

How happy some o'er other some can be!  
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.  
For, ere Demetrius looked on Hermia's eyne,  
He hailed down oaths that he was only mine;  
And when this hail some heat from Hermia felt,  
So he dissolved, and show'rs of oaths did melt.  
I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight.  
Then to the wood will he tomorrow 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.

*She exits.*

Scene 2

*Enter Quince the carpenter, and Snug the joiner, and  
Bottom the weaver, and Flute the bellows-mender, and  
Snout the tinker, and Starveling the tailor.*

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, 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  
Thisbe."

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.

*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.

QUINCE

Francis Flute, the bellows-mender.

FLUTE

Here, Peter Quince.

QUINCE

Flute, you must take Thisbe on you.

FLUTE

What is Thisbe—a wand'ring knight?

QUINCE

It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

FLUTE

Nay, faith, let not me 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 Thisbe too.  
I'll speak in a monstrous little voice: "Thisbe,

Thisne!”—“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

Robin Starveling, the tailor.

STARVELING

Here, Peter Quince.

QUINCE

Robin Starveling, you must play Thisbe's  
mother.—Tom Snout, the tinker.

SNOUT

Here, Peter Quince.

QUINCE

You, Pyramus' father.—Myself, Thisbe'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.

BOTTOM

I grant you, friends, if you should fright the  
ladies out of their wits, they would have no more  
discretion but to hang us. But I will aggravate my  
voice so that I will roar you as gently as any sucking

dove. I will roar you an 'twere any nightingale.

QUINCE

You can play no part but Pyramus, for Pyramus is a sweet-faced man, a proper man as one shall see in a summer's day, a most lovely gentlemanlike man. Therefore you must needs play Pyramus.

BOTTOM

Well, I will undertake it.

QUINCE

Masters, here are your parts, *giving out the parts*, and I am to entreat you, request you, and desire you to con them by tomorrow night and meet me in the palace wood, a mile without the town, by moonlight. There will we rehearse, for if we meet in the city, we shall be dogged with company and our devices known.

BOTTOM

We will meet, and there we may rehearse most obscenely and courageously. Take pains. Be perfit. Adieu.

QUINCE

At the Duke's Oak we meet.

*They exit.*

## *ACT 2*

Scene 1

*Enter a Fairy at one door and Robin Goodfellow at another.*

ROBIN

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.

ROBIN