

A  
**MIDSOMMER**

Nights Dreame.

by

**WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE**

Based on the Folio Text of 1623

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# Shakespeare: First Folio

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# A Midsommer Nights Dreame

N1

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## *Actus primus.*

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2     Enter *Theseus, Hippolita, with others.*

3         *Theseus.*

4     Now faire Hippolita, our nuptiall houre  
5     Drawes on apace: foure happy daies bring in  
6     Another Moon: but oh, me thinkes, how slow  
7     This old Moon wanes; She lingers my desires  
8     Like to a Step- dame, or a Dowager,  
9     Long withering out a yong mans reuennew.

10      *Hip.* Foure daies wil quickly steep the[m]selues in nights  
11     Foure nights wil quickly dreame away the time:  
12     And then the Moone, like to a siluer bow,  
13     Now bent in heauen, shal behold the night  
14     Of our solemnities.

15      *The. Go Philostrate,*  
16     Stirre vp the Athenian youth to merriments,  
17     Awake the pert and nimble spirit of mirth,  
18     Turne melancholy forth to Funerals:  
19     The pale companion is not for our pompe,  
20     Hippolita, I woo'd thee with my sword,  
21     And wonne thy loue, doing thee iniuries:  
22     But I will wed thee in another key,  
23     With pompe, with triumph, and with reuellings.

24     Enter *Egeus and his daughter Hermia, Lysander, and Demetrius.*

25      *Ege.* Happy be *Theseus*, our renowned Duke.

26      *The.* Thanks good *Egeus*: what's the news with thee?

27      *Ege.* Full of vexation, come I, with complaint  
28     Against my childe, my daughter Hermia.

29     Stand forth *Demetrius.*

30     My Noble Lord,  
31     This man hath my consent to marrie her.

32     Stand forth *Lysander.*

33     And my gracious Duke,  
34     This man hath bewitch'd the bosome of my childe:  
35     Thou, thou *Lysander*, thou hast giuen her rimes,  
36     And interchang'd loue- tokens with my childe:  
37     Thou hast by Moone- light at her window sung,  
38     With faining voice, verses of faining loue,

40 And stolne the impression of her fantasie,  
 41 With bracelets of thy haire, rings, gawdes, conceits,  
 42 Knackes, trifles, Nose- gaies, sweet meats (messengers  
 43 Of strong preuailment in vnhardned youth)  
 44 With cunning hast thou filch'd my daughters heart,  
 45 Turn'd her obedience (which is due to me)  
 46 To stubborne harshnesse. And my gracious Duke,  
 47 Be it so she will not heere before your Grace,  
 48 Consent to marrie with *Demetrius*,  
 49 I beg the ancient priuiledge of Athens;  
 50 As she is mine, I may dispose of her;  
 51 Which shall be either to this Gentleman,  
 52 Or to her death, according to our Law,  
 53 Immediately prouided in that case.

54 *The.* What say you Hermia? be aduis'd faire Maide,  
 55 To you your Father should be as a God;  
 56 One that compos'd your beauties; yea and one  
 57 To whom you are but as a forme in waxe  
 58 By him imprinted: and within his power,  
 59 To leauue the figure, or disfigure it:  
 60 *Demetrius* is a worthy Gentleman.

61 *Her.* So is *Lysander*.

62 *The.* In himselfe he is.

63 But in this kinde, wanting your fathers voyce,  
 64 The other must be held the worthier.

65 *Her.* I would my father look'd but with my eyes.

66 *The.* Rather your eies must with his iudgment looke.

67 *Her.* I do entreat your Grace to pardon me.

68 I know not by what power I am made bold,  
 69 Nor how it may concerne my modestie  
 70 In such a presence heere to pleade my thoughts:  
 71 But I beseech your Grace, that I may know  
 72 The worst that may befall me in this case,  
 73 If I refuse to wed *Demetrius*.

74 *The.* Either to dye the death, or to abiure

75 For euer the society of men.

76 Therefore faire Hermia question your desires,  
 77 Know of your youth, examine well your blood,  
 78 Whether (if you yeeld not to your fathers choice)  
 79 You can endure the liuerie of a Nunne,  
 80 For aye to be in shady Cloister mew'd,  
 81 To liue a barren sister all your life,  
 82 Chanting faint hymnes to the cold fruitlesse Moone,  
 83 Thrice blessed they that master so their blood,  
 84 To vndergo such maiden pilgrimage,  
 85 But earthlier happie is the Rose distil'd,

86 Then that which withering on the virgin thorne,  
 87 Growes, liues, and dies, in single blessednesse. [N1v  
 88     *Her.* So will I grow, so liue, so die my Lord,  
 89 Ere I will yeeld my virgin Patent vp  
 90 Vnto his Lordship, whose vnwished yoake,  
 91 My soule consents not to giue soueraignty.  
 92     *The.* Take time to pause, and by the next new Moon  
 93 The sealing day betwixt my loue and me,  
 94 For euerlasting bond of fellowship:  
 95 Vpon that day either prepare to dye,  
 96 For disobedience to your fathers will,  
 97 Or else to wed *Demetrius* as hee would,  
 98 Or on *Dianaes* Altar to protest  
 99 For aie, austerity, and single life.  
 100     *Dem.* Relent sweet *Hermia*, and *Lysander*, yeelde  
 101 Thy crazed title to my certaine right.  
 102     *Lys.* You haue her fathers loue, *Demetrius*:  
 103 Let me haue *Hermiae*: do you marry him.  
 104     *Egeus.* Scornfull *Lysander*, true, he hath my Loue;  
 105 And what is mine, my loue shall render him.  
 106 And she is mine, and all my right of her,  
 107 I do estate vnto *Demetrius*.  
 108     *Lys.* I am my Lord, as well deriu'd as he,  
 109 As well possest: my loue is more then his:  
 110 My fortunes euery way as fairely ranck'd  
 111 (If not with vantage) as *Demetrius*:  
 112 And (which is more then all these boasts can be)  
 113 I am belou'd of beauteous *Hermia*.  
 114 Why should not I then prosecute my right?  
 115     *Demetrius*, Ile auouch it to his head,  
 116 Made loue to *Nedars* daughter, *Helena*,  
 117 And won her soule: and she (sweet Ladie) dotes,  
 118 Deuoutly dotes, dotes in Idolatry,  
 119 Vpon this spotted and inconstant man.  
 120     *The.* I must confesse, that I haue heard so much,  
 121 And with *Demetrius* thought to haue spoke thereof:  
 122 But being ouer- full of selfe- affaires,  
 123 My minde did lose it. But *Demetrius* come,  
 124 And come *Egeus*, you shall go with me,  
 125 I haue some priuate schooling for you both.  
 126 For you faire *Hermia*, looke you arme your selfe,  
 127 To fit your fancies to your Fathers will;  
 128 Or else the Law of Athens yeelds you vp  
 129 (Which by no meanes we may extenuate)  
 130 To death, or to a vow of single life.  
 131 Come my *Hippolita*, what cheare my loue?

132    *Demetrius and Egeus go along:*  
 133    I must employ you in some businesse  
 134    Against our nuptiall, and conferre with you  
 135    Of something, neerely that concernes your selues.  
 136       *Ege.* With dutie and desire we follow you. *Exeunt*  
 137    *Manet Lysander and Hermia.*  
 138       *Lys.* How now my loue? Why is your cheek so pale?  
 139    How chance the Roses there do fade so fast?  
 140       *Her.* Belike for want of raine, which I could well  
 141    Beteeme them, from the tempest of mine eyes.  
 142       *Lys.* For ought that euer I could reade,  
 143    Could euer heare by tale or historie,  
 144    The course of true loue neuer did run smooth,  
 145    But either it was different in blood.  
 146       *Her.* O crosse! too high to be enthral'd to loue.  
 147       *Lys.* Or else misgraffed, in respect of yeares.  
 148       *Her.* O spight! too old to be ingag'd to yong.  
 149       *Lys.* Or else it stood vpon the choise of merit.  
 150       *Her.* O hell! to choose loue by anothers eie.  
 151       *Lys.* Or if there were a sympathie in choise,  
 152    Warre, death, or sicknesse, did lay siege to it;  
 153    Making it momentarie, as a sound:  
 154    Swift as a shadow, short as any dreame,  
 155    Briefe as the lightning in the collied night,  
 156    That (in a spleene) vnfolde both heauen and earth;  
 157    And ere a man hath power to say, behold,  
 158    The iawes of darkness do deuoure it vp:  
 159    So quicke bright things come to confusion.  
 160       *Her.* If then true Louers haue beeene euer crost,  
 161    It stands as an edict in destinie:  
 162    Then let vs teach our triall patience,  
 163    Because it is a customarie crosse,  
 164    As due to loue, as thoughts, and dreames, and sighes,  
 165    Wishes and teares; poore Fancies followers.  
 166       *Lys.* A good perswasion; therefore heare me *Hermia*,  
 167    I haue a Widdow Aunt, a dowager,  
 168    Of great reuennew, and she hath no childe,  
 169    From Athens is her house remou'd seuen leagues,  
 170    And she respects me, as her onely sonne:  
 171    There gentle *Hermia*, may I marrie thee,  
 172    And to that place, the sharpe Athenian Law  
 173    Cannot pursue vs. If thou lou'st me, then  
 174    Steale forth thy Fathers house to morrow night:  
 175    And in the wood, a league without the towne,  
 176    (Where I did meeete thee once with *Helena*).  
 177    To do obseruance for a morne of May)

178 There will I stay for thee.  
 179     *Her.* My good *Lysander*,  
 180 I sweare to thee, by Cupids strongest bow,  
 181 By his best arrow with the golden head,  
 182 By the simplicitie of Venus Doues,  
 183 By that which knitteth soules, and prospers loue,  
 184 And by that fire which burn'd the Carthage Queene,  
 185 When the false Troyan vnder saile was seene,  
 186 By all the vowes that euer men haue broke,  
 187 (In number more then euer women spoke)  
 188 In that same place thou hast appointed me,  
 189 To morrow truly will I meeete with thee.  
 190     *Lys.* Keepe promise loue: looke here comes *Helena*.  
 191 *Enter Helena.*  
 192     *Her.* God speede faire *Helena*, whither away?  
 193     *Hel.* Cal you me faire? that faire againe vnsay,  
 194 *Demetrius* loues you faire: O happie faire!  
 195 Your eyes are loadstarres, and your tongues sweete ayre  
 196 More tuneable then Larke to shepheards eare,  
 197 When wheate is greene, when hauthorne buds appeare,  
 198 Sicknesse is catching: O were fauor so,  
 199 Your words I catch, faire *Hermia* ere I go,  
 200 My eare should catch your voice, my eye, your eye,  
 201 My tongue should catch your tongues sweete melodie,  
 202 Were the world mine, *Demetrius* being bated,  
 203 The rest Ile glie to be to you translated.  
 204 O teach me how you looke, and with what art  
 205 You sway the motion of *Demetrius* hart.  
 206     *Her.* I frowne vpon him, yet he loues me still.  
 207     *Hel.* O that your frownes would teach my smiles  
 208 such skil.  
 209     *Her.* I glie him curses, yet he giues me loue.  
 210     *Hel.* O that my prayers could such affection mooue.  
 211     *Her.* The more I hate, the more he followes me.  
 212     *Hel.* The more I loue, the more he hateth me.  
 213     *Her.* His folly *Helena* is none of mine.  
 214     *Hel.* None but your beauty, wold that fault wer mine  
 215     *Her.* Take comfort: he no more shall see my face,  
 216 *Lysander* and my selfe will flie this place.  
 217 Before the time I did *Lysander* see,  
 218 Seem'd Athens like a Paradise to mee. [N2  
 219 O then, what graces in my Loue do dwell,  
 220 That he hath turn'd a heauen into hell.  
 221     *Lys.* *Helen*, to you our mindes we will vnfold,  
 222 To morrow night, when *Phoebe* doth behold  
 223 Her siluer visage, in the watry glasse,

224 Decking with liquid pearle, the bladed grasse  
 225 (A time that Louers flights doth still conceale)  
 226 Through *Athens* gates, haue we deuis'd to steale.  
 227     *Her.* And in the wood, where often you and I,  
 228 Vpon faint Primrose beds, were wont to lye,  
 229 Emptyng our bosomes, of their counsell sweld:  
 230 There my *Lysander*, and my selfe shall meete,  
 231 And thence from *Athens* turne away our eyes  
 232 To seeke new friends and strange companions,  
 233 Farwell sweet play- fellow, pray thou for vs,  
 234 And good lucke grant thee thy *Demetrius*.  
 235 Keepe word *Lysander* we must starue our sight,  
 236 From louers foode, till morrow deepe midnight.  
 237 *Exit Hermia.*  
 238     *Lys.* I will my *Hermia*. *Helena* adieu,  
 239 As you on him, *Demetrius* dotes on you. *Exit Lysander.*  
 240     *Hele.* How happy some, ore othersome can be?  
 241 Through *Athens* I am thought as faire as she.  
 242 But what of that? *Demetrius* thinkes not so:  
 243 He will not know, what all, but he doth know,  
 244 And as hee erres, doting on *Hermias* eyes;  
 245 So I, admiring of his qualities:  
 246 Things base and vilde, holding no quantity,  
 247 Loue can transpose to forme and dignity,  
 248 Loue lookes not with the eyes, but with the minde,  
 249 And therefore is wing'd *Cupid* painted blinde.  
 250 Nor hath loues minde of any iudgement taste:  
 251 Wings and no eyes, figure, vnheedy haste.  
 252 And therefore is Loue said to be a childe,  
 253 Because in choise he is often beguil'd,  
 254 As waggish boyes in game themselues forswear:  
 255 So the boy Loue is perjur'd euery where.  
 256 For ere *Demetrius* lookt on *Hermias* eyne,  
 257 He hail'd downe oathes that he was onely mine.  
 258 And when this Haile some heat from *Hermia* felt,  
 259 So he dissolu'd, and showres of oathes did melt,  
 260 I will goe tell him of faire *Hermias* flight:  
 261 Then to the wood will he, to morrow night  
 262 Pursue her; and for his intelligence,  
 263 If I haue thankes, it is a deere expence:  
 264 But heerein meane I to enrich my paine,  
 265 To haue his sight thither, and backe againe. *Exit.*  
 266 *Enter Quince the Carpenter, Snug the Joyner, Bottome the  
 267 Weauer, Flute the bellowes- mender, Snout the Tinker, and  
 268 Starueling the Taylor.*  
 269     *Quin.* Is all our company heere?

