

A Midsummer Night's Dream – Act Three, Scene 2

(An adaptation)

Dramatis Personae:

Oberon
Puck
Mustard Seed
Cobweb
Moth
Lysander
Demetrius
Helena
Hermia

PUCK My fairy lord, this must be done in haste,
For night's swift dragons cut the clouds full fast,
And yonder shines aurora's harbinger,
At whose approach ghosts wand'ring here and there
Troop home to churchyards. Damned spirits all
That in crossways and floods have burial
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-browed night.

OBERON 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
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 today.

COBWEB} Up and down, up and down,
MUSTARD} We will lead them up and down.
MOTH} We are feared in field and town.
(Together) Goblins, lead them up and down.

COBWEB Here comes one.

(Enter Lysander)

LYSANDER Where art thou, proud Demetrius? Speak thou now.

MUSTARD (in Demetrius's voice)
Here, villain, drawn and ready. Where art thou?

LYSANDER I will be with thee straight.

MUSTARD (in Demetrius's voice)

Follow me then, to plainer ground.

(Enter Demetrius)

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

MOTH (in Lysander's voice)
Thou coward, art thou bragging to the stars?
Telling the bushes that thou look'st for wars

DEMETRIUS Yea, art thou there?

MOTH (in Lysander's voice)
Follow my voice, we'll try no manhood here.
(They exit)

(Enter Lysander)

LYSANDER He goes before me and still dares me on;
When I come where he calls, then he is gone.
The villain is much lighter-heeled than I.
I followed fast but faster he did fly.
That fallen am I in dark uneven way,
And here will rest me, come thou gentle day,
For if but once thou show me thy grey light,
I'll find Demetrius and revenge this spite.

(He lies down and sleeps)

(Enter Demetrius and Cobweb)

COBWEB (in Lysander's voice)
Ho, ho, ho! Coward, why com'st thou not?

DEMETRIUS Where art thou now?

COBWEB (In Lysanders voice)
Come hither, I am here.

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

(He lies down and sleeps)

(Enter Helena)

HELENA 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 my own company.

(She lies down and sleeps)

(Enter Mustard and Moth)

MUSTARD Yet but three? Come one more.
Two of both kinds makes up four.

MOTH Here she comes, curst and sad.
Cupid is a knavish lad
Thus to make poor females mad.

(Enter Hermia)

HERMIA Never so weary, never so in woe,
Bedabbled with the dew, and torn with briars -
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.

(She lies down and sleeps)

(Enter all sprites)

PUCK On the ground
Sleep sound.
I'll apply
To your eye,
Gentle lover, remedy.

(He squeezes juice on Lysander's eyelids)

COBWEB When thou wak'st,
Thou tak'st
True delight
In the sight
Of thy former lady's eye.

MOTH And the country proverb known,
That every man should take his own,
In your waking shall be shown.

MUSTARD Jack shall have Jill,
Nought shall go ill,
The man shall have his mare again, and all shall be well.