

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

A MIDSUMMER  
NIGHT'S DREAM

Bird Publisher, 2012

## About this eBook

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare, 1596

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## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

**THESEUS**, Duke of Athens

**EGEUS**, father to Hermia

**LYSANDER**, in love with Hermia

**DEMETRIUS**, in love with Hermia

**PHILOSTRATE**, Master of the Revels to Theseus

**QUINCE**, a carpenter

**SNUG**, a joiner

**BOTTOM**, a weaver

**FLUTE**, a bellows-mender

**SNOUT**, a tinker

**STARVELING**, a tailor

**HIPPOLYTA**, Queen of the Amazons, betrothed to Theseus

**HERMIA**, daughter to Egeus, in love with Lysander

**HELENA**, in love with Demetrius

**OBERON**, King of the Fairies

**TITANIA**, Queen of the Fairies

**PUCK**, or **ROBIN GOODFELLOW**

**PEASEBLOSSOM**, fairy

**COBWEB**, fairy

**MOTH**, fairy

**MUSTARDSEED**, fairy

**PROLOGUE**, **PYRAMUS**, **THISBY**, **WALL**, **MOONSHINE**, **LION** are presented by:

**QUINCE**, **BOTTOM**, **FLUTE**, **SNOUT**, **STARVELING**, **AND SNUG**

Other Fairies attending their King and Queen

Attendants on Theseus and Hippolyta

**SCENE:**  
*Athens and a wood near it*

## ACT I.

### SCENE I.

*Athens. The palace of THESEUS*

*Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, Philostrate, and Attendants*

**THESEUS.** Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour  
Draws on apace; four happy days bring in  
Another moon; but, O, methinks, how slow  
This old moon wanes! She lingers my desires,  
Like to a step-dame or a dowager,  
Long withering out a young man's revenue.

**HIPPOLYTA.** Four days will quickly steep themselves in night;  
Four nights will quickly dream away the time;  
And then the moon, like to a silver bow  
New-bent in heaven, shall behold the night  
Of our solemnities.

**THESEUS.** Go, Philostrate,  
Stir up the Athenian youth to merriments;  
Awake the pert and nimble spirit of mirth;  
Turn melancholy forth to funerals;  
The pale companion is not for our pomp.

*Exit Philostrate*

Hippolyta, I woo'd thee with my sword,  
And won thy love doing thee injuries;  
But I will wed thee in another key,  
With pomp, with triumph, and with revelling.

*Enter Egeus, and his daughter Hermia, Lysander, and Demetrius*

**EGEUS.** Happy be Theseus, our renowned Duke!

**THESEUS.** Thanks, good Egeus; what's the news with thee?

**EGEUS.** Full of vexation come I, with complaint  
 Against my child, my daughter Hermia.  
 Stand forth, Demetrius. My noble lord,  
 This man hath my consent to marry her.  
 Stand forth, Lysander. And, my gracious Duke,  
 This man hath bewitch'd the bosom of my child.  
 Thou, thou, Lysander, thou hast given her rhymes,  
 And interchang'd love-tokens with my child;  
 Thou hast by moonlight at her window sung,  
 With feigning voice, verses of feigning love,  
 And stol'n the impression of her fantasy  
 With bracelets of thy hair, rings, gawds, conceits,  
 Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweetmeats- messengers  
 Of strong prevailment in unhardened youth;  
 With cunning hast thou filch'd my daughter's heart;  
 Turn'd her obedience, which is due to me,  
 To stubborn harshness. And, my gracious Duke,  
 Be it so she will not here before your Grace  
 Consent to marry with Demetrius,  
 I beg the ancient privilege of Athens:  
 As she is mine I may dispose of her;  
 Which shall be either to this gentleman  
 Or to her death, according to our law  
 Immediately provided in that case.

**THESEUS.** What say you, Hermia? Be advis'd, fair maid.

To you your father should be as a god;  
 One that compos'd your beauties; yea, and one  
 To whom you are but as a form in wax,  
 By him imprinted, and within his power  
 To leave the figure, or disfigure it.  
 Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.