

# A Midsummer Day's Awakening

By: Xavier Heipp

Dedicated to the professors, the friends,  
and the family who gave me a reason to  
smile

### Author's Note:

- I've always loved telling stories and giving people a reason to smile through those stories. This love led to the development of *A Midsummer Day's Awakening*, a passion project and sequel to one of my favorite plays: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. I hope you enjoy the work and have fun with it!
- The roles are not intended with a certain gender or race in mind. Feel free to change a character to best represent the image you want to create. If you want to change a character's gender, feel free to change their pronouns in the original to match the new version. Most names can be kept as they are, but changing the first names of a character is okay as long as it contains the same number of syllables as the original and the last name is kept the same (Nick Bottom could be changed to Ann Bottom, but could not be Clara Bottom or Ann Top).
- Although the original is set in Ancient Greece, directly after the events of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, you can change the time and setting to best fit your vision.
- If you have any questions regarding if a change you would like to make is acceptable or not, reach out to me at [heippxavier3915@gmail.com](mailto:heippxavier3915@gmail.com).

## Characters:

Theseus: Duke of Athens

Hippolyta: Theseus's wife

Philostrate: Master of the revels to Theseus

Peter Quince: A carpenter

Nick Bottom: A weaver

Francis Flute: A bellows-mender

Tom Snout: A tinker

Robin Starveling: A tailor

Snug: A joiner

Oberon: King of the fairies

Titania: Queen of the fairies

Puck (Robin Goodfellow): Mischievous servant of Oberon

Peas-Blossom: Fairy servant of Titania

Cobweb: Fairy servant of Titania

Mustard-Seed: Fairy servant of Titania

Moth: Fairy servant of Titania

Attendants: Members of the audience viewing the actor's play

## Scenes:

Act 1. Scene 1: Theseus's palace

Act 1. Scene 2: Woods

Act 2. Scene 1: Outgrove near Peter Quince's house

Act 2. Scene 2: Woods

Act 3. Scene 1: Peter Quince's house

Act 3. Scene 2: Woods

Optional Intermission

Act 4. Scene 1: Peter Quince's house

Act 4. Scene 2: Woods

Act 5. Scene 1: Theseus's palace

Act 5. Scene 2: Outside the City

Act 1. Scene 1:

*(Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, and Philostrate)*

**Theseus:** My sweet Hippolyta, we are at last  
Wed after our moon and sun of night's past,  
And now our sights of love have no linger.

**Hippolyta:** And I am glad, t'was a near perfection

**Theseus:** Near? Dear sweet, whose name is music to me;  
Whose world is one of mine shared so deeply,  
Why was the wedding just near to grandeur?

**Hippolyta:** The stage, my dear. The play was fully wrong.

**Theseus:** Does thou speak of the stage of tragedy  
Pyramus and Thisbe, whose love had left  
Upon their death, performed for us both?

**Hippolyta:** Unfortunately, I do. Not for pains,  
Mind you it was a hearty comedy.  
But a comedy born from deep sadness  
And strengthened by the players who perform.  
The story is of greater pains than known  
And it was a failure in the making.

**Theseus:** What would thou have me do, my beloved?  
Is punishment of the player's your wish?  
For if so, I must confess, that is much.  
They tried and excelled, just not as one should.

**Hippolyta:** No, no, dearest Theseus! None of that!  
I seek not vengeance for a poorly play.  
For its misgivings gave me good laughter;  
And we are not savages of the sword  
Who behead those of minor transgressions!  
I only wish to have seen great skill then;  
As opposed to the failures of those poor  
Players who do nothing but make asses  
Of themselves and the play that they performed.

**Theseus:** So, you don't wish for beheadment? Good joy!  
I should not look as a great forgiving lord  
If I were to execute those of no skill.  
But, if the performance doth not bother  
Then what truly troubles thee so?

**Hippolyta:** Thy names.  
They shalt be forever known for this stage,  
Though I fear not for great skill but lack of.  
Just this morning I heard snickers by me.

Our attendants, mocking the player's stage  
And talk of the citizens' large laughter.  
I fear thy names will be forever mud  
And I should wish that not be due to us.

**Theseus:** I see your concern, my dear, and agree.  
Perhaps another chance may be given  
So that the players may redeem themselves  
But let them have full reign of what to say  
So that none can be lost in translation  
And so that no fear may be in their hearts.  
Yes, you're as wise as you are beautiful  
And we shall give these players a next chance;  
A chance to claim what they show not to have.  
Philostrate!

**Philostrate:** Yes, my great Duke Theseus?

**Theseus:** Find the players who performed last night  
Though it be late, they are surely outside  
Bring them posthaste to me and my dear wife

**Philostrate:** As you command sire, I move away now  
And shall return with the actors you seek *(exit)*

**Hippolyta:** Thank you darling, I shall be glad for this.

**Theseus:** Think not of it, I long only thy smile;  
And all that which can bring it forward  
*(Re-enter Philostrate)*

How now man, that was quick as a light bird!  
By you standing here means you have them, yes?

**Philostrate:** T'is true, m'lord. I have found and brought hence  
Those whom thou have so dearly sought after.  
Though, I fear not all are as adequate;  
For standing in thy presence needs respect  
And I fear thou might not receive what's due.

**Theseus:** What troubles you so man? Come! Send them in!  
Nothing could spoil any moment here now.

**Philostrate:** As you wish sire. *(To the outside)* Step forth all  
ye men!

*(Enter Peter Quince, Nick Bottom, Francis Flute, Tom Snout,  
Robin Starveling, and Snug, all merry, cheerful, and a little  
too hooked up on wine.)*

**Theseus:** Welcome friends! I trust you have been in joy;  
For the look of festivities shines through.

**Quince:** (*Stepping forward*) Great lord Theseus, we have thou to thank deeply!

For it's thy great generosity  
And most honorable hospitality  
That privies us to ever grand celebration.  
Our only sweeter joy was the long comfort  
In knowing that we performed for your wed  
And that all was to thy liking.

**Theseus:** Yes. That is what I wish to discuss now.

**Quince:** Thou desires an encore? Such treats!

That can be quite readily arranged!

**Theseus:** No, no. Not that. T'was about thy content.

As I recall, t'was a tragic tale  
Love broken because of walls between us  
And the death of two young pure-hearted souls.  
I address Peter Quince, am I correct?  
Leader of players who stand before me?

**Quince:** Thou are correct sir. Though thy kindness is more  
Than I can possibly choose to take.

I be but a mere carpenter;  
Where as it is only at night that I thrive  
For the stage is forever my second home.  
I praise not myself, only my accomplishments.

**Theseus:** (*Sarcastically*) Truly, a man of humble acceptance.

Conduct me, let you name then your players.  
I wish to know those whom I now address.

**Quince:** As you wish my lord! Step forward friends!

(*All step forward*)

Here lies our youngest part, Francis Flute.

**Flute:** Tis' a great honor to meet thee in person.

Noble duke, I hope my part did satisfy.

For a mere bellows-mender like I,

This meeting is a rare and valuable gift.

**Theseus:** You played the part of Thisbe, the lady,

And the lover of Pyramus, right so?

**Flute:** Indeed, my lord! I am truly blessed

That thou wouldst remember my part of the play.

**Theseus:** Think not of it man. (*To Quince*) Who is next in line?

**Quince:** Next, sir, is Tom Snout, the tinker.

**Theseus:** Ah yes, the one who stood as a strong wall.

The separation of lovers dearest.

A strange but mesmerizing part indeed.

**Snout:** Your honor is admired but too much my lord.  
My part was but one of several to bear witness.  
Those around me I learned much from,  
So give onto them more than what you give to me.

**Theseus:** All the same, I give respects that are due.  
Not to one but all, though humbling you are.

**Quince:** Robin Starveling lies here next my Duke.

**Theseus:** I remember thy role quite well Starveling.

**Starveling:** You do my lord? I should think it very little.

**Theseus:** Nonsense man! For who could ever think that,  
"The man in the moon" would be ever true;  
And that there may be a show of the stage  
Where one could literally be moonshine.

**Starveling:** As a tailor, I did the costumes as well.

**Theseus:** Pray tell, of what material was used  
To make the styles for thy show of past?

**Starveling:** Well, m'lord. We are not well in fruits.  
Our labors leave us with little to purchase.  
Thus, efforts were made to improvise  
And create from cheap cloth and bowstrings.

**Theseus:** I see, *(To himself)* That explains much for quality.  
*(To Snug)* And who be you, that I now stand before?

**Snug:** *(Nervously)* Snug, the joiner, m'lord.

**Theseus:** Up man, speak loud.

**Snug:** *(Slightly louder)* Snug, the joiner, m'lord.

**Theseus:** I can't hear a word you utter, louder.  
Give unto me the speech of confidence!

**Snug:** *(Near screaming)* SNUG, THE JOINER, M'LORD!

**Theseus:** I see why thou played the part of lion.

**Snug:** My apologies great lord Theseus.  
I hope that I did not frighten thee.  
If so, I beg thy forgiveness.  
For I wish to not be hanged 'til death.

**Theseus:** Arise Snug, there shall be no visitors  
And death will be lonely today. Come now,  
I believe that there remains one man left,  
Who was Pyramus himself.

**Bottom:** Indeed so good lord!  
Great lord, great and noble lord! You see mineself!  
And your wisdom doth not fail you. For I am he!

I am a weaver, foiling away for the people.  
I am a gift bringer, to the stage and audience.  
I have gone by many names in my long life.  
Pyramus, being amongst them.  
However, I hold my tongue and cover my ears  
For I am one known as Nick Bottom!

**Theseus:** It is well and good to see your grand flair  
Is not limited to your performance.

**Bottom:** Not at all! Life is a performance!  
We must all be ready to be our best selves  
In but a moment's notice!  
For should we fail at that we are not people,  
No! We are less than! We are shells of ghosts long  
past!

We must arise to betterment!  
And share good times with friends and fortune!

**Theseus:** A rousing speech to be sure. I wonder,  
Perhaps thou could have been in politics.  
Thou hath both the niceties and wisdom for it.

**Bottom:** Your flatteries fall not on blind ears. But alas  
My heart: the stage. My soul: those who live it with  
me  
But there is no need for further undertakings.  
You long for a repeat performance  
And we shall gladly provide!  
Come hence friends! We must-

**Theseus:** (*Interrupting quickly*) No, no, no, no, no, no. We need  
not that.

Alas, if formalities cease, then on;  
There is a grave issue to discuss now, sirs.  
Tis about thy show of last night's full moon.

**Quince:** (*To actors*) Hush now, he is to shower us with mighty  
praise.

**Theseus:** To speak forward in harsh but true feelings  
T'was the worst show we hath ever viewed.

**Quince:** M'lord, Methinks I heard wrong. Did thou sayest "Worst?"

**Theseus:** Thine ears do not falsify you fellows.  
Comedy from tragedy was conceived,  
And though gold coin may not have favored thou,  
The performance was foolhardy and mad.  
But friends, I am of gentle soul and mood.

I wish not for thou names to be slandered.  
For, as it stands, there are none worse in Greece.  
Athens folk mock thee over thy shoulders  
All from a play to satisfy our wed.  
I grant a chance of redemption for all,  
A new play shall be writ and presented  
So that thy names are not that of asses.  
I grant thee full choice and give thee no fear  
For tis not but a moment of the truth.

**Quince:** If I am to speak freely my lord,  
Your words betray our thoughts and hearts  
But if truth is desired upon  
We shall conceive if it pleases.

**Theseus:** It does. I give thee two weeks to prepare  
Where in time of the next moon from above  
All of Athens may see thy growth and heart  
And see thou are of valor and courage.

**Bottom:** Mighty Duke, we need not that much time!  
For thou overestimates us and the craft.  
Wager this then, that less than half of the time  
That is given shall this be done!  
So says Nick Bottom, the weaver,  
And his merry impotent band of mechanicals!

**Theseus:** I see thy confidence and act upon.  
Very well, it shall be in five days then!

**Bottom:** Three days!

**Quince:** Hush Bottom! Thy ignorance dooms us!  
(*To Theseus*) He means not what he says mighty Duke.

**Theseus:** Truth though, three days is better for myself.  
Tell me, could a play be done in three days?

**Quince:** Well, if your lordship requests it, yes, but...

**Theseus:** Exquisite! Three days then!

**Bottom:** TWO DAYS!!!

**Actors:** BOTTOM!!!

**Theseus:** Philostrate!

**Philostrate:** (*Stepping forward*) Yes, mighty duke?

**Theseus:** Have I occupation in two moons time?

**Philostrate:** You do not my lord.

**Theseus:** Then two days will be the time! I await;  
And may your play be as heartfelt as you.  
I take my leave, and recommend the same,

For there is much to be done in two nights.

*(To Hippolyta)* Come my sweet.

**Hippolyta:** I hope for greatness dear mechanicals!

*(Theseus and Hippolyta exit with Philostrate right behind)*

**Quince:** It appears, friends, that we are challenged.

Our reputations be at stake.

**Bottom:** Why fret good masters? There's not to fear!

Good Peter Quince can write the show,

And we might perform it!

**Quince:** Thy opinion is not of concern!

We hath lost near two weeks time

And I shall have to write a most perfect show

To rectify our transgressions;

All because of thy blabbering mouth!

