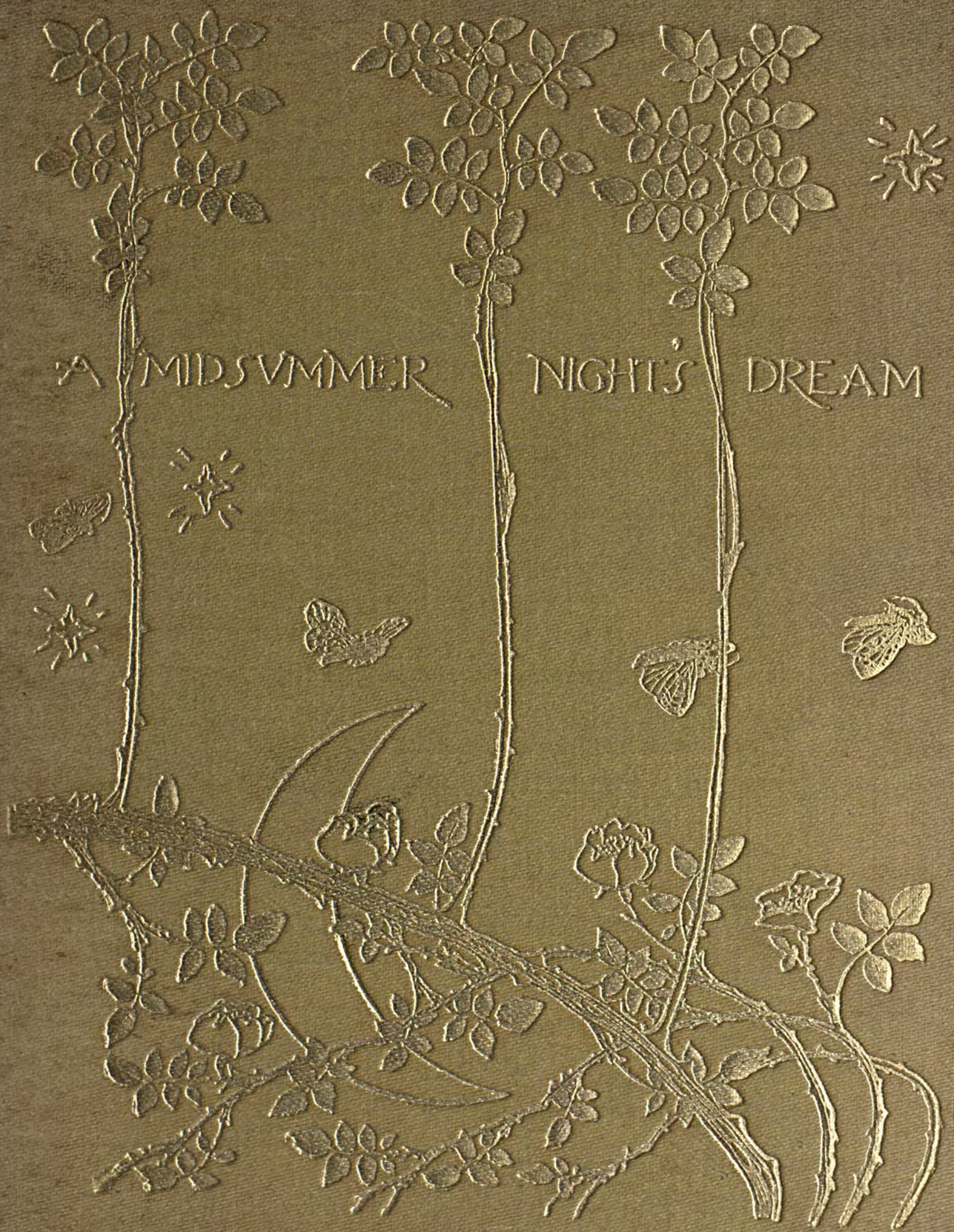


A MIDSUMMER

NIGHT'S DREAM

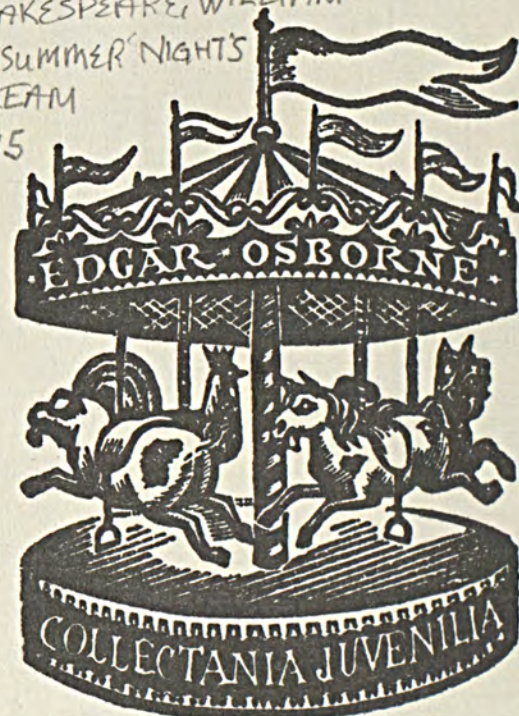






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MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S
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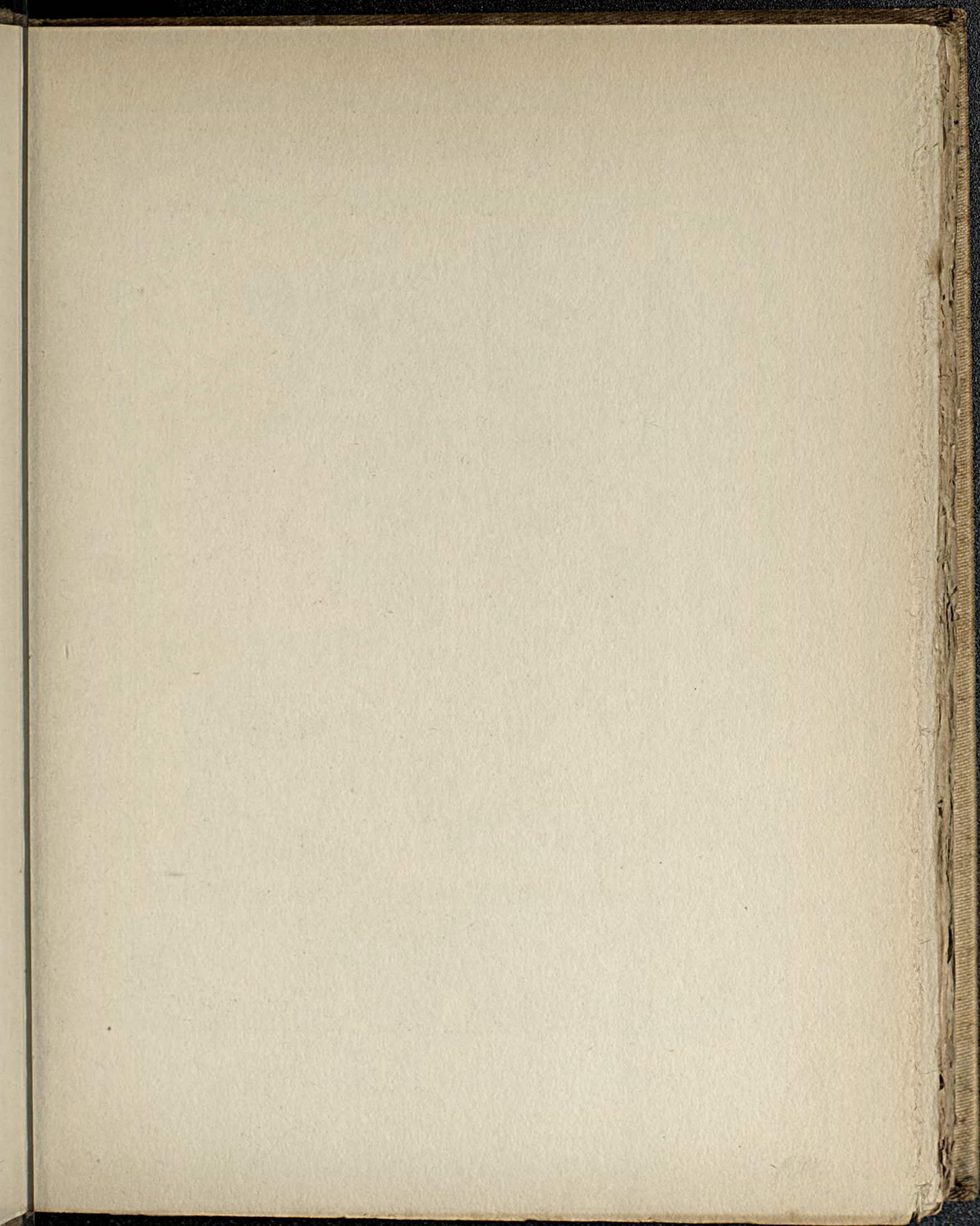
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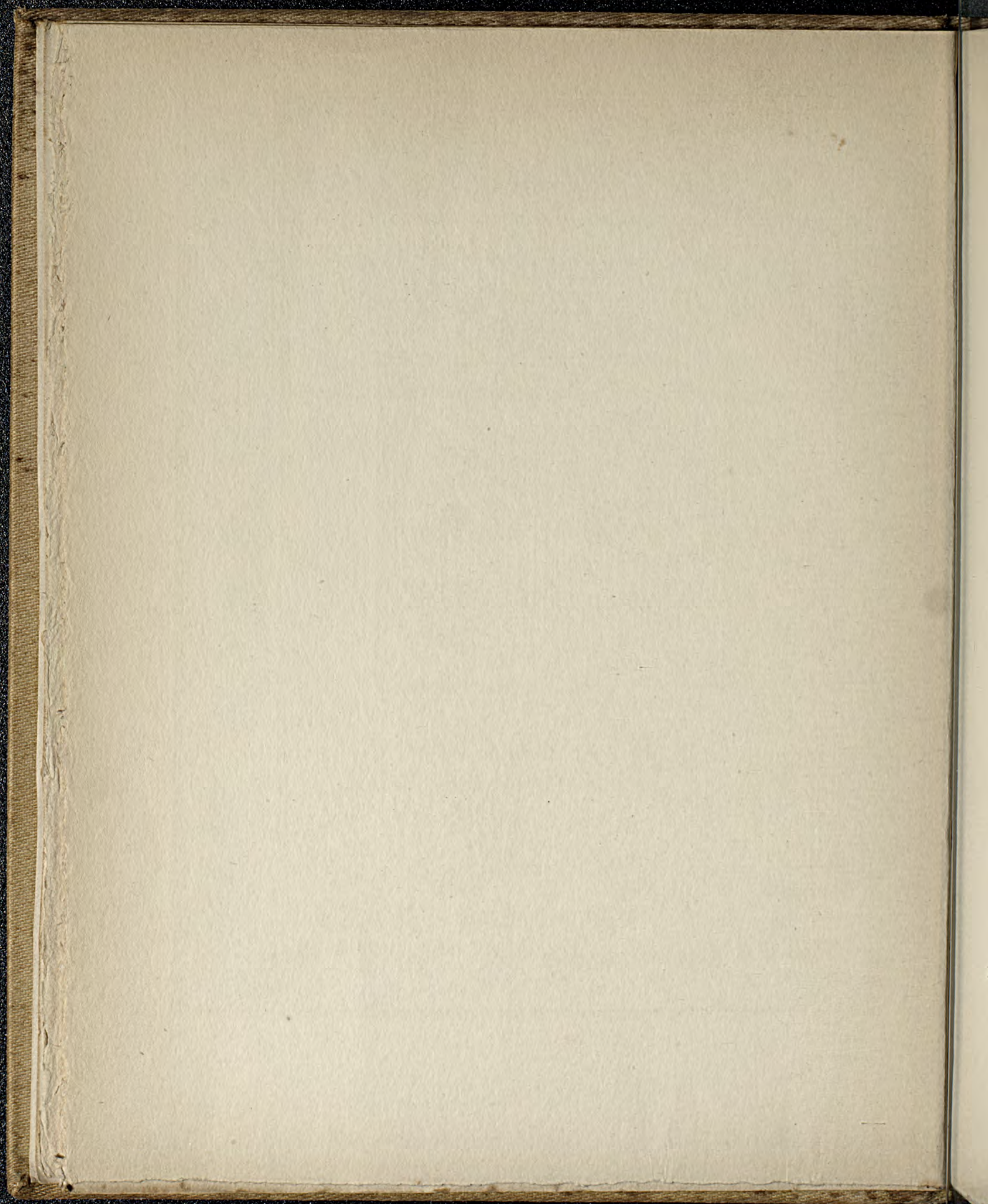




A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM
BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT
ANNING BELL.



EDITED WITH
AN INTRODUCTION
BY ISRAEL GOLLANCZ
J. M. DENT & CO. ALDINE HOUSE
LONDON: E. C. : MDCCCXCV





To

XMAS MDCCCXCV

*A Willing Captive at the Court of
King Oberon & Queen Titania*

DEAREST

Here at last is my long-promised gift—the most beautiful of all gifts for a fairy-loving child—this wonderful fairy-tale told three-hundred years ago by the greatest of story-tellers, the greatest of all the poets that have ever lived, God's best gift to England, England's to the world.

I have not forgotten my promise. How could I forget that bright spring-day, when, invading the quiet

of the school-room, I found my little friend, heedless of the sunshine, poring over those terrible NOTES, committing to memory Mr Theobald's conjectures, and Mr Johnson's, and Mr Steevens', and I know not whose, while at her side lay a gloomy-looking thing labelled "MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM: NOTE-BOOK OF ETYMOLOGIES, &c.", carefully compiled by the most diligent of teachers from the pages of a famous volume she familiarly described as "Skeat"! Far be it from me to say an unkind word against that excellent lady. Had we not good cause to be grateful to her that happy afternoon, when she graciously allowed another to take her place, and the scene of action to be changed from wooden-desk, black-board, and dictionaries, to the delightful shelter of an old-world garden? And that became "the Shakespeare school-room" for many a day, and we banished from our fairyland, "upon pain of instant death," "all trespassers, namely, parallel passages, various readings, conjectural emendations, etymologies, commentaries, commentators, etc., etc. . . .

'Hence away! now all is well!
One aloof stand sentinel.' "

And we soon forgot their very existence, as we watched

the ever-varying scenes in the fairy wood near Athens, though once, at a critical moment, when hapless Pyramus found his "Thisbe's mantle good, all stained with blood," and cried in anguish :—

"O Fates, come, come,
Cut thread and thrum,"

lo, just then, a wretched little vagrant Etymology buzzed in our ears, but was away before we could impale it. We thought we heard a mischievous and mocking laughter as it fled, and there was little doubt that Master Puck was at his knavish tricks again. And when all was over, and the lovers were at last happy, and

"three and three,
Held a feast in great solemnity."

and the wedding-bells of Athens went so merrily, and the good fairies had blessed each several chamber of the palace with sweetest peace, then the gay court of the fairy Monarch and his Queen began to pass away in bright procession, like some heavenly Masque of Flowers, and all seemed radiant with joy, save that Titania looked somewhat sad and wistful. "Poor Queen!" you whispered in my ear, "she so loved the little boy! Cruel Oberon to rob her of her joy. Poor

Queen! I wonder if " . . . and then somehow you strayed from my side, and in a moment a whole host of tiny fairies held you captive, crying aloud, "A changeling! a changeling! a sweeter changeling than the changeling boy!" and with the noise I awoke and found myself all alone in my lonely turret, my head buried in the yellow leaves of a worm-eaten Folio.

My promise, however, was no dream,—my promise to send you Shakespeare's fairy-poem in such a guise as should gladden your heart; but all the booksellers in London could not satisfy my wishes. I bethought me then of my good friend Mr Dent, a Shakespeare lover of the right sort, famous far and wide for his beautiful books, and he readily promised to produce the very thing I sought, on one condition, that I would do my share, and edit it, and write a Preface. In vain I urged that we both objected to editors and their Prefaces. "If your young friend," he sternly said, "is so devoted to Shakespeare, she must surely wish to know something about his history; if she knows Fairyland so well, she ought to know something about the Geography and History of Fairyland; if she delights in the beautiful poetry of MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM, she'll not love it less for understanding how the wonderful fabric arose under the touch of the great

Enchanter. Do you care less," he went on, "for Westminster Abbey, because you can explain its architecture, or does a botanist care less for the marvellous flowers he handles because he can tell you all about the petals?" His eloquence was quite alarming, and I was ready to promise almost anything. You must know that publishers are terrible creatures, and it is dangerous to thwart them.

Well, dearest, let us get back to the old days of good Queen Bess. She was wise as she was good, and I've little doubt she would have chosen you as one of the young maidens of the Court. Imagine yourself then at the Palace on an autumn afternoon in the year 1592. You are at work with half a dozen other girls, most of them rather older than yourself, embroidering a rich piece of tapestry (perhaps it's the story of the Spanish Armada), and as you ply your needles you chat of many things, but chiefly of the beautiful dresses you are to wear at the coming marriage of some great Lady of the Court with one of the most popular of the Queen's favourites. How excited you all are about the dances and the revels! It is rumoured that the Queen herself is to be present, and there is to be a play specially written for the occasion by "the new playwright!" "Who is this new playwright?" asks one. "I marvel

much that my Lord should make choice of a common player to write his wedding Masque! 'Tis scarce becoming! A court-poet were methinks more fitting. Give me Master John Lyly's pastoral plays; there you have the Scholar and the Gentleman in every line, and the courtier, too, withal." "Yea, and for ten years has he flattered our Lady," retorts a third, "and little has he gained for all his flattery." "My brother who is squire to my Lord of Southampton," says a fourth, "has often told me how the gallants throng the common theatres to hear Will Shakespeare's plays; he has heard the Earl and many another of worship declare that there never was so great a playwright in England—nay, not even Kit Marlowe; and the Earl has shown him friendship, and speaks of him ever as his very friend; he has said, too, that Will Shakespeare's gentleness of soul is even greater than the greatness of his quality as playwright and player. 'This player-king,' my good brother once heard the Earl exclaim, 'is sure a king of men.' " "And why not?" comes from a demure and meek-voiced maiden, whom her friends call playfully "dear little Mistress Nun;" "does not God speak at times through ploughmen and shepherds and the humblest of folk? perchance in this poor player He has sent a Teacher to teach his chosen Englishmen to show them-

selves right worthy of His grace." "Nay, dear Mistress Nun," rejoins the first speaker, "for shame! to speak thus of Sir Player as Sir Priest. My father says all common players are but common rogues, and noblemen do wrong. . . ." A message from the queen summoning her maidens to the music-room to sing their madrigals puts a sudden end to the gossip.

At the time of this imaginary conversation Shakespeare was a young man of eight-and-twenty. Five or six years before he had come to London, poor and unknown, from the little Warwickshire town of Stratford-on-Avon, where it had been so difficult to earn enough for himself, his wife, their little girl Susanna, and the twin-babes Hamnet and Judith. So he left them behind in their quiet home to seek his fortune all alone in the great city. There is a story that at first he supported himself by holding the horses of the small gallants who came to the play; and the story goes on to say that he soon became known for his trustworthiness, and everyone tried to get him to take charge of their horses, and in a little time a brigade of small boys served under him, and were called "Will Shakespeare's boys." We don't know whether the story is a true one; but if the first part could be proved to be true, there would be no doubt about the second: whatever Shakespeare under-

took to do, he certainly did well. Anyhow his employment outside the theatre could not have lasted long, and probably before many weeks had passed he had realised the dream of his boyhood, and was actually taking part in the acting of plays. Very soon, too, his comrades must have discovered that their new companion could write as well as act, and so they got him to touch up stale old plays, and to add fresh speeches here and there, and this tinkering of old plays naturally led to the composition of new ones, and so by slow degrees did the genius of Shakespeare reveal itself. We may well imagine all this, and we are probably quite right, but neither he nor any of his friends has left us any record of his life in London during these early years.

Shakespeare must have known a good deal about plays and players long before he came to London, for the simple reason that the chief companies of London actors often visited Stratford, and it is a striking fact that they came most often during Shakespeare's boyhood. It looks as though his father, John Shakespeare, was himself a lover of plays. We know that he was at this time a personage of great importance in the town—a foremost member of the town council—and actors were not allowed to act without the permission of the council, and before they got permission, they had to

give a free performance in the guild hall, just to show what they could do. Of course the councillors took their wives and children to these performances, especially as there was nothing to pay for the seats. An old writer, who was born in 1564, the same year as Shakespeare, has left an interesting account of how he saw one of these plays, "standing between his father's legs;" it was evidently his first play, and he tells us that it made such an impression upon him that when he came to man's estate it was as fresh in his memory as if he had seen it lately acted, and when he was quite an old man he remembered what he had seen as a small boy. The name of the writer was Willis, and he was of Gloucester; instead of 'Willis' we may read 'William,' and imagine our poet watching with large and wondering eyes the plays in the guild hall of Stratford.

Again, it is almost certain that his father took him over to Coventry, to see the old bible-dramas, which were acted there every year at Whitsuntide. People came from all parts to see these plays, for there was plenty of fun in them, although they were on religious subjects, and many who could not read the Bible for themselves, learnt the bible-stories from these open-air 'Miracle plays,' as they were called. A

famous character in the plays was the blustering, wicked King Herod, and Shakespeare refers to him, when he makes Prince Hamlet advise the players not to make too much noise, lest they should 'out-herod Herod,' that is, make even more noise than the terrible Herod in these old plays.

A great event happened near Stratford, when Shakespeare was eleven, namely, Queen Elizabeth's visit to Kenilworth Castle as the guest of Lord Leicester. There never was such a splendid display as on that occasion (you must some day read Sir Walter Scott's novel telling all about the Kenilworth festivities). A relative of Shakespeare's mother was one of Lord Leicester's servants, and so the boy got a good peep at the wonderful tableaux prepared for the queen's delight. As we shall see, he made good use of his knowledge. The noble lords and ladies, who were assembled there in all their pride and glory, little thought that the most glorious person present was a quiet little country lad from Stratford.

These visits to Coventry and Kenilworth must have been delightful, but I fancy that Shakespeare enjoyed nothing so much as taking part in the Christmas and Whitsun theatricals at home; he is evidently telling us about his own boyhood, when in one of his earliest

plays, a page-boy, who is really a young lady in disguise, says that

“ At Pentecost,
When all our pageants of delight were play'd,
Our youth got me to play the woman's part,
And I was trimm'd in madam Julia's gown;
Which served me as fit, by all men's judgments,
As if the garment had been made for me.”

Will Shakespeare certainly had a merry time of it as a boy, what with plays and games. He was first-rate at games; he liked them all:—“whipping of tops,” “hide and seek,” “more sacks to the mill,” “push-pin,” “nine men's morris,” “nine-pins,” “quoits,” “hockey,” “football,” “leapfrog,” “country base,” “fast and loose,” “flap-dragon,” and a good many more. As for story-telling, why none of the Stratford boys could come anywhere near him, and when, after a good game, they were tired, they would get Will to tell them a fairy tale.

“Merry or sad shall't be?” he would ask. “A sad tale's best for winter; I have one of sprites and goblins.” “Let's have that. Come on, sit down: come on,” they'd all cry out, and then he'd begin:—“There was a man dwelt by a churchyard,—” and

he'd make them feel very creepy before he got very far.

One tale he told splendidly; it was Child Rowland's adventure with the Giant, and how he rescued his little sister Ellen from the Giant's power. There was a verse in it he was particularly fond of:—

“Child Rowland to the dark tower came. . . .
His word was still—Fie, foh, and fum,
I smell the blood of a British man.”

Of course there were also lessons to be done, for Shakespeare was probably sent to school when he was seven; he was never what you'd call a bookish boy, though he always seemed to know his tasks quite as well as the bookworms of the class. He got into plenty of scrapes, too, and his masters were pretty often angry with him, or pretended to be, for who could be really angry with a bright, light-hearted, merry, well-mannered, clever boy, full of fun and spirits? I dare say more than once he was punished for drawing his master's likeness in his Latin Grammar, instead of learning the irregular verbs, or Latin-English dialogues. Anyhow after he had left school many years, he still found delight in drawing sketches of his former school-

masters, but they couldn't punish him then. Now although Shakespeare was not a model boy, who only cared for lessons, he probably enjoyed school-life, and he was not describing himself, as some say, when he wrote about

“the whining school-boy, with his satchel,
And shining morning face, creeping like snail,
Unwillingly to school.”

His school-days, however, did not last long, for when he was about twelve, trouble fell upon the family, and his father became quite a poor man; William must have been taken from school soon after. Under ordinary circumstances he would have remained there two or three years longer, and then have gone to the University—to Oxford or Cambridge, probably the former; if he had, perhaps his whole history would have been different. It was not to be. Even his poverty need not have stood in the way, for there were scholarships and exhibitions then as now for promising scholars, and friends might have helped. We know of one poor boy, of just the same age as Shakespeare, the son of a needy parish-clerk and shoemaker of Canterbury, who managed somehow to get to Cambridge. His name was Christopher Marlowe,—a name only second to

Shakespeare's among the great writers of English plays. But Marlowe was a more ambitious boy than Shakespeare. Anyhow while the one was studying at the university, a wayward undergraduate following his own ideas, and not caring much for college discipline, feeling sure that he was going to do something great, the other was earning a modest living in his quiet native town. No one knows what was Shakespeare's employment during those years. Some say he was an usher in a school; others that he was bound apprentice to a butcher; others are quite convinced he was a clerk in a lawyer's office, because his writings show such a deep knowledge of English law. But his writings show a deep knowledge of almost everything; and every trade, profession, and calling, might claim him equally. Whatever it was that he did for a living, he still found his chief recreation in country sports; he certainly knew a great deal about hunting and hawking, and the famous song of the hunt was often on his lips;—

“The hunt is up, the hunt is up,
Sing merrily we, the hunt is up:
The birds they sing,
The deer they fling,
Hey ninny, ninny no.”

These sports seem to have got him into trouble occasionally, and there is a rather nasty story told of him, that he once stole some deer belonging to a grave old Justice of the Peace, who was so anxious to punish him that Will fled from Stratford to London; and thus, according to some writers, began his connection with the London theatres.

Probably the grave old Justice took Will Shakespeare's merry-making too seriously; later on the poet had a good laugh at him, and made the whole world laugh at him, for he put him in one of his plays, and called him "Justice Shallow," and everyone knew that "Justice Shallow" stood for Sir Thomas Lucy, especially when he poked fun at his name, and his pompous nonsensical titles:—"a justice of the peace and coram; ay, a cust-alorum; ay, and rat-olorum too; and a gentleman born, who writes himself armigero."

So it looked as though Shakespeare had done something at Stratford to offend the great man, and no doubt his best friends thought it was quite time for him to become more seriously inclined, especially as he was already a married man; perhaps they thought that his wife ought to have kept her young husband out of mischief, seeing that she was eight years older than he. Mrs William Shakespeare's maiden name was Anne

Hathaway, and as a rule she probably "had her way." When you go to Stratford you must go to the village of Shottery, about a mile off, and see the thatched cottage where Anne lived as a girl, and where Shakespeare made love to her; he was only eighteen and she was twenty-six when they became man and wife.

