SHAKESPEARE'S

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.
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THE FIRST QUARITO,
1600:

A FAC-SIMILE IN PHOTO-LITHOGRAPHY,

BY
WILLIAM GRIGGS,
FOR 13 YEARS PHOTO-LITHOGRAPHER TO THE INDIA OFFICE.

WITH INTRODUCTION BY
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TO HIS GRACE

The Duke of Devonshire:

CHANCELLOR OF CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY:

BY THE EDITOR.

[Shakspere-Quarto Fac-similes, No. 3.]
INTRODUCTION

TO THE PHOTO-LITHOGRAPH OF

FISHER'S QUARTO EDITION, 1600:

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

§ 1. The Two Quartos of 1600.


§ 8. The Fairies: Oberon and Titania.

§ 9. The "Crew of Patches," "Bottom's Dream."

§ 10. Conclusion: The Three-fold Plot.

§ 1. THE TWO QUARTOS OF 1600.

IN the Registers of the Stationers' Company, vol. C = 3, fol. 65 verso, is found the earliest known record of the publication in printed form of "A Midsummer Night's Dream:"

[A.D. 1600.] 8 Octobris.

Thomas ffyssher Entred for his Copie vnder the handes of master RODES / and the Wardens, A booke called A Mydsommer nightes Dreame . . . . vj

Students require absolute fidelity in the reproduction of such rare originals. We therefore offer them this volume without any tamper-

Edward Arber's Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers, &c., iii., 174. This entry undoubtedly refers to the Quarto here reproduced in its integrity from an exemplar in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire. A few pages deficient in the original (viz. 18, 19, 20, 21; 58, 59, 60, 61 = eight pp.) are supplied in the photo-lithograph from Mr. Huth's own copy. The Bodleian Library and the Capell Collection, in Trinity College, Cambridge, possess the same edition. There is also another perfect exemplar in the British Museum, Case 34, k. 29.
ing whatever. Even the mutilated head-lines are left as they were shorn by some reckless bookbinder. The crease in the paper of the title-page (causing omission of two letters, a and h) is a defect in the Devonshire copy. Of course, the other broken or imperfectly-inked letters, etc., are in fac-simile of the original.

For purposes of reference it is sufficient that we number the lines of the Quarto, in fours, on the inside margin; and also mark the division of Acts, which is given in the Folio, but not in either Quarto. We add a list of characters, on a separate page, preceding the title, from a later edition.

Like others of the early typographers and publishers, Thomas Fisher indulged himself with a pictorial rebus and verbal synonyme on his own name. As may be seen in our reproduction of the title-page, he gives a King-fisher or Halcyon, "Alcione," with the motto "Motos soleo componere fluctus." 1

Another Quarto edition was issued, by James Roberts, bearing date of the same year, 1600; but of this publication no record is entered in the Stationers' Registers. For the Introduction to the photolithographic fac-simile of this other edition may well be reserved a consideration of the chief verbal differences between these two Quartos, and also the relation they bear to the first Folio of 1623; the editors whereof had certainly availed themselves of Roberts's printed copy, although they professed to have had access to some manuscript original, if we are to take their announcement literally. 2 At the best, they employed a playhouse copy, which was composed of Roberts's printed Quarto, with additional stage directions, etc., in manuscript. These statements are supported by proofs in our Introduction to the second Quarto.

1 Fisher must have been proud of obtaining the favour of being allowed to print this play-book, his very earliest recorded publication, within a few months after gaining his freedom.

2 Compare the address to the readers of the first Folio, 1623, signed by John Heminge and Henrie Condell: ... "Where (before) you were abus'd with diuerse foline, and furreptitious copies, maimed, and deformed by the frauds and feallhes of injurious impoitors, that expos'd them: even thofe, are now offer'd to your view cur'd, and perfect of their limbes; and all the refl, abfolute in their numbers, as he conceu'd them ....... wee haue scarde receuied from him a blot in his papers." (Sheet sign. A 3.)
§ 2. Mentioned by Meres, 1598.

Two years earlier, at least, the comedy was known and popular on the stage. Francis Meres, in the memorable list contained in his *Palladis Tamia: Wits Treasury; being the Second part of Wits Commonwealth*, September, 1598, fol. 281-2, mentions "Shakespeare among English is the most excellent . . . for the stage; for Comedy witnes . . . his *Midsummer's Night's Dream*," etc. This is the earliest distinct reference to the play, which may have been several years before the public for anything yet shown to the contrary. It is the fifth comedy in the list of six; the others being almost certainly of earlier date than this.

§ 3. Date of the Comedy.

Among conjectural theories, one seemed plausibly to establish the date as immediately following the wet summer of 1594. Numerous are the contemporary accounts of the floods, the damaged fruit and endangered harvest of that year. Dr. Forman’s Ashmolean MS., No. 384, gives such a description of the rainy season and the damage that ensued as might suffice anew for a meteorological diary of 1879. Stowe chronicles the same events, and the statement is copied into Penkethman’s *Artachthos*, 1638. In the *Lectures on Jonah*, delivered at York in the same year, 1594, by the Rev. John King (afterwards D.D., 1601, and Bishop of London, 1611), are passages, often quoted, which refer to the unkind spring “by means of the abundance of rains that fell; our July hath been like to a February; our June even as an April;” and “such unseasonable weather and storms of rain among us, which if we will observe, and compare it with that which is past, we may say that the course of nature is very much inverted; our years are turned upside down; our summers are no summers; our harvests are no harvests; our seed-times are no seed-times; for a great space of time scant any day hath been seen that it hath not rained upon us; and the nights are like the days.” (Lectures upon Jonah, delivered at York, in the year of our Lord 1594: by John King, afterwards Lord Bishop of London. Reprinted by
James Nichol. Edinburgh, 4to., 1864.) In the second Lecture he had said, and pointedly in reference to “the year of the Lord 1593, and 1595:”—“The months of the year have not yet gone about, wherein the Lord hath bowed the heavens, and come down amongst us with more tokens and earnest of his wrath intended, than the agedest man of our land is able to recount of so small a time. For say if ever the winds, since they blew one against the other, have been more common, and more tempestuous, as if the four ends of heaven had conspired to turn the foundations of the world upside down; thunders and lightnings, neither seasonable for the time, and withal most terrible, with such effects brought forth,” &c. (Ibid., p. 21.) We agree with Thomas Kenney in believing that “The detailed enumeration made by Titania, in Act ii. sc. i [our p. 14, line 84, to p. 15, line 113], of the elemental convulsions which [had] followed her quarrel with Oberon, seems to contain an unmistakable allusion to the unseasonable and disastrous weather with which we know that England had been visited during that year.” (Life and Genius of Shakespeare, 1864, p. 175.) The Rev. Alexander Dyce harshly designated the supposition of any such intended allusion to the weather of 1594 as “ridiculous,” but he also thus characterized “not less so” any specific identification of the mourning by the thrice-three Muses,

“For the death
Of learning, late deceast in beggary.”
(P. 53, lines 50, 51.)

§ 4. THE SUPPOSED ALLUSION TO GREENE, 1592.

Nevertheless, it is by no means improbable that Shakespeare did here refer to the blighted career and untimely death, in 1592, of that Robert Greene, who had made scurrilous allusion to his rival as “an absolute Johannes Fac-totum,” and “in his owne conceit the onely Shake-scene in a countrie.” (Groatsworth of Wit, p. 30.) It seems generally forgotten by book-learned critics, who are for the most part unfamiliar with the actual stage-management and the resources of dramatic authorship, that many a “telling” allusion to contemporary
events would be profitably foisted in (like a new verse on the day's occurrences in a "topical song") during the run of a drama, or on its revival.¹

Therefore, even when we are able with precision to determine that some particular allusion must have referred to an event of ascertained date, we are not materially helped to a discovery of the original date of the work itself; only to the fact of it being not later than the date thus established. Oberon's description may have been intentionally appropriated to the wet summer of 1594 (and in such case it was written and spoken before the "fair harvest" in August, mentioned by Stowe, had partly compensated for the previous floods). But this by no means proves that the fairy comedy could not have been acted earlier without that description; that it was so acted, although possible, is far from probable.²

"The thrice-three Muses mourning for the death of Learning," etc., cannot have been an allusion to Spenser's "Tears of the Muses," 1591; for, we are expressly told, "That is some Satire keene and critical, Not sorting with a nuptial ceremony:" a description inapplicable to the Spenserian complaint. Spenser's death was not until January, 1593.

The supposed imitation in "Doctor Dodypoll," 1600—

¹ In most cases this interpolation would be what is called the actor's "gag;" but where the author happened to be in connection with the theatre, a shareholder and performer, close at hand, he would himself occasionally add fresh lines when deemed expedient. Thus Hamlet intended to insert "a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines," in the Gonzago play. Some passage similarly dangerous or seditious may have been interpolated in "Richard the Second," at the time of Essex's ill-starred tumult in 1600.

² It need not be deemed conclusive against the supposition of Robert Greene having been thus indicated, that his death (in September, 1592) was an event too far back to be remembered by the audience. Greene had secured many admirers, and, as J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps shows, his miserable death "was a subject of general conversation for several years, and a reference to the circumstance, though indistinctly expressed, would have been well understood in literary circles at the time it is supposed the comedy was produced." (Privately-printed Memoranda on the Midsummer Night's Dream, p. 20, 1879.) In confirmation of this statement we must remember that even so late as 1598 Greene's name was still employed as a popular spell to enforce attention, for John Dickenson thus uses it in more than the title of his "Greene in Concept: new raised from the Grave to write the Tragique Historie of faire Valeria of London." This novel was probably of later date than the production of Shakespeare's comedy. It was reprinted in 1879 by Dr. Grosart, among his valuable "Occasional Issues."
INTRODUCTION.

"'Twas I that lead you through the painted meades,
Where the light fairies daunst upon the flowers,
Hanging on every leaf an orient pearl," etc.—

is of doubtful value in reference to date; although the comedy was mentioned, by Nash, in 1596: the language, moreover, may be deemed too loose and general to be cited as an imitation or parallel-passage.¹

§ 5. SPENSER'S FAERIE QUEENE, 1596.

A far more important clue is furnished by the ripe scholarship of J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps, in his valuable and most recent Memoranda on the Midsummer Night's Dream, 1879. It is but fair to this life-long student of Shakespearian literature to quote the passage entire, the more especially as the Memoranda are privately printed for a very limited circulation:—

"There seems to be a certainty that Shakespeare, in the composition of the Midsummer Night's Dream, had in one place a recollection of the sixth book of The Faerie Queene, published in 1596, for he all but literally quotes the following line from the eighth canto of that book,—'Through hils and dales, through bushes and through breres.' (Faerie Queene, ed. 1596, p. 460.) As the Midsummer Night's Dream was not printed until the year 1600, and it is impossible that Spenser could have been present at any representation of the comedy before he had written the sixth book of The Faerie Queene, it may fairly be concluded that Shakespeare's play was not composed at the earliest before the year 1596, in fact, not until some time after January the 20th, 1595-6, on which day the Second Part of The Faerie Queene was entered on the books of the Stationers' Company. The sixth book of that poem was probably written as early as 1592 or 1593, certainly in Ireland, and at some considerable time before the month of November, 1594, the date of one entry of publication of the Amoretti; in the eightieth sonnet of which it is distinctly alluded

¹ To Puck the Fairy says (p. 12, lines 10, 11) :—

"I must goe seeke some dew droppes here,
And hang a pearle in everie couslippes eare."

So far as it proves anything, the resemblance in "Doctor Dodypoll" indicates that Midsummer Night's Dream was not later than 1596.
to as having been completed previously to the composition of the latter work.” (Memoranda, pp. 6, 7.)

We admit the virtual identity of the passage quoted from Spenser, with Puck's speech (our p. 12, line 2, Act ii. sc. 1):

"Ouer hill, ouer dale, thorough bush, thorough brier."

If we could feel it to be certain that the Spenserian line (written before 1594) suggested the Shakespearian, the test would be decisive: to us it indicates anew the date 1594.

Malone attributed the date of A Midsummer Night's Dream to 1594; Dr. Nathan Drake to 1593; Professor Delius to 1595; Chalmers to 1598. Recently, attempts have been made to claim so early a date as 1590-91: which claim the present writer holds to be inadmissible, and in opposition to external evidence. 1 Fortunately, the garrulity of Meres has determined the latest possible date as being 1598. This leads us tolerably near to the real date: probably 1593-94, at earliest; and not later than 1596. 2

§ 6. Pyramus and Thisbie, 1584, etc.

No material help in regard to the date of the comedy is afforded by consulting the possible sources of the Interlude. The story of the two lovers had for several years been popular, not only in direct translations of Ovid by Golding and others, but more especially in "A new Sonet of Pyramus and Thisbie: to the Tune of The Downe-right Squier," beginning, "You Dames (I say) that climbe the mount

1 We omit consideration of what are called "verse-tests." At present, the theories based on these are (in the opinion of scholars of established reputation, with whom we hold agreement,) often misleading. In passing, let it be remarked, only, that the light-ending or weak-ending lines are almost wholly absent; and so are the run-on lines. The continuity of rhyme, in many lines repeated, is remarkable in Titania's and Oberon's speeches, adding to their musical impressiveness.

2 Two hitherto-unnnoticed entries in the Stationers' Registers deserve attention, as indicating some connection with A Midsummer Night's Dream. To Thomas Creede (who published several of Shakespeare's plays, more or less irregularly) is entered, on the 14th of May, 1594, "a booke intituled the Scottish story of JAMES the FOURTH, slayme at Flodden, intermixed with a pleasant Comedie presented by OBORON Kinge of Fayres." Again (as probably helping to suggest by contrast the name of Shakespeare's own comedy, which must have been in his mind, if not in great part written), to Edward White is entered, on the 22nd of May, 1594, "a book entituled a Wynters nightes pastime." (Cf. Transcript, ii. 648, 650.)
INTRODUCTION.

of Helicon.” It is by I. Thomson, and contained in Clement Robinson’s *A Handefull of pleasant Delites ; containing sundrie new Sonets and delectable Histories in divers kindes of Meeter.* 1584. Than this there is scarcely a book of which clearer proof remains that it had been seen and was used by Shakespeare. An earlier edition of it was issued in 1565, but whether “Pyramus and Thisbie” be one of “the new additions of certain Songs to verie late deuised Notes,” it would be difficult to prove. In any case, the one extant edition (a unique copy, and mutilated, sheet sign. B. vi. being defective,1) is of too early a date to guide us, having been issued before Shakespeare is believed to have left Stratford.2

§ 7. NORTH’S PLUTARCH, 1579: THESEUS.

Howard Staunton repudiates the theory which assigned the groundwork of the fable to Chaucer’s “Knight’s Tale,” declaring that “there is scarcely any resemblance whatever between Chaucer’s

1 The present Editor was fortunate enough to discover and identify a fragment (leaf D. 2) of the earlier edition in the Bagford Collection at the British Museum (Case 39 K. vol. i. p. 83), hitherto unknown: and to print it in the Ballad Society’s *Bagford Ballads,* p. 43. In the Stationers’ Registers is an entry to Rich. Iohnes of the very book, in 1564-5. The Shakespearian connection is indisputable. (Ex. grat. sheet sign. A. ii. verso, “Rosemarie is for remembrance,” and “Fenel is for flatterers:” compare *Hamlet,* Act iv.) In this respect it is noteworthy that we find a silly blunder (on sheet sign. C. ii.), “At last they promised to meet at prime, by *Minus* well” (sic): which suggests the “*Ninies* tomb” of Flute, as Thisbie of the Interlude.