**Flute:** Then, what are we to do?

**Quince:** Meet at dawn in the palace wood outside the city

In the silent grove near to where my house lies.

I shall be up till morn writing a most excellent story

And we shall rehearse the whole day through.

**Bottom:** We will meet; and there we may rehearse

Most obscenely and courageously!

*(Philostrate re-enters)*

**Philostrate:** Why do thou shout and scream! Tis late and dark;

And my masters wish to sleep! Begon eggs!!

*(All the actors hurry out)*

*(Blackout)*

## Act 1. Scene 2:

*(Peas-Blossom, Cobweb, Mustardseed, and Moth enter)*

**Peas-Blossom:** Our conflicts hath resumed and masters fight.

The world lings in a delicate balance.

**Cobweb:** I thought our troubles had been reverted?

Did our king and queen not agree last moon

That Oberon hath title of bearer?

Was there not an agreement for the child?

*(Puck enters)*

**Puck:** Struggles of old have been reignited;

And all affairs are now so indicted.

Titania, our queen, and Oberon

Hath laid for grievances and wrath upon.

It would seem that trickery of past time  
Hath laid out pains past and not so sublime.

**Mustard-Seed:** Speak forward Puck, else known as Goodfellow.

What pains have relinquished within thy plane?

**Moth:** There lies chaos in trees, death in the wind;

And yet thou knows more than to speak of such.

**Puck:** Quite so! It is pains of couple's scuffle;

And the troubles that always soon follow;

Like a duck who swims against the ripple;

Against winds who cease to not be mellow.

The babe that was given to Oberon

Has been played and taken as such the pawn.

Under the spell of false love's distraction,

Titania gave the babe in action.

She cared not when she was under the curse,

But with spirit freed, she is the reverse.

**Peas-Blossom:** Here comes our queen hence!

**Mustard-Seed:** And the king as well.

*(Oberon and Titania both enter)*

**Oberon:** Titania, thou hast forsaken me;

And for reasons much unknown.

**Titania:** Thou shouldst know!

I was blinded by your fool's trickery

And gave what is not of thy's ownership.

I'm to look after the boy, as my own,

For his mother: Sickly and dead, left me;

And in the name of our dearest friendship.

I have sworn protection of the small boy.

He is mine, and thou took him from my side.

**Oberon:** What fantasies we have to justify:

He is not thine, his mother's, or father's.

He was taken from India kingship;

Thus giving me authority for him.

To you, the boy is nothing but a doll

With whom you would dress up and dote upon.

**Titania:** At least I am to know what love stands for.

I care, I show compassion, what of you?

You see not but a servant in the boy.

I forsake thy attendance and thy form;

Begon hence after what's due is returned!

**Oberon:** If I should deny, what of thy impulse?

I see him as mine, as you have given:  
A gift, a toy forgotten, not but trash.  
Thy acts as a child and looks like one too.  
What was once yours is now mine, as the boy  
Hath been taken and claimed ownership of.

**Titania:** A child! A child! I am not but a child,  
Am I? Fine! Such insults lead to action.  
Would thou not give me the child and depart;  
I, as the gods before me shall see swear,  
Invoke the powers of my fairy army;  
And shall send you and your lands to the hells!

**Oberon:** Surely, a jest! Thou would not destroy me,  
The love of thy bed and life, Oberon!

**Titania:** Doth my lips speak false lies to thy lacéd tongue?  
I think against! Not for all of thy charms!  
I outnumber four to one; test me fool;  
And I assure that destruction comes hence.  
Think wisely, else death shall be your new bride.  
Fairies to me! Leave the king to his choice.

*(Titania exits, followed by Peas-Blossom, Cobweb, Mustard-Seed, and Moth)*

**Puck:** Might I speak freely dear friend Oberon?

**Oberon:** Yes, speak Goodfellow. What lingers in thou?

**Puck:** I fear that Queen Titania speaks true.  
Should you not act, her full strength you will rue.  
Her armies are loyal and war is near;  
And if you two are to fight, then I fear  
That cities will burn and death will conquer  
All for one that could be given to her.  
Ask thyself. Is the servant from a babe  
Worth the pain that shall follow from this maim:  
From a quarrel, a lover's difference,  
All for an assertion of dominance  
Between two partners and their separate pains?

**Oberon:** Thy deep concern is noted, Goodfellow.  
Alas, this shall not be grounds to retreat.  
I refuse a defeat from threats alone.  
But, points are taken, I have a grand plan.  
I shall have need of thy help my old friend.  
Go hence to my chambers and take the babe:  
Hide it from forces against us henceforth;

And keep it safe until the next morning.  
I shall treat my dearest Titania  
So that she might not have need for violence  
While giving me control of the young child.  
I am away, for there is much to do  
And the same shall go for you, Goodfellow.  
I am counting on you for my success.  
Fail me not, else further regrets be had.

*(Oberon exits)*

**Puck:** I wish not to be entangled in this.  
Much can do right and much could be a miss.  
Tis clear to be in this foul game of chess:  
A battle of unending mindlessness.  
These emotions be here to make me numb.  
Love is beautiful, but romance is dumb.  
Hence though, my orders are easily clear  
And the babe is off to be thusly near.  
I am off to partake within the game  
And hope deep for good fortunes all the same.

*(Puck exits)*

*(Blackout)*

## Act 2. Scene 1:

*(Puck runs on with the baby in his arms. It is wrapped up in a pure white cloth.)*

**Puck:** Hours upon end have I been here running.  
While other fairies I stand by shunning.  
Ah ha! Near to Athens I stand in pant.  
For no servants should approach and displant  
A babe that would be hidden away here  
Out in a silent grove that lies so clear  
To that of the mortal's wandering eyes,  
Else that I might stand here ever surprised.  
And what folk have need to approach this place?  
Tis few flowers and no fair game for face.  
I shall hide thou away from enemies  
In the hope of thy's safe securities.  
I only pray that my dear Oberon  
Hath carried out the calm of what's forgone.  
I like not leaving thou, but choice is slim,  
And I should not wish to be caught with him.

Stay safe young one, for I will return here  
And hope that this sick end's soon to be near.

*(Hides the baby, then exits)*

*(Bottom enters, followed slowly by Flute, Snout, Starveling, and Snug)*

**Bottom:** Heigh-Ho fair masters! Are we all met?

**Flute:** We appear to be missing our Peter Quince.

**Snug:** We cannot start without him! Perhaps we should visit?

**Starveling:** His house is right over yonder.

**Snout:** It would be kindly to make sure he is well.

**Snug:** But, if Peter Quince is not well, what are we to do?

**Starveling:** If there is no play or coach, then all this is for naught!

**Bottom:** Fret not! For if man or play is not provided, I have the solution!

**Flute:** You do?

**Bottom:** Observe hence friends, we are of experience!

Peter Quince no doubt has toiled away in the nights;  
And is forthward excruciated!

Thus, I ask of forwardness, would Quince be content;  
Knowing that we stand waiting  
When we could be spawning ideas  
That could be extraneous to the grand plot?

**Snout:** I confess, I know not of creativity.

I have left these pains to Peter Quince;  
For his writings can not be beat.  
Perhaps our weight should now be pulled forth  
And give a chance for Quince to rest.

**Bottom:** Well said Snout! A motivating arousalment!

Thy spirit stirs and shows! Come friends, let us comply!

We shall pour our souls into this play and create  
What shall be known as "The Egregious Mechanicals"

*(Quince enters, somewhat worse for the wear)*

**Quince:** I pray that is a foul joke Bottom.

**Bottom:** Good Peter Quince! It is well to see you sound.

**Quince:** I should think against it, for I hath spent the last stars

Tinkering away a most approachable tale.  
And when I arise, I hear thy shouting;  
Something about "Pulling weight."

Let me handle my job and pull thy own weights  
 By perfecting hence a most excellent show!

**Bottom:** Of course! Art thou inspired by "The Egregious  
 Mechanicals?"

**Quince:** Give me pains if so, thy title practically spells  
 disaster.  
 Sit down now Bottom, there is much to be done.

**Bottom:** Very well. Proceed Peter Quince.

**Quince:** Behold fellows, for I hath created a most invigorating  
 show,  
 One that is sure to redeem our names!  
 The great Duke Theseus wished for tragedy,  
 And tragedy shall be received! I present:  
 "The woeful tale and unfortunate story of Oedipus  
 Rex."  
 It is surely to be known as my masterpiece.  
 Now, step forward when I call thee, and claim thy  
 roles.  
 Nick Bottom the weaver.

**Bottom:** I arise to the challenge! Name the part I am to play!

**Quince:** You, dear Bottom, shall be that of Oedipus himself.

**Bottom:** Describe him for me. Am I to be a lover or a tyrant?

**Quince:** One could argue either from a certain view.

**Bottom:** I see, I am to use the fullest extent of my skill.  
 Thou chose wisely good Peter Quince;  
 For I shall play it as such:  
 Gentle, yet violent, calm, yet enraged, loving, yet  
 murderous!  
 I shall accept and demonstrate my talents.

**Quince:** Good for it. Next, Francis Flute the bellows-mender.

**Flute:** What am I for, Peter Quince?  
 Might I be a striving knight or loyal companion to  
 Oedipus?

**Quince:** You are one of those indeed! You are his mother.

**Flute:** Hold faith man, again? My beard grows thicker;  
 And yet I am given the same task?

**Quince:** Thy performance as Thisbe was excelling.  
 I can think of none than you to be this part.

**Flute:** Very well. I suppose playing a mother is a step above  
 where I stood.  
 At least I have not to play Bottom's lover again.

**Quince:** Ah. About that. You do.

**Flute:** But thou just said I am to be the mother.

Am I to play the part of two?

**Quince:** No, just one.

**Flute:** Then how can I be mother and lover? Unless...

*(Flute puts two-and-two together)*

Blesséd lord above! Tis not that, is it Quince?

**Quince:** Next, Tom Snout the tinker.

**Flute:** Do not divert from the subject!

**Quince:** Thou art to be Oedipus's father.

**Snout:** As thou says Peter Quince. Is he a noble?

**Quince:** Yes, he is the king of Thebes.

**Snout:** Then I should be honored to play him.

**Bottom:** Allow me to play the father! I shall be most daring!

For a ruler must be fierce and proud,

And I am one of both components!

I shall make the audience faint with envy;

For they shan't resist my charms.

**Quince:** And yet, thou would have to be resurrected.

Oedipus kills his father, and blinds himself later.

Would thou perchance know witch magic?

I think not. You are to play Oedipus and only Oedipus.

**Bottom:** As thou says. Proceed.

**Quince:** Robin Starveling the tailor.

**Starveling:** Yes, Peter Quince?

**Quince:** Thou shall be Tiresias, a blind but trusted prophet.

**Starveling:** Doth that mean I might have a special costume?

**Quince:** You are our tailor, I shall trust you for that choice.

Snug the joiner!

**Snug:** Who am I to be Peter Quince?

**Quince:** Not who Snug, what. Thou art to be a wise sphinx.

**Snug:** But I fear I am not wise Peter Quince.

I should think I am not smart either.

**Quince:** Worry not, for you shall only have to act it.

And to finish, I shall be both Chorus and Creon.

A most trusted advisor and messenger.

Now, there lies much to do with little to do it.

Open thy scrolls and read over thy strong parts.

We shall begin the stage shortly.

**Flute:** Peter Quince? There sticks a problem here.

**Quince:** If it is about thy role dear Flute, just know that-

**Flute:** Tis not about that. Though I am still disgruntled.  
The play writes for a part that you have not cast.

**Quince:** What part? I have cast you all, or have I not?

**Flute:** It calls here... for a baby.

**Quince:** A baby?

**Flute:** Yes, in the prologue that is to be shown, the babe,  
That is to be Oedipus, must be cast away.

**Snout:** A troubling conundrum.

**Snug:** None of us can play that of a babe. We are doomed!

**Bottom:** Oh no? Fret not masters! I shall take away pains,  
For I shall play the part of the babe Oedipus!  
I am the only one to play him, and that is what I  
shall do;  
Watch forth as I whine and pity,  
Such that the audience shall love me  
And any tragedy shall be exemplified!  
Ten-fold even! I shall make tears of beauty;  
Followed by sadness for my life.  
My youth, only demonstrated by my chosen beard,  
Will be as hairy and handsome as I was born.  
Yes, I shall take it on and perform ample.

**Quince:** Thou art grown and foolish! You cannot play a child!  
No, it must be disguised. A prop if none else.  
That way, the audience need not know true babe from  
fake.

**Snout:** But what could serve to convey?  
We have not anything to make a baby.  
In terms of finances I speak.

**Bottom:** Stand strong friends, a solution may hath presented.  
Fair Flute, might I take that scarf of yours?

**Flute:** T'was my mothers! I can't part with it!

**Bottom:** Tis for the betterment of the show.  
Think of her pride, should she know this:  
Francis Flute's scarf, bringer of babes,  
Deceiver of eyes, and wooer of crowds!  
Thou could be famous off this show, all of us!  
And all we need to make this hence work is thy scarf.

**Flute:** Well, if it is for the people, and my mother.  
I shall oblige as such.

**Bottom:** Profound! Thy shall not live in regret for this!  
Now behold, as Nick Bottom makes babe from cloth!

*(Bottom takes sticks and rocks laying around and wraps them in the cloth)*

Huzzah! Show forth and onward friends!  
We hath our babe, covered from crown to bottom.  
The folks of Athens shan't know the difference;  
And we shall create a most perfect performance!