270     *Bot.* You were best to call them generally, man by  
 271     man according to the scrip.  
 272     *Qui.* Here is the scrowle of euery mans name, which  
 273     is thought fit through all *Athens*, to play in our Enter-lude  
 274     before the Duke and the Dutches, on his wedding  
 275     day at night.  
 276     *Bot.* First, good *Peter Quince*, say what the play treats  
 277     on: then read the names of the Actors: and so grow on  
 278     to a point.  
 279     *Quin.* Marry our play is the most lamentable come-dy,  
 280     and most cruell death of *Pyramus* and *Thisbie*.  
 281     *Bot.* A very good peece of worke I assure you, and a  
 282     merry. Now good *Peter Quince*, call forth your Actors  
 283     by the scrowle. Masters spread your selues.  
 284     *Quince.* Answere as I call you. *Nick Bottome* the  
 285     Weauer.  
 286     *Bottome.* Ready; name what part I am for, and  
 287     proceed.  
 288     *Quince.* You *Nicke Bottome* are set downe for *Py-ramus*.  
 289     *Bot.* What is *Pyramus*, a louer, or a tyrant?  
 290     *Quin.* A Louer that kills himselfe most gallantly for  
 291     loue.  
 292     *Bot.* That will aske some teares in the true perfor-ming  
 293     of it: if I do it, let the audience looke to their eies:  
 294     I will mooue stormes; I will condole in some measure.  
 295     To the rest yet, my chiefe humour is for a tyrant. I could  
 296     play *Ercles* rarely, or a part to teare a Cat in, to make all  
 297     split the raging Rocks; and shiuering shocks shall break  
 298     the locks of prison gates, and *Phibus* carre shall shine  
 299     from farre, and make and marre the foolish Fates. This  
 300     was lofty. Now name the rest of the Players. This  
 301     is *Ercles* vaine, a tyrants vaine: a louer is more condo-ling.  
 302     *Quin.* *Francis Flute* the Bellowes- mender.  
 303     *Flu.* Heere *Peter Quince*.  
 304     *Quin.* You must take *Thisbie* on you.  
 305     *Flut.* What is *Thisbie*, a wandring Knight?  
 306     *Quin.* It is the Lady that *Pyramus* must loue.  
 307     *Flut.* Nay faith, let not mee play a woman, I haue a  
 308     beard comming.  
 309     *Qui.* That's all one, you shall play it in a Maske, and  
 310     you may speake as small as you will.  
 311     *Bot.* And I may hide my face, let me play *Thisbie* too:  
 312     Ile speake in a monstrous little voyce; *Thisne*, *Thisne*, ah  
 313     *Pyramus* my louer deare, thy *Thisbie* deare, and Lady  
 314     deare.  
 315     *Quin.* No no, you must play *Pyramus*, and *Flute*, you

318     *Thisby.*  
 319     *Bot.* Well, proceed.  
 320     *Qu.* *Robin Starueling* the Taylor.  
 321     *Star.* Heere Peter Quince.  
 322     *Quince.* *Robin Starueling*, you must play *Thisbies*  
 323     mother?  
 324     *Tom Snowt*, the Tinker.  
 325     *Snowt.* Heere Peter Quince.  
 326     *Quin.* you, *Pyramus* father; my self, *Thisbies* father;  
 327     *Snugge* the Ioyner, you the Lyons part: and I hope there  
 328     is a play fitted.  
 329     *Snug.* Haue you the Lions part written? pray you if  
 330     be, giue it me, for I am slow of studie.  
 331     *Quin.* You may doe it *extemporie*, for it is nothing  
 332     but roaring.  
 333     *Bot.* Let mee play the Lyon too, I will roare that I  
 334     will doe any mans heart good to heare me. I will roare,  
 335     that I will make the Duke say, Let him roare againe, let  
 336     him roare againe.  
 337     *Quin.* If you should do it too terribly, you would  
 338     fright the Dutchesse and the Ladies, that they would  
 339     shrike, and that were enough to hang us all.  
 340     *All.* That would hang vs euery mothers sonne.  
 341     *Bottome.* I graunt you friends, if that you should  
 342     fright the Ladies out of their Wittes, they would  
 343     haue no more discretion but to hang vs: but I will ag-grauate  
 344     my voyce so, that I will roare you as gently as  
 345     any sucking Doue; I will roare and 'twere any Nightin-gale.  
 347     *Quin.* You can play no part but *Piramus*, for *Pira-mus* [N2v]  
 348     is a sweet- fac'd man, a proper man as one shall see in  
 349     a summers day; a most louely Gentleman- like man, ther-fore  
 350     you must needs play *Piramus*.  
 351     *Bot.* Well, I will vndertake it. What beard were I  
 352     best to play it in?  
 353     *Quin.* Why, what you will.  
 354     *Bot.* I will discharge it, in either your straw- colour  
 355     beard, your orange tawnie beard, your purple in graine  
 356     beard, or your French- crowne colour'd beard, your per-fect  
 357     yellow.  
 358     *Quin.* Some of your French Crownes haue no haire  
 359     at all, and then you will play bare- fac'd. But masters here  
 360     are your parts, and I am to intreat you, request you, and  
 361     desire you, to con them by too morrow night: and meet  
 362     me in the palace wood, a mile without the Towne, by  
 363     Moone- light, there we will rehearse: for if we meete in  
 364     the Citie, we shalbe dog'd with company, and our deui-ses

365 knowne. In the meane time, I wil draw a bil of pro-perties,  
 366 such as our play wants. I pray you faile me not.  
 367     *Bottom.* We will meete, and there we may rehearse  
 368 more obscenely and couragiously. Take paines, be per-fect,  
 369 adieu.  
 370     *Quin.* At the Dukes oake we meete.  
 371     *Bot.* Enough, hold or cut bow- strings. *Exeunt*

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*Actus Secundus.*

373     *Enter a Fairie at one dore, and Robin good-fellow  
 374 at another.*  
 375     *Rob.* How now spirit, whether wander you?  
 376     *Fai.* Ouer hil, ouer dale, through bush, through briar,  
 377 Ouer parke, ouer pale, through flood, through fire,  
 378 I do wander euerie where, swifter then y Moons sphere;  
 379 And I serue the Fairy Queene, to dew her orbs vpon the |(green.  
 380 The Cowslips tall, her pensioners bee,  
 381 In their gold coats, spots you see,  
 382 Those be Rubies, Fairie fauors,  
 383 In those freckles, liue their sauors,  
 384 I must go seeke some dew drops heere,  
 385 And hang a pearle in euery cowslips eare.  
 386 Farewell thou Lob of spirits, Ile be gon,  
 387 Our Queene and all her Elues come heere anon.  
 388     *Rob.* The King doth keepe his Reuels here to night,  
 389 Take heed the Queene come not within his sight,  
 390 For *Oberon* is passing fell and wrath,  
 391 Because that she, as her attendant, hath  
 392 A louely boy stolne from an Indian King,  
 393 She neuer had so sweet a changeling,  
 394 And iealous *Oberon* would haue the childe  
 395 Knight of his traine, to trace the Forrests wilde.  
 396 But she (perforce) with- holds the loued boy,  
 397 Crownes him with flowers, and makes him all her ioy.  
 398 And now they neuer meeet in groue, or greene,  
 399 By fountaine cleere, or spangled star- light sheene,  
 400 But they do square, that all their Elues for feare  
 401 Creepe into Acorne cups and hide them there.  
 402     *Fai.* Either I mistake your shape and making quite,  
 403 Or else you are that shrew'd and knauish spirit  
 404 Cal'd Robin Good- fellow. Are you not hee,  
 405 That frights the maidens of the Villagree,  
 406 Skim milke, and sometimes labour in the querne,

407 And bootlesse make the breathlesse huswife cherne,  
 408 And sometime make the drinke to beare no barme,  
 409 Misleade night- wanderers, laughing at their harme,  
 410 Those that Hobgoblin call you, and sweet Pucke,  
 411 You do their worke, and they shall haue good lucke.  
 412 Are not you he?

413     *Rob.* Thou speake'st aright;  
 414 I am that merrie wanderer of the night:  
 415 I iest to *Oberon*, and make him smile,  
 416 When I a fat and bean- fed horse beguile,  
 417 Neighing in likenesse of a silly foale,  
 418 And sometime lurke I in a Gossips bole,  
 419 In very likenesse of a roasted crab:  
 420 And when she drinkes, against her lips I bob,  
 421 And on her withered dewlop poure the Ale.  
 422 The wisest Aunt telling the saddest tale,  
 423 Sometime for three- foot stoole, mistaketh me,  
 424 Then slip I from her bum, downe topples she,  
 425 And tailour cries, and fals into a coffe.  
 426 And then the whole quire hold their hips, and loffe,  
 427 And waxen in their mirth, and neeze, and sweare,  
 428 A merrier houre was neuer wasted there.  
 429 But roome Fairy, heere comes *Oberon*.

430     *Fair.* And heere my Mistris:  
 431 Would that he were gone.  
 432 *Enter the King of Fairies at one doore with his traine,*  
 433 *and the Queene at another with hers.*

434     *Ob.* Ill met by Moone- light.  
 435 Proud *Tytania*.  
 436     *Qu.* What, iealous *Oberon*? Fairy skip hence.  
 437 I haue forsworne his bed and companie.  
 438     *Ob.* Tarrie rash Wanton; am not I thy Lord?  
 439     *Qu.* Then I must be thy Lady: but I know  
 440 When thou wast stolne away from Fairy Land,  
 441 And in the shape of *Corin*, sate all day,  
 442 Playing on pipes of Corne, and versing loue  
 443 To amorous *Phillida*. Why art thou heere  
 444 Come from the farthest steepe of *India*?  
 445 But that forsooth the bouncing *Amazon*  
 446 Your buskin'd Mistresse, and your Warrior loue,  
 447 To *Theseus* must be Wedded; and you come,  
 448 To giue their bed ioy and prosperitie.  
 449     *Ob.* How canst thou thus for shame *Tytania*.  
 450 Glance at my credite, with *Hippolita*?  
 451 Knowing I know thy loue to *Theseus*?  
 452 Didst thou not leade him through the glimmering night

453 From *Peregenia*, whom he rauished?  
 454 And make him with faire Eagles breake his faith  
 455 With *Ariadne*, and *Antiope*?  
 456     *Que.* These are the forgeries of ialousie,  
 457 And neuer since the middle Summers spring  
 458 Met we on hil, in dale, forrest, or mead,  
 459 By paued fountaine, or by rushie brooke,  
 460 Or in the beached margent of the sea,  
 461 To dance our ringlets to the whistling Winde,  
 462 But with thy braules thou hast disturb'd our sport.  
 463 Therefore the Windes, piping to vs in vaine,  
 464 As in reuenge, haue suck'd vp from the sea  
 465 Contagious fogges: Which falling in the Land,  
 466 Hath euerie petty Riuier made so proud,  
 467 That they haue ouer- borne their Continents.  
 468 The Oxe hath therefore stretch'd his yoake in vaine,  
 469 The Ploughman lost his sweat, and the greene Corne  
 470 Hath rotted, ere his youth attain'd a beard:  
 471 The fold stands empty in the drowned field,  
 472 And Crowes are fatted with the murrion flocke, [N3]  
 473 The nine mens Morris is fild vp with mud,  
 474 And the queint Mazes in the wanton greene,  
 475 For lacke of tread are vndistinguisable.  
 476 The humane mortals want their winter heere,  
 477 No night is now with hymne or caroll blest;  
 478 Therefore the Moone (the gouernesse of floods)  
 479 Pale in her anger, washes all the aire;  
 480 That Rheumaticke diseases doe abound.  
 481 And through this distemperature, we see  
 482 The seasons alter; hoared headed Frosts  
 483 Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson Rose,  
 484 And on old *Hyems* chinne and Icie crowne,  
 485 An odorous Chaplet of sweet Sommer buds  
 486 Is as in mockery set. The Spring, the Sommer,  
 487 The childing Autumne, angry Winter change  
 488 Their wonted Liueries, and the mazed world,  
 489 By their increase, now knowes not which is which;  
 490 And this same progeny of euills,  
 491 Comes from our debate, from our dissention,  
 492 We are their parents and originall.  
 493     *Ober.* Do you amend it then, it lies in you,  
 494 Why should *Titania* crosse her *Oberon*?  
 495 I do but beg a little changeling boy,  
 496 To be my Henchman.  
 497     *Qu.* Set your heart at rest,  
 498 The Fairy land buyes not the childe of me,

499 His mother was a Votresse of my Order,  
 500 And in the spiced *Indian* aire, by night  
 501 Full often hath she gossipt by my side,  
 502 And sat with me on *Neptunes* yellow sands,  
 503 Marking th' embarked traders on the flood,  
 504 When we haue laught to see the sailes conceiue,  
 505 And grow big bellied with the wanton winde:  
 506 Which she with pretty and with swimming gate,  
 507 Following (her wombe then rich with my yong squire)  
 508 Would imitate, and saile vpon the Land,  
 509 To fetch me trifles, and returne againe,  
 510 As from a voyage, rich with merchandize.  
 511 But she being mortall, of that boy did die,  
 512 And for her sake I doe reare vp her boy,  
 513 And for her sake I will not part with him.

514     *Ob.* How long within this wood intend you stay?

515     *Qu.* Perchance till after *Theseus* wedding day.

516 If you will patiently dance in our Round,  
 517 And see our Moone- light revels, goe with vs;  
 518 If not, shun me and I will spare your haunts.

519     *Ob.* Giue me that boy, and I will goe with thee.

520     *Qu.* Not for thy Fairy Kingdome. Fairies away:

521 We shall chide downe right, if I longer stay. *Exeunt.*

522     *Ob.* Wel, go thy way: thou shalt not from this groue,  
 523 Till I torment thee for this iniury.

524 My gentle *Pucke* come hither; thou remembrest  
 525 Since once I sat vpon a promontory,  
 526 And heard a Meare- maide on a Dolphins backe,  
 527 Vttering such dulcet and harmonious breath,  
 528 That the rude sea grew ciuill at her song,  
 529 And certaine starres shot madly from their Spheares,  
 530 To heare the Sea- maids musicke.

531     *Puc.* I remember.

532     *Ob.* That very time I say (but thou couldst not)

533 Flying betweene the cold Moone and the earth,

534 *Cupid* all arm'd; a certaine aime he tooke  
 535 At a faire Vestall, throned by the West,  
 536 And loos'd his loue- shaft smartly from his bow,  
 537 As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts,  
 538 But I might see young *Cupids* fiery shaft  
 539 Quencht in the chaste beames of the watry Moone;  
 540 And the imperiall Votresse passed on,  
 541 In maiden meditation, fancy free.  
 542 Yet markt I where the bolt of *Cupid* fell.  
 543 It fell vpon a little westerne flower;  
 544 Before, milke- white: now purple with loues wound,

545 And maidens call it, Loue in idlenesse.  
 546 Fetch me that flower; the hearb I shew'd thee once,  
 547 The iuyce of it, on sleeping eye- lids laid,  
 548 Will make or man or woman madly dote  
 549 Vpon the next liue creature that it sees.  
 550 Fetch me this hearbe, and be thou heere againe,  
 551 Ere the *Leuiathan* can swim a league.  
 552     *Pucke.* Ile put a girdle about the earth, in forty mi-nutes.  
 554     *Ober.* Hauing once this iuyce,  
 555 Ile watch *Titania*, when she is asleepe,  
 556 And drop the liquor of it in her eyes:  
 557 The next thing when she waking lookes vpon,  
 558 (Be it on Lyon, Beare, or Wolfe, or Bull,  
 559 On medling Monkey, or on busie Ape)  
 560 Shee shall pursue it, with the soule of loue.  
 561 And ere I take this charme off from her sight,  
 562 (As I can take it with another hearbe)  
 563 Ile make her render vp her Page to me.  
 564 But who comes heere? I am inuisible,  
 565 And I will ouer- heare their conference.  
 566     *Enter Demetrius, Helena following him.*  
 567     *Deme.* I loue thee not, therefore pursue me not,  
 568 Where is *Lysander*, and faire *Hermia*?  
 569 The one Ile stay, the other stayeth me.  
 570 Thou toldst me they were stolne into this wood;  
 571 And heere am I, and wood within this wood,  
 572 Because I cannot meet my *Hermia*.  
 573 Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.  
 574     *Hel.* You draw me, you hard- hearted Adamant,  
 575 But yet you draw not Iron, for my heart  
 576 Is true as steele. Leave you your power to draw,  
 577 And I shall haue no power to follow you.  
 578     *Deme.* Do I entice you? do I speake you faire?  
 579 Or rather doe I not in plainest truth,  
 580 Tell you I doe not, nor I cannot loue you?  
 581     *Hel.* And euen for that doe I loue thee the more;  
 582 I am your spaniell, and *Demetrius*,  
 583 The more you beat me, I will fawne on you.  
 584 Vse me but as your spaniell; spurne me, strike me,  
 585 Neglect me, lose me; onely giue me leaue  
 586 (Vnworthy as I am) to follow you.  
 587 What worser place can I beg in your loue,  
 588 (And yet a place of high respect with me)  
 589 Then to be vsed as you doe your dogge.  
 590     *Dem.* Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit,  
 591 For I am sicke when I do looke on thee.

