

A Midsummer Night's Dream

M/F: PUCK Act II, Scene 1

Thou speakest 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 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 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.

F: HELENA Act III, Scene 2

O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent

To set against me for your merriment:

If you were civil and knew courtesy,

You would not do me thus much injury.

Can you not hate me, as I know you do,

But you must join in souls to mock me too?

If you were men, as men you are in show,

You would not use a gentle lady so;

To vow, and swear, and superpraise my parts,

When I am sure you hate me with your hearts.

You both are rivals, and love Hermia;

And now both rivals, to mock Helena:

A trim exploit, a manly enterprise,

To conjure tears up in a poor maid's eyes

With your derision! none of noble sort

Would so offend a virgin, and extort

A poor soul's patience, all to make you sport.

M: BOTTOM Act IV, Scene 1

[Awaking] When my cue comes, call me,

and I will answer: my next is, 'Most fair Pyramus.'

Heigh-ho! Peter Quince! Flute, the bellows-mender!

Snout, the tinker! Starveling!

God's my life, stolen hence, and left me asleep!

I have had a most rare vision.

I have had a dream, past the wit of man to say what dream it was:

man is but an ass, if he go about to expound this dream.

Methought I was--there is no man can tell what.

Methought I was,--and methought I had,--

but man is but a patched fool, if he will offer to say what methought I had.

The eye of man hath not heard, the ear of man hath not seen,

man's hand is not able to taste, his tongue to conceive,

nor his heart to report, what my dream was.

I will get Peter Quince to write a ballad of this dream:

it shall be called Bottom's Dream, because it hath no bottom;

and I will sing it in the latter end of a play, before the duke:

peradventure, to make it the more gracious, I shall sing it at her death.

F: HELENA Act I, Scene 1

How happy some o'er other some can be!

Through Athens I am thought as fair as she.

But what of that? Demetrius thinks not so;

He will not know what all but he do know.

And as he errs, doting on Hermia's eyes,

So I, admiring of his qualities.

Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind,

And therefore is winged Cupid painted blind.

Nor hath Love's mind of any judgment taste;

For ere Demetrius looked on Hermia's eyne,

He hailed down oaths that he was only mine;

And when this hail some heat from Hermia felt,

So he dissolved, and show'rs of oaths did melt.

I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight.

Then to the wood will he to-morrow night

Pursue her; and for this intelligence

If I have thanks, it is a dear expense.

But herein mean I to enrich my pain,

To have his sight thither and back again.

Henry IV, Part I

M: PRINCE HENRY Act I, Scene 2

[Yet] herein will I imitate the sun,
Who doth permit the base contagious clouds
To smother up his beauty from the world,
That, when he please again to be himself,
Being wanted, he may be more wonder'd at,
By breaking through the foul and ugly mists
Of vapours that did seem to strangle him.
If all the year were playing holidays,
To sport would be as tedious as to work;
But when they seldom come, they wish'd for come,
And nothing pleaseth but rare accidents.
So, when this loose behavior I throw off
And pay the debt I never promised,
By how much better than my word I am,
By so much shall I falsify men's hopes;
And like bright metal on a sullen ground,
My reformation, glittering o'er my fault,
Shall show more goodly and attract more eyes
Than that which hath no foil to set it off.
I'll so offend, to make offence a skill;
Redeeming time when men think least I will.

Richard III

F: LADY ANNE Act I, Scene 2

Foul devil, for God's sake, hence, and trouble us not;
For thou hast made the happy earth thy hell,
Fill'd it with cursing cries and deep exclams.
If thou delight to view thy heinous deeds,
Behold this pattern of thy butcheries.
O, gentlemen, see, see! dead Henry's wounds
Open their congeal'd mouths and bleed afresh!
Blush, Blush, thou lump of foul deformity;
For 'tis thy presence that exhales this blood
From cold and empty veins, where no blood dwells;
Thy deed, inhuman and unnatural,
Provokes this deluge most unnatural.
O God, which this blood madest, revenge his death!
O earth, which this blood drink'st revenge his death!
Either heaven with lightning strike the murderer dead,
Or earth, gape open wide and eat him quick,
As thou dost swallow up this good king's blood
Which his hell-govern'd arm hath butchered!

Measure for Measure

M: ANGELO Act II, Scene 4

Who will believe thee, Isabel?
My unsoil'd name, the austereness of my life,
My vouch against you, and my place i' the state,
Will so your accusation outweigh,
That you shall stifle in your own report
And smell of calumny. I have begun,
And now I give my sensual race the rein:
Fit thy consent to my sharp appetite;
Lay by all nicety and prolixious blushes,
That banish what they sue for; redeem thy brother
By yielding up thy body to my will;
Or else he must not only die the death,
But thy unkindness shall his death draw out
To lingering sufferance. Answer me to-morrow,
Or, by the affection that now guides me most,
I'll prove a tyrant to him. As for you,
Say what you can, my false o'erweighs your true.

F: ISABELLA Act II, Scene 4

To whom should I complain? Did I tell this,
Who would believe me? O perilous mouths,
That bear in them one and the self-same tongue,
Either of condemnation or approval;
Bidding the law make court'sy to their will:
Hooking both right and wrong to the appetite,
To follow as it draws! I'll to my brother:
Though he hath fallen by prompture of the blood,
Yet hath he in him such a mind of honour.
That, had he twenty heads to tender down
On twenty bloody blocks, he'd yield them up,
Before his sister should her body stoop
To such abhor'd pollution.
Then, Isabel, live chaste, and, brother, die:
More than our brother is our chastity.
I'll tell him yet of Angelo's request,
And fit his mind to death, for his soul's rest.