**Snout:** By'r larkin', I believe that should work!

**Starveling:** And we shan't worry over an actual babe.

For they are tiresome and not good players.

**Snug:** Then all is good again! Great relief upon us!

**Quince:** If all is well and good, then that is fine to be.

But it may be safe to acquire more than our just supply.

Bottom, go forth into the woods and find more stones,  
So that we shall not worry about misshapes.

**Bottom:** Of course! Watch hence friends, I shall be back

As speedily as a rooster.

Study up, for when I return

We shall create the greatest first run

And that none more be needed!

*(Bottom exits over near where the baby is)*

**Quince:** His optimism is uplifting, though misplaced.

**Snug:** Do you not have faith we can prevail Quince?

**Quince:** Not for your skills, I trust you all.

But to put on a show as complex as this,  
In less than two moons time,  
I think it a challenge for even the best of players.  
To perform it would indeed be a miracle.

**Snout:** I will confess, I am too afeard.

What if we are to embarrass ourselves more?  
What shall be done for our labors, our names,  
Those who might have cared for us and taught us?  
If I can be truthful,  
I worry I lack the skills for this.

**Starveling:** And what of costumes? There are many parts to play.

Can they be sewn in such limits?

And the parts memorized?

There is much to consider.

Perhaps we have been fools and taken on too much.

Our graves are dug and to be slept in.

**Snug:** I know not what to do.

Of course, I never seem to know such matters.  
I'd like to give thou all a solution to take.  
But, that's not something I'm good at, even for  
myself.

Maybe we run away? Flee from Athens?  
Save our faces of this suffering?

**Flute:** Fleeing would only ruin that more.

I wish too to impress, to show what I possess,  
But if I am to make a fool of myself,  
Then I should fail everyone who supported me.  
We are doomed dear friends.  
Perhaps in another time, we shall fare better.

**Quince:** Why do you all talk of surrender!?

This play be of great challenge,  
And our situation is not favorable;  
But thou have all given up before beginning!  
The play is rich and deep.  
Make it well, and we might be revered!

**Snug:** If that is possible to do.

*(Bottom reenters holding a curled up white cloth)*

**Bottom:** Masters! I believe our situation went from grand to  
superb!

**Quince:** What sayest thou dear Bottom?

Hold tight, did you leave with the cloth?

**Bottom:** No no. See I have found a miracle! A babe!

**All:** WHAT!?

*(Frantic chattering and panicking insues)*

**Bottom:** Hush now! We need not the fake, when the real is right  
here!

**Quince:** Bottom, did thou steal the babe?

**Bottom:** Of course not! I stand not as some bandit,

One who would stoop so low as for this.

T'was abandoned in the bushes, hidden from view.

M'lady Luck shined on me to find it tucked away.

**Quince:** What if the parents come looking?

**Bottom:** What sort of mad folks leave their child in the bushes?

I fear that it is agone from its members.

**Quince:** Even so, should we not take it back to Theseus?

**Bottom:** But that should take too much time! Think of the show!

The show! We can use the babe to play the role;  
And should its parents show, we give it hence.

Perhaps even scold the dull-headedness of the damn fools.

**Quince:** I am not fully keen for it.

What do the rest of thou think on such trivia?

**Flute:** If Bottom's word is true, it may help to find its parents.

The show would be flashing signs.

**Snout:** All of Athens is to be there.

Someone is to know something.

**Starveling:** Plus, there is no guarantee of Theseus getting to it.

He is busy and puts work on Philostrate.

Philostrate knows not to handle such matters.

The babe may end up in orphanage,

Lost to its family for life.

**Snug:** That would be a terrible thing!

Such a sad state for one to have no one else,

For who can you rely on to tell you what to do if you have no one at all?

Tis a true tragedy.

**Quince:** Thou all seem to have made minds up.

Therehence, I'll agree to this crazed decision.

**Snug:** But who is to care for the child?

**Quince:** Well, Bottom hath found it, let him care for it.

**Bottom:** Thy smarts show through the mouth dear Quince!

I shall care for the child, were he my own family.

**Quince:** Very Well. Then it is settled. But how the day has flown!

Let us back soon to my house.

We shall rehearse through the night and day of next

So that we may be presentable!

**Bottom:** Quite so! Mark words here friends!

The people shall hath never seen such swanky words!

Their eyes will be charmed by our voices;

And their ears by our faces!

Make work, and we shall be legends!

To homeward bound!

*(Bottom exits, followed by Snout, Starveling, and Snug. Quince is stopped by Flute)*

**Flute:** Then, we are to follow through with the show?

**Quince:** If the show will save the babe and restore our honor,

then I suppose so.

*(Quince and Flute exit, only for Puck to soon enter)*

**Puck:** Oh, I have made a dearly grave error.

One that shall send me into sheer terror.

Not only is the child stolen from woods.

But mine ears hear talk of deep troubled goods.

Those players, I know the fools. I fear them.

For what influence could the babe soon stem?

I know where they are but dare not approach.

As I know not what terrors would encroach.

I away myself to Oberon's side.

For a quick plan of his may save my hide.

*(Puck exits)*

*(Blackout)*

## Act 2. Scene 2:

*(Oberon and Titania are on stage talking with each other)*

**Titania:** Perhaps I have misjudged thee Oberon.

Thou art a wise tongue and handsome beauty.

**Oberon:** I'm as pale as the moon when next to thou.

**Titania:** And ever the romantic flirt I see.

I suppose some things cease to ever change.

**Oberon:** I only aim to please thou, my dear wife.

*(Oberon goes in for a kiss but is stopped by Titania)*

**Titania:** Which makes your twisted lies ever tragic.

"Aim to please" none but thy own desires.

I know of thy schemes and machinations,

I am, after all thy maid of wedding,

Thou seek only the babe, to pry from me:

It's comfort, It's company, and for what?

Because thou art jealous of a small boy!

Forget not that I hold all the trump cards;

And that thy's simple flirts value nothing.

Return the babe, and all might change uncut.

Elsewise, thou shall be humiliated,

In front of all kingdoms. My dear pale moon,

Think wisely or there shall be bad conflict.

**Oberon:** Ever the insightful Titania.

It may be true that I cannot best you,

But I still claim what thou desires most.

We need not escalate this, just give up.

**Titania:** Thou art not but a bawdy base-court lout!  
Thou, who dares to toy with gravest matters,  
That hath no business doing so, expect  
That I ought simply to surrender here,  
For the sake of the babe? I shall have rights!  
If you truly loved me, as I once thought,  
Perhaps we could share the babe as a gift,  
Yet thou only cares for self-benefits.

**Oberon:** Perhaps the boy is a benefit. So?  
And what of it? Tis mine own right, not thine,  
To claim of property over the boy.  
A servant must start young in the making.

**Titania:** Property! Thou art vile, sick, and wicked!  
Thou wouldst think not for me or for his care,  
A tyrant is what thou seeks to be, scut!

**Oberon:** Look who speaks! A hypocrite in such pains!  
I gave to you my love, my bed, my home,  
All those years on hill and dale of the woods.  
For what? To lose it all for a small brat!  
Thou speaks of property? Look at the boy,  
Thy love's the same as the love for a toy!  
Playing and dressing, forgoing when bored,  
Thou art worse than I, dear Titania!

**Titania:** Forget all before. Henceforth, this changes.  
I need not beat thou in war for the babe,  
But only to put thou in thy place.  
Thou wishes to fight, then so shall it be!  
Else, thy errors would change very quickly!

**Oberon:** I have not to be sorry for, thou shrew.  
Thou gave me him and he shall stay as such!

*(Puck enters)*

How now, see! My faithful friend! My dear Puck,  
Bring forth the babe from its deep hiding place  
So that I may rectify her failure!

**Puck:** That I cannot do, Oberon, my king.  
I have come to tell you about such things.  
The babe's... no longer in our possession.

**Oberon:** What!? Speak swiftly to explain thyself Puck!

**Titania:** Is it not obvious, dear Oberon?  
My fairies found the child and shall come hence;  
Watch as they shall be summoned to my side!

Peas-Blossom, Cobweb, Mustard-Seed, and Moth!  
(*Peas-Blossom, Cobweb, Mustard-Seed, and Moth enter*)  
**Fairies:** Here at thy request Queen Titania  
**Titania:** I congratulate thou all on well wins!  
Now, which of you hath brought the babe to me?  
**Peas-Blossom:** Not I.  
**Cobweb:** Not I.  
**Mustard-Seed:** Not I.  
**Moth:** Not I either.  
**Titania:** Then whose subordinates came for the boy?  
**Peas-Blossom:** Not mine.  
**Cobweb:** Not mine.  
**Mustard-Seed:** Not mine.  
**Moth:** Not mine either.  
**Titania:** Then who is in the possession of him?  
**Puck:** That is what I wish to say my sweet queen.  
Thy prized trophy, or so it would seem,  
Hath been taken in by that of asses.  
A group of some rude mechanicals, as  
They are shown to be players of the stage.  
**Everyone:** WHAT!?  
**Oberon:** Damn players.  
**Titania:** I've heard enough! Example must be shown!  
For thy foolishness hath cost all greatly.  
**Oberon:** Hold thy anger my fierce Titania!  
Such circumstances proceed to solve us,  
And acquit us of our grand dilemma.  
**Titania:** I am listening.  
**Oberon:** I propose a contest, you against me.  
Thou claimed that thou could defeat me always;  
So now thy may have the chance to prove it.  
My selections against thy's, The goal's such:  
Whoever's troops may take the boy from them  
Shall hath true ownership, while the other:  
Must forgo all rights and love the other,  
Else be shamed hence for all time continued.  
**Titania:** And what of the fact of the numbers game?  
As I recall, my train is four to one.  
What is to stop me from taking with force?  
**Oberon:** Then we shall even to thy good liking.  
Thou shall select four servants to retrieve,

While I shall have the use of only one.

**Titania:** Very well! I shall accept these here terms;  
Knowing that thou hath dug thy own deep grave!  
Victory should already be hence mine!  
Peas-Blossom, Cobweb, Mustard-Seed, and Moth!  
You four will be tasked with this hard mission!  
Fail me not! I count on you all my friends!

**Peas-Blossom:** Fear not my queen!

**Cobweb:** We shall emerge winning!

**Mustard-Seed:** The babe shall be already thine my queen!

**Moth:** For none of the king's can defeat our skill!

**Oberon:** I see thou hath picked four loyal fairies.  
I shall pick mine then. My dear Goodfellow!  
Thou shall be forth mine representative!

**Titania:** Robin Goodfellow!? Surely you must jest?  
Is he not the cause for this set-made match?  
Thou art doomed before even beginning!

**Oberon:** He may be the cause for all of this, yes,  
But I wager that he is still better:  
Better than thy Peas-Blossom, thy Cobweb,  
Thy Mustard-Seed, and better than thy Moth.

**Titania:** We shall see about that! I leave now dears.  
Show us the cunning of my train fairies,  
And the foolishness of our beloved king.  
For there shall be only one chance given  
And that chance will be with me and my friends.  
Report back after thy grandest attempt!

*(Titania exits)*

**Oberon:** One chance then? Very well. Thou heard her speak.  
One chance for both sides, Puck, I count on you.  
Bring home victory to me.

**Puck:** But why King?

Why pick me over any others here?

**Oberon:** Because I know that thou shall find a way.

*(Oberon exits)*

**Peas-Blossom:** Away hence fairies, there is much to plan.

**Cobweb:** Thou shall lose Puck, prepare to lick the king's boots!

**Mustard-Seed:** Waste not thy breath, he does it now anyway.

**Moth:** Good luck, and may thy failure be such known.

*(Peas-Blossom, Cobweb, Mustard-Seed, and Moth exit)*

**Puck:** They know not who they talk to, the poor fools.

How strange they be, acting like complete tools.  
Oberon trusts me and shall have his day;  
For getting him the babe will be child's play.  
Let them have all their fun; for, by the way,  
I shall be the one to win on this day.

*(Puck exits)*

*(Blackout)*

### Act 3. Scene 1:

*(Open with Bottom, Flute, Snout, Starveling, and Snug reading lines in Quince's house, the baby is wrapped in its white cloth next to the scarf with the rocks)*

**Bottom:** "Thou were mine mother! No! Such betrayals to me!  
I shall have no choice but to blind eyes!  
Thus, I might forget these pains!"  
Heigh-Ho friends! Tell me not exhaustion creeps on  
thou!  
We have only just begun!

**Snug:** Bully Bottom, it is late.  
Peter Quince hath already gone to sleep.  
Though how he sleeps I know not.

**Bottom:** Alas, thou must awaken!  
For the lines materialize not themselves.  
We must press on! Continue thy studies masters!

**Starveling:** Shh, lower thy boom Bottom,  
Else you may wake the baby.

**Bottom:** You are right, my apologies.  
*(Slightly softer)* We must press on! Continue thy  
studies masters!

**Snout:** Bottom, if I may offer a suggestion,  
Our brains hath fried without rest,  
Perhaps a break is called for us,  
So that our energy can return to full.

