

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

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Adapted for Young People  
from the original play by  
William Shakespeare

by

Judy Matetzsch-Campbell

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Austin TX

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Edited by Andrew Perry

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The Tempest was first produced by Pollyanna Theatre Company in Austin TX at The City Theatre in January 2008. The cast and crew were as follows:

QUINCE, FAIRIES:

Michelle Keffer

PUCK, PHILOSTRATE:

Skip Johnson

BOTTOM:

David Meissner

SNOUT, FAIRIES:

Bethany Harbaugh

OBERON, FLUTE:

Jason Marlett

TITANIA, HIPPOLYTA:

Stacey Glazer

DIRECTOR:

Judy Matetzschk-Campbell

STAGE MANAGER:

Andrew Perry

SCENIC DESIGNER:

Ia Ensterä

COSTUME DESIGNER:

Pamela Friday

SOUND DESIGNER:

Peter Blackwell

Cast of Characters

<u>PUCK:</u>	A mischievous fairy
<u>OBERON:</u>	King of the fairies
<u>TITANIA:</u>	Queen of the fairies
<u>QUINCE:</u>	A carpenter and acting troupe leader
<u>BOTTOM:</u>	A weaver and actor
<u>SNOUT:</u>	A tinker and actor
<u>FLUTE:</u>	A bellows mender and actor
<u>HIPPOLYTA:</u>	The soon-to-be Duchess of Athens
<u>PHILOSTRATE:</u>	Master of Revels to the court of Athens
<u>COBWEB:</u>	A fairy
<u>PEASEBLOSSUM:</u>	A fairy
<u>MOTH:</u>	A fairy
<u>MUSTARDSEED:</u>	A fairy

The goal of this adaptation of A Midsummer Night's Dream is to introduce young audiences to the major plot which, like many Shakespeare's plays, is based on the conflicts within families, new love, and the battle between humans and nature. The more adult characters and themes are removed.

\*May be performed by as few as six actors, with some playing multiple roles. Fairies may also be represented by puppets in addition to the live actors.

\*\*For school productions, the word "ass" may be replaced with "mule" if desired.

Scene

A forest and the court of Athens.

Time

Any time past, present, or future.

SETTING: A forest near the court of Athens.

AT RISE: PUCK and COBWEB enter.

PUCK

The king doth keep his revels here tonight;  
 Take heed the queen come not within his sight;  
 For Oberon is passing fell and wrath,  
 Because that she as her attendant hath  
 A lovely boy stolen from an Indian king;  
 She never had so sweet a changeling.  
 And jealous Oberon would have the child  
 Knight of his train, to trace the forests wild;  
 But she perforce withholds the loved boy,  
 Crowns him with flowers, and makes him all her joy.  
 And now they never meet in grove or green,  
 By fountain clear, or spangled starlight sheen,  
 But they do square, that all their elves for fear  
 Creep into acorn cups and high them there.

COBWEB

Either I mistake your shape and making quite,  
 Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite  
 Called Robin Goodfellow. Are not you he,  
 That frights the maidens of the villagery,  
 Skim milk, and sometimes labour in the quern  
 And bootless make the breathless housewife churn,  
 And sometimes make the drink to bear no barm,  
 Misdread night wanderers, laughing at the harm?  
 Those that Hobgoblin call you, and sweet Puck,  
 You do their work, and they shall have good luck.  
 Are not you he?

PUCK

Thou speak'st aright,  
 I am that merry wanderer of the night.  
 I jest to Oberon and make him smile,  
 When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,  
 Neighing in likeness of a filly foal;  
 And sometimes lurk I in a gossip's bol,  
 In very likeness of a roasted crab;  
 And when she drinks, against her lips I bob,  
 And on her withered dewlap pour the ale.  
 The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,  
 Sometimes for three-foot stool mistaketh me;  
 Then slip I from her bum, down topples she,  
 And "Tailor!" cries and falls into a cough;

PUCK (Cont.)

And then the whole quire hold their hips and laugh,  
And waxen in their mirth, and neeze and swear  
A merrier hour was never wasted there.  
But... How now, spirit, whither wander you?

