A Midsummer Night's Dream
—As Told in Rhyme for Children Just Around the Age of Nine—

Honors 499

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Abstract

This project is an adaptation of William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, targeted at children in the fourth grade and above. It is told as a story through an ABCB pattern of rhyme, and although it is not written in a play format, it is still separated into acts and scenes with all of the action and events taken place in the same order as the original. Its objective is primarily to present Shakespeare's work to children in a way that interests and entertains them, and also to eliminate the Shakespearean language barrier that so often deters people from understanding and enjoying his work. This will hopefully make them more inclined to read Shakespeare later in life or at least give his work more of a chance.

I provide a third-person narration to the story and keep the story as close to the original as possible. Because it is for children though, I did make some alterations. I changed all of the Athenian characters' names, with the exception of the workmen who have easily recognizable names, so that they would be easier for children to pronounce and remember; all of the changed names are close to the original characters' names though. I have kept the fairies' names the same because they are unique names, and I think this helps to distinguish them as different beings. Another deviation from the story is that I changed the Indian boy, that Titania has and Oberon covets, to an emerald. In Shakespeare's play, the basis for the feud between Titania and Oberon is the fact that Titania has something that Oberon wants, and I just thought that, for children, it was more appropriate for them to be fighting over an object rather than a person. Lastly, in my work, I omitted the threat of death against Hermia if she does not follow her father's demand that she marry Demetrius. I thought a punishment of death for this was a little extreme and, again, unnecessary, so instead of death, I say the punishment will be confinement to a nunnery.

Overall, in my work, there are five acts and two scenes per act, with the exception of act five which only has one scene. I also provide my own introduction and a character list at the beginning of the play.

Acknowledgments

Brent Royster
Katie Meinzer
Katie Deveau
A Midsummer Night's Dream

As told in rhyme, for children just around the age of nine

Jacqueline M. Pacyk
A note for the eyes of the reader—

This tale you are about to read
Is an adaptation inspired by one of the finest plays ever penned.
It is alive with fairies and magic and characters so amusing
That I hope it will keep your interest from beginning to end.

So please get comfortable
And open your imagination up very wide
We are about to travel to Greece,
And I dedicate myself to you, as a constant guide.

I will be honest
And try to make my words simple, yet fun, to follow.
I do not want to lose you in the dark
Or do the story an injustice by making it hollow.

Now I believe that you are ready to be enchanted,
So I will be quick in telling you these words are sincere ~
I truly hope you enjoy this retelling of a legendary play,
Created by man named William Shakespeare.
Our tale begins in Athens with a duke named Theo,
Who is anxious for the arrival of his wedding day.
   It is then that he will marry the beautiful Lydia –
A lady so magnificent, she was once Queen in a land faraway.

Theo won Lydia’s heart
With his strength while he was at war,
   But clearly he does not have patience –
He cries that their wedding isn’t for four days more!

As he sulks, the lovely Lydia tries to soothe him,
   And she promises the next few days will go by fast.
Theo sees it is not good to dwell on his sadness,
   So he decides to throw a party and let his bad mood stay in the past.

He calls for his servant, Phil,
To invite the Athenians for merry times that are sure to lift his spirit,
   But as Phil leaves, a few townspeople walk in looking upset,
And Theo can tell there is a problem so he says “Let me hear it!”

A man named Edgar explains that it is his daughter, Mia,
   Who is causing him a great deal of trouble.
He believed she would marry a man named Demetri,
   But she has recently refused and burst her father’s bubble!

Mia speaks now and reveals that she is in love with another man,
   Who goes by the name of Alexander.
She says she wants to marry him instead,
   But her father does not appreciate her candor.

Edgar believes that Alexander has bewitched his daughter
   And has made her into a disobedient child.
He wants Theo to make Mia marry Demetri,
   Rather than letting her run wild.

—Now I must interrupt for a minute to explain
   That in these times it was very ordinary
   For families to be in charge of choosing
   Who their sons and daughters would marry.

So please do not think
   That Edgar is simply a horrible father –
He’s just doing what he thinks is right,
   Although it seems like he’s only being a bother!
But now let’s get back to the story at hand,
And we will see if Edgar gets his demand—

It is at this time, that Theo takes a moment
To think about this family issue.
He’s about to voice his opinion
And after this, Mia might need a tissue.

Theo clears his throat and proclaims,
“According to law, you must marry Demetri or become a nun.
Plus, I think your father would only choose the best man for you to wed,
So as far as I’m concerned, this matter is done”

But Alexander is not willing to give up his love—
At least not without a fight—
He declares he is just as wealthy and worthy as Demetri,
Plus he has the love of Mia, so to be with her is his right.

Alexander then reminds Theo
That Demetri had just been courting Mia’s friend Helen,
And she is now very much in love with him
Because he stole her heart like a felon.

Theo admits he had heard this news
But had been so busy that he had forgotten.
He tells Mia to think about her choices
And then takes Edgar and Demetri away to scold them for being so rotten.

Now Alexander and Mia are left alone,
And Mia is looking very pale.
To soothe her Alexander says, “The course of true love never did run smooth,”
And the two begin to think of things that can cause a love to fail.

Alexander offers the example of different social standings
Like a poor man loving a queen,
And Mia thinks that’s horrible reason for two people to be torn apart,
And that people’s judgments can be so mean.

Alexander goes on to recite more reasons of failed love—
Like parents disapproving or a substantial difference in age.
He says that even if a couple can make it work,
A war or a storm might take one of them away in rage.
After all of these examples,
Mia takes some time to reflect,
And she decides this awful pattern must only be fate
Testing the love that a couple must protect.

Mia realizes that it will not be easy,
But she and Alexander must make their love work.
She tells him they must be patient,
And not allow fate to ruin their relationship and smirk.