2 Long before Shakespeare’s interlude, “a tedious briefe Scene of young *Pyramus* and his love *Thisby:* very trigical mirth,” there had been a similar entertainment offered to the press, and probably also on the stage. For we find an entry in the Stationers’ Registers, at the beginning of the year between 22 July, 1567, and 22 July, 1568. “*Recevyd of Rycharde Jonnes for his lycense for pryntinge of a boke intituled ye tragecally comedye of *DAMOUNDE* and *PETHYAS* . . . iiiijd.*” (See Arber’s *Transcript,* 1875, i. 354.) And the phrase tickled the fancy of the public, for we find again, two years later, “*Receyvd of John Alde for his lycense for pryntinge of an enterlude a lamentable Tragedy full of pleasaut myrth . . . iiiijd.*” (*Ibid.* i. 400, for 22 July, 1569, to 22 July, 1570.) We are not aware that these entries have been hitherto cited in illustration. It may also here be noted that, near the same time, when he had been writing or meditating *A Midsummer Night’s Dream,* Shakespeare himself introduced an allusion into *The Merchant of Venice* (but see J. W. E.’s forthcoming Introduction to it), act v. sc. 1:—

“In such a night
Did *Thisbie* fearfully o’ertrip the dew,
And saw the Lion’s shadow ere himself,
And ran dismay’d away.”
tale and Shakespeare's play, beyond that of the scene in both being laid at the Court of Theseus.” He admits that the character of “the Duke” is founded on the account in North's Translation of Plutarch; but he somewhat exaggerates in declaring that, “beyond one or two passing allusions, there is no attempt to individualize either the man or the country.” As to the country we may concede the point, for the haunted wood more resembles the Wier-Brake of Warwickshire than any grove near Athens. Local colouring was unthought of, so long as events and characters were found interesting. But in the stately dignity of Theseus, with his large-hearted acceptance of the efforts made to please him, and the half-expressed repugnance to unreal sentiment or rhapsody, such as befitted a man of action and success in war, we recognize his individuality. The delineation of Theseus, as a piece of art, is complete in its strength and beauty; although it is almost overlooked in any popular estimate of the wonderful fairy mythology. The lore of pedants could never have given to us this heroic figure—one whose every word still recalls, like the analogous sculpture by Phidias, that period of Grecian antiquity when gods walked the earth with man as with a friend. The nobility of Theseus is of a kind that none but a truly great mind could have conceived; it is nobility in repose. We have no opportunity of seeing him in his

1 For which see Reeves and Turner's excellent Shakespeare's Library, second edition (being enlarged from J. P. Collier's, of 1841), 1875, vol. i. pp. 7 to 71. The full title of North's translation is, The Lives of the noble Grecians and Romans, compared together by that grave learned Philosopher and Historiographer, Plutareke of Chaeronea... By Thomas North. Imprinted at London by Thomas Vautroilier, dwelling in the Black Friers by Ludgate. 1579. In folio, 595 leaves. From this work certain names were directly borrowed for A Midsummer Night's Dream, particularly, 1, Ægles (from pp. 28, 41); 2, Perigouna, the daughter of Sinnis (p. 15); 3, Ægus, father of Theseus. These we find in the present Fisher's Quarto, printed or misprinted, as, 1, Eagles (intended for Ægle, which, moreover, ought to have been italicized, on p. 14, line 75); 2, Perigenia (on same page, line 74); and, 3, a different Ægus (Acts i. and v.). There are also Antiope, Hyppolita (in North, as the same person: but in Shakespeare as distinct women), etc. The preceding offer a stronger clue.

2 Compare Julius Caesar, Act iv., sc. 3: “What should the wars do with these juggling fools?”

3 We have little need to disturb ourselves concerning anachronisms and incongruities, although we find Athenian Theseus declare "Saint Valentine is past" (p. 47); and Titania accuse Oberon of having been disguised as Corin, conversing "love to amorous Phillida." Dido, "the Carthage Queen," and Æneas (p. 7) belong to a later date than Theseus; whom Chaucer also had called a "Duke." These are trifles.
early enterprises as a redressor of wrongs and seeker after adventures. Although he tells his queen,

"Hippolita, I wooed thee with my sword,
And won thy love, doing thee injury,"

the struggle with her Amazons is ended before he appears in view; his battle with the Centaurs is only incidentally referred to (p. 52), "in glory of my kinsman Hercules." There is no rebellious strife in the Athenian city to demand display of energy. Yet we feel, in his every word and movement, that here is indeed a man "equal to either fortune;" one whom prosperity cannot dazzle, or adversity humiliate and sour. Noteworthy is it how thoroughly Shakespeare portrays such heroes as this (and no dramatist can rise to lofty heights unless there be in himself true dignity)—the majestic grace of his speech, the genial warmth of sympathy with inferiors, entering without ostentation into their feelings, receiving their lame endeavours with kindly humour, and thus making complete what they imperfectly perform:

"And what poor duty cannot do
Noble respect takes it in might, not merit."

He is unwilling to disappoint these

"hard-handed men that work in Athens here,
Who never laboured in their minds till now,
And now have toiled their unbreath'd memories
With this same play against his nuptials."

This acceptance is evidently from consideration for "their intents, extremely stretch'd, and conned with cruel pain to do him service," since he answers—

"I will hear this play,
For never any thing can be amiss
When simpleness and duty tender it."

Again, afterwards, in reply to Hippolita's complaint that the dramatic interlude is "the silliest stuff" she ever heard, he reminds her—as an apology for any such shortcomings—"The best in this kind are but shadows: and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend
INTRODUCTION.

them." But with all this willingness to accept such a “palpable gross play,” his more keen delight is in the stirring chase, with his Amazonian bride, and his hounds that “are bred out of the Spartan kind: Slow in pursuit, but match’d in mouth like bells, each under each; a cry more tuneable was never halloed to, nor cheer’d with horn in Crete, in Sparta, nor in Thessaly.” And this not only from love for the chase itself, but also to ascend

“The mountain’s top,
And mark the musical confusion
Of hounds and echo in conjunction.”

From him we gain that most lovely contrast between the wedded wife and Diana’s chaste votary,

“In shady cloister mew’d,
To live a barren Sister all her life,
Chaunting faint hymns to the cold fruitless moon.
Thrice blessed they, that master so their blood,
To undergo such maiden pilgrimage;
But earthlier happy is the rose distill’d,
Than that which, withering on the virgin thorn,
Grows, lives, and dies in single blessedness.”

From Theseus also comes the magnificent passage, as philosophically exact as it is poetically beautiful, descriptive of Imagination; gaining additional value from the position which it occupies, and from the character of him who utters it.

Even here, elevated to a throne, unchallenged in dignity, victor in struggles that were soon to be accounted mythical; after all the vast experience of his youth, familiarized by converse with beings of superhuman might and loveliness, Theseus appears not to be conscious of his own superiority to ordinary men, or that near to him are working

1 It will not be without service to contrast the unkind mockery and persistent humiliation of the actors who personate the Nine Worthies in Love’s Labour’s Lost—probably an earlier play—with the raillery that greets the far more ridiculous exhibition of Pyramus and Thisbie. Well may Holofernes make remonstrance: “This is not generous; not gentle; not humble.”

2 A picture elaborated, later, in the Isabella of Measure for Measure. As with Sir Walter Scott’s Catherine, The Fair Maid of Perth, the intention of the author had probably been to preserve the virginal chastity of the heroine unblemished until death. In either case, her marriage is a concession made to popular prejudice, weakening the force of the character, and thus injurious.
unseen those spiritual agencies that influence mankind. His poetry of thought and of expression is but the common air that he breathes. To him there is forgetfulness of mere self, his deeds appearing nowise marvellous to one who, from an inner world, surveys the outer sphere of action. Despite all that he has seen, he is no Visionary. Like a commentary on the whole drama of this Midsummer Night’s Dream, and on the creative power of Shakespeare’s own imagination, as beheld and restrained by practical wisdom, flow his words:

“I never may believe
These antique fables, nor these fairy toys:
Lovers and madmen have such seething brains,
Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend
More than cool reason ever comprehends.
The Lunatic, the Lover, and the Poet,
Are of Imagination all compact:
One sees more devils than vast Hell can hold;
That is the Madman: the Lover, all as frantic,
Sees Helen’s beauty in a brow of Egypt:
The Poet’s eye, in a fine phrensy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
And, as Imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the Poet’s pen
Turns them to shape, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.”

§ 8. The Fairies: Oberon and Titania.

Although into the stately presence of Theseus the fairies enter not, visibly, they love and revere him; as they mention during the quarrel between Oberon and Titania: thus their latest employment is to hallow his nuptial dwelling. Over the more youthful pairs of lovers their spells are potent, at first to perplex, and afterwards to reunite them. But it is upon the clowns—the men described as

“A crew of Patches, rude mechanicals,
That work for bread upon Athenian stalls,
Who meet together to rehearse a play
Intended for great Theseus’ nuptial day”—

that the elvish Puck, that lob of spirits,¹ most freely exercises his mis-

¹ “Farewell, thou Lobbe of spirits.” (P. 12.)
“Then lies him down, the Lubber-fiend.”—Milton’s L’Allegro, 110.
chivous mirth. He confesses his belief, "What fools these mortals be!" The gambols of these tiny ministrants may well be regarded as the most perfect poem of its class that has ever appeared. The lyrical melodiousness, and the profusion of floral or starry imagery never grow wearisome. They yield a clear, although a glowing revelation of the fairies' temperament. We see their sportive jealousies and fantastic vengeances; their gatherings on "the beached margent of the sea, to dance their ringlets to the whistling winds;" their drowsiness on banks of thyme, "o'er-canopied with sweet musk-roses and with eglantine;" their whimsical horror of intrusion from thorny hedgehogs, newts and blind-worms, spiders, snails, and beetles; their love of "music that brings sleep," and of the moonlit glades; their restless obligation to "trip after the moon's shade," "following darkness as a dream." We see the rollicking mirthfulness of Robin Goodfellow, to whom "things most pleasant be that befal preposterously." 2

Amid this revelling in fancy there is a poetical completeness far beyond the requirements of any stage-effect. In our own time, at theatres, we may find the dramatic illusion heightened with set scenes, coloured lights and transparencies, the witcheries of graceful forms, fantastic costumes; and the loveliest melodies of Mendelssohn's

1 Malone and, recently, J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps and W. C. Hazlitt, have shown that Michael Drayton's Nymphidia cannot be regarded as having in any way suggested the drama; for the Nymphidia was not only never printed until 1627, but is indicated as having been among the later poems of its author. See Malone's Shakespeare, edition 1821, v. 206; the Percy Society Illustrations of Fairy Mythology, 1845; and Reeves and Turner's Fairy Tales illustrating Shakespeare, 1875, p. 239, where the Nymphidia is reprinted complete. Also, the Robin Goodfellow ballad, attributed by Peck to Ben Jonson, "From Oberon, in fairyland," Roxb. Coll., i. 230; or Roxburghe Ballads, ii. 81.

2 Commend we to the notice of all students a suggestive little volume on "Shakespeare's Puck, and his Folklore, illustrated from the Superstitions of All Nations;" By William Bell, Phil. Doct., 1852. In a forthcoming volume of the Ballad Society's reprint, The Roxburghe Ballads, the curious woodcuts of Robin Goodfellow will be given in fac-simile to Roxb. Coll., ii. 145. Professor Daniel Wilson's Caliban: the Missing Link, and A Midsummer Night's Dream, 1873, is one of the most valuable contributions to Shakespearian criticism. The name of Oberon, "the dwarfe king of fayres," had already been made a household word by having appeared in the popular romance of Huon of Bourdeux, a translation of which, by Lord Berners, had appeared about 1558. Oberon is guessed to be simply an adaptation of the original Elberich, or Albrich. The name Titania was borrowed from one of the synonyms of Diana, to whom it is applied by Ovid.
INTRODUCTION.

genius, to enhance the charm. But beyond all these additional adornments, giving pleasure to the eye and to the ear, remain unapproachable for realization that minuteness, that almost intangible evanescence, which belong to the fairy people of Shakespeare. Puck is native to our own folks-lore, although trace of him is found elsewhere. But Shakespeare, by several allusions, had carefully prepared us for welcoming the tiny monarchs as visitors from distant regions. Oberon has newly “Come from the farthest steppe of India,” and Titania’s favourite little changeling, the cause of strife, has been brought from his mother’s land, where she had goseipt “in the spiced Indian air by night.” These words, like Puck’s boast, “I’ll put a girdle round about the earth in forty minutes,” or “I go, I go, swifter than arrow from the Tartar’s bow,” increase the impression of their swift travel and wide experiences; for although wanderers and foreign visitants, they are at home in every land, here as elsewhere. Thus the well-understood description of Queen Elizabeth,¹ “the imperiall Votress,” “a fair Vestal, throned in the West,” whom “young Cupid’s fiery shaft” could not transpierce (p. 16), would inevitably bring back to the audience the remembrance that they were supposed to be at a distance from the England of their own time. Beyond these hints of remoteness, and a few antique names, disguise was scarcely attempted, to present the Athens of two thousand years ago.

§ 9. THE “CREW OF PATCHES:” “BOTTOM’S DREAM.”

From the first, no doubt, the world welcomed the genuine humour of contrasting and intermingling with the fairy sprites these “hempen home-spuns” Peter Quince, the carpenter, manager, and Prologizer; Flute, the bellows-mender, who plays Thisbe, although he has a beard

¹ We attach no weight whatever to Warburton’s supposition that by the “Mermaid on a Dolphin’s back” Shakespeare glanced at Elizabeth’s rival, Mary Queen of Scots. She was judicially murdered in 1587, and we may be sure that if the poet could have possibly descended to insult her, long after death, the attack would have been made as self-evident as was the flattering tribute to Elizabeth. It is one of the idle crotchets of those who are incapable of understanding true poetry. Thus attempts have been made to identify every character in Hamlet as portraits of Sir Philip Sidney, Essex, &c.
coming, but may do it in a mask; Starveling, a tailor of melancholy anticipations, who loses temper when gibed at as the "Man in the Moon;" Snug, the joiner, who is slow of study, and methodical in all that he does or asks—an orderly man, and well to be depended on in other matters than the Lion’s part, "which is nothing but roaring;" Snout, the tinker, who enacts Wall in public, and is generally content to chime in with suggestions of others, being unobtrusive by nature in private life. But in all circles is Bully Bottom the favourite.\(^1\) Being a weaver by trade, thence comes his dictatorial habit; for your weaver is a contemplative man, a politician, and abstruse inquirer: he thinks much at his loom, as though it were that of Destiny, and, when he emerges from the stronghold of his treddles, he sometimes forgets that the sequences of his deductions and dogmas are not so logical as they had appeared. He is indisposed to remain hidden in the background. He likes to play first fiddle in all societies, does Bottom: he would willingly perform the Lover and the Tyrant; also Thisbe and the Lion. When his time comes, he will summon Peaseblossom as authoritatively as he had ordered his Athenian comrades; and will volunteer a special answer, in contradiction of Theseus himself, concerning Thisbe’s cue, and, again, regarding the Epilogue. Bottom is self-consistent throughout. In him is exemplified the great truth that no fairyland enchantment of dreams, or love itself, can alter the inherent nature of a full-grown man (as Fielding declared concerning drunkenness, in *Tom Jones*); at most it intensifies, and develops what was latent. He is equally full of ignorant assumption

\(^1\) It is worth noting, as it proves the continued popularity of Bully Bottom among readers and old theatre-lovers, that during the Cromwellian interregnum, whilst all stage-plays were prohibited, Francis Kirkman and Robert Cox maintained the performance of "The merry conceited Humors of Bottom the Weaver; as it hath been often publiquely acted by some of his Majesties Comedians, and lately privately presented by several apprentices for their harmless recreation, with great applause." This was printed in 1661; reprinted in Kirkman’s "*The Wits: or, Sport upon Sport. In Selected Pieces of DROLLERY. 2nd Part. 1672.*" With Frontispiece, representing the Red Bull during performance of sundry Drolls. We need attach little weight to the opinion of Samuel Pepys, 29th September, 1662, that the *Midsummer Night’s Dream* appeared to him "the most insipid ridiculous play that ever I saw in my life" (*Diary*, best edition, 1876, ii. 51); for the Secretary’s critical judgment does him little credit in regard to poetry. What Hamlet says of Polonius (falsely, it appears,) is tolerably true of Pepys: "He’s for a jig, or a tale of bawdry, or he sleeps."
INTRODUCTION.

when Titania proffers music or affection, as he had been in his self-estimates of ability before his transformation. Had he not really been "the shallowest thick-skin of that barren sort," we might have cherished the idea of his career becoming thereafter dignified by a remembrance of the fairy realm into which he, and he alone, had been for awhile admitted;\(^1\) especially as we have, in our own possession, the original Greek ballad which Peter Quince was to have written thereon. But the memory of his Ass's ears was the only perennial bequest of his Midsummer Night's Dream.

§ 10. Conclusion: The Three-fold Plot.

Simple though it appears, when acted, the interweaving of the three-fold plot might have tasked the ingenuity of any playwright. The fairies were to be kept quite distinct from influencing Theseus, his Amazonian bride, and their Court; yet it was specially to grace the nuptials that Oberon had journeyed so far, and the fairy benediction on the wedding-couch concludes the action of the play. The entanglements and misconceptions of the two pairs of lovers were to be caused by Puck and his enchantments of the magic juice; yet after all errors are happily dispersed, and the four friends made happy,—

"When they next wake, all this derision
Shall seem a dream and fruitless vision:" (p. 41.)

