

A Midsummer night's dream



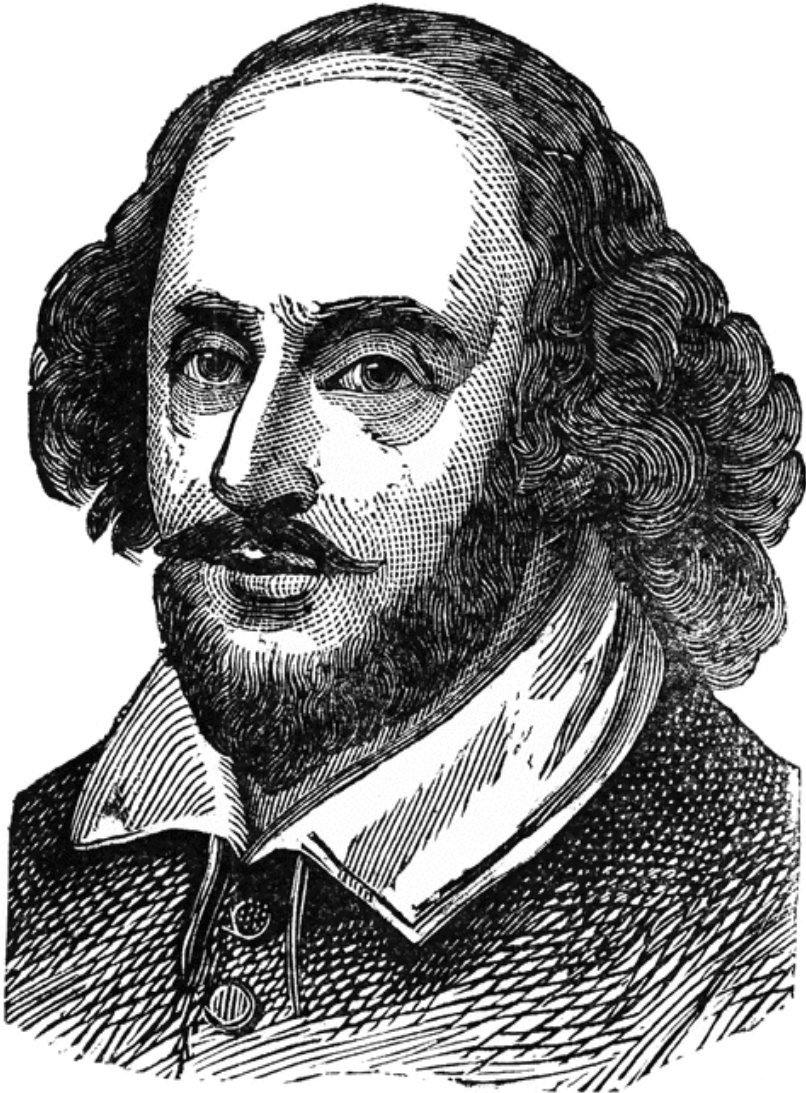
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Shakespeare

Born in England in 1564, William Shakespeare was a playwright, poet, and possibly the most famous writer, ever. At least 38 plays, 150 sonnets, and two narrative poems have been attributed to him, and his plays have been translated into more than 50 languages. Today he continues to be celebrated for his psychologically complex characters and timeless insights into the human condition.

Plot Overview

The plot revolves around Theseus, the Duke of Athens, as he prepares for his marriage to Hippolyta, the Queen of the Amazons, with a four-day festival. Egeus, an Athenian nobleman, comes to the court with his daughter, Hermia, and two young men, Demetrius and Lysander. Egeus wants his daughter to marry Demetrius, but Hermia loves Lysander and refuses to comply. Egeus threatens her with execution or sending her to a convent if she doesn't obey.



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Hermia and Lysander plan to escape Athens and marry at Lysander's aunt's house. They confide in their friend Helena, who was once engaged to Demetrius and still loves him. Hoping to regain Demetrius's love, Helena tells him about Hermia and Lysander's plan. Demetrius follows them into the woods, and Helena follows Demetrius.