Now I must tell you a strange and remarkable story. When Shakespeare first came to London about the year 1587, everybody was talking about a certain young scholar, who had written a great play, which was then being acted at one of the principal theatres. And who do you think this young scholar was? Why, Kit Marlowe, the poor boy of Canterbury, whom I've already mentioned. He had taken his degree of Master of Arts at Cambridge that very year, and had probably already written the play which was to throw the whole of London into the greatest excitement. I wonder whether I can explain to you what it was that this young giant did. You must know that all the plays then acted at the theatres were either extremely silly, or extremely dull; if they were comic, their fun was very feeble, and it seemed ridiculous that grown up men and women should find any pleasure in them; if they were serious, they were

more like sermons than plays, and people were getting quite tired of being preached to from the stage, as though it were a pulpit. Even the best plays were coarse and vulgar, and sensible folk wished it were possible to make a clean sweep of the whole thing:—

“If this were only swept away,”

They said, “it would be grand.”

But who was to do it? It seemed as hopeless as to sweep away the sands of the sea.

Unexpectedly, to their surprise and joy, the difficult task was accomplished. It had long been young Marlowe's great ambition to sweep the old-fashioned lumber from off the stage, and to teach Londoners what their plays should be like. He spoke out boldly, as boldly as a king, and told them that a nation of heroes, who were soon going to show Spain the stuff they were made of, ought to care for something better than buffoonery and clownage. A nation of warriors, he said, ought to have plays dealing with war; their plays should be stately and dignified like the march of soldiers, and not mere sing-song fit for nursery rhymes. And when people heard his first play, they applauded him, and said they would have no other plays than his, and the chief writers of the day,

though at first they laughed and sneered at Kit Marlowe, soon found that the very best thing they could do, if they wished to earn a living, was to try and imitate him. It was not so much the stories of his plays that people admired as the wonderful majestic poetry he put into the mouths of his characters; they all spoke like great heroes ready to conquer the world. His first play, which made him so famous, told how a poor Eastern shepherd, called Tamburlaine, had such great strength and power of will that he became a mighty emperor; but he didn't enjoy his empire very long. Each of Marlowe's plays—he only wrote about half a dozen—told a similar story of a man doing something almost impossible, and when he had gained what he longed for, and thought himself quite happy, suddenly his fortune changed and he came to ruin. The fall of a great man is always a sad sight, and a play dealing with such a story, or any story with an unhappy ending, is called a 'tragedy'; when the plot ends like a good old fairy-tale—"and they lived happy ever after"—it is called a 'comedy.'

But Marlowe's own life was as tragic as his plays, and his end was very sad; he had a desperate quarrel, and was badly wounded, and died soon after; this was in 1593, when he was not yet thirty.

By that time, however, people had learnt that great as Marlowe was, he was only as it were a herald announcing the coming of a much greater master. It was quite natural that they should at first have looked on him as the master himself, and have imagined that there could be no one greater; he was so magnificent, and so majestic, and so much noise and applause greeted his coming. But as you may have noticed, it is often so in grand processions. The heralds that go before the prince to make the way clear for him seem much more imposing than the prince himself; and if the prince is very mighty, even his heralds are mighty men too. So was it with great Marlowe, the herald of the greater Shakespeare.

He was working away quietly, and we hear nothing of our poet from the time of his arrival in London till the year 1592, when he had already become so successful that people were getting jealous, and one writer in particular, who had at first said unkind things about Marlowe, now turned his spite against Shakespeare. His name was Robert Greene, a well-known novelist and a writer of plays, and a scholar, too,—“Master of Arts of both Universities,” as he proudly wrote on the title-pages of his books. But for all his learning, he was the most unfortunate of men, and the worst of it

was that he brought his misfortunes on himself; he died in dreadful poverty a year before Marlowe. The last thing he did was to write a small book, which he called *A Groatsworth of Wit bought with a Million of Repentance*—(the title would have made a very good epitaph for poor ‘Robin,’ as they called him).—In this book he wrote a letter, just as I am writing now to you, and addressed it to his fellow-authors who like himself were University men; he begged them to have nothing more to do with plays, and to put no trust in players; it was high time, he said, that scholars should scorn these ignorant upstarts. And he went on to give his reason; “for,” he added, “there is one among them, an upstart crow beautified with our feathers, who actually thinks that he is as well able to write plays as the best of you; this *Jack of all trades* is in his own conceit the only *Shake-scene* in the country.” “Shake-scene” was of course a sort of pun on Shakespeare’s name; and to make it quite clear whom he meant, he spoke of “his tiger’s heart wrapt in a player’s hide;” this was another spiteful jest, for the words “Oh tiger’s heart wrapt in a woman’s hide!” occur in one of the first great speeches that Shakespeare wrote, a passage probably added by him to an old play he had revised. (Perhaps you’d like to read the lines;

you 'll find them in the Third Part of King Henry the Sixth, Act I. Scene iv., where the aged Duke of York reproaches the wicked Queen Margaret, "the she-wolf of France," as he calls her, for murdering his sweet young son the Earl of Rutland.)

Poor Greene! green indeed with envy and spite, because the unknown player had worked his way to the first place among the writers of the day. Some other scholars, too, were a bit envious, but they rather proudly comforted themselves by saying that "Learning and Poverty must ever kiss," and that Ignorance, (by which they meant Shakespeare and others who had never been to Oxford or Cambridge) was always successful. As though they really believed such nonsense! Probably in their hearts they wondered as much as we do at Shakespeare's marvellous powers, though it must indeed always remain a mystery how he acquired so much knowledge in such a little time; but then we must remember that Shakespeare is one of the greatest miracles in the world's history. We can be quite sure that while people sneered at his supposed ignorance, they coveted his wisdom. He, on his part, took no notice of their hatred, and the only possible allusion to Robert Greene and his cruel attack to be found in all his works has no touch of

bitterness in it; these are the lines, (you'll find them on page 95 of this book):—

“*The thrice three Muses mourning for the death
Of Learning, late deceased in beggary.*’

That is some satire, keen and critical,
Not sorting with a nuptial ceremony.”

We, too, can almost forgive Robert Greene, for in his hate he has told us something about Shakespeare's early years in London. What is even more interesting about his attack is this:—The publisher of Greene's book was so grieved to think he had pained Shakespeare, that shortly after its publication he printed an apology, and said that he was quite as sorry as if the original fault had been his; “because,” he continued, “I have seen that Shakespeare is as noble in character, as he is excellent in all he undertakes. Moreover many men of high rank speak of his uprightness and honesty, to say nothing of his greatness as a writer.” His words were even stronger than this, and every Englishman ought to honour the name of Chettle, who has left us this grand testimony to Shakespeare's character. You'll see from this that I was not drawing altogether on my imagination when I made the squire of the Earl of Southampton report to his sister the

words he had heard. As a matter of fact Shakespeare's first book, his poem of *Venus and Adonis*, appeared the following year, 1593, and it was dedicated to the young Earl, and in 1594, another poem, the *Lucrece*, was again dedicated to him, and the young poet wrote in it:—"What I have done is yours; what I have to do is yours; being part of all I have, devoted yours." There was friendship and affection between them, though the one was a lowly player, and the other a great lord.

As we have seen, Shakespeare's name had already become quite famous before these poems were printed: during the three or four previous years he had written some delightful plays. They were not, like Marlowe's, fearful tragedies, making the hearers shudder, but sweet and gentle comedies, full of tenderness and love, laughter and fun. For at this time, and years after, Shakespeare rightly thought that people might easily have too much of tragic horrors, and that it was better for them to laugh than to weep. He did not think so always, for in his middle age he, too, wrote some terrible tragedies,—almost too terrible; but then again, towards the end of his life, he gave us the happiest of all his plays, showing how fathers, and mothers, and children, and friends, meet together after long separa-

tion, and all their sorrow is turned to joy. He did indeed write one tragedy during these early years, but it is not terrible, though very sad,—you've read the story in Lamb's *Tales*—the tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet*. True the two young lovers die, but their death is beautiful; for does it not put an end to their fathers' foolish hate?—When Shakespeare was thinking of writing a play on this sad story, he was probably already actually at work on a more joyous tale, telling how four Athenian lovers, the fickle Demetrius and Lysander, and the constant Helena and Hermia, were at last made happy after passing through some strange adventures.

And now I will try to explain to you how Shakespeare came to write this delightful play of "A Midsummer Night's Dream." In the merry days of Queen Elizabeth, the queen and her courtiers were just as fond of plays as the poor folk who crowded the pit of the theatres; and when a great lord and lady married, the wedding-feast was not complete without the performance of some private theatricals, and generally a special play was written in honour of the event by one of the great poets of the day. These wedding-plays were not like the plays ordinarily performed at the public theatres; they were quite a special

kind. There had to be, in the first place, an interesting and happy love-story, with plenty of songs and dances ; then, again, following a very ancient wedding-custom, there had to be some whimsical foolery, making fun of lovers and their love-stories ; thirdly, the poet had to introduce the old heathen gods and goddesses ("the deities of ancient classical mythology," as they are grandly called in books), so as to allow of beautiful pageants and splendid dresses (and perhaps, too, so as to show off the writer's learning) ; fourthly,—and this was most important,—something very pretty had to be brought in about the queen ; she liked to be flattered, and it became the regular custom to flatter her ; it was quite the right thing to say that she was beautiful as Venus, wise as Minerva, virtuous as Diana, and the like. One writer carried it perhaps a little too far, and somehow or other, although his charming plays were nothing but long elaborate compliments to the queen, he did not win her favour. This was a pity, for he was a born courtier, and one feels sorry to think that John Lyly was often too poor to afford even velvet-doublet and hose, to say nothing of well-starched lace-ruffles and frills. Nevertheless, we always picture him as the very pink of perfection in dress and bearing and speech, for was he not the darling of the ladies of England ? Did

he not write for them, and in praise of them, the most popular novel of the day, using a new kind of English style, very refined and affected, most suitable for the courtly and gracious speeches of the young gallants and their ladies? The hero of this novel was named 'Euphues,' and the hero gave his name to the book, and when people wrote or spoke in this new style they were said to write or speak "Euphues" or "Euphuism." "Euphuism" and many other strange kinds of speech were fashionable in Society when Shakespeare came to London, and when first he heard this new English, so different to what he had been accustomed to at home, it must have seemed to him a new language, or, perhaps, like Alice, he felt "dreadfully puzzled," for the language seemed to have no sort of meaning, "and yet it was certainly English." Anyhow he soon learnt to understand it, and he made fun of the whole thing in what was probably his earliest play—the Comedy of *Love's Labour's Lost*. But I'm only telling you about John Lyly, because I want to give you an idea of one of his complimentary plays. Perhaps his best and simplest piece of work was his play on the favourite story of "Endymion"—(the music of the name is very dear to poets). The story tells how Endymion, a Grecian youth of surpassing beauty, fondly loves Cynthia

(the Moon-goddess), but she loves him not; Endymion, however, is beloved by Tellus (the Earth-goddess), but he rejects her love; to punish him she gets a witch to charm him into a long long sleep. "*When she whose figure of all is the perfectest, and never to be measured; always one, yet never the same; still inconstant, yet never wavering, shall come and kiss Endymion in his sleep, he shall then rise, else never;*" so speaks the oracle, and it is quite clear that the dark saying refers to Cynthia, that is, the inconstant yet never wavering Moon. Endymion has now slept forty years. . . .

"*Cynthia.*] Well, let us to Endymion. I will not be so stately (good Endymion) not to stoop to do thee good, and if thy liberty consist in a kiss from me, thou shalt have it. And although my mouth hath been heretofore as untouched as my thoughts, yet now to recover thy life (though to restore thy youth it be impossible) I will do that to Endymion which yet never mortal man could boast of heretofore, nor shall ever hope for hereafter. [*She kisseth him.*] . . .

Endymion's friend.] Speak, Endymion, Endymion, Endymion.

Endymion.] Endymion? I call to mind such a name. . . .

Cynthia.] Endymion, speak sweet Endymion, knowest thou not Cynthia?

Endymion.] O heavens, whom do I behold, fair Cynthia, divine Cynthia?

Cynthia.] I am Cynthia, and thou Endymion.

Endymion.] Endymion! what do I hear? what a grey beard? hollow eyes? withered body? decayed limbs? and all in one night?

Endymion's friend.] One night? thou hast slept here forty years, by what enchantress, as yet it is not known; and behold the twig to which thou didst lay thy head is now become a tree; callest thou not thy friend to remembrance?

Endymion.] Thy name I do remember by the sound, but thy features I do not yet call to mind; only divine Cynthia, to whom time, fortune, destiny, and death are subject, I see and remember, and in all humility, I regard and reverence."

Of course by "Cynthia" John Lyly meant the Queen, and the whole play was evidently a delicate handling of some well-known gossip about a great courtier who foolishly aspired to win the Queen's love. The wooer was perhaps the famous Lord Leicester; he had a very good chance once of becoming Prince Consort, and it

was generally supposed that the Kenilworth festivities were prepared in honour of the event, but my Lord was doomed to disappointment.

Now, Shakespeare when invited to write a new play to grace some grand wedding did not choose to imitate Master John Lyly, but went his own way, and wrote a play very much like the plays he had written for the London theatres, and yet, strange to say, it contained all the various elements which the wedding guests would expect to find in a wedding-play; and though he hated flattery, he managed even that point, and introduced a few lines of refined and courteous compliment to the Queen; these two lines must have given her greater pleasure than all John Lyly's plays taken together:—

“And the imperial votaress passed on
In maiden meditation, fancy-free.”

But when we look into the whole passage, where these magical lines occur (you'll find them on page 34), a great surprise awaits us. We are told that once upon a time “Cupid all arm'd” was seen flying between the cold Moon and the Earth, and taking a bold aim at a fair vestal thronèd by the West; but the dart missed, and fell upon a little western flower,

“ Before milk-white, now purple with love’s wound,
And maidens call it love-in-idleness.”

In these dozen or sixteen lines Shakespeare has actually condensed the whole story of “Endymion,” as dramatised by John Lyly. “Cupid” is, of course, the love-sick Endymion, “the cold Moon” and “the fair Vestal” are both mere renderings of “Cynthia,” while “the Earth” is nothing but a translation of the Latin “Tellus,” the name of Cynthia’s cruel rival in Lyly’s play. And Shakespeare, also, is evidently using the Endymion - story in order to refer to the well-known story of Lord Leicester’s disappointment. Had not our poet himself been present at the Kenilworth Festivities in 1575, when quite a small boy? Shakespeare, in fact, says much more about the great event in these few lines than Lyly does in his long play. He tells us, too, that at the time of the Vision he was looking at a wonderful sight,

“ And heard a Mermaid, on a dolphin’s back,
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath,
That the rude sea grew civil at her song,
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres
To hear the sea-maid’s music.”

We know that Will saw this at Kenilworth, for an

old writer was present at the time and wrote an account of it all, so that people who were not lucky enough to be among the guests, might get some idea of the princely splendour of the entertainment. Even we are grateful to him for his interesting descriptions, not that you or I care much for Lord Leicester, but we do care very much to know what Shakespeare was thinking of when he wrote these famous lines. There was a wonderful dolphin,—says old Gascoigne (that's the writer's name),—and secretly placed within was a concert of music, while sitting on the dolphin's back was a strange sea-god, who sang a sweet song in the Queen's honour; then, too, there was Triton, Neptune's Trumpeter, in the likeness of a mermaid, and he came to the Queen's Majesty, and said he was a messenger to her Highness from great Neptune, who had commanded the waves to be calm, and the fishes to show their dutiful obedience: thereupon Triton blew his trumpet, and spoke to the winds, waters, and fishes, as follows:—

“ You winds, return unto your caves,
And silent there remain
You waters wild, suppress your waves,
And keep you calm and plain ;

You fishes all, and each thing else,
That here have any sway,
I charge you all, in Neptune's name
You keep you at a stay."

Then fireworks were shewn upon the water ; they were strange and wonderful ; sometimes they remained under the water for a long time, and when everyone thought they had gone off, or forgot about them, they would suddenly rise again, and burn more brightly than before. A very amusing story is told about one of the actors : seated upon the dolphin's back, he had to sing a dulcet song ; but when his turn came, he found he was too hoarse to sing ; so he tore off his disguise, and said something to this effect :—" Fair Lady, I entreat you ; if you think I am Arion, it were a pity ; no, I am no such thing, not I ; I am a man as other men are,—e'en honest Harry Golding, that have been drinking your Majesty's health from morning till midnight." Doesn't this remind you of one of the funniest passages in the play ? I'm not going to tell you where it is, because I'm sure you know. But this anecdote is only by the way ; I'm writing about the Vision containing Shakespeare's delicate compliment to the Queen, and I want you to see how very cleverly

this complimentary passage is introduced, and how it becomes, as it were, the very pivot of the whole play; for do not all the strange adventures result from the little western flower, called Love-in-Idleness? "Fetch me that flower"—the whole play revolves round these few words.

Let us keep to this rather pretty notion of a wheel. If the compliment to the Queen is the axis, then I think we may call the marriage of Theseus and Hippolyta the great outer rim of the wheel, for it encircles the whole. At the beginning of the play we have the announcement that their 'nuptial hour draws on'; throughout the scenes we hear of the preparations for the wedding; we are present at the marriage-feast at the end of the play. Yet no adventures befall these lovers; theirs is not the real love-story of the play; their marriage is but the frame-work of the strangest story ever told of love and lovers. This story of the two pairs of lovers and their cross-love may well be represented by cross-lines,—the spokes of our imaginary wheel.

Shakespeare was always very fond of stories of cross-love, and especially in his early plays, but here he seems to have set himself the task of working out a little problem, namely, how many possible changes you can

get if two pairs of lovers love at cross-purposes, the men being fickle, the girls true and constant.

In the first scene of the play we are introduced to the four lovers, Lysander and Demetrius, Hermia and Helena. Lysander and Hermia are in love; Demetrius, who had once loved Helena, loves her no longer, but dotes on Hermia, although he knows too well that Lysander has won her heart; Helena, whom he slights, loves him in spite of all his unkindness. Within a few hours something very strange has happened; Lysander's love is quite changed, and all his love is now for Helena; but Hermia is still loyal to Lysander, and Helena to Demetrius. The state of affairs could not be worse; each of the men now loves the girl who does not care for him. A little later on, and again something strange has happened, for, lo, suddenly Demetrius' love for Hermia is "melted as the snow, and all the faith, the virtue of his heart, is only Helena;" but alas, Lysander says just the same; and the two rivals for Helena's love use harsh words to one another, and seek a place to fight. Helena is now in the same position as Hermia was at the opening of the play; but she thinks that the men are only making fun of her, that their rivalry is still for Hermia's love, and that they are merely mocking her. Hermia sees it is only too true, that

Lysander has proved false to her; and thereupon the two girls fall out and quarrel, and forget their school-days' friendship, and how they have grown up together,

“Like to a double cherry, seeming parted,
But yet a union in partition;
Two lovely berries moulded on one stem;”

and Hermia calls Helena “juggler,” “canker-blossom,” “thief of love,” “painted maypole;” while Helena remembers that her dear friend was “a vixen when she went to school,”

“And though she be but little, she is fierce.”

Could anything be sadder? But very soon all is to be well, and they are to be happy friends again. Only one more change, and the fair lovers are full of joy and mirth.

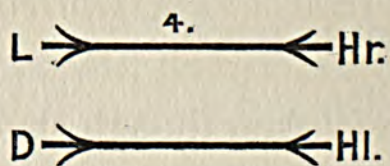
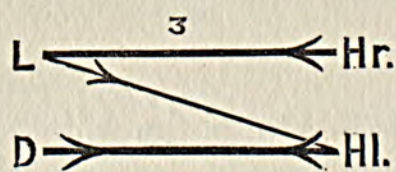
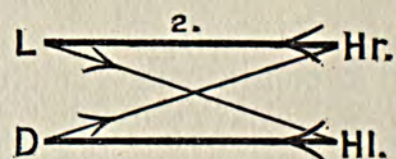
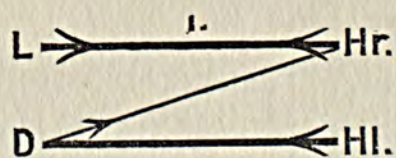
The fourth transformation shows us Hermia betrothed to Lysander, Helena to Demetrius:

“Jack shall have Jill;
Nought shall go ill.”

'Tis a strange story the lovers tell to Theseus and

Hippolyta; the warrior Theseus thinks it "more strange than true," but the gentle Hippolyta thinks otherwise; to her their story is "strange and admirable,"——a thing of wonder.

It is somewhat difficult to follow the course of this love-story; perhaps these four little figures will help you to remember the various changes:—



It is rather good fun to draw a love-story as though it were a bit of Euclid, but I don't think you'll find these figures at all puzzling, and they may amuse you. The letters stand for the names of the characters; the arrow-head points from the lover to the person beloved. The fourth figure makes the other figures quite clear: when the course of true-love runs smooth, you get two parallel straight lines, and each straight line has two arrow-heads, one pointing from the lover to his lady, and the other from the lady to her true-

love; in figures 1, 2, 3, you get cross-lines, for the love is at cross-purposes.

Now if you happened to hear that some of your friends had been behaving like Demetrius and Lysander, it would be charitable to say that they must have been bewitched, or had lost their senses, or had at least been dreaming, and it would have been a very simple thing for Shakespeare to have taken exactly the same view of this case. But we must remember that he was writing for a wedding-feast, and on these occasions gods and goddesses were always introduced, and made answerable for the strange events befalling lovers. If he had prided himself on his classical learning, like John Lyly, he might easily have brought in the great gods and goddesses of classical mythology, and Venus, Mars, and Saturn, would probably have figured in the play. But Shakespeare saw a better way. He had loved the fairies from his boyhood, and he resolved to let them take the place of the more learned beings of the scholar-poets. No one ever knew more about fairies than Shakespeare did, and he must have spent a long time in Fairyland. I've a very strong belief that the changeling boy in the play was really little Will, though he is described as a little Indian prince, but Shakespeare only puts it

so, because he never cared to say much about himself. No wonder then that the Fairy King and the Fairy Queen quarrelled to possess him.

There are so many chapters in the history of Fairyland, that I'm afraid to attempt to tell you anything about it, for I may find myself writing a whole book, instead of a letter; besides, what Shakespeare tells you is more beautiful than anything that can be written.

English fairy-lore has as many elements as the English language, and naturally so, for all the different races that settled in England had their own special beliefs in these wonderful little beings who were supposed to inhabit the woods, the fields, the seas, and the hills; so that we have Celtic fairies, and Saxon fairies, and Scandinavian fairies, and, in addition to all these, the fairy creations of the old poets and writers of romances. The oldest English fairies, dear to Saxons and Danes, were not called "fairies" at all, but elves, and trolls, and dwarfs, and pixies; "elf-folk" was their general name, and they were of two kinds, the Light Elves, or the Good, and the Dark Elves, who were mischievous and unkind; the Light Elves guarded little children from harm, the Dark Elves stole them from their mothers' care. In later times the priests taught that all elves, whether light

or dark, were angels expelled from heaven, allowed to dwell between their old home on high and the dark regions of hell beneath the earth; but the people would not give up their belief that the elves were not all children of mischief, and that some, at least, loved

“To love them that honest be,
And help them in necessity.”

Nothing delighted these little elves more than dancing; they were never tired of their dances and songs, and the feasts in elf-land were never without elfin-music, which was so weird and enchanting, that any mortal coming near was forced to join in the dance. Woe to him that refused! On the morrow of these moonlight dances the peasants pointed out the traces of the dance-circles on the dewy grass. We can still sometimes see the magic rings of these elf-dances, but crabbed scholars who do not themselves believe in elves, would have us believe that they are nothing but curious mushroom-growths, which spring up very quickly, and spread over large tracts of grass in the form of circles.

Many stories are told of the mischievous tricks of some of the elf-folk, especially of the little dwarfs,

whose love of fun seems to have made them rather fond of teasing people, but, on the whole, these tiny pigmies — they were long-nosed, little-eyed, bluish-grey little creatures—selected wicked people as the victims of their cruel jests:—

“For seldom have such spirits power
To harm, save in the evil hour
When guilt we meditate therein,
Or harbour unrepented sin.”

“Pease-blossom,” “Cobweb,” “Moth,” and “Mustard-seed,” remind us of the good little elves; little Puck has many qualities of the mischief-loving dwarfs, but he is much better looking, and there is no very dark spot in his naughty little self; his great fault is his too great fondness for practical jokes.

So much for the old English fairies, or rather “elves,” for “fairy” is a French word, and meant originally “the state of being like ‘a fay’;” sometimes it was used in the sense of “enchantment,” or for “Fairy-land,” or to signify all the inhabitants of Fairy-land, the fairy-folk. It is indeed very strange to speak of a “fairy,” when we mean a “fay”; it is in reality quite as strange as if we were to call a single man on horseback “a cavalry.” The word “fay” is simple enough; it is

of the same Latin origin as our English word "fate." It is important to remember that "a fay" is "a fate," and was originally one of the Three Fates who, according to ancient Greek and Roman belief, controlled the life of every individual. And not only did the Greeks and Romans believe this, but also other races believed in them too, and we know the names given to the three sisters by the Old Scandinavians; they called them Past, Present, and Future, and described them as three maidens who sat and spun the whole story of each human life under a wonderful ash-tree, which was their symbol of the Universe. How often do these three maidens appear in our fairy-tales giving their gifts to new-born children! Something of its old meaning still clings to the word, though we use it very loosely for all sorts of wonderful beings and stories from wonderland.

In one of these stories from wonderland Shakespeare read about a fairy-king called Oberon; it was an old French romance called "the Book of Duke Huon of Bordeaux;" Lord Berners had translated it into English about 1534, but it was written some two or three hundred years before. The story tells how the little fairy-king Oberon, with all his fairy subjects, dwells in a forest on the way to Babylon; he is the terror of all travellers, for if anyone speaks to him he

is lost for ever. I will give the description of this famous fairy-king in the very words that Shakespeare may have read:—

“The dwarf fay came riding through the wood and was clad in a robe so exceedingly fine and rich that it would be a marvel to relate it for the great and marvelous riches that were upon it: for so much was there of precious stones, that the great lustre that they cast was like unto the sun when he shineth full clear. And therewithal he bare a bright fair bow in his fist so rich that no one could value it, so fine it was: and the arrow that he bare was of such sort and manner that there was no beast in the world that he wished to have, that it did not stop at that arrow. He had at his neck a rich horn, which was hung by two strings of rich gold.”

King Oberon has a long and interesting history, for he is in reality the famous little dwarf Alberich, who does many wonderful things in old German stories, and though his name looks very French, it is originally German, and actually means “Elf-king.”

Shakespeare has, of course, changed the Oberon of the French Romance, but he still places Fairy-land in the far East. As for Queen Titania, there were many stories in England about Fairy-queens; they were probably of Celtic origin; but the name of Shakespeare’s

queen seems to have been his own idea; I wont trouble you with its history; it's a Latin word. We have in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* a sort of Fairy-realm with a Fairy Court,—King and Queen, and subjects, with Puck as court-jester. This was Shakespeare's great creation; no one had attempted it before; and now when we think of Fairy-land we always call to mind this Fairy-land of Shakespeare.