... "And think no more of this night's accidents,
But as the fierce vexation of a dream." (p. 45.)

Even thus it befalls. At first they believe "That yet we sleep, we dream;" and afterwards declare, "Let's follow him; And by the way, let us recount our dreams." Lastly, of the Athenian clowns, the handicraftsmen, none behold the fairy crew save only Bottom, the connecting-link, since fate will have it so, between the mortals and

\(^1\) But see, in exemplification of this, Allan Park Paton's *Web of Life*, 1858, p. 261. The transformation is poetically conceived, and skilfully detailed; yet, after all, it is merely of modern false sentiment, opposed to the steadfastness of character that is shown by Shakespeare. We cannot gather figs from thistles: Bottom remains Bottom.
the ethereal company. Even while undergoing the enchantment he
had confounded his own identity: he had longed for dry oats, a
peck of provender, a handful or two of dried peas, a pottle of hay,
"good hay, sweet hay, hath no fellow!" His long ears tickle him:
"I must to the barber's; for methinks I am marvellous hairy about
the face." But when he awakes he feels, "I have had a most rare
vision. I have had a dream!"

No one need puzzle over the confused chronology of the drama.
The action includes only three days and nights, dramatically; although
we are told of four days to intervene between opening words and
nuptial hour. In the old drama, without change of scene, without
a marked distinction of the Acts (such as we now recognize, both in
printed books and at our theatres), there was seldom, if ever, a re-
membrane forced on the spectator of exact length of time. It was
deemed sufficient if some conception arose of an extended duration
—much beyond the real flight of minutes. For this the poet gave
his hint. He found his audience apt, and far too wise to spoil enjoy-
ment by labouring to detect his art. On the contrary, as Wordsworth
writes, "We murder to dissect." As Bully Bottom says,

"Man is but an ass, if he will go about to expound this dream."

Mr. J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps declares: "What is absurdly termed
aesthetic criticism is more out of place on this comedy than perhaps
on any other of Shakespeare's plays. It deadens the 'native wood-
notes wild,' that every reader of taste would desire to be left to their
own influences. The Midsummer Night's Dream is too exquisite a
composition to be dulled by the infliction of philosophical analysis."

1 The flight of the lovers, and the rehearsal of the Interlude, take place on the
night of the second day: the three weddings fall on the next night, "Tomorrow
midnight." Thus we have (Act i.) part of a first day; (Acts ii., iii., iv.) the
night of a second day; running on into (Act v.) the morning, noon, and night of a
third day.

2 That J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps did not intend by his words to deprecate all
explanatory or introductory remarks on A Midsummer Night's Dream is proved
conclusively by his own excellent labours (beyond those of all other men, in this
department,) connected with the Fairy Mythology. At best, it is a thankless
office to write Introductions, so long as they are exposed to captious and malicious
criticism, from those who are intolerant of all opinions except their own.
INTRODUCTION.

(Memoranda, p. 13.) Nevertheless, we criticize, for this our age is perverted from simple tastes, and not only demands the "finger-post criticism," but listens to the perverse misdirection of so-called scientific anatomists. We accept thankfully the glowing summary: "Of the lyric or the prosaic part, the counterchange of loves and laughters, of fancy fine as air and imagination high as heaven, what need can there be for any one to shame himself by the helpless attempt to say one word not utterly unworthy?" We trust that blame attaches not to those among us who dare speak at all on the subject, whilst admitting that no pen can fitly celebrate the inexhaustible beauties of A Midsummer Night's Dream.

J. Woodfall Ebsworth.

MOLASH VICARAGE,
byAshford, Kent.
PERSONS REPRESENTED.

[The two Quarto editions and the four Folio editions have no list of characters. Rowe first added one, in 1709.]

Theseus, Duke of Athens.
Egeus, an Athenian Lord, Father of Hermia.
Lysander, \{ in love with Hermia.
Demetrius, \}
Philostrate, Master of the Revels to Theseus.
Quince, a Carpenter;
Snug, a Joiner;
Bottom, a Weaver;
Flute, a Bellows-mender;
Snout, a Tinker;
Starveling, a Tailor;
Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons, betrothed to Theseus.
Hermia, daughter of Egeus, in love with Lysander.
Helena, in love with Demetrius.

Oberon, King of the Fairies.
Titania, Queen of the Fairies.
Puck, or Robin-Goodfellow, a Fairy.
Peas-blossom, Cobweb, Moth, Mustard-seed,\} Fairies.

Pyramus, Thisbe, Wall, Moonshine, Lion,\} Characters in the Interlude, performed by the Clowns.

Other Fairies attendant on Oberon and Titania.

Attendants on Theseus and Hippolyta.

Scene varies, from the Palace of Theseus at Athens, and Quince’s house, to a Wood in the neighbourhood.
A Midsummer night's dream.

As it hath beene sundry times publickely acted, by the Right honourable, the Lord Chamberlaine his servants.

Written by William Shakespeare.
Enter Theseus, Hippolita, with others.

Theseus.

Oh faire Hippolita, our nuptiall hower
Draws on apace: fower happy daies bring in
An other Moone: but oh, me thinks, how slow
This old Moone waues! She lingers my desires,
Like to a Stepdame, or a dowager,
Long withering out a yong mans reueneue.

Fower daies will quickly steepe themselves in night:
Fower nights will quickly dreame away the time:
And then the Moone, like to a siluer bowe,
Nowbent in heauen, shall beholde the night
Of our solemnities.

The. Goe Philostrate,
Stirre vp the Athenian youth to merriments,
Awake the heart and nimble spirit of mirth,
Turne melancholy foorth to funerals:
The pale companion is not for our pomp.

Hippolita, I woo'd thee with my sword,
And wonne thy loue, doing thee injuries:
But I will wed thee in another key,
With pompe, with triumph, and with reueling.

Enter Egeus and his daughter Hermia, and Lysander
and Helena, and Demetrius.

Ege. Happy be Theseus, our renowned duke.
The. Thanks good Egeus. What's the newes with thee
Ege. Full of vexation, come! with complaint
Against my childe, my daughter Hermia,

Stand forth Demetrius.

My noble Lord,
This man hath my consent to marry her,

Stand forth Lisander.

And my gracious Duke,
This man hath bewitched the bosome of my childe.

Thou, thou Lisander, thou hast given her rimes,
And interchangel'd love tokens with my childe:
Thou hast, by moonc-light, at her windowes sung,
With faining voice, verses of faining loue,
And stolne the impression of her phantasy:
With bracelets of thy haire, rings, gawdes, conceites,
Knackes, trifles, nolegaies, sweete meates (messengers
Of strong prevailement in vnhardened youth)
With cunning hast thou filched my daughters heart,
Turn'd her obedience (which is due to me)
To stubborne harshnesse. And, my gracious Duke,
Be it so, she will not here, before your Grace,
Consent to marry with Demetrius.

I beg the auncient priuilege of Athens:
As she is mine, I may dispose of her:
Which shall be, either to this gentleman,
Or to her death: according to our lawe,
Immediatly provided, in that case,

The, What say you, Hermia? Be aduised, faire maid.
To you, your father should be as a God:
One that compos'd your beauties: yea and one,
To whom you are but as a forme in wax,
By him imprinted, and within his power,
To leue the figure, or disfigure it:
Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

her, So is Lisander. the, In himselfe he is:
But in this kinde, wanting your fathers voice,
The other must be held the worthier.
A Midsommer nightes dreame.

Her, I would my father lookt but with my eyes.
The. Rather your eyes must, with his judgement, looke,
Her. I doe intreat your grace, to pardon mee.
I know not by what power, I am made bould;
Nor how it may concerne my modesty,
In such a presence, here to plead my thoughts:
But I beseech your Grace, that I may knowe
The worst that may befall mee in this case,
If I refuse to wed Demetrius.
The. Either to dy the death, or to abiure,
For euer, the society of men.
Therefore, saue Hermia, question your desires,
Knowe of your youth, examine well your blood,
Whether (if you yeelde not to your fathers choyce)
You can endure the liuery of a Nunne,
For aye to be in shady cloyster, mew'd
To live a barrayne sister all your life,
Chaunting saint hymnes, to the colde fruitlesse Moone,
Thrife blest they, that master so there bloode,
To vndergoe such maiden pilgrimage:
But earthlyer happy is the rose distild,
Then that, which, withering on the virgin thorne,
Growes, liues, and dies, in single blestnednesse.
Her. So will I growe, so liue, so die my Lord.
Ere I will yield my virgin Patent, vp
Vnto his Lordshippe, whose vnwise d yoake
My soule consents not to giue souerainty.
The. Take time to pawle, and by the next newe moone,
The sealing day, betwixt my loue and mee,
For everlastinge bond of fellowshippe,
Upon that day either prepare to dye,
For disobedience to your fathers will,
Or else to wed Demetrius, as he would,
Or on Dianaes altar to protest,
For aye, austeritie and singe life.

A3

Dem.  
Dem. Relent, sweete Hermia, and Lysander, yeeld
Thy crazed title to my certaine right,
Lys. You haue her fathers loue, Demetrius:
Let me haue Hermias: doe you marry him,
Egeus, Scornesfull Lysander, true, he hath my loue:
And what is mine, my loue shall render him.
And she is mine, and all my right of her
I doe estate unto Demetrius,
Lysand. I am my Lord, as well deriu'd as hee,
As well posses't: my loue is more than his:
My fortunes every way as fairely rankt
(If not with vantage) as Demetrius:
And (which is more then all these boastes can be)
I am belou'd of beautious Hermia.
Why should not I then prosecute my right?
Demetrius, Ile auouch it to his heade,
Made loue to Nedars daughter, Helena,
And won her soule: and she (sweete Ladie) dotes,
Deuourly dotes, dotes in Idolatry,
Upon this spotted and inconstant man.
Thee, I must confesse, that I haue heard so much;
And, with Demetrius, thought to haue spoke thereof;
But, being overfull of selfe affaires,
My minde did loose it. But Demetrius come,
And come Egeus, you shall goe with me:
I haue some private schooling for you both.
For you, faire Hermia, looke you armes your selfe,
To fit your fancies, to your fathers will;
Or else, the Law of Athens yeelds you vp
(Which by no meanes we may extenuate)
To death, or to a vowe of single life,
Come my Hyppolita: what cheare my loue?
Demetrius and Egeus goe along:
I must employ you in some businesse,
against our nuptiall, and conferre with you
Of
A Midsummer Night's Dream

Of some thing, merely that concerns your fancies.

Ege. With duty and desir, we follow you. *Exeunt.*

Lys. How now my love? Why is your cheek so pale? How chance the roses there do fade so fast?

Her. Belike, for want of rain: which I could well betome them, from the tempest of my eyes.

Lys. E'g! E'me: for aught that I could ever reade,

Could ever here by tale or history,

The course of true love never did run smooth;

But either it was different in blood;

Her. O crost! too high to be in thrall to love.

Lys. Or else misgrafted, in respect of yeares;

Her. O sight! too olde to be incag'd to young.

Lys. Or else, it roode upon the choyce of friends;

Her. O hell, to choose love by another's eyes!

Lys. O, if there were a sympathy in choyce,

Warre, death or sicknesse, did lay siege to it;

Making it momentane, as a sound,

Swift, as a shadowe; short, as any dreame;

Briefe, as the lightning in the collies night,

That (in a spleene) vnfolds both heaven and earth;

and ere a man hath power to say, beholde,

The iowes of darkenesse do deoure it vp:

So quicke bright thins come to confusion.

Her. If then true lovers have bin euery crost,

It stands as an edict, in destiny:

Then let vs teach our triall patience:

Because it is a customary crost,

as dewe to love, as thoughts, and dreams, and sighes,

Wishes, and tears; poore Fancies followers.

Lys. A good perswaision: therefore heare mee, Hermia:

Ihave a widow aunt, a dowager,

Of great reuene, and she hath no child:

From Athens is her house remote, sevene leagues:

And she respectes mee, as her only sonne:

A4 There,
A Midsummer night's dream.

There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee:
And to that place, the sharpe Athenian law
Can not pursue us. If thou louest mee, then
Scour forth thy fathers house, to morrow night:
And in the wood, a league without the towne
(Where I did meet thee once with Helena
To do obseruance to a morn of May)
There will I stay for thee.

her. My good Lysander,
I sweare to thee, by Cupids strongest bowe,
By his best arrowe, with the golden heade,
By the simplicitie of Venus doyes,
By that which knitteth soules, and prospers soules
And by that fire which burnd the Carthage queene,
When the false Trojan vnder saile was seene,
By all the vowes that euer men haue broke,
(In number more then euer women spoke)
In that same place thou haft appointed mee,
To morrow truely will I meete with thee.


Enter Helena.

her. God speede faire Helena: whither away?

Hel. Call you mee faire? That faire againe vnlay.

Demetrius. loues your faire: o happy faire!
Your eyes are loadstarres, and your tongues sweete aire
More tunable then larke, to sheepeheards eare,
When wheat is greene, when hauthorne buddes appeare.
Sicknesse is catching: o, were fauour so,
Your words I catch, faire Hermia, ere I goe,
My eare should catch your voice, my eye, your eye,
My tongue should catch your tongues sweete melody.
Were the world mine, Demetrius being bated,
The restile guie to beto you translated.
O, teach mee how you looke, and with what Art,
You sway the motion of Demetrius heart.
A Midsommer nightes dreame.

Her. I frowne vpon him; yet hee loues mee still.
Hel. O that your frowns would teach my smiles such skil.
Her. I giue him curses; yet he giues mee loue.
Hel. O that my prayers could fuch affection mooue.
Her. The more I hate, the more he followes mee.
Hel. The more I loue, the more he hateth mee.
Her. His folly, Helena, is no fault of mine.
Hel. None but your beauty; would that fault were mine.
Her. Take comfort: he no more Shall see my face:
Lysander and my selfe will fly this place.
Before the time I did Lysander see,
Seem'd Athens as a Paradise to mee.
O then, what graces in my loue dooe dwell,
That hee hath turn'd a heav'en vnto a hell!

Lys. Helena, to you our minde's wee will unsould:
To morrow night, when Phaebbe doth beholde
Her silver visage, in the watry glasse,
Decking, with liquid pearle, the bladed grass
(A time, that louers flights doth still conceale)
Through Athens gates, haue wee deuis'd to steale.

Her. And in the wood, where often you and I,
Vpon saint Primrose beddes, were wont to lye,
Emptying our bosomes, of their counsell sweld,
There my Lysander, and my selfe shall meeete,
And thence, from Athens, turne away our eyes,
To secke new friends and strange companions,
Farewell, sweete playfellow: pray thou for vs.
And good lucke graunt theee thy Demetrius.

Keepe word Lysander: we must starue our sight,
From louers soode, till morrow deepe midnight.

Exit Hermia,

Lys. I will my Hermia, Helena adieu;
As you on him, Demetrius dote on you, Exit Lysander.

Hel. How happie some, or other some, can be,
Through Athens, I am thought as faire as she.

Exit Hermia, Lysander.
A Midsummer Night's Dream,

But what of that? Demetrius thinkes not so:
He will not knowe, what all, but hee doe know.
And as hee erres, doting on Hermias eyes:
So I, admiring of his qualities.
Things base and vile, holding no quantitie,
Loue can transpose to forme and dignitie.
Loue lookes not with the eyes, but with the minde:
And therefore is wingd Cupid painted blinde.
Nor hath loues minde of any judgemenstaste:
Wings, and no eyes, figure, vnheedy haaste.
And therefore is loue faind to bee a childer:
Because, in choyce, he is so oft beguil'd.
As wagglifh boyes, in game, themselues forswear:
So the boy, Loue, is periur'd every where.
For, ere Demetrius lookt on Hermias eyen,
Hee hayld downe othes, that he was onely mine.
And when this haile some heat, from Hermia, felt,
So he dissolued, and shovers of oathes did melt.
I will goe tell him of faire Hermias flight:
Then, to the wodde, will he, to morrow night,
Purse her: and for this intelligenct,
If I haue thankes, it is a deare expense:
But herein meane I to enrich my paine,
To haue his fight thither, and back againe.

Enter Quince, the Carpenter, and Snugge, the Joiner, and
Bottom, the Weaver, and Flute, the Bellowes mender:
Snout, the Tinker, and Starveling the Tayler.

Quin. Is all our company here?
Bot. You were best to call them generally, man by
man, according to the scrippe.