592     *Hel.* And I am sicke when I looke not on you.  
 593     *Dem.* You doe impeach your modesty too much,  
 594     To leaue the City, and commit your selfe  
 595     Into the hands of one that loues you not,  
 596     To trust the opportunity of night.  
 597     And the ill counsell of a desert place,  
 598     With the rich worth of your virginity.  
 599     *Hel.* Your vertue is my priuiledge: for that  
 600     It is not night when I doe see your face.  
 601     Therefore I thinke I am not in the night,  
 602     Nor doth this wood lacke worlds of company, [N3v  
 603     For you in my respect are all the world.  
 604     Then how can it be said I am alone,  
 605     When all the world is heere to looke on me?  
 606     *Dem.* Ile run from thee, and hide me in the brakes,  
 607     And leaue thee to the mercy of wilde beasts.  
 608     *Hel.* The wildest hath not such a heart as you;  
 609     Runne when you will, the story shall be chang'd:  
 610     *Apollo* flies and *Daphne* holds the chase;  
 611     The Doue pursues the Griffin, the milde Hinde  
 612     Makes speed to catch the Tyger. Bootlesse speede,  
 613     When cowardise pursues, and valour flies.  
 614     *Demet.* I will not stay thy questions, let me go;  
 615     Or if thou follow me, doe not beleeue,  
 616     But I shall doe thee mischiefe in the wood.  
 617     *Hel.* I, in the Temple, in the Towne, and Field  
 618     You doe me mischiefe. Fye *Demetrius*,  
 619     Your wrongs doe set a scandall on my sexe:  
 620     We cannot fight for loue, as men may doe;  
 621     We should be woo'd, and were not made to wooe.  
 622     I follow thee, and make a heauen of hell,  
 623     To die vpon the hand I loue so well. *Exit.*  
 624     *Ob.* Fare thee well Nymph, ere he do leaue this groue,  
 625     Thou shalt flie him, and he shall seeke thy loue.  
 626     Hast thou the flower there? Welcome wanderer.  
 627     *Enter Pucke.*  
 628     *Puck.* I there it is.  
 629     *Ob.* I pray thee giue it me.  
 630     I know a banke where the wilde time blowes,  
 631     Where Oxslips and the nodding Violet growes,  
 632     Quite ouer- cannoped with luscious woodbine,  
 633     With sweet muske roses, and with Eglantine;  
 634     There sleepes *Tytania*, sometime of the night,  
 635     Lul'd in these flowers, with dances and delight:  
 636     And there the snake throwes her enammeled skinne,  
 637     Weed wide enough to rap a Fairy in.

638 And with the iuyce of this Ile streake her eyes,  
 639 And make her full of hatefull fantasies.  
 640 Take thou some of it, and seek through this groue;  
 641 A sweet Athenian Lady is in loue  
 642 With a disdainefull youth: annoint his eyes,  
 643 But doe it when the next thing he espies,  
 644 May be the Lady. Thou shalt know the man,  
 645 By the Athenian garments he hath on.  
 646 Effect it with some care, that he may proue  
 647 More fond on her, then she vpon her loue;  
 648 And looke thou meet me ere the first Cocke crow.

649     *Pu. Feare not my Lord, your seruant shall do so. Exit.*

650 *Enter Queene of Fairies, with her traine.*

651     *Queen.* Come, now a Roundell, and a Fairy song;  
 652 Then for the third part of a minute hence,  
 653 Some to kill Cankers in the muske rose buds,  
 654 Some warre with Reremise, for their leathern wings.  
 655 To make my small Elues coates, and some keepe backe  
 656 The clamorous Owle that nightly hoots and wonders  
 657 At our queint spirits: Sing me now asleepe,  
 658 Then to your offices, and let me rest.

659     *Fairies Sing.*

660 *You spotted Snakes with double tongue,*  
 661 *Thorny Hedgehogges be not seene,*  
 662 *Newts and blinde wormes do no wrong,*  
 663 *Come not neere our Fairy Queene.*

664 *Philomele with melodie,*

665 *Sing in your sweet Lullaby.*

666 *Lulla, lulla, lullaby, lulla, lulla, lullaby,*  
 667 *Neuer harme, nor spell, nor charme,*  
 668 *Come our louely Lady nyne,*  
 669 *So good night with Lullaby.*

670     *2.Fairy. Weauing Spiders come not heere,*

671 *Hence you long leg'd Spinners, hence:*

672 *Beetles blacke approach not neere;*

673 *Worme nor Snayle doe no offence.*

674 *Philomele with melody, &c.*

675     *1.Fairy. Hence away, now all is well;*

676 *One aloofe, stand Centinell. Shee sleepes.*

677 *Enter Oberon.*

678     *Ober.* What thou seest when thou dost wake,  
 679 Do it for thy true Loue take:  
 680 Loue and languish for his sake.  
 681 Be it Ounce, or Catte, or Beare,  
 682 Pard, or Boare with bristled haire,  
 683 In thy eye that shall appeare,

684 When thou wak'st, it is thy deare,  
 685 Wake when some vile thing is neere.  
 686 *Enter Lisander and Hermia.*  
 687     *Lis.* Faire loue, you faint with wandring in y woods,  
 688 And to speake troth I haue forgot our way:  
 689 Wee'll rest vs *Hermia*, If you thinke it good,  
 690 And tarry for the comfort of the day.  
 691     *Her.* Be it so *Lysander*; finde you out a bed,  
 692 For I vpon this banke will rest my head.  
 693     *Lys.* One turfe shall serue as pillow for vs both,  
 694 One heart, one bed, two bosomes, and one troth.  
 695     *Her.* Nay good *Lysander*, for my sake my deere  
 696 Lie further off yet, doe not lie so neere.  
 697     *Lys.* O take the sence sweet, of my innocence,  
 698 Loue takes the meaning, in loues conference,  
 699 I meane that my heart vnto yours is knit,  
 700 So that but one heart can you make of it.  
 701 Two bosomes interchanged with an oath,  
 702 So then two bosomes, and a single troth.  
 703 Then by your side, no bed- roome me deny,  
 704 For lying so, *Hermia*, I doe not lye.  
 705     *Her.* *Lysander* riddles very prettily;  
 706 Now much beshrew my manners and my pride,  
 707 If *Hermia* meant to say, *Lysander* lied.  
 708 But gentle friend, for loue and courtesie  
 709 Lie further off, in humane modesty,  
 710 Such separation, as may well be said,  
 711 Becomes a vertuous batchelour, and a maide,  
 712 So farre be distant, and good night sweet friend;  
 713 Thy loue nere alter, till thy sweet life end.  
 714     *Lys.* Amen, amen, to that faire prayer, say I,  
 715 And then end life, when I end loyalty:  
 716 Heere is my bed, sleepe giue thee all his rest.  
 717     *Her.* With halfe that wish, the wishers eyes be prest.  
 718 *Enter Pucke. They sleepe.*  
 719     *Puck.* Through the Forest haue I gone,  
 720 But *Athenian* finde I none,  
 721 One whose eyes I might approue  
 722 This flowers force in stirring loue.  
 723 Nigh and silence: who is heere?  
 724 Weedes of *Athens* he doth weare:  
 725 This is he (my master said)  
 726 Despised the *Athenian* maide:  
 727 And heere the maiden sleeping sound, [N4  
 728 On the danke and durty ground.  
 729 Pretty soule, she durst not lye

- 730 Neere this lacke- loue, this kill- curtesie.  
 731 Churle, vpon thy eyes I throw  
 732 All the power this charme doth owe:  
 733 When thou wak'st, let loue forbid  
 734 Sleepe his seate on thy eye- lid.  
 735 So awake when I am gone:  
 736 For I must now to *Oberon*. *Exit*.  
 737 *Enter Demetrius and Helena running.*  
 738     *Hel.* Stay, though thou kill me, sweete *Demetrius*.  
 739     *De.* I charge thee hence, and do not haunt me thus.  
 740     *Hel.* O wilt thou darkling leau me? do not so.  
 741     *De.* Stay on thy perill, I alone will goe.  
 742 *Exit Demetrius.*  
 743     *Hel.* O I am out of breath, in this fond chace,  
 744 The more my prayer, the lesser is my grace,  
 745 Happy is *Hermia*, wheresoere she lies;  
 746 For she hath blessed and attractiue eyes.  
 747 How came her eyes so bright? Not with salt teares.  
 748 If so, my eyes are oftner washt then hers.  
 749 No, no, I am as vgly as a Beare;  
 750 For beasts that meeet me, runne away for feare,  
 751 Therefore no maruaile, though *Demetrius*  
 752 Doe as a monster, flie my presence thus.  
 753 What wicked and dissembling glasse of mine,  
 754 Made me compare with *Hermias* sphery eyne?  
 755 But who is here? *Lysander* on the ground;  
 756 Deade or asleepe? I see no bloud, no wound,  
 757 *Lysander*, if you liue, good sir awake.  
 758     *Lys.* And run through fire I will for thy sweet sake.  
 759 Transparent *Helena*, nature her shewes art,  
 760 That through thy bosome makes me see thy heart.  
 761 Where is *Demetrius*? oh how fit a word  
 762 Is that vile name, to perish on my sword!  
 763     *Hel.* Do not say so *Lysander*, say not so:  
 764 What though he loue your *Hermia*? Lord, what though?  
 765 Yet *Hermia* still loues you; then be content.  
 766     *Lys.* Content with *Hermia*? no, I do repent  
 767 The tedious minutes I with her haue spent.  
 768 Not *Hermia*, but *Helena* now I loue;  
 769 Who will not change a Rauen for a Doue?  
 770 The will of man is by his reason sway'd:  
 771 And reason saies you are the worthier Maide.  
 772 Things growing are not ripe vntill their season;  
 773 So I being yong, till now ripe not to reason,  
 774 And touching now the point of humane skill,  
 775 Reason becomes the Marshall to my will.

776 And leades me to your eyes, where I oreooke  
 777 Loues stories, written in Loues richest booke.  
 778     *Hel.* Wherefore was I to this keene mockery borne?  
 779 When at your hands did I deserue this scorne?  
 780 Ist not enough, ist not enough, yong man,  
 781 That I did neuer, no nor neuer can,  
 782 Deserue a sweete looke from *Demetrius* eye,  
 783 But you must flout my insufficiency?  
 784 Good troth you do me wrong (good- sooth you do)  
 785 In such disdainfull manner, me to woee.  
 786 But fare you well; perforce I must confesse,  
 787 I thought you Lord of more true gentlenesse.  
 788 Oh, that a Lady of one man refus'd,  
 789 Should of another therefore be abus'd. *Exit.*  
 790     *Lys.* She sees not *Hermia*: *Hermia* sleepe thou there,  
 791 And neuer maist thou come *Lysander* neere;  
 792 For as a surfeit of the sweetest things  
 793 The deepest loathing to the stomacke brings:  
 794 Or as the heresies that men do leauie,  
 795 Are hated most of those that did deceiue:  
 796 So thou, my surfeit, and my heresie,  
 797 Of all be hated; but the most of me;  
 798 And all my powers addresse your loue and might,  
 799 To honour *Helen*, and to be her Knight. *Exit.*  
 800     *Her.* Helpe me *Lysander*, helpe me; do thy best  
 801 To plucke this crawling serpent from my brest.  
 802 Aye me, for pitty; what a dreame was here?  
 803 *Lysander* looke, how I do quake with feare:  
 804 Me- thought a serpent eate my heart away,  
 805 And yet sat smiling at his cruell prey.  
 806 *Lysander*, What remoou'd? *Lysander*, Lord,  
 807 What, out of hearing, gone? No sound, no word?  
 808 Alacke where are you? speake and if you heare:  
 809 Speake of all loues; I sound almost with feare.  
 810 No, then I well perceiue you are not nye,  
 811 Either death or you Ile finde immedietly. *Exit.*

***Actus Tertius.***

813 Enter the Clownes.  
 814     *Bot.* Are we all met?  
 815     *Quin.* Pat, pat, and here's a maruailous conuenient  
 816 place for our rehearsall. This greene plot shall be our  
 817 stage, this haughtorne brake our tyring house, and we will

818 do it in action, as we will do it before the Duke.  
 819     *Bot. Peter Quince?*  
 820     *Peter.* What saist thou, bully *Bottome*?  
 821     *Bot.* There are things in this Comedy of *Piramus* and  
 822 *Thisby*, that will neuer please. First, *Piramus* must draw a  
 823 sword to kill himselfe; which the Ladies cannot abide.  
 824 How answeres you that?  
 825     *Snout.* Berlaken, a parlous feare.  
 826     *Star.* I beleue we must leaue the killing out, when  
 827 all is done.  
 828     *Bot.* Not a whit, I haue a deuice to make all well.  
 829 Write me a Prologue, and let the Prologue seeme to say,  
 830 we will do no harme with our swords, and that *Pyramus*  
 831 is not kill'd indeede: and for the more better assurance,  
 832 tell them, that I *Piramus* am not *Piramus*, but *Bottome* the  
 833 Weauer; this will put them out of feare.  
 834     *Quin.* Well, we will haue such a Prologue, and it shall  
 835 be written in eight and sixe.  
 836     *Bot.* No, make it two more, let it be written in eight  
 837 and eight.  
 838     *Snout.* Will not the Ladies be afear'd of the Lyon?  
 839     *Star.* I feare it, I promise you.  
 840     *Bot.* Masters, you ought to consider with your selues, to  
 841 bring in (God shield vs) a Lyon among Ladies, is a most  
 842 dreadfull thing. For there is not a more fearefull wilde  
 843 foule then your Lyon liuing: and wee ought to looke  
 844 to it.  
 845     *Snout.* Therefore another Prologue must tell he is not  
 846 a Lyon.  
 847     *Bot.* Nay, you must name his name, and halfe his face  
 848 must be seene through the Lyons necke, and he himselfe  
 849 must speake through, saying thus, or to the same defect;  
 850 Ladies, or faire Ladies, I would wish you, or I would [N4v  
 851 request you, or I would entreat you, not to feare, not to  
 852 tremble: my life for yours. If you thinke I come hither  
 853 as a Lyon, it were pitty of my life. No, I am no such  
 854 thing, I am a man as other men are; and there indeed let  
 855 him name his name, and tell him plainly hee is *Snug* the  
 856 ioyner.  
 857     *Quin.* Well, it shall be so; but there is two hard  
 858 things, that is, to bring the Moone- light into a cham-ber:  
 859 for you know *Piramus* and *Thisby* meete by Moone-light.  
 860     *Sn.* Doth the Moone shine that night wee play our  
 861 play?  
 862     *Bot.* A Calender, a Calender, looke in the Almanack,  
 863 finde out Moone- shine, finde out Moone- shine.