**Bottom:** Energy? Full? Nonsense man!  
I strive for maximum feat at all times of the day!  
Surely the same can be said for thou as well!

**Flute:** Perhaps Bottom, if you need not a boost, go out.  
You may continue to perfect thy Oedipus,  
While our wings are recouped.

**Bottom:** A fair point taken! Perchance a good course of action.

I shall take my deep leave for but a brief start,  
Then, upon my return: our hearts will sing proud,  
Our voices will beat to drums, and our souls need not  
linger

On struggles of the past. Rest well friends!

*(Bottom starts to leave, but stops and takes the baby with him  
without anyone noticing)*

**Flute:** It sounds of silence, I suppose he hath taken off.

**Starveling:** A moment of reprieve!

**Snug:** Why does he always show off so jolly faced?

**Snout:** Frankly, I respect such mannerisms of his.

Though they stand not always at the appropriate time,  
His prowess and joy is unobtainable.

I hath learned much from him.

**Starveling:** Including his wrong tongue, I see.

It is undetainable, for unobtainable means never  
reached.

Yet, it clearly hath been by him.

**Flute:** I should think that undetainable though is not a word.

For detainable is keeping out, but no "Un" exists.

**Snug:** Perchance hath he rubbed off on all of us?

**Starveling:** I hope not. Though players can be many characters,  
No person should ever act as Bottom but himself.

**Flute:** I know not how he stands proud against adversity.

Surely he sees the doom in our situation.

What are our families, friends, and the people to  
think?

I should wish to not shame my mother.

**Snout:** I know thy concern, but they are sure to still support  
us.

My brother hath always been proud of my work;  
And I shall strive to continue it.

**Starveling:** It stands true to my two sisters as well, Snout.

**Snug:** And I, with my Aunt and Uncle.

**Flute:** What of Quince and Bottom then?

**Snout:** I hath heard that Quince cares for his old father;  
And that he is in reciprocated love.

**Snug:** Who would be mad enough to chase romance with Quince?

**Starveling:** Only someone who would stand as mad as he seems to  
be.

**Flute:** And what of Bottom then?

*(Silence)*

Well, surely someone hath some knowledge to impart?

Come now, everyone has a family!

**Snout:** Perhaps not all people have someone to love.

**Flute:** It could be that he chooses not to talk about them!

Or see them. Always at home. Alone.

But he is always so joyous!

**Snout:** Perhaps the biggest smiles hide the deepest sadness.

**Snug:** This hath taken a saddening turn.

**Starveling:** Perhaps we ought to get back to rehearsing, so that  
we are ready.

*(Murmurs of agreement. Meanwhile, Peas-Blossom, Cobweb,  
Mustard-Seed, and Moth all enter outside the house in plain  
clothes)*

**Cobweb:** These clothes art ever uncomfortable.

**Moth:** How do these mortals wear them every day?

**Mustard-Seed:** Hush now, we are near to the player's home.

**Peas-Blossom:** Are all brightly clear upon the action?

**Moth:** Aye, though I hath doubts of its successes.

**Mustard-Seed:** And yet, there is not else a better plan.

**Cobweb:** Puck is soon to move, we ought be quicker.

**Peas-Blossom:** Remember, we art burglars, that are thieves,  
We shall sneak by cover of the moonshine;  
And snatch the babe while mortals dwell in sleep.

**Moth:** What if they should awaken, or are now?

**Mustard-Seed:** Worry not Moth, there lies no sane human,  
Who would be up past the strike of night's noon,  
That still does work and chatters full away.

**Cobweb:** I pray that thou art correct Mustard-Seed.

**Peas-Blossom:** Cobweb, Moth, worry not. We shall soon be gone.

**Cobweb:** Then I also pray that thou too are right,  
Lead the way dear Peas-Blossom. Sneak us in.

*(The fairies sneak in, only to be met face-to-face with the  
Mechanicals)*

**Snout:** Who art thou, lurking in a house not of thy own?

**Peas-Blossom:** We art simple friends lost and... um.. and Art..  
*(Gestures to others to help cover her)*

**Moth:** Art Burglars! That are thieves under the moon!

**Starveling:** Burglars!

**Flute:** Burglars!

**Snug:** Is that bad?

**Snout:** It is.

**Snug:** Oh. Burglars!

**Mustard-Seed:** We cause thee no harm or summon troubles,  
We hath but need of something thou obtained.

**Snout:** I understand thee completely.

**Mustard-Seed:** You do?

**Snout:** Indeed, it is clear to all. Your clothes speak of great  
tales;

And even grander tragedies.

Turned away from the law for crime is a temptation,  
Alas, this home is not our own and we can give not.

Further, none of us are well in fruits either.

You are wasting time, go home and to deep sleep,

And change over a new leaf for tomorrow's sun.

**Cobweb:** Good sir, we are not after thy earned coin.

It is of not use to us, thou needs it more.

**Starveling:** Then perhaps our crops? Our clothes and food  
storage?

If materials were provided,

I could make thee some fresh wears,

For thou certainly looks the desperation for  
them.

Food, alas, is near and far from us as well.

We hath none to give away.

**Peas-Blossom:** Thank thee, no. We art after something that,  
To many, is a once-ever gift, worth beyond  
Measure.

**Snug:** And what item of worth is that?

**Flute:** Wait, could you fellows be so kind to hold still?

There is something that pulls us away for  
conversation.

**Mustard-Seed:** Very well, but be fast. Time is pressing,  
And we must be away before long past.

**Flute:** Of course, thank thee.

*(Flute pulls Snout, Starveling, and Snug aside)*

Friends, I fear the danger that faces us now.

**Snout:** What troubles thee so greatly Flute?

**Flute:** Think! What is greater than money, clothes, and food;  
Something that is only given once?

**Snout:** A chance?

**Starveling:** A dream?

**Snug:** A kiss?

**Flute:** No, no, and definitely no. I pity thee dear Snug.

**Snug:** T'ould be not the first time; sure to not be the last.

**Flute:** It's life. They wish to claim our lives!

**Snout:** Art thou sure? They present honorable for their  
occupation.

**Starveling:** Burglars? Honorable? You jest!

**Flute:** Can we focus? What else could fulfill such riddles?  
We are in grave danger! They are murderers;  
And we are soon to be victims next!

**Snug:** But they said they were burglars, not murderers.

**Flute:** They need not be fully truthful.

**Snug:** Then let us ask them.

*(To fairies)*

**Snug:** Excuse me, art thou murderers?

**Peas-Blossom:** No.

**Mustard-Seed:** The only killing is you with our time.

**Snug:** I see, thank thee. We be not much longer hence.

*(To players)*

They say they are not.

**Flute:** Yes, but is that not exactly what one ought expect  
murderers to say?

If confronted with law, one does not confess,  
Not usually as such, no, they lie, they run,  
And posing as burglars is lighter in Athens than  
killers.

**Snout:** I fear thou may be true in thought and logic, but what to  
do?

**Flute:** Well, what are murderers? They are of deadly terror.  
So, we must scare them away.

**Snug:** But we be not scary.

Perhaps in appearance, but not internally true.

**Flute:** Remember what Peter Quince said,

"We need only act it."

Quick, think of what scares thee,  
And we must become as such!

**Snug:** Money?

**Flute:** That scares all and yet none. Plus it cannot be acted.

**Snout:** My past lover?

**Flute:** Ay, that is scary. But I know not if we can act as  
someone that scary.

**Starveling:** Bottom?

**Flute/Snout/Snug:** Bottom?

**Starveling:** What? He doth scare me sometimes,

With his crazed movements;

And dominating presence.

He could pose and all would stop, some even run.

**Snout:** That could work.

**Snug:** But how are we to be Bottom?

There is only one him.

**Flute:** Just extra-fy everything.

**Peas-Blossom:** Dear players, our patience is at its end.

Give us our need, and all shall be over.

**Flute:** If this fails hard, it has been grand to know thee all.

**Snout:** I know not a finer group of skilled players.

**Starveling:** Perhaps there be costumes to make on the other side.

**Snug:** Let's give an exit of legend!

*(They all turn toward the fairies, and dramatically pose)*

**Mustard-Seed:** What spirits hath taken hold of their minds?

**Cobweb:** Perhaps they art truly gone from this Earth?

**Starveling:** They be not phased!

**Snout:** More! Do more! And approach strongly!

*(They strike more poses in rapid succession while approaching the fairies)*

**Moth:** No, they hath gone mad! What are they here gone?

**Cobweb:** We be not safe, friends! I fear for my life!

**Mustard-Seed:** We art in jeopardy! What shall we do?

**Peas-Blossom:** They are just mortals!

**Moth:** Who may cause us pains!

**Peas-Blossom:** I see thou may be right! Come, we must vanish!

Back to Titania, we must regroup.

*(The fairies panic and run away)*

**Snug:** We have chased them away!

**Flute:** But they may yet be back, come friends!

Let us chase them out of Athens forever more!

*(The four of them chase after the fairies, all while striking different poses. After they exit, Puck enters and sneaks into the house)*

**Puck:** T'was as I predicted, I have thus won.

Though that madness was a gift of just one.

Never before to view such mindlessness,

But through fairies suffering brings kindness.

A simple auditor and observer  
Knows when to not engage in one's fervor.  
The war is won and now with this hereon,  
The babe shall hence be known as Oberon's.

*(Puck picks up the fake baby)*

I am glad to see thou art well and safe,  
I had feared the worse of thy cruelest fate.  
But, how strange, thou art rather quite... lumpy.  
Perhaps it's only foods in thy tummy.  
It's good to see thou was well cared and fed.  
But now we are off to Oberon's bed.

*(Puck sneaks away, with Flute, Snout, Starveling, and Snug returning soon after)*

**Flute:** We hath chased the theives away to the deep ends of the woods!

**Snout:** Good, then none are to create bothersome outcomes.

**Snug:** I hope such commotions did not wake Peter Quince or the babe.

**Starveling:** Worry not for Quince, he can sleep through nearly all.

**Flute:** I will check up on the babe.

**Snout:** That was a most peculiar encounter.

**Starveling:** Indeed, but now we might resume work.

**Flute:** We've been had friends! Duped!

**Snout:** Calm thyself Flute. What upsets-

**Flute:** The babe is gone! It must hath been taken whilst we were away!

*(All the actors panic and frantically search for the baby, then Peter Quince enters)*

**Quince:** Always with the shouting! Can nothing shut you up!

I put little screaming in the show! Save thy voices.

Further, let me and the babe sleep!

**Snug:** That's just the issue dear Peter Quince!

**Starveling:** Burglars came and while we chased them off, they took the babe!

**Quince:** Burglars, babe, WHAT!? We must find them!

*(Everyone starts talking and panicking about what to do. Bottom enters with the babe)*

**Bottom:** What how masters! Thy screams are grand, but not needed!  
Tis late, consume thy voice, and let there be sleep  
for Quince and the boy.

**Quince:** Tis the problem Bottom!

There were burglars who came and took grasp of the  
babe;

And now they are out there with it!

**Bottom:** Doth thou mean this babe?

**Quince:** Yes! That be the one!

Now, I have a delicate operation,

If our minds art clear, we can put it to action.

First, Flute, thou shall seek out to... halt.

Bottom. Thou has the babe!

**Bottom:** Tis what I said, yes.

**Snug:** Were'st thou part of the thieves' plan?

Art thou a traitor?

**Bottom:** I pray thou not think that.

Though, apologies are in order.

I took the babe when I had left,

Out of need for both audience,

And for thou to perchance have peace.

I told thee not so thou would have no fears.

**Snout:** That is quite fine Bottom.

**Starveling:** I suppose that all shall be fine then.

**Flute:** Wait, did thou take my scarf with the stones in them too?

**Bottom:** I fear not, that laid still by the babe when I departed.

**Flute:** Then they hath stolen my mother's scarf!

Why must this always happen to me!?

**Quince:** All is safe, that is of first priority.

Plus, we hath no need for it for Oedipus.

**Flute:** I do!

**Bottom:** Good Flute, after next moon's show, thou shall have  
riches;

Riches to buy thy maternal parent all scarfs she  
needs.

**Flute:** I suppose so.

**Quince:** In which case, thou art all to get back to work!

Much time has been lost; and I am still in need of  
sleep!

**Bottom:** Quite so! Masters! Let us rise up so that all be wooed  
upon arrival;

And that all may know of us players;

For soon, we shalt be known as legends!

*(Blackout)*

Act 3. Scene 2:

*(Titania is on stage with her four fairies)*

**Titania:** Peas-Blossom, Cobweb, Mustard-Seed, and Moth!  
How doth the fairies, chosen right by me,  
Who art loyal and clever, make asses  
Not only of themselves, but of their queen?  
T'was but a small few rude mechanicals!  
One can't fail against such mindless players,  
And yet, thou did! Now what am I to do?  
Bow to Oberon? Must I submit then?  
I demand due compensation! Explain!  
Tell how the chiefs hath become the dull fools!

**Peas-Blossom:** My dear queen Titania. They were mad!  
They chased us away, our lives afeard for!  
There is no telling what may hath become  
If we were not to escape into trees.

**Titania:** And? Dost thou think that excuses failure?  
Do not misinterpret, I stand relieved;  
For thou art my best fairies, and I wish,  
Amongst other things, for thy goodly health.  
Which angers me to see such big failures!  
I should think this easily won! Yet no!  
All I hear is poor tragic excuses!