Alexander is in agreement
With this very rational side of Mia.
He then takes a moment to think
And comes up with a new, exciting idea.

Alexander has a widowed aunt,
Who thinks of him as a son,
She lives miles outside of Athens,
And he and Mia could go there on the run.

At her house, they could get married
Because they would be free from Athenian law.
He asks Mia to agree to this plan
And hopes she won’t hem and haw.

He says that if she loves him,
She will sneak out of her father’s house the very next night
And meet him in the forest,
Where they can run away, guided by the moon’s light.

Of course Mia agrees,
And she swears by Cupid she will be there,
But now they must stop speaking of the arrangement
As Mia’s friend Helen is approaching the passionate pair.

Mia says “Hello, pretty Helen!”
And asks her where she is going,
But Helen ignores the question and cries that she is not “pretty”
While Mia stands there in a manner so unknowing.

Helen goes on to say that Mia is the pretty one,
And she wishes she could catch her beauty like one catches the flu
She wails, “I would give up everything in the world,
Except for Demetri, if I could only be you!”
She then asks Mia what tricks she used
To make Demetri fall in love with her so completely.
Mia says she frowns and curses and hates him,
But he just smiles and follows and loves her even more sweetly!

Helen says it is the opposite for her—
The more she loves him and sends smiles his way,
The more he dislikes her
And wishes to keep her at bay.

Helen says she knows it is not Mia’s fault
That Demetri loves her, but it is her beauty that’s to blame.
Mia tells her not to worry any longer
Because soon Demetri will be put to shame.

Mia and Alexander then disclose their plan in all its detail,
As Helen follows every word.
They tell her how they are leaving Athens forever
To go to a place where their love will not be deterred.

Then the happy couple wishes Helen well,
With prayers that Demetri will return her love and make things right.
They leave and say goodbye to each other,
With promises to meet in one day at midnight.

Now Helen is left alone,
And she voices her private thoughts out loud.
It is about to become apparent
That over her friends’ plan, she will cast a cloud.

Helen exclaims:
*Some people are happy while others are sadder,*
*Some people think I am just as pretty as Mia,*
*But Demetri doesn’t, and that’s really the only matter.*

*Demetri is a fool to be in love with Mia,*
*And I, to be in love with him.*
*Love and Cupid truly are blind and reckless,*
*Which makes our judgment very dim.*

*Demetri made me so many promises*
*And he swore that he was mine*
*Then he looked at Mia, and ever since,*
*He has believed that she is more divine.*
Now I will tell Demetri
Of Mia and Alexander’s plan to run away,
And I know he will follow her,
But at least he will see me and be thankful on that day.”

Act 1, Scene 2

Now it is time to meet some new characters
In a brand new setting.
They are six Athenian workmen in town
Talking about putting on a play at Theo and Lydia’s wedding.

A carpenter named Peter is in charge of the meeting,
And he begins to talk about the play.
He announces the title and plot
And what character each man will portray.

As Peter assigns each man to a part,
A weaver named Bottom interrupts him non-stop.
He wants to play every role in the play,
But Peter convinces him that would make it a flop.

So Bottom will only play the male lead’s role,
And a man named Snug will play the lion.
The men are silly as they think that if his roar is too ferocious
It will make ladies in the audience start cryin’!

After the rest of the roles are given out,
The men agree to rehearse the play the next night.
They must prepare their lines
And meet in the forest, far out of everyone’s sight.

—Now Act One is over, but please don’t be blue
Because it is time to see what happens in Act Two—

Act 2, Scene 1

This second act takes place on the next night in the forest,
Which will soon be the setting for much mania
It is here that the fairies live,
And they are led by a king, Oberon, and a queen, Titania.

Two of the fairies are meeting now
One is named Puck, and he is known for playing tricks
He is the servant of Oberon
and often causes many conflicts.
He is talking to Titania's servant and warns her:

"Tonight Titania better steer clear of this spot.
Oberon is throwing a party here,
And if he sees her, he will become hot!

She has the most beautiful emerald,
And Oberon wants it really bad
But she refuses to give it up –
So until she does, he will remain mad!

He hates watching her
Shine the emerald and carry it around.
It is the most beautiful green stone ever –
Another can't be found.

So please, keep Titania away
Or else the two are sure to get into a huge fight.
Now, move over because I see Oberon coming –
He is just within my sight!"

Unfortunately, at this time,
Titania is approaching from the other side.
The two are about to run into each other,
And it's too late for the other fairies to hide!

The fairy king and queen exchange harsh words
As soon as they do meet.
It is clear that they will not be making up soon
Or sharing a bite to eat.

Titania complains that since they started fighting,
The world has not been right.
The seasons have all changed around,
And flowers are now as black as night.

Oberon is very quick to respond,
And he says the problem is not hard to fix –
If Titania would give up the emerald,
The earth would stop playing these tricks.

Titania will not agree to this solution though,
Because the emerald was given to her by a friend who passed away,
And Titania promised that friend
She would always keep the stone safe and as bright as day.
So it seems this matter cannot be resolved
Since Titania will not give Oberon what he wants.
She knows that if she stays they’ll just fight,
So she leaves and vows not to go near Oberon’s usual haunts.

Now Oberon is left alone with Puck,
And he begins to talk and plan.
He feels very insulted by Titania
And wants to get her back in the best way that he can.

He says to Puck:
“One night I saw Cupid flying in the sky.
He shot his bow & arrow at a girl to fill her with love,
But he missed and hit a flower near by.

Now I want you to find that flower.
It is purple, and you should bring it to me –
If the flower’s juice is put on someone’s sleeping eyes,
When they wake up they will fall in love with the first creature they see.

