

## Act Three · Scene 1 scene description

The workmen now come on to this same spot to rehearse their play. (Titania is still sleeping.) Before they get to the actual rehearsal, they bring up various problems that they have discovered about the play and the acting of it.

With Bottom pretty much taking charge, they arrive at solutions for these problems and then they start the rehearsal.

Puck comes upon this scene and decides to make himself invisible and listen in. When Pyramus exits into the bushes, Puck takes the opportunity to follow him off and using his fairy magic, he fastens an asses head onto Bottom and then sits back and watches while "all hell breaks loose" when Bottom reenters and his pals see him.

They all run away from him in terror, and he, not aware that anything has happened to him, thinks that they are all just trying to frighten him and he decides to sing to prove that he is not afraid.

His singing wakes Titania and since Bottom is the first creature she sees, she falls in love with him. She then calls her fairies to wait upon him and escort him to her bower (the flowered, tree-shaded spot in the woods where she lives some of the time.) They all exit.

## Act Two · Scene 2 vernacular

*bit*/ Oh, dear me! What a dream I had!  
Lysander, oh, it was really bad!  
Lysander! Lysander! Oh no,  
where are you? Say something  
or I'll faint from fear. No? Then I  
guess you're really not here. Either  
my death or you I'll find out there.  
*[exits]*

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*[Titania is still asleep; enter Bottom, Quince, Snout, Starveling, Snug and Flute]*

BOTTOM:

Are we all here?

QUINCE:

And on time. This is a marvelous spot for our rehearsal.

BOTTOM:

Peter Quince—

QUINCE:

What is it Bottom?

BOTTOM:

There are things in this comedy of Pyramus and Thisbe that will offend. First, Pyramus has to draw a sword to kill himself; which ladies couldn't stand. What do you think?

STARVELING:

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

BOTTOM:

Not at all—I have a plan to solve the problem. Write a little speech: and let it say that we won't really hurt anyone with our swords; and that Pyramus is not dead—really. This will keep them from being afraid.

QUINCE:

Well, we'll write it.

SNOUT:

Won't the ladies be afraid of the lion?

BOTTOM:

Men, bringing a lion into a room full of ladies, is a dreadful thing.

SNOUT:

Then another speech should say that he is not really a lion.

BOTTOM:

We'll have to state his name, and half his face must show, and he must say: "Ladies," or "Fair ladies, I wish you," or "I beg you not to be afraid. If you think I'm really a lion, I'm not, I'm a man."

QUINCE:

Well, we'll do it. But there are two problems—one is, to get moonlight inside a room: because you know, Pyramus and Thisbe meet by moonlight.

SNOUT:

Does the moon shine the night we play our play?

BOTTOM:

A calendar, a calendar! Look in the almanac; find out moonshine, find out moonshine.

QUINCE: *[looking it up]*

Yes, it does shine that night.

BOTTOM:

Why then, leave a window open, and the moon may shine in.

QUINCE:

Yes, or else someone must come in with a lantern and say he comes to represent moonshine. Then there is another thing: we must have a

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wall; for Pyramus and Thisbe, the story says, talked through a crack in a wall.

SNOUT:

You could never bring in a wall. What do you say, Bottom?

BOTTOM:

Somebody must represent the Wall. And let him wear some plaster on him to signify a wall and let him hold his fingers like this, and through that crack Pyramus and Thisbe will whisper.

QUINCE:

Then all is well. Come, and rehearse your parts. Pyramus, you begin. When you have said your speech, enter into that thicket, and everybody else follow suit.

*[Enter Puck, invisible to those onstage]*

PUCK:

What a bunch of hicks are here so close to the Fairy Queen's bed? Is this a play? I'll listen.

QUINCE:

Speak, Pyramus.

BOTTOM: *[acting his part of Pyramus]*

"Thisbe, the flowers of odious savors sweet—"

QUINCE: *[correcting him]*

Odors, odors!

BOTTOM:

"Odors savors sweet. So hath thy breath, my dear. *[hears something]* But hark, a voice!" *[he exits to check out noise]*

PUCK: *[to audience]*

Weird! *[he follows Bottom off]*

FLUTE:

Do I speak now?