Quin. Here is the scrowle of evry mans name, which is
thought fit, through al Athens, to play in our Enterlude, be-
fore the Duke, & the Dutches; on his wedding day at night.
Bot. First good Pecedor Quince, say what the Play treats on:
then read the names of the Actors: & so grow to a point.

Quin,
A Midsummer nightes dreame.

Quin. Mary, our Play is the most lamentable comedy, and most cruell death of Pyramus and Thisby.

Bot. A very good piece of worke, I assure you, & a merry. Now good Peeter Quince, call forth your Actors, by the scrowle, Mastes, spreade your selues.

Quin. Answer, as I call you Nick Bottom, the Weaver? Bot. Readie: Name what part I am for, and proceede.

Quin. You, Nick Bottom are set downe for Pyramus.

Bot. What is Pyramus? A loung, or a tyrant?

Quin. A louer that kills himselfe, most gallant, for loue.

Bot. That will alke some teares in the true performing of it. If I doe it, let the Audience looke to their eyes: I will moue them : I will condole, in some measure. To the rest yet, my chiefe humour is for a tyrant. I could play Hercules rarely, or a part to teare a Cat in, to make all split the raging rocks : and shivering shocks, shall breake the locks of prifon gates, and Phibbus carre shall shine from farre, and make & marre the foolish Fates. This was lostie. Now, name the rest of the Players. This is Hercules vaine, a tyrants vaine: A louer is more condoling.

Quin Francis Flute, the Bellowes mender.

Flu. Here Peeter Quince.

Quin. Flute, you must take Thisby, on you.

Fla. What is Thisby? A wandering knight?

Quin. It is the Lady, that Pyramus must love. (miser.

Fla. Nay faith, let not me play a woman; I haue a beard co-

Quin. Thats all one, you shall play it in a Masket, and you may speake as small as you will.

Bot. And I may hide my face, let me play Thisby to: Ile speake in a monstrous little voice; Thisbe, Thisbe, ah Py-

Quin. No, you must play Pyramus & Flute, you Thisby.

Bot. Well, proceede. Quin. Robin Starveling, the Tailer?

Star. Here Peeter Quince.

Quin. Robin Starveling, you must play Thisbyes mother;
Tom Snowte, the Tinker?
Snug. Here Peter Quince.
Quin. You, Pyramus father; my selfe, Thisbies father;
Snugge, the Ioyner, you the Lyons part: And I hope here
is a Play fitted.
Snug. Have you the Lyons part written? Pray you, if it
bee, giue it mee: for I am flowe of Studie.
Quin. You may doe it, extempare: for it is nothing but
roaring.
Bot. Let mee play the Lyon to. I will roare, that I will
doe any mans heart good to heare mee. I will roare, that
I will make the Duke say; Let him roare againe; let him
roare againe.
Quin. And you shoule do it too terribly, you would fright
the Dutcheffe, and the Ladies, that they would shrike: and
that were inough to hang vs all.
All. That would hang vs, euery mothers sonne.
Bot. I grant you, friends, if you should fright the Ladies
out of their wis, they would haue no more discretion, but
to hang vs; but I will aggrauate my voice so, that I will
roare you as gently, as any fucking doue: I will roare you,
and twere any Nightingale.
Quin. You can play no part but Piramus: for Piramus is a
fweete fac't man; a proper man as one shall see in a som-
ners day; a most lovely gentlemanlike man: therefore
you must needs play Piramus:
Bot. Well: I will undertake it. What beard were I best
to play it in?
Quin. Why? what you will.
Bot. I will discharge it, in either your straw colour beard,
your Orange tawne bearde, your purple in graine bearde,
or your french crowne colour bearde, your perfit yellow.
Quin. Some of your french crownes haue no haire at all;
and then you will play bare fac't. But maisters here are
your parts, and I am to intreat you, request you, and desire
you.
A Midsommer nightes dreame.

you, to con them by to morrow night: and meete mee in
the palace wood, a mile without the towne, by Moone-
light; there will wee rehearse: for if wee meete in the city,
wee shall be dogd with company, and our deuises known.
In the meane time, I will draw a bill of properties, such as
our play wants. I pray you saile me not.

Bot Wee will meete, & there we may rehearse most ob-
scenely, and coragiously. Take paines, bee perfit: adieu.

Quin. At the Dukes oke wee meete.

Bot. Enough, hold, or cut bowstrings. Exeunt.

If Enter a Fairie at one doore, and Robin goodfellow
at another.

Robin. How now spirit, whither wander you?

Fa. Ouer hill, ouer daie, thorough bufl, thorough brier,
Ouer parke, ouer pale, thorough flood, thorough fire:
I do wander every where; swifter than the Moonsphere:
And I serue the Fairy Queene, to dew her orbs upon the
The cowflippes tull her Pensioners bee, (gree ne.
In their gold coats, spottes you see:
Those be Rubies, Fairie sauvors;
In those freckles, lue their sauvors.
I must goe seke some dew droppes here,
And hang a pearle in ever cowflippes care.

Farewell thou Lobbe of spirits: lie be gon.

Our Queene, and all her Elues come here anon.

Rob. The king doth kepe his Reuels here to night.

Take heed the Queene come not within his sight.

For Oberon is passin fell and wrath:
Because that she, as her attendant, hath
Alouely boy stollen, from an Indian king:
She neuer had so sweete a changeling.

And iealous Oberon would have the childe,
Knight of his traine, to trace the forrests wille.
But shee, perforce, with houlds the loued boy,
Crownes him with flowers, and makes him all her joy.

B 3 And
A Midsummer Night's Dream

And now, they never meet in grove or green,
By fountain clear, or spangled starlight scene,
But they do square, that all their Elves, for fear,
Creep into acorne cups, and hide them there.

F. Either I mistake your shape, and making, quite,
Or else you are that shrewd and knaunish sprite,
Call'd Robin Goodfellow. Are not you hee,
That frights the maidens of the Village tree,
Skim milk, and sometimes labour in the querne,
And bootless make the breathless huswife cherne,
And sometime make the drinkke to beare no barme,
Mislead nightwanderers, laughing at their harms!
Those, that Hobgoblin call you, and sweete Puck,
You doe their worke, and they shall have good luck.
Are not you hee?

Rob. Thou speakest aright; I am that merry wanderer of
I least to Oberon, and make him smile,
When I a fat and beane-fed horse beguile;
Neyghing, in likeness of a filly sole,
And sometime lurke I in a gothrippes bole,
In very likeness of a rostled crabbe.
And when she drinkes, against her lips I bob,
And on her withered dewlop, pour the ale.
The wisest Aunt, telling the faddest tale,
Sometime, for three boote floule, mistaketh mee;
Then slippe I from her bumme, downe topples she,
And tailour cryes, and fallses into a coffe;
And then the whole Quire hould their hippes, and loose,
And waxen in their myrth, and necze, and sweare
A merrier hower was never wasted there.
But roome Faery: here comes Oberon.

Fa. And here, my mistresse, Would that he were gon,

Enter the King of Fairies, at one doore, with his traine;
and the Queene, at another, with hers.

Ob. I'll meet by moonlight, proud Titania.
A Midsummer night's dream.

Qu. What, jealous Oberon? Fairy skippeth hence.
I haue forsworne his bedde, and company.

Ob. Tarry, rash wanton. am not I thy Lord?

Qu. Then I must be thy Lady: but I know
When thou haft stollen away from Fairy land,
And in the shape of Corin, sat all day, 
Playing on pipes of corn, and vsing lune,
To amorous Phillida, Why art thou here
Come from the farthest stepe of India?
But that, forsooth, the bounting Amason,
Your bulkind mistresse, and your warriour lune,
To Theseus must be wedded; and you come,
To giue their bedde, joy and prosperitie.

Ob. How canst thou thus, for shame, Tytania.
Glauncet at my credit, with Hippolita?
Knowing, I know thy loue to Theseus,
Didst not thou lead him through the glimmering night,
From Perigenia, whom he rauished?
And make him, with faire Eagles, breake his faith
With Ariadne, and Antiope?

Queen. These are the forgeries of jealeousie:

And neuer, since the middle Sommers spring,
Met we on hill, in dale, forest, or meade,
By paued fountaine, or by rushie brooke,
Or in the beached margent of the Sea,
To daunce our ringlets to the whistling winde,
But with thy brawles thou haft disturb'd our sport.
Therefore the windes, pyping to vs in vaine,
As in revenge, haue suckt vp, from the Sea,
Contagious foggies; which, falling in the land,
Hath euery pelting riuier made so proude,
That they have ouerborne their Continents.
The Ox hath therefore strectched his yoke in vaine,
The Ploughman loft his sweat, and the greene corne
Hath rotted, er his youth attaine a bearde:

B4    The
A w i l i a n o u s n i g h t e s u t c a m e.

The fold stands empty, in the drowned field,
And crows are fatted with the murion flocke,
The nine mens Morris is fillt vp with mudde:
And the quent Mazes, in the wanton greene,
For lacke of tread, are undistinguishable.
The humane mortals want their winter here.
No night is now with hymne or caroll blest.
Therefor the Moone (the gouvernisse of floods)
Pale in her anger, washes all the aire;
That Rheumaticke diseasfe doe abound.
And, thorough this distemperature, wee see
The seasons alter, hoary headed frosts
Fall in the fresh lappe of the Crymson rose,
And on old Hyems chinne and icy crowne,
An odorous Chaplet of sweete Sommer buddes
Is, as in mockery, set The Spring, the Sommer,
The chilting Autumne, angry Winter change
Their wonted Liuries; and the mazed world,
By their increase, now knowes not which is which.
And this same progeny of evils,
Comes from our debate, from our dissention:
We are their Parents and originall.

Oberon. Doe you amend it then; it lyes in you.
Why should Titania croffe her Oberon?
I doe but begge a little Changeling boy,
To be my Henchman.

Queen. Set your heart at rest.
The Fairie Land buies not the childe of mee,
His mother was a Votresse of my order:
And in the spiced Indian ayer, by night,
Full often hath she goffipt, by my side,
And sat, with me on Neptunes yellow sands
Marking th'embarkd traders on the flood;
When we haue laught to see the sailes conceal'd,
And grow bigge bellied, with the wanton winde;

Which
A Midsummer night's dream.

Which she, with prettie and with swimming gate,
Following (her wombe then rich with my young squire)
Would imitate, and saile vp on the land,
To fetch me trilles, and returne againe,
As from a voyage, rich with marchandise.
But she, being mortall, of that boy did die,
And, for her sake, doe I reare vp her boy:
And, for her sake, I will not part with him.

Ob. How long, within this wood, entend you stay?
 Quee. Perchance, till after Theseus wedding day.
If you will patiently daunce in our Round,
And see our Moone-light Recuelles, goe with vs;
If not, shunne me, and I will spare your haunts.
 Ob. Giue mee that boy, and I will goe with thee.
 Quee. Not for thy Fairy kindome. Fairies away.
We shall chide downeright, if I longer stay,
 Exeunt.
 Ob. Well: goe thy way. Thou shalt not from this grove,
Till I torment thee, for this injury.
My gentle Pucke come hither: thou remembrest,
Since once I sat upon a promontory,
And heard a Meare-maide, on a Dolphins backe,
Uttering such dulcet and hermonious breath,
That the rude sea grewe ciuil at her song,
And certaine stars shot madly from their Spheres,
To heare the Sea-maids musicke.

Puck. I remember.

Ob. That very time, I saw (but thou couldst not)
Flying betweene the colde Moone and the earth,
Cupid, all arm'd: a certaine aime he tooke
At a faire Vestall, throned by west,
And loo'd his loue-shaft smartly, from his bowe,
As it should pearece a hundred thousand hearts:
But, I might see young Cupids fiery shaft
Quench't in the chaft beames of the warthy Moone;
And the imperiall Votresse pass'd on,

In
A Midsummer Night's Dream.

In maiden meditation, fancy free.
Yet mark'd I, where the bolt of Cupid fell.
It fell upon a little western flower;
Before, milke white; now purple, with loues wound,
And maidens call it, Loue in idlenesse.
Fetch mee that flowre: the herbe I shewed thee once.
The iewece of it, on sleeping eyeliddes laide,
Will make or man or woman madly dote,
Upon the next line creature that it see.
Fetch mee this herbe, and be thou here againe.
Ere the Leviathan can swimme a league.
Put Ie put a girdle, roud about the earth, in forty minutes.

Oberon. Hauing once this iuice,
Ile watch Titania, when she is a sleepe,
And droppe the liquor of it, in her eyes:
The next thing then she waking, looke vpon
(Be it on Lyon, Beare, or Wolfe, or Bull,
On medling Monky, or on busie Ape.)
She shal pursue it, with the soule of Loue.
And ere I take this charme, from of her sight
(As I can take it with another herbe)
Ile make her render vp her Page, to mee,
But, who comes here? I am inviible,
And I will ouerheare their conference.

Enter Demetrius, Helena following him.

Deme. I loue thee not; therefore pursue me not,
Where is Lysander, and faire Hermia?
The one Ile stay: the other layeth me.
Thou toldst me, they were solne vnto this wood:
And here am I, and sodde, within this wood:
Because I cannot meete my Hermia.
Hence, get the gone, and follow mee no more.

Hel. You draw mee, you hard hearted Adamant:
But yet you draw not iron. For my heart
Is true as steel. Leave you your power to draw,

And
A Midsummer night's dream.

And I shall have no power to follow you.

Dem. Do I entice you? Do I speak you faire?
Or rather do I not in plainest trithe,
Tell you I doe not, not I cannot loue you?

Hel. And euen, for that, do I loue you, the more:
I am your Spaniell; and, Demetrius,
The more you beat mee, I will sawne on you.
Vse me but as your Spaniell: spurne mee, strike mee,
Neglect mee, loose me: onely give me leaue
(Vnworthie as I am) to follow you.
What worser place can I begge, in your loue
(And yet, a place of high respect with mee)
Then to be vsl'd as you vse your dogge.

Dem. Tempt not, too much, the hatred of my spirit.
For I am sick, when I do looke on thee.

Hel. And I am sick, when I looke not on you.

Dem. You doe impeach your modestie too much,
To leau the citie, and commit your selue,
Into the hands of one that loues you not,

Hel. Your vertue is my pruiledge: For that
It is not night, when I doe see your face,
Therefore, I thinke, I am not in the night,
Nor doth this wood lacke worlds of company.
For you, in my respect, are all the world.
Then, how can it be faide, I am alone,
When all the world is here, to looke on mee?

Dem. Ie runne from thee, and hide me in the brakes,
And leau thee to the mercy of wilde beastes.

Hel. The wildest hath not such a heart as you.

Runne when you will: The story shall be chaung'd:
Apollo flies and Daphne holds the chafe:
The Doue pursues the Griffon: the milde Hinde

C 2 Make
A Midsummer nightes dreame.

Makes speede to catch the Tigre. Booteleffe speede,
When cowardife pursuues, and valour flies.

Demet. I will not stay thy questions, Let me goe:
Or if thou followe mee, do not beleue,
But I shall doe thee mischiefe, in the wood.

Hel. I, in the Temple, in the towne, the fiulde,
You doe me mischiefe. By Demetrius.
Your wrongs doe set a scandal on my sex:
We cannot fight for loue, as men may doe:
We should be woold, and were not made to woole.
Ile follow thee and make a heauen of hell,
To dy vp on the hand I loue so well.

Ob. Fare thee well Nymph. Ere he do leaue this groue,
Thou shalt fly him, and he shall seeke thy loue.
Haft thou the flower there? Welcome wanderer.

Enter Pucke.

Puck. I, there it is.
Ob. I pray thee give it mee.
I know a banke where the wilde time blowes,
Where Ox lips, and the noddling Violet growes,
Quite ouer canopi'd with lushing woodbine,
With sweete muske roses, and with Egantine:
There sleepees Tystania, sometime of the night,
Luld in these flowers, with daunces and delight:
And there the snake throwes her enamelled skinne,
Weed wide enough to wrappe a Fairy in,
And, with the iuyce of this, Ile freake her eyes,
And make her full of hauel, full phantasies.
Take thou some of it, and seek through this groue:
A sweete Athenian Lady is in loue,
With a disdainfull youth: annoint his eyes.
But doe it, when the next thing he espies,
May be the Ladie. Thou shalt know the man,
By the Athenian garments he hath on.
Effect it with some care, that he may proue

More
A Midsummer Night's Dream

More fond on her, then she upon her love;
And looke thou meete me ere the first Cocke crowe.