I will use the juice on Titania
And squeeze the flower’s juice on her eyes while she is asleep.
The when she wakes, she will fall in love with something silly,
Like a bear, a lion, a wolf, or a sheep!

Then I’ll make her give me the emerald
Before I use another plant to cure her of the magic spell.
She’ll be so crazy in love
She won’t mind giving the stone up – she won’t even yell!

Now, shhh! I must be quiet, and you go find the flower –
I think there are people coming near.
I will make myself invisible and listen to their conversation
As soon as they appear.”

So Oberon hides himself,
While Puck flies into the night.
Then Helen and Demetri approach,
And of course they’re in a fight.

Helen has already told Demetri
Of her friends’ plan to run from Athens and wed.
Now he wants to stop Mia from leaving,
So he’s searching the forest and is filled with so much dread.
He is very annoyed with Helen
Because she won’t go away and just let him be.
He says, “Why won’t you leave me alone?
I want you to stop following me!”

Helen replies that she cannot leave him alone
Because he is the one to blame for the love she feels,
But Demetri disagrees and exclaims,
“That’s not true! I am mean to you and never invite you for meals!”

Now, I must admit that Helen is a little crazy
Because she says, “Your cruelty just makes me love you more.”
Then after the two fight a bit longer, Demetri leaves
And Helen follows because her love is something she can’t ignore.

As soon as they’re gone, Oberon reappears,
And after hearing their conversation,
He feels very bad for Helen
And wants to help her situation.

He decides right then
That he can use the flower’s love potion
On Demetri’s eyes so that when he wakes up,
He will see Helen and show her complete devotion.

Then Demetri will be the one chasing Helen
By the time the sun graces the forest with its light.
It almost seems like a fair plan for revenge,
But for some reason, I don’t think everything will turn out right.

There’s no time to worry right now though
Because Puck has the flower and is back on the scene.
He was very quick on his trip, so now Oberon
Can use Cupid’s flower on the eyes of the Fairy Queen.

Oberon says to Puck:
“I know where Titania falls asleep to lullabies –
It is in a part of the forest covered in violets and daisies,
And I will go there to drip this flower’s juice onto her eyes.

While I do this,
I have another task for you,
And in order to do it,
You’ll need some of this flower’s juice too.”
Look around this part of the forest,  
And you will find Helen – a beautiful Athenian girl.  
She is in love with a man who is horrible to her  
And does not see that she is as precious as a pearl.

I want you to squeeze the juice over his eyes  
And make sure she is the first one he sees when he wakes.  
I want him to love her more than she loves him  
I want it to be his heart that aches.

He is just so cold to this poor girl,  
But soon we shall make him caring.  
You will be able to recognize this man  
By the Athenian clothes he is wearing.

Now go off and find him,  
And don’t be slow.  
I will see you in the morning  
Before the first rooster’s crow.”

Act 2. Scene 2

This scene begins with Titania  
And her loyal, little fairy crew.  
They sing her to sleep before flying off  
To work on the chores she told them to do.

After they have left,  
Oberon quietly sneaks in.  
He has brought Cupid’s flower  
And looks at Titania with a mischievous grin.

He squeezes the flower’s juice over her eyes  
And whispers in her ear,  
“You will love the first creature you see when you wake up.  
You will long for him and always want him near.

Open your eyes  
When something horrible will be your first sight.  
It can be a bear or a panther  
Or anything that would give someone else a fright.”

So with those quick words, Oberon leaves,  
And now we will shift our focus elsewhere.  
Remember, Mia and Alexander are in the forest tonight,  
And it seems that they could use a prayer.
The two have met as they planned,  
But unfortunately they’ve gotten lost in the night  
Alexander suggests they take some time to rest  
And then find their way in the morning when it’s light.

Mia agrees that it is a good idea  
To let the darkness pass.  
She says goodnight to Alexander,  
Then he goes to sleep by a tree while she sleeps in the grass.

As Mia and Alexander sleep, Puck is walking the forest  
Looking for the boy Oberon told him about.  
He complains he’s been everywhere and hasn’t found the Athenian,  
And it’s making him so angry he could shout!

Now just when he thinks the boy can’t be found,  
He sees an Athenian sleeping under a tree.  
We all know it’s Alexander,  
But Puck mistakes him for Demetri!

He says, “This must be the boy Oberon saw.  
And ah! – The girl sleeping near must be the one he mistreated.  
I will soak his eyes with this magic juice,  
And then find Oberon since my task is completed.”

After Puck applies the juice to the sleeping boy’s eyes,  
He hurries off to find the fairy king.  
Now we will see where Demetri and Helen are  
And what it is that they’ve been doing.

As you may have guessed, Demetri is still looking for Mia,  
While Helen follows him on his heels.  
She begs him to stop and slow down  
Because he’s moving so fast, it’s like he’s on wheels!

But Demetri will not move slower,  
And Helen is out of breath from this chase.  
He tells her again to just go away,  
And then sprints ahead, leaving her in disgrace.

Now poor Helen is alone in the dark,  
And she cries for herself because she’s in such pain.  
She says, “Why did I ever think I could compare to Mia?  
She’s so much prettier. I must have been insane!”
Then Helen walks along slowly,
And she spots Alexander sleeping on the ground.
She looks to see if he is hurt,
Then tells him to wake up if he is safe and sound.

So Alexander opens his eyes,
And Helen's face is the first that he sees.
The juice from Cupid's flower works,
As love fills him and makes him weak in the knees.

He tells Helen, "You are simply radiant,
And I feel like I can see into your heart.
Demetri should be put in jail because he's so horrible,
and that's just for a start!"

Helen is surprised by Alexander's words,
And tells him he shouldn't care where Demetri went
Because he is the one who has Mia's love,
And for that reason he should be content.