QUINCE:

Yes, you do, because he is going off to see about a noise he heard and will come back again.

FLUTE: *[as Thisbe]*

"Most radiant Pyramus, as true as truest horse, that yet would never tire."

QUINCE:

Pyramus, enter. Your cue is past. It is "never tire."

FLUTE: *[repeating the cue]*

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

*[enter Puck invisible, and Bottom who now wears asses-head]*

BOTTOM:

"If I were fair, fair Thisbe, I were only thine."

QUINCE: *[reacting to the transformed Bottom]*

Oh my god! We're haunted. Come on, guys, let's go. Help! *[Quince, Flute, Snout, Snug and Starveling exit]*

BOTTOM:

Why are they running away?

SNOUT: *[reentering]*

Oh Bottom, you've changed! *[he runs off]*

QUINCE: *[reentering]*

Bottom, you've been transformed!  
*[exits]*

BOTTOM:

I get it. They're trying to scare me. But I won't budge from here. I'll walk up and down, and I'll sing. Then they'll hear I'm not afraid. *[he sings]*

The ouzel cock, so black of hue,

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With orange-tawny bill,

TITANIA: *[awakening]*

What angel awakens me from my slumber?

BOTTOM: *[still singing]*

The throstle with his note  
so true,  
The wren with little quill.

TITANIA:

Kind mortal, my eyes are captivated  
by you; and your sweetness drives me  
to say—to swear—that I love you!

BOTTOM:

I think, lady, you don't have any reason  
to say that. But, to tell the truth,  
reason and love have little in common  
these days.

TITANIA:

You are as clever as you are  
beautiful.

BOTTOM:

If I had brains enough to get out of  
these woods, that would be brains enough.

TITANIA:

Out of these woods! No! You shall stay  
here whether you like it or not. I love  
you. Therefore come with me. I'll give  
you fairies to wait on you; *[calling]* Peaseblossom!  
Cobweb! Moth! and Mustardseed! *[enter*  
*four fairies]*

PEASEBLOSSOM:

Ready.

COBWEB:

And I.

MOTH:

And I.

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MUSTARDSEED:

And I.

TITANIA:

Be kind and courteous to this gentleman.

PEASEBLOSSOM:

Hail, mortal!

COBWEB:

Hail!

MOTH:

Hail!

MUSTARDSEED:

Hail!

BOTTOM:

What is your name?

COBWEB:

Cobweb.

BOTTOM:

And your name, honest gentleman?

PEASEBLOSSOM:

Peaseblossom.

BOTTOM:

Your name, I beg you sir?

MUSTARDSEED:

Mustardseed.

TITANIA:

Come and wait on him; take him to my bower. *[they exit]*

Act Three • Scene 2 scene description

Oberon is wondering whether the love-juice has worked on Titania. Puck comes to tell him that Titania has awakened and that she has fallen in love with the actor playing Pyramus.

Oberon is delighted with the news. He then asks whether Puck has located the Athenian man. Puck says he has and just at that moment Demetrius

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*[enter Oberon]*

OBERON:

I wonder if Titania has awakened. *[enter Puck]* Here comes my messenger. What's up, mad spirit?

## Act Three · Scene 2 scene description

*Cont.*

and Hermia enter. Oberon points out that Demetrius is the Athenian man he meant and Puck realizes that he anointed the wrong eyes.

Hermia (who obviously ran into Demetrius during her search for Lysander) is accusing Demetrius of killing Lysander because she can think of no other reason for Lysander to have left her alone in the woods.

Demetrius, of course denies this. Hermia leaves him to go on looking for Lysander. Demetrius realizes that there is no point in following her while she is so angry and decides to rest.

Oberon tells Puck to go and find Helena and to bring her back. He then squeezes the love-juice in Demetrius' eyes so that he will awaken when Helena arrives and fall in love with her.

Puck comes back and says that Helena and Lysander are about to enter and he and Oberon stand aside to watch.

Lysander is still pursuing Helena and she is still convinced that he is making fun of her. At that moment Demetrius awakens and he falls in love with Helena. Helena is now absolutely convinced that Demetrius and Lysander are in cahoots to torment her.