865    *Enter Pucke.*

866    *Quin.* Yes, it doth shine that night.

867    *Bot.* Why then may you leauue a casement of the great  
868    chamber window (where we play) open, and the Moone  
869    may shine in at the casement.

870    *Quin.* I, or else one must come in with a bush of thorns  
871    and a lanthorne, and say he comes to disfigure, or to pre-sent  
872    the person of Moone- shine. Then there is another  
873    thing, we must haue a wall in the great Chamber; for *Pi-ramus*  
874    and *Thisby* (saies the story) did talke through the  
875    chinke of a wall.

876    *Sn.* You can neuer bring in a wall. What say you  
877    *Bottome?*

878    *Bot.* Some man or other must present wall, and let  
879    him haue some Plaster, or some Lome, or some rough  
880    cast about him, to signifie wall; or let him hold his fin-gers  
881    thus; and through that cranny shall *Piramus* and  
882    *Thisby* whisper.

883    *Quin.* If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit  
884    downe euery mothers sonne, and rehearse your parts.  
885    *Piramus*, you begin; when you haue spoken your speech,  
886    enter into that Brake, and so euery one according to his  
887    cue.

888    *Enter Robin.*

889    *Rob.* What hempen home- spuns haue we swagge-ring  
890    here,  
891    So neere the Cradle of the Faerie Queene?  
892    What, a Play toward? Ile be an auditor,  
893    An Actor too perhaps, if I see cause.

894    *Quin.* Speake *Piramus*: *Thisby* stand forth.

895    *Pir.* *Thisby*, the flowers of odious sauors sweete.

896    *Quin.* Odours, odours.

897    *Pir.* Odours sauors sweete,  
898    So hath thy breath, my dearest *Thisby* deare.  
899    But harke, a voyce: stay thou but here a while,  
900    And by and by I will to thee appeare. *Exit. Pir.*

901    *Puck.* A stranger *Piramus*, then ere plaid here.

902    *This.* Must I speake now?

903    *Pet.* I marry must you. For you must vnderstand he  
904    goes but to see a noyse that he heard, and is to come a-gaine.

906    *Thys.* Most radiant *Piramus*, most Lilly white of hue,  
907    Of colour like the red rose on triumphant bryer,  
908    Most brisky Iuuenall, and eke most louely Iew,  
909    As true as truest horse, that yet would neuer tyre,  
910    Ile meete thee *Piramus*, at *Ninnies* toombe.

911    *Pet.* *Ninus* toombe man: why, you must not speake

912 that yet; that you answer to *Piramus*: you speake all  
 913 your part at once, cues and all. *Piramus* enter, your cue is  
 914 past; it is neuer tyre.

915     *Thys.* O, as true as truest horse, that yet would neuer  
 916 tyre:

917     *Pir.* If I were faire, *Thisby* I were onely thine.

918     *Pet.* O monstrous. O strange. We are hanted; pray  
 919 masters, flye masters, helpe.

920     *The Clownes all Exit.*

921     *Puk.* Ile follow you, Ile leade you about a Round,  
 922 Through bogge, through bush, through brake, through |(bryer,  
 923 Sometime a horse Ile be, sometime a hound:  
 924 A hogge, a headlesse beare, sometime a fire,  
 925 And neigh, and barke, and grunt, and rore, and burne,  
 926 Like horse, hound, hog, beare, fire, at euery turne. *Exit.*

927     *Enter Piramus with the Asse head.*

928     *Bot.* Why do they run away? This is a knauery of  
 929 them to make me afeard. *Enter Snowt.*

930     *Sn.* O *Bottom*, thou art chang'd; What doe I see on  
 931 thee?

932     *Bot.* What do you see? You see an Asse- head of your  
 933 owne, do you?

934     *Enter Peter Quince.*

935     *Pet.* Blesse thee *Bottome*, blesse thee; thou art transla-ted.  
 936 *Exit.*

937     *Bot.* I see their knauery; this is to make an asse of me,  
 938 to fright me if they could; but I will not stirre from  
 939 this place, do what they can. I will walke vp and downe  
 940 here, and I will sing that they shall heare I am not a-fraid.  
 941 The Woosell cocke, so blacke of hew,  
 942 With Orenge- tawny bill.  
 943 The Throstle, with his note so true,  
 944 The Wren and little quill.

945     *Tyta.* What Angell wakes me from my flowry bed?

946     *Bot.* The Finch, the Sparrow, and the Larke,  
 947 The plainsong Cuckow gray;  
 948 Whose note full many a man doth marke,  
 949 And dares not answeare, nay.  
 950 For indeede, who would set his wit to so foolish a bird?  
 951 Who would giue a bird the lye, though he cry Cuckow,  
 952 neuer so?

953     *Tyta.* I pray thee gentle mortall, sing againe,  
 954 Mine eare is much enamored of thy note;  
 955 On the first view to say, to sweare I loue thee.  
 956 So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape.  
 957 And thy faire vertues force (perforce) doth moue me.

959     *Bot.* Me- thinkes mistresse, you should haue little  
 960 reason for that: and yet to say the truth, reason and  
 961 loue keepe little company together, now-adayes.  
 962 The more the pittie, that some honest neighbours will  
 963 not make them friends. Nay, I can gleeke vpon occa-sion.

965     *Tyta.* Thou art as wise, as thou art beautifull.

966     *Bot.* Not so neither: but if I had wit enough to get  
 967 out of this wood, I haue enough to serue mine owne  
 968 turne.

969     *Tyta.* Out of this wood, do not desire to goe,  
 970 Thou shalt remaine here, whether thou wilt or no.  
 971 I am a spirit of no common rate:  
 972 The Summer still doth tend vpon my state,  
 973 And I doe loue thee; therefore goe with me,  
 974 Ile giue thee Fairies to attend on thee;  
 975 And they shall fetch thee Iewels from the deepe,  
 976 And sing, while thou on pressed flowers dost sleepe:  
 977 And I will purge thy mortall grossenesse so,  
 978 That thou shalt like an airie spirit go.

979     *Enter Pease- blossom, Cobweb, Moth, Mustard-seede,*  
 980 *and foure Fairies.*

981     *Fai.* Ready; and I, and I, and I, Where shall we go? [N5]

982     *Tita.* Be kinde and curteous to this Gentleman,  
 983 Hop in his walkes, and gambole in his eies,  
 984 Feede him with Apricocks, and Dewberries,  
 985 With purple Grapes, greene Figs, and Mulberries,  
 986 The honie- bags steale from the humble Bees,  
 987 And for night- tapers crop their waxen thighes,  
 988 And light them at the fierie- Glow- wormes eyes,  
 989 To haue my loue to bed, and to arise:  
 990 And plucke the wings from painted Butterflies,  
 991 To fan the Moone- beames from his sleeping eies.  
 992 Nod to him Elues, and doe him curtesies.

993     1.*Fai.* Haile mortall, haile.

994     2.*Fai.* Haile.

995     3.*Fai.* Haile.

996     *Bot.* I cry your worships mercy hartily; I beseech  
 997 your worships name.

998     *Cob. Cobweb.*

999     *Bot.* I shall desire you of more acquaintance, good  
 1000 Master *Cobweb:* if I cut my finger, I shall make bold  
 1001 with you.

1002 Your name honest Gentleman?

1003     *Pease. Pease Blossome.*

1004     *Bot.* I pray you command me to mistresse *Squash*,  
 1005 your mother, and to master *Peascod* your father. Good

1006 master *Pease- blossome*, I shal desire of you more acquain-tance  
 1007 to. Your name I beseech you sir?  
 1008     *Mus. Mustard- seede.*  
 1009     *Peas. Pease- blossome.*  
 1010     *Bot.* Good master *Mustard seede*, I know your pati-ence  
 1011 well: that same cowardly gyant- like Oxe beefe  
 1012 hath deuoured many a gentleman of your house. I pro-mise  
 1013 you, your kindred hath made my eyes water ere  
 1014 now. I desire you more acquaintance, good Master  
 1015 *Mustard- seede.*  
 1016     *Tita.* Come waite vpon him, lead him to my bower.  
 1017 The Moone me- thinks, lookes with a watrie eie,  
 1018 And when she weepes, weepe euerie little flower,  
 1019 Lamenting some enforced chastitie.  
 1020 Tye vp my louers tongue, bring him silently. *Exit.*  
 1021 *Enter King of Pharies, solus.*  
 1022     *Ob.* I wonder if *Titania* be awak't;  
 1023 Then what it was that next came in her eye,  
 1024 Which she must dote on, in extremitie.  
 1025 *Enter Pucke.*  
 1026 Here comes my messenger: how now mad spirit,  
 1027 What night- rule now about this haunted groue?  
 1028     *Puck.* My Mistris with a monster is in loue,  
 1029 Neere to her close and consecrated bower,  
 1030 While she was in her dull and sleeping hower,  
 1031 A crew of patches, rude Mechanicals,  
 1032 That worke for bread vpon *Athenian* stals,  
 1033 Were met together to rehearse a Play,  
 1034 Intended for great *Theseus* nuptiall day:  
 1035 The shallowest thick- skin of that barren sort,  
 1036 Who *Piramus* presented, in their sport,  
 1037 Forsooke his Scene, and entred in a brake,  
 1038 When I did him at this aduantage take,  
 1039 An Asses nbole I fixed on his head.  
 1040 Anon his *Thisbie* must be answered,  
 1041 And forth my Mimmick comes: when they him spie,  
 1042 As Wilde- geese, that the creeping Fowler eye,  
 1043 Or russet- pated choughes, many in sort  
 1044 (Rising and cawing at the guns report)  
 1045 Seuer themselues, and madly sweepe the skye:  
 1046 So at his sight, away his fellowes flye,  
 1047 And at our stampe, here ore and ore one fals;  
 1048 He murther cries, and helpe from *Athens* cals.  
 1049 Their sense thus weake, lost with their feares thus strong,  
 1050 Made senslesse things begin to do them wrong.  
 1051 For briars and thornes at their apparell snatch,

1052 Some sleeues, some hats, from yeelders all things catch,  
 1053 I led them on in this distracted feare,  
 1054 And left sweete *Piramus* translated there:  
 1055 When in that moment (so it came to passe)  
 1056 *Tytania* waked, and straightway lou'd an Asse.  
 1057     *Ob.* This fals out better then I could devise:  
 1058 But hast thou yet lacht the *Athenians* eyes,  
 1059 With the loue iuyce, as I bid thee doe?  
 1060     *Rob.* I tooke him sleeping (that is finisht to)  
 1061 And the *Athenian* woman by his side,  
 1062 That when he wak't, of force she must be eyde.  
 1063 *Enter Demetrius and Hermia.*  
 1064     *Ob.* Stand close, this is the same *Athenian*.  
 1065     *Rob.* This is the woman, but not this the man.  
 1066     *Dem.* O why rebuke you him that loues you so?  
 1067 Lay breath so bitter on your bitter foe.  
 1068     *Her.* Now I but chide, but I should vse thee worse.  
 1069 For thou (I feare) hast giuen me cause to curse,  
 1070 If thou hast slaine *Lysander* in his sleepe,  
 1071 Being oreshooes in bloud, plunge in the deepe, and kill  
 1072 me too:  
 1073 The Sunne was not so true vnto the day,  
 1074 As he to me. Would he haue stollen away,  
 1075 From sleeping *Hermia*? Ile beleue as soone  
 1076 This whole earth may be bord, and that the Moone  
 1077 May through the Center creepe, and so displease  
 1078 Her brothers noonetide, with th'*Antipodes*.  
 1079 It cannot be but thou hast murdred him,  
 1080 So should a murtherer looke, so dead, so grim.  
 1081     *Dem.* So should the murderer looke, and so should I,  
 1082 Pierst through the heart with your stearne cruelty:  
 1083 Yet you the murderer lookes as bright as cleare,  
 1084 As yonder *Venus* in her glimmering spheare.  
 1085     *Her.* What's this to my *Lysander*? where is he?  
 1086 Ah good *Demetrius*, wilt thou giue him me?  
 1087     *Dem.* I'de rather giue his carkasse to my hounds.  
 1088     *Her.* Out dog, out cur, thou driu'st me past the bounds  
 1089 Of maidens patience. Hast thou slaine him then?  
 1090 Henceforth be neuer numbred among men.  
 1091 Oh, once tell true, euen for my sake,  
 1092 Durst thou a lookt vpon him, being awake?  
 1093 And hast thou kill'd him sleeping? O braue tutch:  
 1094 Could not a worme, an Adder do so much?  
 1095 An Adder did it: for with doubler tongue  
 1096 Then thine (thou serpent) neuer Adder stung.  
 1097     *Dem.* You spend your passion on a mispris'd mood,

1098 I am not guiltie of *Lysanders* blood:  
 1099 Nor is he dead for ought that I can tell.  
 1100     *Her.* I pray thee tell me then that he is well.  
 1101     *Dem.* And if I could, what should I get therefore?  
 1102     *Her.* A priuiledge, neuer to see me more;  
 1103 And from thy hated presence part I: see me no more  
 1104 Whether he be dead or no. *Exit.*  
 1105     *Dem.* There is no following her in this fierce vaine,  
 1106 Here therefore for a while I will remaine.  
 1107 So sorrowes heauinesse doth heauier grow:  
 1108 For debt that bankrout slip doth sorrow owe,  
 1109 Which now in some slight measure it will pay, [N5v  
 1110 If for his tender here I make some stay. *Lie downe.*  
 1111     *Ob.* What hast thou done? Thou hast mistaken quite  
 1112 And laid the loue iuyce on some true loues sight:  
 1113 Of thy misprision, must perforce ensue  
 1114 Some true loue turn'd, and not a false turn'd true.  
 1115     *Rob.* Then fate ore- rules, that one man holding troth,  
 1116 A million faile, confounding oath on oath.  
 1117     *Ob.* About the wood, goe swifter then the winde,  
 1118 And *Helena* of *Athens* looke thou finde.  
 1119 All fancy sickle she is, and pale of cheere,  
 1120 With sighes of loue, that costs the fresh bloud deare.  
 1121 By some illusion see thou bring her heere,  
 1122 Ile charme his eyes against she doth appeare.  
 1123     *Robin.* I go, I go, looke how I goe,  
 1124 Swifter then arrow from the *Tartars* bowe. *Exit.*  
 1125     *Ob.* Flower of this purple die,  
 1126 Hit with *Cupids* archery,  
 1127 Sinke in apple of his eye,  
 1128 When his loue he doth espie,  
 1129 Let her shine as gloriously  
 1130 As the *Venus* of the sky.  
 1131 When thou wak'st if she be by,  
 1132 Beg of her for remedy.  
 1133 *Enter Pucke.*  
 1134     *Puck.* Captaine of our Fairy band,  
 1135 *Helena* is heere at hand,  
 1136 And the youth, mistooke by me,  
 1137 Pleading for a Louers fee.  
 1138 Shall we their fond Pageant see?  
 1139 Lord, what fooles these mortals be!  
 1140     *Ob.* Stand aside: the noyse they make,  
 1141 Will cause *Demetrius* to awake.  
 1142     *Puck.* Then will two at once wooe one,  
 1143 That must needs be sport alone:

