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A midsummer night's dream act 2 scene 1 summary

Robin Goodfellow, also called Puck, meets with a fairy who serves Queen Titania. She tells him that Titania is coming to the woods outside of Athens that night. Puck informs the fairy that it would be better if Titania and his master, Oberon, did not meet since they only quarrel when they do so. Seconds later both Oberon and Titania arrive onstage, both accompanied by their respective fairy followers. Immediately they begin an argument, with both of them accusing each other of infidelity and jealousy. Titania has stolen a young boy whom she keeps with her and spends her time caring for. Oberon, jealous of the attention the boy is receiving, demands that Titania give the boy to him, a request she refuses. After Titania departs, Oberon vows to get revenge on her for causing him embarrassment. He sends his puck to fetch some pansies, the juice of which is supposed to make a person love the first thing he or she sees upon waking up. Oberon's plan is to put the juice onto Titania's eyes while she sleeps, so that she will fall in love with the first animal she sees after waking up. Puck leaves him and Oberon hides himself. Demetrius and Helena arrive in the woods right next to where Oberon is hidden. Demetrius tells Helena to go away, and that he does not love her even though she has told him about Hermia and Lysander trying to run away. She threatens to chase him down if he should try to leave her in the woods. Oberon, having overheard the entire conversation, decides to make Demetrius fall in love with Helena. He tells Robin Goodfellow to take some of the juice and go anoint the eyes of the Athenian man in the woods, but doing so only when it is certain that the woman by his side will be the first person he sees. The puck agrees, and goes off to carry out his errand. Act Two, Scene TwoTitania calls for a quick dance in the woods with her fairies, after which they sing her to sleep. Oberon takes the opportunity to sneak up and drop the pansy juice onto her closed eyelids. Soon thereafter Lysander and Hermia, tired of walking and having lost their way, decide to go to sleep as well. They lie down, but Hermia demands that Lysander sleep a short distance away in order to keep up her sense of modesty since she is not married to him yet. The puck enters, having vainly searched the woods for an Athenian. He spies Lysander lying apart from Hermia and deduces that this must be the hard-hearted Athenian which Oberon spoke about. Robin Goodfellow quickly drops some of the juice onto Lysander's eyes. Demetrius, followed closely by Helena, runs into the clearing where Lysander is lying asleep. She begs him to stop running away from her, but he refuses and leaves her there alone. Helena finally sees Lysander on the ground and shakes him awake, unwittingly becoming the first woman he sees when he opens his eyes. Lysander immediately falls in love with Helena, and tells her that he deeply loves her. She thinks it is a cruel joke and tells him to stop abusing her. Helena leaver, and Lysander decides to forget about Hermia and follow Helena instead. Hermia wakes up because she is scared about a dream she has had in which a serpent eats her heart. She calls for Lysander, but he is no longer near her. She then leaves her bed to go search for him.AnalysisThe aspect of the woods as a place for the characters to reach adulthood is made even more explicit in this scene. In the dialogue between Helena and Demetrius, the woods are a place to be feared, and also are a place to lose virginity. As Demetrius warns, "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" (2.1.214-219). Thus the forest can be allegorically read as a sort of trial for the characters, a phase they must pass through in order to reach maturity. Hermia's serpent serves as a sign of the monsters which are in the woods. This plays into the fact that the woods are not only a place which the characters must escape from, but are also a place of imagination. Hermia's fear of her dream, in which the monster and the danger are only imagined, is meant to show the audience that the danger in a play is only imagined by the audience; neither the play nor Hermia's dream are real. my Midsummer Night's Dream [Enter two supernatural spirits from opposite sides of the stage. One is a typical female fairy; the other is a puck, a mischievous spirit, named Robin Goodfellow] How now, spirit? Whither wander you? Thorough bush, thorough brier, Thorough flood, thorough fire. 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 favors; In those freckles live their savors. 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. The King doth keep his revels here tonight. 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. Either I mistake your shape and making quite, Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite Called Robin Goodfellow. Are not you he That frights the maidens of the villag'ry, Skim milk, and sometimes labor 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. 