Then, on comes Hermia (who has been searching for Lysander all this time) and she races over to him and demands to know why he deserted her. Lysander tells her that he left because he hates her.

Hermia can't believe her ears and Helena, hearing all this now believes that Hermia is in on the joke with Lysander and Demetrius and that they are all trying to make fun of her. She is furious with Hermia and Hermia is furious with her because Hermia thinks that Helena has stolen her boyfriend.

At this point, the two guys start arguing about who loves Helena the most.

Helena says that she is going back to Athens but when she doesn't move, Hermia asks why she's not going and Helena says her heart won't let her leave. Hermia is afraid Helena means that she is in love with Lysander but Helena says no, it's Demetrius she loves.

The two guys now start arguing about who has the greater right to protect Helena against possible threats from Hermia and they go off to find a place to fight it out.

Left alone with Hermia and her spitfire temper, Helena decides to run away to avoid a fight.

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PUCK:

My mistress is in love with a monster.  
Near to her bed, while she was still  
asleep, a bunch of crude workmen had  
come together to rehearse a play. Upon  
the dumbest of them, the one who played  
Pyramus, I attached an asses head. And  
at that moment it came to pass, Titania  
wakened and fell in love with an ass.

OBERON:

This has turned out better than I could  
have imagined. But did you pour the  
potion in the Athenian's eyes as I asked  
you to?

PUCK:

I did it while he was asleep. [*enter  
Demetrius and Hermia*]

OBERON:

This is that very Athenian.

PUCK:

This is the woman, but not the man.  
[*they stand aside*]

DEMETRIUS:

Oh, why do you scold me when I love  
you so?

HERMIA:

You have given me reason if you've  
killed Lysander. Would he have left  
me there asleep? It can only be that  
you have murdered him.

DEMETRIUS:

You stab me through the heart with  
your cruelty.

HERMIA:

You drive me past the limits of a  
young girl's patience. Have you  
killed him?

DEMETRIUS:

I am not guilty of shedding Lysander's  
blood, nor is he dead for all I know.

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Cont.

Hermia, completely baffled by all that has happened, wanders off.

Oberon, who has been watching all this with Puck, now accuses him of negligence for placing the love-juice in the wrong man's eyes and Puck defends himself by pointing out that all Oberon had told him was to find the man wearing the Athenian garments and Lysander had on garments of Athens!

Oberon then devises a plan to remedy all the troubles. He needs to diffuse the fight and get Demetrius and Lysander to go to sleep so that he can counteract the love-juice in Lysander's eyes. In order to accomplish this, he tells Puck to pretend to be Demetrius and lead Lysander on a chase till he is worn out and then to pretend to be Lysander and lead Demetrius astray.

When they are both worn out and fall asleep, he tells Puck to apply the antidote herb into Lysander's eyes which will remove the effects of the love-juice and then Lysander will be back in love with Hermia. Oberon then leaves, telling Puck that he is going to ask Titania for the orphan boy and then release her from the spell.

Puck then proceeds to confuse and wear out Demetrius and Lysander as Oberon instructed him. And after Helena and Hermia both show up and fall asleep, Puck applies the antidote to Lysander's eyes.

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HERMIA:

I beg you then, tell me that he is well.

DEMETRIUS:

And if I could, what do I get for my pains?

HERMIA:

The privilege of never seeing me again.  
*[she exits]*

DEMETRIUS:

It doesn't pay to follow when she's looking for a fight. So I'll just stay here for the rest of the night. *[he yawns and sleeps]*

OBERON:

What have you done? You've mistaken and put the love juice in some true-lover's eyes. Go through the woods and find Helena of Athens. Bring her here; I'll put the love juice in his eyes before she appears.

PUCK:

I go, I go, look how I go. *[he exits]*

OBERON: *[putting the juice in Demetrius' eyes]*

When his love he does see,  
Let her shine as gloriously  
As does Venus up in the sky.  
When you wake, if she be by,  
Beg her for a good reply.