1144 And those things doe best please me,  
 1145 That befall preposterously.  
 1146 *Enter Lysander and Helena.*  
 1147     *Lys.* Why should you think y I should woee in scorn?  
 1148 Scorne and derision neuer comes in teares:  
 1149 Looke when I vow I weepe; and vowes so borne,  
 1150 In their nativity all truth appeares.  
 1151 How can these things in me, seeme scorne to you?  
 1152 Bearing the badge of faith to proue them true.  
 1153     *Hel.* You doe aduance your cunning more & more,  
 1154 When truth kils truth, O diuelish holy fray!  
 1155 These vowes are *Hermias*. Will you giue her ore?  
 1156 Weigh oath with oath, and you will nothing weigh.  
 1157 Your vowes to her, and me, (put in two scales)  
 1158 Will euen weigh, and both as light as tales.  
 1159     *Lys.* I had no iudgement, when to her I swore.  
 1160     *Hel.* Nor none in my minde, now you giue her ore.  
 1161     *Lys.* *Demetrius* loues her, and he loues not you. *Awa.*  
 1162     *Dem.* O *Helen*, goddesse, nymph, perfect, diuine,  
 1163 To what, my loue, shall I compare thine eyne!  
 1164 Christall is muddy, O how ripe in show,  
 1165 Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow!  
 1166 That pure congealed white, high *Taurus* snow,  
 1167 Fan'd with the Easterne winde, turnes to a crow,  
 1168 When thou holdst vp thy hand. O let me kisse  
 1169 This Princesse of pure white, this seale of blisse.  
 1170     *Hell.* O spight! O hell! I see you are all bent  
 1171 To set against me, for your merriment:  
 1172 If you were ciuill, and knew curtesie,  
 1173 You would not doe me thus much iniury.  
 1174 Can you not hate me, as I know you doe,  
 1175 But you must ioyne in soules to mocke me to?  
 1176 If you are men, as men you are in show,  
 1177 You would not vse a gentle Lady so;  
 1178 To vow, and sweare, and superpraise my parts,  
 1179 When I am sure you hate me with your hearts.  
 1180 You both are Riuals, and loue *Hermia*;  
 1181 And now both Riuals to mocke *Helena*.  
 1182 A trim exploit, a manly enterprize,  
 1183 To coniure teares vp in a poore maid's eyes,  
 1184 With your derision; none of noble sort,  
 1185 Would so offend a Virgin, and extort  
 1186 A poore soules patience, all to make you sport,  
 1187     *Lysa.* You are vnkind *Demetrius*; be not so,  
 1188 For you loue *Hermia*; this you know I know;  
 1189 And here with all good will, with all my heart,

1190 In *Hermias* loue I yeeld you vp my part;  
 1191 And yours of *Helena*, To me bequeath,  
 1192 Whom I do loue, and will do to my death.

1193     *Hel.* Neuer did mockers wast more idle breth.  
 1194     *Dem.* *Lysander*, keep thy *Hermia*, I will none:  
 1195 If ere I lou'd her, all that loue is gone.  
 1196 My heart to her, but as guest- wise soiourn'd,  
 1197 And now to *Helen* it is home return'd,  
 1198 There to remaine.

1199     *Lys.* It is not so.  
 1200     *De.* Disparage not the faith thou dost not know,  
 1201 Lest to thy perill thou abide it deare.  
 1202 Looke where thy Loue comes, yonder is thy deare.  
 1203 *Enter Hermia.*

1204     *Her.* Dark night, that from the eye his function takes,  
 1205 The eare more quicke of apprehension makes,  
 1206 Wherein it doth impaire the seeing sense,  
 1207 It paies the hearing double recompence.  
 1208 Thou art not by mine eye, *Lysander* found,  
 1209 Mine eare (I thanke it) brought me to that sound.  
 1210 But why vnkindly didst thou leauue me so?

1211     *Lysan.* Why should hee stay whom Loue doth presse |(to go?  
 1212     *Her.* What loue could presse *Lysander* from my side?

1213     *Lys.* *Lysanders* loue (that would not let him bide)  
 1214 Faire *Helena*; who more engilds the night,  
 1215 Then all yon fierie oes, and eies of light.  
 1216 Why seek'st thou me? Could not this make thee know,  
 1217 The hate I bare thee, made me leauue thee so?

1218     *Her.* You speake not as you think; it cannot be.  
 1219     *Hel.* Loe, she is one of this confederacy,

1220 Now I perceiue they haue conioyn'd all three,  
 1221 To fashion this false sport in spight of me.  
 1222 Iniuorous *Hermia*, most vngratefull maid,  
 1223 Haue you conspir'd, haue you with these contriued  
 1224 To baite me, with this foule derision?  
 1225 Is all the counsell that we two haue shar'd,  
 1226 The sisters vowes, the houres that we haue spent,  
 1227 When wee haue chid the hasty footed time,  
 1228 For parting vs; O, is all forgot?

1229 All schooledaiies friendship, child- hood innocence?  
 1230 We *Hermia*, like two Artificiall gods,  
 1231 Haue with our needles, created both one flower,  
 1232 Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,  
 1233 Both warbling of one song, both in one key:  
 1234 As if our hands, our sides, voices, and mindes  
 1235 Had beene incorporate. So we grew together,

1236 Like to a double cherry, seeming parted,  
 1237 But yet a vniion in partition, [N6  
 1238 Two louely berries molded on one stem,  
 1239 So with two seeming bodies, but one heart,  
 1240 Two of the first life coats in Heraldry,  
 1241 Due but to one and crowned with one crest.  
 1242 And will you rent our ancient loue asunder,  
 1243 To ioyne with men in scorning your poore friend?  
 1244 It is not friendly, 'tis not maidenly.  
 1245 Our sexe as well as I, may chide you for it,  
 1246 Though I alone doe feele the iniurie.

1247     *Her.* I am amazed at your passionate words,  
 1248 I scorne you not; It seemes that you scorne me.  
 1249     *Hel.* Haue you not set *Lysander*, as in scorne  
 1250 To follow me, and praise my eies and face?  
 1251 And made your other loue, *Demetrius*  
 1252 (Who euen but now did spurne me with his foote)  
 1253 To call me goddesse, nymph, diuine, and rare,  
 1254 Precious, celestiall? Wherfore speakes he this  
 1255 To her he hates? and wherfore doth *Lysander*  
 1256 Denie your loue (so rich within his soule)  
 1257 And tender me (forsooth) affection,  
 1258 But by your setting on, by your consent?  
 1259 What though I be not so in grace as you,  
 1260 So hung vpon with loue, so fortunate?  
 1261 (But miserable most, to loue vnLou'd)  
 1262 This you should pittie, rather then despise.

1263     *Her.* I vnderstand not what you meane by this.  
 1264     *Hel.* I, doe, perseuer, counterfeit sad lookes,  
 1265 Make mouthes vpon me when I turne my backe,  
 1266 Winke each at other, hold the sweete iest vp:  
 1267 This sport well carried, shall be chronicled.  
 1268 If you haue any pittie, grace, or manners,  
 1269 You would not make me such an argument:  
 1270 But fare ye well, 'tis partly mine owne fault,  
 1271 Which death or absence soone shall remedie.

1272     *Lys.* Stay gentle *Helena*, heare my excuse,  
 1273 My loue, my life, my soule, faire *Helena*.  
 1274     *Hel.* O excellent!  
 1275     *Her.* Sweete, do not scorne her so.  
 1276     *Dem.* If she cannot entreate, I can compell.  
 1277     *Lys.* Thou canst compell, no more then she entreate.  
 1278 Thy threats haue no more strength then her weak praise.  
 1279     *Helen,* I loue thee, by my life I doe;  
 1280 I sweare by that which I will lose for thee,  
 1281 To proue him false, that saies I loue thee not.

1282     *Dem.* I say, I loue thee more then he can do.  
 1283     *Lys.* If thou say so, with-draw and proue it too.  
 1284     *Dem.* Quick, come.  
 1285     *Her. Lysander,* whereto tends all this?  
 1286     *Lys.* Away, you *Ethiope.*  
 1287     *Dem.* No, no, Sir, seeme to breake loose;  
 1288     Take on as you would follow,  
 1289     But yet come not: you are a tame man, go.  
 1290     *Lys.* Hang off thou cat, thou bur; vile thing let loose,  
 1291     Or I will shake thee from me like a serpent.  
 1292     *Her.* Why are you growne so rude?  
 1293     What change is this sweete Loue?  
 1294     *Lys.* Thy loue? out tawny *Tartar*, out;  
 1295     Out loathed medicine; O hated poison hence.  
 1296     *Her.* Do you not iest?  
 1297     *Hel.* Yes sooth, and so do you.  
 1298     *Lys. Demetrius:* I will keepe my word with thee.  
 1299     *Dem.* I would I had your bond: for I perceiue  
 1300     A weake bond holds you; Ile not trust your word.  
 1301     *Lys.* What, should I hurt her, strike her, kill her dead?  
 1302     Although I hate her, Ile not harme her so.  
 1303     *Her.* What, can you do me greater harme then hate?  
 1304     Hate me, wherefore? O me, what newes my Loue?  
 1305     Am not I *Hermia?* Are not you *Lysander?*  
 1306     I am as faire now, as I was ere while.  
 1307     Since night you lou'd me: yet since night you left me.  
 1308     Why then you left me (O the gods forbid)  
 1309     In earnest, shall I say?  
 1310     *Lys.* I, by my life;  
 1311     And neuer did desire to see thee more.  
 1312     Therefore be out of hope, of question, of doubt;  
 1313     Be certaine, nothing truer: 'tis no iest,  
 1314     That I do hate thee, and loue *Helena.*  
 1315     *Her.* O me, you iugler, you canker blossome,  
 1316     You theefe of loue; What, haue you come by night,  
 1317     And stolne my loues heart from him?  
 1318     *Hel.* Fine yfaith:  
 1319     Haue you no modesty, no maiden shame,  
 1320     No touch of bashfulnesse? What, will you teare  
 1321     Impatient answers from my gentle tongue?  
 1322     Fie, fie, you counterfeit, you puppet, you.  
 1323     *Her.* Puppet? why so? I, that way goes the game.  
 1324     Now I perceiue that she hath made compare  
 1325     Betweene our statures, she hath vrg'd her height,  
 1326     And with her personage, her tall personage,  
 1327     Her height (forsooth) she hath preual'd with him.

1328 And are you growne so high in his esteeme,  
 1329 Because I am so dwarfish, and so low?  
 1330 How low am I, thou painted May- pole? Speake,  
 1331 How low am I? I am not yet so low,  
 1332 But that my nailes can reach vnto thine eyes.  
 1333     *Hel.* I pray you though you mocke me, gentlemen,  
 1334 Let her not hurt me; I was neuer curst:  
 1335 I haue no gift at all in shrewishnesse;  
 1336 I am a right maide for my cowardize;  
 1337 Let her not strike me: you perhaps may thinke,  
 1338 Because she is something lower then my selfe,  
 1339 That I can match her.  
 1340     *Her.* Lower? harke againe.  
 1341     *Hel.* Good *Hermia*, do not be so bitter with me,  
 1342 I euermore did loue you *Hermia*,  
 1343 Did euer keepe your counsels, neuer wronged you,  
 1344 Saue that in loue vnto *Demetrius*,  
 1345 I told him of your stealth vnto this wood.  
 1346 He followed you, for loue I followed him,  
 1347 But he hath chid me hence, and threatned me  
 1348 To strike me, spurne me, nay to kill me too;  
 1349 And now, so you will let me quiet go,  
 1350 To *Athens* will I beare my folly backe,  
 1351 And follow you no further. Let me go.  
 1352 You see how simple, and how fond I am.  
 1353     *Her.* Why get you gone: who ist that hinders you?  
 1354     *Hel.* A foolish heart, that I leauue here behinde.  
 1355     *Her.* What, with *Lysander*?  
 1356     *Her.* With *Demetrius*.  
 1357     *Lys.* Be not afraid, she shall not harme thee *Helena*.  
 1358     *Dem.* No sir, she shall not, though you take her part.  
 1359     *Hel.* O when she's angry, she is keene and shrewd,  
 1360 She was a vixen when she went to schoole,  
 1361 And though she be but little, she is fierce.  
 1362     *Her.* Little againe? Nothing but low and little?  
 1363 Why will you suffer her to flout me thus?  
 1364 Let me come to her.  
 1365     *Lys.* Get you gone you dwarfe,  
 1366 You *minimus*, of hindring knot- grasse made,  
 1367 You bead, you acorne.  
 1368     *Dem.* You are too officious,  
 1369 In her behalfe that scornes your seruices. [N6v  
 1370 Let her alone, speake not of *Helena*,  
 1371 Take not her part. For if thou dost intend  
 1372 Neuer so little shew of loue to her,  
 1373 Thou shalt abide it.

1374     *Lys.* Now she holds me not,  
 1375     Now follow if thou dar'st, to try whose right,  
 1376     Of thine or mine is most in *Helena*.  
 1377     *Dem.* Follow? Nay, Ile goe with thee cheeke by  
 1378     iowle. *Exit Lysander and Demetrius.*  
 1379     *Her.* You Mistris, all this coyle is long of you.  
 1380     Nay, goe not backe.  
 1381     *Hel.* I will not trust you I,  
 1382     Nor longer stay in your curst companie.  
 1383     Your hands then mine, are quicker for a fray,  
 1384     My legs are longer though to runne away.  
 1385     *Enter Oberon and Pucke.*  
 1386     *Ob.* This is thy negligence, still thou mistak'st,  
 1387     Or else committ'st thy knaueries willingly.  
 1388     *Puck.* Beleeue me, King of shadowes, I mistooke,  
 1389     Did not you tell me, I should know the man,  
 1390     By the *Athenian* garments he hath on?  
 1391     And so farre blamelesse proues my enterprize,  
 1392     That I haue nointed an Athenians eies,  
 1393     And so farre am I glad, it so did sort,  
 1394     As this their iangling I esteeme a sport.  
 1395     *Ob.* Thou seest these Louers seeke a place to fight,  
 1396     Hie therefore *Robin*, ouercast the night,  
 1397     The starrie Welkin couer thou anon,  
 1398     With drooping fogge as blacke as *Acheron*,  
 1399     And lead these testie Riuals so astray,  
 1400     As one come not within another's way.  
 1401     Like to *Lysander*, sometime frame thy tongue,  
 1402     Then stirre *Demetrius* vp with bitter wrong;  
 1403     And sometime raile thou like *Demetrius*;  
 1404     And from each other looke thou leade them thus,  
 1405     Till ore their browes, death- counterfeiting, sleepe  
 1406     With leaden legs, and Battie- wings doth creepe:  
 1407     Then crush this hearbe into *Lysanders* eie,  
 1408     Whose liquor hath this vertuous propertie,  
 1409     To take from thence all error, with his might,  
 1410     and make his eie- bals role with wonted sight.  
 1411     When they next wake, all this derision  
 1412     Shall seeme a dreame, and fruitless vision,  
 1413     And backe to *Athens* shall the Louers wend  
 1414     With league, whose date till death shall neuer end.  
 1415     Whiles I in this affaire do thee imploy,  
 1416     Ile to my Queene, and beg her *Indian Boy*;  
 1417     And then I will her charmed eie release  
 1418     From monsters view, and all things shall be peace.  
 1419     *Puck.* My Fairie Lord, this must be done with haste,

1420 For night- swift Dragons cut the Clouds full fast,  
 1421 And yonder shines *Auroras* harbinger;  
 1422 At whose approach Ghosts wandring here and there,  
 1423 Troope home to Church- yards; damned spirits all,  
 1424 That in crosse- waies and flouds haue buriall,  
 1425 Alreadie to their wormie beds are gone;  
 1426 For feare least day should looke their shames vpon,  
 1427 They wilfully themselues exile from light,  
 1428 And must for aye consort with blacke browd night.