**Cobweb:** We are deeply sorry thy ladyship.

**Mustard-Seed:** It is true, we hath badly failed thee.

**Moth:** There are no excuses that can be made.

**Titania:** I see the truth in thy eyes. It is so.  
Perhaps these players were taken for false,  
I thought them simpletons, but perhaps not.  
If the four of thee could not best them so,  
Then I doubt that dear Puck could win as well.

*(Enter Oberon)*

**Oberon:** Ill-met Titania. Thou speaks so harsh,  
Thou knows not of Goodfellow's true prowess.  
He is sure to come through, unlike thy troops.  
I should expect him back any moment.

**Titania:** Thou talks large, but will stand ever tiny.  
My fairies could not win, why should thy Puck?  
I should know a grand bluff when I spot it.  
Thou quivers in knowing of soon defeat,  
Suffered by that of such clever players.

**Oberon:** Thou gives them too much credit my dear wife.  
Though, thou always did have that tendency:  
Too much to thy incompetent fairies,  
Too much to these strange rude mechanicals,  
Too much to thy own capable thinking.

**Titania:** My dear Oberon, thou art surely right!  
Alas, you mention not the truest one:  
Too much to your egotistical ass!

*(Enter Puck with the rock scarf)*

**Oberon:** Let's see if mine egotistical ass,  
May have its own right to be as thou says.  
Robin Goodfellow! How was thy journey?

**Puck:** T'was of great success, my lord Oberon.  
I hath gained and give what thou so dear longs.  
The babe is yours, the contest is over!  
Now this mess may at last be turned over.

**Oberon:** See, dearest Titania? Thou hast lost!  
Thy fairies were not for my sweetest Puck!

**Titania:** Show me the babe to know thou do not cheat.  
Then I shall admit defeat as thy wish.

**Oberon:** Very well. Thou earned that much. Show her Puck.

**Puck:** Behold, the babe!

*(Puck opens the scarf only for rocks and sticks to fall out all over the ground)*

**Oberon:** A-haaa! A good trick!  
But now tis not the time for tricks Robin.  
Show us the real babe and end this fine test.

**Puck:** That was the real babe, or I should think so.  
Unless I did wrong, but I do not know.

**Titania:** Damn you Goodfellow! Damn you Puck! Damn you!  
What hath you turned him into? Sticks and stones?  
I ought to have thy tiny head for this!  
This is betrayal of the highest charge!

**Oberon:** Robin Goodfellow. Explain. This instant.

**Puck:** I am truly as stumped as you my lord!  
I should not betray you, trust this accord!  
I took the babe from home when none had looked,  
And thought that I had gotten off the hook!  
But I can think only I grabbed a fake,  
And that is truly my greatest mistake.  
I shall bear all responsibility,

And ask thou would do what must be quickly.

**Oberon:** It appears as such that I owe favors.

Forgive me Titania, I thought too,  
That these players were jokes. Not so it seems.  
They hath bested thou and they hath best me.

**Titania:** It truly pleases me to hear such things.

It seems we have both been made the fools of.  
Shall we form a peace between our combat?  
It may take us both to take back the babe.

**Oberon:** Thou speaks some truth. I should concur as such.

Though know that by the time it's all over,  
I shall be in possession of the babe.

**Titania:** Ugh! Thou art intolerable. Again?

Despicable man that thou always are,  
Looking for the best way to profit hence.  
I hath ownership, as his dear mother,  
Rest in peace, bestowed her son unto me!  
I shall not have that fact taken by thee!

**Oberon:** Facts! I give thee facts! The boy was stolen;

From India kings no less, thus he's mine!

**Titania:** I have not the care nor time for this talk.

Fairies, skip away. Bring us both our swords.  
For if undesired conflicts arise,  
We may yet have need of force for our goals.  
We shall take matters into personal,  
And then they shall be between only us.

**Oberon:** I could not concur more Titania.

We move and shall strike in the morning sun.  
These players shall be no trouble for us.

*(Oberon, Titania, and the fairies all exit, leaving Puck alone on stage)*

**Puck:** Fools they still call these known players to be.

Yet perhaps the fools here are all of we.  
For in the page taken of history.  
Liars are of both the king and the queen.  
The queen found the boy, yes that much is true.  
But the rest of her tale is soon to rue.  
His mother was a girl she never knew.  
The babe was found covered by new sun's dew.  
A small little doll was found by the queen,  
Though she truly doth not know what love means.

Thus, wasting away the kid's potential,  
Only to have what's inconsequential.  
Then comes along jealous King Oberon,  
Who did love her before it came along.  
They would play in the trees and lay on hills  
But the boy to him soon became a bill.  
It cost him his wife and took her away,  
But rather than support wife, he would play,  
Thinking of a way when she should rue  
Denying him the chance for her to woo.  
So, he had me slip love into her eyes  
And to absolutely no one's surprise,  
She fell in a trance with that of an ass  
And gave up the kid without any sass.  
Now that she is back to her normal state,  
She is so angry at her loving mate.  
And thus this pointless war could escalate,  
All for these players, who know not their fate.  
After so long, thou knows the full story,  
How will it end for our player's glory?  
I know not, but tis rather exciting.  
Happy or tragic? Tis so inviting.

*(Exit Puck)*

*(Blackout)*

#### Act 4. Scene 1:

*(Open with Bottom outside, near Quince's house, singing to the sleeping baby. It should be somewhat like a lullaby)*

**Bottom:** The Ousel-Cock, so black of hue,  
With orange tawny bill,  
The Thristle with his note so true,  
The Wren, with little quill.  
The Finch, the Sparrow, and the Lark,  
The plain-song Cuckoo gray,  
Whose note full many a man doth mark  
And dares not answer nay;  
For, indeed, who would set his wit to so foolish  
A bird? Who would give a bird the lie, though he cry  
'Cuckoo' never so?  
*(Speaking)*

Look upon thy sleeping face, such purity.  
I should thank thee for mine own antics,  
For I needed not an audience, but company;  
Yet when thou woke from midnight's slumber,  
Thou had blessed me with laughter and smiles,  
My Oedipus gave thee joy, and returned to me.  
In all this time thou hath not cried, not wanted,  
Only listened and entertained.  
One should think it ill, for what babe is without  
tears?  
To keep awake at night is thy job, but no.  
Sleep in comfort, eat in thankfulness.  
When I found thou, there were no tears then,  
But there was fear.  
Yet, when I picked thou up, it vanished.  
Art thou comfortable? Happy?  
It makes me so. But when I see thou,  
I should also see abandonment.  
A child without anyone to care for,  
A lost soul that hath nothing to leave,  
An innocence soon to be shattered.  
I see... me. I shall not let that fate bestow itself  
again.  
Upon my word, I will protect you little one,  
At least till thy home is found.  
Thou may never remember me, but I shall always  
remember thee.  
Thank you, for smiling back at this poor player.

*(Enter Quince, Flute, Snout, Starveling, and Snug)*

**Quince:** It is agreed upon then?

**Snout:** With regret in heart, I should suppose it so.

**Starveling:** Regret nothing man. A fair try took strong here.

The task was naught but an impossible one.

**Snug:** I wish only that Bottom can understand.

**Flute:** Bottom will not, it is the love of show that drives him,  
And we art to do naught but take it away.  
This is cruel.

**Quince:** And crueller still for us all to suffer upon the stage.  
Let Athens mock us? No. The task is failed.  
I shall not let good players fall upon the gutters.  
There be no honor here to seek.

**Flute:** Then who is to tell Bottom?

**Quince:** That shall be my burden to bear.

**Snout:** Let it be all ours. We hath all made the choice.  
Let us all remain true till the final part.  
We ought to speak as one voice.

**Quince:** Very well then.  
(*To Bottom*)  
Bottom, there is needed a great discussion.

**Bottom:** Good Peter Quince! And my most merry players!  
Though, tis not perhaps merry I see.  
Fear it not friends! Our performance is to be soon!  
Quelch thy fears and straighten forward,  
For there is much to do with little left to  
accomplish.  
Now, what is needed of me?

**Quince:** Nothing more Bottom. Nothing more.

**Bottom:** Thy breath is made of comforting facilities.  
Why should there be nothing left, when nothing's  
nothing is already set?  
Our show and audience awaits;  
And while tis newly dawn, Our feets cannot linger.  
I shall assist thou with packing, for all now is easy.

**Quince:** We are done Bottom. There is nothing left to pack.  
Only perhaps any respects of our old lives.

**Bottom:** Presently said! And thus;  
A new life of riches and respects,  
Shall come tumbling down before us!

**Starveling:** We abandon Athens as a whole Bottom!  
The show is done before its start.  
We have surrendered to these unjust causes.

**Bottom:** A fine jest Starveling! But now's not humor's time.  
That shall be for after parties and wine diluting!

**Snout:** It lies to be a jest Bottom.  
I wish that it were.

**Bottom:** Enough of this now! The joke is too far gone!  
For one must know when to cease tranquilities.

**Snug:** I fear thy rage but must speak true.  
The play is cast aside, for no hope remains.  
We would create our own humiliation forever more.

**Bottom:** No. No, tis fine. If thou art scared, so be it.  
Flute, thou still stands with me. Yes?

Think of our prestige, thy mother.  
Thou hath blossomed grandly;  
And I should be honored to act alongside thee again.

**Flute:** Your praise is flattering and temptations true.  
But I stand small to you, and know not my part.  
What if I embarrass myself? What if I fail my mother?  
The risks are too great. I-I don't. Can't.  
Believe that I can accomplish this given task.  
I would have loved to act by thou, but can not.  
I am truly sorry.

**Bottom:** Say it is not so. Quince. Please.  
If all but me hath given up, then I should follow.  
But to say surrender, that goes against me.  
Peter Quince, please. Start laughing or even smiling.  
Say this is false. Smile at me and say all is well,  
And that we shall give a most excellent show;  
And make the audience smile with us on stage.

**Quince:** You must learn that not every battle can be won.  
We gave forth a hearty effort, did we not?  
That was asked and given, not so for more than that.  
I am sure that none would care to miss the show,  
After what we are already known for performing.

**Bottom:** And what of the babe? What of his family?  
Surely they will be looking yonder over?

**Quince:** There are many ways to take care of the babe.  
We will find his home through Philostrate.  
I know this be much to absorb.  
Pray tell if thou would need anything of us.

**Bottom:** I should wish to be alone now. Follow me not.  
For I now have much to consider.  
As well, I should like the babe to come with me.  
He makes finer company than any here.

**Quince:** I understand.  
*(Bottom takes the baby and exits)*

**Flute:** We are asses of the highest caliber.

**Quince:** I should wish to not hear ill necessities now Flute.

**Flute:** And Bottom should not wish to hear our betrayal,  
Yet, we gave that all the same!  
Who are we to take away the dreams of one,  
Who so clearly cares for them?

**Quince:** The ones who are saving them!

There can be other shows, but to perform this,  
T'would be mad! We agreed upon it!

**Flute:** And yet none would apologize for our actions.

**Starveling:** Do not exclude thyself just for flattery!

**Flute:** I never claimed to. I fear to be guilty as well.

But to see a heart within one's eyes shatter,  
That is not something I ever wished to bear witness.  
We shattered the heart of Nick Bottom, our friend.

**Quince:** Hearts mend with time Flute. Thou art too young to know.

We all just want what's best for Bottom.  
His eyes cannot see beyond his desires.  
We all stand with him to be sure.

**Flute:** Then we did a poor show of it.

*(Beat passes. Then Titania and Oberon enter)*

**Oberon:** Hail good strangers! Good will upon thee all!

**Quince:** And to thee returned. Who speaketh here?

**Titania:** We art not any but fair travelers,  
And kindly friends to great Duke Theseus.  
We have been but lurking in these deep woods  
Searching for a child of our creation.  
Pray tell, hath thou seen such one near to here?  
He be but a babe and we request him.

**Quince:** Then fortune favors thee travelers!

For not the other day was the babe discovered!  
We workers of Athens hath taken care for,  
And watched very closely, the babe thou wouldst seek!

**Titania:** Blesséd heroes be thee! Such noble hearts!

**Oberon:** Couldst thou bring him forth? We should wish to view,  
For his safety is of our great concern.

**Quince:** Most certainly! Patience be needed however,  
For one of our own troupe left with him moments ago.  
I shall send a messenger. Flute?

**Flute:** Ay, I shall go to retrieve Bottom.

It shall be a half a tick's time when I'm back.

*(Flute exits after Bottom. Quince continues to strike conversation with Oberon and Titania, while Snout, Starveling and Snug talk amongst themselves)*

**Snout:** I should fully confess my fears to you two.

**Starveling:** What troubles thou so Snout?

The parentage of the babe comes, it is over.  
We no longer must hold responsibility,

And the past shall be behind us.

**Snout:** Be this too hasty? How are we to know of lies?

Tis but too soon for parents to come forward.

**Starveling:** Is it never too soon? A family loses their child,  
They search, they find it. Nothing hence.  
We must consider fortune upon us if once thought,  
For what if they reported to Philostrate,  
Then we may be charged and hanged!  
This provides safety for the babe and all of us!  
Explaining the story should smooth stones,  
Look how Quince talks to them!  
Perhaps we shall gain new wealthy friends as well  
And all have a merry laugh in years to come.