But Alexander is not happy with Mia –
At least not any more –
The flower's juice has changed his feelings,
And he now thinks Mia is such a bore.

He exclaims to Helen:
"I wasted so much time on Mia, when you are the one I love.
Why would I ever want her?
She is like an ugly blackbird, and you are like a dove.

It's obvious that you are so much more worthy of my affection
And now I am finally seeing this for the first time.
There are love stories written in your eyes,
And when I look at you I see fireworks and hear bells chime."

Now Alexander's declarations of love
Are too much for Helen to take.
In fact, his words come as such a surprise
That she thinks he's just being fake.

She cries, "Why are you mocking me?
What did I ever do to you?!
Demetri has already rejected me
And now you have to insult me too?"
I always thought you were a nice person,
And I didn't think you would be so cruel
Now I am going to leave
Before you make me into more of a fool!"

So with those words, Helen exits,
Without even noticing that Mia is sleeping nearby.
Alexander walks over and speaks to Mia while she sleeps,
But his words to her are no longer as sweet as pie.

He says, "I hope I never see you again!
Our relationship was all just a huge mistake.
It makes me sick just to look at you –
Like one feels after eating too much cake!"

Then he dedicates himself to Helen
And promises to treat her like a queen on a throne.
He goes off to find her
And leaves Mia sleeping on her own.

As soon as Alexander is gone,
Mia suddenly wakes from a horrible nightmare.
She dreamt it was her wedding day,
But Alexander wasn't there.

She starts to call out for Alexander
But sees that he is not around.
She becomes frightened
And immediately goes to search the ground.

She has no idea about what went on
While she was sleeping
I am sorry to say that when she finds out,
The effects of the love potion will probably have her weeping.

—Now we are done with Act Two, so it’s time to see
How this story will unfold as we move on to Act Three—

**Act 3. Scene 1**

This new act opens with the Athenian townsmen,
Who are in the forest, as they had planned before.
They are ready to rehearse for their play,
Which they hope everyone at the wedding will adore.
As the men begin to practice,
Oberon’s mischievous servant, Puck, creeps by.
He wonders what the men are doing
And stays hidden so he can spy.

After watching the men for a little while,
He realizes that the men are rehearsing for a play.
He then spots Bottom, the weaver,
Who is standing a bit away.

Bottom is waiting for his cue
To enter their practice stage and read his part,
But when Puck sees him he gets an idea for a prank
That he thinks is really funny and smart.

Puck waves his wand and points it at Bottom,
And after a few magic words are said,
Bottom no longer looks like himself—
He now has a donkey’s head!

Puck laughs and laughs
At the results of his little spell.
Bottom’s new appearance is ridiculous
And his look is sure to make the other men yell.

Sure enough, as soon as Bottom steps on the stage,
His friends see him and they all scream and run.
What makes it even worse, is that Bottom doesn’t know
That he has a donkey’s head because of what Puck has done!

Bottom wrongly thinks his friends are just trying to scare him
And make him the butt of joke.
So he decides to just stay where he is
And listen to the trees rustle and the frogs croak.

Bottom starts to sing
Because he thinks his friends are still around.
He wants to show them he’s not scared
So he starts to wander and pick flowers from the ground.

Puck continues watching
As Bottom hums a little song.
Things are about to get more interesting
As Bottom walks along.
In a funny twist of fate, Titania just so happens to be sleeping
In the spot in the forest where Bottom is walking through,
And when Bottom's singing wakes her up,
Guess who is the first creature in her view!

If you guessed the donkey-headed Bottom,
Then you are absolutely right,
And as you remember, there's a potion over her eyes,
Which makes her fall in love with Bottom upon first sight!

From the moment that she wakes,
Titania declares her love.
She asks Bottom to sing some more
Because his voice is sweet like a dove.

Bottom is very unassuming as he says,
"I don't really think you have reason to love me,
But then again reason and love don't often go together —
They're not like crumpets and tea."

After those words
Titania then thinks Bottom is very wise.
She says she'll never let him leave the forest now
Because he truly is a prize.

Then she calls on some of her fairy servants
To wait on Bottom and feed him grapes and figs.
She wants them to dance for him and fan him
And make him a shelter out of twigs.

Bottom introduces himself to the fairies,
And they promise to fulfill his every want and need.
Then Titania orders them to take him to her home in the forest,
As she looks at him with a love in her eyes that is easy to read.

As Titania and her fairies lead Bottom away,
Puck watches and laughs out loud.
Then he flies off to tell Oberon what happened
And hopes it makes him proud.

Act 3, Scene 2

This scene opens with Puck and Oberon,
And Puck is telling Oberon about his latest trick —
How he gave a man a donkey's head
And how Titania saw him and love hit her like a brick.
Oberon is very pleased and says, 
"My plan is working even better than I expected, 
But did you also put the flower's juice over the eyes of the Athenian boy 
So he'd fall in love with the poor girl he rejected?"

Puck tells Oberon that he did complete this task, 
And he found the boy when he was asleep. 
He tells Oberon the girl was sleeping right by him 
So by now the boy is probably awake and his love must be deep.

Oberon is pleased 
Because this is just what he wanted to hear, 
But he tells Puck to be quiet now 
Because there are people coming near.

It seems that Demetri has found Mia – 
They are the two that Oberon hears walking at a fast pace. 
As they come closer, Puck recognizes Mia from before 
But worries when he realizes that he doesn’t know the boy’s face.

Oberon and Puck overhear the two arguing – 
Mia is accusing Demetri of hurting Alexander. 
She says there is no way he would’ve just left her alone, 
But Demetri denies doing anything to him, and says "This is slander!"

The two continue to bicker back and forth, 
And Demetri has to deny accusation after accusation. 
Both of them are getting fed up 
And finally Mia races off in frustration.