1429     *Ob.* But we are spirits of another sort:

1430 I, with the mornings loue haue oft made sport,  
 1431 And like a Forrester, the groues may tread,  
 1432 Euen till the Easterne gate all fierie red,  
 1433 Opening on *Neptune*, With faire blessed beames,  
 1434 Turnes into yellow gold, his salt greene stremes.  
 1435 But notwithstanding haste, make no delay:  
 1436 We may effect this businesse, yet ere day.

1437     *Puck.* Vp and downe, vp and downe, I will leade  
 1438 them vp and downe: I am fear'd in field and towne.  
 1439 *Goblin,* lead them vp and downe: here comes one.

1440 *Enter Lysander.*

1441     *Lys.* Where art thou, proud *Demetrius*?

1442 Speake thou now.

1443     *Rob.* Here villaine, drawne & readie. Where art thou?

1444     *Lys.* I will be with thee straight.

1445     *Rob.* Follow me then to plainer ground.

1446 *Enter Demetrius.*

1447     *Dem.* *Lysander,* speake againe;

1448 Thou runaway, thou coward, art thou fled?

1449 Speake in some bush: Where dost thou hide thy head?

1450     *Rob.* Thou coward, art thou bragging to the stars,  
 1451 Telling the bushes that thou look'st for wars,  
 1452 And wilt not come? Come recreant, come thou childe,  
 1453 Ile whip thee with a rod. He is defil'd  
 1454 That drawes a sword on thee.

1455     *Dem.* Yea, art thou there?

1456     *Ro.* Follow my voice, we'l try no manhood here. *Exit.*

1457     *Lys.* He goes before me, and still dares me on,

1458 When I come where he cals, then he's gone.

1459 The Villaine is much lighter heel'd then I:

1460 I followed fast, but faster he did flye; *shifting places.*

1461 That fallen am I in darke vneuen way,

1462 And here wil rest me. Come thou gentle day: *lye down.*

1463 For if but once thou shew me thy gray light,

1464 Ile finde *Demetrius*, and reuenge this spight.

1465 *Enter Robin and Demetrius.*

1466     *Rob.* Ho, ho, ho; coward, why com'st thou not?  
 1467     *Dem.* Abide me, if thou dar'st. For well I wot,  
 1468     Thou runst before me, shifting euery place,  
 1469     And dar'st not stand, nor looke me in the face.  
 1470     Where art thou?  
 1471     *Rob.* Come hither, I am here.  
 1472     *Dem.* Nay then thou mock'st me; thou shalt buy this  
 1473     deere,  
 1474     If euer I thy face by day- light see.  
 1475     Now goe thy way: faintnesse constraineth me,  
 1476     To measure out my length on this cold bed,  
 1477     By daies approach looke to be visited.  
 1478     *Enter Helena.*  
 1479     *Hel.* O weary night, O long and tedious night,  
 1480     Abate thy houres, shine comforts from the East,  
 1481     That I may backe to *Athens* by day- light,  
 1482     From these that my poore companie detest;  
 1483     And sleepe that sometime shuts vp sorrowes eie,  
 1484     Steale me a while from mine owne companie. *Sleepe.*  
 1485     *Rob.* Yet but three? Come one more,  
 1486     Two of both kindes makes vp foure.  
 1487     Here she comes, curst and sad,  
 1488     *Cupid* is a knauish lad,  
 1489     *Enter Hermia.*  
 1490     Thus to make poore females mad.  
 1491     *Her.* Neuer so wearie, neuer so in woe,  
 1492     Bedabbled with the dew, and torne with briars,  
 1493     I can no further crawle, no further goe;  
 1494     My legs can keepe no pace with my desires.  
 1495     Here will I rest me till the breake of day,  
 1496     Heauens shield *Lysander*, if they meane a fray.  
 1497     *Rob.* On the ground sleepe sound,  
 1498     Ile apply your eie gentle louer, remedy.  
 1499     When thou wak'st, thou tak'st  
 1500     True delight in the sight of thy former Ladies eye, [O1  
 1501     And the Country Prouerb knowne,  
 1502     That euery man should take his owne,  
 1503     In your waking shall be shounre.  
 1504     *Iacke* shall haue *Ill*, nougat shall goe ill.  
 1505     The man shall haue his Mare againe, and all shall bee  
 1506     well.  
 1507     *They sleepe all the Act.*

*Actus Quartus.*

1509 Enter Queene of Fairies, and Clowne, and Fairies, and the  
 1510 King behinde them.

1511 *Tita.* Come, sit thee downe vpon this flowry bed,  
 1512 While I thy amiable cheekes doe coy,  
 1513 And sticke muske roses in thy sleake smoothe head,  
 1514 And kisse thy faire large eares, my gentle ioy.

1515 *Clow.* Where's *Peaseblossome*?

1516 *Peas.* Ready.

1517 *Clow.* Scratch my head, *Pease- blossom.* Wher's Moun-sieuer  
 1518 *Cobweb.*

1519 *Cob.* Ready.

1520 *Clowne.* Mounsieur *Cobweb*, good Mounsier get your  
 1521 weapons in your hand, & kill me a red hipt humble- Bee,  
 1522 on the top of a thistle; and good Mounsieur bring mee  
 1523 the hony bag. Doe not fret your selfe too much in the  
 1524 action, Mounsieur; and good mounsieur haue a care the  
 1525 hony bag breake not, I would be loth to haue you ouer-flowne  
 1526 with a hony- bag signiour. Where's Mounsieur  
 1527 *Mustardseed*?

1528 *Mus.* Ready.

1529 *Clo.* Giue me your neafe, Mounsieur *Mustardseed*.

1530 Pray you leauue your courtesie good Mounsieur.

1531 *Mus.* What's your will?

1532 *Clo.* Nothing good Mounsieur, but to help Caualery  
 1533 *Cobweb* to scratch. I must to the Barbers Mounsieur, for  
 1534 me- thinkes I am maruellous hairy about the face. And I  
 1535 am such a tender asse, if my haire do but tickle me, I must  
 1536 scratch.

1537 *Tita.* What, wilt thou heare some musicke, my sweet  
 1538 loue.

1539 *Clow.* I haue a reasonable good eare in musicke. Let  
 1540 vs haue the tongs and the bones.

1541 *Musicke Tongs, Rurall Musicke.*

1542 *Tita.* Or say sweete Loue, what thou desirest to eat.

1543 *Clowne.* Truly a pecke of Prouender; I could munch  
 1544 your good dry Oates. Me- thinkes I haue a great desire  
 1545 to a bottle of hay: good hay, sweete hay hath no fel-low.

1547 *Tita.* I haue a venturous Fairy,  
 1548 That shall seeke the Squirrels hoard,  
 1549 And fetch thee new Nuts.

1550 *Clown.* I had rather haue a handfull or two of dried  
 1551 pease. But I pray you let none of your people stirre me, I  
 1552 haue an exposition of sleepe come vpon me.

1553 *Tyta.* Sleepe thou, and I will winde thee in my arms,

1554 Fairies be gone, and be alwaiies away.  
 1555 So doth the woodbine, the sweet Honisuckle,  
 1556 Gently entwist; the female Iuy so  
 1557 Enrings the barky fingers of the Elme.  
 1558 O how I loue thee! how I dote on thee!  
 1559 *Enter Robin goodfellow and Oberon.*  
 1560     *Ob.* Welcome good *Robin*:  
 1561 Seest thou this sweet sight?  
 1562 Her dotage now I doe begin to pitty.  
 1563 For meeting her of late behinde the wood,  
 1564 Seeking sweet sauours for this hatefull foole,  
 1565 I did vpbraid her, and fall out with her.  
 1566 For she his hairy temples then had rounded,  
 1567 With coronet of fresh and fragrant flowers.  
 1568 And that same dew which somtime on the buds,  
 1569 Was wont to swell like round and orient pearles;  
 1570 Stood now within the pretty flouriets eyes,  
 1571 Like teares that did their owne disgrace bewaile.  
 1572 When I had at my pleasure taunted her,  
 1573 And she in milde termes beg'd my patience,  
 1574 I then did aske of her, her changeling childe,  
 1575 Which straight she gaue me, and her fairy sent  
 1576 To beare him to my Bower in Fairy Land.  
 1577 And now I haue the Boy, I will vndoe  
 1578 This hatefull imperfection of her eyes.  
 1579 And gentle *Pucke*, take this transformed scalpe,  
 1580 From off the head of this *Athenian* swaine;  
 1581 That he awaking when the other doe,  
 1582 May all to *Athens* backe againe repaire,  
 1583 And thinke no more of this nights accidents,  
 1584 But as the fierce vexation of dreame.  
 1585 But first I will release the Fairy Queene.  
 1586 *Be thou as thou wast wont to be;*  
 1587 *See as thou wast wont to see.*  
 1588 *Dians bud, or Cupids flower,*  
 1589 *Hath such force and blessed power.*  
 1590 Now my *Titania* wake you my sweet Queene.  
 1591     *Tita.* My *Oberon*, what visions haue I seene!  
 1592 Me- thought I was enamoured of an asse.  
 1593     *Ob.* There lies your loue.  
 1594     *Tita.* How came these things to passe?  
 1595 Oh, how mine eyes doth loath this visage now!  
 1596     *Ob.* Silence a while. *Robin* take off his head:  
 1597 *Titania*, musick call, and strike more dead  
 1598 Then common sleepe; of all these, fine the sense.  
 1599     *Tita.* Musicke, ho musicke, such as charmeth sleepe.

- 1600 *Musick still.*  
 1601     *Rob.* When thou wak'st, with thine owne fooles eies  
 1602     peepe.  
 1603     *Ob.* Sound musick; come my Queen, take hands with |(me  
 1604     And rocke the ground whereon these sleepers be.  
 1605     Now thou and I new in amity,  
 1606     And will to morrow midnight, solemnly  
 1607     Dance in Duke *Theseus* house triumphantly,  
 1608     And blesse it to all faire posterity.  
 1609     There shall the paires of faithfull Louers be  
 1610     Wedded, with *Theseus*, all in iollity.  
 1611     *Rob.* Faire King attend, and marke,  
 1612     I doe heare the morning Larke,  
 1613     *Ob.* Then my Queene in silence sad,  
 1614     Trip we after the nights shade;  
 1615     We the Globe can compasse soone,  
 1616     Swifter then the wandering Moone.  
 1617     *Tita.* Come my Lord, and in our flight,  
 1618     Tell me how it came this night,  
 1619     That I sleeping heere was found,  
 1620 *Sleepers Lye still.* [O1v  
 1621     With these mortals on the ground. *Exeunt.*  
 1622 *Winde Hornes.*  
 1623 *Enter Theseus, Egeus, Hippolita and all his traine.*  
 1624     *Thes.* Goe one of you, finde out the Forrester,  
 1625     For now our obseruation is perform'd;  
 1626     And since we haue the vaward of the day,  
 1627     My Loue shall heare the musicke of my hounds.  
 1628     Vncouple in the Westerne valley, let them goe;  
 1629     Dispatch I say, and finde the Forrester.  
 1630     We will faire Queene, vp to the Mountains top,  
 1631     And marke the musicall confusion  
 1632     Of hounds and echo in coniunction.  
 1633     *Hip.* I was with *Hercules* and *Cadmus* once.  
 1634     When in a wood of *Creete* they bayed the Beare  
 1635     With hounds of *Sparta*; neuer did I heare  
 1636     Such gallant chiding. For besides the groues,  
 1637     The skies, the fountaines, euery region neere,  
 1638     Seeme all one mutuall cry. I neuer heard  
 1639     So musicall a discord, such sweet thunder.  
 1640     *Thes.* My hounds are bred out of the *Spartan* kinde,  
 1641     So flew'd, so sanded, and their heads are hung  
 1642     With eares that sweepe away the morning dew,  
 1643     Crooke kneed, and dew- lapt, like *Thessalian* Buls,  
 1644     Slow in pursuit, but match'd in mouth like bels,  
 1645     Each vnder each. A cry more tuneable

1646 Was neuer hallowed to, nor cheer'd with horne,  
 1647 In *Creete*, in *Sparta*, nor in *Thessaly*;  
 1648 Judge when you heare. But soft, what nimphs are these?  
 1649     *Egeus*. My Lord, this is my daughter heere asleepe,  
 1650 And this *Lysander*, this *Demetrius* is,  
 1651 This *Helena*, olde *Nedars Helena*,  
 1652 I wonder of this being heere together.  
 1653     *The*. No doubt they rose vp early, to obserue  
 1654 The right of May; and hearing our intent,  
 1655 Came heere in grace of our solemnity.  
 1656 But speake *Egeus*, is not this the day  
 1657 That *Hermia* should giue answer of her choice?  
 1658     *Egeus*. It is, my Lord.  
 1659     *Thes.* Goe bid the hunts- men wake them with their  
 1660 hornes.  
 1661 *Hornes and they wake*.  
 1662 *Shout within, they all start vp.*  
 1663     *Thes.* Good morrow friends: Saint *Valentine* is past,  
 1664 Begin these wood birds but to couple now?  
 1665     *Lys.* Pardon my Lord.  
 1666     *Thes.* I pray you all stand vp.  
 1667 I know you two are Riuall enemies.  
 1668 How comes this gentle concord in the world,  
 1669 That hatred is so farre from iealousie,  
 1670 To sleepe by hate, and feare no enmity.  
 1671     *Lys.* My Lord, I shall reply amazedly,  
 1672 Halfe sleepe, halfe waking. but as yet, I sweare,  
 1673 I cannot truly say how I came heere.  
 1674 But as I thinke (for truly would I speake)  
 1675 And now I doe bethinke me, so it is;  
 1676 I came with *Hermia* hither. Our intent  
 1677 Was to be gone from *Athens*, where we might be  
 1678 Without the perill of the *Athenian Law*.  
 1679     *Ege.* Enough, enough, my Lord: you haue enough;  
 1680 I beg the Law, the Law, vpon his head:  
 1681 They would have stolne away, they would *Demetrius*,  
 1682 Thereby to haue defeated you and me:  
 1683 You of your wife, and me of my consent;  
 1684 Of my consent, that she should be your wife.  
 1685     *Dem.* My Lord, faire *Helen* told me of their stealth,  
 1686 Of this their purpose hither, to this wood,  
 1687 And I in furie hither followed them;  
 1688 Faire *Helena*, in fancy followed me.  
 1689 But my good Lord, I wot not by what not by what power,  
 1690 (But by some power it is) my loue  
 1691 To *Hermia* (melted as the snow)

1692 Seems to me now as the remembrance of an idle gaude,  
 1693 Which in my childehood I did doat vpon:  
 1694 And all the faith, the vertue of my heart,  
 1695 The obiect and the pleasure of mine eye,  
 1696 Is onely *Helena*. To her, my Lord,  
 1697 Was I betroth'd, ere I see *Hermia*,  
 1698 But like a sickenesse did I loath this food,  
 1699 But as in health, come to my naturall taste,  
 1700 Now doe I wish it, loue it, long for it,  
 1701 And will for euermore be true to it.