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 withered 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 choir 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. And here my mistress. Would that he were gone. [Enter King Oberon and his fairies from one side, Queen Titania and her fairies from the other] Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania. What, jealous Oberon? - Fairies, skip hence, I have forsworn his bed and company. Tarry, rash wanton. Am not I thy lord? Then I must be thy lady. But I know When thou hast stol'n away from fairyland, 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 step of India, But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon, Your buskined mistress and your warrior love, To Theseus must be wedded, and you come To give their bed joy and prosperity? How canst thou thus for shame, Titania, Glance at my credit with Hippolyta, Knowing I know thy love to Theseus? Didst not thou lead him through the glimmering night From Perigouna, whom he ravished, And make him, with fair Aegles, break his faith With Ariadne and Antiopa? 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 margin of the sea To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind. But with thy brawls thou hast disturbed our sport. Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain, As in revenge have sucked up from the sea Contagious fogs, which, falling in the land, Hath every pelting river made so proud That they have overcome their continents. The ox hath therefore stretched his yoke in vain, The ploughman lost his sweat, and the green corn Hath rotted ere his youth attained a beard. The fold stands empty in the drowned field, And crows are fatted with the murrain flock. The nine men's morris is filled up with mud, And the quaint mazes in the wanton green For lack of tread are undistinguishable. The human mortals want their winter cheer; No night is now with hymn or carol blessed. 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 mock'ry, 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. Do you amend it, then. It lies in you. Why should Titania cross her Oberon? I do but beg a little changeling boy The fairyland buys not the child of me. His mother was a vot'ress of my order, And in the spiced Indian air by night Full often hath she gossiped by my side; And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands, Marking th'embarked traders on the flood, When we have laughed 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. How long within this wood intend you stay? 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. Give me that boy and I will go with thee. Not for thy fairy kingdom - Fairies, away. We shall chide downright if I longer stay. [Exit Titania with her fairies] Well, go thy way. Thou shalt not from this grove Till I torment thee for this injury. My gentle puck, come hither. Thou rememb'rest Since once I sat upon a promontory 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? That very time I saw - but thou couldst not - Flying between the cold moon and the earth Cupid all armed. A certain aim he took At a fair vestal throned 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 Quenched in the chaste beams of the wat'ry moon, And the imperial vot'ress passed on In maiden meditation, fancy-free. Yet marked 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 showed thee once. The juice of it, on sleeping eyelids laid, Will make or man or woman madly dote Upon the next live creature that it sees. Fetch me this herb, and be thou here again Ere the leviathan can swim a league. I'll put a girdle round about the earth I'll watch Titania when she is asleep, And drop the liquor of it in her eyes. The next thing then she waking looks upon - Be it on lion, bear, or wolf, or bull, On meddling monkey, or on busy ape - She shall pursue it with the soul of love. And ereake 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 with Helena following him. Oberon remains nearby.] 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 stol'n unto this wood, And here am I, and wood within this wood Because I cannot meet my Hermia. Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more. 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. 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? 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 worse 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? Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit. For I am sick when I do look on thee, And I am sick when I look not on you. 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. 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? I'll run from thee and hide me in the brakes, And leave thee to the mercy of wild beasts. 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 valor flies. 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. 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 wooed and were not made to woo. I'll follow thee and make a heaven of hell, To die upon the hand I love so well. [Exit Demetrius, Helena following him, leaving Oberon alone on the stage] Fare thee well, nymph. Ere he do leave this grove Thou shalt fly him, and he shall seek thy love. [Enter Robin with the flower which had been struck by Cupid's bow] Hast thou the flower there? Welcome, wanderer. I know a bank where the wild thyme blows, Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows Quite overcanopied with luscious woodbine, With sweet musk-roses, and with eglantine. There sleeps Titania sometime of the night, Lulled in these flowers with dances and delight; And there the snake throws her enamelled 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. [Oberon gives some of the flowers to Robin] Take thou some of it, and seek through this grove. A sweet Athenian lady is in love With a disdainful youth. Anoint his eyes, But do it when the next thing he espies 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. Fear not, my lord. Your servant shall do so. [Exit Robin and Oberon separately]

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