COBWEB

Over hill over dale  
I do wander everywhere,  
Swifter than the moon's sphere;  
And I serve the fairy queen,  
To dew her orbs upon the green.  
The cowslips tall her pensioners be,  
In their gold coats spots you see;  
Those be rubies, fairy favours,  
In those freckles live their savours.  
I must go seek some dewdrops here,  
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.

(QUINCE, BOTTOM, and FLUTE  
approach. PUCK and COBWEB  
hide and watch.)

QUINCE

Is all our company here?

BOTTOM

You were best to call them generally, man by man, according  
to the scrip.

QUINCE

Here is the scroll of every man's name, which is thought  
fit, through all Athens, to play in our interlude before  
the Duke and the Duchess on his wedding-day at night.

BOTTOM

First, good Peter Quince, say what the play treats on, then  
read the names of the actors, and so grow to the point.

QUINCE

Marry, our play is: "The Most Lamentable Comedy and Most  
Cruel Death of Pyramus and Thisbe."

BOTTOM

A very good piece of work, I assure you, and a merry. Now,  
good Peter Quince, call forth your actors by the scroll.  
Masters, spread yourselves.

QUINCE

Answer as I call you. Nick Bottom, the weaver?

BOTTOM

Ready. Name what part I am for, and proceed.

QUINCE

You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus.

BOTTOM

What is Pyramus? A lover or a tyrant?

QUINCE

A lover that kills himself most gallant for love.

BOTTOM

That will ask some tears in the true performance of it. If I do it, let the audience look to their eyes: I will move storms; I will condole in some measure. To the rest- yet my chief humour is for a tyrant. I could play Ercles rarely, or part to tear a cat in, to make all split:

The raging rocks,  
And shivering shocks,  
Shall break the locks  
Of prison-gates;  
And Phibbus' car  
Shall shine from far  
And make and mar  
The foolish fates.

This was lofty! Now name the rest of the players. This is Ercles' vein, a tyrant's vein: A lover is more condoling.

QUINCE

Francis Flute, the bellows-mender?

FLUTE

Here, Peter Quince.

QUINCE

Flute, you must take Thisbe on you.

FLUTE

What is Thisbe? A wandering Knight?

QUINCE

It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

FLUTE

Nay, faith, let me not play a woman: I have a beard coming.

QUINCE

That's all one; you shall play it in a mask, and you may speak as small as you will.

BOTTOM

An I may hide my face, let me play Thisbe too. I'll speak in a monstrous little voice: "Thisbe, Thisbe!" "Ah, Pyramus, my lover dear! Thy Thisbe dear, and lady dear!"

QUINCE

You can play no part but Pyramus; for Pyramus is a sweet-faced man, a proper man as one shall see in a summer's day, a more lovely, gentleman-like man; therefore you must needs play Pyramus.

BOTTOM

Well, I will undertake it.

QUINCE

But, masters, here are your parts. And I am to entreat you, request you, and desire you, to con them by tomorrow night; and meet me in this palace wood, a mile without the town, by moonlight. Here will we rehearse. I pray you, fail me not.

BOTTOM

We will meet, and here we may rehearse most obscenely and courageously. Take pains; be perfect; Adieu!

QUINCE

At The Duke's oak we meet.

BOTTOM

Enough; hold or cut bow-strings.

(QUINCE, BOTTOM, and FLUTE  
exit. Enter PUCK and  
COBWEB.)

COBWEB

Farewell, thou lob of spirits; I'll be gone;  
Our Queen and all her elves come here anon.

PUCK

But room, fairy! Here comes Oberon!

COBWEB

And here my mistress! Would that he were gone!

(Exit PUCK.)

OBERON

I'll meet by moonlight, proud Titania.

TITANIA

What, jealous Oberon? Fairies, skip hence;  
I have foresworn his bed and company.

OBERON

Tarry, rash wanton; am not I thy lord?

TITANIA

Then I must be thy lady; but I know  
When thou hast stolen away from fairy land,  
And in the shape of Corin sat all day,  
Playing on pipes of corn, and versing love  
To amorous Phillida. Why art thou here,  
Come from the furthest steep of India?

OBERON

How canst thou thus, for shame, Titania,  
Glance at my credit!