1702     *Thes.* Faire Louers, you are fortunately met;  
 1703 Of this discourse we shall heare more anon.

1704     *Egeus*, I will ouer- beare your will;  
 1705 For in the Temple, by and by with vs,  
 1706 These couples shall eternally be knit.

1707 And for the morning now is something worne,  
 1708 Our purpos'd hunting shall be set aside.  
 1709 Away, with vs to *Athens*; three and three,  
 1710 Wee'll hold a feast in great solemnitie.

1711 Come *Hippolita*. *Exit Duke and Lords.*

1712     *Dem.* These things seeme small & vndistinguishable,  
 1713 Like farre off mountaines turned into Clouds.

1714     *Her.* Me- thinks I see these things with parted eye,  
 1715 When euery thing seemes double.

1716     *Hel.* So me- thinkes:

1717 And I haue found *Demetrius*, like a iewell,  
 1718 Mine owne, and not mine owne.

1719     *Dem.* It seemes to mee,  
 1720 That yet we sleepe, we dreame. Do not you thinke,  
 1721 The Duke was heere, and bid vs follow him?

1722     *Her.* Yea, and my Father.

1723     *Hel.* And *Hippolita*.

1724     *Lys.* And he bid vs follow to the Temple.

1725     *Dem.* Why then we are awake; lets follow him, and  
 1726 by the way let vs recount our dreames.

1727 *Bottome wakes. Exit Louers.*

1728     *Clo.* When my cue comes, call me, and I will answer.  
 1729 My next is, most faire *Piramus*. Hey ho. *Peter Quince*?  
 1730 *Flute* the bellowes- mender? *Snout* the tinker? *Starue-ling*?  
 1731 Gods my life! Stolne hence, and left me asleepe: I  
 1732 haue had a most rare vision. I had a dreame, past the wit  
 1733 of man, to say, what dreame it was. Man is but an Asse,  
 1734 if he goe about to expound this dreame. Me- thought I  
 1735 was, there is no man can tell what. Me- thought I was,  
 1736 and me- thought I had. But man is but a patch'd foole,  
 1737 if he will offer to say, what me- thought I had. The eye of

1738 man hath not heard, the eare of man hath not seen, mans  
 1739 hand is not able to taste, his tongue to conceiue, nor his  
 1740 heart to report, what my dreame was. I will get *Peter*  
 1741 *Quince* to write a ballet of this dreame, it shall be called  
 1742 *Bottomes Dreame*, because it hath no bottome; and I will  
 1743 sing it in the latter end of a play, before the Duke. Per-aduenture,  
 1744 to make it the more gracious, I shall sing it  
 1745 at her death. *Exit.*

1746 *Enter Quince, Flute, Thisbie, Snout, and Starueling.*  
 1747     *Quin.* Haue you sent to *Bottomes* house? Is he come  
 1748 home yet?  
 1749     *Staru.* He cannot be heard of. Out of doubt hee is  
 1750 transported. [O2  
 1751     *This.* If he come not, then the play is mar'd. It goes  
 1752 not forward, doth it?  
 1753     *Quin.* It is not possible: you haue not a man in all  
 1754 *Athens*, able to discharge *Piramus* but he.  
 1755     *This.* No, hee hath simply the best wit of any handy-craft  
 1756 man in *Athens*.  
 1757     *Quin.* Yea, and the best person too, and hee is a very  
 1758 Paramour, for a sweet voyce.  
 1759     *This.* You must say, Paragon. A Paramour is (God  
 1760 blesse vs) a thing of nought.  
 1761 *Enter Snug the Ioyner.*  
 1762     *Snug.* Masters, the Duke is comming from the Tem-ple,  
 1763 and there is two or three Lords & Ladies more mar-ried.  
 1764 If our sport had gone forward, we had all bin made  
 1765 men.  
 1766     *This.* O sweet bully *Bottome*: thus hath he lost sixe-pence  
 1767 a day, during his life; he could not haue scaped six-pence  
 1768 a day. And the Duke had not giuen him sixpence  
 1769 a day for playing *Piramus*, Ile be hang'd. He would haue  
 1770 deserued it. Sixpence a day in *Piramus*, or nothing.  
 1771 *Enter Bottome.*  
 1772     *Bot.* Where are these Lads? Where are these hearts?  
 1773     *Quin.* *Bottome*, o most couragious day! O most hap-pie  
 1774 houre!  
 1775     *Bot.* Masters, I am to discourse wonders; but ask me  
 1776 not what. For if I tell you, I am no true *Athenian*. I  
 1777 will tell you euery thing as it fell out.  
 1778     *Qu.* Let vs heare, sweet *Bottome*.  
 1779     *Bot.* Not a word of me: all that I will tell you, is, that  
 1780 the Duke hath dined. Get your apparell together, good  
 1781 strings to your beards, new ribbands to your pumps,  
 1782 meeet presently at the Palace, euery man looke ore his  
 1783 part: for the short and the long is, our play is preferred:

1784 In any case let *Thisby* haue cleane linnen: and let not him  
 1785 that playes the Lion, paire his nailes, for they shall hang  
 1786 out for the Lions clawes. And most deare Actors, eate  
 1787 no Onions, nor Garlick; for wee are to vtter sweete  
 1788 breath, and I doe not doubt but to heare them say, it is a  
 1789 sweet Comedy. No more words: away, go away.  
 1790 *Exeunt.*

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### *Actus Quintus.*

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1792 Enter *Theseus, Hippolita, Egeus and his Lords.*  
 1793     *Hip.* 'Tis strange my *Theseus*, y these louers speake of.  
 1794     *The.* More strange then true. I neuer may beleue  
 1795 These anticke fables, nor these Fairy toyes,  
 1796 Louers and mad men haue such seething braines,  
 1797 Such shaping phantasies, that apprehend more  
 1798 Then coole reason euer comprehends.  
 1799 The Lunaticke, the Louer, and the Poet,  
 1800 Are of imagination all compact.  
 1801 One sees more diuels then vaste hell can hold;  
 1802 That is the mad man. The Louer, all as frantick,  
 1803 Sees *Helens* beauty in a brow of *Egipt*.  
 1804 The Poets eye in a fine frenzy rolling, doth glance  
 1805 From heauen to earth, from earth to heauen.  
 1806 And as imagination bodies forth the forms of things  
 1807 Vnknowne; the Poets pen turnes them to shapes,  
 1808 And giues to aire nothing, a locall habitation,  
 1809 And a name. Such tricks hath strong imagination,  
 1810 That if it would but apprehend some ioy,  
 1811 It comprehends some bringer of that ioy.  
 1812 Or in the night, imagining some feare,  
 1813 Howe easie is a bush suppos'd a Beare?  
 1814     *Hip.* But all the storie of the night told ouer,  
 1815 And all their minds transfigur'd so together,  
 1816 More witnesseth than fancies images,  
 1817 And growes to something of great constancie;  
 1818 But howsoeuer, strange, and admirable.  
 1819 Enter louers, *Lysander, Demetrius, Hermia,*  
 1820 *and Helena.*  
 1821     *The.* Heere come the louers, full of ioy and mirth:  
 1822 Ioy, gentle friends, ioy and fresh dayes  
 1823 Of loue accompany your hearts.  
 1824     *Lys.* More then to vs, waite in your royll walkes,  
 1825 your boord, your bed.

- 1826     *The.* Come now, what maskes, what dances shall  
 1827     we haue,  
 1828     To weare away this long age of three houres,  
 1829     Between our after supper, and bed- time?  
 1830     Where is our vsuall manager of mirth?  
 1831     What Reuels are in hand? Is there no play,  
 1832     To ease the anguish of a torturing houre?  
 1833     Call *Egeus*.  
 1834     *Ege.* Heere mighty *Theseus*.  
 1835     *The.* Say, what abridgement haue you for this eue-ning?  
 1837     What maske? What musicke? How shall we beguile  
 1838     The lazie time, if not with some delight?  
 1839     *Ege.* There is a breefe how many sports are rife:  
 1840     Make choise of which your Highnesse will see first.  
 1841     *Lis.* The battell with the Centaurs to be sung  
 1842     By an Athenian Eunuch, to the Harpe.  
 1843     *The.* Wee'l none of that. That haue I told my Loue  
 1844     In glory of my kinsman Hercules.  
 1845     *Lis.* The riot of the tipsie Bachanals,  
 1846     Tearing the Thracian singer, in their rage?  
 1847     *The.* That is an old deuice, and it was plaid  
 1848     When I from *Thebes* came last a Conqueror.  
 1849     *Lis.* The thrice three Muses, mourning for the death  
 1850     of learning, late deceast in beggerie.  
 1851     *The.* That is some Satire keene and critcall,  
 1852     Not sorting with a nuptiall ceremonie.  
 1853     *Lis.* A tedious breefe Scene of yong *Piramus*,  
 1854     And his loue *Thisby*; very tragicall mirth.  
 1855     *The.* Merry and tragicall? Tedious, and briefe? That  
 1856     is, hot ice, and wondrous strange snow. How shall wee  
 1857     finde the concord of this discord?  
 1858     *Ege.* A play there is, my Lord, some ten words long,  
 1859     Which is as breefe, as I haue knowne a play;  
 1860     But by ten words, my Lord, it is too long;  
 1861     Which makes it tedious. For in all the play,  
 1862     There is not one word apt, one Player fitted.  
 1863     And tragicall my noble Lord it is: for *Piramus*  
 1864     Therein doth kill himselfe. Which when I saw  
 1865     Rehearst, I must confesse, made mine eyes water:  
 1866     But more merrie teares, the passion of loud laughter  
 1867     Neuer shed.  
 1868     *Thes.* What are they that do play it?  
 1869     *Ege.* Hard handed men, that worke in Athens heere,  
 1870     Which neuer labour'd in their mindes till now;  
 1871     And now haue toyled their vnbreathed memories  
 1872     With this same play, against your nuptiall.

1873     *The.* And we will heare it. [O2v  
 1874     *Hip.* No my noble Lord, it is not for you. I haue heard  
 1875     It ouer, and it is nothing, nothing in the world;  
 1876     Vnless you can finde sport in their intents,  
 1877     Extreamely stretched, and cond with cruell paine,  
 1878     To doe you seruice.  
 1879     *Thes.* I will heare that play. For neuer any thing  
 1880     Can be amisse, when simpelenesse and duty tender it.  
 1881     Goe bring them in, and take your places, Ladies.  
 1882     *Hip.* I loue not to see wretchednesse orecharged;  
 1883     And duty in his seruice perishing.  
 1884     *Thes.* Why gentle sweet, you shall see no such thing.  
 1885     *Hip.* He saies, they can doe nothing in this kinde.  
 1886     *Thes.* The kinder we, to giue them thanks for nothing  
 1887     Our sport shall be, to take what they mistake;  
 1888     And what poore duty cannot doe, noble respect  
 1889     Takes it in might, not merit.  
 1890     Where I haue come, great Clearkes haue purposed  
 1891     To greeete me with premeditated welcomes;  
 1892     Where I haue seene them shiuier and looke pale,  
 1893     Make periods in the midst of sentences,  
 1894     Throttle their practiz'd accent in their feares,  
 1895     And in conclusion, dumbly haue broke off,  
 1896     Not payng me a welcome. Trust me sweete,  
 1897     Out of this silence yet, I pickt a welcome:  
 1898     And in the modesty of fearefull duty,  
 1899     I read as much, as from the ratling tongue  
 1900     Of saucy and audacious eloquence.  
 1901     Loue therefore, and tongue- tide simplicity,  
 1902     In least, speake most, to my capacity.  
 1903     *Egeus.* So please your Grace, the Prologue is addrest.  
 1904     *Duke.* Let him approach. *Flor. Trum.*  
 1905     Enter the Prologue. *Quince.*  
 1906     *Pro.* If we offend, it is with our good will.  
 1907     That you should thinke, we come not to offend,  
 1908     But with good will. To shew our simple skill,  
 1909     That is the true beginning of our end.  
 1910     Consider then, we come but in despight.  
 1911     We do not come, as minding to content you,  
 1912     Our true intent is. All for your delight,  
 1913     We are not heere. That you should here repent you,  
 1914     The Actors are at hand; and by their show,  
 1915     You shall know all, that you are like to know.  
 1916     *Thes.* This fellow doth not stand vpon points.  
 1917     *Lys.* He hath rid his Prologue, like a rough Colt: he  
 1918     knowes not the stop. A good morall my lord. it is not

- 1919 enough to speake, but to speake true.
- 1920     *Hip*. Indeed hee hath plaid on his Prologue, like a  
1921 childe on a Recorder, a sound, but not in gouernment.
- 1922     *Thes*. His speech was like a tangled chaine: nothing  
1923 impaired, but all disordered. Who is next?
- 1924 *Tawyer with a Trumpet before them.*
- 1925 *Enter Pyramus and Thisby, Wall, Moone- shine, and Lyon.*
- 1926     *Prol*. Gentles, perchance you wonder at this show,  
1927 But wonder on, till truth make all things plaine.
- 1928 This man is *Piramus*, if you would know;
- 1929 This beauteous Lady, *Thisby* is certaine.
- 1930 This man, with lyme and rough- cast, doth present  
1931 Wall, that vile wall, which did these louers sunder:
- 1932 And through walls chink (poor soules) they are content
- 1933 To whisper. At the which, let no man wonder.
- 1934 This man, with Lanthorne, dog, and bush of thorne,  
1935 Presenteth moone- shine. For if you will know,
- 1936 By moone- shine did these Louers thinke no scorne
- 1937 To meet at *Ninus* toombe, there, there to wooo:
- 1938 This grizly beast (which Lyon hight by name)
- 1939 The trusty *Thisby*, comming first by night,  
1940 Did scarre away, or rather did affright:
- 1941 And as she fled, her mantle she did fall;
- 1942 Which Lyon vile with bloody mouth did staine.
- 1943 Anon comes *Piramus*, sweet youth and tall,  
1944 And findes his *Thisbies* Mantle slaine;
- 1945 Whereat, with blade, with bloody blamefull blade,  
1946 He brauely broacht his boiling bloudy breast,
- 1947 And *Thisby*, tarrying in Mulberry shade,
- 1948 His dagger drew, and died. For all the rest,
- 1949 Let *Lyon, Moone- shine, Wall*, and Louers twaine,
- 1950 At large discourse, while here they doe remaine.
- 1951 *Exit all but Wall.*
- 1952     *Thes*. I wonder if the Lion be to speake.
- 1953     *Deme*. No wonder, my Lord: one Lion may, when  
1954 many Asses doe.
- 1955 *Exit Lyon, Thisbie, and Mooneshine.*
- 1956     *Wall*. In this same Interlude, it doth befall,  
1957 That I, one *Snowt* (by name) present a wall:
- 1958 And such a wall, as I would haue you thinke,
- 1959 That had in it a crannied hole or chinke:
- 1960 Through which the Louers, *Piramus* and *Thisbie*  
1961 Did whisper often, very secretly.
- 1962 This loame, this rough- cast, and this stone doth shew,  
1963 That I am that same Wall; the truth is so.
- 1964 And this the cranny is, right and sinister,