**Snout:** Yes, I suppose thou art right. Thank you my friend.

**Starveling:** Thou worries far too much Snout.

All has worked out in our favor!

In all your wisdom, you must see that.

**Snout:** Quite so, I should be glad for thy explanations!

**Snug:** I still don't get it.

**Starveling:** What is there not to get Snug?

What part does not factor into thy brain,  
Tell me and I may yet explain it.

**Snug:** Well, we are here, at Quince's house.

But the babe was found under leaves' dew,  
Near where the grove lies.

Did they search there? And if so, why come forth here?

**Starveling:** Because we took the babe they could not uncover.

**Snug:** But, if we thought the babe was left there, why come back?

**Starveling:** Because they are its parents.

**Snug:** And so tracked us down after.

**Starveling:** Yes!

**Snug:** But why leave a babe in such a place?

**Starveling:** Perhaps they were desperate.

**Snug:** Desperate for what?

**Starveling:** To get rid of it!

**Snug:** Why get rid of it?

**Starveling:** Because they can't afford it!

**Snout:** I should think they have no need of monetary worth.

They are rich within it, and friends of Theseus.

What desires should one seek beyond such treasures?

**Starveling:** None, lest a child could provide others to them.

**Snout:** Yet, child they left behind.  
**Starveling:** Which should only mean...  
**Snout and Starveling:** They aren't the parents!  
**Snug:** Or they be just really bad at parentage.  
**Starveling:** Hush now Snug. Ruin not this rare moment of genius  
that you have presented.  
**Snug:** I spoke of smarts?  
**Snout:** Indeed, for even a blind squirrel shall find a nut.  
**Snug:** I should do more of that.  
**Starveling:** *(To Snout)* Be it bizarre as it should seem,  
I fear thy intuition was correct.  
Too little makes sense for these to be parents.  
**Snout:** I must confess, both of thy logics are confounding.  
I fear it should not hold in Theseus's house.  
We must be sure of making such grave accusations.  
**Starveling:** Indeed, our discoveries shall not be made forth to  
the public eye.  
**Snug:** *(To Titania and Oberon)* Excuse my pardons, but be it as  
standing, art thou true parents of the babe?  
**Titania:** Why dost thou question? Have we not stated;  
The child is ours and none else have come hence,  
Truly there exists no doubt in one's soul,  
The babe that should lie is for our taking.  
**Quince:** Favorably spoken my lady! And true,  
A thousand pardons for my friend,  
For lacking in judgment is a poor characteristic.  
Those of prestige should not be questioned,  
And given proper respects, right?  
**Snug:** But then why should thou of clear wealth abandon it?  
**Oberon:** Our reasons be our own, not for thy self.  
There be no need for expression to you.  
**Quince:** Apologies my lord, but that is fair.  
I confess I am as now interested,  
What should be the story behind the abandoned child?  
**Titania:** *(To Oberon)* Fool of a fairy!  
Use thy head before thy mouth speaks falsehoods.  
We should seem such the more suspicious now,  
For we have misjudged their wisdom in past  
And again it hath cost us too dearly.  
They should not yield him without inquiry.  
Had thou been silent, the other would have,

For us, been the silencer. Not so now.

**Oberon:** Then what would thou desire? How should we,  
Given the options, choose to react next?  
Should we take action with our sharpened blades?

**Titania:** Nonsense, we hath not hit that dire point, yet.  
We shall await for the final player.

**Oberon:** Tis getting late, what if he is not found?  
(*Enter Flute and Bottom with the baby*)

**Flute:** Peter Quince! I have found and brought forth Bottom.  
We spoke at length, and he is ready to give the babe.

**Titania:** (*To Oberon*) See how fortune favors us Oberon?  
(*To Bottom*) Blesséd be thou who would reunite us,  
And may thou hath favored fortunes henceforth.  
As thou surely knows, we are the parents  
Of the babe whom thou now cradles gently.  
Gratitudes are plentiful from us here,  
For thy services are unpayable.

**Bottom:** It should be not so, for in my eyes at least,  
This babe be worth more than all forms of payment.  
The time we spent shall be among my most treasured.

**Titania:** Thou art kind stranger. Thou speaks most fondly.  
I should be glad enjoyment was present,  
But we must return to previous states.

**Bottom:** (*Hesitantly*) Yes, I should suppose so.

**Snout:** (*To Bottom*) Bottom, something stands not true.  
Starveling, Snug, myself, and even Quince have doubts.  
We think that they are thieves hidden in fine robes.

**Bottom:** (*Suddenly recognizing Titania*) Nonsense man! Look here,  
this be the woman of my dreams!

**Snout:** What?

**Bottom:** I know her well! My dearest, for long have we been apart  
And yet not so! For it is a few mere moons passing.  
Thy smile is the glistening stone of a small pond,  
Pretty yet deep. Thy eyes shine like the moonshine,  
As I think of when I should drink it.  
So glad should I be to see thee here again.  
Might I sing for you, and thy monsieurs may get me  
Honeycombs and hay to munch upon?

**Titania:** Thy poetry is... flattering my friend.  
But thou would stand here and be mistaken  
If thou thinks we have met before, not so.

**Bottom:** Not so? Thy jokes are humorous, but unfit.

We hath met, we hath laughed, we hath loved-

**Titania:** LOVED!?

**Bottom:** Embraced in warm hearts, though first against my will,  
For thy coming was strong and fierce, like a lion.

Perhaps thou would not recognize me?

I was strangely hairier not long ago.

**Oberon:** *(Catching on)* Like that of an ass perhaps my good man?

**Bottom:** Rather rude of thou, though I suppose not so to claim.  
My beard needed a shave, so it rings to truth.

**Titania:** An ass... YOU! Which means we have, and yet I...

*(To Oberon)* Why would thou bring me here without  
warning?

**Oberon:** Warning to what?

**Titania:** Thou art an oaf-brained cattle!

I should curse thy name, for you sought roses.

**Oberon:** And thy cheeks will provide.

In defense, I lacked to see he was him.

But, it has given proper amusement.

**Titania:** Is that what I am? Amusement to you?

The players here all talk wrong and foolish,

Yet are more presentable than you are!

Not to mention smarter too!

**Oberon:** How dare you!?

*(The two of them start fighting as the players watch in horror.  
Suddenly, for the miraculous first time in this entire story,  
the baby starts crying)*

**Bottom:** ENOUGH! *(The two stop fighting to stare at Bottom)*

I shall not let thou cause tears upon his face.

If you art to fight, do it elsewhere.

In all this time, this baby has not cried once.

I should not know why or how, it is a strange thing,

But if thy bickering disrupts that, then be gone.

No baby should have to cry at its parents. *(Beat)*

Snout, what thou said to me earlier. Is it true?

**Snout:** Every word.

**Bottom:** Then I am sure you will find no troubles in Theseus,  
He should know how to establish  
The parenthood you both would claim.

**Titania:** That should not be necessary. Hand him,  
Then we may be upon our way, players.

**Bottom:** I should think that such hesitancy shows unfaithfulness.  
I will not let you take the babe without being sure.

**Titania:** (*Drawing her sword*) Very well then.  
If thou would say to deny me what's mine  
I shall do not else but use force to claim.

**Oberon:** (*Drawing his sword as well*) Oh, How this all could have  
been avoided.  
Such is the unfortunate way of fate.

**Quince:** Bottom, give the baby up. Thy protection is worthless.  
Thou will die otherwise. They do not jest with swords.

**Oberon:** Thy friend speaks to true reason. Stay thy grit;  
Else thy chance of peace shall fade far away.

(*Beat*)

**Bottom:** I reject and spit at thy offer.

**Titania:** Fool of a player, doth thou lack insight?  
Do you seek pains? For we shall deliver.  
Does thy own safety have less importance  
Than one whom you hath not known a fortnight?

**Bottom:** Perhaps thou will never know pain, pity;  
For thou cannot know what love is without.  
Those who fight contain none of life's passion,  
Only a blinded section of their goals.  
I claimed the stage as my home to find life,  
And a hope that others may applaud me.  
I longed to be a shooting star for all,  
A wish upon which some could admire.  
However, there exists a greater star,  
A star of love, friends, family, and smiles.  
For so long I did not see this grand star,  
Until I was yet again reminded.  
This sweet child, he showered me with his love,  
He does not know me, he owes me nothing,  
And yet he gives willingly all the same.  
He is that star, and one you shan't put out.  
Love is the greatest strength we all can have,  
And if you were to jeopardize his love  
Due to thy own ill-mannered practices,  
I shall stand firm and stop thy advances.

**Oberon:** Bold words that are well-spoken foolish friend.  
Alas, thy partners seem to lack thy strength.  
Thou stands alone and thou shall die alone.

**Quince:** (*Stepping forward*) He stands not alone.

**Bottom:** Peter Quince?

**Quince:** I am sorry for my actions Bottom.

I was so afraid of what could pass us,  
That I took away what thou truly loved.  
I spent time concerned about what could be,  
Instead of what stands to be currently.  
I see now the importance of thy plight,  
And won't worry myself or the details,  
If I might stand by thee as once before.  
As both players of the stage, and as friends.

**Flute:** And may I stand tall aside thou as well?

**Oberon:** Heavens above, another one appears!

Art thou too to chat at our bleeding ears?  
Some grand appraisal of growth it would seem,  
Is needed for all you mechanicals.  
It would be of mine own greatest delight  
If thou were to step away quietly.

**Flute:** I care not for your wishes, nor your pains,  
Only that of what stands as right and wrong.  
I should be not as one to bow to thee,  
If you should be cruel to those I care for.  
Methinks to be happier, as is true,  
Is best to be not spent appeasing you.

**Snout:** Hear, hear! Thyself lacks for better honor.  
I shall share the stage with those of respect,  
Before giving in to thy savagery.

**Starveling:** A cloth hath no purpose with no wearer.  
Like so, there is no purpose without love,  
To stand against one so cruel as thou art.

**Snug:** I don't know much about what's right and wrong,  
But I know that by them I will stand true.  
So I will stand against the both of you.

**Oberon:** Look here upon these foolish dramatics  
That do not but waste our time and patience.  
If growth comes with a cost, this be too great.  
Titania, let us end this party  
So that we may go home all the sooner.  
This drivell has done naught but bore mineself.  
Shalt thou take the sweet charge? Titania?

(*Beat*)

**Titania:** *(To self)* If before this day one had said mortals,  
Even these varlots, had love within them,  
I should sooner shoo them away and laugh.  
Yet now, I stand of doubt within myself.  
I should think that I love as they do now,  
But I hesitate upon their actions.  
They act it as such with no true regrets,  
While I stand here opposing their nature.  
What is love anyway? Is it to die?  
They face the danger of it with courage  
Even when they've known the babe so little.  
No, if it were true, all should be so dead.  
For a world living without love is blank,  
False to the one I have seemed to live in.  
Then perhaps it is the bonds over time,  
Like with how these players stand together.  
No, if time were the piece, it falls apart.  
One can be closer to one they meet now  
Than one whom they should have met years ago.  
I do not seem to understand this love,  
The willingness to protect, to care for.  
Perhaps I have been wrong on my own love,  
And that love simply is, without statement.  
I am sorry little one, for all things.  
Thou deserves more than what I can give thee.  
*(She sheathes her sword and speaks to everyone)*  
I retract all claims made upon this ground.

**Oberon:** Titania? What change hath come on thee?

**Titania:** A clarity Oberon, and its truth.  
We have not the right to a living babe  
If our intentions only be selfish.

**Oberon:** In all times I have known thee, I should not,  
In any occurrence, think to see thee,  
When in power, surrender what thou wants.  
It is calm and yet troubling to mine ears.

**Titania:** Then take the babe, but be the worse for it,  
Thou loves it not, nor have I in this time.  
Neither have a claim, we both know that truth.  
Take it, as thou cared more for it than I.

**Oberon:** *(Sheathes sword)* I never cared for it more than thyself,  
Though I have perhaps shown deep jealousy.

If claims like these are made, let us away,  
For there is more to discuss than to act.

*(To players)*

May our intrusion not hinder thyself;  
And may all thy performances shine bright.

*(Oberon exits)*

**Titania:** I away myself and bid thee good day.

A thousand apologies for today.

**Bottom:** Hold thyself steady!

**Titania:** Hmm?

**Bottom:** Why must grievances be held in thy heart?

The pains in thine eyes art too clearly there.

No harm has been caused to any persons.

**Titania:** Yes, but these pains come from deepest regret.

For so long I thought to know what love is,

I see now there is much I have to learn.

I thank thee for unblinding my closed eyes.

May thou be the brightest star in the sky,

And bring forth smiles to all those who need them.

*(Titania exits)*

**Bottom:** A stranger experience I've not seen,

But all has ended true and just it seems.

I thank thee my dear friends, for thy kindness.

Thou needed not to be by my strong side,

Yet thou were all the same.

**Flute:** Bottom, thou said what I hath query for.

Thou said of what a second reminder

The babe had brought unto you, please tell me,

What was the first?

**Bottom:** Is that not as clear as the sun's bright rays?

It was all of thee, my fellow players.

The passion and the love that thy all present

Is most promiscuous and extravagant!