In the woods, there are two groups of characters: a band of fairies led by King Oberon and Queen Titania, and a group of Athenian craftsmen rehearsing a play for the duke's wedding. Oberon and Titania argue over a young Indian boy. Oberon uses a magical flower to make Titania fall in love with a strange creature. The flower also affects Lysander, who falls in love with Helena instead of Hermia.

Various misunderstandings and conflicts occur in the woods. Eventually, things are resolved, and everyone returns to Athens. Lysander marries Hermia, and Demetrius marries Helena. The Athenian craftsmen perform a humorous play, and the fairies bless the couples before the play ends.

Character List

Puck

Puck, also known as Robin Good fellow, is a playful fairy and Oberon's jester. He loves playing tricks on people. Although the play follows different groups of characters, Puck is like the main character. His mischievous actions lead to many problems in the story: he mistakenly uses the love potion on Lysander instead of Demetrius, creating chaos among the young lovers, and he turns Bottom's head into that of a donkey.

Oberon

Oberon, the fairy king, is in conflict with his wife, Titania, because she won't give up a young Indian prince he wants to make a knight. Oberon seeks revenge by sending Puck to get a love-potion flower, which causes much of the play's confusion and comedy.

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Titania

Titania, the lovely fairy queen, resists her husband Oberon's attempts to make a young Indian prince a knight. Under the influence of a love potion, she briefly falls in love with Nick Bottom, who has been turned into a donkey by Puck. This situation is the play's main example of contrasting elements.

Lysander

Lysander, a young man from Athens, loves Hermia. Their relationship shows how love can be complicated: they can't marry because Hermia's father, Egeus, wants her to marry Demetrius instead. When they escape into the forest, Lysander is accidentally enchanted and falls in love with Helena instead.

Demetrius

Demetrius, a young man from Athens, starts off in love with Hermia but ends up in love with Helena. His stubborn pursuit of Hermia disrupts the balance of love

among the four young Athenians, preventing a harmonious pairing of couples.

Hermia

Hermia, Egeus's daughter, is in love with Lysander and friends with Helena. Due to Oberon's love potion, both Lysander and Demetrius fall in love with Helena, leaving Hermia upset and suspicious because of her short height. In the end, Puck uses the potion to fix things, and Lysander's love for Hermia is restored.

Helena

Helena, a young woman from Athens, loves Demetrius. They were once engaged, but Demetrius left Helena for her friend Hermia. Helena doubts her appearance and believes Demetrius and Lysander are teasing her when the fairies' magic makes them fall in love with her.

Egeus

Egeus, Hermia's father, complains to Theseus because

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Hermia loves Lysander instead of Demetrius, whom Egeus has chosen for her. Egeus insists Hermia obey him or face severe Athenian law, contrasting with the playful, dreamlike world of the forest.

Theseus

The heroic duke of Athens engaged to Hippolyta. Theseus represents power and order throughout the play. He appears only at the beginning and end of the story, removed from the dreamlike events of the forest.

Hippolyta

The legendary queen of the Amazons, engaged to Theseus. Like Theseus, she symbolizes order.

Nick Bottom

Nick Bottom, a weaver, is cast as Pyramus in the craftsmen's play for Theseus's wedding. Bottom is very confident and offers a lot of advice, but he often makes foolish mistakes and misuses words. He is unfazed by the fairy queen Titania's love for him and doesn't realize

Puck has given him the head of a donkey, showing his extreme foolishness and arrogance.

Peter Quince

Peter Quince, a carpenter, is the leader of the craftsmen's attempt to put on a play for Theseus's wedding. However, the overly confident Bottom often overshadows him. During the play, Quince takes on the role of the Prologue.

Francis Flute

Francis Flute, a bellows-mender, is selected to play Thisbe in the craftsmen's play for Theseus's wedding. Although he is a bearded man, he must play a young girl in love, so he decides to use a high-pitched, squeaky voice for his lines.

Robin Starveling

Robin Starveling, a tailor, is chosen to play Thisbe's mother in the craftsmen's play for Theseus's wedding celebration. However, he ends up playing the role of Moonshine instead.