Demetri decides it's best at the moment 
To just leave her alone while he rests his eyes. 
Meanwhile, Oberon turns to Puck, 
Who is in for quite a surprise.

Oberon realizes that Puck 
Must have put the love juice on the wrong man, 
And he tells Puck they must fix the situation 
As quickly they he can.

Puck doesn’t think it's that big of a deal, 
But Oberon is extremely concerned 
Because a true love has been ruined 
And Helen's love for Demetri still is unreturned.
Oberon then gives Puck these orders:

"You must search the forest, high and low –
You have to find Helen,
And you must not move slow!

I am going to use the flower juice
On this sleeping boy's eyes to make things right.
When you have brought Helen here, we will wake him
And make sure Helen is the first creature in his sight."

Then Oberon sends Puck away
And Puck flies off as fast as lightning.
In almost no time, he returns –
I must say, his speed is actually a little frightening!

Puck lets Oberon know that Helen is coming near,
And she is being followed by the Athenian guy
That he earlier used the love juice on,
Which has been a big mistake he can't deny.

Puck and Oberon watch as the two approach,
And they hear Alexander begging Helen for her affection.
The noise they're making is definitely going to wake Demetri,
And when he sees Helen, there is sure to be a love connection.

Puck gets excited when he realizes
That when Demetri wakes, trouble won't be far,
Because then he and Alexander will fight over Helen,
Which makes Puck laugh as he exclaims, "Lord, what fools these mortals are!"

Now Puck and Oberon stop talking
So they can watch this scene unfold.
Right now Alexander is telling Helen how his feelings are real,
But she still thinks he's just mocking her and that it's getting old.

She says, "The promises you're making to me
Are promises you already made to Mia, so they can't both be true.
In fact, all of your promises are empty –
They are just lies through and through."

Alexander denies this and argues
That when he made Mia promises, he wasn't thinking clearly,
But Helen says, "It's now that you're not thinking straight,
As you break those promises so insincerely."
Alexander gets so fed up at this point,  
That he shouts, "Demetri loves Mia, not you!"  
But as fate would have it, the noise has woken Demetri up,  
And he contradicts Alexander's words and declares his love for Helen too!

Then he compliments her crystal eyes,  
Her cherry red lips, and her flawless skin.  
Helen is so surprised and caught off guard,  
That at first she doesn’t know what to say or where to begin!

Suddenly she erupts and shouts:  
"I see you are both set  
On teaming up to insult me  
And make me greatly upset!

If either of you were  
At all considerate or kind  
You would just hate my silently,  
Instead of trying to make me lose my mind!

I know you both love Mia,  
And are competing for her love in vein,  
And now you’re just competing  
To see who can cause me to go insane!

No respectable man  
Would ever take any part  
In a game like this that only aims  
To break a poor girl's heart!"

—Now I want to make one thing clear if you’re confused,  
As to why these boys' compliments make Helen want to scream.  
It's simply because Helen has a case  
Of very low self-esteem.

She doesn’t think very much of herself,  
So when someone says something like "You look nice!"  
Because she doesn’t believe she does, she can’t believe the person  
Who says it is serious, and it makes her think twice.

This is why she thinks  
Alexander and Demetri are only teasing and being cruel  
When they tell her how much they love her  
And how they think she's super cool.
Of course the love potion has also confused things
And has made the situation a little extraordinary,
Because if Alexander and Demetri had not been enchanted,
Then Mia would still be the one they'd both want to marry.

So I guess we can understand
Why Helen would be a little bit confused.
It's just her anger over so many compliments
That is harder to overlook or excuse.

But now, let's get back to the story — I think that's only wise —
We're at the point where Helen is fighting off these men like flies—

After Helen's outburst, her anger only grows
As the men continue to fight over her.
Lysander even offers to give Mia up to Demetri
Because his love for Mia is now just a blur.

Of course Demetri denies this offer
And says his love for Mia was only brief.
The men are still arguing when Mia happens to walk in
And when she sees Alexander she feels such relief!

She says, "Thank god I found you Alexander!
It's so hard to see in the dark - I'm lucky I overheard your voice,
But why did you ever leave my side?
That's not very nice, and I hope it wasn't by choice!"

Mia is definitely in for a surprise
As Alexander rudely states, "Love told me to go -
I had to find the true love of my life, Helen.
I really don't like you, and I figured you would just know."

Mia can't believe what Alexander's saying,
And Helen can't believe that Mia finds Alexander's insult shocking.
She still believes the boys are just teasing her,
And now she thinks Mia has joined them in their mocking.

She tells Mia off for joining the boys only to hurt her feelings,
Especially since Mia is supposed to be her best friend.
She says "All women would scold you for acting like this,
But I'm the only one it truly hurts in the end."
Just confess already!
As an insult, you’re the one who sent these guys
To compliment me and pretend they love me,
   Even though I’m someone they despise!

Why on earth would Demetri be so nice to me?
And why would Alexander say he doesn’t love you?
Why would either of them show me any affection?
   Unless you told them to!

I know they don’t love me.
I know the love I feel for Demetri is not returned.
   But instead of hating me for it, you should feel pity for me!
I’ll never be loved like you – it’s a lesson I’ve already learned.”

You keep telling me you have idea what I’m talking about,
   But I know you’re only lying.
Keep up your little game – laugh behind my back,
   And then when I turn around, pretend you feel so bad that you’re crying!”

Now Helen turns to leave,
   But Alexander and Demetri beg her to stay.
   They offer to give their lives for her love
   And to cherish her each and every day.

The men fight back and forth
   Over who loves Helen more,
   And when Mia asks for some explanation
   Both boys just want to show her the door.

   Neither man is willing to give up Helen.
   They say that without her, their lives would be incomplete.
   They insult each other and poor Mia
   With words I don’t even want to repeat!

