

TEXT IN ENGLISH

Henry Purcell

THE FAIRY QUEEN

Drottningholms Slottsteater

2023

ACT I

OBERON

Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania.

TITANIA

What, jealous Oberon?

I have forsworn thy 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 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 are you here?

OBERON

How canst thou thus for shame, Titania,
Reflect on my past scapes? When well thou
know'st,
I have pursu'd you to this very place,
Where you retir'd to wanton with our child.

TITANIA

The guardian was a vot'ress of my order,
And for that sake I breed the pretty child,
And for that sake, I will not part with it.
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 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.
And thorough this distemperature we see
The seasons alter: 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

I do but beg our little changeling child
To be my henchman.

TITANIA

Set your heart at rest.

The fairyland buys not the child of me.
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 child and I will go with thee.

TITANIA

Not for thy fairy kingdom. – Fairies, away.
We shall chide downright if I longer stay.

THESEUS

What say you, Hermia? Be advised, fair maid.
Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

HERMIA

So is Lysander.

THESEUS

In himself he is;
But in this kind, wanting your fathers voice,

The other must be held the worthier.

HERMIA

I would my father looked but with my eyes.

THESEUS

Rather your eyes must with my judgement
look.

HERMIA

I know not by what power I am made bold,
But I beseech your grace that I may know
The worst that may befall me in this case
If I refuse to wed Demetrius

THESEUS

Either to die the death, or to abjure
For ever the society of men.

HERMIA

So will I grow, so live, so die, so die.

DEMETRIUS

Relent, sweet Hermia; and Lysander, yield
Thy crazed title to my certain right.

LYSANDER

You have her father's love, Demetrius;
Let me have Hermia's. Do you marry him.

THESEUS

Scornful Lysander, true, he hath my love;
And what is mine my love shall render him.

BOTTOM

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 couple on
the wedding day at night.

THESEUS

Say what the play treats on.

BOTTOM

Our play is *The Most Lamentable Comedy and*

Most Cruel Death of Pyramus and Thisbe. A very good piece of work. I assure you, and a merry.

THESEUS

I have some private schooling for your group,
And come, Demetrius. You shall go with me.

DEMETRIUS

With duty and desire, I follow you.

THESEUS

For you, fair daughter, look you arm yourself
To fit your fancies to your fathers will.

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 eye.

HERMIA

God speed, fair Helena. Whither away?

HELENA

Call you me fair? That 'fair' unsay.

O, teach me how you look, and with what art
You sway the motion on Demetrius' heart.

HERMIA

I frown upon him, yet he loves me still.

HELENA

O that your frowns would teach my smiles such
skills!

HERMIA

I give him curses, yet he gives me love.

HELENA

O that my prayers could such affection move!

HERMIA

His folly, Helen, 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.

LYSANDER

Helen, to you our minds we will unfold.
This very night, when Phoebe doth behold
Her silver visage in the wat'ry glass,
Decking with liquid pearls the bladed grass –
A time that lovers' flights doth still conceal –
Through Athens' gates have we devised to steal.

HERMIA

Farewell, sweet playfellow. Pray thou for us,
And good luck grant thee thy Demetrius.

HELENA

How happy some o'er other some can be!

I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight.
Then to the wood will he this very night
Pursue her, and for this intelligence
If I have thanks it is a dear expense.

ACT II

PUCK

The King doth keep his revels here tonight,
Take heed, Puck, the Queen comes not within
his sight.

The jealous Oberon would have the child,
One of his train, to trace the forest wild.
But she, perforce, withholds the lovely thing.
Crowns it with flowers, and for it dance and
sing.

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.

OBERON

My gentle puck. Thou rememb'rest –
Once marked I the place 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 a man or woman madly dote
Upon the next live creature that it sees.
Fetch me this herb, go, and be here again,
Ere the leviathan can swim a league.

PUCK

I'll put a girdle round about the earth
In forty minutes.

OBERON

Having once this flower

I'll watch Titania when she is asleep,
And drop the liquor of it in her eyes.
The next live thing she waking looks upon –
Be it on lion, bear, or wolf, or bull,
The meddling monkey, or the busy ape –
She shall pursue it with the soul of love.
And ere I take this charm from off her sight –
As I can take it with another herb –
I'll make her render up her page to me.