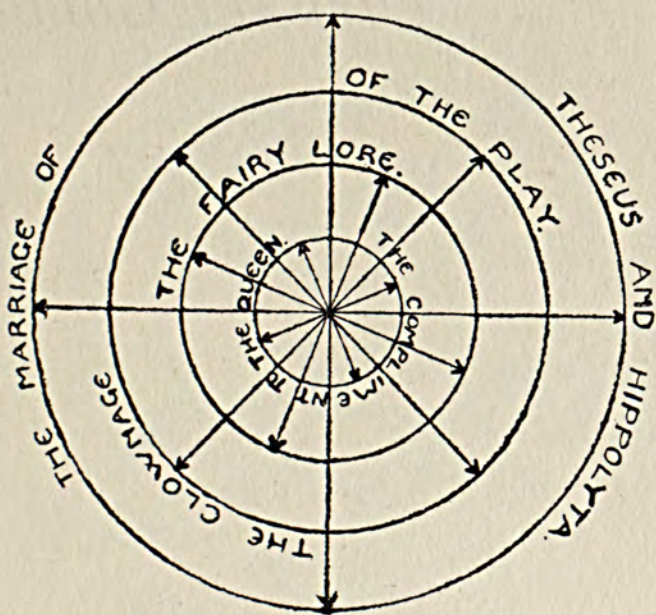
The fairies come to Athens solely to bless the marriage of Theseus and Hippolyta; we are told so at the beginning of the second act, and we hear and see them throughout the play, and at the end they sing their blessing, and depart. But even in Fairyland there are lovers' quarrels, and the strife between the Fairy Queen and the Fairy King, though it be about a little human child, is very much like a story of love at cross-purposes; so that the fairy-lore of the play is, as it were, a smaller circle within the larger one, representing the marriage of Theseus and Hippolyta; and cross-lines may again represent the story of cross-love.

Lastly there had to be some fun in this wedding-play, and Shakespeare thought of the Stratford rustics and their mumming-plays; he had probably often watched them rehearsing their speeches, and had laughed at some conceited weaver who thought him-

self the greatest actor that ever lived. So he shows us Bottom and his friends preparing for their performance in honour of the Duke's marriage. Shakespeare does not bring them in merely at the marriage-feast, but we have the rustics with us throughout the play; they serve as a contrast to the courtly lovers, the ethereal fairies, and the dignified Theseus and Hippolyta. Their part, too, like that of the fairies, runs right through the play in a complete circle. And just as in the case of Oberon's Vision, and of the main story of the play, and of the fairy-lore, so here, too, even in the case of the clownage, we have a story of cross-love, for the play performed by these "hard-handed men," *The most lamentable Comedy and most cruel Death of Pyramus and Thisbe*, is a sad story of blighted love, however lamentably comic their version of it may be.

I think I've now told you something about the different parts of the play, but although I've taken them separately, it is quite impossible to separate them in reality, for Shakespeare has so closely interwoven them, that they cannot be parted without spoiling the wonderful story. I will draw a picture just to show you what I mean. Here are four circles, representing (1) the marriage of Theseus and Hippolyta, (2) the

clownage of the play, (3) the fairy-lore, and (4) the compliment to the Queen; the first encloses the other three; the last is the centre of the whole; in each of the four circles we have cross-lines, for each contains a story of cross-love; see how the circles cut the cross-lines! It is just so in the play.



I hope you'll understand it; don't let it puzzle you too much; our good friend Bottom may have been right after all, when he said "man is but an ass, if he go about to expound this dream." Perhaps you'll say that about me,—but you're too good to say anything unkind.

This letter is dreadfully long; it is the longest I've ever written; I mustn't add to it, although there's a good deal more to say. If you forgive me this time, I promise that you'll never receive such a long letter again

From your loving friend,

ISRAEL GOLLANCZ.

The Play



Characters of the Play

Theseus, Duke of Athens.

Egeus, father to Hermia.

Lysander, } in love with Hermia.
Demetrius, }

Philstrate, master of the revels to Theseus.

Quince, a carpenter.

Snug, a joiner.

Bottom, a weaver.

Flute, a bellows-mender.

Snout, a tinker.

Starveling, a tailor.

Hippolyta, queen of the Amazons, betrothed to Theseus.

Hermia, daughter to Egeus, in love with Lysander.

Helena, in love with Demetrius.

Oberon, king of the fairies.

Titania, queen of the fairies.

Puck, or Robin Goodfellow.

Peaseblossom, } fairies.
Cobweb, }
Moth, }
Mustardseed, }

Other fairies attending their King and Queen. Attendants
on Theseus and Hippolyta.

Scene: Athens, and a Wood near it.



A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM

ACT FIRST. Scene I

Athens

The palace of Theseus

Enter

Theseus
Hippolyta
Philostrate
and
Attendants



Theseus

OW, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour
Draws on apace ; four happy days bring in
Another moon : but, O, methinks, how slow
This old moon wanes ! she lingers my desires,
Like to a step-dame, or a dowager,
Long withering out a young man's revenue.

Hip. Four days will quickly steep themselves in night ;
Four nights will quickly dream away the time ;
And then the moon, like to a silver bow
New-bent in heaven, shall behold the night
Of our solemnities.

10

The.

Go, Philostrate,

Stir



Act The First



Stir up the Athenian youth to merriments ;
Awake the pert and nimble spirit of mirth :
Turn melancholy forth to funerals ;
The pale companion is not for our pomp.

[Exit *Philistrate*.]

Hippolyta, I woo'd thee with my sword,
And won thy love, doing thee injuries ;
But I will wed thee in another key,
With pomp, with triumph, and with revelry.

[Enter *Egeus*, *Hermia*, *Lysander*, and *Demetrius*.]

Ege. Happy be Theseus, our renownèd duke! 20

The. Thanks, good Egéus: what's the news with thee?

Ege. Full of vexation come I, with complaint
Against my child, my daughter Hermia.
Stand forth, Demetrius. My noble lord,
This man hath my consent to marry her.
Stand forth, Lysander: and, my gracious duke,

Scene The First

This man hath 'witch'd the bosom of my child :
Thou, thou, Lysander, thou hast given her rhymes,
And interchanged love-tokens with my child :
Thou hast by moonlight at her window sung, 30
With feigning voice, verses of feigning love ;
And stol'n the impression of her fantasy
With bracelets of thy hair, rings, gawds, conceits,
Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweetmeats, messengers
Of strong prevailment in unhardened youth :
With cunning hast thou filch'd my daughter's heart ;
Turn'd her obedience, which is due to me,
To stubborn harshness : and, my gracious duke,
Be it so she will not here before your Grace
Consent to marry with Demetrius, 40
I beg the ancient privilege of Athens,
As she is mine, I may dispose of her :
Which shall be either to this gentleman
Or to her death, according to our law
Immediately provided in that case.

The. What say you, Hermia? be advised, fair maid :
To you your father should be as a god ;
One that composed your beauties ; yea, and one
To whom you are but as a form in wax
By him imprinted and within his power 50
To leave the figure or disfigure it.
Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

Her. So is Lysander.

The. In himself he is ;
But in this kind, wanting your father's voice,
The other must be held the worthier.

Act The First

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

The. Rather your eyes must with his judgement look.

Her. I do entreat your Grace to pardon me.

I know not by what power I am made bold,

Nor how it may concern my modesty,

60

In such a presence here to plead my thoughts ;

But I beseech your Grace that I may know

The worst that may befall me in this case,

If I refuse to wed Demetrius.

The. Either to die the death, or to abjure

For ever the society of men.

Therefore, fair Hermia, question your desires ;

Know of your youth, examine well your blood,

Wheth'r, if you yield not to your father's choice,

You can endure the livery of a nun ;

70

For aye to be in shady cloister mew'd,

To live a barren sister all your life,

Chanting faint hymns to the cold fruitless moon.

Thrice-blessèd they that master so their blood,

To undergo such maiden pilgrimage ;

But earthlier happy is the rose distill'd,

Than that which, withering on the virgin thorn,

Grows, lives, and dies in single blessedness.

Her. So will I grow, so live, so die, my lord,

Ere I will yield my virgin patent up

80

Unto his lordship, whose unwishèd yoke

My soul consents not to give sovereignty.

The. Take time to pause ; and, by the next new moon,—

The sealing-day betwixt my love and me,

For everlasting bond of fellowship,—

Scene The First

Upon that day either prepare to die
For disobedience to your father's will,
Or else to wed Demetrius, as he would ;
Or on Diana's altar to protest
For aye austerity and single life.

90

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

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

Ege. Scornful Lysander ! true, he hath my love,
And what is mine my love shall render him.
And she is mine, and all my right of her
I do estate unto Demetrius.

Lys. I am, my lord, as well derived as he,
As well possess'd ; my love is more than his ;
My fortunes every way as fairly rank'd,
If not with vantage, as Demetrius' ;
And, which is more than all these boasts can be,

100



Act The First

I am beloved of beauteous Hermia :
Why should not I then prosecute my right ?
Demetrius, I'll avouch it to his head,
Made love to Nedar's daughter, Helena,
And won her soul ; and she, sweet lady, dotes,
Devoutly dotes, dotes in idolatry,
Upon this spotted and inconstant man.

110

The. I must confess that I have heard so much,
And with Demetrius thought to have spoke thereof ;
But, being over-full of self-affairs,
My mind did lose it. But, Demetrius, come ;
And come, Egeus ; you shall go with me,
I have some private schooling for you both.
For you, fair Hermia, look you arm yourself
To fit your fancies to your father's will ;
Or else the law of Athens yields you up,—
Which by no means we may extenuate,—
To death, or to a vow of single life.
Come, my Hippolyta : what cheer, my love ?
Demetrius and Egeus, go along :
I must employ you in some business
Against our nuptial, and confer with you
Of something nearly that concerns yourselves.

120

Ege. With duty and desire we follow you.

[Exeunt all but *Lysander* and *Hermia*.]

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

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

130

Lys. Ay me ! for aught that I could ever read,

Scene The First

Could ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth ;
But, either it was different in blood,—

Her. O cross! too high to be enthrall'd to low.

Lys. Or else misgraffed in respect of years,—

Her. O spite! too old to be engaged to young.

Lys. Or else it stood upon the choice of friends,—

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

140

Lys. Or, if there were a sympathy in choice,
War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it,
Making it momentary as a sound,
Swift as a shadow, short as any dream ;
Brief as the lightning in the collied night,
That, in a spleen, unfolds both heaven and earth,
And ere a man hath power to say 'Behold !'
The jaws of darkness do devour it up :
So quick bright things come to confusion.

Her. If then true lovers have been ever cross'd,
It stands as an edict in destiny :

150

Then let us teach our trial patience,
Because it is a customary cross,
As due to love as thoughts and dreams and sighs,
Wishes and tears, poor fancy's followers.

Lys. A good persuasion : therefore, hear me, Hermia.

I have a widow aunt, a dowager
Of great revénue, and she hath no child ;
And she respects me as her only son.

From Athens is her house remote seven leagues ;

160

There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee ;
And to that place the sharp Athenian law

Act The First

Cannot pursue us. If thou lovest me, then,
Steal forth thy father's house to-morrow night;
And in the wood, a league without the town,
Where I did meet thee once with Helena,
To do observance to a morn of May,
There will I stay for thee.

Her. My good Lysander!
I swear to thee, by Cupid's strongest bow,
By his best arrow with the golden head, 170
By the simplicity of Venus' doves,
By that which knitteth souls and prospers loves,
And by that fire which burn'd the Carthage queen,
When the false Trojan under sail was seen,
By all the vows that ever men have broke,
In number more than ever women spoke,
In that same place thou hast appointed me,
To-morrow truly will I meet with thee.

Lys. Keep promise, love. Look, here comes Helena.

Enter Helena.

Her. God speed fair Helena! whither away? 180
Hel. Call you me fair? that fair again unsay.
Demetrius loves you fair: O happy fair!
Your eyes are lode-stars; and your tongue's sweet air
More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear,
When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear.
Sickness is catching: O, were favour so,
Yours would I catch, fair Hermia, ere I go;



I SWEAR TO THEE BY CVPID'S STRONGEST BOW,
 BY HIS BEST ARROW WITH THE GOLDEN HEAD,
 BY THE SIMPLICITY OF VENUS' DOVES,
 BY THAT WHICH KNITTETH SOULS & PROSPERS LOVES,
 AND BY THAT FIRE WHICH BURND THE CARTHAGE QUEEN,
 WHEN THE FALSE TROYAN VNDER SAIL WAS SEEN,
 BY ALL THE VOWS THAT EVER MEN HAVE BROKE,
 IN NUMBER MORE THAN EVER WOMEN SPOKE,
 IN THAT SAME PLACE THOU HAST APPOINTED ME,
 TOMORROW TRVLV WILL I MEET WITH THEE.

Act The First

My ear should catch your voice, my eye your eye,
My tongue should catch your tongue's sweet melody.
Were the world mine, Demetrius being bated, 190
The rest I 'ld give to be to you translated.
O, teach me how you look; and with what art
You sway the motion of Demetrius' heart!

Her. I frown upon him, yet he loves me still.

Hel. O that your frowns would teach my smiles such skill!

Her. I give him curses, yet he gives me love.

Hel. O that my prayers could such affection move!

Her. The more I hate, the more he follows me.

Hel. The more I love, the more he hateth me.

Her. His folly, Helena, is no fault of mine. 200

Hel. None, but your beauty: would that fault were mine!

Her. Take comfort: he no more shall see my face;

Lysander and myself will fly this place.

Before the time I did Lysander see,

Seem'd Athens as a paradise to me:

O, then, what graces in my love do dwell,

That he hath turn'd a heaven into a hell!

Lys. Helen, to you our minds we will unfold:

To-morrow night, when Phœbe doth behold

Her silver visage in the watery glass, 210

Decking with liquid pearl the bladed grass,

A time that lovers' flights doth still conceal,

Through Athens' gates have we devised to steal.

Her. And in the wood, where often you and I

Upon faint primrose-beds were wont to lie,

Emptying our bosoms of their counsel sweet,

There my Lysander and myself shall meet;



Act The First

And thence from Athens turn away our eyes,
To seek new friends and stranger companies.
Farewell, sweet playfellow: pray thou for us; 220
And good luck grant thee thy Demetrius!
Keep word, Lysander: we must starve our sight
From lovers' food till morrow deep midnight.

Lys. I will, my Hermia. [Exit *Herm.*

Helena, adieu:

As you on him, Demetrius dote on you! [Exit.

Hel. How happy some o'er other some can be!
Through Athens I am thought as fair as she.
But what of that? Demetrius thinks not so;
He will not know what all but he do know:
And as he errs, doting on Hermia's eyes, 230
So I, admiring of his qualities:
Things base and vile, holding no quantity,
Love can transpose to form and dignity:
Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind;
And therefore is wing'd Cupid painted blind:
Nor hath Love's mind of any judgement taste;
Wings, and no eyes, figure unheedy haste:
And therefore is Love said to be a child,
Because in choice he is so oft beguiled.
As waggish boys in game themselves forswear, 240
So the boy Love is perjured everywhere:
For ere Demetrius look'd on Hermia's eyne,
He hail'd down oaths that he was only mine;
And when this hail some heat from Hermia felt,
So he dissolved, and showers of oaths did melt.
I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight:

Scene The First

Then to the wood will he to-morrow night
Pursue her; and for this intelligence
If I have thanks, it is a dear expense:
But herein mean I to enrich my pain,
To have his sight thither and back again.

250
[Exit.





ACT FIRST
Scene II

The same—Quince's
house



Quince.

all our company here?

Bot. You were best to call them generally,
man by man, according to the scrip.

Quin. Here is the scroll of every man's
name, which is thought fit, through
all Athens, to play in our interlude
before the duke and the duchess, on
his wedding-day at night.

Bot. First, good Peter Quince, say what the play treats on;
then read the names of the actors; and so grow to a
point.

11

Quin. Marry, our play is, *The most lamentable comedy, and
most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisby.*

Bot. A very good piece of work, I assure you, and a merry.
Now, good Peter Quince, call forth your actors by the
scroll. Masters, spread yourselves.

Act The First

Quin. Answer as I call you. Nick Bottom, the weaver.

Bot. Ready. Name what part I am for, and proceed.

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

Bot. What is Pyramus? a lover, or a tyrant? 20

Quin. A lover, that kills himself most gallant for love.

Bot. That will ask some tears in the true performing of it: if I do it, let the audience look to their eyes; I will move storms, I will condole in some measure. To the rest: yet my chief humour is for a tyrant: I could play Ercles rarely, or a part to tear a cat in, to make all split.

*The raging rocks
And shivering shocks
Shall break the locks
Of prison-gates;
And Phibbus' car
Shall shine from far,
And make and mar
The foolish Fates.*

30

This was lofty! Now name the rest of the players. This is Ercles' vein, a tyrant's vein; a lover is more condoling.

Quin. Francis Flute, the bellows-mender.

Flu. Here, Peter Quince. 40

Quin. Flute, you must take Thisby on you.

Flu. What is Thisby? a wandering knight?

Quin. It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

Flu. Nay, faith, let not me play a woman; I have a beard coming.

Scene The Second

Quin. That's all one: you shall play it in a mask, and you may speak as small as you will.

Bot. An I may hide my face, let me play Thisby too, I'll speak in a monstrous little voice, 'Thisne, Thisne;' 'Ah Pyramus, my lover dear? thy Thisby dear, and lady dear!'

51

Quin. No, no; you must play Pyramus: and, Flute, you Thisby.

Bot. Well, proceed.

Quin. Robin Starveling, the tailor.

Star. Here, Peter Quince.

Quin. Robin Starveling, you must play Thisby's mother. Tom Snout, the tinker.

Snout. Here, Peter Quince.

59

Quin. You, Pyramus' father: myself, Thisby's father: Snug, the joiner; you, the lion's part: and, I hope, here is a play fitted.

Snug. Have you the lion's part written? pray you, if it be, give it me, for I am slow of study.

Quin. You may do it extempore, for it is nothing but roaring.

Bot. Let me play the lion too: I will roar, that I will do any man's heart good to hear me; I will roar, that I will make the duke say, 'Let him roar again, let him roar again.'

70

Quin. An you should do it too terribly, you would fright the duchess and the ladies, that they would shriek; and that were enough to hang us all.

All. That would hang us, every mother's son.

Bot.

Act The First

Bot. I grant you, friends, if you should fright the ladies out of their wits, they would have no more discretion but to hang us: but I will aggravate my voice so, that I will roar you as gently as any sucking dove; I will roar you an 'twere any nightingale. 80

Quin. You can play no part but Pyramus; for Pyramus is a sweet-faced man; a proper man, as one shall see in a summer's day; a most lovely, gentleman-like man: therefore you must needs play Pyramus.

Bot. Well, I will undertake it. What beard were I best to play it in?

Quin. Why, what you will. 88

Bot. I will discharge it in either your straw-colour beard, your orange-tawny beard, your purple-in-grain beard, or your French crown colour beard, your perfect yellow.

Quin. Some of your French crowns have no hair at all, and then you will play barefaced. But, masters, here are your parts: and I am to entreat you, request you, and desire you, to con them by to-morrow night; and meet me in the palace wood, a mile without the town, by moonlight; there will we rehearse, for if we meet in the city, we shall be dogged with company, and our devices known. In the mean time I will draw a bill of properties, such as our play wants. I pray you, fail me not.

Bot.

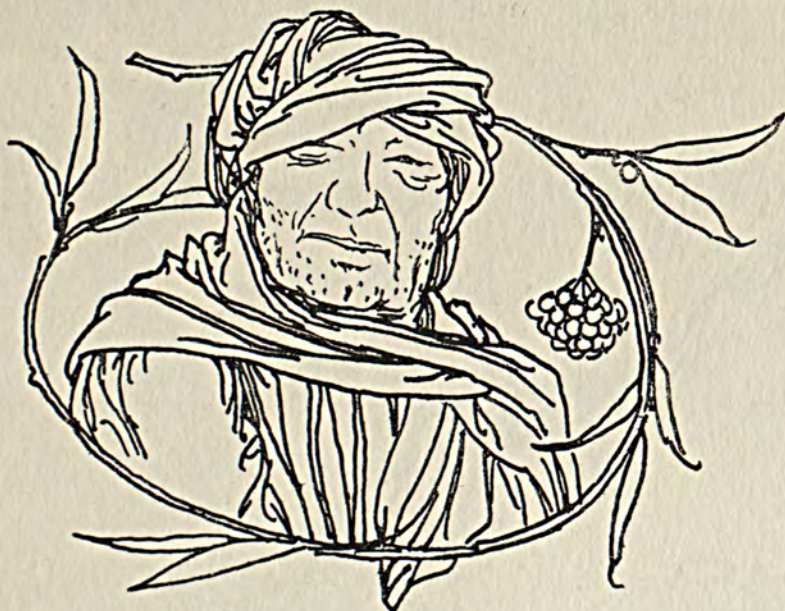
Scene The Second

Bot. We will meet; and there we may rehearse most obscenely and courageously. Take pains; be perfect: adieu.

Quin. At the duke's oak we meet.

Bot. Enough; hold or cut bow-strings.

[Exeunt.]







ACT SECOND. Scene I

A wood near Athens

Enter, from opposite
sides

A Fairy

and

Puck



Puck.

OW now, spirit! whither wander
you?

Fai. Over hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough
brier,
Over park, over pale,
Thorough flood, thorough
fire,

I do wander every where,
Swifter than the moon's sphere;

And I serve the fairy queen,
To dew her orbs upon the green.
The cowslips tall her pensioners be:
In their gold coats spots you see;

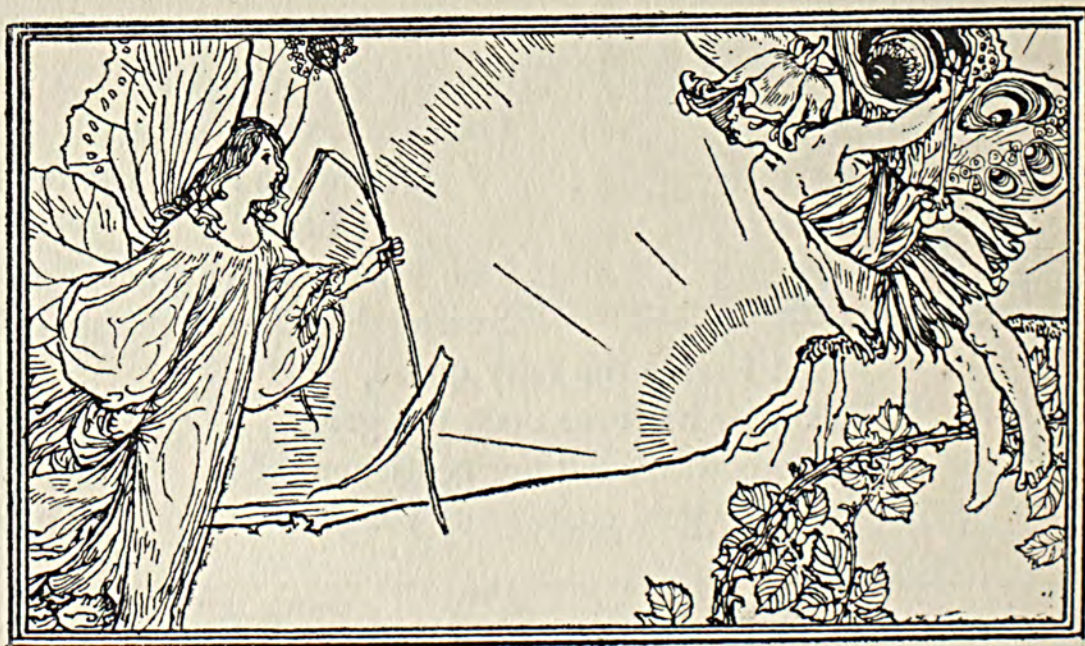
IO
Those



Act The Second

Those be rubies, fairy favours,
In those freckles live their savours :
I must go seek some dewdrops here,
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.
Farewell, thou lob of spirits ; I'll be gone :
Our queen and all her elves come here anon.

Puck. The king doth keep his revels here to-night :
Take heed the queen come not within his sight ;
For Oberon is passing fell and wrath, 20
Because that she as her attendant hath
A lovely boy, stolen from an Indian king ;
She never had so sweet a changeling :
And jealous Oberon would have the child
Knight of his train, to trace the forests wild ;
But she perforce withholds the lovèd boy,
Crowns him with flowers, and makes him all her joy :



Scene The First



And now they never meet in grove or green,
By fountain clear, or spangled starlight sheen,
But they do square, that all their elves for fear 30
Creep into acorn cups and hide them there.

Fai. Either I mistake your shape and making quite,
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite
Call'd Robin Goodfellow: are not you he
That frights the maidens of the villag'ry;
Skim milk, and sometimes labour in the quern,
And bootless make the breathless housewife churn;
And sometime make the drink to bear no barm;
Mislead night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?
Those that Hobgoblin call you, and sweet Puck, 40
You do their work, and they shall have good luck:
Are not you he?

Puck. Thou speak'st aright;
I am that merry wanderer of the night.
I jest to Oberon, and make him smile,



'THAT SHREWD AND KNAVISH SPRITE
CALL'D ROBIN GOODFELLOW.'

Scene The First

When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,
Neighing in likeness of a filly foal:
And sometime lurk I in a gossip's bowl,
In very likeness of a roasted crab;
And when she drinks, against her lips I bob
And on her withered dewlap pour the ale. 50
The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,
Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me;
Then slip I from her, and down topples she,
And 'tailor' cries, and falls into a cough;
And then the whole quire hold their hips and laugh;
And waxen in their mirth, and neeze, and swear
A merrier hour was never wasted there.
But, room, fairy! here comes Oberon.

Fai. And here my mistress. Would that he were gone!

Enter, from one side, *Oberon*, with his train; from the
other, *Titania*, with hers.

Obe. Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania. 60

Tita. What, jealous Oberon! Fairies, skip hence:
I have forsworn his bed and company.

Obe. Tarry, rash wanton: am not I thy lord?

Tita. Then I must be thy lady: but I know
When thou hast stolen away from fairy land,
And in the shape of Corin sat all day,
Playing on pipes of corn, and versing love
To amorous Phillida. Why art thou here,
Come from the farthest steep of India?
But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon, 70
Your buskin'd mistress and your warrior love,



"ILL MET BY MOONLIGHT,



PROVD. TITANIA "

Act The Second

To Theseus must be wedded, and you come
To give their bed joy and prosperity.