Pa. Fear not my Lord; your servant shall do so. Exeunt,

Enter Tytania Queene of Fairies, with her traine.

Que. Come, now a Roundell, and a Fairy song:
Then, for the third part of a minute hence,
Some to kill cankers in the musk rose buds,
Some ware with Reremise, for their lethten wings,
To make my small Elues coates, and some keepe backe
The clamorous Owle, that nightly hootes and wonders
At our queint spirits; Sing me now a sleepe;
Then to your offices, and let mee rest.

Fairies sing,
You spottet snakes, with double tongue,
Thorny Hedgehogges be not seene,
Newts and blindewormes do no wrong,
Come not neere our Fairy Queene.

Philomel, with melody,
Sing in our sweete Lullaby,
Lulla, lulla, lullaby, lulla, lulla, lullaby,
Neuer harme, nor spell, nor charm,
Come our loyely lady nigh.
So good night, with lullaby.

1. Fai. W.managed Spiders come not here:
Hence you long legd Spinners, hence,
Beetles blacke approach not neere;
Worme nor snail doe no offence.

Philomel with melody, &c.

2. Fai. Hence away: now all is well:
One aloofe, stand Centinell.

Enter Oberon.

Ob. What thou seest, when thou dost wake,
Doe it for thy true loue sake;
Louve and languish for his sake.
Be it Ounce, or Catte, or Beare,

C 3

Pard,
A Midsummer nightes dreame.

Pard, or Boare with bristled haire,
In thy eye that shall appeare,
When thou wak'st, it is thy deare.
Wake, when some vile thing is neere.

Enter Lysander and Hermia.

Lys. faire love, you saint, with wandering in the wood:
And to speake troth I haue forgot our way.
Weele rest vs Hermia, if you thinke it good,
And tarry for the comfor of the day.

Her. Bet it so Lysander: finde you out a bedde:
For I, upon this banke, will rest my head.

Lys. One turfe shall serve, as pillow, for vs both,
One heart, one bedde, two bosomes, and one troth.

Her. Nay God Lysander: for my sake, my deere
Ly further off, yet; doe not lye so neere.

Lys. O take the sense, sweetes, of my innocence.
Love takes the meaning, in loues conference,
I meaneth as my heart into yours is knit;
So that but one heart we can make of it:
Two bosomes interchained with an oath:
So then two bosomes, and a single troth.
Then, by your side, no bed-room me deny:
For lyeing so, Hermia, I doe not lye.

Her. Lysander riddles very prettily.
Now much bestrewe my manners, and my pride,
If Hermia meant to say, Lysander lyed.
But gentle friend, for love and curtesie,
Ly further off, in humane modesty:
Such separation, as may well be said
Becomes a vertuous batcheler, and a maide,
So farre be distant, and good night sweete friend:
Thy love were alter till thy sweete life end.

Lys. Amen, amen, to that faireprayer, say I,
And then end life, when I end loyalty.
Hecre is my bed; sleepe, giue thee all his rest.
A Midsummer Night's Dream.

Her. With halfe that wish, the wilhers eyes be prest.

Enter Puck.

Puck. Through the forrest haue I gone.

But Athenian found I none,

On whose eyes I might approve

This flowers force in stirring loue.

Night and silence. Who is heere?

Weedes of Athenian he doth weare:

This is hee (my master saide)

Despite the Athenian maide:

And here the maiden, sleeping sound,

On the danke and dirty ground.

Pretty sowl the durst not lye,

Neere this lack-loue, this kil-curtelsic.

Churle, upon thy eyes I throwe

All the power this charme doth owe:

When thou wak'ft, let loue forbidde

Sleepe, his fear, on thy eye lidde.

So awake, when I am gon:

For I must now to Oberon. Exit.

Enter Demetrius and Helena running.

Hel. Stay; though thou kill mee, sweete Demetrius.

De. I charge thee hence, and doe not haunt mee thus.

Hel. O, wilt thou darkling leaue me? doe not so.

De. Stay, on thy peril: I alone will goe.

Hel. O, I am out of breath, in this fond chafe,

The more my prayer, the lester is my grace.

Happie is Hermia, wherefoere she lies:

For she hath blessed, and attractue eyes.

How came her eyes so bright? Not with salt teares.

If so, my eyes are ofter waft then hers.

No, no: I am as vgly as a Beare:

For beastes that meeke mee, runne away, for feare.

Therefore, no maruaile, though Demetrius

Doe, as a monster, flye my preidence, thus.

What
A Midsummer nightes dreame.

What wicked and dissembling glasse, of mine,
Made me compare with Hermias shery eyn!
But, who is here? Lyfander, on the ground?
Dead, or a sleepe? I see no blood, no wound.
Lyfander, if you live, good sir awake.

Lyf, and runne through fire, I will for thy sweete sake.
Transparent Helena, nature shewes are,
That through thy bosome, makes me fee thy heart.
Where is Demetrius? Oh how fit a word
Is that vile name, to perish on my sworde!

Hel. Do not say so, Lyfander, say not so.
What though he loue your Hermia? Lord, what though?
Yet Hermia still loues you: then be content.

Lyf. Content with Hermia? No: I doe repent
The tedious minutes, I with her have spent.
Not Hermia, but Helena I love.

Who will not change a Rauen for a doue?
The will of man is by his reason swa'ld:
And reason saies you are the worthier maide,
Things growing are not ripe, vntill their season:
So I, being young, till now ripe not to reason.
And touching now, the point of humane skill,
Reason becomes the Marshall to my will,
And leads mee to your eyes; where I orelooke
Loves stories, written in loves richest booke.

Hel. Wherefore was I to this keene mockery borne?
When, at your hands, did I defere this scorne?
If not enough, if not enough, young man,
That I did never, no nor never can,

Defere a sweete looke from Demetrius eye,
But you must flout my insufficiency?
Good troth you doe mee wrong (good troth you doe)
In such disdainfull manner, mee to wooe.

But, fare you well: perfore, I must confesse,
I thought you Lord of more true gentlenesse.

O,
A Midsummer night's dream.

O, that a Ladie, of one man refus'd,
Should, of another, therefore be abus'd!  Exit.

Lys. She sees not Hermia. Hermia, sleepe thou there,
And never maft thou come Lysander neere.

For, as a surfeit of the sweetest things
The depepest loathing, to the Romacke brings:
Or, as the heresies, that men doe leave,
Are hated most of those they did deceive:
So thou, my surfeit, and my heresie,
Of all bee hated; but the most of mee:
And all my powers address ye your loue and might,
To honour Helen, and to be her knight.  Exit.

Her. Helpe mee Lysander, helpe mee: do thy beft
To pluck this crawling serpent, from my brest.
Ay mee, for pittie. What a dreame was here?
Lysander looke, how I doe quake with feare.
Me thought, a serpent eate my heart away,
And you late smiling at his cruel pray.
Lysander what, remou'd? Lysander, Lord,
What, out of hearing, gon? No found, no word?
Alacke where are you? Speake, and if you heare;
Speake, of all loues. I sweone almost with feare,
No, then I well perceiue, you are not ny:
Either death, or you, lle finde immediately.  Exit.

Enter the Clownes.

Botts. Are wee all met?
Quin. Pat, pat: and heres a maruailes convenient place,
for our rehearfall. This greene plot shall be our stage, this
hauhorne brake our tyring house, and wee will doe it in
action, as wee will doe it before the Duke.

Bott Peeter Quince?
Quin. What fairest thou, bully, Bottoms?
Bot. There are things in this Comedie, of Pyramus and
Thisby, that will never please. First, Pyramus must draw
a sworde, to kill himselfe; which the Ladies cannot abide,
A Midsummer night's dream.

How answered you that?

Snout. Berlakin, a parlous fear.

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

Bot. Not a whit; I have a device to make all well. 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; and for the better assurance, tell them, that I Pyramus am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver: this will put them out of fear.

Quin. Well; we will have such a Prologue, and it shall be written in eight and six.

Bot. No; make it two more; let it be written in eight and eight.

Snout. Will not the ladies be afraid of the Lyon?

Star. I fear it, I promise you.

Bot. Masters, you ought to consider with your selve, to bring in (God shield ye) a Lyon among Ladies, is a most dreadful thing. For there is not a more fearful wild soul then your Lyon living: and we ought to looke to it.

Sn. Therefore, another Prologue must tell, he is not a Lion.

Bot. Nay: you must name his name, and halfe his face must be seen through the Lions necke, and he himselfe must speake through, saying thus, or to the same effect; Ladies, or faire Ladies, I would wish you, or I would request you, or I wold intreat you, not to fear, not to trouble: my life for yours. If you think I come hither as a Lyon, it were pittie of my life. No: I am no such thing; I am a man as other men are: & there indeed, let him name his name, and tell them plainly he is Snugge, the loyner.

Quin. Well: it shall be so; but there is two hard things: that is, to bring the Moone-light into a chamber: for you know, Pyramus and Thisby meete by Moone-light.

Sn. Doth the Moone shine, that night, we play our Play?

Bot,
A Midsummer night's dreame.

Bo. A Calender, a Calender: looke in the Almanack: finde out Moone-shine, finde out Moone-shine.

Quin. Yes: it doth shone that night.

Ceri. Why then, may you leave a casement of the great chamber window (where we play) open; and the Moone may shone in at the casement.

Quin. I: or els, one must come in, with a bush of thorns, & a latern, and say he comes to disfigure, or to present the person of Moone-shine. Then, there is another thing; we must have a wal in the great chaber: for Pyramus & Thisby (saities the story) did talke through the chinke of a wall.

Sno. You can neuer bring in a wall. What say you Bottom?

Bot. Some man or other must present wall: and let him have some plaster, or some lome, or some rough cast, about him, to signifie wall; or let him holde his fingers thus: and through that crany, shall Pyramus and Thisby whisper.

Quin. If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit downe e-very mothers sonne, and rehearse your parts. Pyramus, you beginne: when you haue spoken your speech, enter into that Brake, and so every one according to his cue.

Enter Robin

Ro. What hempen home-spunnes haue we swagging here, So neere the Cradle of the Fairy Queene?

What, a play toward? Ile be an Auditor,

An Actor to perhappes, if I see cause.

Quin. Speake Pyramus: Thysby stand forth.

Pyra. Thysby the flowers of odious sauours sweete.

Quin. Odours, odorous.

Py. Odours sauours sweete.

So hath thy breath, my dearest Thysby deare,

But harke, a voice: stay thou but heere a while,

And by and by I will to thee appeare.

Exit.

Quin. A stranger Pyramus, then ere played heere.

Thys. Must I speake now?
A Midsummer Night's Dream.

**Quin.** I marry must you, for you must understand, he goes but to see a noyse, that he heard, and is to come again.

**Thys.** Most radiant Pyramus, most lillie white of hewe, Of colour like the redrose, on triumphant bryer,
Most brisky Iuuenall, and eke most lovely lewe,
As true as truest horse, that yet would never tyr, Ile meete thee Pyramus, at Ninnies tumbte.

**Quin.** Ninnies tumbte, man. Why ? you must not speake
That yet, That you anrwere to Pyramus. You speake
Al your part at once, cues, and, all Pyramus, enter: your cue is past: It is; never tire.

**Thys.** O, as true as truest horse, that yet would never tyr.
**Pyr.** If I were saire, Thys/hr, I were onely thine.

**Quin.** O monstrous! O strange! We are haunted. Pray ma-
sters fly masters helpe.

**Rob.** Ile follow you: Ile leade you about a Round,
Through bogge, through bush, through brake, through
Sometime a horse ille be, sometime a hound,

A hogge, a headlesse Beare, sometime a fier,
And neigh, and barke, and grunte, and rore, and burne,

Like horse, hound, hogge, beare, fire, at every turne. **Exit.**

**Bot.** Why do they runne away? This is a knauery of
them to make mee afeard. **Enter Snowte.**

**Sn.** O Bottom, thou art chaung'd. What do I see on thee?

**Bot.** What doe you see? You see an Asse head of your
owne, Do you?

**Enter Quince.** (Exit.

**Quin** Bless thee Bottom, bless thee. Thou art traslated.

**Bot.** I see their knauery. This is to make an asse of mee, to
fright me, if they could: but I wil not stirre from this place
do what they can, I will walke vp and downe here, and
will sing that they shal heare I am not afaide.

The Woosell cock, so blacke of hewe,
With Orange tawny bill,

The
A Midsummer night's dream.

The Throstle, with his note so true,
The Wren, with little quill.

_Tytania._ What Angel wakes me from my flowry bed?
_Bott._ The Fynch, the Sparrowe, and the Lark,
The plainsong Cuckow gray:
Whose note, full many a man doth marke,
And dares not answer, nay,
For indeede, who would set his wit to so foolish a birde?
Who would give a bird the ly, though hee cry Cuckow, neuer so?

_Tita._ I pray thee, gentle mortall, sing againe.
Myne eare is much enamoured of thy note:
So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape,
And thy faire vertues force (perforce) doth mooue mee,
On the first viewe we to say, to sweare, I love thee.

_Bott._ Me thinks mistresse, you should haue little reason for that. And yet, to say the truth, reason and loue keepe little company together, now a daies. The more the pitty, that some honest neighbours will not make them friends.

_Nay._ I can gleake, vpon occasion.

_Tyt._ Thou art as wise, as thou art beautifull.
_Bott._ Not so neither: but if I had wit enough to get out of this wood, I haue enough to serue mine owe turne.

_Tyt._ Out of this wood, doe not desire to goe:
Thou shalt remaine here, whether thou wilt or no,
I am a spirit, of no common rate:
The Sommer, still, doth tend vpon my state,
And I doe love thee: therefore goe with mee.

Ile giue thee Fairies to attend on thee:
And they shall fetch thee Jewels, from the deepe,
And sing, while thou, on pressed flowers, dost sleepe:
And I will purge thy mortall grossenesse so,
That thou shalt, like an ayery spirit, goe.

_Peace-blosome, Cobweb, Moth, and Mustard-seede._
Enter foure Fairyes.

_D 3_
A Midsummer Night's Dream

Fairies, Readie: and I, and I, and I. Where shall we goe?
Titania, Be kinde and courteous to this gentleman,
Hop in his walkes, and gambole in his eyes,
Feede him with Apricocks, and Dewberries,
With purple Grapes, greene figges, and Mulberries,
The honey bagges steale from the humble Bees,
And for night tapers, cropp your wakyn thighes,
And light them at the fiery Glowe-wormes eyes,
To feed my loue to bedde, and to arise,
And pluck the wings, from painted Butterflies,
To fanne the Moone-beames from his sleeping eyes,
Nod to him Elues, and doe him curtseys.

1. Fai. Haile mortall, haile.

Bot. I cry your worships mercy, hartily: I beseech your worshippes name,
Cobweb.

Bot. I shall desire you of more acquaintance, good master Cobweb: if I cut my finger, I shall make bold with you. Your name honest gentleman?
Peaseblossome.

Bot. I pray you commend mee to mistress Squab, your mother, and to master Peasodd, your father. Good master Peaseblossome, I shall desire you of more acquaintance, to. Your name I beseech you sir?

Mustardseed.

Bot. Good master Mustardseed, I know your patience well, That same cowardly, gyantlike, Ox-beefe hath deuourd many a gentleman of your house. I promise you, your kindred hath made my eyes water, ere now. I desire you more acquaintance, good master Mustardseed.

Titania, Come waite vpon him: leade him to my bower.
The Moone, I thinkes, lookes with a watry eye:
And when shee weepes, weepes euery little flower.

Lamen-
A Midsummer Nightes Dreame.

Lamenting some enforced chastitie.

Ty vp my louers tongue, bring him silently. Exit.

Enter King of Fairies, and Robin goodfellow.

O, I wonder if Titania be awak't;

Then what it was, that next came in her eye,

Which she must doe on, in extreamitie.

Here comes my messenger. How now, mad spirit?

What nightrule now about this haunted group?

Puck. My mistresse with a monster is in loue,

Neere to her close and consecrated bower.

While she was in her dull, and sleepeing hower,

A crew of patches, rude Mechanicals,

That workes for bread, vpon Athenian stalles,

Were met together to rehearse a play,

Intended for great Theseus nuptiall day:

The shallowest thick skinne, of that barraine fort,

Who Pyramus presented, in their sport,

Forsooke his Scene, and entred in a brake,

When I did him at this advantage take:

An Asses nole I fixed on his head.

