

# **SHAKESPEARIENCE!**

## *Midsummer Night's Dream*

### Act III, Scene 1: *Quince, Flute, Snug, Snout, Starveling, Bottom, Puck*

#### **BOTTOM**

Are we all met?

#### **QUINCE**

Pat, pat; and here's a marvellous convenient place for our rehearsal.

#### **SNUG**

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.

#### **BOTTOM**

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**

By'r lakin, a parlous fear.

#### **STARVELING**

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

#### **BOTTOM**

Not a whit:  
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...

#### **QUINCE**

Well, we will have such a prologue...

#### **SNUG**

and it shall be written in eight and six!

#### **BOTTOM**

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

**SNOUT**

Will not the ladies be afeard of the lion?

**STARVELING**

I fear it, I promise you.

**BOTTOM**

Masters, to  
bring in--God shield us!--a lion among ladies, is a  
most dreadful thing and we ought to  
look to 't.

**SNOUT**

Therefore another prologue must tell he is not a lion.

**BOTTOM**

Nay, 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....

**QUINCE**

Well it shall be so. But, you know, Pyramus and Thisby meet by moonlight.

**SNOUT**

Doth the moon shine that night we play our play?

**BOTTOM**

A calendar, a calendar! Find out moonshine, find out moonshine.

**QUINCE**

Yes, it doth shine that night.

**BOTTOM**

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.

**SNUG**

Ay; or else one must come in with a bush of thorns  
and a lanthorn, and say he comes to disfigure, or to  
present, the person of Moonshine.

**QUINCE**

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.

**SNOUT**

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

**BOTTOM**

Some man or other must present Wall: a let him hold his fingers thus, and through that cranny shall Pyramus and Thisby whisper.

**SNUG**

If that may be, then all is well!

**QUINCE**

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.

*[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.

**QUINCE**

Speak, Pyramus. Thisby, stand forth.

**BOTTOM**

Thisby, the flowers of odious savours sweet,--

**QUINCE**

Odours, odours.

**BOTTOM**

--odours savours sweet: But hark, a voice! *[Exit]*

**PUCK**

A stranger Pyramus than e'er played here.  
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. *[Exit]*

**FLUTE**

Must I speak now?

**QUINCE**

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

**FLUTE**

I'll meet thee, Pyramus, at Ninny's tomb.

**QUINCE**

'Ninus' tomb,' man:

**FLUTE**

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

*[Re-enter PUCK, and BOTTOM with an ass's head]*

**BOTTOM**

If I were fair, Thisby, I were only thine.

**QUINCE**

O monstrous! O strange! we are haunted. Pray, masters! fly, masters! Help!

**SNUG**

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

**BOTTOM**

What do you see? you see an asshead of your own, do you?

*[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.

**BOTTOM**

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

*[Re-enter QUINCE]*

**QUINCE**

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

**BOTTOM**

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...

**TITANIA**

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

**PUCK**

My mistress with a monster is in love! *[Exit]*