Obe. How canst thou thus for shame, Titania,
Glance at my credit with Hippolyta,
Knowing I know thy love to Theseus?
Didst thou not lead him through the glimmering night
From Perigenia?
And make him with fair Ægly break his faith,
With Ariadne and Antiopa? 80

Tita. These are the forgeries of jealousy:
And never, since the middle summer's spring,
Met we on hill, in dale, forest, or mead,
By paved fountain or by rushy brook,
Or in the beachèd margent of the sea,
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,
But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.
Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,
As in revenge, have suck'd up from the sea
Contagious fogs; which, falling in the land, 90
Have every pelting river made so proud,
That they have overborne their continents:
The ox hath therefore stretch'd his yoke in vain,
The ploughman lost his sweat; and the green corn
Hath rotted ere his youth attain'd a beard:
The fold stands empty in the drownèd field,
And crows are fatted with the murrion flock;
The nine men's morris is fill'd up with mud;
And the quaint mazes in the wanton green,
For lack of tread, are undistinguishable: 100
The human mortals want their winter here;

Scene The First



No night is now with hymn or carol blest :
 Therefore the moon, the governess of floods,
 Pale in her anger, washes all the air,
 That rheumatic diseases do abound :
 And thorough this distemperature we see
 The seasons alter : hoary-headed frosts
 Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose ;
 And on old Hiems' thin and icy crown
 An odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds
 Is, as in mockery, set : the spring, the summer,
 The childing autumn, angry winter, change
 Their wonted liveries ; and the mazèd world,
 By their increase, now knows not which is which :
 And this same progeny of evils comes
 From our debate, from our dissension ;
 We are their parents and original.

110

Obe. Do you amend it, then ; it lies in you :

Act The Second

Why should Titania cross her Oberon?
I do but beg a little changeling boy,
To be my henchman.

120

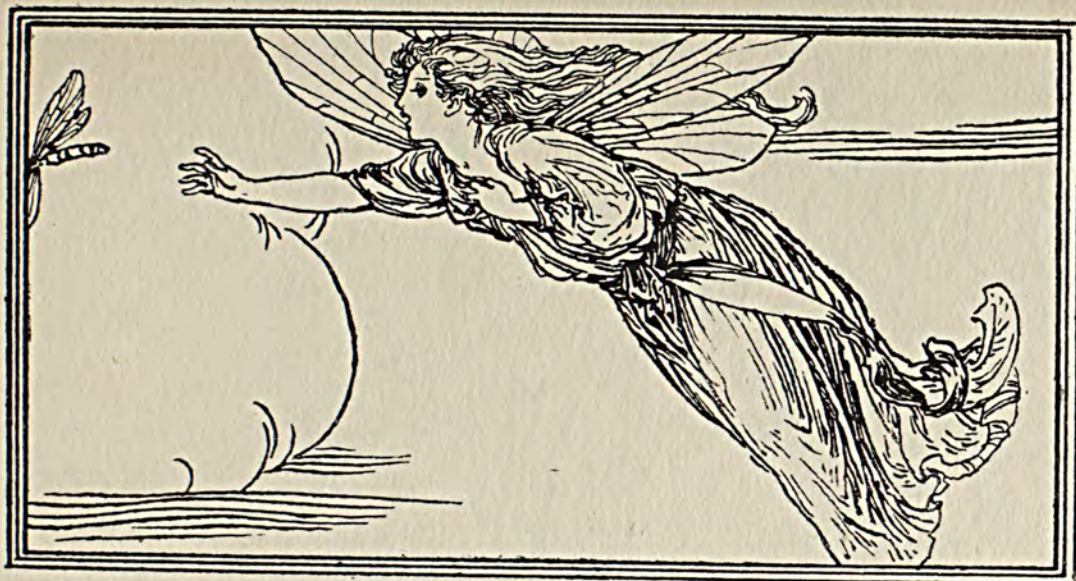
Tita. Set your heart at rest:
The fairy land buys not the child of me.
His mother was a votaress of my order:
And, in the spiced Indian air, by night,
Full often hath she gossip'd by my side;
And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands,
Marking the embarkèd traders on the flood;
When we have laugh'd to see the sails conceive
And grow big-bellied with the wanton wind;
Which she, with pretty and with swimming gait, 130
Would imitate, and sail upon the land,
To fetch me trifles, and return again,
As from a voyage, rich with merchandise.



30

But

Scene The First



But she, being mortal, of that boy did die ;
And for her sake do I rear up her boy ;
And for her sake I will not part with him.

Obe. How long within this wood intend you stay ?

Tita. Perchance till after Theseus' wedding-day.

If you will patiently dance in our round,
And see our moonlight revels, go with us ;
If not, shun me, and I will spare your haunts.

140

Obe. Give me that boy, and I will go with thee.

Tita. Not for thy fairy kingdom. Fairies, away !
We shall chide downright, if I longer stay.

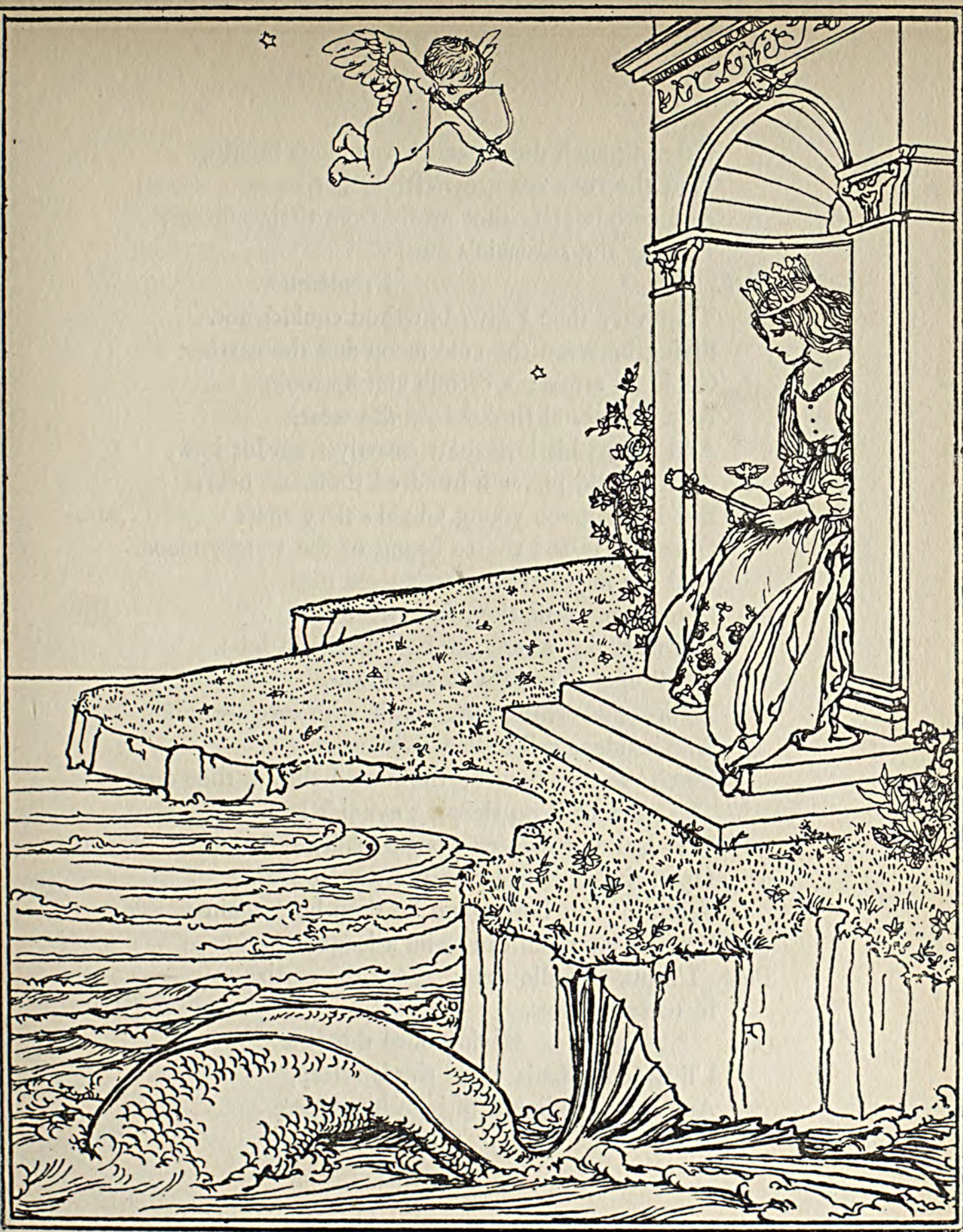
[Exit *Titania* with her Train.]

Obe. Well, go thy way : thou shalt not from this grove
Till I torment thee for this injury.
My gentle Puck, come hither. Thou rememberest
Since once I sat upon a promontory,
And heard a mermaid, on a dolphin's back,

OBERON

PUCK





Act The Second

Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath, 150
That the rude sea grew civil at her song,
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,
To hear the sea-maid's music.

Puck. I remember.

Obe. That very time I saw, but thou couldst not,
Flying between the cold moon and the earth,
Cupid all arm'd: a certain aim he took
At a fair vestal thronèd by the west,
And loosed his love-shaft smartly from his bow,
As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts:
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft 160
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the watery moon,
And the imperial votaress passed on,
In maiden meditation, fancy-free.
Yet mark'd I where the bolt of Cupid fell:
It fell upon a little western flower,
Before milk-white, now purple with love's wound,
And maidens call it love-in-idleness.
Fetch me that flower; the herb I shew'd thee once:
The juice of it on sleeping eye-lids laid
Will make or man or woman madly dote 170
Upon the next live creature that it sees.
Fetch me this herb; and be thou here again
Ere the leviathan can swim a league.

Puck. I'll put a girdle round about the earth
In forty minutes. [Exit.

Obe. Having once this juice,
I'll watch Titania when she is asleep,
And drop the liquor of it in her eyes.

Scene The First

The next thing then she waking looks upon,
Be it on lion, bear, or wolf, or bull,
On meddling monkey, or on busy ape, 180
She shall pursue it with the soul of love :
And ere I take this charm from off her sight,
As I can take it with another herb,
I'll make her render up her page to me.
But who comes here? I am invisible ;
And I will overhear their conference.

Enter *Demetrius*, *Helena* following him.

Dem. I love thee not, therefore pursue me not.
Where is Lysander and fair Hermia ?
The one I'll slay, the other slayeth me.
Thou told'st me they were stolen unto this wood ; 190
And here am I, and wode within this wood,
Because I cannot meet my Hermia.
Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more

Hel. You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant ;
But yet you draw not iron, for my heart
Is true as steel : leave you your power to draw,
And I shall have no power to follow you.

Dem. Do I entice you? do I speak you fair?
Or, rather, do I not in plainest truth
Tell you, I do not nor I cannot love you? 200

Hel. And even for that do I love you the more.
I am your spaniel ; and, Demetrius,
The more you beat me, I will fawn on you :
Use me but as your spaniel, spurn me, strike me,
Neglect me, lose me ; only give me leave,

Act The Second

Unworthy as I am, to follow you.
What worser place can I beg in your love,—
And yet a place of high respect with me,—
Than to be used as you use your dog?

Dem. Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit; 210
For I am sick when I do look on thee.

Hel. And I am sick when I look not on you.

Dem. You do impeach your modesty too much,
To leave the city, and commit yourself
Into the hands of one that loves you not;
To trust the opportunity of night
And the ill counsel of a desert place
With the rich worth of your virginity.

Hel. Your virtue is my privilege: for that 220
It is not night when I do see your face,
Therefore I think I am not in the night;
Nor doth this wood lack worlds of company,
For you in my respect are all the world:
Then how can it be said I am alone,
When all the world is here to look on me?

Dem. I'll run from thee and hide me in the brakes,
And leave thee to the mercy of wild beasts.

Hel. The wildest hath not such a heart as you. 230
Run when you will, the story shall be changed:
Apollo flies, and Daphne holds the chase;
The dove pursues the griffin; the mild hind
Makes speed to catch the tiger; bootless speed,
When cowardice pursues, and valour flies.

Dem. I will not stay thy questions; let me go:
Or, if thou follow me, do not believe

Scene The First

But I shall do thee mischief in the wood.

Hel. Ay, in the temple, in the town, the field,
You do me mischief. Fie, Demetrius!
Your wrongs do set a scandal on my sex:
We cannot fight for love, as men may do; 240
We should be woo'd, and were not made to woo.

[Exit *Dem.*

I'll follow thee, and make a heaven of hell,
To die upon the hand I love so well. [Exit.

Obe. Fare thee well, nymph: ere he do leave this grove,
Thou shalt fly him, and he shall seek thy love.

Re-enter *Puck.*

Hast thou the flower there? Welcome, wanderer.

Puck. Ay, there it is.

Obe. I pray thee, give it me.
I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows;
Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine, 250
With sweet musk-roses, and with eglantine:
There sleeps Titania sometime of the night,
Lull'd in these flowers with dances and delight;
And there the snake throws her enamell'd skin,
Weed wide enough to wrap a fairy in:
And with the juice of this I'll streak her eyes,
And make her full of hateful fantasies.
Take thou some of it, and seek through this grove:
A sweet Athenian lady is in love
With a disdainful youth: anoint his eyes; 260
But do it when the next thing he espies

Act The Second

May be the lady: thou shalt know the man
By the Athenian garments he hath on.
Effect it with some care that he may prove
More fond on her than she upon her love:
And look thou meet me ere the first cock crow.
Puck. Fear not, my lord, your servant shall do so.



ACT SECOND
Scene II

Another part of the
wood



ENTER TITANIA WITH HER TRAIN

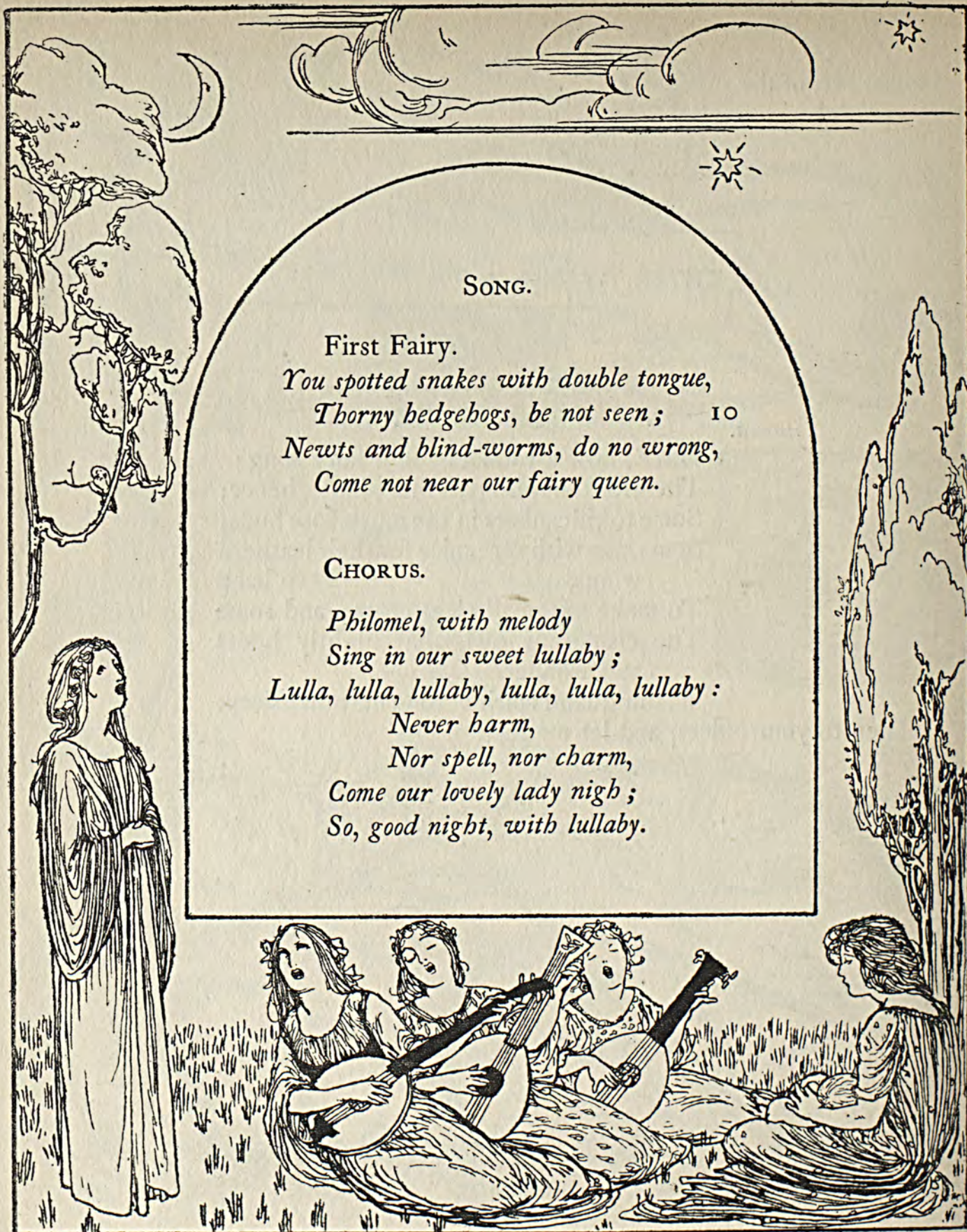
Titania.



COME, now a roundel and a fairy song;
Then, for the third part of a minute, hence;
Some to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds;
Some war with rere-mice for their leathern
wings, [keep back
To make my small elves coats; and some
The clamorous owl, that nightly hoots
and wonders

At our quaint spirits. Sing me now asleep;
Then to your offices, and let me rest.





SONG.

First Fairy.

*You spotted snakes with double tongue,
Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen; 10
Newts and blind-worms, do no wrong,
Come not near our fairy queen.*

CHORUS.

*Philomel, with melody
Sing in our sweet lullaby;
Lulla, lulla, lullaby, lulla, lulla, lullaby:
Never harm,
Nor spell, nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh;
So, good night, with lullaby.*

SONG.

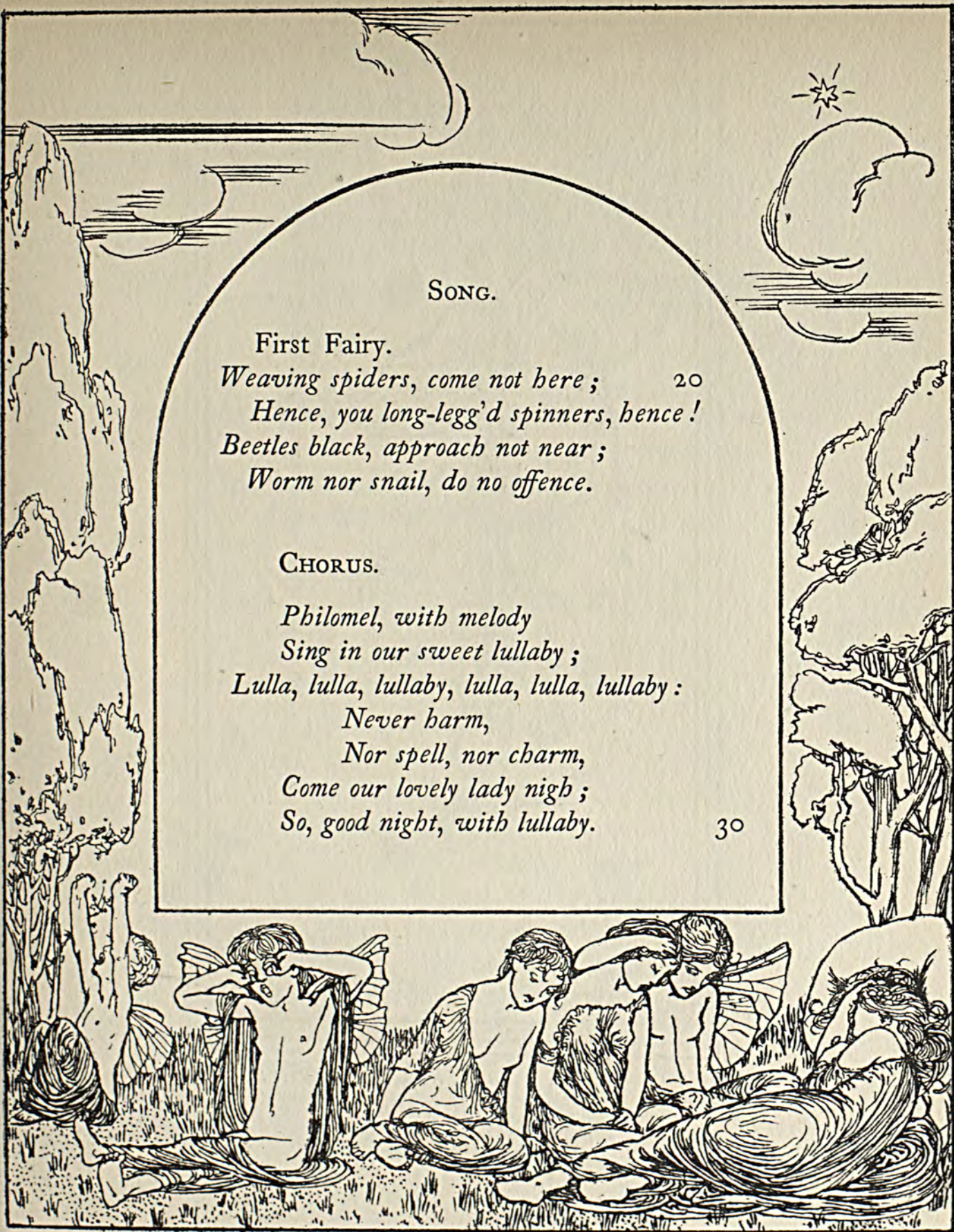
First Fairy.

Weaving spiders, come not here ; 20
Hence, you long-legg'd spinners, hence !
Beetles black, approach not near ;
Worm nor snail, do no offence.

CHORUS.

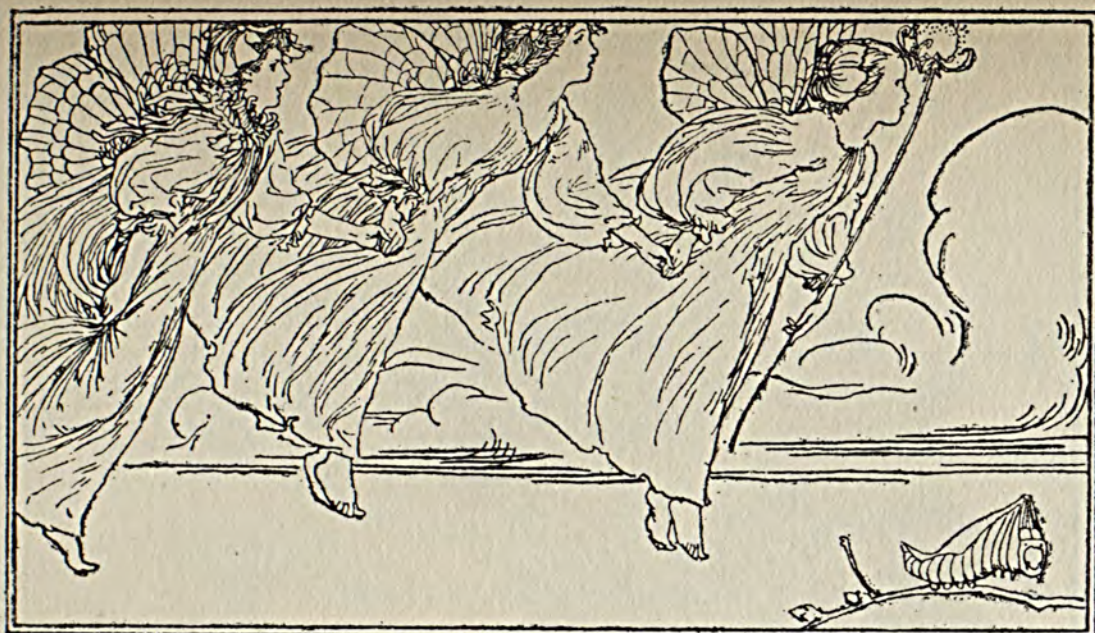
Philomel, with melody
Sing in our sweet lullaby ;
Lulla, lulla, lullaby, lulla, lulla, lullaby :
Never harm,
Nor spell, nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh ;
So, good night, with lullaby.

30





Sec. Fairy. *Hence, away! now all is well:*
 One aloof stand sentinel.
 [Exeunt Fairies. *Titania sleeps.*



Enter *Oberon*, and squeezes the flower on *Titania's* eyelids.

Obe. What thou seest When thou dost Wake,
Do it for thy true-love take:
Love and languish for his sake:
Be it ounce, or cat, or bear,
Pard, or boar With bristled hair,
In thy eye that shall appear
When thou Wake'st, it is thy dear:
Wake When some vile thing is near.

40
[Exit.

Enter *Lysander* and *Hermia*.

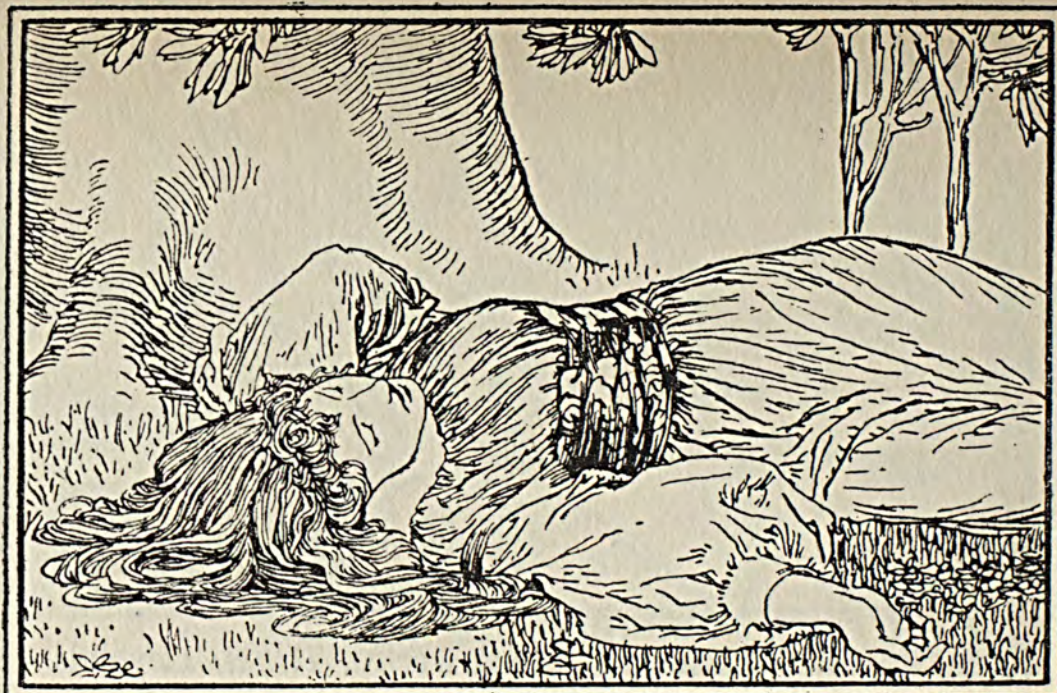
Lys. Fair love, you faint with wandering in the wood;
And to speak troth, I have forgot our way:
We'll rest us, *Hermia*, if you think it good,
And tarry for the comfort of the day.