Anon his Thibbie must be answered,

And forth my Minnick comes. When they him spy;

As wilde geese, that the creeping Fouler eye,

Or rufset pated coughes, many in sort

(Ryng, and cawing, at the gunnes report)

Seuer themselves, and madly sweepe the sky:

So, at his sight, away his fellowes fly,

And at our stampe, here ore and ore, one falles:

He murther cryes, and helpe from Athens cals

Their sense, thus weake, lost with their feares, thus strong

Made senselesse things begin to doe them wrong

For, briers and thornes, at their apparell, snatch:

Some sleeues, some hats, from yeelders, all things catch,

I led them on, in this distracted feare,

And left sweete Pyramus translated there:

D 4
A Midsummer night's dream.

When in that moment (for it came to pass)
Tytania wak't, and straight way loud'd an Ass.
Oh, This falles out better, then I could devise.
But hast thou yet lach't the Athenian eyes,
With the love juice, as I did bid thee doe?
Rob. I tooke him sleeping (that is finisht to)
And the Athenian woman, by his side;
That when he wak't, of force she must be ey'd.

Enter Demetrius and Hermia,

Ob. Stand close: this is the same Athenian.
Rob. This is the woman: but not this the man.

Dem. O, Why rebuke you him, that loves you so?
Lay breath so bitter, on your bitter foe,
Her. Now I but chide: but I should see thee worse;
For thou (I fear) hast given me cause to curse.
If thou hast slaine Lysander, in his sleepe;
Being ore shooes in blood, plunge in the deep, & kill mee.
The Sunne was not so true vnto the day,
As hee to mee, Would hee have stolen away,
Frow sleeping Hermia! Ile beleue, as soone,
This whole earth may be bor'd, and that the Moone
May through the Center creepe, and so displease
Her brothers noontide, with th'Antipodes.
It cannot be, but thou hast murdred him,
So should a murthrer looke so dead, so grimme.

Dem. So should the murder'd looke, and so should I.
Pearst through the heart, with your sterne cruelty,
Yet you, the murderer, looke as bright, as cleere,
As yonder Venus, in her glimmering sphare.

Her. What this to my Lysander? Where is hee?
Ah good Demetrius, wilt thou give him mee?

Dem. I had rather give his carcasse to my hounds.

Her. Out dog, out curre: thou driu'st me past the bounds
Of maidens patience, Haft thou slaine him then?
Henceforth be neuer numbred among men.
A Midsummer night's dream.

O, once tell true; tell true, even for my sake:
Durst thou have looke upon him, being awake?
And hast thou kill'd him, sleeping? O base rush!
Could not a worm, an Adder do so much?
An Adder did it: For with double tongue
Then thyne (thou serpent) never Adder stung.

Deme. You spend your passion, on a mispris'd mood;
I am not guilty of Lynders' blood:
Nor is he dead, for ought that I can tell.

Hel. I pray thee, tell mee then, that he is well.

Deme. And if I could, what should I get therefore?

Hel. A priuilege, never to see mee more:
And from thy hated presence part I: see me no more;
Whether he be dead or no.

Deme. There is no following her in this fierce vaine.
Heere therefore, for a while, I will remaine.
So sorrowes heavinesse doth heauier growe.
For debt that bankrout slippe doth forrow owes:
Which now in some flight measure it will pay;
If for his tender here I make some stay.

O. What haft thou done? Thou haft mistaken quite,
And laid the loue iuice on some true loues light,
Of thy misprision, must perforce ensue
Some true loue turnd, and not a false turnd true.

Rob. Then fate or rules, that one man holding troth,
A million faile, confounding oath on oath.

O. About the wood, goe swifter then the winde,
And Helena of Athens looke thou finde.

All fancy sicke she is and pale of cheere,
With sighes of loue, that costs the fresh blood deare.
By some illusion see thou bring her here:
Ile charm his eyes, against the doe appeare.

Rob. I goe, I goe, looke how I goe.
Swifter then arrow, from the Tartar's bowe.

O. Flower of this purple dy,
A midsummer night's dream.

Hit with Cupid's archery,
Sink in apple o' his eye,
When his love he doth espy,
Let her shine as gloriously
As the Venus of the sky.
When thou wak'st, if she be by,
Begge of her, for remedy.

Enter Puck.

Puck, Captaine of our Fairy band,
Helena is here at hande,
And the youth, misliooke by mee,
Pleading for a lovers fee
Shall wee their fond pageant see?
Lord, what fools these mortals bee!

Ob, Stand aside. The noyse, they make,
Will cause Demetrius to awake.

Pu. Then will two, at once, wooe one:
That must needs be sport alone.
And those things do best please mee,
That befall preposterously.

Enter Lyfander, and Helena.

Lyf. Why should you think, that I should wooe in scorn?
Scorne, and derision, never come in tears.
Looke when I vow, I weep: and vowes so borne,
In their natuiritie all truth appears,
How can these things, in mee, seeme scorn to you?

Hel. You doe advance your cunning, more, and more.
When trueth killes truth, o diuellish holy fray!
These vowes are Hermias. Will you giue her ore?
Weigh oath, with oath, and you will nothing weigh.
Your vowes to her, and mee (put in two scales)
Will euen weigh: and both as light as tales.

Lyf. I had no judgement, when to her I swore.

Hel. Nor none, in my minde, now you giue her ore.

Lyf.
A Midsummer night's dream.

_Lysen_ and _Demetrius_ love each other; and he loves not you.

_Demetrius_. O _Hermione_, goddess, nymph, perfect divine,

To what, my love, shall I compare thine eye?

_A Midsummer night's dream_.

Christ is muddy. O, how ripe, in showe,

Thy lippes, those kissing cherries, tempting growe!

That pure coniealed white, high Taurus now,

_and with the Easterne winde, turns to a crowe,

When thou holdest vp thy hand, O let me kiss

This Princessse of pure white, this scale of blisse.

_Hermione_. O plight! O hell! I see, you all are bent

To set against mee, for your merriment,

If you were ciuill, and knew curtesy,

You would not doe mee thus much injury.

Can you not hate mee, as I know you doe,

But you mist ioyne, in soules, to mocke mee too?

If you were men, as men you are in showe,

You would not vs a gentle Lady so;

To vowe, and sweare, and superpraise my parts,

When I am sure, you hate mee with your hearts,

You both are Rivals, and loue _Hermione_:

And now both Rivalles, to mock _Helena_.

A trim exploit, a manly enterprise,

To conjure teares vp, in a poore maides eyes,

With your derision None, of noble sort,

Would so offend a virgin, and extort

A poore soules patience, all to make you sport.

_Lysander_. You are vnkinde, _Demetrius_: be not so.

For you loue _Hermione_: this you know I know

And heare, with all good will, with all my heart,

_In Hermiones_: 1 loue I yeelde you vp my part:

And yours of _Helena_, to mee bequeath:

Whom I doe loue, and will do till my death.

_Hermione_. Neuer did mockers waste more idle breath.

_Demetrius_. Lyfander, keepe thy _Hermione_: I will none.

If ere I lou'd her, all that loue is gone.
A Midsummer night's dream.

My heart to her, but as guestwife, sojournd;
And now to Helen, is it home return'd,
There to remaine.

_Lys._ Helen, it is not so.

_Dream._ Disparage not the faith, thou dost not know;
Left to thy peril, thou aby it deare.
Looke where thy loue comes: yonder is thy deare.

_Enter Hermia._

_Her._ Darke night, that from the eye, his function takes,
The ear more quicke of apprehension makes.
Wherein it doth impair the seeing sense,
It pays the hearing double rempence.
Thou art not, by myne eye, Lysander, found:
Mine ear, I thank it, brought me to thy found.
But why, vnkindly, didst thou leaue mee so?

_Lys._ Why should he stay, whom loue doth press to go?

_Her._ What loue could press Lysander, from my side?

_Lys._ Lysanders loue (that would not let him bide)
Faire Helena: who more engilds the night
Then all yon fiery oes, and eyes of light.
Why seek'st thou me? Could not this make thee know,
The hate I bare thee, made mee leaue thee so?

_Her._ You speake not as you thinke: It cannot bee.

_Hel._ Lo: she is one of this confederacy.

Now I perceiue, they haue conioynd all three,
To fashion this false sport, in spight of mee.
Injurious Hermia, most vngratefull maide,
Haue you conspir'd, haue you with these contrived
To baite mee, with this foule derision?
Is all the counsell that we two haue shar'd,
The sisters vowes, the howers that we haue spent,
When we haue chid the hastie footed time,
For parting vs; O, is all forgot?
All schooldaies, friendship, childhood innocence?
VVee, Hermia, like two artificial gods,
A Midsummer nightes dreame.

Haue with our needles, created both one flower,
Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,
Both warbling of one song, both in one key;
As if our hands, our sides, voyces, and mindes
had bin incorporate. So wee grewe together,
Like to a double cherry, seeming parted;
But yet an union in partition,
Two louely berries moulded on one stemme:
So with two seemeing bodies, but one heart,
Two of the first life coats in heraldry,
Due but to one, and crowned with one creast.
and will you rent our auncient loue asunder,
To ioyne with men, in scorning your poore friend?
It is not friendly, tis not maidenly.
Our sex, as well as I, may chide you for it;
Though I alone doe feele the injury.

Her, I am amazed at your words:
I scorne you not. It seemes that you scorne mee.
Hol, have you not set Lysander, as in scorne,
To follow mee, and praiue my eyes and face?
And made your other loue, Demetrius
(Who euene but now did spurne mee with his foote)
To call mee goddesse, nymph, diuine, and rare,
Pretious celestials? Wherefore speakes he this,
To her he hates? And wherefore doth Lysander
Deny your loue(fo rich within his soule)
And tender mee(fo sooth) affection,
But by your setting on, by your consent?
What though I be not so in grace as you,
So hung vpon with loue, so fortunate?
(But miserable most, to loue vn lou’d)
This you should pittie, rather then despise.
Her, I understand not, what you meane by this,
Hol, I doe. Perseuer, counterfaite sad lookes:
Make mouthes vpon mee, when I turne my back.

Winke
AMidsommer nightes dreame.

Winke each at other, holde the sweete ieast vp.
This sport well carri'd, shall bee chronicled.
If you haue any pitty, grace, or manners,
You would not make me such an argument.
But fare ye well; tis partly my owne fault;
Which death, or absence soone shall remedy.

Lys. Stay, gentle Helena: heare my excuле,
My loue, my life, my foule, faire Helena.

Hel. O excellent!

Herm. Sweete, doe not sorne her so,

Dem. If she cannot entreat, I can compell,

Lys. Thou canst compell no more, then she intreat.

Thy threats haue no more strench then her weake praise.

Hel. I loue thee, by my life I doe:
I sweare by that which I will loose for thee;
To prooue him false, that saies I loue thee not.

Dem. I say, I loue thee more then he can do.

Lys. If thou say so, withdrawe, and prooue it to.

Dem. Quick come,

Hel. Lysander, whereto tends all this?

Lys. Away, you Ethiopian.

Dem. No, no: heele

Seeme to breake loose: take on as you would follow;
But yet come not: You are a tame man, go.

Lys. Hang of thou cat, thou bur: vile thing let loose;
Or I will shake thee from mee, like a serpents.

Hel. Why are you grown so rude? What change is this,

Sweete loue?

Lys. Thy loue? Out tawny Tartar, out:
Out loathed medicine: o hated potion hence.

Hel. Doe you not ieast?

Hel. Yes toole: and so doe you.

Lys. Demetrius, I will keepe my word, with thee.

Dem. I would I had your bond, For I perceive,

A weake bond holds you. Ile not trust your word.

Lys.
A Midsummer Night's Dream.

Lys. What? Should I hurt her, strike her, kill her dead?
Although I hate her, Ie not harme her so,
her. What? Can you doe me greater harme, then hate?
Hate mee, wherefore? O mee, what newes, my loue?
Am not I hermia? Are not you Lysander?
I am as faire now, as I was ere while.
Since night, you lou'd mee; yet since night, you left mee,
Why then, you left mee (ô the gods forbid)
In earnest, shall I say?
Lys. 1, by my life:
And neuer did desire to see thee more.
Theorefore be out of hope, of question, of doubt;
Be certaine : nothing truer : tis no ieaft
That I doe hate thee, and loue helena.
her. O mee, you juggler, you canker blossome,
You theese of loue : what, haue you come by night,
And holne my loues heart, from him?
hel. Fine, I faith,
Haue you no modesty, no maiden shame,
No touch of bafhfulneffe? What, will you teare
Impatient anfweres, from my gentle tongue?
Fy, fy, you counterfai, you puppet, you,
her. Puppet? Why fo? I, that way goes the game.
Now I perceiue that she hath made compare,
Betweene our flatures, the hath vrg'd her height,
And with her personage, her tall personage,
her height(for looth) the hath pruauid with him,
And are you growne so high in his efteeme,
Because I am so dwarfish and so lowe?
how lowe am I, thou painted May-pole? Speake:
how lowe am I? I am not yet so lowe,
But that my nailes can reach vnto thine eyes.
hel. I pray you, though you mocke me, gentleman,
Let her not hurt me, I was neuer curft:
I haue no gift at all in shrewifhnesse:
A Midsummer Night's Dream.

I am a right maid, for my cowardize:
Let her not strike mee. You perhaps, may thinke,
Because she is something lower then my selfe,
That I can match her.

_Her._ Lower? harke againe.

_Hel._ Good _Hermia_, do not be so bitter with mee,
I euermore did loue you _Hermia_,
Did euer kepe your counsels, neuer wrongd you;
Saue that in loue, vnto _Demetrius_,
I toold him of your stealth vnto this wood.
He followed you: for loue, I followed him.
But he hath chid me hence, and threatned mee
To strike mee, spurne mee; nay to kill mee to.
And now, so you will let me quiet goe,
To _Athens_ will I beare my folly backe,
And follow you no further. Let me goe.
You see how simple, and how fond I am.

_Herm._ Why? get you gon. Who ist that hinders you?

_Hel._ A foolish heart, that I leaue here behind.

_Her._ What, with _Lysander_?

_Hel._ With _Demetrius_.

_Lys._ Be not afraid: she shall not harm thee _Helena_.

_Deme._ No sir: she shall not, though you take her part.

_Hel._ O, when she is angry, she is keene and shrewd,
She was a vixen, when she went to schoole:
And though she be but little, she is fierce.

_Her._ Little againe? Nothing but low and little?
Why will you suffer her to floute me thus?
Let me come to her.

_Lys._ Get you gon, you dwarfe;
You minimus, of hindring knot graffe, made;
You bead, you acorne.

_Deme._ You are too officious,
In her behalfe, that scornes your services.
Let her alone: speake not of _Helena_,

Take
A Midsummer nightes dreame.

Take not her part. For if thou dost intend
Never so little shewe of love to her,
Thou shalt aby it.

Lyf. Now she holds me not:
Now follow, if thou dar'st, to try whose right,
Of thine or mine, is most in Helena.

Deme. Follow? Nay: he goeth with thee, checke by iowle.
her. You, mistresse, all this coyle is long of you.

Nay: go not backe.

hel. I will not trust you, I,
Nor longer play in your curt company.
Your hands, than mine, are quicker for a fray:

My legges are longer through, to runne away.

her, I am amaz'd, and know not what to say. Exeunt.

Ob. This is thy negligence: still thou mistak'st,
Or else commitst thy knauries willfully.

Puck. Belieue mee, king of shadowes, I mistooke.

Did not you tell mee, I shoud know the man.
By the Athenian garments, he had on?
And so farre eblamelesse prooves my enterprise,
That I haue nointed an Athenians eyes:

And so farre am I glad, it so did sorre,
As this their iangling I esteeme a sport.

Ob. Thou seest, these louers seek a place to fight;

Hy therefore Robin, overcast the night,
The starry welkin couer thou anon,
With drooping fogge as blacke as Acheron,

And lead thele teasty Riuals so a fray,

As one come not within anothers way.

Like to Lysander, sometime frame thy tongue:
Then stirre Demetrius vp, with bitter wrong;

And sometime raile thou like Demetrius:
And from each other, looke thou lead them thus;
Till ore their browes, death counterfaiting, sleepe,

With leaden legs, and Batty wings doth creepe:

Then
A Midsummer night's dream.

Then crush this hearbe into Lyfanderson's eye;
Whose liquor hath this vertuous property,
To take from thence all error, with his might,
And make his eyebals roule with wonted light.
When they next wake, all this derision
Shall seeme a dreme, and fruitelesse vision,
And backe to Athens shall the lovers wend,
With league, whose date till death shall neuer end.
Whiles I, in this affaire, doe thee imploie,
Ile to my Queene and beg her Indian boy:
And then I will her charmed eye release
From monsters viewe, and all things shall be peace.

