**ACT I-SCENE 1A**

**Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, PHILOSTRATE, and Attendants**

**THESEUS**

**Now, 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 revenue.**

**HIPPOLYTA**

**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.**

**THESEUS**

**Go, Philostrate,**

**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 PHILOSTRATE**

**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 revelling.**

**ACT I-SCENE 1B**

**EGEUS**

**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,**

**This man hath bewitch'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,**

**With feigning voice verses of feigning love,**

**And stolen the impression of her fantasy**

**With bracelets of thy hair, rings, gawds, conceits,**

**Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweetmeats, messengers**

**Of strong prevailment in unharden'd 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,**

**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.**

**ACT I-SCENE 1C**

**LYSANDER**

**How now, my love! why is your cheek so pale?**

**How chance the roses there do fade so fast?**

**HERMIA**

**Belike for want of rain, which I could well**

**Beteem them from the tempest of my eyes.**

**LYSANDER**

**Ay me! for aught that I could ever read,**

**Could ever hear by tale or history,**

**The course of true love never did run smooth;**

**But, either it was different in blood,--**

**HERMIA**

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

**LYSANDER**

**Or else misgraffed in respect of years,--**

**HERMIA**

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

**LYSANDER**

**Or else it stood upon the choice of friends,--**

**HERMIA**

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

**LYSANDER**

**Or, if there were a sympathy in choice,**

**War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it,**

**Making it momentany 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.**

**HERMIA**

**If then true lovers have been ever cross'd,**

**It stands as an edict in destiny:**

**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.**

**LYSANDER**

**A good persuasion: therefore, hear me,**

**Hermia. I have a widow aunt, a dowager**

**Of great revenue, and she hath no child:**

**From Athens is her house remote seven leagues;**

**And she respects me as her only son.**

**There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee;**

**And to that place the sharp Athenian law**

**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.**

**HERMIA**

**My good Lysander!**

**I swear to thee, by Cupid's strongest bow,**

**By his best arrow with the golden head,**

**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 Troyan 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.**

**ACT I-SCENE 1D**

**HERMIA**

**God speed fair Helena! whither away?**

**HELENA  Call you me fair? that fair again unsay.**

**Demetrius loves your 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;**

**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,**

**The rest I'd give to be to you translated.**

**O, teach me how you look, and with what art**

**You sway the motion of Demetrius' heart.**

**HERMIA**

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

**HELENA**

**O that your frowns would teach my smiles such skill!**

**HERMIA  I give him curses, yet he gives me love.**

**HELENA**

**O that my prayers could such affection move!**

**HERMIA**

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

**HELENA**

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

**HERMIA  His folly, Helena, is no fault of mine.**

**HELENA**

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

**HERMIA**

**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 unto a hell!**

**ACT I- SCENE 2A**

**Enter QUINCE, SNUG, BOTTOM, FLUTE, SNOUT, and STARVELING**

**QUINCE**

**Is all our company here?**

**BOTTOM**

**You were best to call them generally, man by man,**

**according to the scrip.**

**QUINCE**

**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.**

**BOTTOM**

**First, good Peter Quince, say what the play treats**

**on, then read the names of the actors, and so grow**

**to a point.**

**QUINCE**

**Marry, our play is, The most lamentable comedy, and**

**most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisby.**

**BOTTOM**

**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.**

**QUINCE**

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

**BOTTOM**

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

**QUINCE**

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

**BOTTOM  What is Pyramus? a lover, or a tyrant?**

**QUINCE**

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

**BOTTOM**

**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.**

**This was lofty!**

**Now name the rest of the players.**

**This is Ercles' vein, a tyrant's vein; a lover is more**

**condoling.**

**QUINCE**

**Francis Flute, the bellows-mender.**

**FLUTE**

**Here, Peter Quince.**

**QUINCE**

**Flute, you must take Thisby on you.**

**FLUTE**

**What is Thisby? a wandering knight?**

**QUINCE**

**It is the lady that Pyramus must love.**

**FLUTE**

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

**QUINCE**

**That's all one: you shall play it in a mask,**

**and you may speak as small as you will.**

**BOTTOM**

**An I may hide my face, let me play Thisby too,**

**I'll speak in a monstrous little voice.**

**'Thisne, Thisne;' 'Ah, Pyramus, lover dear!**

**thy Thisby dear, and lady dear!'**

**QUINCE**

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