- 1965 Through which the fearfull Louers are to whisper.  
 1966     *Thes.* Would you desire Lime and Haire to speake  
 1967 better?  
 1968     *Deme.* It is the wittiest partition, that euer I heard  
 1969 discourse, my Lord.  
 1970     *Thes.* *Pyramus* drawes neere the Wall, silence.  
 1971 *Enter Pyramus.*  
 1972     *Pir.* O grim lookt night, o night with hue so blacke,  
 1973 O night, which euer art, when day is not:  
 1974 O night, o night, alacke, alacke, alacke,  
 1975 I feare my *Thisbies* promise is forgot.  
 1976 And thou o wall, thou sweet and louely wall,  
 1977 That stands between her fathers ground and mine,  
 1978 Thou wall, o Wall, o sweet and louely wall,  
 1979 Shew me thy chinke, to blinke through with mine eine.  
 1980 Thankes courteous wall. *Ioue* shield thee well for this.  
 1981 But what see I? No *Thisbie* doe I see.  
 1982 O wicked wall, through whom I see no blisse,  
 1983 Curst be thy stones for thus deceiuing mee.  
 1984     *Thes.* The wall me- thinkes being sensible, should  
 1985 curse againe.  
 1986     *Pir.* No in truth sir, he should not. *Deceiuing me,*  
 1987 Is *Thisbies* cue; she is to enter, and I am to spy  
 1988 Her through the wall. You shall see it will fall.  
 1989 *Enter Thisbie.*  
 1990 Pat as I told you; yonder she comes.  
 1991     *This.* O wall, full often hast thou heard my mones,  
 1992 For parting my faire *Piramus*, and me  
 1993 My cherry lips haue often kist thy stones;  
 1994 Thy stones with Lime and Haire knit vp in thee.  
 1995     *Pyra.* I see a voyce; now will I to the chinke,  
 1996 To spy and I can heare my *Thisbies* face. *Thisbie?*  
 1997     *This.* My Loue thou art, my Loue I thinke.  
 1998     *Pir.* Thinke what thou wilt, I am thy Louers grace,  
 1999 And like *Limander* am I trusty still.  
 2000     *This.* And like *Helen* till the Fates me kill.  
 2001     *Pir.* Not *Shafalus* to *Procrus* was so true.  
 2002     *This.* As *Shafalus* to *Procrus*, I to you. [O3  
 2003     *Pir.* O kisse me through the hole of this vile wall.  
 2004     *This.* I kisse the wals hole, not your lips at all.  
 2005     *Pir.* Wilt thou at *Ninnies* tombe meete me straight  
 2006 way?  
 2007     *This.* Tide life, tide death, I come without delay.  
 2008     *Wall.* Thus haue I *Wall*, my part discharged so;  
 2009 And being done, thus *Wall* away doth go. *Exit Clow.*  
 2010     *Du.* Now is the morall downe between the two

- 2011 Neighbours.
- 2012     *Dem.* No remedie my Lord, when Wals are so wil-full,  
2013 to heare without warning.
- 2014     *Dut.* This is the silliest stuppe that ere I heard.
- 2015     *Du.* The best in this kind are but shadowes, and the  
2016 worst are no worse, if imagination amend them.
- 2017     *Dut.* It must be your imagination then, & not theirs.
- 2018     *Duk.* If wee imagine no worse of them then they of  
2019 themselves, they may passe for excellent men. Here com  
2020 two noble beasts, in a man and a Lion.
- 2021 *Enter Lyon and Moone-* shine.
- 2022     *Lyon.* You Ladies, you (whose gentle harts do feare  
2023 The smallest monstrous mouse that creepes on floore)  
2024 May now perchance, both quake and tremble heere,  
2025 When Lion rough in wildest rage doth roare.
- 2026 Then know that I, one *Snug* the Ioyner am  
2027 A Lion fell, nor else no Lions dam:  
2028 For if I should as Lion come in strife  
2029 Into this place, 'twere pittie of my life.
- 2030     *Du.* A verie gentle beast, and of good conscience.
- 2031     *Dem.* The verie best at a beast, my Lord, y ere I saw.
- 2032     *Lis.* This Lion is a verie Fox for his valor.
- 2033     *Du.* True, and a Goose for his discretion.
- 2034     *Dem.* Not so my Lord: for his valor cannot carrie  
2035 his discretion, and the fox carries the Goose.
- 2036     *Du.* His discretion I am sure cannot carrie his valor:  
2037 for the Goose carries not the Fox. It is well; leauue it to  
2038 his discretion, and let vs hearken to the Moone.
- 2039     *Moone.* This Lanthorne doth the horned Moone pre-sent.
- 2040     *De.* He should haue worne the hornes on his head.
- 2041     *Du.* Hee is no crescent, and his hornes are inuisible,  
2042 within the circumference.
- 2043     *Moon.* This lanthorne doth the horned Moone pre-sent:  
2044 My selfe, the man i'th Moone doth seeme to be.
- 2045     *Du.* This is the greatest error of all the rest; the man  
2046 Should be put into the Lanthorne. How is it els the man  
2047 i'th Moone?
- 2048     *Dem.* He dares not come there for the candle.
- 2049 For you see, it is already in snuffe.
- 2050     *Dut.* I am wearie of this Moone; would he would  
2051 change.
- 2052     *Du.* It appeares by his smal light of discretion, that  
2053 he is in the wane: but yet in courtesie, in all reason, we  
2054 must stay the time.
- 2055     *Lys.* Proceed Moone.
- 2056     *Moon.* All that I haue to say, is to tell you, that the

2058 Lanthorne is the Moone; I, the man in the Moone; this  
 2059 thorne bush; my thorne bush; and this dog, my dog.  
 2060     *Dem.* Why all these should be in the Lanthorne: for  
 2061 they are in the Moone. But silence, heere comes *Thisby*.  
 2062     *Enter Thisby.*  
 2063     *This.* This is old *Ninnies* tombe: where is my loue?  
 2064     *Lyon.* Oh.  
 2065     *The Lion roares,* *Thisby runs off.*  
 2066     *Dem.* Well roar'd Lion.  
 2067     *Du.* Well run *Thisby*.  
 2068     *Dut.* Well shone Moone.  
 2069 Truly the Moone shines with a good grace.  
 2070     *Du.* Wel mouz'd Lion.  
 2071     *Dem.* And then came *Piramus*.  
 2072     *Lys.* And so the Lion vanisht.  
 2073     *Enter Piramus.*  
 2074     *Pyr.* Sweet Moone, I thank thee for thy sunny beames,  
 2075 I thanke thee Moone, for shining now so bright:  
 2076 For by thy gracious, golden, glittering beames,  
 2077 I trust to taste of truest *Thisbies* sight.  
 2078 But stay: O spight! but marke, poore Knight,  
 2079 What dreadful dole is heere?  
 2080 Eyes do you see! How can it be!  
 2081 O dainty Ducke: O Deere!  
 2082 Thy mantle good; what staind with blood!  
 2083 Approch you furies fell:  
 2084 O Fates! come, come: Cut thred and thrum,  
 2085 Quaile, crush, conclude, and quell.  
 2086     *Du.* This passion, and the death of a deare friend,  
 2087 Would go neere to make a man looke sad.  
 2088     *Dut.* Beshrew my heart, but I pittie the man.  
 2089     *Pir.* O wherfore Nature, did'st thou Lions frame?  
 2090 Since lion vilde hath heere deflour'd my deere:  
 2091 Which is: no, no, which was the fairest Dame  
 2092 That liu'd, that lou'd, that like'd, that look'd with cheere.  
 2093 Come teares, confound: Out sword, and wound  
 2094 The pap of *Piramus*:  
 2095 I, that left pap, where heart doth hop;  
 2096 Thus dye I, thus, thus, thus.  
 2097 Now am I dead, now am I fled, my soule is in the sky,  
 2098 Tongue lose thy light, Moone take thy flight,  
 2099 Now dye, dye, dye, dye.  
 2100     *Dem.* No Die, but an ace for him; for he is but one.  
 2101     *Lis.* Lesse then an ace man. For he is dead, he is no-thing.  
 2103     *Du.* With the helpe of a Surgeon, he might yet reco-uer,  
 2104 and proue an Asse.

2105     *Dut.* How chance Moone- shine is gone before?  
 2106     *Thisby* comes backe, and findes her Louer.  
 2107     *Enter Thisby.*  
 2108     *Duke.* She wil finde him by starre- light.  
 2109     Heere she comes, and her passion ends the play.  
 2110     *Dut.* Me thinkes shee should not vse a long one for  
 2111     such a *Piramus*: I hope she will be breefe.  
 2112     *Dem.* A Moth wil turne the ballance, which *Piramus*  
 2113     which *Thisby* is the better.  
 2114     *Lys.* She hath spyd him already, with those sweete |(eyes.  
 2115     *Dem.* And thus she meanes, *videlicit*.  
 2116     *This.* Asleepe my Loue? What, dead my Doue?  
 2117     *O Piramus* arise:  
 2118     Speake, speake. Quite dumbe? Dead, dead? A tombe  
 2119     Must couer thy sweet eyes.  
 2120     These Lilly Lips, this cherry nose,  
 2121     These yellow Cowslip cheekes  
 2122     Are gone, are gone: Louers make mone:  
 2123     His eyes were greene as Leekes.  
 2124     *O Sisters three,* come, come to mee,  
 2125     With hands as pale as Milke,  
 2126     Lay them in gore, since you haue shore  
 2127     with sheeres, his thred of silke.  
 2128     Tongue not a word: Come trusty sword:  
 2129     Come blade, my brest imbrue: [O3v  
 2130     And farewell friends, thus *Thisbie* ends;  
 2131     Adieu, adieu, adieu.  
 2132     *Duk.* Moone- shine & Lion are left to burie the dead.  
 2133     *Deme.* I, and Wall too.  
 2134     *Bot.* No, I assure you, the wall is downe, that parted  
 2135     their Fathers. Will it please you to see the Epilogue, or  
 2136     to heare a Bergomask dance, betweene two of our com-pany?  
 2138     *Duk.* No Epilogue, I pray you; for your play needs  
 2139     no excuse. Neuer excuse; for when the plaiers are all  
 2140     dead, there need none to be blamed. Marry, if hee that  
 2141     writ it had plaid *Piramus*, and hung himselfe in *Thisbies*  
 2142     garter, it would haue beene a fine Tragedy: and so it is  
 2143     truely, and very notably discharg'd. but come, your  
 2144     Burgomaske; let your Epilogue alone.  
 2145     The iron tongue of midnight hath told twelue.  
 2146     Louers to bed, 'tis almost Fairy time.  
 2147     I feare we shall out- sleepe the comming morne,  
 2148     As much as we this night haue ouer- watcht.  
 2149     This palpable grosse play hath well beguil'd  
 2150     The heauy gate of night. Sweet friends to bed.  
 2151     A fortnight hold we this solemnity.

2152 In nightly Reuels; and new iollitie. *Exeunt.*  
 2153 *Enter Pucke.*  
 2154     *Puck.* Now the hungry Lyons rores,  
 2155 And the Wolfe beholds the Moone:  
 2156 Whilst the heauy ploughman snores,  
 2157 All with weary taske fore- done.  
 2158 Now the wasted brands doe glow,  
 2159 Whil'st the scritch- owle, scritching loud,  
 2160 Puts the wretch that lies in woe,  
 2161 In remembrance of a shrowd.  
 2162 Now it is the time of night,  
 2163 That the graues, all gaping wide,  
 2164 Euery one lets forth his spright,  
 2165 In the Church- way paths to glide,  
 2166 And we Fairies, that do runne,  
 2167 By the triple *Hecates* teame,  
 2168 From the presence of the Sunne,  
 2169 Following darkenesse like a dreame,  
 2170 Now are frolickie; not a Mouse  
 2171 Shall disturbe this hallowed house.  
 2172 I am sent with broome before,  
 2173 To sweep the dust behinde the doore.  
 2174 *Enter King and Queene of Fairies, with their traine.*  
 2175     *Ob.* Through the house giue glimmering light,  
 2176 By the dead and drowsie fier,  
 2177 Euerie Elfe and Fairie spright,  
 2178 Hop as light as bird from brier,  
 2179 And this Ditty after me, sing and dance it trippinglie,  
 2180     *Tita.* First rehearse this song by roate,  
 2181 To each word a warbling note.  
 2182 Hand in hand, with Fairie grace,  
 2183 Will we sing and blesse this place.  
 2184 *The Song.*  
 2185 *Now vntill the breake of day,*  
 2186 *Through this house each Fairy stray.*  
 2187 *To the best Bride- bed will we,*  
 2188 *Which by vs shall blessed be:*  
 2189 *And the issue there create,*  
 2190 *Euer shall be fortunate:*  
 2191 *So shall all the couples three,*  
 2192 *Euer true in louing be:*  
 2193 *And the blots of Natures hand,*  
 2194 *Shall not in their issue stand.*  
 2195 *Neuer mole, harelip, nor scarre,*  
 2196 *nor mark prodigious, such as are*  
 2197 *Despised in Natiuitie,*

2198 *Shall vpon their children be.*  
2199 *With this field dew consecrate,*  
2200 *Euery Fairy take his gate,*  
2201 *And each seuerall chamber blesse,*  
2202 *Through this Pallace with sweet peace,*  
2203 *Euer shall in safety rest.*  
2204 *And the owner of it blest.*  
2205 *Trip away, make no stay;*  
2206 *Meet me all by break of day.*  
2207     *Robin.* If we shadowes haue offended,  
2208     Thinke but this (and all is mended)  
2209     That you haue but slumbred heere,  
2210     While these Visions did appeare.  
2211     And this weake and idle theame,  
2212     No more yeelding but a dreame,  
2213     Gentles, doe not reprehend.  
2214     If you pardon, we will mend.  
2215     And as I am an honest *Pucke*,  
2216     If we haue vnearned lucke,  
2217     Now to scape the Serpents tongue,  
2218     We will make amends ere long:  
2219     Else the *Pucke* a lyar call.  
2220     So good night vnto you all.  
2221     Giue me your hands, if we be friends,  
2222     And *Robin* shall restore amends.

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**FINIS.**

2224   A  
2225   MIDSOMMER  
         Nights Dreame.

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