Her. Be it so, *Lysander*: find you out a bed;
For I upon this bank will rest my head.

Lys. One turf shall serve as pillow for us both;
One heart, one bed, two bosoms, and one troth.

Her. Nay, good *Lysander*; for my sake, my dear, 50
Lie further off yet, do not lie so near.

Lys. O, take the sense, sweet, of my innocence!
Love takes the meaning in love's conference.



I mean, that my heart unto yours is knit,
 So that but one heart we can make of it :
 Two bosoms interchainèd with an oath ;
 So then two bosoms and a single troth.
 Then by your side no bed-room me deny ;
 For lying so, Hermia, I do not lie.

Her. Lysander riddles very prettily : 60

Now much beshrew my manners and my pride,
 If Hermia meant to say Lysander lied.
 But, gentle friend, for love and courtesy
 Lie further off ; in human modesty,
 Such separation as may well be said
 Becomes a virtuous bachelor and a maid,
 So far be distant ; and, good night, sweet friend :
 Thy love ne'er alter till thy sweet life end !

Lys. Amen, amen, to that fair prayer, say I ;
 And then end life when I end loyalty ! 70

Here is my bed : sleep give thee all his rest !

Her. With half that wish the wisher's eyes be press'd !

ENTER PVCK

PVCK

THROUGH the forest have I gone,
But Athenian found I none,
On whose eyes I might approve
This flower's force in stirring love.

Night and silence.—Who is here?
Weeds of Athens he doth wear:
This is he, my master said,
Despisèd the Athenian maid;
And here the maiden, sleeping sound,
On the dank and dirty ground.
Pretty soul! she durst not lie
Near this lack-love, this kill-courtesy.

Churl, upon thy eyes I throw
All the power this charm doth owe.
When thou wake'st, let love forbid
Sleep his seat on thy eyelid:
So awake when I am gone;
For I must now to Oberon.

Enter *Demetrius* and *Helena*, running.

Hel. Stay, though thou kill me, sweet *Demetrius*.

Dem. I charge thee, hence, and do not haunt me thus.

Hel. O, wilt thou darkling leave me? do not so.

Dem. Stay, on thy peril: I alone will go.

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

The more my prayer, the lesser is my grace.

Act The Second

Happy is Hermia, wheresoe'er she lies;
For she hath blessèd and attractive eyes.
How came her eyes so bright? Not with salt tears:
If so, my eyes are oftener wash'd than hers. 100
No, no, I am as ugly as a bear;
For beasts that meet me run away for fear:
Therefore no marvel though Demetrius
Do, as a monster, fly my presence thus.
What wicked and dissembling glass of mine
Made me compare with Hermia's sphery eyne?
But who is here? Lysander! on the ground!
Dead? or asleep? I see no blood, no wound.
Lysander, if you live, good sir, awake.

Lys. [Awaking] And run through fire I will for thy sweet
sake. 110

Transparent Helena! Nature shews art,
That through thy bosom makes me see thy heart.
Where is Demetrius? O, how fit a word
Is that vile name to perish on my sword!

Hel. Do not say so, Lysander; say not so.
What though he love your Hermia? Lord, what
though?

Yet Hermia still loves you: then be content.

Lys. Content with Hermia! No; I do repent
The tedious minutes I with her have spent.
Not Hermia but Helena I love: 120
Who will not change a raven for a dove?
The will of man is by his reason sway'd
And reason says you are the worthier maid.
Things growing are not ripe until their season:



Act The Second

So I, being young, till now ripe not to reason;
And touching now the point of human skill,
Reason becomes the marshal to my will,
And leads me to your eyes; where I o'erlook
Love's stories, written in love's richest book.

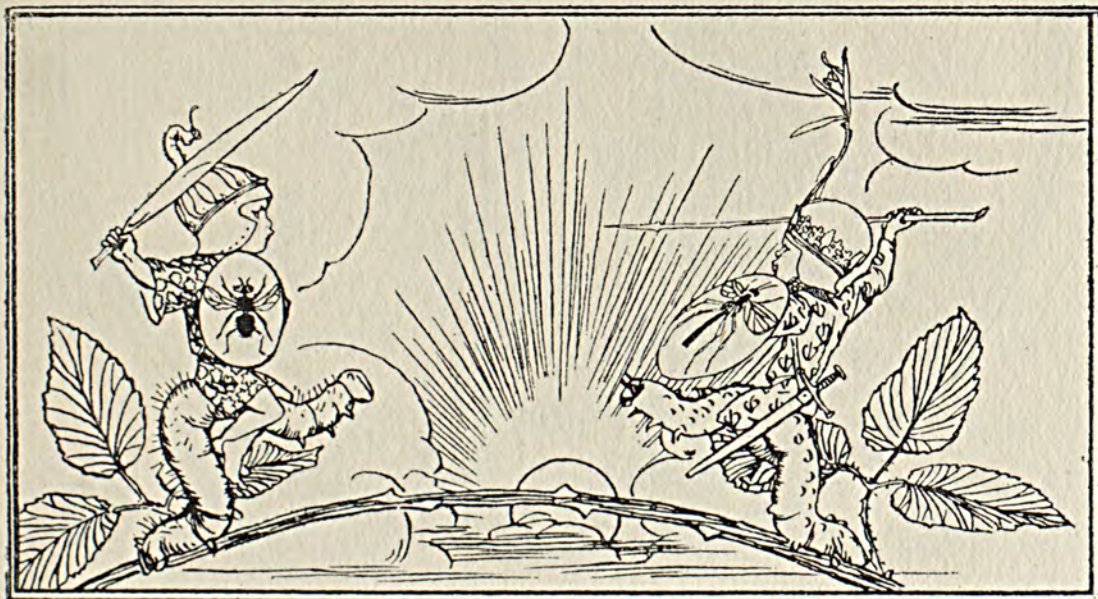
Hel. Wherefore was I to this keen mockery born? 130
When at your hands did I deserve this scorn?
Is't not enough, is't not enough, young man,
That I did never, no, nor never can,
Deserve a sweet look from Demetrius' eye,
But you must flout my insufficiency?
Good troth, you do me wrong, good sooth, you do,
In such disdainful manner me to woo.
But fare you well: perforce I must confess
I thought you lord of more true gentleness.
O, that a lady, of one man refused, 140
Should of another therefore be abused! [Exit.]

Lys. She sees not Hermia. Hermia, sleep thou there:
And never mayst thou come Lysander near!
For as a surfeit of the sweetest things
The deepest loathing to the stomach brings,
Or as the heresies that men do leave
Are hated most of those they did deceive,
So thou, my surfeit and my heresy,
Of all be hated, but the most of me!
And, all my powers, address your love and might 150
To honour Helen and to be her knight! [Exit.]

Her. [Awaking] Help me, Lysander, help me! do thy best
To pluck this crawling serpent from my breast!
Ay me, for pity! what a dream was here!

Scene The Second

Lysander, look how I do quake with fear:
Methought a serpent eat my heart away,
And you sat smiling at his cruel prey.
Lysander! what, removed? Lysander! lord!
What, out of hearing? gone? no sound, no word?
Alack, where are you? speak, an if you hear; 160
Speak, of all loves! I swoon almost with fear.
No? then I well perceive you are not nigh:
Either death or you I'll find immediately. [Exit.







ACT THIRD. Scene I

The wood
Titania lying asleep

Enter
*Quince, Snug,
Bottom, Flute,
Snout* and
Starveling



Bottom.

RE we all met?

Quin. Pat, pat; and here's a marvellous convenient place for our rehearsal. This green plot shall be our stage, this hawthorn-brake our tiring-house; and we will do it in action as we will do it before the duke.

Bot. Peter Quince,—

Quin. What sayest thou, Bully Bottom?

Bot. There are things in this comedy of Pyramus and Thisby that will never please. First, Pyramus must draw a sword to kill himself; which the ladies cannot abide. How answer you that?

Snout.

9



Act The Third

Snout. By 'r lakin, a parlous fear.

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

Bot. Not a whit: I have a device to make all well. Write me a prologue; and let the prologue seem to say, we will do no harm with our swords, and that Pyramus is not killed indeed; and, for the more better assurance, tell them that I Pyramus am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver: this will put them out of fear. 22

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

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

Snout. Will not the ladies be afeard of the lion?

Star. I fear it, I promise you.

Bot. Masters, you ought to consider with yourselves: to bring in,—God shield us!—a lion among ladies, is a most dreadful thing; for there is not a more fearful wild-fowl than your lion living: and we ought to look to 't. 33

Snout. Therefore another prologue must tell he is not a lion.

Bot. Nay, you must name his name, and half his face must be seen through the lion's neck; and he himself must speak through, saying thus, or to the same defect,—'*Ladies,*'—or, '*Fair ladies,*—*I would wish you,*'—or, '*I would request you,*'—or, '*I would entreat you,—not to fear, not to tremble: my life for yours. If you think I come hither as a lion, it were pity of my life: no, I am no such thing; I am a man as other men are:*' and there

Scene The First

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

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

Snout. Doth the moon shine that night we play our play?

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

51

Quin. Yes, it doth shine that night.

Bot. Why, then may you leave a casement of the great chamber window, where we play, open, and the moon may shine in at the casement.

Quin. Ay; or else one must come in with a bush of thorns and a lantern, and say he comes to disfigure, or to present, the person of moonshine. Then, there is another thing: we must have a wall in the great chamber; for Pyramus and Thisby, says the story, did talk through the chink of a wall.

61

Snout. You can never bring in a wall. What say you, Bottom?

Bot. Some man or other must present wall: and let him have some plaster, or some loam, or some rough-cast about him, to signify wall; and let him hold his fingers thus, and through that cranny shall Pyramus and Thisby whisper.

Quin. If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit down, every mother's son, and rehearse your parts. Pyramus, you begin: when you have spoken your speech, enter into that brake: and so every one according to his cue.

73

Act The Third

Enter *Puck* behind.

Puck. What hempen home-spuns have we swaggering here,
So near the cradle of the fairy queen?
What, a play toward! I'll be an auditor;
An actor too perhaps, if I see cause.

Quin. Speak, *Pyramus*. *Thisby*, stand forth.

Bot. *Thisby*, the flowers of odious savours sweet,—

Quin. Odours, odours.

80

Bot. ———odours savours sweet:

So hath thy breath, my dearest Thisby dear.

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

And by and by I will to thee appear.

[Exit.



Puck.

Scene The First

Puck. A stranger Pyramus than e'er play'd here. [Exit.

Flu. Must I speak now?

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

Flu. *Most radiant Pyramus, most lily-white of hue,* 90
Of colour like the red rose on triumphant brier,
Most brisky juvenal, and eke most lovely Jew,
As true as truest horse, that yet would never tire,
I'll meet thee, Pyramus, at Ninny's tomb.

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

Flu. O,—*As true as truest horse, that yet would never tire.*



Act The Third

Re-enter *Puck*, and *Bottom* with an ass's head.

Bot. If I were fair, *Thisby*, I were only thine. 100

Quin. O monstrous! O strange! we are haunted.

Pray, masters! fly, masters! Help!

[Exeunt *Quince*, *Snug*, *Flute*, *Snout*, and *Starveling*.]

Puck. I'll follow you, I'll lead you about a round,
Through bog, through bush, through brake, through
brier:

Sometime a horse I'll be, sometime a hound,
A hog, a headless bear, sometime a fire;
And neigh, and bark, and grunt, and roar, and burn,
Like horse, hound, hog, bear, fire, at every turn.

[Exit.

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

Re-enter *Snout*.

Snout. O Bottom, thou art changed! what do I see on
thee? 112

Bot. What do you see? you see an ass-head of your own,
do you? [Exit *Snout*.

Re-enter *Quince*.

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

[Exit.

Bot. I see their knavery: this is to make an ass of me; to
fright me, if they could. But I will not stir from this
place, do what they can: I will walk up and down here,
and I will sing, that they shall hear I am not afraid.

[Sings.

The

Scene The First

*The ousel cock so black of hue,
With orange-tawny bill,
The throstle with his note so true,
The wren with little quill;*

120

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

Bot. *The finch, the sparrow, and the lark,
The plain-song cuckoo gray,
Whose note full many a man doth mark,
And dares not answer nay;—*

for, indeed, who would set his wit to so foolish a bird?
who would give a bird the lie, though he cry 'cuckoo'
never so?

132

Tita. I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again:
Mine ear is much enamour'd of thy note;
So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape;
And thy fair virtue's force perforce doth move me
On the first view to say, to swear, I love thee.

Bot. Methinks, mistress, you should have little reason for
that: and yet, to say the truth, reason and love keep
little company together now-a-days; the more the pity,
that some honest neighbours will not make them friends.
Nay, I can gleek upon occasion.

142

Tita. Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.

Bot. Not so, neither: but if I had wit enough to get out of
this wood, I have enough to serve mine own turn.

Tita. Out of this wood do not desire to go:
Thou shalt remain here, whether thou wilt or no.

Act The Third

I am a spirit of no common rate :
The summer still doth tend upon my state ;
And I do love thee : therefore, go with me ; 150
I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee ;
And they shall fetch thee jewels from the deep,
And sing, while thou on pressed flowers dost sleep :
And I will purge thy mortal grossness so,
That thou shalt like an airy spirit go.
Peaseblossom ! Cobweb ! Moth ! and Mustardseed !

Enter *Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Moth, and Mustardseed.*

First Fai. Ready.

Sec. Fai. And I.

Third Fai. And I.

Fourth Fai. And I.

All. Where shall we go ?

Tita. Be kind and courteous to this gentleman,
Hop in his walks, and gambol in his eyes ;
Feed him with apricocks and dewberries, 160
With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries ;
The honey-bags steal from the humble-bees,
And for night-tapers crop their waxen thighs,
And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes,
To have my love to bed and to arise ;
And pluck the wings from painted butterflies,
To fan the moonbeams from his sleeping eyes :
Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies.

First Fai. Hail, mortal !

Sec. Fai. Hail !

Third Fai. Hail !

170

Scene The First



Fourth Fai. Hail!

Bot. I cry your worships mercy, heartily: I beseech your worship's name.

Cob. Cobweb.

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

Peas. Peaseblossom.

Bot. I pray you, commend me to Mistress Squash, your mother, and to Master Peascod, your father. Good Master Peaseblossom, I shall desire you of more acquaintance too. Your name, I beseech you, sir? 183

Mus. Mustardseed.

Bot. Good Master Mustardseed, I know your patience well: that same cowardly, giant-like ox-beef hath devoured many a gentleman of your house: I promise you your

Act The Third



kindred hath made my eyes water ere now. I desire
your more acquaintance, good Master Mustardseed.

Tita. Come, wait upon him; lead him to my bower. 190

The moon methinks looks with a watery eye;
And when she weeps, weeps every little flower,
Lamenting some enforced chastity.

Tie up my love's tongue, bring him silently.

[Exeunt.]



ACT THIRD
Scene II

Another part of the
wood



Oberon.

WONDER if Titania be awaked ;
Then, what it was that next came in her
eye,
Which she must dote on in extremity.

Enter Puck.

Here comes my messenger.

How now, mad spirit !

What night-rule now about this haunted
grove ?

Puck. My mistress with a monster is in love.

Near to her close and consecrated bower,
While she was in her dull and sleeping hour,
A crew of patches, rude mechanicals,
That work for bread upon Athenian stalls,
Were met together to rehearse a play,
Intended for great Theseus' nuptial-day.
The shallowest thick-skin of that barren sort,
Who Pyramus presented, in their sport
Forsook his scene, and enter'd in a brake :

10

61

When

Act The Third

When I did him at this advantage take,
An ass's noll I fixèd on his head :
Anon his Thisbe must be answered,
And forth my mimic comes. When they him spy,
As wild geese that the creeping fowler eye, 20
Or russet-pated choughs, many in sort,
Rising and cawing at the gun's report,
Sever themselves and madly sweep the sky,
So, at his sight, away his fellows fly ;
And, at our stamp, here o'er and o'er one falls ;
He murder cries, and help from Athens calls.
Their sense thus weak, lost with their fears thus
strong,

Made senseless things begin to do them wrong ;
For briers and thorns at their apparel snatch ;
Some sleeves, some hats, from yielders all things catch.
I led them on in this distracted fear, 31

And left sweet Pyramus translated there :
When in that moment, so it came to pass,
Titania waked, and straightway loved an ass.

Obe. This falls out better than I could devise.
But hast thou yet latch'd the Athenian's eyes
With a love-juice, as I did bid thee do ?

Puck. I took him sleeping,—that is finish'd too,—
And the Athenian woman by his side ;
That, when he waked, of force she must be eyed. 40

Enter *Hermia* and *Demetrius*.

Obe. Stand close : this is the same Athenian.

Puck. This is the woman, but not this the man.

Scene The Second

Dem. O, why rebuke you him that loves you so?

Lay breath so bitter on your bitter foe.

Her. Now I but chide; but I should use thee worse,

For thou, I fear, hast given me cause to curse.

If thou hast slain Lysander in his sleep,

Being o'er shoes in blood, plunge in the deep,

And kill me too.

The sun was not so true unto the day

50

As he to me: would he have stolen away

From sleeping Hermia? I'll believe as soon

This whole earth may be bored, and that the moon

May through the centre creep, and so displease

Her brother's noontide with the Antipodes.

It cannot be but thou hast murder'd him;

So should a murderer look, so dead, so grim.

Dem. So should the murder'd look; and so should I,
Pierced through the heart with your stern cruelty:

Yet you, the murderer, look as bright, as clear,

60

As yonder Venus in her glimmering sphere.

Her. What's this to my Lysander? where is he?

Ah, good Demetrius, wilt thou give him me?

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

Her. Out, dog! out, cur! thou driv'st me past the bounds
Of maiden's patience. Hast thou slain him, then?

Henceforth be never number'd among men!

O, once tell true, tell true, even for my sake!

Durst thou have look'd upon him being awake,

And hast thou kill'd him sleeping? O brave touch! 70

Could not a worm, an adder, do so much?

An adder did it; for with doubler tongue

Act The Third

Than thine, thou serpent, never adder stung.

Dem. You spend your passion on a misprised mood :

I am not guilty of Lysander's blood ;

Nor is he dead, for aught that I can tell.

Her. I pray thee, tell me then that he is well.

Dem. An if I could, what should I get therefore ?

Her. A privilege, never to see me more.

And from thy hated presence part I so :

80

See me no more, whether he be dead or no.

[Exit.

Dem. There is no following her in this fierce vein :

Here therefore for a while I will remain.

So sorrow's heaviness doth heavier grow

For debt that bankrupt sleep doth sorrow owe ;

Which now in some slight measure it will pay,

If for his tender here I make some stay.

[Lies down and sleeps.

Obe. What hast thou done ? thou hast mistaken quite,

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

Of thy misprision must perforce ensue

90

Some true love turn'd, and not a false turn'd true.

Puck. Then fate o'er-rules, that, one man holding troth,
A million fail, confounding oath on oath.

Obe. About the wood go swifter than the wind,

And Helena of Athens look thou find :

All fancy-sick she is and pale of cheer,

With sighs of love, that costs the fresh blood dear :

By some illusion see thou bring her here :

I'll charm his eyes against she do appear.

Puck. I go, I go ; look how I go,

100

Swifter than arrow from the Tartar's bow.

[Exit.

Obe.

Scene The Second

Obe. Slober of this purple dye.
Hit With Cupid's archery.
Sink in apple of his eye.
When his love he doth espy.
Let her shine as gloriously
As the Venus of the sky.
When thou make'st, if she be by.
Beg of her for remedy.

Re-enter *Puck*.

<i>Puck.</i>	Captain of our fairy band, Helena is here at hand; And the youth, mistook by me, Pleading for a lover's fee. Shall we their fond pageant see? Lord, what fools these mortals be?	110
<i>Obe.</i>	Stand aside: the noise they make Will cause Demetrius to awake.	
<i>Puck.</i>	Then will two at once woo one; That must needs be sport alone; And those things do best please me That befall preposterously.	120

Enter *Lysander* and *Helena*.

Lys. Why should you think that I should woo in scorn?
Scorn and derision never come in tears:
Look, when I vow, I weep; and vows so born,
In their nativity all truth appears.
How can these things in me seem scorn to you,

Act The Third

Bearing the badge of faith, to prove them true?

Hel. You do advance your cunning more and more.

When truth kills truth, O devilish-holy fray!

These vows are Hermia's: will you give her o'er? 130

Weigh oath with oath, and you will nothing weigh:

Your vows to her and me, put in two scales,

Will even weigh; and both as light as tales.

Lys. I had no judgement when to her I swore.

Hel. Nor none, in my mind, now you give her o'er.

Lys. Demetrius loves her, and he loves not you.

Dem. [Awaking] O Helen, goddess, nymph, perfect, divine!

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

Crystal is muddy. O, how ripe in show

Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow! 140

That pure congealèd white, high Taurus' snow,

Fann'd with the eastern wind, turns to a crow

When thou hold'st up thy hand: O, let me kiss

This princess of pure white, this seal of bliss!

Hel. O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent

To set against me for your merriment:

If you were civil and knew courtesy,

You would not do me thus much injury.

Can you not hate me, as I know you do,

But you must join in souls to mock me too? 150

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

You would not use a gentle lady so;

To vow, and swear, and superpraise my parts,

When I am sure you hate me with your hearts.

You both are rivals, and love Hermia;

And now both rivals, to mock Helena:

Scene The Second

A trim exploit, a manly enterprise,
To conjure tears up in a poor maid's eyes
With your derision! none of noble sort
Would so offend a virgin, and extort
A poor soul's patience, all to make you sport.

160

Lys. You are unkind, Demetrius; be not so;
For you love Hermia; this you know I know:
And here, with all good-will, with all my heart,
In Hermia's love I yield you up my part;
And yours of Helena to me bequeath,
Whom I do love, and will do till my death.

Hel. Never did mockers waste more idle breath.

Dem. Lysander, keep thy Hermia; I will none:
If e'er I loved her, all that love is gone.
My heart to her but as guest-wise sojourn'd,
And now to Helen is it home return'd,
There to remain.

170

Lys. Helen, it is not so.

Dem. Disparage not the faith thou dost not know,



Act The Third

Lest, to thy peril, thou aby it dear.
Look, where thy love comes; yonder is thy dear.

Re-enter *Hermia*.

Her. Dark night, that from the eye his function takes,
The ear more quick of apprehension makes;
Wherein it doth impair the seeing sense,
It pays the hearing double recompence. 180
Thou art not by mine eye, Lysander, found;
Mine ear, I thank it, brought me to thy sound.
But why unkindly didst thou leave me so?

Lys. Why should he stay, whom love doth press to go?

Her. What love could press Lysander from my side?

Lys. Lysander's love, that would not let him bide,
Fair Helena, who more engilds the night
Than all yon fiery oes and eyes of light
Why seek'st thou me? could not this make thee know,
The hate I bare thee made me leave thee so? 190

Her. You speak not as you think: it cannot be.

Hel. Lo, she is one of this confederacy!
Now I perceive they have conjoin'd all three
To fashion this false sport, in spite of me.
Injurious *Hermia*! most ungrateful maid!
Have you conspired, have you with these contrived
To bait me with this foul derision?
Is all the counsel that we two have shared,
The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent,
When we have chid the hasty-footed time 200
For parting us,—O, is all forgot?
All school-days' friendship, childhood innocence?



Act The Third

We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,
Have with our needles created both one flower,
Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,
Both warbling of one song, both in one key;
As if our hands, our sides, voices, and minds,
Had been incorporate. So we grew together,
Like to a double cherry, seeming parted,
But yet an union in partition;
Two lovely berries moulded on one stem;
So, with two seeming bodies, but one heart;
Two of the first, like coats in heraldry,
Due but to one, and crownèd with one crest.
And will you rent our ancient love asunder,
To join with men in scorning your poor friend?
It is not friendly, 'tis not maidenly:
Our sex, as well as I, may chide you for it,
Though I alone do feel the injury.

210

Her. I am amazèd at your passionate words.
I scorn you not: it seems that you scorn me.

220

Hel. Have you not set Lysander, as in scorn,
To follow me and praise my eyes and face?
And made your other love, Demetrius,
Who even but now did spurn me with his foot,
To call me goddess, nymph, divine and rare,
Precious, celestial? Wherefore speaks he this
To her he hates? and wherefore doth Lysander
Deny your love, so rich within his soul,
And tender me, forsooth, affection,
But by your setting on, by your consent?
What though I be not so in grace as you,

230

Scene The Second

So hung upon with love, so fortunate,
But miserable most, to love unloved?
This you should pity rather than despise.

Her. I understand not what you mean by this.

Hel. Ay, do, perséver, counterfeit sad looks,
Make mouths upon me when I turn my back;
Wink each at other; hold the sweet jest up:
This sport, well carried, shall be chronicled. 240
If you have any pity, grace, or manners,
You would not make me such an argument.
But fare ye well: 'tis partly my own fault;
Which death or absence soon shall remedy.

Lys. Stay, gentle Helena; hear my excuse:
My love, my life, my soul, fair Helena!

Hel. O excellent!

Her. Sweet, do not scorn her so.

Dem. If she cannot entreat, I can compel.

Lys. Thou canst compel no more than she entreat:
Thy threats have no more strength than her weak
prayers. 250

Helen, I love thee; by my life, I do:
I swear by that which I will lose for thee,
To prove him false that says I love thee not.

Dem. I say I love thee more than he can do.

Lys. If thou say so, withdraw, and prove it too.

Dem. Quick, come!

Her. Lysander, whereto tends all this?

Lys. Away, you Ethiope!

Dem. No, no, sir;
Seem to break loose; take on as you would follow,
71 But

Act The Third

But yet come not: you are a tame man, go!

Lys. Hang off, thou cat, thou burr! vile thing, let loose,
Or I will shake thee from me like a serpent! 261

Her. Why are you grown so rude? what change is this?
Sweet love,—

Lys. Thy love! out, tawny Tartar, out!
Out, loathèd medicine! hated potion, hence!

Her. Do you not jest?

Hel. Yes, sooth; and so do you.

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

Dem. I would I had your bond, for I perceive
A weak bond holds you: I'll not trust your word.

Lys. What, should I hurt her, strike her, kill her dead?
Although I hate her, I'll not harm her so. 270

Her. What, can you do me greater harm than hate?
Hate me! wherefore? O me! what news, my love!
Am not I Hermia? are not you Lysander?
I am as fair now as I was erewhile.
Since night you loved me; yet since night you left me:
Why, then you left me,—O, the gods forbid!—
In earnest, shall I say?

Lys. Ay, by my life;
And never did desire to see thee more.
Therefore be out of hope, of question, of doubt;
Be certain, nothing truer; 'tis no jest 280
That I do hate thee, and love Helena.

Her. O me! you juggler! you canker-blossom!
You thief of love! what, have you come by night
And stolen my love's heart from him?

Hel. Fine, i' faith!

Scene The Second

Have you no modesty, no maiden shame,
No touch of bashfulness? What, will you tear
Impatient answers from my gentle tongue?
Fie, fie! you counterfeit, you puppet, you!