Puck, My Faery Lord, this must be done with haste.
For nights swift Dragons cut the clouds full fast,
And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger:
At whose approach, Ghosts, wandering here and there,
Troope home to Churchyards; damned spirits all;
That in crosse waies and floods have burial:
Already to their wormie beds are gone:
For seare lest day should look their flames upon;
They wilfully themselves exile from light.
And must for aye comfort with black browed night.

Ober. But we are spirits of another sort,
I, with the mornings louse, have oft made sport,
And like a forrester, the groues may tred
Euen till the Easterne gate all fiery red,
Opening on Neptune, with faire blessed beames,
Turnes, into yellow golde, his salt greene streames,
But notwithstanding, haste, make no delay:
We may effect this businesse, yet ere day.

Puck. vp & down, vp & down, I will lead them vp & down.
I am seard in field & town. Goblin, lead them vp & downe.
Here comes one. Enter Lyfander.

Lyf. Where art thou, proud Demetrius? Speak thou now.
Rob. Here villain, drawne & ready. Where art thou?
A Midsummer Night's Dream.

Lys. I will be with thee straight.
Rob. Follow me then to plainer ground.

Enter Demetrius.

Deme. Lysander, speak again.
Thou runaway, thou coward, art thou fled?
Speake in some bush, Where dost thou hide thy head?
Rob. Thou coward art thou bragging to the stars,
Telling the bushes that thou lookst for warres,
And wilt not come? Come recreant, come thou childe,
Ile whippe thee with a rodd, He is defil'd,
That draws a sword on thee,

De. Yea, art thou there?

Lys. He goes before me, and still dares me on;
When I come where he calleth, then he is gone.
The villaine is much lighter heel'd than I;

I followed saft: but safter he did fly;

That fallen am I in darke vneaun way,
And here will rest me, Come thou gentle day.
For if but once, thou shewe me thy gray light,
Ile finde Demetrius, and reuenge this spight.

Robi. No, no, no: Coward, why com'st thou not?

Deme. Abide me, if thou dar'st, For well I wot,
Thou runft before me, shifting every place,
And dar'st not stand, nor looke me in the face,
Where art thou now?

Rob. Come hither: I am here.

De. Nay then thou mockst me. Thou that buy this dear,

If ever I thy face by day light see.

Now, goe thy way. Faintnesse constraineth mee,
To measure, out my length, on this cold bed:
By daies approach look to be visited.

Enter Helena.

Hel. O weary night, O long and tedious night,

Abate
Abate thy houres, shine comforts, from the east;
That I may backe to Athens, by day light,
From thence that my poore company detest:
And sleepe, that sometimes shuts vp sorrowes eye,
Steale mee a while from mine owne companie.  
Sleepe.

Rob. Yet but three? Come one more,
Two of both kindes makes vp fower,
Heare shee comes, curtis, and sadde.
Cupid is a knauish ladde,
Thus to make poore females madde,
her. Neuer so weary, neuer so in woe,
Bedabbled with the dew, and tore with briers:
I can no further clawle, no further goe:
My legges can keepe no pale with my desires,
Here will I rest mee, till the breake of day:
Heauens shield Lysander, if they meane a fray.

Rob. On the ground sleepe sound:
Rhe apply your eye, gentle louver, remedy.
When thou wak'lt, thou tak'lt
True delight, in the sight, of thy former ladies eye:
And the country prouerbe knowne,
That eyery man should take his owne,
In your waking shall be shoen,
Jacke shall haue till: nought shall go ill:
The man shall haue his mare again, & all shall be well.

Enter Queen of Faeries, and Clowne, and Faeries:and
the king behind them.

Tita. Come sit thee downe vpon this fowry bed,
While I thy amiable cheekes doe coy,
And sticke musk roses in thy sleeke smooth head,
And kisse thy faire large eares, my gentle joy.

Clown. Where's Pease-blossome?
Pea. Ready.

Clown. Scratch my head, Pease-blossome. Wher's Mounteau
fier Cobweb? Cob, Ready.

Clo.
A Midnight Fairies Scene

Clo. Mounfieur Cabweb, good Mounfieur, get you your weapons in your hand, and kill me a red hipt Humble Bee, on the topp of a thistle: and good Mounfieur, bring mee the hony bagge. Doe not fret your selfe too much, in the action, Mounfieur: and good Mounfieur haue a care, the hony bagge breake not, I wold be loath to haue you over-flowen with a honibag signior. Where's Mounfieur Mustardseed?

Must. Readie.

Clo. Give me your neafe, Mounfieur Mustardseed. Pray you, leave your curtfe, good Mounfieur,

Must. what's your will?

Clo. Nothing good Mounfieur, but to helpe Caualery Cabwebbe to scratch, I must to the Barbers, Mounfieur, For me thinkes I am maruailes hairy about the face, And I am such a tender Asle, if my haire doe but tickle mee, I must scratch.

Titya. What, wilt thou heare some musique, my sweete love?

Clo. I haue a reasonale good ear in musique. Letts haue the tongs, and the bones.

Titya. Or, say sweete love, what thou desirest to eate.

Clo. Truely a pecke of prouander. I could mouche your good dry Oates, Methinkes, I haue a great desire to a bottle of hay. Good hay, sweete hay hath no fellow. (hoord,

Titya. I haue a venturous Fairy, that Shall seek the Squirils And fetch thee newe nuts.

Clo. I had rather haue a handfull, or two of dried pease. But, I pray you; let none of your people stirre me: I haue an expostion of sleepe come vpon mee.

Titya. Slepe thou, and I will winde thee in my armes, Fairies be gon, and be alwaies away.

So doth the woodbine, the sweete Honisuckle,
Gently entwist the female luy so
Enrings the barky fingers of the Elme.
now I loue thee! how I dote on thee!

Enter Robin goodfellow.

O. Welcome good Robin, Seest thou this sweete sight
Her dotage now I doe beginne to pittie.
For meeting her of late, behinde the wood,
Seeking sweete favours for this hatefull foole,
I did vpbraied her, and fall out with her.
For she his hairy temples then had rounded,
With coronet offresh and fragrant flowers.
And that same deawe which sometime on the buddes,
Was wont to swell, like round and orient pearles;
Stood now within the pretty flouriets eyes,
Like teares, that did their owne disgrace bewaile.
When I had, at my pleasure, taunted her,
And she, in milde tearmes, begd my patience,
I then did aske of her, her changeling childe:
Which straight she gaue mee, and her Fairy sent
To beare him, to my bower, in Fairie land.

And now I haue the boy, I will vn doe
This hatefull imperfection of her eyes.
And, gentle Puck, take this transformed scalpe,
From of the heade of this Athenian swaine;
That hee, awaking when the other do,
May all to Athens backe againe repaire,
And thinke no more of this nights accidents,
But as the feare vexation of a dreame.
But first I will release the Fairy Queene.

Be, as thou waft wont to bee:
See, as thou waft wont to see.
Dian's budde, or Cupids flower,
Hath such force, and blessed power.

Now, my Titania, wake you, my sweete Queene.

Tita. My Oberon, what visions haue I seene!
Me thought I was enamour of an Asse,

O. There lyes your loue.

Tita.
A Midsummer nightes dreame.

Tit. How came these things to passe?  
O., how mine eyes do loath his visage now!  
Ob. Silence a while. Robin, take off this head:  
Titania, musicke call, and strike more dead
Then common sleepe: of all these, fine the sense.
Tit. Musicke, howe musicke: such as charmeth sleepe. (peepe.
Rob. Now, when thou wak'rt, with thine own fools eyes
Ob. Sound Musicke: come, my queen, take hands with me,
And rocke the ground whereon these sleepers be.
Now, thou and I are new in amitie,
And will to morrow midnight, solemnly
Daunce, in Duke Theseus house triumphantly,
And blesse it to all faire prosperitie.
There shall the paires of faithfull lourers be
Wedded, with Theseus, all in iollitie.
Rob. Fairy King, attend, and marke:
I do heare the morning Larke.
Ob. Then my Queene, in silence sad,
Trippe we after nights shade:
We, the Globe, can compasse soone,
Swifter then the wandring Moone.
Tit. 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,

Enter Theseus and all his traine.

Exeunt.

Winde borne,

The, Go one of you, finde out the forrestor:
For now our observation is performde.
And since we have the vaward of the day,
My lour shall heare the musicke of my hounds.
Uncouple, in the westernne vallie, let them goe:
Dispatch I say, and finde the forrestor,
Wee will, faire Queene, vp to the mountaines toppe,
And marke the musicall confusion
Of hounds and Echo in conjunction.
A Midsummer nightes dreame.

I, once, when in a wood of Crete, they bayed the Beare,
With hounds of Sparta: such gallant chiding,
Such gallant chiding. For besides the groves,
The skyes, the fountaines, the region neare
Seeme all one mutuell cry, I never heard
So musicall a discord, such sweete thunder.

The hounds are bred out of the Sparte kinde:
So flew'd, so fanned: and their heads are hung
With cares, that sweepe away the morning deawe,
Crooke kneed, and dewlapd, like Thessalian Buls:
Each ynder each. A cry more tunable
Was never hollod to, nor cheerd with horne,
In Crete, in Sparte, nor in Thesaly.

Judge when you heare, But soft, What nymphes are these?

Egeus, My Lord, this my daughter heere a sleepe,
And this Lysander, this Demetrius is,
This Helena, old Nedar's Helena.

I wonder of their being here together.

The, No doubt, they rose vp early, to obserue
The right of May: and hearing our intent,
Came heere, in grace of our solemnitie.

But speake, Egeus, is not this the day,
That Hermia should give answer of her choyce?

Egeus. It is, my Lord. (horses.
These. Gore, bid the huntsmen wake them with their
Shouts within: they all start vp, wind hones.
The. Good morrow, friends. Saint Valentine is past.

Begin these wood birds but to couple, now?

Lys. Pardon, my Lord.
The. I pray you all, stand vp.

I know, you two are Riell enemies,
How comes this gentle concord in the worlde,
That hatred is so farre from jealouie,
A Midsummer night's dream.

To sleepe by hate, and feare no enimie,
Lyce. My Lord, I shall reply amazedly,
Hafe sleepe, halfe waking. But, as yet I sweare,
I cannot truely say how I came here.
But as I thinke (for truely would I speake)
And now I doe bethinke mee, so it is;
I came with Hermia, hither, Our intent
Was to be gon from Athens where we might
Without the perill of the Athenian lawe,
Ege. Enough, enough my Lord: you haue enough.
I begge the law, the law, vpon his head:
They would haue stolne away, they would, Demetrius,
Thereby to haue defeated you and me:
You of your wife, and mee, of my consent:
Of my consent, that she should be your wife.

Deme. My Lord, faire Helen told me of their stealth,
Of this their purpose hither, to this wood,
And I in fury hither followed them;
Faire Helena, in fancy following mee.
But my good Lord, I wote not by what power
(But by some power it is) my loue,
To Hermia (melted as the snowe)
Seemes to me now as the remembrance of an idle gaude,
Which in my childehoode I did dote vpon:
And all the faith, the vertue of my heart,
The obiect and the pleasure of mine eye,
Is onely Helena. To her, my Lord,
Was I betrothed, ere I see Hermia:
But, like a sicknesse, did I loath this foode.
But, as in health, come to my naturall taste,
Now I doe witt it, love it, long for it,
And will for euermore be true to it.
The faire louers, you are fortunately met,
Of this discourse, we more will here anon.

Egeus.
Egeus, I will overbear your will:
For in the Temple, by and by, with vs,
These couples shall eternally be knit.
And, for the morning now is something wore,
Our purpose hunting shall be set aside.
Away, with vs, to Athis. Three and three,

Deme. These things seeme small and undistinguishable,
Like farre off mountaines turned into clouds.

Her. Me thinks I see these things, with parted eye,
When every thing seemes double.

Hel. So mee thinkes:
And I haue found Demetrius, like a jiewell,
Mine owne, and not mine owne.

Dem. Are you sure
That we are awake? It seemes to me,
That yet we sleepe, we dreame Do not you thinke,
The Duke was here, and bid vs follow him?

Her. Yea, and my father.

Hel. And Hyppolita.

Lyf. And he did bid vs follow to the Temple.

Dem. Why then, we are awake: lets follow him, and by
the way lets recount our dreames.

Clo. When my cue comes, call mee, and I will answer.
My next is, most faire Pyramus, Hey ho. Peeter Quince?
Flute, the bellowes mendes, Snow the tinker? Standeling?
Gods my life! Stolne hence, and lest mee a sleepe? I haue
had a most rare vision. I haue had a dreame, past the wit
of man, to say, whaet dreame it was. Man is but an Affe, if
hee goe about expound this dreame. Me thought I was,
there is no man can tell what. Me thought I was, and me
thought ye had, But manis but patche a foole, If hee will
offer to say, what mee thought I had. The eye of man
hath not heard, the ear of man hath not. See, mans

A Midsummer Night's Dream.

hand is not able to taste, his tongue to conceive, nor his heart to report, what my dream was, I will get Peter Quince to write a Ballet of this dream: it shall be call'd Bottom's Dream; because it hath no bottom: and I will sing it in the latter end of a Play, before the Duke. Peradventure, to make it the more gracious, I shall sing it at her death.

Enter Quince, Flute, Thisby and the rabble.

Quin. Have you sent to Bottom's house? Is he come home, yet?

Flut. Hee cannot be heard of. Out of doubt he is transported.

Thys. If hee come not, then the Play is mard. It goes not forward. Doth it?

Quin. It is not possible. You haue not a man, in all Athens, able to discharge Pyramus, but he.

Thys. No, hee hath simply the best wit of any handycraft man, in Athens.

Quin. Yea, and the best person to, and hee is a very Paramour, for a sweete voice.

Thys. You must say, Paragon. A Paramour is (God bless vs) a thing of nought.

Enter Snug, the Joiner.

Snug. Masters, the Duke is comming from the Temple, and there is two or three Lords and Ladies more married. If our sport had gon forward, wee had all beene made men.

Thys. O sweete bully Bottom, thus hath hee lost six pence a day, during his life: hee could not haue scape d six pence a day. And the Duke had not giuen him six pence a day, for playing Pyramus, Ile be hanged.

He would haue deferred it. Six pence a day, in Pyramus, or
or nothing.

Enter Bottom.

Bot. Where are these lads? Where are these harts?

Quin. Bottom, O most courageous day! O most happy hour:

Bot. Masters, I am to discourse wonders: but ask me not what. For if I tell you, I am not true Athenian. I will tell you every thing right as it fell out.

Quin. Let us hear, sweete Bottom.

Bot. Not a word of mee, All that I will tell you, is, that the Duke hath dined. Get your apparell together, good strings to your beardes, new ribands to your pumpe, meete presently at the palace, every man looke ore his part. For, the short and the long is, our play is prefered. In any case let Thisby haue cleane linnen: and let not him, that plaies the Lyon, pare his nailes: for they shall hang out for the Lyons clawes. And most deare Actors, eat no Onions, nor garlicke: for we are to vttre sweete breath: and I do not doubt but to hear them say, it is a sweete Comedy.

No more wordes. Away, go away.

Enter Theseus, Hippolita, and Philoftrate.

Hyp. Tis strange, my Theseus, that these louers speake of.

The. More straunge then true, I never may beleue These antiques fables, nor these Fairy toyes, Louers, and mad men haue such seething braines, Such shapping phantasies, that apprehend more, Then coole reafon euer comprehends. The lunatick, The louer, and the Poet are of imagination all compact.

One sees more diuels, then vast hell can holde:

That is the mad man, The louer, all as frantick,

Sees Helens beauty in a brow of Egypt.
The Poets eye, in a fine frenzy, rolling, doth glance From heauen to earth, from earth to heauen. And as Imagination bodies forth the forms of things
A Midsummer night's eclogue.

Unknowne: the Poets penne turns them to shapes,
And giuest o ayery nothing, a local habitation,
And a name. Such trickes hath strong imagination,
That if it would but apprehend some ioy,
It comprehends some bringer of that ioy.
Or in the night, imagining some feare,
How easy is a bush suppos'd a Beare?

But, all the story of the night told ouer,
And all their minds transfigur'd so together,
More witnesseth than fancies images,
And grows to something of great constancy:
But how soever, strange and admirable.

Enter Lovers: Lyfander, Demetrius, Hermia and Helena.

