

Midsummer Night's

Dream Moved

Synopsis

A Midsummer Night's Dream begins with a father, Egeus, going to see his Duke, Theseus, demanding his daughter, Hermia, marry the man of his choice, Demetrius, or die, but she is in love with Lysander.

EGEUS

Full of vexation come I, with complaint
Against my child, my daughter Hermia.

HERMIA

I know not by what power I am made bold,
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

... the law of Athens yields you up...
To death, or to a vow of single life.

DEMETRIUS

Relent, sweet Hermia: and, Lysander, yield
Thy crazed title to my certain right.

LYSANDER

You have her father's love, Demetrius;
Let me have Hermia's: do you marry him.

Lysander tells Duke Theseus that Demetrius was in love with a girl called Helena.

LYSANDER

Demetrius...

Made love to Nedar's daughter, Helena,
And won her soul

Theseus is about to get married to Hippolyta and decides to give Hermia time to choose her father's wishes or die.

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...

**Lysander and Hermia decide to
flee Athens and get married
anyway.**

LYSANDER

I have a widow aunt...

From Athens is her house remote seven
leagues...

There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee...

Steal forth thy father's house to-morrow night;

And in the wood...There will I stay for thee.

Hermia's friend Helena comes by. Helena is heartbroken about Demetrius dropping her and wants Hermia to teach her how to win him back. Hermia tells Helena that they are leaving Athens to get married.

HERMIA

God speed fair Helena!

HELENA

Call you me fair?

O, teach me how you look, and with what art
You sway the motion of Demetrius' heart.

HERMIA

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

**Helena decides to tell Demetrius,
so that he will realise Hermia is
gone and come back to her.**

HELENA

I will go tell him of fair Hermia's
flight...

To have his sight thither and back
again

**A playwright, Peter Quince,
gathers a group of friends to
rehearse a play to present before
the Duke on his wedding day. The
lead actor, Bottom, wants to play
all the roles.**

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... To have his sight thither and back again

BOTTOM

What is Pyramus? A lover, or a tyrant?

... let me play Thisby too...

... Let me play the lion too...

**To keep their play secret they
decide to meet in the forest at
night to rehearse.**

QUINCE

I am to entreat you, request
you and desire you, to con them by to-morrow
night;
and meet me in the palace wood, a mile
without the
town, by moonlight; there will we rehearse

In the forest Oberon, the fairy king and Titania, the Fairy queen are fighting over a human baby. Their fairy servants warn each other to keep them apart - but the two fighting fairy lovers meet.

PUCK

For Oberon is passing fell and wrath,
Because that she as her attendant hath
A lovely boy, stolen from an Indian king;

OBERON

Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania.

TITANIA

What, jealous Oberon! Fairies, skip hence

As king and queen of the fairy world, Oberon and Titania's fighting is having a disastrous effect on nature - floods, drought and endless summer [Sound familiar?]

TITANIA

The human mortals want their winter here ...
this same progeny of evils comes
From our debate, from our dissension

OBERON

Do you amend it then; it lies in you:
I do but beg a little Indian boy.

TITANIA

His mother was a votaress of my order.

Oberon is furious that he has been rejected again and decides to use magic against Titania.

OBERON

Fetch me that flower; the herb I show'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

**Demetrius and Helena stumble
through the dark forest night and
Oberon sees them arguing.**

DEMETRIUS

I love thee not, therefore pursue me
not...

I tell you, I do not, nor I cannot love you

HELENA

And even for that do I love you the more

Oberon decides to send his servant Puck to make Demetrius fall in love with Helena with the same magic herb he will use on Titania.

OBERON

A sweet Athenian lady is in love

With a disdainful youth: anoint his eyes...

thou shalt know the man

By the Athenian garments he hath on

**He casts his magic on
Titania's eyes.**

OBERON

What thou seest when thou dost
wake,

Do it for thy true-love take

**In another part of the forest
Lysander and Hermia are lost and
decide to sleep [at a chaste
distance] until morning enables
them to see their way.**

LYSANDER

Fair love, you faint with wandering in the wood;

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

HERMIA

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

Puck discovers the two Athenian lovers and mistakes Lysander for Demetrius, putting the magic herb on his eyes.

PUCK

This is he, my master said,

Despised the Athenian maid;

And here the maiden, sleeping

**Helena, abandoned by Demetrius,
stumbles upon the sleeping
Lysander (doesn't see Hermia) and
wakes him up, triggering the magic
spell.**

HELENA

Lysander if you live, good sir,
awake.

LYSANDER

[Awaking] And run through fire I
will for thy sweet sake.

Meanwhile Puck plays a prank on the actors rehearsing their play. He transforms Bottom's head into a donkey's head, scaring his friends who run away.

