

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

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;  
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 lovèd 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  
Called Robin Goodfellow. Are not you he  
That frights the maidens of the villagery,  
Those that "Hobgoblin" call you and "sweet Puck,"  
You do their work, and they shall have good luck.  
Are not you he?

ROBIN

Thou speakest 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 withered 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 choir hold their hips and loffe  
And waxen in their mirth and neeze and swear  
A merrier hour was never wasted there.  
But room, fairy. Here comes Oberon.

*Enter Oberon the King of Fairies at one door, with his  
train, and Titania the Queen at another, with hers.*

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 Fairyland  
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 steep of India,  
But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,  
Your buskined 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?

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 beachèd margent of the sea,  
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,  
But with thy brawls thou hast disturbed 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: hoary-headed frosts  
Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose,  
And on old Hiems' thin and icy crown  
An odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds  
Is, as in mockery, set. 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 Fairyland buys not the child of me.  
His mother was a vot'ress of my order,  
And in the spicèd Indian air by night

Full often hath she gossiped by my side  
And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands,  
Marking th' embarkèd traders on the flood,  
When we have laughed 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,  
As from a voyage, rich with merchandise.  
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.

*Titania and her fairies exit.*

OBERON

Well, go thy way. Thou shalt not from this grove  
Till I torment thee for this injury.—  
My gentle Puck, come hither. Thou rememb'rst  
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.

ROBIN

I remember.

OBERON

That very time I saw (but thou couldst not),  
Flying between the cold moon and the Earth,  
Cupid all armed. A certain aim he took  
At a fair vestal thronèd 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  
Quenched in the chaste beams of the wat'ry moon,  
And the imperial vot'ress passèd on

In maiden meditation, fancy-free.  
Yet marked 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 showed thee once.  
The juice of it on sleeping eyelids 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.

*He exits.*

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  
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.

*Enter Demetrius, Helena following him.*

DEMETRIUS

I love thee not; therefore pursue me not.  
Where is Lysander and fair Hermia?  
Thou told'st me they were stol'n unto this wood,  
And here am I, and wood 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