Thee, here come the lovers, full of ioy and mirth.
Ioy, gentle friends, ioy and fresh daies
Of ioue accompany your hearts.

Lyf, More then tovs, waite in your royall walkes, your
boorde, your bedde.

Thee, Come now: what maskes, what daunces shall we
To weare away this long age of three hours, betwenee
Or after supper, & bed-time? Where is our visual manager
Of ioy? What Reuels are in hand? Is there no play,
To ease the anguish of a torturing hower? Call Philostrate.

Philostrate, Here mighty Theseus.

Thee, Say, what abridgement haue you for this euening?
What maske, what musicke? how shall we beguile
The lazy tyme, if not with some delight?

Philo, There is a briefe, how many sports are ripe.
Make choyce, of which your highnesse will see first.

Thee, The battell with the centaures to be sung,
By an Athenian Eunuche, to the harpe?
Whee none of that, That haue I tolde my loue,
In glory of my kinshman Hercules.
The ryot of the tipsi Bachanals.
Tearing the Thracian singer, in their rage?
That is an olde deuife: and it was plaid,
When I from Thebes came last a conquerer.
The thrife three Muses, mourning for the death
Of learning, late deceit, in beggary?
That is some Sace keene and critically,
Not sorting with a nuptiall ceremony.
A tedious briefe Scene of young Pyramus
And his loue Thibby, very tragicall mirth?
Merry, and tragicall? Tedious, and briefe? That is hot Ises,
And wondrous strange snow. How shall we find the cōcord
Of this discor'd?

Philof. A Play there is, my Lord, some ten words long:
Which is as briefe, as I have knowne a play:
But, by ten words, my Lord it is too long:
Which makes it tedious. For in all the Play,
There is not one word apt, one player fitted.
And tragically, my noble Lord, it is. For Pyramus,
Therein, doth kill himselfe. Which when I saw
Rehearsed, I must confess, made mine eyes water;
But more merry tears the passion of loud laughter
Never shed.

These. What are they, that doe play it?

Phil. Hard handed men, that worke in Athens here,
Which neverlabour'd in their minds till now:
And now have toyled their vnbreathed memories,
With this same Play, against your nuptiall,
This. And wee will heare it.

Phil. No, my noble Lord, it is not for you. I haue heard
It ouer, and it is nothing, nothing in the world;
Vnlesse you can finde sport in their entents,
Extremely stretcht, and cond with cruell paine,
To do you service.
This. I will heare that play. For never any thing
Can be amisse, when simpleness and dutty tender it.
AMICULUM Nitescens draco.

Goe bring them in, and take your places, Ladies.

_Hip._ I loue not to see wretchednesse orecharged;
And duty, in his service, perishing.

De._ Why, gentle sweete, you shall see no such thing.

_Hip._ He sayes, they can doe nothing in this kinde.

De._ The kinder we, to give them thanks, for nothing.

Our sport shall be, to take what they mistake.

And what poore duty cannot doe, noble respect

Takes it in might, not merit.

Where I haue come, great Clerkes haue purposed
To greeete me, with premeditated welcomes;

Where I haue seene them shiuer and looke pale,

Make periods in the midst of sentences,

Throttle their practiz'd accent in their feares,

And in conclusion dumbly haue broke off,

Not paying mee a welcome. Trust mee, sweete,

Out of this silence, yet, I pickt a welcome:

And in the modesty of fearefull duty,

I read as much, as from the rattling tongue

Of saucy and audacious eloquence.

Louve, therefore, and tong-tide simplicitie,

In leaff, speake most, to my capacity.

_Philby._ So please your Grace, the Prologue is addresst,

_Duk._ Let him approach.

_Enter the Prologue._

_Pro._ If wee offend, it is with our good will.

That you should thinke, we come not to offend,

But with good will, To shew our simple skill,

That is the true beginning of our end.

Consider then, we come but in despight.

We doe not come, as minding to content you,

Our true intent is, All for your delight,

Wee are not here, that you should here repent you,

the actors are at hand: and, by their shewe,

You shall know all, that you are like to knowe,

The.
This fellow doth not stand upon points.

Lys. He hath rid his Prologue, like a rough Colte: hee knowes not the stoppe. A good moral my Lord. It is not enough to speake; but to speake true.

Hyp. Indeed he hath plaid on this Prologue, like a child on a Recorder, a sound; but not in governement.

The, his speach was like a tangled Chaine; nothing im-

paired, but all disordered. Who is next?

Enter Pyramus, and Thisby, and Wall, ana Moone-

shine, and Lyon.

Prologue. Gentles, perchance you wonder at this show

But, wonder on, till truth make all things plaine.

This man is Pyramus, if you would knowe:

This beautious Lady Thisby is certaine.

This man, with lyme and roughcaft, doth present

Wall, that vile wall, which did these louers sunder:

And through walls chinke, poore soules, they are content

to whisper. At the which, let no man wonder.

This man, with lanterne, dogge, and bush of thorne,

Preseneth moone-shine. For if you will know,

By moone-shine did these louers thinke no scorne

to meete at Ninus tombe, there, there to woode.

This grisly beast (which Lyon hight by name)

the trusty Thisby, comming first by night,

Did scare away, or rather did affright:

And as she fled, her mantle she did fall:

Which Lyon vile with bloody mouth did staine.

Anon comes Pyramus, sweete youth, and tall,

And finds his trusty Thisbys mantle staine:

Whereat, with blade, with bloody blamefull blade,

he brauely broach his boyling bloody breast.

And Thisby, tarying in Mulberry shade,

his dagger drew, and dyed. For all the rest,

Let Lyon, Moone-shine, Wall, and louers twaine,

At large discourse, while here they doe remaine,
A Midsummer nightes dreame.

The, I wonder, if the Lyon be to speake.
Demet. No wonder, my Lord. One Lyon may, when many Asses doe.

Exit Lyon, Thysby, and Mooneshine.

Wall. In this same enterlude it doth befall,
That I, one Flute (by name) present a wall:
And such a wall, as I would have you thinke
That had in it a crani'd hole or chinke:
Through which the louers, Pyramus, and Thisby,
Did whisper often, very secretly,
This lome, this roughcast, and this stone doth shewe,
That I am that same wall: the truth is so.
And this the cranied is, right and sniffer,
Through which the fearfull louers are to whisper.

The. Would you desire lime and haire to speake better?
Demet. It is the wittiest partition, that euer I heard discourse, my Lord.

The. Pyramus draws neare the wall: silence.

Py. O grim lookt night, o night, with hue so blacke,
O night, which euer art, when day is not:
O night: O night, alacke, alacke, alacke,
I feare my Thisbys promise is forgot.
And thou o wall, o sweete, o louely wall,
That standst betwene her fathers ground and mine,
Thou wall, o wall, o sweete and louely wall,
Showe mee thy chinke, to blink through, with mine eyne,
Thankes curteous wall. lom shield thee well for this.
But what see I? No Thisby doe I see,
O wicked wall, through whome I see no bliffe,
Curt be thy stones, for thus deceiving mee,
the. The wall mee thinkes, being fensible, should curse againe.

Pyr. No, in truth Sir, he should not. Deceiving mee is Thisbys cue: she is to enter now, and I am to spy
Her through the wall. You shall see it will fall

H

Pat
A Midsummer Night's Dream.

As I told you: yonder she comes. Enter Thisby.

This. O wall, full oft you haft thou heard my mones,
For parting my faire Pyramus, and mee.
My cherry lips have oft kiss thy flones;
Thy flones, with lime and hayre knit now againe.
Pyra. I see a voice: now will I to the chinke,
To spy and I can heare my Thisbys face. Thy by?
This. My love thou art, my love I thinke.
Py. Thinke what thou wilt, I am thy louers Grace:
And, like Limander, am I truly still.
This. And I, like Helen, till the fates me kill.
Pyra. Not Shafalus, to procrus, was so true.
This. As Shafalus to procrus, I to you.
Py. O kisse me, through the hole of this vilde walle.
This. I kisse the wallis hole; not your lips at all.
Py. Wilt thou, at Nimmie tombe, meete me straight way?
This. Tide life, tyde death, I come without delay.
Wol. Thus haue I, Wall, my part discharged so;
And, being done, thus wall away doth goe.
Duke. Now is the Moon vsed between the two neighbors.
Deme. No remedy, my Lord, when wals are so wilfull, to
haere without warning.
Dutch. This is the silliest stuffe, that euer I heard.
Duke. The beft, in this kinde, are but shadowes: and
the worst are no worfe, if imagination amend them.
Dutch. It must be your imagination, then; & not theirs.
Duke. If we imagine no worfe of them, then they of the-
elves, they may passe for excellent men. Here come two
noble beasts, in a man and a Lyon.

Enter Lyon, and Moone-shine.

Lyon. You Ladies, you (whose gentle hearts do feare
The smallest monstrous mouse, that creepes on floore)
May now, perchance, both quake and tremble here,
When Lyon rough, in wildest rage, doth roare.
Then know that I, as Snug the lonyer am
A Midsummer nightes dreame.

A Lyon fell, nor else no Lyons damme,
For, if I should, as Lyon, come in strife,
Into this place, 'twere pitty on my life.

Duk. A very gentle beast, and of a good conscience.
Deme. The very best at a beast, my Lord, that ere I saw.
Lyf. This Lyon is a very fox, for his valour.
Duk. True: and a goose for his discretion.
D. Not so, my Lord. For his valour cannot carry his discretion: and the fox carries the goose.

Duk. His discretion, I am sure, cannot carry his valour. For the goose carries not the fox. It is well: leave it to his discretion, and let vs listen to the Moone.

Moone. This lanthorne doth the horned moone present.
Deme. He should have wore the hornes, on his head.
Duk. He is no crescent, and his hornes are invisible, within the circumference.

Moone. This lanthorne doth the horned moone present.
My selfe, the man ith Moone, doe seeme to be.
Duke. This is the greatest error of all the rest; the man should be put into the lanthorne. How is it else the man ith Moone?

Deme. He dares not come there, for the candle. For, you see, it is already in snuffe.

Dutch, I am aweary of this Moone. Would hee woulde
Duke. It appeares, by his small light of discretion, that hee is in the wane; but yet in curtesie, in all reason, we must stay the time.

Lyfan. Proceede, Moone.

Moone. All that I have to say, is to tell you, that the lanthorne is the Moone, I the man ith Moone, this thorne bush my thorne bush, and this dogge my dogge.

Deme. Why? All these should be in the lanthorne: for all these are in the Moone. But silence: here comes Thisby,

Enter Thisby.

TH. This is ould Ninies tumbe. Where is my loue? Lyon, Oh.

H 2

Demetrius
A Midsummer night's dream.

Dem. Well roard, Lyon.
Duke. Well runne, thisby.
Dutchess. Well shone Moone. Truly, the Moone shines, with a good grace.
Duke. Well mouz'd, Lyon.
Dem. And then came Pyramus.
Lyf. And so the Lyon vanish'd.

Enter Pyramus.

Pyr. Sweete Moone, I thanke thee, for thy sunny beams. I thanke thee, Moone, for shining now so bright. For by thy gracious golden, glittering beames, I trust to take of truest thisby light. But stay: despight, but marke, poore knight, What dreadfull dole is here? Eyes do you see! How can it bee! O dainty duck, o deare! Thy mantle good, what, staine with blood? Approach ye Furies fell, O fates come, come, cut thread and thrumme, Quaile, crush, conclude, and quell.

Duke. This passion, & the death of a deare friend would goe neere to make a man looke sad.

Duch. Befhrew my heart, but I pity the man.

Pyr. O, wherefore, Nature, didst thou Lyons frame? Since Lyon vilde hath here deflour'd my deare. Which is, no, no: which was the fairest dame That liu'd, that lou'd, that lik'ed, that lookt with cheere. Come teares, confound, out sword, and wound The pappe of Pyramus:

I, that left pappe, where heart doth hoppe. Thus dy I, thus, thus, thus.

Now am I dead, now am I fled, my soule is in the sky. Tongue loose thy light, Moone take thy flight, Now dy, dy, dy, dy, dy.

Dem. No Die, but an ace for him. For he is but one.

Lyf.
A Midsummer nightes dreame.

Lys. Less he then an ace, man. For he is dead, he is nothing.
Duke. With the helpe of a Surgeon, he might yet recover, and yet proue an Asse.
Dut. How chance Moone-shine is gone before? Thisby comes backe, and findes her louver,
Duk. Shee will finde him, by starre-light. Here Shee comes, and her passion ends the Play.
Dut. Methinkes, she should not use a long one, for such a Pyramus: I hope, she will be briehe.
Demet. A moth will turne the ballance; which Pyramus, which Thisby is the better: he for a man; God warnd vs:
She, for a woman; God bleffe vs.
Lys. She hath spied him already, with those sweete eyes,
Demet. and thus she meanes, videlicet;
This, A sleepe my loue? What, dead my doue?
O Pyramus, arise,
Must couer thy sweete eyes.
These lilly lippes, this cherry nose,
These yellow cowlippe cheekes
Are gon, are gon: louers make mone;
His eyes were green, as lekes,
O sifters three, come, come, to mee,
With hands as pale as milke,
Lay them in gore, since you haue shore
With sheeres, his threede of silke,
tongue, not a word: come truely word,
Come blade, my breast imbrow;
And farewell friends: thus Thisby ends:
Adieu, adieu, adieu.
Duke. Moone-shine and Lyon are left to bury the dead.
Demet. and W esto.
Lyon. No, I assure you, the wall is done, that parted their fathers. Will it please you, to see the Epilogue, or to heare a Bergomaskes daunce, between two of our company?

Duke
A Midsummer nights dreame.

Duke, No Epilogue, I pray you, For your Play needs no excuse. Neuer excuse: For when the Players are all deade, there need not be blamed. Mary, if hee that writ it, had played Pyramus, and hangd him selfe in Thisbies garter, it would have beene a fine tragedie; and so it is truely, and very notably discharge'd. But come your Burgomasse, let your Epilogue alone.
The iron tongue of midnight hath tolde twelue. Louers to bed, tis almost Fairy time.
I feare we shall out sleepe the comming morn, As much as wee this night haue overwatcht. This palpable grosse Play hath well beguil'd. The heauie gate of night. Sweete friends, to bed. A fortnight holde we this solemnitie. In nightly Recuels, and new jollity. 

Enter Puck.

Puck, Now the hungry Lyons roares. And the wolfe beholds the Moone; Whilft the heauie ploughman snores, All with weary taske foroone. Now the wasted brands doe glowe, Whilft the screech-owle, screeching lowd, puts the wretch, that lyes in woe, In remembrance of a throwde. Now it is the time of night, That the graues, all gaping wide, Every one lets forth his spight, In the Churchway paths to glide. And wee Fairies, that doe runne, By the triple Hecates teame, From the presence of the Sunne, Following darkenesse like a dreame, Now are frolick: not a moufe Shall disturbe this hallowed house. I am sent, with broome, before, 

To
A Midsummer Night's Dream.

354 To swepe the dust, behind the door.

Enter King and Queene of Fairies, with all their traine.

Ob. Through the house giee glimmering light,

By the dead and drowsie hier,

Every Elfe and Fairy sprite,

Hop as light as birds from brier,

And this dittie after mee, Sing, and daunce it trippingly.

Tita. First rehearse your song by rote,

to each word a warbling note.

Hand in hand, with Fairy grace,

Will we sing and blewe this place,

Ob. Now, until the breake of day,

Through this house, each Fairy stray.

To the best bride bed will wee:

Which by vs shall blessed be:

And the issue there create,

Euer shall be fortunate:

So shall all the couples three

Euer true in loving be:

And the blots of natures hand

Shall not in their issue stand.

Never mole, hare-lippe, nor scarre,

Nor marke prodigious, such as are

Despised in natuuitie,

Shall upon their children be.

With this field deaw consecrate,

Every Fairy take his gate,

And each severall chamber bless,

Through this palace, with sweete peace,

Euer shall in safety rest,

And the owner of it blewe.

Trippe away: make no stay:

Meete me all, by breake of day. Exeunt.

Robin. If we shadowes have offended,

Thinke but this (and all is mended)

H 4 That
A Midsummer Night's Dream.

That you have but slumbered here,
While these visions did appear,
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream,
Gentles, do not reprehend.
If you pardon, we will mend.
And, as I am an honest Puck,
If we have woelected luck,
Now to escape the Serpent's tongue,
We will make amends ere long:
Else, the Puck a yoke call.
So, good night unto you all.
Give me your hands, if we be friends:
And Robin shall restore amends.

FINIS.