**BOTTOM**

**Well, proceed.**

**QUINCE**

**Robin Starveling, the tailor.**

**STARVELING**

**Here, Peter Quince.**

**QUINCE**

**Robin Starveling, you must play Thisby's mother.**

**Tom Snout, the tinker.**

**SNOUT**

**Here, Peter Quince.**

**QUINCE**

**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.**

**QUINCE**

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

**BOTTOM**

**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.'**

**QUINCE**

**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.**

**BOTTOM**

**I grant you, friends, if that 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.**

**QUINCE**

**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.**

**BOTTOM**

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

**QUINCE**

**Why, what you will.**

**BOTTOM**

**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.**

**QUINCE**

**Some of your French crowns have no hair at all,**

**and then you will play bare-faced. 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 meantime I will draw a bill of properties, such as our play wants. I pray you, fail me not.**

**BOTTOM**

**We will meet; and there we may rehearse most obscenely and courageously.**

**Take pains; be perfect: adieu.**

**QUINCE**

**At the duke's oak we meet.**

**BOTTOM**

**Enough; hold or cut bow-strings.**

**ACT II-SCENE 1A**

**PUCK**

**How now, spirit! whither wander you?**

**Fairy**

**Over hill, over dale,**

**Thorough bush, thorough brier,**

**Over park, over pale,**

**Thorough flood, thorough fire,**

**I do wander everywhere,**

**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;**

**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 our 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,**

**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 loved boy,**

**Crowns him with flowers and makes him all her joy:**

**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**

**Creep into acorn-cups and hide them there.**

**Fairy**

**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 villagery;**

**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,**

**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**

**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 wither'd dewlap pour the ale.**

**The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,**

**Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me;**

**Then slip I from her bum, 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.**

**ACT II-SCENE 2A**

**OBERON**

**Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania.**

**TITANIA**

**What, jealous Oberon! Fairies, skip hence:**

**I have forsworn his bed and company.**

**OBERON**

**Tarry, rash wanton: am not I thy lord?**

**TITANIA**

**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 Steppe of India?**

**But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,**

**Your buskin'd mistress and your warrior love,**

**To Theseus must be wedded, and you come**

**To give their bed joy and prosperity.**

**OBERON**

**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, whom he ravished?**

**And make him with fair AEgle break his faith,**

**With Ariadne and Antiopa?**

**TITANIA**

**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 beached 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 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 drowned 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:**

**The human mortals want their winter here;**

**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**

**Far 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 mazed 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.**

**OBERON**

**Do you amend it then; it lies in you:**

**Why should Titania cross her Oberon?**

**I do but beg a little changeling boy,**

**To be my henchman.**

**TITANIA**

**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 embarked 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**

**Following,--her womb then rich with my young squire,--**

**Would imitate, and sail upon the land,**

**To fetch me trifles, and return again,**

**As from a voyage, rich with merchandise.**

**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.**

**OBERON**

**How long within this wood intend you stay?**

**TITANIA**

**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.**

**OBERON**

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

**TITANIA**

**Not for thy fairy kingdom. Fairies, away!**

**We shall chide downright, if I longer stay.**

**ACT II-SCENE 2B**

**DEMETRIUS**

**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;**

**And here am I, and wode within this wood,**

**Because I cannot meet my Hermia.**

**Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.**

**HELENA**

**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.**

**DEMETRIUS**

**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?**

**HELENA**

**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,**

**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?**

**DEMETRIUS**

**Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit;**

**For I am sick when I do look on thee.**

**HELENA  And I am sick when I look not on you.**

**DEMETRIUS**

**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.**

**HELENA  Your virtue is my privilege: for that**

**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?**

**DEMETRIUS**

**I'll run from thee and hide me in the brakes,**

**And leave thee to the mercy of wild beasts.**

**HELENA**

**The wildest hath not such a heart as you.**

**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.**

**DEMETRIUS**

**I will not stay thy questions; let me go:**

**Or, if thou follow me, do not believe**

**But I shall do thee mischief in the wood.**

**HELENA**

**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;**

**We should be wood and were not made to woo.**