After Alexander tells Mia that he never wants to see her again,
   Mia becomes truly hurt and heartbroken
   Because she sees that Alexander’s feelings have changed –
   She can tell by the way he is acting and the words he has spoken.

   Mia then turns to Helen and yells,
      “You are a trickster and a worm!
   You deliberately stole Alexander from me,
   And now you have a grip on him that is firm!”
How did you lure him away from me?
I believe you used your height!
You're so tall and I'm so short,
But I could still beat you in a fight!"

Helen denies Mia's accusations
But then asks the boys for their protection.
She believes Mia really will hurt her
And send fists in her direction.

She really hates fighting with Mia though
And really wants to make peace
Because Mia has always been her best friend
Throughout all land of Greece.

So Helen says to Mia:
"We've been friends for so long,
I don't want you to be bitter.
I've always given you advice and I've never done you wrong.

Wait, I take that back! I did betray you,
But I promise it was only one time –
It was when I told Demetri you'd be in the forest tonight,
And I only did that because I was so in love with him – it's practically a crime!

But he was so horribly mean before,
And he repeatedly told me to leave him alone.
I've been so insulted and mistreated tonight –
Now I just want to go back to Athens on my own.

It was a mistake for me to come here
So will you please just let me leave?
My heart can stay behind in this forest with Demetri
While I go home and grieve."

So Mia tells Helen just to go
And asks her what's keeping her here any longer,
But the boys want Helen to stay, and they tell her
They'll keep Mia from hurting her because they're stronger.

Then they are argue over Helen some more
Before they leave to fight over her in a place where the girls can't see,
And then Helen makes her exit because she's still scared
That Mia's still going to hit her or kick her in the knee!
When everyone is gone,
Mia just stands there for a moment in disbelief and shock.
She is out of words and doesn't understand what happened,
So she just begins to walk.

Now that everyone has left,
Oberon and Puck appear.
They have witnessed everything that just happened
And Oberon is not feeling any cheer.

He turns to Puck and scolds him
For the fights and heartaches that have erupted
Since Puck used the love potion on the wrong man's eyes.
He says, "You're always making mistakes, and now love has been corrupted!"

He questions whether Puck did this on purpose –
Just for laughs and fun,
But Puck swears that he didn't
And that this mistake was an honest one.

He says he was only told
To look for a boy with Athenian clothes,
And that's what he did – How was he supposed to know
There were two and that they'd come to blows?

Puck does admit though,
That he's happy with the way things have turned out
Because he does enjoy all the chaos and commotion
And watching other people shout.

Oberon gives Puck a disapproving look,
And then comes up with a plan
To fix this giant mess
In the best way that they can.

He tells Puck:
"We know that the two boys are about to fight,
So make the forest dark and cloudy
So that they lose each other in the night.

Then, when you have found Alexander,
Imitate Demetri's voice – this is required –
Yell insults and throw the voice all over
To make him run around and grow very tired."
Then find Demetri, and using Alexander's voice,
Do the exact same thing.
They won't be able to find each other
And each man will find this so frustrating.

Eventually they'll give up for awhile
Because they'll have become so stressed.
They'll want to take some time
To close their eyes and rest.

This is when you should go to Alexander,
And squeeze this white flower's juice over his eyes.
Its magic will reverse the purple flower's effect on him
And make him think and behave like he used to – all before sunrise.

Make sure the girls
Also sleep in the woods and are nearby.
If you hang on for just a moment
I will tell you why.

When all four of the Athenians wake up
They will think this entire mess was only a hazy dream.
Then they will travel back home together as friends
And maybe even stop to grab a cup of coffee with cream.

Now, while you are busy with this task,
I am going to find my fairy queen.
I will ask her for the emerald again,
And then lift the love spell from her eyes, if she isn't mean.

Then she will no longer be in love
With that ridiculous donkey-headed man.
Everything will soon be normal
When we complete this final plan."

Now both Puck and Oberon go their separate ways
Because they have so much to do.
Puck first finds both the boys
In order to follow the plan through.

After Puck has made sure
That the boys are fast asleep,
He waits for the girls to grow tired,
As they each wander alone like lost little sheep.
Helen is the first to become too tired
To move on,
So she lays down and whispers
"I'll forget my sorrow while I sleep" with a yawn.

Then Puck watches as Mia walks elsewhere,
And listens to her moan, "I've never been so tired and upset,
My legs can't walk anymore! I'll just lay down and sleep here.
Then, in the morning I'll jet!"

Now that all four are asleep,
Puck flies over to Alexander with the white flower.
He squeezes its juice into the sleeping man's eyes
And says "All will be normal within the hour.

You will be delighted to see
The lady you loved before all this magic.
Jill will have her Jack back
And your love story won't be tragic."

—Now with Puck's words, we will close the door
On this act and see what happens in Act Four—

Act 4. Scene 1

This act opens with Titania and Bottom,
Who still has the head of a donkey
Titania is kissing his ears and putting roses in his hair,
And fussing over him with glee.

Bottom is loving the attention and doesn't hesitate
To order Titania's fairy servants around.
He asks them to scratch his head and bring him honey
And play some music with a nice sound.

Bottom still doesn't realize
That his appearance is a ridiculous display,
Which make it even funnier when he thinks out loud
How he needs a barber and that he has a taste for hay!

Now Bottom decides he is tired,
And so he goes to lay in Titania's arms.
As he falls asleep, Titania tells him how much she loves him
And that she'll always keep him safe from harm.
Then Titania also falls asleep,
And Oberon and Puck enter the scene.
As they look on, Oberon tells Puck
About a conversation he had earlier with his queen.

Oberon says:
"Ah, Puck, do you see this sweet sight?
I really do pity her for loving such an awful creature.
Although I do admit, it has brought me some delight.