PUCK: *[reentering]*

Captain of our fairy band, Helena is here at hand, and the youth mistook by me. Lord, what fools these mortals be!

OBERON:

Stand aside. The noise they make will cause Demetrius to wake.  
*[they stand aside and Lysander and Helena enter]*



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LYSANDER:

Why do you think I'd woo just to make fun of you?

HELENA:

These vows belong to Hermia.

LYSANDER:

When I swore my love to her, I was so callow.

HELENA:

And now, in dumping her, you prove you're shallow.

DEMETRIUS: *[waking up]*

Oh Helen, goddess, nymph, my dove! What shall I do to prove my love?

HELENA:

Oh spite! Oh hell! You are all making fun of me; I can tell. If you were men, as you appear to be, you wouldn't be so cruel to me.

LYSANDER:

You are mean Demetrius; don't be so; for you love Hermia: you know I know.

HELENA:

You are all just wasting your breath.

DEMETRIUS:

Lysander, you keep Hermia; if I ever loved her, all that love is gone. Look, here she comes; there is your love.

HERMIA: *[entering]*

Why did you, so cruelly, leave me?

LYSANDER:

Why should I stay, when love is forcing me to go.

HERMIA:  
What love could force Lysander away  
from me?

LYSANDER:  
Lysander's love—that would not let  
him stay. Fair Helena; who more  
brightly paints the sky at night  
than all the stars with all their  
light. Why do you seek me? You must  
know, that hate I feel for you made  
me go.

HERMIA:  
You can't mean that; it can't be.

HELENA:  
Oh, she is part of this confederacy!  
Now I see, they have all joined  
forces to make fun of me. Cruel  
Hermia!—are you with them and  
against me? Is all the time that  
we have spent, our vows, our  
schemes,—have you forgot?—our  
schooldays' friendship, childhood  
innocence? Will you tear our friend-  
ship apart to join with men and break  
my heart? This isn't friendly; it  
isn't maidenly.

HERMIA:  
I am amazed at what you say. I'm not  
making fun of you; you're making fun  
of me!

HELENA:  
Did you not get Lysander to follow  
me and sing my praises? And made  
your other love, Demetrius, call  
me goddess? Why would he say that to  
someone he hates?

HERMIA:  
I don't understand what you mean!

HELENA:

If you had any manners, you wouldn't treat me like this. So, farewell.

LYSANDER:

Stay, gentle Helena, my love, my life, my soul, fair Helena!

HELENA:

Oh, great!

HERMIA: *[to Lysander]*

My dear, don't make fun of her.

LYSANDER:

Helen, I love you; on my life it's true.

DEMETRIUS:

I say I love you more than he can do.

LYSANDER: *[to Demetrius]*

If you say so, come on and prove it.

DEMETRIUS: *[to Lysander]*

Come on!

LYSANDER: *[to Hermia]*

Get off, vile thing! Let me go; or I will throw you off.

HERMIA:

Why are you so mean to me? What's caused this change my love?

LYSANDER:

Your love? Get lost, you worm! You witch, go away!

HERMIA:

Are you kidding?

HELENA:

He is, and so are you.

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LYSANDER:  
Demetrius, I'll be right there.

DEMETRIUS: *[sarcastically]*  
Sure you will.

LYSANDER:  
What? Do you want me to hurt her? I  
may hate her, but I will not harm her.

HERMIA:  
Hate me! Oh my! Then you meant to leave  
me in the woods alone?

LYSANDER:  
Yes, and never wished to see you  
again. For real, I hate you, and I  
love Helena.

HERMIA:  
Oh my! You cheater! you thief of love!  
You snuck right in and stole my true  
love's heart!

HELENA:  
Yeah, yeah! you phony, you little  
puppet!

HERMIA:  
Puppet? Now I see, she has compared  
our heights, and with her person,  
her tall person, her height, for  
god's sake, she has won him. And  
have you grown so high in his esteem  
because I am so dwarfish and so low?  
How low am I? I'm not so low that  
my nails can't reach into your eyes.

HELENA:  
I beg you, gentleman, don't let her  
hurt me. Maybe you think because she  
is somewhat lower than me, that I can  
fight her.