Twas why I should be saddened at our stop,

For our halted production brought me fear

That my star had been unlightened.

**Flute:** Then I shall be its relighting!

I should see Oedipus Rex shown and mocked,

Then be a coward for lack of self faith.

**Snout:** And I as well! If for new self-respect,

For if thou believes in me Nick Bottom,

What should I fear I can fail to do!

**Snug:** And I maybe think, no, know that this choice,  
Shall mark us down in the pages of books.  
I may be afraid, but I'll be with thee,  
Just as I have before and always will.

**Starveling:** I suppose that if the show is onward,  
Thou shalt have need of greater clothing, yes?  
I shall be happy to provide and serve.

**Bottom:** I know not what to say to such pleasures!  
To see such vigor, it is of beauty.  
I can not thank thee all enough for this.

**Quince:** Yes, tis all sweet and touching and cliché,  
But hath thou forgotten reality?  
We art hours away from a live showing  
Before the Duke and Duchess of our land!  
No fairy tale of friendship from stories  
Can take away from our ill-preparedness!

**Bottom:** I should hath thought thou had grown Peter Quince,  
What from the rousing speech thou had given.

**Quince:** T'was but a defense for the baby and  
My error in not being true with thee  
As I should have been from the very start.

**Bottom:** I should think thy truth was in thy actions,  
Not in what you claim as now my dear friend.  
We may yet still pull off the greatest show,  
But we shall have need of our Peter Quince.

**Quince:** Hopeless or idiots, perhaps both words  
Can be used to describe thy ambitions.  
Still, tis better to fall on one's own ground  
And say that the trial did not defeat us.  
Well then, thou hopefully art right Bottom.  
I shall push aside fears and let forth art.  
On with the show!

*(Some cheering from the others)*

**Bottom:** Come now friends, all rehearse thy many parts,  
For we shalt dine with the Duke and Duchess,  
And perform the tale of Oedipus Rex  
Most obscenely and courageously!

*(Happily and hurriedly talking as the players exit)*

*(Blackout)*

Act 4. Scene 2:

*(Puck is alone upstage playing around. Oberon and Titania enter together silent and unaware of Puck's presence)*

**Oberon:** I must confess mine curiosity;  
For events hath transpired bizarrely  
In a close fashion of olden dramas.  
Titania, I should know my dear wife,  
And I should know she does not surrender.  
Why didst thou accept a false custody?

**Titania:** If theirs be false so should ours Oberon,  
For I saw that they did love the sweet child,  
Not as a servant or a small plaything.  
But thou did not have to follow my form.  
Tell me Oberon, why didst thou give in?  
Surely thou wouldst have more to gain from it.

**Oberon:** Perhaps, but mine interest was soonly lost  
When thou had given up the fight for it.  
I thought, "Why fight for what you do not love,  
And who you do love does not love either?"

**Titania:** Thou loves me?

**Oberon:** I hath always loved thee, Titania.  
But I fear my jealousy hath made clouds  
Over the sunlight of my heart and mind.  
If thou would shower me with forgiveness,  
I would promise a better Oberon  
In all ways thou could ever believe in.

**Titania:** But then what if I did not pledge the same?  
I should fear that my false love drove me wild  
And away from whomst I truly do love.  
I forgive thee if thou can forgive me,  
And may the rays of sun and moon bless us.

**Oberon:** Though I must confess, I stand here troubled,  
Worried if our chosen path is pleasant.  
Can these players care for the poor baby,  
Or shall influence be pulled for a home?

**Puck:** Might I, good lord Oberon, speak forward?

**Oberon:** Goodfellow! Thy presence was masked as night.  
Though I show no care for one eavesdropping,  
Thy wisdom may be of great privilege.  
Indeed, thou may speak of deep-seeded thoughts.

**Puck:** As I hath heard of this story now told,  
The decisions past made were rather bold.  
But the guidance of thy dear caring hearts,  
May yet serve to play a much grander part.  
The babe hath found deep love, or so it seems,  
Though the ends rarely justify the means.  
Now, my plan may sound most unorthodox,  
I wish to send my ideas across.  
Let the players have care of the baby  
And if forces above are kind, maybe  
The babe will find his happy ending tale  
In the arms of one who they would cradle.  
But we shall not forget our dearest babe,  
And from the shadows he shall have it made  
That there will be me at a moment's call  
To make needed assistance, if at all.  
I shall be a guardian from afar  
To watch the dear child wherever we are.

**Oberon:** Thou hath faith in these strange players, Robin?

**Puck:** I do my lord, for better or for worse.

**Titania:** And we may watch and help thee if needed?

**Puck:** As thou would wish it, my dearest lady.

**Oberon:** Then I see little wrong with such action.

**Titania:** As do I. It shall be settled here then.

We shall count on thou, Robin Goodfellow.

**Puck:** As thou wishes, so it shall be done hence.

**Oberon:** Speaking upon the matter of watching,

Did the players speak of a performance?

If they are to act, I should wish to see.

**Puck:** Well my lord, as thou may not yet quite know,

I have good word that tonight is a show.

**Titania:** Tonight? Then we must go, my Oberon!

**Oberon:** Quite so my sweet, let us change attire.

Then we shall to Athens and find two seats.

**Titania:** And may this be the start of a new love!

*(They both exit together)*

**Puck:** Methinks that upon this day, I hath seen,

A happy love between the King and Queen.

That sadly be a rare reality,

But it brings hope for the future to me.

Alas, why should they alone see the show,

When I, dear Puck, do also wish to go.  
Though for comics or not I can not say,  
But only know it shall be a fun day.  
*(Puck exits after Oberon and Titania)*  
*(Blackout)*

Act 5. Scene 1:

*(Open with attendants on stage talking. Philostrate enters)*

**Philostrate:** All ye citizens, gather and perch now,  
For the honorable lord Theseus,  
And the most beautiful Hippolyta,  
Hath now graced us with their perfect presence!  
*(Theseus and Hippolyta enter arm in arm and are met with applause)*

**Theseus:** Thy applause is gracious, but now onwards,  
For we art all gathered for one purpose;  
To bear witness to new entertainment,  
Provided by our own mechanicals!  
Now dear people of Athens, take thy seats,  
For we are to bear witness to the tale  
Of Oedipus Rex!

*(Mixed applause as everyone takes their seats)*

May the chorus enter!

*(Quince enters)*

**Quince (Chorus):** May all thee have blessings upon thy lives,  
Unlike Oedipus, from whose life pain thrives,  
For Oedipus's life has no gladness.  
Filled with tragedy and deepest sadness.  
We offer comfort for this tale of woe,  
For there is much, and we beg thou to know,  
That we wish not offense or ill-time spent,  
But only for your greatest enjoyment.

*(Quince exits)*

**Attendant 1:** Speech of fair honesty. Respectable.

**Attendant 2:** Though perhaps not proper for a new show.

**Attendant 3:** I just fear that this is a waste of time.

**Attendant 4:** Show courtesy, there may yet be better.

**Theseus:** Hush now! In comes new characters.

*(Enter Snout and Flute, who has an extended belly)*

**Snout (Laius):** Dear Jocasta, I Laius, King of Thebes,  
So do love thee and am smitten for this child.

For thy bosom carries in it a sacred treasure,  
That shall be most cherished by all.

**Flute (Jocasta) :** And how glad I am that it should be ours,  
For I shall love him as I love thee  
And our days shall be ever happier  
With a new name of our family.

*(Enter Starveling)*

**Starveling (Prophet) :** My King and Queen, the gods have presented  
And given unto me a future vision.  
I see the birth of thy babe, happy and healthy.  
But I hath also foreseen thy demise,  
Given unto thee by thy own next of kin.

**Snout (Laius) :** My own child thou say, to be my end?  
Then we must act! For my fate is nigh,  
And Thebes shall disperse into an abyss  
Should there be no leader to rule it.  
Alas, I know not how to care for a kin  
That seeks only mine own demise.

**Flute (Jocasta) :** Perhaps we shall give great lengths of love,  
So that we may be a true family?

**Snout (Laius) :** A murderer shall be no family of mine!  
Perhaps we shall murder the murderer,  
Before the seed of evil may be planted  
And that a more deserving child may take place.

**Starveling (Prophet) :** A brilliant idea your majesty!  
Your genius no doubt confounds more simple minds!

**Attendant 1 :** If I be simple then thou art a tool!

**Attendant 2 :** The king be little but a hypocrite.

**Quince (Chorus) :** And so twas decreed, that at the birth,  
The poor child would be brought into the world,  
*(Starveling shows off the baby)*  
And he would be sent back away,  
Through methods of pikes through the feet  
And a drowning in Neptune's sea.  
*(Starveling rushes off stage with the baby)*

**Attendant 3 :** I should hath never seen such savagery!

**Attendant 4 :** Quickly, we must off to save the poor babe!

**Quince (Chorus) :** Worry thyselfs not my friends, the babe is  
fine.  
For blessings of mercy were shown and the babe,  
Still fragile and weak, was left on a mountain

By a kindly servant. Soon after a shepard,  
Blessed in heart, found and took the babe to Corinth.  
The King and Queen of Corinth took the babe,  
*(Flute and Snout make some slight clothing adjustment  
to indicate change of character)*  
And they made him their adopted child.  
He was bestowed with the name Oedipus.  
*(Enter Bottom who poses dramatically before going over  
to stand with Snout and Flute)*  
All stood well for Oedipus, till one day,  
When he learnt the truth. He was adopted.  
*(Bottom overacts surprised and saddened, while Snout,  
Flute, and Quince all at shrug and exit the stage  
awkwardly)*

**Bottom(Oedipus):** Mine life shall have thee no penance,  
For it is of sweet graces that I, Oedipus,  
Have learnt of my cruel and unjust fate.  
I must away myself for knowledge,  
So that I can find where my own kin lies.  
If I had but only known of an oracle,  
So that I might be given guidance!

*(Starveling enters)*

**Starveling(Oracle):** Didst thou speak of a grave need for  
guidance?

For I may offer much yet none so kind.  
Dear Oedipus, I hath foreseen thy fate,  
Thou art to murder thy own dear father.

**Bottom(Oedipus):** Gods be feared! If thou speaks true, I must  
away.

For to live where I might take away the life,  
Of the man who gave me mine happily  
I shall not allow for it. Therein such,  
I shall travel to Thebes, where I know none  
And start life anew, far away from fate.

*(Starveling exits)*

**Theseus:** I should pity the man, if he I knew,  
I would hath given to him safe comforts,  
For fate can be a cruel and unkind friend.

**Hippolyta:** Perhaps that his life may yet change for good,  
Look now at a new approach from Laius.  
He hath returned into this grim story.

*(Snout enters and bumps into Bottom)*

**Snout(Laius):** Beest thou a blind fool or just slow?

Make thyself moved aside, I must have way.

**Bottom(Oedipus):** Such indulgence! Thou hath insulted my honor!

I should expect formal apologies for cruel acts!

**Snout(Laius):** Hah! Doth thou know not who I am?

It should be within thy best interest,

To stand, bow, and beg for forgiveness.

Else I shall ensure grave consequences,

And thou wilt have them at fullest extent.

**Bottom(Oedipus):** Full consequences? I shall show thee punishment,

And perhaps a rough fight might teach thee respect!

**Snout(Laius):** Have at thee ruffian!

*(They fight and Bottom emerges triumphant)*

**Bottom(Oedipus):** Thou art slain. Pity upon the mighty fool,

Who thought he could best Oedipus in combat.

Now I am to be off, for I hath lost time,

Dealing with this stranger of a man.

*(Starveling and Quince come and drag Snout off stage)*

**Attendant 1:** Look at how they come and drag him off stage!

**Attendant 2:** Perhaps the greater tragedy to see,

Is the one on stage but not in the show.

**Attendant 3:** Though it certainly serves for comedy.

**Attendant 4:** Hey now! What serves to be that bizarre thing?

*(Snug enters)*

**Bottom(Oedipus):** Heigh ho! Is this not Thebes, good creature?

**Snug(Sphinx):** It is.

**Bottom(Oedipus):** Then might I be granted passage to it?

**Snug(Sphinx):** You may.

**Bottom(Oedipus):** Well, I thank thee kind-

**Snug(Sphinx):** IF THOU CAN SOLVE THE RIDDLE OF THE SPHINX!

**Hippolyta:** I can see that the booming voice of Snug,

Hath finally been used to strong effect.

**Bottom(Oedipus):** Pray thee then great Sphinx. Give me the riddle.

**Snug(Sphinx):** Hold yet stranger, should you fail this test,

I shall kill you. Doth thou still accept this?

Else run and thou shalt still live again.

**Bottom(Oedipus):** I fear thee not. Challenge me so!

**Snug(Sphinx):** Very well then, speak forth the right answer.

What walks on four legs in the morning,  
Two legs at noon, and three in the evening?

**Theseus:** Ah! I should know the answer! Tis people.

A person begins morning life crawling,  
Stands strong on their two feet at midlife noon,  
And shall hath need of a third cane at end.

**Bottom(Oedipus):** But tis so easy! Observe it hence,

As the great Oedipus declares as such:

The answer to thy riddle Sphinx, is a chair!

*(Confusion talking and reactions from all)*

*(Quince rushes on stage in a panic)*

**Quince(Chorus):** Of course this was but a jest of Oedipus!

For the answer was, said Lord Theseus,

A human being, not a chair!