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Tom Snout

Tom Snout, a tinker, is selected to play Pyramus's father in the craftsmen's play for Theseus's wedding celebration. However, he ends up playing the part of the Wall, which separates the two lovers.

Snug

Snug, a joiner is chosen to play the lion in the craftsmen's play for Theseus's wedding celebration. He is concerned that his roaring might scare the ladies in the audience.

Philostrate

Philostrate is Theseus's Master of the Revels, in charge of organizing entertainment for the duke's wedding celebration.

Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Mote, and Mustardseed

Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Mote, and Mustardseed are fairies commanded by Titania to care for Bottom after she falls in love with him.

Chapter 1

At his palace, Theseus, duke of Athens, and Hippolyta, his fiancée, discuss their wedding, to be held in four days, under the new moon. Impatient for the event and in a celebratory mood, Theseus orders Philostrate, his Master of the Revels, to “stir up the Athenian youth to merriments” and devise entertainments with which the couple might pass the time until their wedding.

Philostrate takes his leave, and Theseus promises Hippolyta that though he wooed her with his sword (Hippolyta, queen of the Amazons, presumably met Theseus in combat), he will wed her “with pomp, with triumph, and with revelling”—with a grand celebration to begin at once and last until the wedding.

Egeus, a citizen of Athens, strides into the room, followed by his daughter Hermia and the Athenian youths Lysander and Demetrius.

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Egeus has come to see Theseus with a complaint against his daughter: although Egeus has promised her in marriage to Demetrius, who loves her, Lysander has won Hermia's heart, and Hermia refuses to obey her father and marry Demetrius. Egeus demands that the law punish Hermia if she fails to comply with his demands.

Theseus speaks to Hermia sharply, telling her to expect to be sent to a nunnery or put to death. Lysander interrupts, accusing Demetrius of being fickle in love, saying that he was once engaged to Hermia's friend Helena but abandoned her after he met Hermia. Theseus admits that he has heard this story, and he takes Egeus and Demetrius aside to discuss it. Before they go, he orders Hermia to take the time remaining before his marriage to Hippolyta to make up her mind. Theseus, Hippolyta, Egeus, and Demetrius depart, leaving Hermia alone with Lysander. Hermia and Lysander discuss the trials that must be faced by those who are in love: "The course of

true love never did run smooth,” Lysander says.

He proposes a plan: he has an aunt, wealthy and childless, who lives seven leagues from Athens and who dotes on Lysander like a son. At her house, Hermia and Lysander can be married—and, because the manor is outside of Athens, they would be free from Athenian law. Hermia is overjoyed, and they agree to travel to the house the following night.

Helena, Hermia’s friend whom Demetrius jilted, enters the room, lovesick and deeply melancholy because Demetrius no longer loves her. Hermia and Lysander confide their plan to her and wish her luck with Demetrius. They depart to prepare for the following night’s journey. Helena remarks to herself that she envies them their happiness. She thinks up a plan: if she tells Demetrius of planning, he will be bound to follow them to the woods to try to stop them; if she then follows him into the woods, she might have a chance to win back his love.

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Questions:

Open- Ended Questions:

1. What does Theseus promise to wed Hippolyta with?
2. Who is Hermia promised to in marriage by her father, Egeus?
3. How does Theseus suggest Hermia should be punished if she refuses to marry Demetrius?
4. Where does Lysander propose he and Hermia get married?
5. Why is Helena lovesick and melancholy?

Comment on the quotations in short;

1. «The course of true love never did run smooth.» - Lysander
2. «With pomp, with triumph, and with reveling.» - Theseus
- 3.«Lovesick and deeply melancholy because Demetrius no longer loves her.» - Describing Helena.

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Complete the following Sentences:

1. Theseus is eager to celebrate his wedding to Hippolyta, which will take place in.....
2. Egeus demands that the law punish his daughter Hermia for
3. Helena plans to follow Demetrius into the woods in order to

Discuss

1. How does the relationship between Hermia and Lysander highlight the struggles of true love in the play?
2. What are the potential consequences of Helena's decision to follow Demetrius into the woods?
3. How does the character of Theseus balance his roles as a ruler and a lover in the opening chapter of the play?