

A Midsummer Night's Dream (Quince/Snug/Bottom/Snout/Starveling/Snout/Puck), 3.1 |**Comedy**

Enter fearfully QUINCE, SNUG, BOTTOM, FLUTE, SNOUT, and STARVELING – it's a dark night in a scary wood and they are a long way from home.

BOTTOM

Are we all met?

QUINCE

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

BOTTOM

Peter Quince?

QUINCE

What sayest thou, bully Bottom?

BOTTOM

There are things in this comedy of "Pyramus and Thisby" that will never please. First, Pyramus must draw a sword to kill himself -

SNUG

Which the ladies cannot abide!

BOTTOM

How answer you that?

SNOUT

By'r lakin, a parlous fear.

STARVELING

I believe we must leave the killing out, when all is done.

BOTTOM

Not a whit: Write me a prologue; and let the prologue seem to say, we will do no harm with our swords, and that Pyramus is not killed indeed.

SNUG

This will put them out of fear!

QUINCE

Well, we will have such a prologue.

SNOUT

Will not the ladies be afeard of the lion?

STARVELING

I fear it, I promise you.

BOTTOM

Masters, you ought to consider with yourselves: to bring in--God shield us!--a lion among ladies, is a most dreadful thing.

SNOUT

Therefore another prologue must tell he is not a lion.

BOTTOM

Nay! Half his face must be seen through the lion's neck: and he himself must speak through, saying thus, 'Ladies, '-

SNUG

Or 'Fair-ladies -

BOTTOM

I would wish You, '-

SNUG

Or 'I would entreat you, -

BOTTOM

Not to fear, if you think I come hither as a lion, it were pity of my life: no I am no such thing. I am a man -

SNUG

As other men are -

BOTTOM

And there indeed let him name his name, and tell them plainly he is Snug the joiner.

QUINCE

Well it shall be so. But there is two hard things; that is, to bring the moonlight into a chamber; for, you know, Pyramus and Thisby meet by moonlight.

SNOUT

Doth the moon shine that night we play our play?

BOTTOM

A calendar, a calendar!

STARVLING

Look in the almanac; find out moonshine, find out moonshine.

QUINCE

Yes, it doth shine that night.

STARVELING

Why, then may you leave a casement of the great chamber window, where we play, open -

BOTTOM

And the moon may shine in at the casement.

QUINCE

Ay; or else one must come in with a bush of thorns and a lantern -

STARVELING

And say he comes to disfigure, or to present, the person of Moonshine.

QUINCE

Then, there is another thing: we must have a wall in the great chamber; for Pyramus and Thisby 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 -

STARVELING

And let him have some plaster -

SNUG

Or some loam -

SNOUT

Or some rough-cast about him -

STARVELING, SNUG & SNOUT

To signify wall!

BOTTOM

And let him hold his fingers thus, and through that cranny shall Pyramus and Thisby whisper.

QUINCE

If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit down, every mother's son, and rehearse your parts.

Pyramus, you begin: when you have spoken your speech, enter into that brake: and so everyone according to his cue.

Enter PUCK behind

PUCK

What hempen home-spuns have we swaggering here?

What, a play toward! I'll be an auditor;

An actor too, perhaps, if I see cause.

QUINCE

Speak, Pyramus. Thisby, stand forth.

BOTTOM

Thisby, the flowers of odious savours sweet,--

QUINCE

Odours, odours!

BOTTOM

--odours savours sweet:

So hath thy breath, my dearest Thisby dear.

But hark, a voice! Stay thou but here awhile,

And by and by I will to thee appear.

Exit

PUCK

A stranger Pyramus than e'er played here.

Exit

FLUTE

Must I speak now?

QUINCE

Ay, marry, must you; for you must understand he goes but to see a noise that he heard, and is to come again.

FLUTE

Most radiant Pyramus, most lily-white of hue,
Of colour like the red rose on triumphant brier,
Most brisky juvenal and eke most lovely Jew,
As true as truest horse that yet would never tire,
I'll meet thee, Pyramus, at Ninny's tomb.

QUINCE

'Ninus' tomb,' man: why, you must not speak that yet; that you answer to Pyramus: you speak all your part at once, cues and all Pyramus enter: your cue is past; it is, 'never tire.'

FLUTE

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

Re-enter PUCK, and BOTTOM with an ass's head

BOTTOM

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

QUINCE

O monstrous! O strange! we are haunted. Pray, masters! fly, masters! Help!
Exeunt QUINCE, SNUG, FLUTE, SNOUT, and STARVELING

PUCK *[frightening the actors]*

I'll follow you, I'll lead you about a round,
Through bog, through bush, through brake, through brier:
Sometime a horse I'll be, sometime a hound,
A hog, a headless bear, sometime a fire;
And neigh, and bark, and grunt, and roar, and burn,
Like horse, hound, hog, bear, fire, at every turn.

Exit

BOTTOM

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

Re-enter SNOUT

SNOUT

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? *Exit SNOUT*

Re-enter QUINCE

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,--

Exits while singing