

A Midsummer Night's Dream

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Act 1

- 1 Egeus wanted a young man called Demetrius to marry his daughter, Hermia. Hermia refused to obey her father, because she loved Lysander and he loved her. This made Egeus very angry with both of them.
- 2 Theseus told Hermia that she must obey her father and marry Demetrius. If she did not, she must either die or become a nun.
- 3 Lysander asked Hermia to meet him in the wood. Then they would run away together and stay with Lysander's aunt, far away from the law of Athens.
- 4 Demetrius stopped loving Helena when he saw Hermia and fell in love with her.
- 5 The craftsmen were rehearsing a play about the death of Pyramus and Thisbe. They were hoping that they could act it on the Duke's wedding day.
- 6 Nick Bottom - Pyramus
Francis Flute - Thisbe
Snug - the lion
Peter Quince directed the play and read the prologue.
We learn later that he played the part of the wall.

Act 2

- 1 Titania had a little Indian boy. She was very fond of the child, but Oberon wanted him too. Every time they met, the King and Queen of the Fairies argued about who should look after the boy
- 2 The fairy said that Puck caused mischief everywhere he went.
He frightened young girls, took the cream off the milk and at night, he made people lose their way.
- 3 Titania did not want to give the little boy to Oberon because the boy's mother had been Titania's friend. She had died when the boy was born and Titania has been looking after him. She would never give him up.
- 4 The juice from this flower had a special power. It could be squeezed into the eyes of a sleeping person. When they woke, they would fall in love with the first living thing that they saw.
- 5 Demetrius came to the palace wood to find Lysander and Hermia.
- 6 Oberon put some of the love juice on Titania's eyes. Puck put some of the same love juice on Lysander's eyes.
- 7 Lysander spoke to Helena with loving words. That was strange, because before he went to sleep, he had loved Hermia.

Act 3

- 1 They were very frightened, because Puck had given Bottom a donkey's head.
- 2 She fell in love with a monster – Bottom with the donkey's head.
- 3 He had put the love juice on Lysander's eyes, instead of the eyes of Demetrius.
- 4 Oberon put some of the love juice on Demetrius' eyes. Oberon made sure that the first person that Demetrius saw when he woke up was Helena. Then he would love her again.
Oberon gave Puck the second flower. Its juice could break the love spell. Puck must put this juice on the sleeping Lysander's eyes.
- 5 A short time before, Demetrius and Lysander were both in love with Hermia. Now, owing to Puck's mistake, both men were telling Helena that they loved her. She thought that they were pretending and making fun of her in front of Hermia.
- 6 Hermia was angry with Helena because she thought that everything was her fault. Hermia accused Helena of cheating her, by stealing Lysander's love. Hermia was much shorter than Helena. Hermia was very upset because Helena was teasing her about this and calling her names.
- 7 Lysander and Demetrius wanted to fight for Helena's love. At this time, both men thought that they loved her.
- 8 Puck made the two men chase each other through the wood. He spoke in their voices and said rude things. But Puck had made the sky dark too and the men could not find each other. In the end, they were so tired that they both fell asleep.
- 9 This was the juice of the second flower. It broke the love spell. When Lysander woke up, he would love Hermia again.

Act 4

- 1 Oberon was clever. He asked Titania to give him the little Indian boy when she was in love with Bottom and could think only of him. Titania agreed. Oberon had what he wanted and so he broke the love spell with the juice of the second flower.
- 2 They were all out hunting.
- 3 They found the four young lovers - Helena, Hermia, Lysander and Demetrius.
- 4 Egeus was angry with Lysander and his daughter, Hermia, because they had planned to run away together from Athens.
- 5 Demetrius was not angry with Lysander and Hermia, because he loved Helena. He had no more interest in Hermia.
- 6 Theseus decided that the two pairs of lovers should be married in the temple, at the same time as Theseus and Hippolyta.
- 7 Bottom's good news was that their play had been chosen as part of that night's celebrations.

Act 5

- 1 He thought that the craftsmen's play was terrible.
- 2 Theseus wanted to see the play because the craftsmen had worked hard at it. They wanted to please him.
- 3 Pyramus killed himself in the play because he thought that the lion had killed Thisbe.
- 4 Thisbe killed herself because Pyramus was dead. She could not live without him.
- 5 The fairies came to Theseus' house to bless it. They blessed the three couples who were sleeping there. They would always be faithful, safe and happy.