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?

QUINCE

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

**Titania wakes up with this
noise and falls in love with
the donkey headed
Bottom.**

TITANIA

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

**In the forest Demetrius has found
Hermia, who assumes that
Demetrius has killed, the missing,
Lysander.**

DEMETRIUS

O, why rebuke you him that loves you
so?

HERMIA

...I fear, hast given me cause to curse,
If thou hast slain Lysander...

**Oberon sees all the
chaos and rebukes
Puck for charming the
wrong Athenian.**

OBERON

What hast thou done? Thou hast
mistaken quite

And laid the love-juice on some
true-love's sight.

As Demetrius sleeps, Oberon casts the magic on Demetrius' eyes so he will fall in love with Helena. She stumbles upon him and he falls passionately for her.

DEMETRIUS

[Awaking] O Helena, goddess, nymph,
perfect, divine!

HELENA

O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent
To set against me for your merriment:

**Hermia hears the noise and
stumbles back to ask
Lysander why he left her.
Helena thinks the others
are teasing her.**

HERMIA

But why unkindly didst thou leave me so?

HELENA

Lo, she is one of this confederacy!

Now I perceive they have conjoin'd all
three

To fashion this false sport, in spite of me

**Hermia assumes that
Helena has stolen her
fiance from her, Helena
seeks protection from
Hermia.**

HERMIA

O me! You juggler! You canker-blossom!
You thief of love!

HELENA

O, when she's angry, she is keen and shrewd!
She was a vixen when she went to school;
And though she be but little, she is fierce.

LYSANDER

Get you gone, you dwarf...
You bead, you acorn.

**When Lysander protects Helena
Demetrius challenges him to a
fight. They go off to fight.**

DEMETRIUS

...If thou dost intend
Never so little show of love to her,
Thou shalt aby it.

LYSANDER

Now follow, if thou darest, to try whose right,
Of thine or mine, is most in Helena.

DEMETRIUS

Follow! Nay, I'll go with thee, cheek by jowl.

**Helena is left alone
with the fierce Hermia
and avoids a fight.**

HELENA

Your hands than mine are quicker for a
fray,
My legs are longer though, to run away.

Exit

HERMIA

I am amazed, and know not what to say.

**Oberon blames Puck
for the chaos, but Puck
has an excuse.**

OBERON

This is thy negligence: still thou
mistakest...

PUCK

Did not you tell me I should know the man
By the Athenian garment he had on?

Oberon tells Puck to restore the lovers to their true selves and decides to release Titania from his spell.

OBERON

I'll to my queen and beg her Indian
boy;

And then I will her charmed eye
release...

**Titania, released from the magic,
asks Oberon how it was that she
came to have such strange
'dreams'.**

TITANIA

Come, my lord, and in our flight
Tell me how it came this night
That I sleeping here was found
With these mortals on the ground.

**The four lovers are discovered
sleeping in the forest by
Theseus, Hippolyta and Egeus.
They are awoken.**

LYSANDER

I came with Hermia hither: our intent
Was to be gone from Athens, where we might,
Without the peril of the Athenian law.

EGEUS

Enough, enough, my lord; you have enough:
I beg the law, the law, upon his head.

**Demetrius announces
that he is now back in
love with Helena.**

DEMETRIUS

...all the faith, the
virtue of my heart,
Is only Helena.

Theseus decides to make an exception to the law and let the lovers join him and Hippolyta in a triple-wedding.

THESEUS

Egeus, I will overbear your will;
For in the temple by and by with us
These couples shall eternally be
knit:

**Bottom, returned to human form,
finds his friends in Athens. He tries
to tell them what happened to
him.**

BOTTOM

Masters, I am to discourse wonders: but ask me not what; for if I tell you, I am no true Athenian..... I will tell you everything, right as it fell out.

Their play is chosen to be shown to Duke Theseus. It is the story of two lovers, Pyramus and Thisbe, who are separated by a wall.

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...

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.

**Arranging to meet in a graveyard
at night Pyramus thinks his lover
has been killed by a lion and kills
himself in grief.**

Pyramus

Thus die I, thus, thus, thus...

Now die, die, die, die, die.

Dies

**Thisbe finds Pyrmus'
dead body and kills
herself too.**

Thisbe

Asleep, my love?

What, dead, my dove?

Come, trusty sword;

Stabs herself

And, farewell, friends;

Thus Thisby ends:

Adieu, adieu, adieu.

Dies

**Oberon, Titania and the fairies
bless the newly-weds and Puck
ends the show with a request that
if the audience didn't like the play
they just pretend it was all a
dream.**

PUCK

If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended,
That you have but slumber'd here
While these visions did appear...
Give me your hands, if we be friends,
And Robin shall restore amends.