Her. Puppet? why so? ay, that way goes the game.
Now I perceive that she hath made compare 290
Between our statures; she hath urged her height;
And with her personage, her tall personage,
Her height, forsooth, she hath prevail'd with him.
And are you grown so high in his esteem,
Because I am so dwarfish and so low?
How low am I, thou painted maypole? speak;
How low am I? I am not yet so low
But that my nails can reach unto thine eyes.

Hel. I pray you, though you mock me, gentlemen,
Let her not hurt me: I was never curst; 300
I have no gift at all in shrewishness;
I am a right maid for my cowardice:
Let her not strike me. You perhaps may think,
Because she is something lower than myself,
That I can match her.

Her. Lower! hark, again.

Hel. Good Hermia, do not be so bitter with me.
I evermore did love you, Hermia,
Did ever keep your counsels, never wrong'd you;
Save that, in love unto Demetrius,
I told him of your stealth unto this wood. 310
He follow'd you; for love I follow'd him;
But he hath chid me hence, and threaten'd me
To strike me, spurn me, nay, to kill me too:

Act The Third

And now, so you will let me quiet go,
To Athens will I bear my folly back,
And follow you no further: let me go:
You see how simple and how fond I am.

Her. Why, get you gone: who is't that hinders you?

Hel. A foolish heart, that I leave here behind.

Her. What, with Lysander?

Hel. With Demetrius.

320

Lys. Be not afraid; she shall not harm thee, Helena.

Dem. No, sir, she shall not, though you take her part.

Hel. O, when she's angry, she is keen and shrewd!

She was a vixen when she went to school;

And though she be but little, she is fierce.

Her. Little again! nothing but low and little!

Why will you suffer her to flout me thus?

Let me come to her.

Lys. Get you gone, you dwarf;

You minimus, of hindering knot-grass made;

You bead, you acorn.

Dem. You are too officious

330

In her behalf that scorns your services.

Let her alone: speak not of Helena;

Take not her part; for, if thou dost intend

Never so little show of love to her,

Thou shalt aby it.

Lys. Now she holds me not;

Now follow, if thou darest, to try whose right,

Of thine or mine, is most in Helena.

Dem. Follow! nay, I'll go with thee, cheek by jole.

[Exeunt *Lysander* and *Demetrius*.

Scene The Second



Her. You, mistress, all this coil is 'long of you:
Nay, go not back.

Hel. I will not trust you, I,
Nor longer stay in your curst company.
Your hands than mine are quicker for a fray.
My legs are longer though, to run away.

340

Her. I am amazed, and know not what to say.

[Exit.
[Exit.

Obe. This is thy negligence: still thou mistakest,
Or else committ'st thy knaveries wilfully.

Puck. Believe me, king of shadows, I mistook.
Did not you tell me I should know the man
By the Athenian garments he had on?
And so far blameless proves my enterprise,
That I have 'nointed an Athenian's eyes;
And so far am I glad it so did sort,
As this their jangling I esteem a sport.

350

Act The Third

Obe. Thou see'st these lovers seek a place to fight :
Hie therefore, Robin, overcast the night ;
The starry welkin cover thou anon
With drooping fog, as black as Acheron ;
And lead these testy rivals so astray,
As one come not within another's way.
Like to Lysander sometime frame thy tongue, 360
Then stir Demetrius up with bitter wrong ;
And sometime rail thou like Demetrius ;
And from each other look thou lead them thus,
Till o'er their brows death-counterfeiting sleep
With leaden legs and batty wings doth creep :
Then crush this herb into Lysander's eye ;
Whose liquor hath this virtuous property,
To take from thence all error with his might,
And make his eyeballs roll with wonted sight.
When they next wake, all this derision 370
Shall seem a dream and fruitless vision ;
And back to Athens shall the lovers wend,
With league whose date till death shall never end.
Whiles I in this affair do thee employ,
I'll to my queen and beg her Indian boy ;
And then I will her charmed eye release
From monster's view, and all things shall be peace.

Puck. My fairy lord, this must be done with haste,
For night's swift dragons cut the clouds full fast,
And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger ; 380
At whose approach, ghosts, wandering here and there,
Troop home to churchyards : damned spirits all,
That in crossways and floods have burial,

Scene The Second

Already to their wormy beds are gone ;
For fear lest day should look their shames upon,
They wilfully themselves exile from light,
And must for aye consort with black-brow'd night.

Obe. But we are spirits of another sort :
I with the morning's love have oft made sport ;
And, like a forester, the groves may tread, 390
Even till the eastern gate, all fiery-red,
Opening on Neptune with fair blessed beams,
Turns into yellow gold his salt green streams.
But, notwithstanding, haste ; make no delay :
We may effect this business yet ere day. [Exit.

Puck. Up and down, up and down,
I will lead them up and down :
I am fear'd in field and town :
Goblin, lead them up and down.

Here comes one. 400

Re-enter *Lysander*.

Lys. Where art thou, proud Demetrius? speak thou now.

Puck. Here, villain ; drawn and ready. Where art thou?

Lys. I will be with thee straight.

Puck. Follow me, then,
To plainer ground.

[Exit *Lysander*, as following the voice.

Re-enter *Demetrius*.

Dem. Lysander! speak again :
Thou runaway, thou coward, art thou fled?
Speak! In some bush? Where dost thou hide thy
head?

Act The Third

Puck. Thou coward, art thou bragging to the stars,
Telling the bushes that thou look'st for wars,
And wilt not come? Come, recreant; come, thou
child;
I'll whip thee with a rod: he is defiled 410
That draws a sword on thee.

Dem. Yea, art thou there?

Puck. Follow my voice: we'll try no manhood here.

[Exeunt.

Re-enter *Lysander*.

Lys. He goes before me and still dares me on:
When I come where he calls, then he is gone.
The villain is much lighter-heel'd than I:
I follow'd fast, but faster he did fly;
That fallen am I in dark uneven way,
And here will rest me. [Lies down.] Come, thou
gentle day!
For if but once thou show me thy grey light,
I'll find Demetrius, and revenge this spite. [Sleeps.

Re-enter *Puck* and *Demetrius*.

Puck. Ho, ho, ho! Coward, why comest thou not? 421

Dem. Abide me, if thou darest; for well I wot
Thou runn'st before me, shifting every place,
And darest not stand, nor look me in the face.
Where art thou now?

Puck. Come hither: I am here.

Dem. Nay, then, thou mock'st me. Thou shalt buy this
dear,

If ever I thy face by daylight see:

Now, go thy way. Faintness constraineth me

Scene The Second



To measure out my length on this cold bed.
By day's approach look to be visited.

430

[Lies down and sleeps.]

Re-enter *Helena*.

Hel. O weary night, O long and tedious night,
Abate thy hours! Shine comforts from the east,
That I may back to Athens by daylight,
From these that my poor company detest:
And sleep, that sometimes shuts up sorrow's eye,
Steal me awhile from mine own company.

[Lies down and sleeps.]

Puck. Yet but three? Come one more;
Two of both kinds makes up four.
Here she comes, curst and sad:
Cupid is a knavish lad,
Thus to make poor females mad.

440

Act The Third

Re-enter *Hermia*.

Her. Never so weary, never so in woe ;
Bedabbled with the dew, and torn with briers ;
I can no further crawl, no further go ;
My legs can keep no pace with my desires.
Here will I rest me till the break of day.
Heavens shield Lysander, if they mean a fray !
[Lies down and sleeps.

Puck. On the ground
Sleep sound :
I'll apply 450
To your eye,
Gentle lover, remedy.
[Squeezing the juice on Lysander's eye.

When thou wake'st,
Thou take'st
True delight
In the sight
Of thy former lady's eye :
And the country proverb known,
That every man should take his own,
In your waking shall be shown :
Jack shall have Jill ;
Nought shall go ill ;
The man shall have his mare again, and all shall be
Well. [Exit.



ACT FOURTH. Scene I

The same

Lysander, Demetrius, Helena, and
Hermia, lying asleep

Enter
Titania and
Bottom; *Pease-*
blossom, *Cobweb*,
Moth, *Mustard-*
seed, and other
Fairies attending;
Oberon behind
unseen

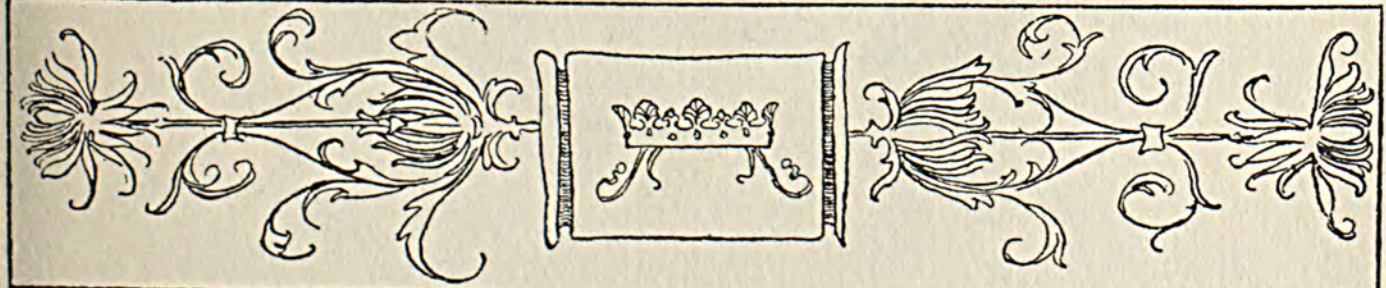


Titania.

COME, sit thee down upon this
flowery bed,
While I thy amiable cheeks do
coy,
And stick musk-roses in thy sleek
smooth head,
And kiss thy fair large ears, my
gentle joy.

Bot. Where's Peaseblossom?

Peas.



Act The Fourth

Peas. Ready.

Bot. Scratch my head, Peaseblossom. Where's Mounsieur Cobweb?

Cob. Ready.

9

Bot. Mounsieur Cobweb, good mounsieur, get you your weapons in your hand, and kill me a red-hipped humble-bee on the top of a thistle; and, good mounsieur, bring me the honey-bag. Do not fret yourself too much in the action, mounsieur; and, good mounsieur, have a care the honey-bag break not; I would be loth to have you overflown with a honey-bag, signior. Where's Mounsieur Mustardseed.

Mus. Ready.

Bot. Give me your neaf, Mounsieur Mustardseed. Pray you, leave your courtesy, good mounsieur.

20

Mus. What's your will?



Scene The First



Bot. Nothing, good mounsieur, but to help Cavalery Cobweb to scratch. I must to the barber's, mounsieur; for methinks I am marvellous hairy about the face; and I am such a tender ass, if my hair do but tickle me, I must scratch.

Tita. What, wilt thou hear some music, my sweet love?

Bot. I have a reasonable good ear in music. Let's have the tongs and the bones.

Tita. Or say, sweet love, what thou desirest to eat. 30

Bot. Truly, a peck of provender: I could munch your good dry oats. Methinks I have a great desire to a bottle of hay: good hay, sweet hay, hath no fellow.

Tita. I have a venturous fairy that shall seek
The squirrel's hoard, and fetch thee thence new nuts.

Bot. I had rather have a handful or two of dried peas. But, I pray you, let none of your people stir me: I have an exposition of sleep come upon me.

Tita. Sleep thou, and I will wind thee in my arms.

Act The Fourth

Fairies, be gone, and be all ways away. 40
[Exeunt *Fairies*.]

So doth the woodbine the sweet honeysuckle
Gently entwist; the female ivy so
Enrings the barky fingers of the elm.
O, how I love thee! how I dote on thee! [They sleep.]

Enter *Puck*.

Obe. [Advancing] Welcome, good Robin. See'st thou this
sweet sight?

Her dotage now I do begin to pity:
For, meeting her of late behind the wood,
Seeking sweet favours for this hateful fool,
I did upbraid her, and fall out with her;
For she his hairy temples then had rounded 50
With coronet of fresh and fragrant flowers;
And that same dew, which sometime on the buds
Was wont to swell, like round and orient pearls,
Stood now within the pretty flowerets' eyes,
Like tears, that did their own disgrace bewail.
When I had at my pleasure taunted her,
And she in mild terms begg'd my patience,
I then did ask of her her changeling child;
Which straight she gave me, and her fairy sent 60
To bear him to my bower in fairy land.
And now I have the boy, I will undo
This hateful imperfection of her eyes:
And, gentle Puck, take this transformèd scalp
From off the head of this Athenian swain;
That, he awaking when the other do,
May all to Athens back again repair,

Scene The First

And think no more of this night's accidents,
But as the fierce vexation of a dream.
But first I will release the fairy queen.

Be as thou wast wont to be ; 70
See as thou wast wont to see :
Dian's bud o'er Cupid's flower
Hath such force and blessed power.

Now, my Titania ; wake you, my sweet queen.

Tita. My Oberon ! what visions have I seen !

Methought I was enamour'd of an ass.

Obe. There lies your love.

Tita. How came these things to pass ?

O, how mine eyes do loathe his visage now !

Obe. Silence awhile. Robin, take off this head.

Titania, music call ; and strike more dead 80
Than common sleep of all these five the sense.

Tita. Music, ho ! music, such as charmeth sleep !

[Music, still.

Puck. Now, when thou wak'st, with thine own fool's eyes
peep.

Obe. Sound, music ! Come, my queen, take hands with me,
And rock the ground whereon these sleepers be.

Now thou and I are new in amity,
And will to-morrow midnight solemnly
Dance in Duke Theseus' house triumphantly,
And bless it to all fair posterity :

There shall the pairs of faithful lovers be 90
Wedded, with Theseus, all in jollity.

Puck. Fairy king, attend, and mark :

Act The Fourth

I do hear the morning lark.
Obe. Then, my queen, in silence sad,
 Trip we after night's shade :
 We the globe can compass soon,
 Swifter than the wandering moon.

Tita.



OME, my lord ; and in our flight,
 Tell me how it came this night,
 That I sleeping here was found 100
 With these mortals on the ground. [Exeunt.
 [Horns winded within.

Enter *Theseus*, *Hippolyta*, *Egeus*, and train.

The. Go, one of you, find out the forester ;
 For now our observation is perform'd ;

And since we have the vaward of the day,
 My love shall hear the music of my hounds.
 Uncouple in the western valley ; go :
 Dispatch, I say, and find the forester. [Exit an Attend.
 We will, fair queen, up to the mountain's top,
 And mark the musical confusion
 Of hounds and echo in conjunction. 110

Hip. I was with Hercules and Cadmus once,
 When in a wood of Crete they bay'd the bear
 With hounds of Sparta : never did I hear
 Such gallant chiding ; for, besides the groves,
 The skies, the fountains, every region near
 Seem'd all one mutual cry : I never heard
 So musical a discord, such sweet thunder.

The. My hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind,

Scene The First

So flew'd, so sanded; and their heads are hung
 With ears that sweep away the morning dew; 120
 Crook-knee'd, and dew-lapp'd like Thessalian bulls;
 Slow in pursuit, but match'd in mouth like bells,
 Each under each. A cry more tuneable
 Was never holla'd to, nor cheer'd with horn,
 In Crete, in Sparta, nor in Thessaly:
 Judge when you hear. But, soft! what nymphs are these?

Ege. My lord, this is my daughter here asleep;
 And this, Lysander; this Demetrius is;
 This Helena, old Nedar's Helena:
 I wonder of their being here together. 130

The. No doubt they rose up early to observe
 The rite of May; and, hearing our intent,
 Came here in grace of our solemnity.
 But speak, Egeus; is not this the day
 That Hermia should give answer of her choice?

Ege. It is, my lord.

The. Go, bid the huntsmen wake them with their horns.
 [Horns and shout within. *Lys., Dem.,*
 Hel., and Her., wake and start up.

Good morrow, friends. Saint Valentine is past:
 Begin these wood-birds but to couple now?

Lys. Pardon, my lord.

The. I pray you all, stand up. 140
 I know you two are rival enemies:
 How comes this gentle concord in the world,
 That hatred is so far from jealousy,
 To sleep by hate, and fear no enmity?

Lys. My lord, I shall reply amazedly,

Act The Fourth

Half sleep, half waking: but as yet, I swear,
I cannot truly say how I came here;
But, as I think,—for truly would I speak,
And now I do bethink me, so it is,—
I came with Hermia hither: our intent 150
Was to be gone from Athens, where we might,
Without the peril of the Athenian law.

Ege. Enough, enough, my lord; you have enough:
I beg the law, the law, upon his head.
They would have stolen away; they would, Demetrius,
Thereby to have defeated you and me,
You of your wife and me of my consent,
Of my consent that she should be your wife.

Dem. My lord, fair Helen told me of their stealth,
Of this their purpose hither to this wood; 160
And I in fury hither follow'd them,
Fair Helena in fancy following me.
But, my good lord, I wot not by what power,—
But by some power it is,—my love to Hermia,
Melted as the snow, seems to me now
As the remembrance of an idle gaud,
Which in my childhood I did dote upon;
And all the faith, the virtue of my heart,
The object and the pleasure of mine eye,
Is only Helena. To her, my lord, 170
Was I betroth'd ere I saw Hermia:
But, like in sickness, did I loathe this food;
But, as in health, come to my natural taste,
Now I do wish it, love it, long for it,
And will for evermore be true to it.

Scene The First

The. Fair lovers, you are fortunately met :
Of this discourse we more will hear anon.
Egeus, I will overbear your will ;
For in the temple, by and by, with us
These couples shall eternally be knit : 180
And, for the morning now is something worn,
Our proposed hunting shall be set aside.
Away with us to Athens! three and three,
We'll hold a feast in great solemnity.
Come, Hippolyta. [Exeunt *The.*, *Hip.*, *Ege.*, and train.

Dem. These things seem small and undistinguishable,
Like far-off mountains turned into clouds.

Her. Methinks I see these things with parted eye,
When every thing seems double.

Hel. So methinks :
And I have found Demetrius like a jewel, 190
Mine own, and not mine own.

Dem. But are you sure
That we are yet awake? It seems to me
That yet we sleep, we dream. Do not you think
The duke was here, and bid us follow him?

Her. Yea; and my father.

Hel. And Hippolyta.

Lys. And he did bid us follow to the temple.

Dem. Why, then, we are awake: let's follow him;
And by the way let us recount our dreams. [Exeunt.

Bot. [Awaking] When my cue comes, call me, and I will
answer: my next is, '*Most fair Pyramus.*' Heigh-ho!
Peter Quince! Flute, the bellows-mender! Snout, the
tinker! Starveling! God's my life, stolen hence, and

Act The Fourth

left me asleep! I have had a most rare vision. I have had a dream, past the wit of man to say what dream it was: man is but an ass, if he go about to expound this dream. Methought I was—there is no man can tell what. Methought I was,—and methought I had,—but man is but a patched fool, if he will offer to say what methought I had. The eye of man hath not heard, the ear of man hath not seen, man's hand is not able to taste, his tongue to conceive, nor his heart to report, what my dream was. I will get Peter Quince to write a ballad of this dream: it shall be called Bottom's Dream, because it hath no bottom; and I will sing it in the latter end of our play, before the Duke: peradventure, to make it the more gracious, I shall sing it at her death. [Exit.



ACT FOURTH

Scene II

Athens. Quince's house



Quince.

HAVE you sent to Bottom's house? is he come home yet?

Star. He cannot be heard of. Out of doubt he is transported.

Flu. If he come not, then the play is marred: it goes not forward, doth it?

Quin. It is not possible: you have not a man in all Athens able to discharge Pyramus but he.

Flu. No, he hath simply the best wit of any handicraft man in Athens.

Quin. Yea, and the best person too; and he is a very paramour for a sweet voice.

Flu. You must say 'paragon': a paramour is, God bless us, a thing of naught.

Enter *Snug*.

Snug. Masters, the Duke is coming from the temple, and there is two or three lords and ladies more married:

Act The Fourth

if our sport had gone forward, we had all been made men. 20

Flu. O sweet bully Bottom! Thus hath he lost sixpence a day during his life; he could not have scaped sixpence a day: an the Duke had not given him sixpence a day for playing Pyramus, I'll be hanged; he would have deserved it: sixpence a day in Pyramus, or nothing.

Enter *Bottom*.

Bot. Where are these lads? where are these hearts?

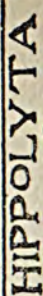
Quin. Bottom! O most courageous day! O most happy hour!

Bot. Masters, I am to discourse wonders: but ask me not what; for if I tell you, I am no true Athenian. I will tell you every thing, right as it fell out. 31

Quin. Let us hear, sweet Bottom.

Bot. Not a word of me. All that I will tell you is, that the Duke hath dined. Get your apparel together, good strings to your beards, new ribbons to your pumps; meet presently at the palace; every man look o'er his part; for the short and the long is, our play is preferred. In any case, let Thisby have clean linen; and let not him that plays the lion pare his nails, for they shall hang out for the lion's claws. And, most dear actors, eat no onions nor garlic, for we are to utter sweet breath; and I do not doubt but to hear them say, it is a sweet comedy. No more words: away! go, away! 43

[Exeunt.]



HIPPOLYTA

ACT FIFTH. Scene I

Athens

The palace of Theseus

Enter

*Theseus, Hippolyta,
Philostrate, Lords,
and*

Attendants

Hippolyta.

IS strange, my Theseus, that these lovers
speak of.

The. More strange than true: I never may
believe

These antique fables, nor these fairy
toys.

Lovers and madmen have such seething
brains,

Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend
More than cool reason ever comprehends.

The lunatic, the lover and the poet
Are of imagination all compact:

One

Act The Fifth



One sees more devils than vast hell can hold,
That is, the madman: the lover, all as frantic, 10
Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt:
The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to
heaven;

And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.

Such tricks hath strong imagination,
That, if it would but apprehend some joy,
It comprehends some bringer of that joy; 20
Or in the night, imagining some fear,
How easy is a bush supposed a bear!

Hip. But all the story of the night told over,
And all their minds transfigured so together,
More witnesseth than fancy's images,
And grows to something of great constancy;

Scene The First

But, howsoever, strange and admirable.

The. Here come the lovers, full of joy and mirth.

[Enter *Lysander, Demetrius, Hermia, and Helena.*

Joy, gentle friends! joy and fresh days of love
Accompany your hearts!

Lys. More than to us 30
Wait in your royal walks, your board, your bed!

The. Come now; what masques, what dances shall we have,
To wear away this long age of three hours
Between our after-supper and bed-time?
Where is our usual manager of mirth?
What revels are in hand? Is there no play,
To ease the anguish of a torturing hour?
Call Philostrate.

Phil. Here, mighty Theseus.

The. Say, what abridgement have you for this evening?
What masque? what music? How shall we beguile
The lazy time, if not with some delight? 41

Phil. There is a brief how many sports are ripe:
Make choice of which your highness will see first.

[Giving a paper.

The. [reads] *The battle with the Centaurs, to be sung
By an Athenian eunuch to the harp.*

We'll none of that: that have I told my love,
In glory of my kinsman Hercules.

[Reads] *The riot of the tipsy Bacchanals,
Tearing the Thracian singer in their rage.*

That is an old device; and it was play'd 50
When I from Thebes came last a conqueror.

[Reads] *The thrice three Muses mourning for the death*

Act The Fifth

Of Learning, late deceased in beggary.

That is some satire, keen and critical,
Not sorting with a nuptial ceremony.

[Reads] *A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus
And his love Thisbe; very tragical mirth.*

Merry and tragical! tedious and brief!
That is, hot ice and wondrous flaming snow.
How shall we find the concord of this discord? 60

Phil. A play there is, my lord, some ten words long,
Which, is as brief as I have known a play;
But by ten words, my lord, it is too long,
Which makes it tedious; for in all the play
There is not one word apt, one player fitted:
And tragical, my noble lord, it is;
For Pyramus therein doth kill himself.
Which, when I saw rehearsed, I must confess,
Made mine eyes water; but more merry tears
The passion of loud laughter never shed. 70

The. What are they that do play it?

Phil. Hard-handed men, that work in Athens here,
Which never labour'd in their minds till now;
And now have toil'd their unbreathed memories
With this same play, against your nuptial.

The. And we will hear it.

Phil. No, my noble lord;
It is not for you: I have heard it over,
And it is nothing, nothing in the world;
Unless you can find sport in their intents,
Extremely stretch'd and conn'd with cruel pain, 80
To do you service.

Scene The First

The. I will hear that play ;
For never any thing can be amiss,
When simpleness and duty tender it.
Go, bring them in : and take your places, ladies.
[Exit *Philostrate*.

Hip. I love not to see wretchedness o'ercharged,
And duty in his service perishing.

The. Why, gentle sweet, you shall see no such thing.

Hip. He says they can do nothing in this kind.

The. The kinder we, to give them thanks for nothing.
Our sport shall be to take what they mistake : 90
And what poor duty cannot do, noble respect
Takes it in might, not merit.
Where I have come, great clerks have purposed
To greet me with premeditated welcomes ;
Where I have seen them shiver and look pale,
Make periods in the midst of sentences,
Throttle their practised accent in their fears,
And, in conclusion, dumbly have broke off,
Not paying me a welcome. Trust me, sweet,
Out of this silence yet I picked a welcome ; 100
And in the modesty of fearful duty
I read as much as from the rattling tongue
Of saucy and audacious eloquence.
Love, therefore, and tongue-tied simplicity
In least speak most, to my capacity.

Re-enter *Philostrate*.

Phil. So please your Grace, the Prologue is address'd.

The. Let him approach. [Flourish of trumpets.

Act The Fifth

Enter Quince for the Prologue.

*Pro. If we offend, it is with our good will.
That you should think, we come not to offend,
But with good will. To show our simple skill, 110
That is the true beginning of our end.
Consider, then, we come but in despite.
We do not come, as minding to content you,
Our true intent is. All for your delight,
We are not here. That you should here repent you,
The actors are at hand ; and, by their show,
You shall know all, that you are like to know.*

The. This fellow doth not stand upon points.

*Lys. He hath rid his prologue like a rough colt ; he knows
not the stop. A good moral, my lord : it is not enough
to speak, but to speak true. 121*

*Hip. Indeed he hath played on his prologue like a child on a
recorder ; a sound, but not in government.*

*The. His speech was like a tangled chain ; nothing impaired,
but all disordered. Who is next ?*

Enter Pyramus and Thisbe, Wall, Moonshine, and Lion.

*Pro. Gentles, perchance you wonder at this show ;
But wonder on, till truth make all things plain.
This man is Pyramus, if you would know ;
This beauteous lady Thisby is certain.
This man, with lime and rough-cast, doth present 130
Wall, that vile Wall which did these lovers sunder ;
And through Wall's chink, poor souls, they are content
To whisper. At the which let no man wonder.*

Scene The First

*This man, with lanthorn, dog, and bush of thorn,
Presenteth Moonshine ; for, if you will know,
By moonshine did these lovers think no scorn*

To meet at Ninus' tomb, there, there to woo.

*This grisly beast, which by name Lion hight,
The trusty Thisby, coming first by night,
Did scare away, or rather did affright ;*

140

*And, as she fled, her mantle she did fall,
Which Lion vile with bloody mouth did stain.*

Anon comes Pyramus, sweet youth and tall,

And finds his trusty Thisby's mantle slain :

Whereat, with blade, with bloody blameful blade,

He bravely broach'd his boiling bloody breast ;

And Thisby, tarrying in mulberry shade,

His dagger drew, and died. For all the rest,

Let Lion, Moonshine, Wall, and lovers twain

At large discourse, while here they do remain.