Earlier I saw Titania in the forest
Picking flowers for this horrible fool.
After I teased her a great deal, she begged me to stop
And I said I would only if she gave me the jewel.

She agreed right away and sent for a fairy
To bring the emerald to my home in Fairyland,
And now that I have the stone,
I will undo the magic I cast over her eyes, as I had planned.

And, please Puck, turn this man’s head back
To the way that it looked before.
Then when he wakes up, he will also think
That what happened tonight was just a dream and nothing more."

Then Oberon squeezes the juice
From the white flower over Titania’s eyes.
It erases the love spell,
And Titania wakes up to a surprise.

The first thing she says
Is that she had an awful dream,
Where she was in love with a donkey,
And Oberon starts to beam.

He points at Bottom
And tells her, “Look over there!”
When she sees what she was in love with,
She says she hates looking at him now and it brings her despair.

Then Puck does a spell
To get rid of Bottom’s donkey head,
And the fairies play some music while Oberon and Titania
Talk about their plans that lie ahead.
Now that the fairy queen and king
Have made up and put their differences aside,
They decide to dance at Theo and Lydia's wedding
And bless the marriage between the groom and his new bride.

But morning is coming now,
And the fairies hear the birds start to sing with joy,
So they fly off, and Titania tells Oberon he can fill her in
On how she ended up with that donkey-headed boy.

Just moments after the fairies have left,
Theo, the duke, Lydia and Edgar enter the woods together.
It is a holiday called May Day and they've come to watch the sunrise
And to take in the beautiful weather.

As they are walking,
Theo spots four Athenians sleeping on the ground,
And Edgar realizes it is his daughter, Mia,
And Helen, Demetri, and Alexander that they've found.

Theo guesses that they probably woke up early
For the May Day celebration,
But he has servants blow horns to wake them up
So that they can provide an explanation.

Once the four young Athenians are up,
Theo asks them what they are doing in the woods at this hour.
They all yawn and stretch, and they're a little bit hazy
Because none of them have gotten to take a morning shower.

Alexander apologizes and admits that he and Mia
Came to the forest in the night to run away and escape the law,
Which greatly upsets Mia's father Edgar,
Who tightens his fists and clenches his jaw.

He yells:
"I have heard enough! Theo, my lord,
I insist that they be punished
Because it is the law they have ignored!

And Demetrius – you should be angry too!
They were trying to defeat us and bring us gloom.
Alexander was going to take Mia from you,
And Mia was taking away my right to choose her groom!"
But Demetri is not angry at all, and he explains:

"My lord Theo, I heard about Mia and Alexander's plan
From the beautiful Helen,
And I'll admit, at the point I was an angry man.

I followed the pair into the forest
And Helen followed me.
I was going to try to stop Mia
And tell her not to flee.

Then by some power –
Or for some reason that I just don't know –
The love I had for Mia
Simply melted away like snow.

Now Helen is the only person
Who I really love and want forever by my side.
If you remember, before my engagement to Mia,
Helen was going to be my bride.

For awhile then I hated her,
And I don't know why – I must've been sick
But now I have come to my senses,
And I will always be true to her because our love is thick."

After hearing Demetri's words,
Theo is touched and sees that Demetri is sincere.
He disagrees with Edgar that Mia and Alexander
Should be punished because now everyone has found cheer.

Now because Theo is the duke,
Edgar really has no choice in the matter at hand,
So even if he isn't happy that Mia will not be marrying Demetri,
He has to learn to accept it and understand.

Theo also invites the two happy couples
To get married alongside himself and Lydia later in the day.
He can see how much they love each other and wants to help them
Get married before anything else can get in their way.

Of course both couples – Mia and Alexander,
And Helen and Demetri – are very excited to say the least.
They agree right away, and then to celebrate,
Theo invites them for a feast.
Then Theo, Lydia and Edgar leave the woods
In order to prepare for the day’s events,
And the two couples try to figure out what happened
In the night and make it into some sense.

They all agree that the night was very hazy
And that it feels like a distant memory.
They wonder if they are even awake now
Because life has turned out so perfectly.

But the couples are supposed to meet up with the duke soon,
So they don’t have much time to talk.
They decide to discuss as the dreams they had
On their way while they walk.

Now that Alexander, Demetri, Helen and Mia
Have left the forest, it’s Bottom’s turn to wake up.
As he opens his eyes, he is very confused
And starts yapping like a pup!

He calls for his friends Peter and Snug,
But of course they are not near.
Then he cries out, “I can’t believe
That they left me alone to sleep out here!

Oh, and what a strange dream I had in this forest!
It really was the weirdest dream ever.
I almost can’t describe it, and I don’t think anyone could
Understand it – even if they are very clever!

Hmm... Well, I think I will tell my dream to Peter
And have him write it into a song.
I will sing it during our play, and I better go practice now
To make sure my performance is strong!”

Act 4. Scene 2

This scene begins with the Athenian men,
Who had planned to put on a play.
They are worried now though because they haven’t seen Bottom,
And they aren’t sure if he is okay.

They have looked at his house,
But he just isn’t there.
Without him, their play can’t go on,
And of this, the men are very aware.
As the men are discussing Bottom, they get news
That the Duke's wedding ceremony is now complete.
They also find out that two other couples also got married,
And now they are all going to eat.

As the man grow more disappointed
That their chance to perform for newlyweds has been destroyed,
Suddenly, out of nowhere, Bottom shows up,
And the men are completely overjoyed!

The men ask him where he's been,
But he says, "I can't tell you right now – we have to go,
Grab your costumes, look over your parts again,
And meet me at the palace – it's almost time for our show!"