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HERMIA:

Lower! You hear that,—again!

HELENA:

Dear Hermia, don't be so nasty. I always loved you, Hermia, always kept your secrets—except that, because I love Demetrius, I told him of your plan to escape into the woods. I'm going back to Athens and I won't follow you anymore.

HERMIA:

Then go. Who's stopping you?

HELENA:

My foolish heart that wants to stay here.

HERMIA:

Who with, Lysander?

HELENA:

With Demetrius.

LYSANDER: *[trying to protect Helena]*

Don't worry. She won't harm you Helena.

HELENA:

Oh when she's angry, she is mean and nasty. She was a vixen when she went to school, and although she's little, she is fierce.

HERMIA:

Little again? Why do you let her pick on me like this? Let me at her.

LYSANDER:

Get lost you dwarf; you minimus.

DEMETRIUS:

Don't say one word about Helena or try to take up for her. If you even think of loving her, you'll pay bigtime.

LYSANDER:

She's not holding me now; come on, follow me now, if you dare.

DEMETRIUS:

Follow? Heck, I'm with you, side by side. *[they exit]*

HERMIA:

You mistress, all this mess is due to you. Don't back away.

HELENA:

I don't trust you. Your hands are too quick to pick a fight. But I have longer legs to take flight. *[she exits]*

HERMIA:

I am dumbfounded by this sight. *[she exits]*

OBERON: *[to Puck]*

This is all your fault.

PUCK:

I made a mistake. Didn't you say I would know the man by his Athenian clothes?

OBERON:

These fellows are looking for a place to fight, go, Robin, blot out the moonlight; and lead these rivals all astray and keep them out of each other's way. Sometimes imitate Lysander's voice; then rant like Demetrius. Until, worn out with sleep, they drop off their feet. Then squeeze the juice of this herb into Lysander's eyes, it has the power to counteract the other charm. When they awake, all that has happened will seem a dream. I'm going to the Fairy Queen's to ask for the boy; and then I will release her from the charm and all will be at peace. *[he exits]*

PUCK:

Up and down, up and down, I will lead  
them up and down. Here comes one.

*[Lysander enters]*

LYSANDER:

Where are you, Demetrius? Say something.

PUCK: *[imitating Demetrius]*

I'm here, villain. Where are you?

LYSANDER:

I'm coming.

PUCK: *[in Demetrius voice]*

Follow me then. *[exits]*

DEMETRIUS: *[enters]*

Lysander, you coward, did you run away?  
Where are you hiding?

PUCK: *[imitating Lysander's voice]*

You coward! Come on! I'll whip you.

DEMETRIUS:

Yeah, where are you?

PUCK: *[imitating Lysander]*

Follow my voice. *[he runs off with  
Demetrius following]*

LYSANDER: *[enters]*

He runs before me and dares me.  
But when I get there, he is gone.  
*[he yawns]* I'll rest here, *[he lies  
down]* and wait for the daylight to  
revenge this spite. *[he sleeps]*

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PUCK: *[enter imitating Lysander's voice]*  
Ho, ho, ho! Coward, where are you?

DEMETRIUS:  
You run before me, all over the place; and don't dare stand still, and look me in the face. Where are you now?

PUCK:  
Come on; I'm here.

DEMETRIUS:  
No, you're just making fun of me. *[he yawns]* Go away. *[sleeps]*

HELENA: *[enters]*  
Oh, what a night. A long and tedious night. *[she yawns]* Sleep, take me away. *[she sleeps]*

PUCK:  
Only three? Come on, one more; two of both kinds adds up to four.

HERMIA: *[entering]*  
I've never been so tired, never so depressed, I can't go another inch, *[she yawns]* so here, will I rest. *[she sleeps]*

PUCK: *[squeezing the herb into Lysander's eyes]*

On the ground  
Sleep sound:  
I'll apply  
To your eye,  
Gentle lover, remedy.  
When thou wak'st,  
Thou tak'st  
True delight  
In the sight  
Of thy former lady's eye:  
Jack shall have Jill;  
Naught shall go ill;  
The man shall have his mare again,  
and all shall be well. *[exit]*