150

[Exeunt Prologue, Pyramus, Thisbe, Lion, and Moonshine.

The. I wonder if the lion be to speak.

*Dem. No wonder, my lord : one lion may, when many
asses do.*

Wall. In this same interlude it doth befall

That I, one Snout by name, present a wall ;

And such a wall, as I would have you think,

That had in it a crannied hole or chink,

Through which the lovers, Pyramus and Thisby,

Did whisper often very secretly,

This loam, this rough-cast, and this stone, doth show

160

That I am that same wall ; the truth is so :

Act The Fifth



*And this the cranny is, right and sinister,
Through which the fearful lovers are to whisper.*

The. Would you desire lime and hair to speak better?

Dem. It is the wittiest partition that ever I heard discourse,
my lord.

The. Pyramus draws near the wall: silence!

170

Re-enter Pyramus.

Pyr. *O grim-look'd night! O night with hue so black!*

O night, which ever art when day is not!

O night, O night! alack, alack, alack,

I fear my Thisby's promise is forgot!

And thou, O wall, O sweet, O lovely wall,

That stand'st between her father's ground and mine!

Thou wall, O wall, O sweet and lovely wall,

Show me thy chink, to blink through with mine eyne!

[Wall holds up his fingers.

100

Thanks,

Scene The First



*Thanks, courteous wall : Jove shield thee well for this !
But what see I? No Thisby do I see
O wicked wall, through whom I see no bliss !
Cursed be thy stones for thus deceiving me !*

179

The. The wall, methinks, being sensible, should curse again.
Pyr. No, in truth, sir, he should not. 'Deceiving me' is Thisby's cue: she is to enter now, and I am to spy her through the wall. You shall see, it will fall pat as I told you. Yonder she comes.

Re-enter Thisbe.

This. O wall, full often hast thou heard my moans,
For parting my fair Pyramus and me !
My cherry lips have often kiss'd thy stones,
Thy stones with lime and hair knit up in thee.

Pyr. I see a voice : now will I to the chink,

Act The Fifth



*To spy an I can hear my Thisby's face.
Thisby !*

190

This. My love thou art, my love I think.

*Pyr. Think what thou wilt, I am thy lover's grace ;
And, like Limander, am I trusty still.*

This. And I like Helen, till the Fates me kill.

Pyr. Not Shafalus to Procrus was so true.

This. As Shafalus to Procrus, I to you.

Pyr. O, kiss me through the hole of this vile wall !

This. I kiss the wall's hole, not your lips at all.

Pyr. Wilt thou at Ninny's tomb meet me straightway ? 200

This. 'Tide life, 'tide death, I come without delay.

[Exeunt Pyramus and Thisbe.]

Wall. Thus have I, wall, my part discharged so ;

And, being done, thus wall away doth go. *[Exit.]*

The. Now is the mural down between the two neighbours.

102

Dem.

Scene The First



Dem. No remedy, my lord, when walls are so wilful to hear without warning.

Hip. This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard.

The. The best in this kind are but shadows; and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them.

Hip. It must be your imagination then, and not theirs. 210

The. If we imagine no worse of them than they of themselves, they may pass for excellent men. Here come two noble beasts in, a man and a lion.

Re-enter *Lion* and *Moonshine*.

Lion. You, ladies, you, whose gentle hearts do fear
The smallest monstrous mouse that creeps on floor,
May now perchance both quake and tremble here,
When lion rough in wildest rage doth roar.
Then know that I, one Snug the joiner, n'am
A lion fell, nor else no lion's dam;

Act The Fifth

*For, if I should as lion come in strife
Into this place, 'twere pity on my life.*

220

The. A very gentle beast, and of a good conscience.

Dem. The very best at a beast, my lord, that e'er I saw.

Lys. This lion is a very fox for his valour.

The. True; and a goose for his discretion.

Dem. Not so, my lord; for his valour cannot carry his discretion; and the fox carries the goose.

The. His discretion, I am sure, cannot carry his valour; for the goose carries not the fox. It is well: leave it to his discretion, and let us listen to the moon. 230

Moon. *This lanthorn doth the horned moon present;—*

Dem. He should have worn the horns on his head.

The. He is no crescent, and his horns are invisible within the circumference.

Moon. *This lanthorn doth the horned moon present;
Myself the man i' the moon do seem to be.*

The. This is the greatest error of all the rest: the man should be put into the lantern. How is it else the man i' the moon?

Dem. He dares not come there for the candle; for, you see, it is already in snuff. 241

Hip. I am aweary of this moon; would he would change!

The. It appears, by his small light of discretion, that he is in the wane; but yet, in courtesy, in all reason, we must stay the time.

Lys. Proceed, Moon.

Moon. *All that I have to say, is, to tell you that the lanthorn is the moon; I, the man i' the moon; this thorn-bush, my thorn-bush; and this dog, my dog.*

Scene The First

Dem. Why, all these should be in the lantern; for all these
are in the moon. But, silence! here comes *Thisbe*. 251

Re-enter *Thisbe*.

This. *This is old Ninny's tomb. Where is my love?*

Lion. [Roaring] *Oh—* [*Thisbe* runs off.]

Dem. Well roared, *Lion*.

The. Well run, *Thisbe*.

Hip. Well shone, *Moon*. Truly, the moon shines with a
good grace. [The *Lion* shakes *Thisbe's* mantle, and exit.]

The. Well moused, *Lion*.

Dem. And then came *Pyramus*.

Lys. And so the lion vanished. 260

Re-enter *Pyramus*.

Pyr. *Sweet Moon, I thank thee for thy sunny beams ;
I thank thee, Moon, for shining now so bright ;
For, by thy gracious, golden, glittering gleams,
I trust to take of truest Thisbe sight.*

But stay, O spite !

But mark, poor knight,

What dreadful dole is here !

Eyes, do you see ?

How can it be ?

O dainty duck ! O dear !

Thy mantle good,

What, stain'd with blood !

Approach, ye Furies fell !

O Fates, come, come,

Cut thread and thrum ;

Quail, crush, conclude, and quell !

Act The Fifth

The. This passion, and the death of a dear friend, would go near to make a man look sad.

Hip. Beshrew my heart, but I pity the man.

Pyr. O wherefore, Nature, didst thou lions frame? 280

Since lion vile hath here deflower'd my dear :

Which is—no, no—which was the fairest dame

That lived, that loved, that liked, that look'd with cheer.

Come, tears, confound ;

Out, sword, and wound

The pap of Pyramus ;

Ay, that left pap,

Where heart doth hop : [Stabs himself.

Thus die I, thus, thus, thus.

Now am I dead, 290

Now am I fled ;

My soul is in the sky :

Tongue, lose thy light ;

Moon, take thy flight : [Exit Moonshine.

Now die, die, die, die, die. [Dies.

Dem. No die, but an ace, for him ; for he is but one.

Lys. Less than an ace, man ; for he is dead ; he is nothing.

The. With the help of a surgeon he might yet recover, and prove an ass.

Hip. How chance Moonshine is gone before Thisbe comes back and finds her lover? 301

The. She will find him by starlight. Here she comes ; and her passion ends the play.

Re-enter Thisbe.

Hip. Methinks she should not use a long one for such a Pyramus : I hope she will be brief.

Scene The First

Dem. A mote will turn the balance, which Pyramus, which
Thisbe, is the better; he for a man, God warrant us;
she for a woman, God bless us.

Lys. She hath spied him already with those sweet eyes.

Dem. And thus she means, *videlicet* :—

310

This.

Asleep, my love?

What, dead, my dove?

O Pyramus, arise!

Speak, speak. Quite dumb?

Dead, dead? A tomb

Must cover thy sweet eyes.

These lily lips,

This cherry nose,

These yellow cowslip cheeks,

Are gone, are gone :

320

Lovers, make moan :

His eyes were green as leeks.

O Sisters Three,

Come, come to me,

With hands as pale as milk :

Lay them in gore,

Since you have shore

With shears his thread of silk.

Tongue, not a word :

Come, trusty sword ;

330

Come, blade, my breast imbrue : [Stabs herself.

And, farewell, friends ;

Thus Thisbe ends :

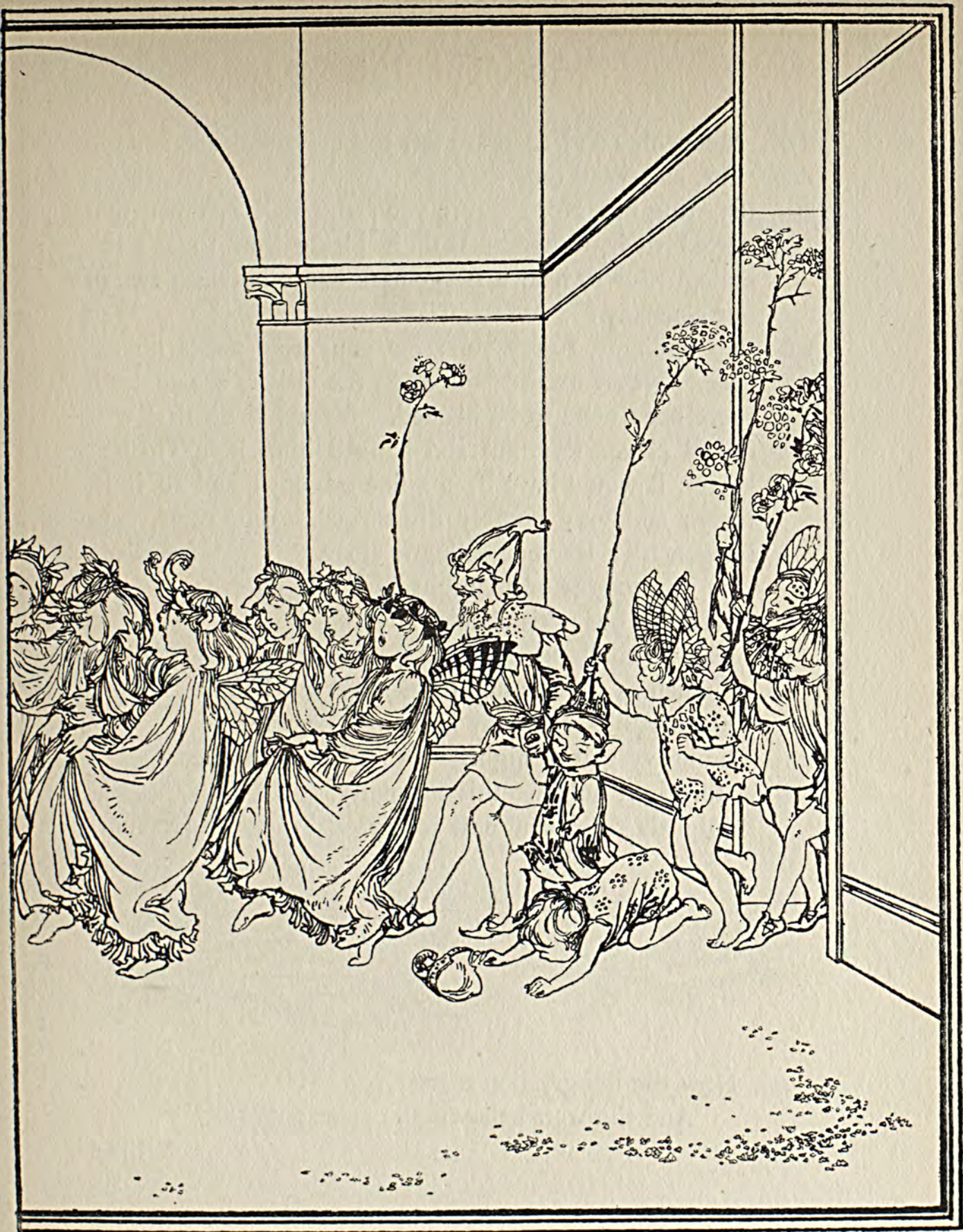
Adieu, adieu, adieu.

[Dies.

107

The.





Act The Fifth

The. Moonshine and Lion are left to bury the dead.

Dem. Ay, and Wall too.

Bot. [Starting up] No, I assure you; the wall is down that parted their fathers. Will it please you to see the epilogue, or to hear a Bergomask dance between two of our company? 340

The. No epilogue, I pray you; for your play needs no excuse. Never excuse; for when the players are all dead, there need none to be blamed. Marry, if he that writ it had played Pyramus and hanged himself in Thisbe's garter, it would have been a fine tragedy: and so it is, truly; and very notably discharged. But, come, your Bergomask: let your epilogue alone. [A dance.

The iron tongue of midnight hath told twelve:

Lovers, to bed; 'tis almost fairy time.

I fear we shall out-sleep the coming morn,

350

As much as we this night have overwatch'd.

This palpable-gross play hath well beguiled

The heavy gait of night. Sweet friends, to bed.

A fortnight hold we this solemnity,

In nightly revels and new jollity.

[Exeunt.



Puck. Now the hungry lion roars,
And the wolf behowls the moon;

Scene The First

Whilst the heavy ploughman snores,
 All with weary task fordone.
 Now the wasted brands do glow, 360
 Whilst the screech-owl, screeching loud,
 Puts the wretch that lies in woe
 In remembrance of a shroud.
 Now it is the time of night,
 That the graves, all gaping wide,
 Every one lets forth his sprite,
 In the church-way paths to glide :
 And we fairies, that do run
 By the triple Hecate's team,
 From the presence of the sun, 370
 Following darkness like a dream,
 Now are frolic : not a mouse
 Shall disturb this hallow'd house :
 I am sent with broom before,
 To sweep the dust behind the door.



Obe. Through the house give glimmering light,
 By the dead and drowsy fire :
 Every elf and fairy sprite
 Hop as light as bird from brier ;
 And this ditty, after me, 380
 Sing, and dance it trippingly.

I I I

Tita.

Act The Fifth

Tita. First, rehearse your song by rote,
To each word a warbling note :
Hand in hand, with fairy grace,
Will we sing, and bless this place.



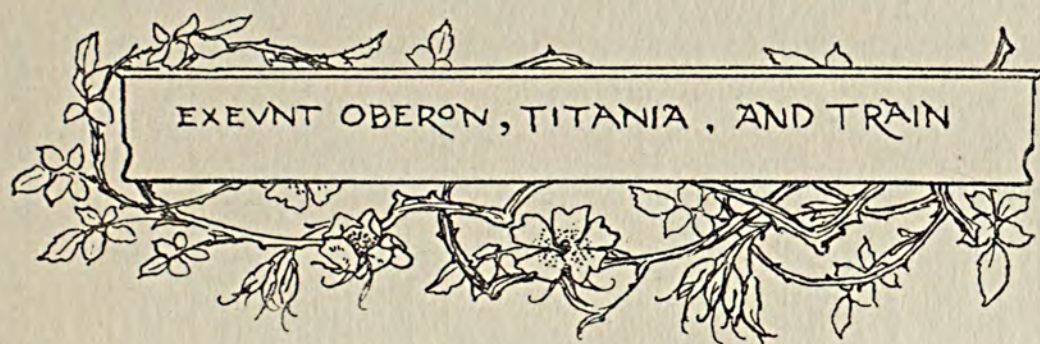
Obe. Now, until the break of day,
Through this house each fairy stray.
To the best bride-bed will we,
Which by us shall blessèd be ;
And the issue there create
Ever shall be fortunate.
So shall all the couples three
Ever true in loving be ;
And the blots of Nature's hand
Shall not in their issue stand ;
Never mole, hare lip, nor scar,
Nor mark prodigious, such as are
Despisèd in nativity,
Shall upon their children be.
With this field-dew consecrate,
Every fairy take his gait ;
And each several chamber bless,
Through this palace, with sweet peace,

390

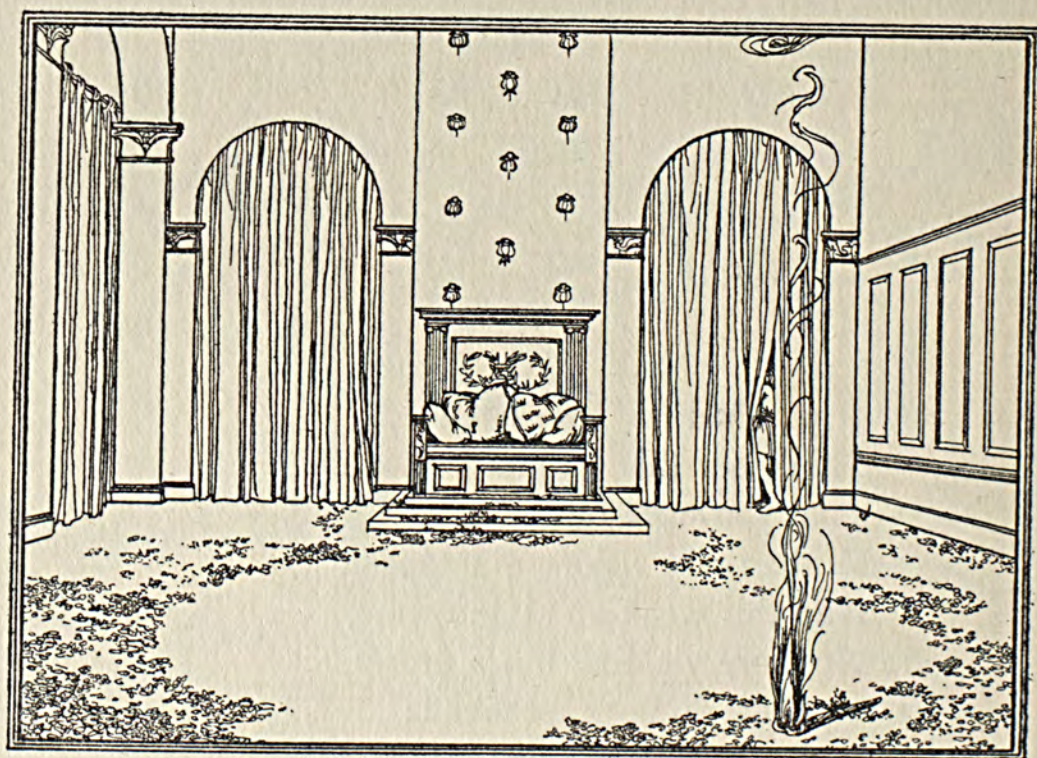
400

Scene The First

And the owner of it blest,
Ever shall in safety rest.
Trip away ; make no stay ;
Meet me all by break of day.



Puck. If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended,
That you have but slumber'd here, 410
While these visions did appear.
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream,
Gentles, do not reprehend :
If you pardon, we will mend.
And, as I am an honest Puck,
If we have unearned luck
Now to scape the serpent's tongue,
We will make amends ere long ;
Else the Puck a liar call : 420
So, good night unto you all.
Give me your hands, if we be friends,
And Robin shall restore amends. [Exit.



Here follows a List of Words and Phrases arranged in Alphabetical Order.



ABBRIDGEMENT, an entertainment to
 while away the time; V. i. 39.
 ABY, pay for; III. ii. 175.
 ACE, a single point on a die, (pro-
 nounced almost the same as "ass;"
 hence the joke); V. i. 235.
 ACHERON, the "River of Sorrows",
 one of the five rivers of the lower
 regions; III. ii. 357.
 ADAMANT, loadstone; II. i. 194.
 ADDRESS'D, ready; V. i. 106.
 ADMIRABLE, to be wondered at; V. i.
 27.
 ADVISED; "be advised", = consider
 what you are doing; I. i. 46.
 ÆGLÈ, a nymph beloved by Theseus;
 II. i. 79.
 AFTER-SUPPER, probably the "dessert"
 served after the regular supper-meal;
 V. i. 34.

AGAINST, in preparation for; V. i.
 75.
 AGGRAVATE, Bottom's blunder for
 "decrease"; I. ii. 78.
 ALL, fully; II. i. 156.
 ALONE, by itself, without anything
 else; III. ii. 119.
 AMAZON, one of the fabulous race of
 female warriors; II. i. 70.
 AN, if; I. ii. 50.
 AN IF, if; II. ii. 160.
 ANTIOPA, an Amazon and daughter
 of Mars, in love with Theseus;
 II. i. 80.
 ANTIPODES, the people living on the
 opposite side of the globe; "with
 the A", = among the Antipodes;
 III. ii. 55.
 ANTIQUE, strange; V. i. 3.
 APPROVE, prove; II. ii. 75.
 APRICOCKS, apricots; III. i. 158.
 ARGUMENT, subject of story; III. ii.
 242.
 ARIADNE, daughter of Minos, King of

Crete. She gave Theseus a ball of thread to guide him out of the Cretan labyrinth. Theseus married his deliverer, but when he arrived at Naxos he forsook her; II. i. 80.

ARTIFICIAL, skilled in art; III. ii. 203.

As, that as; I. i. 42.

ASK, require; I. ii. 24.

AUNT, old dame; II. i. 51.

AURORA, the goddess of the morning-dawn; III. ii. 380.

AUSTERITY, strictness of life; I. i. 90.

AY ME, alas; II. ii. 154.



BACCHANALS, the wild priestesses of Bacchus, god of wine; V. i. 48.

BADGE, token, mark, ("the b. of faith" signifies 'tears' in this connexion); III. ii. 127.

BAIT, to set upon, as a dog attacks its prey; III. ii. 197.

BARM, froth, yeast; II. i. 38.

BARREN, empty headed; III. ii. 13.

BATED, excepted; I. i. 190.

BAYED, chased, drove to bay, (that is, the state of a chase when the game is driven to extremity and turns against its pursuer); IV. i. 112.

BEARD, the prickles on the ears of corn; II. i. 95.

BELIKE, very likely; I. i. 130.

BELLOWS-MENDER, mender of the bellows of organs; I. ii. 41.

BERGOMASK DANCE, a rude clownish dance such as the people of the town Bergamo or of the province Bergamasco were wont to practise. Bergamo is the name of a town in the Venetian territory, the capital of the old province of Bergamasco, whose inhabitants used to be ridiculed as clownish; V. i. 339.

BESHREW, a mild form of oath; "much b. my manners", *i.e.* alas for my bad manners; II. ii. 62.

BETEEM, accord, permit; I. i. 131.

BILL, list; I. ii. 102.

BLIND-WORM, slow-worm; II. ii. 11.

BLOOD, passion; I. i. 68; I. i. 74.

—, birth, social rank; I. i. 135.

BOLT, arrow; II. i. 164.

BOOTLESS, in vain, uselessly; II. i. 37.

BOND, used quibblingly for (i.) contract, and (ii.) tie, fetter; III. ii. 267, 268.

BOSOM, heart; I. i. 27.

BOTTLE, bundle, truss; IV. i. 32.

BOUNCING, plump; II. i. 70.

BRAKES, thickets; II. i. 226.

BRAVE TOUCH, noble action; III. ii. 70.

BREATH, voice, notes; II. i. 150.

BRIEF, short statement; V. i. 42.

BRISKY, brisk; III. i. 90.

BROACH'D, stabbed, spitted; V. i. 146.

BULLY, comrade; III. i. 9.

BURR, the prickly head of the burdock plant, which clings to one; III. ii. 260.

BUSKIN'D, wearing the buskin, a boot with high heels, worn by hunters and huntresses; II. i. 71.

C

- CANKER-BLOSSOM, the worm that eats into blossoms; III. ii. 282.
- CANKERS, worms; II. ii. 3.
- CAPACITY; "to my c.", = so far as I am able to understand; V. i. 105.
- CARTHAGE QUEEN = Dido, queen of Carthage, who burned herself when Æneas, the Trojan hero, with whom she was in love, sailed away to Italy; I. i. 173.
- CATCHING, contagious; I. i. 186.
- CAVALERY, cavalero, cavalier; IV. i. 22.
- CENTAURS; "battle with the c.", an allusion to the attack made on Hercules by the Centaurs, fabulous monsters half men and half horse; V. i. 44.
- CENTRE, middle point of the earth; III. ii. 54.
- CHANCE; "how c.", = how chances it; I. i. 129.
- CHANGELING, a child stolen by the fairies; properly a fairy-child left in the place of the real one; II. i. 23.
- CHARMETH, produces as by a charm; IV. i. 82.
- CHEEK BY JOLE, cheek to cheek, side by side; III. ii. 338.
- CHEER, countenance; III. ii. 96; V. i. 283.
- , "what cheer"? = how is it with you?; I. i. 122.
- CHIDING, barking; IV. i. 114.
- CHILDING, productive, fertile; II. i. 112.
- CHURCH-WAY, the way or path leading to the church; V. i. 367.
- CHURL, boor, peasant; II. ii. 85.
- CLERKS, scholars; V. i. 93.
- CLOISTER, religious house; I. i. 71.
- COATS, = coats of arms; "c. in heraldry due but to one," etc., an allusion to the fact that in heraldry the *double* coats of arms that belong to man and wife as one person have only *one* crest; III. ii. 213.
- COIL, confusion, ado; III. ii. 339.
- COLLIED, dark, black; I. i. 145.
- COMPACT, composed, formed; V. i. 8.
- COMPARE WITH, try to rival; II. ii. 106.
- CON, learn by heart; I. ii. 97.
- CONCEITS, fanciful presents; I. i. 33.
- CONCERN, accord with, befit; I. i. 60.
- CONDOLE, probably one of Bottom's blunders, unless perhaps used in the sense of "lament"; I. ii. 26.
- CONFEDERACY, league, conspiracy; III. ii. 192.
- CONFERENCE, discourse, conversation; II. i. 186.
- CONFUSION, ruin; I. i. 149.
- CONSECRATE, consecrated; V. i. 400.
- CONSTANCY, consistency; V. i. 26.
- CONTAGIOUS, pestilential; II. i. 90.
- CONTINENTS, banks; II. i. 92.
- CONTRIVED, plotted; III. ii. 196.
- CORIN, a common Latin name for a shepherd; II. i. 66.
- COURAGEOUS, happy, fortunate; IV. ii. 27.
- COY, fondle; IV. i. 2.
- CRAB, crab-apple; II. i. 48.
- CRANNY, chink; III. i. 66.
- CRAZED; "c. title", = a title with a flaw in it; I. i. 92.
- CREATE, created; V. i. 390.
- CRITICAL, censorious, fault-finding; V. i. 54.

CROSS, annoyance, vexation; I. i. 136.

CROW; "turns to a c.", = becomes black as a crow; III. ii. 142.

CRY, pack of hounds; IV. i. 123.

CRY MERCY, beg pardon; III. i. 171.

CUE, catchword; a theatrical term for words which, spoken at the end of a speech, are the signal for the next speech, or for the entrance of another player; III. i. 76.

CUPID'S FLOWER, the pansy, called also "love-in-idleness"; IV. i. 72.

CURST, shrewish; III. ii. 300.

CUT THREAD AND THRUM, = cut everything, good and bad (vide THREAD and THRUM); V. i. 275.

CUT BOWSTRINGS; "hold or c. b.", a proverbial way of binding oneself to an engagement, originally used by archers, meaning "I'll keep my promise; you may cut my bowstrings if I fail"; I. ii. 109.