—With these words Act Four has ended, but the story's still alive
Now let's see how the whole tale ends in Act Five—

**Act 5, Scene 1**

This act begins with Theo and Lydia
Who are discussing stories they heard
From Alexander, Mia, Demetri and Helen,
And Theo thinks they're pretty absurd.

The two couples told the duke and his new duchess
About the dreams they all had the previous night.
Lydia thinks their dreams may have been real
But Theo doesn't think that she is right.

He tells Lydia:
"These couples just have wild imaginations.
People who are so much in love just lose their senses
And invent these crazy situations."

Lydia points out though, that it is very strange
How all four of their stories are exactly the same.
It makes her think that something more could have happened,
And that the couples' dreams may not just have been dreams, as they claim.

Now Lydia stops talking as the two new couples enter,
And Theo wishes them joy and a love that is always warm.
Then he asks his servant, Phil, about the night's entertainment
And if anyone has prepared a play to perform.
Phil hands Theo a piece of paper with a list of plays,
Which have been prepared and that Theo can choose from to see.
Theo scans the list and after deciding against many of them,
He picks one that he thinks will bring them glee.

The play prepared by Bottom and his workmen friends
Is the one that Theo has chosen to watch.
Phil warns him that he should choose a different one though
Because their play is very far from top-notch.

He says the acting is terrible and that the men have used
The last of their brains to create this awful play.
He believes their performance is a complete waste of time –
Unless Theo will find humor in the jumbled-up lines that they say.

Against Phil’s advice,
Theo insists that this is the play he wants to view.
He says that nothing can be bad
If the heartfelt effort of the actors shines through.

So Phil calls the workmen in to begin their performance,
But unfortunately they do not start off strong.
Peter delivers the introduction,
And because of bad punctuation, he gets the message all wrong.

Instead of saying that the actors do not want to offend anyone,
And that their intention is only to bring their audience delight,
Peter says that they do mean to offend everyone,
And that they’re not here to make anyone happy tonight.

Of course Theo and his friends notice the mistakes
And they comment as the play moves ahead.
I’m sorry to say the other actors aren’t any better than Peter
And that the production is just as bad as Phil said.

One of the workmen is playing a wall –
The kind of wall with a hole in it –
He explains to the audience that this is so
People can talk through him in secret.

After seeing this part, Demetri whispers to Theo,
“This ‘wall’ is the smartest wall I’ve ever heard speak!”
Then they watch as the workmen continue
To give a performance that is very... unique.
The lion, played by Snug, enters  
And lets the ladies know that he – the lion – isn’t real,  
So they should try not to be afraid when he roars,  
And they shouldn’t worry that he’ll eat them for a meal.

Then a man holding a lantern comes in  
And proclaims that he is the moon.  
The play is so ridiculous  
That the audience is starting to hope it’ll be over soon.

Theo, Lydia and their friends are very kind though  
And they applaud the “moon’s” shine and the “lion’s” roar.  
Then they watch and make jokes among themselves  
As the play goes on for a little while more.

Finally, when it ends, Bottom asks Theo  
If he’d like to hear the epilogue that has been prepared,  
And Theo thanks him for offering but says the play was so complete,  
That a speech to end it doesn’t really need to be shared.

So rather than reciting a speech for the audience  
The actors all decide to dance for them instead,  
And after they’re done, Theo declares that it’s midnight  
And time for everyone to go to bed.

He thanks the workmen for their performance –  
Even though it was a foolish one,  
Then he announces that they will celebrate their happy new marriages  
Over the next two weeks, but for tonight they are done.

So everyone says their goodbyes,  
And as soon as the world is quiet and lost in dreams,  
The fairies enter the Duke’s palace,  
But tonight they won’t be causing chaos and screams.

Oberon and Titania simply wish to bless  
Theo and Lydia by using their fairy grace.  
They want to ensure that the couple has a happy future together,  
No matter what problems the future may bring them to face.

So with their fairy servants and followers,  
Titania and Oberon join hands for a dance and song  
That wishes all of the new couples well  
With lives that are full and long.
They sing their hopes that the couples' love
Is never caught by a thorn
And that their children are all healthy
And beautiful when they are born.

Then when they are done singing,
Oberon provides the fairies with enchanted dew
That they are to use to in the palace
To bless every room through and through.

After the fairies fly off to complete this task,
King Oberon is content and he is last seen
Leaving the palace to go home to the forest,
Happily with Titania, his fairy queen.

Now I may be wrong,
But I think that you can see,
We have come to a very happy ending –
As all endings should always be.

We have seen a love potion
Momentarily meddle with some lives,
But now Alexander and Demetri
Are happy with their new wives.

I just hope Edgar will learn
To accept his new son-in-law soon
Because his daughter loves him dearly –
He really makes her swoon.

At least Theo is finally married
With Lydia as his bride,
And I'm happy that Oberon and Titania
Have made up and put their differences aside.

Lastly, it was nice to see
Those Athenian workmen perform their play.
Even though it was silly, they didn't know it
And it really made their day.

Now I will only say that I have enjoyed my time with you,
From the beginning through the conclusion,
And I truly hope you enjoyed it all too –
The characters, the magic, and the confusion.
But if you did not – then in keeping with a theme,
I will tell you this entire story was *nothing but a dream.*
Character List

Theo — Duke of Athens; Lydia’s fiancée

Lydia — Theo’s fiancée

Edgar — Mia’s father

Phil — Theo’s servant

Mia — Athenian girl; in love with Alexander

Alexander — Athenian boy; in love with Mia

Helen — Athenian girl; in love with Demetri, who does not love her back

Demetri — Athenian boy; in love with Mia

Peter — Athenian workman – carpenter; bad actor

Bottom — Athenian workman – weaver; bad actor

Titania — Fairy Queen

Oberon — Fairy King

Puck — Oberon’s fairy servant