Hermia? No, I do repent

The tedious minutes I with her have spent.
Not Hermia but Helena I love.
Who will not change a raven for a dove? 120
The will of man is by his reason swayed,
And reason says you are the worthier maid.
Things growing are not ripe until their season,
So I, being young, till now ripe not to reason.
And, touching now the point of human skill, 125
Reason becomes the marshal to my will,
And leads me to your eyes, where I o'erlook
Love's stories written in love's richest book.

HELENA

Wherefore was I to this keen mockery born?
When at your hands did I deserve this scorn? 130
Is't not enough, is't not enough, young man,
That I did never±±no, nor never can±±
Deserve a sweet look from Demetrius' eye,
But you must flout my insufficiency?
Good troth, you do me wrong; good sooth, you do, 135
In such disdainful manner me to woo.
But fare you well. Perforce I must confess
I thought you lord of more true gentleness.
O, that a lady of one man refused
Should of another therefore be abused! 140

Exit

LYSANDER

She sees not Hermia. Hermia, sleep thou there,
And never mayst thou come Lysander near;
For as a surfeit of the sweetest things
The deepest loathing to the stomach brings,
Or as the heresies that men do leave 145
Are hated most of those they did deceive,
So thou, my surfeit and my heresy,
Of all be hated, but the most of me;
And all my powers, address your love and might
To honour Helen, and to be her knight. 150

Exit

HERMIA (*awaking*)

Help me, Lysander, help me! Do thy best
To pluck this crawling serpent from my breast!

Ay me, for pity. What a dream was here?
Lysander, look how I do quake with fear.
Methought a serpent ate my heart away, 155
And you sat smiling at his cruel prey.
Lysander±±what, removed? Lysander, lord±±
What, out of hearing, gone? No sound, no word?
Alack, where are you? Speak an if you hear,
Speak, of all loves. I swoon almost with fear. 160
No? Then I well perceive you are not nigh.
Either death or you I'll find immediately.

Exit