DEMETRIUS

I love thee not, therefore pursue me not.
Where is Lysander, and fair Hermia?

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 cannot love you?

HELENA

And even for that do I love you the more.

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

I'll run from thee, and hide me in the brakes,
And leave thee to the mercy of wild beasts.

HELENA

I'll follow thee, and make a heaven of hell,
To die upon the hand I love so well.

OBERON

I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,

Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,

PUCK

There sleeps Titania sometime of the night.

OBERON

And with the juice of this I'll streak her eyes
And make her full of hateful fantasies.

Take you 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. You shall know the man,
By the Athenian garment he has on.
And look you meet me ere the first cock crow.

PUCK

Fear not, my lord. Your servant shall do so.

PUCK

Though the forest I have gone,
But Athenian find I none.

On whose eyes I might approve
This flower's force in stirring love.
Night, and silence. Who is here?
Weeds of Athens he doth wear.
This is he my master said,
Despised the Athenian maid –
And here the maiden, sleeping sound
On the dank and dirty ground.

PUCK

When thou wak'st, let love forbid
Sleep his seat on thy eyelid.
So, awake when I am gone.
For I must now to Oberon.

ACT III

BOTTOM

Are we all met? Pat, pat; and here's a
marvellous convenient place for our rehearsal.
This green plot shall be our stage, this

hawthorn brake our tiring-house, and we will do it in action as we will do it before the Duke.

PUCK

What hempen homespuns have we swagg'ring here

So near the cradle of the Fair Queen?

What, a play toward? I'll be an auditor –
An actor, too, perhaps, if I see cause.

BOTTOM

Come every mother's son and rehearse your parts. I begin.

BOTTOM

(in a strange voice)

“Gentles ... perchance you wonder at this show,
But wonder on, till truth make all things plain.
This man is Pyramus, if you would know ...”

PUCK

I'll follow you, I'll lead you about a round.

Through bog, through bush, through brake,
through briar.

Sometime a horse I'll be, sometimes a hound;
A hog, a headless bear, sometimes a fire.

And neigh, and grunt, and bark, and roar, and
burn,

Like horse, hog, hound, bear, fire, at every
turn.

BOTTOM

Why do they run away? This is a knavery of
them to make me afeard. I see their knavery.
This is to make an ass of me, to fright me, if
they could; but I will not stir from this place,
do what they can. I will walk up and down here,
and I will sing, that they shall hear I am not
afraid.

TITANIA

What angel wakes me from my flowr'y bed?

I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again.

Mine ear is much enamoured with thy note;

So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape;
And thy fair virtue's force perforce doth move
me
On the first view to say, to swear, I love thee.

BOTTOM

Methinks, mistress, you should have little
reason for that. And yet to say the truth, reason
and love, keep little company together
nowadays – the more pity that some honest
neighbours will not make them friends. Nay, I
can glee upon occasion.

TITANIA

Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.

BOTTOM

Not so, neither; but if I had wit enough to get
out of this wood, I have enough to serve my
own turn.

TITANIA

Out of this wood do not desire to go.

Here you shall stay whether you will or no.

TITANIA

Be kind and courteous to this gentleman.
Hop in his walks, and gambol in his eyes.
Feed him with apricots, and dewberries,
With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries.
The moon, methinks, looks with a wat'ry eye,
And when she weeps, weeps every little flower,
Lamenting some enforced chastity.
Come, sit thee down upon this flow'ry bed,
While I thy amiable cheeks do coy,
And stick musk-roses in thy sleek smooth head,
And kiss thy fair large ears, my gentle joy.
What, wilt thou hear some music, my sweet
love?

BOTTOM

I have a reasonably good ear in music. Let's
have the tongs and the bones.

TITANIA

Now say, sweet love, what thou desir'st to eat?

BOTTOM

Truly, a peck of provender. I could munch
some good dry oats. Methinks I have a great
desire to a bottle of hay. Good hay, sweet hay,
hath no fellow.

TITANIA

I'll lead thee to a bank strew'd o'er with violets,
We'll sport away the remnant of the night,
And all the world shall envy our delight.

INTERVAL

ACT IV

PUCK

This is the woman.