DANCES AND DELIGHT, = delightful dances; II. i. 253.

DANK, damp; II. ii. 82.

DAPHNE HOLDS THE CHASE; the story tells how Apollo pursued Daphne, who was changed into a laurel-tree as he reached her; II. i. 230.

DARKLING, in the dark; II. ii. 93.

DATE, duration; III. ii. 373.

DEAD, deadly, death-like; III. ii. 57.

DEAR (see EXPENSE).

DEATH; "to die the death," that is, a violent death, death by the judge's sentence; I. i. 65.

DEBATE, contention; II. i. 116.

DEFEATED, cheated; IV. i. 156.

DEFECT, Bottom's blunder for "effect"; III. i. 37.

DERIVED; "as well derived," as well-born; I. i. 99.

DEVICE, performance; V. i. 50.

DEVICES, plans, projects; I. ii. 101.

DEWBERRIES, the fruit of the dewberry bush; III. i. 158.

DEWLAP, the loose skin hanging from the throat of cattle; here used for "neck"; II. i. 50.

DEW-LAPP'D (see DEWLAP); IV. i. 121.

DIANA, the goddess of the moon and of womanly virtue; I. i. 89.

DIAN'S BUD, probably the bud of the Agnus Castus or Chaste-tree; the virtue of this herb is that it will keep man and woman virtuous.

It is just possible that "Dian's bud" = Diana's rose, the rose of England's Virgin Queen; if so, it is used here as a compliment to the Queen; IV. i. 72.

DISCHARGE, perform, act; I. ii. 90; IV. ii. 10.

DISFIGURE, obliterate; I. i. 51.

DISFIGURE, Quince's blunder for "figure"; III. i. 56.

DISPARAGE, to speak contemptuously of; III. ii. 174.

DISTEMPERATURE, disorder of the elements; II. i. 106.

DISTILL'D; "the rose d.", = the rose whose perfume has been extracted; I. i. 76.

DOLE, grief; V. i. 267.

DONE; "when all is done", = when all is said and done; III. i. 16.
 DOUBLE TONGUE, forked tongue; II. ii. 9.
 DOWAGER, a widow having an income during her life; I. i. 5.
 DRAW A BILL, write out a list; I. ii. 107.
 DRAWN, with drawn sword; III. ii. 402.



EARTHLIER; "earthlier happy," happier as regards this world; I. i. 76.
 EAT, ate; II. ii. 156.
 EGLANTINE, sweetbriar; II. i. 251.
 EGYPT; "brow of E.", = the brow of a gipsy (*i.e.* an Egyptian); V. i. 11.
 EIGHT AND SIX, alternate lines of eight and six syllables; the common ballad metre of the time; III. i. 24.
 EMBARKED TRADERS, traders embarked upon the sea; II. i. 127.
 ENFORCED, forced, violated; III. i. 191.
 ENOUGH; "you have enough", = you have heard enough to convict him; IV. i. 153.
 ENTHRALL'D, reduced to the willing slavery of love, in love; I. i. 136.
 ERCLES = HERCULES, whose twelve labours had often formed the subject of dramatic shows, the hero resembling Herod in his ranting; I. ii. 28.
 EREWHILE, a little while ago; III. ii. 274.

ESTATE UNTO, bestow upon; I. i. 98.
 ETHIOPE, a native of Ethiopia, a district south of Egypt; hence "a negro"; applied contemptuously to a dark person; III. ii. 257.
 EVER, always; I. i. 150.
 EXPENSE; "dear expense", agreeable and well-spent effort; I. i. 249.
 EXPOSITION, Bottom's blunder for "disposition"; IV. i. 38.
 EXTENUATE, mitigate, relax; I. i. 120.
 EXTORT, to draw by force, to wring; "to e. a poor soul's patience", = to make a poor soul impatient; III. ii. 160.
 EYNE, an old form of the plural "eyes"; I. i. 242.



FAINT, pale; I. i. 215.
 FAIR, fairness, beauty; I. i. 182.
 —, kindly; II. i. 198.
 FALL, let fall, drop; V. i. 143.
 FANCY, love; I. i. 155; IV. i. 162.
 FANCY-FREE, free from the power of love; II. i. 163.
 FANCY-SICK, sick for love; III. ii. 96.
 FANTASY, imagination; V. i. 5.
 —, thoughts; II. i. 258.
 —, love; I. i. 32.
 FAVOUR, features; I. i. 186.
 FAVOURS, love tokens; II. i. 12.
 —, nosegays of flowers; IV. i. 48.
 FEARFUL, full of fear, timid; V. i. 101.

FEE, payment; III. ii. 113.
 FELL; "passing fell," extremely
 angry; II. i. 20.
 FELLOW, match, equal; IV. i. 33.
 FIERCE, wild, disordered; IV. i. 68.
 FIGURE, typify; I. i. 237.
 FILCH'D, stolen, pilfered; I. i. 36.
 FILLY, a mare colt; II. i. 46.
 FIRE, will of the wisp; III. i. 104.
 FLEW'D, having an overhanging lip on
 the upper jaw; IV. i. 119.
 FLOODS, waters; II. i. 103.
 FLOUT, mock at; II. ii. 135.
 FOND, foolish; II. ii. 95.
 FOR; "for the candle," = because of
 the candle; V. i. 240.
 FORCE; "of force", of necessity; III.
 ii. 40.
 FORDONE, exhausted; V. i. 359.
 FORGERIES, idle inventions; II. i. 81.
 FORTH, out of, from; I. i. 164.
 FOR THAT, because; II. i. 219.
 FORTY, used as an indefinite number;
 II. i. 174.
 FRENCH CROWN COLOUR, light yellow,
 the colour of the gold of the French
 crown; I. ii. 92.



GAIT; "take his g.", = take his way;
 V. i. 401.
 GALLANT, gallantly; I. ii. 23.
 GAWDS, trifles, trinkets; I. i. 33.
 GENERALLY, Bottom's blunder for
 "severally"; I. ii. 2.
 GENTLENESS, good breeding; II. ii.
 139.

GIRDLE; "to put a g. round the
 earth", = to go right round the
 earth; II. i. 174.
 GIVE THE LIE, charge with falsehood;
 III. i. 129.
 GLANCE AT, hint at; II. i. 75.
 GLEEK, jest, scoff; III. i. 140.
 GO ABOUT, attempt; IV. i. 205.
 GOSSIP'S BOWL, originally a christening
 cup; thence applied to a drink
 usually prepared for christening
 feasts; its ingredients were ale,
 spice, sugar, and roasted *crabs* (*i.e.*
crab-apples); II. i. 47.
 GOVERNMENT, control; "in govern-
 ment", = under control; V. i. 123.
 GRACE, favour granted; II. ii. 86.
 —, "in g. of", = in honour of;
 IV. i. 133.
 GREEN, applied in olden times to
 beautiful eyes where now we speak
 of "blue"; V. i. 322.
 GRIFFIN, a fabulous beast, with the
 head, wings, and forelegs of an
 eagle, and in other parts resembling
 a lion; II. i. 231.
 GRIM-LOOK'D, grim-looking; V. i.
 171.
 GRISLY, grim, terrible; V. i. 138.
 GROW; "grow to a point", come to
 the point; I. ii. 13.
 GUEST-WISE, like a stranger; III. ii.
 171.



HAIL'D DOWN, poured down as thick
 as hail; I. i. 243.

HANDS; "give me your hands", applauded by clapping; V. i. 422.

HARBINGER, forerunner; III. ii. 380.

HARE-LIP, an ugly blemish of the upper lip; V. i. 396.

HEAD; "to his head", = to his face; I. i. 106.

HEARTS, good fellows; IV. ii. 26.

HELEN, a blunder for "Hero"; V. i. 195; (*see* LIMANDER).

HEMPEN HOME-SPUNS, coarse fellows, (rude mechanicals); III. i. 73.

HENCHMAN, page, attendant; II. i. 121.

HERESIES, false doctrines; II. ii. 146.

HIEMS = winter; II. i. 109.

HIGHT, is called; V. i. 138.

HIS = its, (the regular old form of the neuter possessive pronoun, till about 1600); V. i. 86.

HOLLA'D TO, shouted to; ("holla"! the huntsman's call to the hounds); IV. i. 124.

HONEY-BAGS, the little bags in which the bees carry their honey; III. i. 160.

HORNED MOON, used perhaps quibblingly with reference to the material of Moonshine's lanthorn; V. i. 235.

HUMAN, humane, courteous; II. ii. 64.

HUMAN MORTALS, men as distinguished from fairies, who were considered *mortal*, though not *human*; II. i. 101.

J

IMBRUE, stain with blood; V. i. 331.

IMMEDIATELY, purposely; I. i. 45.

IMPEACH, bring into question, expose to reproach; II. i. 213.

IN = on; II. i. 85.

INCORPORATE, made one body; III. ii. 208.

INSUFFICIENCY, want of beauty; II. ii. 135.

INTERLUDE, a play performed in the intervals of a feast; I. ii. 9; V. i. 154.

INJURIOUS, insulting; III. ii. 195.

INTEND, pretend; III. ii. 333.

INTERCHAINED, bound together; II. ii. 56.

K

JANGLING, quarrelling; III. ii. 353.

JUVENAL, juvenile, youth; III. i. 90.

K

KIND; "in this kind", in this respect; I. i. 54.

KNACKS = knick-knacks; I. i. 34.

KNOT-GRASS; "hindering k."; knot-grass was formerly believed to have the power of checking the growth of children; III. ii. 329.

L

LAKIN; "by'r lakin" = by our lady-kin, or little lady, = the Virgin Mary; III. i. 14.

- LANTHORN, a curious old spelling of "lantern," because *born* was sometimes used for the sides of lanterns; V. i. 231.
- LATCH'D, moistened, anointed; III. ii. 36.
- LEAVE, give up; II. i. 196.
- LEVIATHAN, whale; II. i. 173.
- LIMANDER, a blunder for "Leander," who swam nightly across the Hellespont to visit his lady-love Hero; one night he was drowned, and Hero leaped into the waters and was also drowned; V. i. 194.
- LINGERS, causes to linger, delays; I. i. 4.
- LIQUOR, juice; III. ii. 367.
- LIVERY, dress, garb; I. i. 70.
- LOB, buffoon, clown; II. i. 16.
- LODE-STAR, the leading star, the polar star; I. i. 183.
- LORDSHIP; "unto his lordship, whose," etc., = unto the government of him, to whose, etc.; I. i. 81.
- LOSE, forget; I. i. 114.
- LOVE-IN-IDLENESS, the heartsease, or pansy, called "Cupid's flower"; II. i. 167.
- LOVES; "of all loves," for love's sake; II. ii. 161.
- Low, short; III. ii. 295.
- LUSCIOUS, delicious, sweet; II. i. 250.
- MAKE MOUTHS UPON = make faces at, mock at; III. ii. 238.
- MARGENT, margin, edge; II. i. 85.
- MARRY = by the Virgin Mary, = indeed, to be sure; I. ii. 14.
- MARSHAL, leader, director; II. ii. 127.
- MASQUES, entertainments in which the performers wore masks; V. i. 32.
- MAY, can; V. i. 2.
- MAZED, perplexed; II. i. 113.
- MAZES, figures marked out on village greens for country sports, such as the game called *running the figure of eight*; II. i. 99.
- MEANS, moans; V. i. 310.
- MECHANICALS, working-men; III. ii. 9.
- MEW'D, shut up; I. i. 71.
- MIMIC, actor; III. ii. 19.
- MINDING, intending; V. i. 113.
- MINIMUS, tiny creature; III. ii. 329.
- MISGRAFFED, grafted amiss, ill placed; I. i. 137.
- MISPRISED, mistaken; III. ii. 74.
- MISPRISION, mistake; III. ii. 90.
- MORNING'S LOVE = Cephalus, beloved by Aurora, the goddess of the Morn, (*see SHAFALUS*); III. ii. 389.
- MOTE, the smallest atom imaginable; V. i. 306.
- MOUSED, torn in pieces, as a cat worries a mouse; V. i. 258.
- MOUTH, sound; IV. i. 122.
- MURAL, wall; V. i. 204.
- MURRION = infected with murrain, a disease among cattle; II. i. 97.
- MUSK-ROSE, described in an old book as "a flower of a white colour," with "certaine yellow seedes in the middle . . . of most writers reckoned among the wilde Roses"; II. i. 251.



MADE MEN, men who have made their fortunes; IV. ii. 19.

N

N'AM, am not; V. i. 218.
 NAUGHT; "a thing of n.", a worthless thing; IV. ii. 16.
 NEAF, fist; IV. i. 19.
 NEARLY; "nearly that c.", = that nearly c.; I. i. 126.
 NEEDLES (pronounced as one syllable; "neeld" for 'needle' is often found in old books); III. ii. 204.
 NEEDS, necessarily, of necessity; I. ii. 85.
 NEEZE = sneeze; II. i. 56.
 NEW, renewed; "n. in amity", = friends again; IV. i. 86.
 NEXT, nearest, first; III. ii. 2.
 NIGHT-RULE, night revel; III. ii. 5.
 NINE MEN'S MORRIS; a plat of green turf cut into a sort of chess board, for the rustic youth to exercise their skill upon. The game was called "nine men's morris" (or "merrils," = "counters" or "pawns") because the players had each nine men which they moved along the lines cut in the ground—a figure of three squares, one within the other—until one side had taken or penned up all those on the other; II. i. 98.
 NINUS, the supposed founder of Nineveh, the husband of Semiramis, Queen of Babylon; V. i. 137.
 NOLE, noddle, head; III. ii. 17.
 NONE; "I will none," = nothing to do with her, none of her; III. ii. 169.

NOONTIDE, midday; "her (the moon's) brother's noontide", = the sun's mid-day, = the mid-day sun; III. ii. 55.

NUPTIAL, nuptials, wedding; I. i. 125.

O

OBSCENELY, perhaps Bottom's blunder for "obscurely," or wrongly used in some such sense as "unseen"; I. ii. 106.

OBSERVANCE, "to do o. to a morn of May," = to go into the woods early on May-morning; I. i. 167.

OBSERVATION = observance of May-day; IV. i. 103.

O'ER SHOES, = somewhat deeply, though not knee-deep; III. ii. 48.

OS; o was used for anything round, among other things for circular discs of metal used for ornaments; III. ii. 188.

OFFER, attempt, dare; IV. i. 208.

OFFICES, duties, employments; II. ii. 8.

ON; "fond on", = doting on; II. i. 265.

ON = of; V. i. 221.

ORANGE-TAWNY, dark yellow; I. ii. 91.

ORBS, rings of rich green grass thought to be caused by the fairies; II. i. 9.

ORIENT, bright-shining (like an eastern gem); IV. i. 53.

ORIGINAL, originators; II. i. 117.

OTHER, others; IV. i. 65.

OTHER SOME, others; I. i. 226.
 OUNCE, a kind of lynx; II. ii. 37.
 OUSEL, blackbird; III. i. 118.
 OVERBEAR, over-rule; IV. i. 178.
 OWE, own; II. ii. 86.
 OXLIPS, a kind of cowslip not often found wild; II. i. 249.



PAGEANT, show, exhibition; III. ii. 114.
 PALPABLE-GROSS, palpably gross; V. i. 352.
 PARD, leopard; II. ii. 38.
 PARLOUS, perilous; III. i. 14.
 PARTS, qualities; III. ii. 153.
 PASSING, surpassingly, exceedingly; II. i. 20.
 PASSION, strong emotion; V. i. 303.
 PAT, PAT, exactly, just as it should be; III. i. 2.
 PATCHED, wearing a coat of various colours; IV. i. 108.
 PATCHES, clowns; III. ii. 9.
 PATENT; "my virgin p.", = my privilege of being a maiden; I. i. 80.
 PAVED, pebbled; II. i. 84.
 PEARL, dew; I. i. 211.
 PELTING, paltry; II. i. 91.
 PENSIONERS, retainers; II. i. 10.
 PERIGENIA, the daughter of a famous robber-chief, carried off by Theseus; II. i. 78.
 PERIODS, full stops; V. i. 96.
 PERSÉVER, persevere; III. ii. 237.

PERSUASION, opinion, belief; I. i. 156.
 PERT, lively; I. i. 13.
 PHIBBUS, Bottom's blunder for Phœbus, the sun; I. ii. 34.
 PHILLIDA, a common name for a shepherdess; II. i. 68.
 PHILOMEL = Philomela, the nightingale; II. ii. 13.
 PHOEBE, Diana's name as the goddess of the moon; I. i. 209.
 PILGRIMAGE; "maiden pilgrimage", a passing through life unwedded; I. i. 75.
 PITY; "it were pity of", = it were a bad thing for; III. i. 41.
 PLAIN-SONG, used of the cuckoo, with reference to its simple, monotonous note; a "plain-song" is a melody without any variations; III. i. 126.
 POINTS; "stand upon points", used quibblingly for (1) "mind his stops," and (2) "be over-scrupulous"; V. i. 118.
 POSSESS'D; "as well possess'd", possessed of as much wealth; I. i. 100.
 PREFERRED, submitted for approval; IV. ii. 37.
 PREPOSTEROUSLY, perversely; III. ii. 121.
 PRESENTLY, immediately; IV. ii. 36.
 PREVAILMENT, weight, sway; I. i. 35.
 PREY, the act of preying; II. ii. 157.
 PRINCESS, paragon, perfection; III. ii. 144.
 PRIVILEGE, safeguard, protection; II. i. 219.
 PROCRUS, a blunder for "Procris," the wife of Cephalus (*see* SHAFALUS); V. i. 196.
 PRODIGIOUS, unnatural; V. i. 397.

PROLOGUE, speaker of the prologue; V. i. 106.

PROPER, fine, handsome; I. ii. 83.

PROPERTIES, a theatrical term for all the adjuncts of a play, except the scenery and the dresses of the actors; I. ii. 102.

PROTEST, vow; I. i. 89.

PUMPS, low shoes; IV. ii. 35.

PURPLE-IN-GRAIN, dyed deep red; I. ii. 91.

Q

QUAIL, quell, overpower; V. i. 276.

QUAINT, neat, trim; II. i. 99.

QUANTITY, proportion; I. i. 232.

QUELL, kill; V. i. 276.

QUERN, a mill for grinding corn by hand; II. i. 36.

QUESTIONS, arguings; II. i. 234.

QUILL, pipe; III. i. 121.

QUIRE, choir; II. i. 55.

R

RECORDER, a kind of flageolet; V. i. 123.

RECREANT, cowardly wretch; III. ii. 409.

REHEARSE, repeat; V. i. 382.

RENT, rend; III. ii. 215.

RERE-MICE, bats; II. ii. 4.

RESPECT; "in my r.", = in my estimation; II. i. 223.

RESPECTS, regards; I. i. 160.

RHÉUMATIC DISEASES, = diseases which produce a flowing, such as coughs, colds, catarrhs; II. i. 105.

RIGHT MAID, true maid; III. ii. 302.

RINGLETS, the circles on the green-sward, supposed to be made by the fairies (*cp.* ORBS); II. i. 86.

RIPE, grow ripe; II. ii. 124.

—, ready for presentation; V. i. 42.

ROCK, move up and down like a cradle; IV. i. 85.

ROTE; "by rote", = by heart; V. i. 382.

ROUGH-CAST, a kind of plaster mixed with pebbles; III. i. 64.

ROUND, a dance in a circle; II. i. 139.

ROUNDEL, dance in a circle; II. ii. 1.

RUN THROUGH FIRE, a proverbial expression signifying "to do impossibilities"; II. ii. 110.

RUSSET-PATED, grey-headed; III. ii. 21.

S

SAD, serious; IV. i. 94.

SAMPLER, wool work in which patterns are worked; III. ii. 205.

SANDED, sandy coloured; IV. i. 119.

SAVOURS, scents, fragrance; II. i. 13.

SCHOOLING, instructions; I. i. 116.

SCRIP, scroll, list of actors; I. ii. 4.

SEAL, pledge; III. ii. 144.

SEETHING, heated, excited; V. i. 4.

- SELF-AFFAIRS, my own business ; I. i. 113.
 SENSIBLE, capable of feeling ; V. i. 180.
 SERPENT'S TONGUE, = hissing as a sign of disapproval ; V. i. 418.
 SHAFALUS, a blunder for "Cephalus," who remained true to his wife Procris notwithstanding Aurora's love for him ; V. i. 196.
 SHADOWS, spirits ; V. i. 408.
 SHEEN, bright (or perhaps brightness) ; II. i. 29.
 SHORE = shorn ; V. i. 327.
 SHREWD, mischievous ; II. i. 33.
 SIMPLICITY, innocence ; I. i. 171.
 SIMPLENESS, simplicity ; V. i. 83.
 SINCE, when ; II. i. 148.
 SINISTER, left ; V. i. 165.
 SISTERS THREE, = the three Fates ; V. i. 323.
 SKILL, discernment ; II. ii. 126.
 SLEEP, sleeping ; IV. i. 146.
 SMALL, in a treble voice like a boy or a woman ; I. ii. 49.
 SNUFF, used equivocally ; "to be in snuff", to be offended ; V. i. 241.
 So, in the same manner ; IV. i. 119.
 SOLEMNITIES, nuptial festivities ; I. i. 11.
 SOLEMNLY, with due ceremony ; IV. i. 87.
 SOOTH, truth ; II. ii. 136.
 SORT, company, crew ; III. ii. 13.
 SORTING ; "not s. with", not befitting ; V. i. 55.
 SOULS ; "in s.", = heartily ; III. ii. 150.
 SPEAK YOU FAIR, speak kindly to you ; II. i. 198.
 SPHERY, star-like ; II. ii. 106.
 SPITE ; "in s. of", = so as to spite ; III. ii. 194.
 SPLEEN, sudden passion ; I. i. 146.
 SPLIT, "to make all split", a proverbial expression used to denote violence of action ; originally used by sailors ; (Bottom is perhaps making a pun without knowing it, for the phrase might mean "to make all split with laughter") ; I. ii. 29.
 SPOTTED, polluted ; I. i. 110.
 SPRING ; "middle summer's spring", the beginning of midsummer ; II. i. 82.
 SQUARE, squabble ; II. i. 30.
 SQUASH, an unripe peascod ; III. i. 178.
 STAY, to stay ; II. i. 137.
 STEEP, rock, mountain ; II. i. 69.
 STEALTH, stealing away ; III. ii. 310.
 STILL, always, ever ; I. i. 212.
 STOOD UPON, depended upon ; I. i. 139.
 STREAK, touch softly ; II. i. 256.
 STRETCH'D, strained ; "extremely s.", = strained to the utmost ; V. i. 80.
 STRINGS, to tie on false beards with ; IV. ii. 35.
 SUPERPRAISE, overpraise ; III. ii. 153.

T

TAILOR, "down topples and 'tailor' cries" ; it seems to have been an old custom to cry 'tailor' at a sudden fall backwards ; he that slips beside his chair falls just as a tailor squats upon his board ; II. i. 54.

TAKES IN MIGHT, considers the effort, takes the will for the deed; V. i. 92.

TAKE ON, be angry; III. ii. 258.

TARTAR'S BOW, the Tartars or Parthians were famous for their skill in archery; III. ii. 101.

TASTE OF, particle of; I. i. 236.

TAURUS, a mountain range in Southern Asia Minor; III. ii. 141.

TAWNY, having a yellowish dark colour; III. ii. 263.

TEAR; "to tear a cat in," a proverbial phrase = to rant violently; I. ii. 28.

TESTY, angry; III. ii. 358.

THICK-SKIN, dolt; III. ii. 13.

THIN, bald; II. i. 109.

THRACIAN SINGER, = Orpheus, whose grief for the loss of Eurydice led him to treat with contempt the Thracian women, who in revenge tore him to pieces under the excitement of their wild orgies; V. i. 49.

THREAD, the warp; V. i. 275.

THROWS, throws off, sheds; II. i. 254.

THRUM, the loose end of a weaver's warp; V. i. 275.

'TIDE, betide; V. i. 205.

TIRING-HOUSE, dressing-room; III. i. 5.

TO, to the sound of; II. i. 86; according to, V. i. 105.

TOIL'D, exerted; V. i. 74.

TOUCH; "brave t.", = brave exploit; III. ii. 70.

—, "no touch", = not a particle; III. ii. 286.

TOWARD, in progress; III. i. 74.

TOYS, trifles; "fairy toys," fanciful tales; V. i. 3.

TRACE, traverse; II. i. 25.

TRANSLATED, transformed; I. i. 191; III. i. 113.

TRANSPORTED, removed, carried off; IV. ii. 4.

TRANSPOSE, transform; I. i. 233.

TRIPLE HECATE, because she rules in three realms—as Luna or Cynthia in heaven, Diana on earth, and Hecate in hell; V. i. 369.

TRIUMPH, public show; I. i. 19.

TROTH, truth; II. ii. 43.

TROJAN, "false Trojan"; (*see* CARTHAGE QUEEN).

TUNEABLE, tuneful; I. i. 123.

TURN'D, turned false; III. ii. 91.



UNBREATHED, unexercised; V. i. 74.

UNCOUPLE, let loose; IV. i. 106.

UNHARDEN'D, impressionable; I. i. 35.

UPON, by; II. i. 243.

URGED, insisted upon; III. ii. 291.



VANTAGE; "with v.", having the advantage; I. i. 102.

VAWARD = vanguard; IV. i. 104.

VILLAGERY, a collective word, meaning either (1) village population, or (2) villages; II. i. 35.

VIRTUE; "fair virtue's force," *i.e.*
the power of thy fairness; III. i.
134.

VIRTUOUS, efficacious; III. ii. 367.

VOICE, approval; I. i. 54.

VOTARESS, a woman who has pledged
herself by a vow to be true to the
rules of an order; II. i. 123.

—, a maiden who has vowed never
to marry; II. i. 162.



WANDERING KNIGHT = knight errant;
I. ii. 44.

WANT, lack; II. i. 101.

WANTON, luxuriant, thick; II. i. 99.

WASHES, moistens, makes damp; II. i.
104.

WASTED, consumed; V. i. 360.

WAYS; "all ways," in all directions;
IV. i. 40.

WEED, robe; II. i. 255.

WELKIN, sky; III. ii. 356.

WHERE (dissyllabic); II. i. 249.

WHERE, wherever; IV. i. 151.

WHETHER (monosyllabic); I. i. 69.

WHITE, whiteness; III. ii. 141.

WHITHER AWAY? = where are you off
to?; I. i. 180.

WITHERING OUT, delaying the enjoy-
ment of; I. i. 6.

WITHOUT, outside of; I. i. 165.

—, beyond the reach of; IV. i. 152.

WODE, mad (with a play upon
"wood"); II. i. 191.

WOODBINE, honeysuckle; II. i. 250.

—, probably "convolvulus or bind-
weed"; IV. i. 41.

WORM, serpent; III. ii. 71.

WORSE, used emphatically for
"worse"; II. i. 207.

WOT, know; III. ii. 422.

WRATH, wrathful; II. i. 20.



YOU WERE BEST, it were best for
you, you had better; I. ii. 2.



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