**Bottom(Oedipus):** I had thought about it much dear Chorus,

And while one may think it is a human being,

It is not so. For think on this fact,

Life is not measured in a day, tis beyond thought.

Thus, it must be an unlivable object.

Hence, a chair. One sits every morning in one,

With four strong legs. Until the legs give way,

For wood shalt not last forever, and snap in two.

Thus, two legs remain. But a chair need only three,

As a circular chair in form need but three,

And any should know to not throw waste to wind.

**Attendant 1:** Be that a stool then?

**Bottom(Oedipus):** Can't thou sit on a stool?

**Attendant 2:** You can.

**Bottom(Oedipus):** And doth thou sit in chairs?

**Attendant 3:** You do.

**Bottom(Oedipus):** Then doesn't it mean that stools and chairs be  
the same?

**Attendant 4:** Yes?

**Bottom(Oedipus):** Then I, Oedipus, hath solved the riddle!

*(Quince and Snug make slight hand signs to signal to "just go with it")*

**Snug(Sphinx):** Thy smarts hath bested me! I must redeem myself,  
And jump off a cliff to the great beyond.

*(Snug jumps off stage with a death cry. Quince hurries offstage and changes to Creon. Quince then hurries back on dragging Flute)*

**Quince(Creon) :** Brave hero! Thou art a grand champion!  
Thee who hath bested the Sphinx, may we say,  
That due to the vanish of the king,  
Thou should take his place and marry our queen!  
I, humble Creon, shall serve thee faithfully.

**Bottom(Oedipus) :** A most fashionable idea! I accept.

**Flute (Jocasta) :** And might I say that our love shall be pure and true.

*(Quince switches to Chorus while Bottom and Flute do lovey dovey things)*

**Hippolyta:** Is that not a wholesome love, Theseus?

**Theseus:** It should be better if they weren't of kin.

**Quince(Chorus) :** Alas, fortune should not live forever.  
In time, the lands became cursed with a plague  
That sewed weaves of death and destruction.

**Bottom(Oedipus) :** Creon!

**Quince(Creon) :** *(Switching back)* As thou hath summoned me my lord.

**Bottom(Oedipus) :** Head forth to the oracle at Delphi.  
Find the truth of the falsities that plague us.

**Quince(Creon) :** Right away my lord!  
*(Quince exits)*

**Flute (Jocasta) :** Whatever could be the reason for this?  
Must this cursed sadness be ever going?

**Bottom(Oedipus) :** I know not, only that Creon may learn of why.  
*(Quince reenters)*

**Quince(Creon) :** I hath seen and spoken to the oracle.  
Our pains exist from the death of beyond,  
The last King, Liaus, was sadly murdered,  
And the gods hath spoken of justice's need.

**Bottom(Oedipus) :** Then there be but one action to take.  
Bring forth to my presence Tiresias.  
I shall hath need of good sight  
From one who is to the world blinded.

*(Quince exits and reenters with Starveling)*

Tiresias, speak of thy wise knowledge.  
Who twas the one that struck down King Liaus,  
So that the gods may yet be satisfied?

**Starveling(Tiresias) :** Thou doth not see the truth poor Oedipus,  
For if you did, the search would cease to be.  
Thou art the one who killed thy own father.

**Bottom(Oedipus) :** Lies! I hath not done what is claimed here.

I should not stand to think that fate caught me,  
And that mine efforts hath been for nothing.

**Flute (Jocasta) :** My love would not kill for killing, lest it be  
kin,

Wouldst thou argue that the man before thee,  
Thy noble King, is a dirty killer?

**Starveling(Tiresias) :** It is the truth and thou art but a fool  
If thou will live in denial and run.

**Bottom(Oedipus) :** I live not in denial, for I hath killed.

But it twas many years ago, an old man,  
Who was crooked and passed me by to Thebes.

**Flute (Jocasta) :** This man thou speaks of. What were his features?

**Bottom(Oedipus) :** *(Using hand gestures)* About yay tall, so wide,  
and of thy age.

**Flute (Jocasta) :** *(Aside)* Gods forsake me no, it is him.

Which can only mean this fear has come true.

I must away myself and console for what has been.

I would blame the fates for such a cruel trick,

But I know I am at fault for my actions.

The fear I gave power took its new strength

And secured the fate I fought to avoid.

My life, which was spent trying to escape

This ending by any cost, has become

The catalyst from which these events have transpired.

All that can be done now to redeem myself

In my eyes and my heart, is to ensure

That none else be harmed through this life's folly.

Please know that I do love thee Oedipus,

But not for what our love should be made of.

I must do with myself alone now. Goodbye.

*(Flute exits)*

**Bottom(Oedipus) :** Creon, escort the prophet out, I need no more.

*(Quince and Starveling exit)*

If all is held as truth, what should I fear?

I should fear it all, my wife, my love,

My home, my city. All gotten through death.

But my wife, how she would act just now.

It reeks of treachery and betrayal.

She must hath known of this horrible truth,

Yet she kept it hidden away from me.

This be unforgivable in mine eyes  
And I shall see her pay for these misdeeds!

*(Bottom exits after Flute)*

**Attendant 1:** A cruel and unforgiving fate awaits.

**Attendant 2:** I were to fly if I was in her state.

*(Bottom reenters carrying the "dead" Flute in his arms)*

**Attendant 3:** But look now at how he carries her corpse!

**Attendant 4:** Hath he given in to a full savage?

**Bottom(Oedipus) :** It be not by my hand that she lays dead.

Though perhaps it might as well should be.

Through her own hands hath she given back life

And welcomed the embracement of death.

*(Bottom sets Flute down)*

Now she may rest from her sins in good peace,

While I shall live and rot with my mistakes.

My own pursuit hath brought me here

And I have become everything I feared.

Fate is cruel and hath taken more than given.

So now may I take away from mine as well.

For too long I thought I could see my path,

Yet he who was blind saw more than I.

I wish not to see if I shall be cursed with this pain.

*(Bottom takes hairpins and "stabs" his eyes in a both dramatic and slightly scarred fashion)*

I may now be blind to the world,

But I can now clearly see my flaws.

I shall take my leave of Thebes forever more,

And let none think fondly again of Oedipus,

For he is a pitiable and foolish man

Who is no better than his fate predicted.

*(Quince enters as Chorus)*

**Quince(Chorus) :** And thus came unto his end, Oedipus.

For no greater tragedy could have come

To one truly noble and wise of heart.

May his peace and his memory

Reside within all of thee who see.

And to live not in fear but in courage

Unafraid of what is and shall be.

*(An awkward silence comes from the audience)*

**Bottom:** *(To Quince)* They do not applause us.

**Quince:** I can, with my eyes, see that Bottom.

**Bottom:** *(To the Attendants)* Perhaps thou would like more?  
Pray tell, perhaps a follow up story?  
One of Oedipus's next adventure?  
Or something related to his children?  
For we could make that as well,  
Perhaps Lord Theseus can preside in one?

**Theseus:** I pray not, I be not one of the stage.  
I should shudder at my own performance  
And to have me as a true character?  
I know not how to see that image fit.

**Bottom:** Well then? What of thy thoughts? Have we not  
entertained?

*(Beat)*

**Hippolyta:** *(Standing up and clapping)* Most certainly.  
I have not seen a finer tragedy,  
With comedy not bearing as before.  
Thou hath performed truly admirable  
My dear mechanicals.

*(Everyone else joins in the clapping as all the mechanicals come  
to the front of the stage, hug each other, and bow)*

*(Blackout)*

#### Act 5. Scene 2:

*(Bottom is alone on stage singing to the baby)*

**Bottom:** The Ousel-Cock, so black of hue,  
With orange tawny bill,  
The Thristle with his note so true,  
The Wren, with little quill.  
The Finch, the Sparrow, and the Lark,  
The plain-song Cuckoo gray,  
Whose note full many a man doth mark  
And dares not answer nay;  
For, indeed, who would set his wit to so foolish  
A bird? Who would give a bird the lie, though he cry  
'Cuckoo' never so?

*(Speaking)*

Little one, look upon where we now stand.  
I know not by what good graces we met,  
But they have led us on an adventure.  
Though I am sad to see thee go, tis best.  
Thy home lies with those who can care for thee.

I am sure that Peter Quince will find them,  
Thy true parents of course. Not lying thieves.  
But I shall always come to thee in need.  
I promise thou the best I can provide  
And the best wishes for a happy life.

*(Quince enters)*

**Quince:** So thou lies here Bottom! I bring news.

**Bottom:** Good Peter Quince! What of the boy's parents?

**Quince:** None I hath found lay to the claim of kin.

I swear thee up and down, I talked to all,  
But none would step forward to claim the boy.

**Bottom:** Tis concerning. Doth none care for him?

We must away ourselves and keep looking.

I would hath thought the play might bring them out.

**Quince:** What if, dare I speak it, those travelers,

The ones we met near the woods, were truthful  
And were the child's parents?

**Bottom:** They had no love and had no rights to him.

They spoke it so from their crimson mouths, Quince.  
Plus, there was too much against such a truth.

**Quince:** I shall trust you then, and hope we find them.

The true family of the babe that is.

*(Flute, Snout, Starveling and Snug enter)*

**Flute:** Peter Quince! Bottom! We hath come to warn!

Philostrate has heard rumors of a babe  
That has no family to call its own.  
I fear that Philostrate will take the boy,  
If we do not find the family quick!

**Quince:** Then we must act quickly! Time is fleeting!

They must be found without hesitation,  
Else who knows in what degraded shack  
Philostrate will throw the babe into.

**Bottom:** There is no need. We already found them.

**Quince:** What dost thou speak of Bottom? Tis a lie.

Thou just said that they were not found and yet,  
Now thou says opposite so truthfully.

**Bottom:** Within these two days I hath seen greatness.

I've seen how one child can change a world.  
I hath seen simple folks, like us, showcase  
And share our gifts, to be met with respect.  
I have seen, and I will not let it fade.

Find Philostrate and tell him this as such,  
I, Nick Bottom, shall assume custody  
Of the child.

**Starveling:** But what of his family?

**Bottom:** He has none that hath shown themselves to us.  
Thus, I shall take him on alone.

**Quince:** No, not alone. If thou wilt have me, Bottom,  
I should wish to join in good care for him.

**Bottom:** Peter Quince, thou doth not need to join me.  
I hath spent long thinking upon this point.  
You need not make this choice here with me.

**Quince:** I forsook thy feelings once Nick Bottom,  
I promise to never do so again.  
Despite some setbacks, the Oedipus show  
Was grander than any could have thought of.  
You believed in it and us, so I shall too.  
Worry not, for I will ease all of my fears.

**Flute:** And I shall commit myself here as well.  
He shall be like the brother I have not,  
And I might teach him all that I now know.

**Snout:** Thou art still young dear Flute, with much to learn.  
Therefore, it should be said without silence,  
That I offer my services as well.

**Starveling:** And I would suppose that I should help too.  
For funds are scarce and much could be savéd,  
If one, like myself, made clothes to be worn.

**Snug:** I know not the ways I might be of help,  
But name it and I shall gladly partake!  
I will do what I can for the baby.

**Bottom:** All of you, I thank thee for this kindness.  
From now on, we shall not just be players,  
We art to be a family!

*(They all embrace)*

Now, I think that we must see Philostrate  
And speak upon a lack of need for services.

*(Agreements as they happily talk and walk offstage together)*  
*(Meanwhile Oberon and Titania appear from a hiding spot)*

**Titania:** Away goes those mechanicals, may they,  
And the boy, be blessed and most fortunate.

**Oberon:** I know they will make a fine family.  
One of goodness and joyous connection.

**Titania:** Perhaps thy dear Puck was correct to say  
That these players will make the baby play.

**Oberon:** Forget not dearest, we too shall watch him.  
Like silent spirits and kind guardians,  
The child will never truly leave our sight.

**Titania:** Yes, and it shall make me ever merry.  
Both to watch the child grow up and, of course,  
To do so alongside thou Oberon.

**Oberon:** And may I return the same to thee dear,  
For Titania is kinder than all.  
*(Music is heard beginning to play)*  
Doth thou hear the sounds of a happy band?

**Titania:** I do indeed, and tis not just a song.  
It be one that we hath often danced to.  
Our first as well if I am so correct.

**Oberon:** Then may I have one more dance here as well?  
For the moon is bright and thou art perfect.

**Titania:** Only a dance with you, my Oberon.  
*(They begin to dance to the music as Puck enters)*

**Puck:** If love and joy are not what thou do seek  
Forgive our intentions for being meek.  
For while many happy tales can be bad,  
A good tale told need not always be sad.  
And as I am an honest living Puck,  
Think not down on thy unfortunate luck.  
For good fortune can always find a way  
Into those who would simply wish to play.  
Love that is broken will with time remend,  
And thou may find from it the truest friend.  
*(Oberon and Titania dance offstage together)*  
And though we must now sadly say goodbye,  
We beg thou not to weep, despair, and cry,  
For we shall be in all of thine fair hearts,  
Never truly forgotten nor apart.  
Think that this was not but a reckoning  
In a midsummer day's awakening.  
*(Puck exits)*

*(Blackout)*  
*(Curtain)*  
*(Fin)*