OBERON

But not that the man.

What hast thou done? Thou hast mistaken
quite,
And laid the love juice on some true lover's
sight.

About the wood, go swifter than the wind.
You shall the poor despairing Helen find.
By some illusion see thou bring her here.
I'll charm his eyes. And when the damsel's
near,
We'll wake Demetrius.

PUCK

I go, I go. Look how I go,
Swift as an arrow from a fairy's bow.

PUCK

Captain of our fairy band,
Helena is here at hand,
And the youth mistook by me,
Pleading for a lover's fee.
Shall we their fond pageant see?
Lord, what fools these mortals be!

OBERON

Stand aside. The noise you make
Will cause Demetrius to awake.

PUCK

Then will two at once woo one.
That must needs be sport alone;
And those things do best please me
That befall prepost'rously.

OBERON

While I in this affair do thee employ,
I'll to my queen, and rouse her precious toy.
Then from the charm I will her eye release,
Send home that clown, and all shall be at
peace.

PUCK

Up and down, up and down,
I will lead them up and down.
I am feared in field and town.

Goblin, lead them up and down.
Here comes one.

LYSANDER

Where art thou, proud Demetrius? Speak thou
now.

PUCK

Here, villain, drawn and ready. Where are you?

LYSANDER

I will be with you straight.

PUCK

Follow me then,
To plainer ground.

LYSANDER

I follow fast, but faster he did fly,
That fallen am I in dark uneven way,
And here will rest me.

HELENA

O weary night, O long and tedious night,
Abate thy hours; shine comforts from the east
That I may back to Athens by daylight
From these that my poor company detest;
And sleep, that sometimes shuts up sorrow's
eye,
Steal me a while from my own company.

PUCK

Yet but three? Come one more,
Two of both kinds make up four.

HERMIA

Never so weary, never so in woe,
Bedabbled with the dew, and torn with briers.
I can no further crawl, no further go.
My legs can keep no pace with my desires.
Here I will rest the remnant of the night.
Heavens shield Lysander, if they mean a fray.

PUCK

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

OBERON

Now my Titania, wake you, my sweet queen.

TITANIA

My Oberon! What visions have I seen!
Methought I was enamoured of an ass.

OBERON

There lies your love.

TITANIA

How came these things to pass?
O, how mine eyes do loathe his visage now!

AKT V

THESEUS

Good morrow, friends. Saint Valentine is past.
Begin the wood-birds to couple now?

LYSANDER

Pardon, my lord.

THESEUS

I pray you all stand up.
Fair lovers, you are fortunately met.
Of this discourse we more will hear anon. –
These couples shall eternally be knit. –
And now we shall enjoy the wedding play!

BOTTOM

Gentles, perchance you wonder at this show,
But wonder on, till truth make all things plain.
This man is Pyramus, if you would know;
This beauteous lady Thisbe is, certain.
This man with lime and roughcast, doth
present

Wall, that vile Wall which did these lover
sunder;
And through Wall's chink, poor souls, they are
content
To whisper; at the which no man wonder.
This man with lantern, dog, and bush of thorn,
Presenteth Moonshine. For if you will know,
By moonshine did these lovers think no scorn
To meet at Ninu's tomb, there, there to woo.
This grizzly beast, which 'Lion' hight by name,
The trusty Thisbe coming first by night
Did scare away, or rather did affright;
And as she fled, her mantle she did fall,
Which Lion vile with bloody mouth did stain.
Anon comes Pyramus, sweet youth and tall,
And finds his trusty Thisbe's mantle slain;
Whereat with blade – with bloody, blameful,
blade –
He bravely broached his boiling bloody breast;
And Thisbe, tarrying in mulberry shade,
His dagger drew and died. For all the rest,

Let Lion, Moonshine, Wall, and lovers twain
At large discourse, while here they do remain.

PUCK

If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended,
That you have but slumber'd here,
While these visions did appear.
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream,
Gentles, do not reprehend:
If you pardon, we will mend.
And, as I'm an honest Puck,
If we have unearned luck
Now to 'scape the serpent's tongue,
We will make amends ere long:
Else the Puck a liar call.
So, good night unto you all.
Give me your hands, if we be friends,
And I shall restore amends.

THE END