

SHAKESPEARIENCE!

Midsummer Night's Dream

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

BOTTOM

Are we all met?

QUINCE

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

SNUG

This green plot shall be our stage.

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

A parlous fear!

STARVELING

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

BOTTOM

Not a whit:

Write me a prologue which speaks 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 'Ladies,'--or 'Fair-ladies, I would wish you,'--or 'I would request you,'--or 'I would entreat you,'--not to fear, not to tremble...

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 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

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, SNOOT, and STARVELING]

PUCK

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

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]*