TITANIA

These are the forgeries of jealousy;  
And never since the middle summer's spring  
Met we in hill, in dale, forest or mead,  
By paved fountain, or by rushy brook,  
Or in the beached margent of the sea,  
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,  
But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.  
Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,  
As in revenge have sucked up from the sea  
Contagious fogs.  
No night is now with hymn or carol blest;  
Therefore the moon, governess of floods,  
Pale in her anger, washes all the air,  
That rheumatic diseases to abound.  
And thorough this distemperature we see  
The seasons alter: The spring, the summer,



TITANIA (Cont.)

The childing autumn, angry winter, change  
 Their wonted liveries, and the mazed world,  
 By their increase, now knows not which is which.  
 And this same progeny of evils comes  
 From our debate, from our dissension;  
 We are their parents and original.

OBERON

Do you amend it, then; it lies in you.  
 Why should Titania cross her Oberon?  
 I do but beg a little changeling boy  
 To be my henchman.

TITANIA

Set your heart at rest;  
 The fairyland buys not the child of me.  
 His mother was a votaress of my order,  
 And in the spiced Indian air, by night,  
 Full often hath she gossiped by my side;  
 And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands,  
 Marking the embarked traders on the flood.  
 When we have laughed to see the sails conceive  
 And grow big-bellied with the wonton wind;  
 But she, being mortal, of that boy did die;  
 And for her sake do I rear up her boy  
 And for her sake I do not part with him.

OBERON

How long within this wood intend you stay?

TITANIA

If you will patiently dance in our round,  
 And see our moonlight revels, go with us.

OBERON

Give me that boy and I will go with thee.

TITANIA

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

(TITANIA & FAIRY exit.)

OBERON

Well, go thy way; thou shalt not from this grove,  
 'Til I torment thee for this injury.

OBERON (Cont.)

My gentle Puck, come hither. Thou rememb' rest  
 Since I once sat upon a promontory,  
 and heard a mermaid on a dolphin's back  
 Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath  
 That the rude sea grew civil at her song.

PUCK

I remember.

OBERON

That very time I saw, but thou couldst not,  
 Flying between the cold moon and earth,  
 Cupid all armed; a certain aim he took  
 At a fair vestal throned by the west  
 And loosed his love-shaft smartly from his bow  
 As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts;  
 Yet marked I where the bolt of Cupid fell:  
 It fell upon a little western flower.  
 Fetch me that flower, the herb I shewed thee once.  
 The juice of it on sleeping eyelids laid  
 Will make or man or woman madly dote  
 Upon the next live creature that it sees.  
 Fetch me this flower!

PUCK

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

(Exit PUCK.)

OBERON

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

(OBERON exits. Enter  
 TITANIA and FAIRIES.)

TITANIA

Come now, a roundel, and a fairy song;  
 Then, for the third part of a minute, hence;  
 Some to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds,  
 Some war with rere-mice for their leathern wings,  
 To make my small elves coats. Sing me now asleep;  
 Then to your offices, and let me rest.

COBWEB

(singing)

You spotted snakes with double tongue,  
 Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen;  
 Newts and blind-worms, do no wrong,  
 Come not near our fairy queen.

ALL FAIRIES

Sing in sweet lullaby;  
 Lulla, lulla, lullaby  
 Never harm, nor spell nor charm,  
 Come our lovely lady nigh;  
 So goodnight with lullaby.

PEASEBLOSSOM

Weaving spiders, come not here,  
 Hence, you long-legged spinners, hence!  
 Beetles black, approach not near;  
 Worm nor snail, do no offence.

ALL FAIRIES

Sing in sweet lullaby;  
 Lulla, lulla, lullaby  
 Never harm, nor spell nor charm,  
 Come our lovely lady nigh;  
 So goodnight with lullaby.

COBWEB

Hence away! Now all is well.

(Enter PUCK and OBERON.)

OBERON

Welcome, wanderer. Hast thou the flower there?

PUCK

Ay, there it is.

OBERON

I pray thee give it me.  
 I know a bank where the wild thyme blows;  
 Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows.  
 There sleeps Titania, some time of the night,  
 Lull'd in these flowers with dances in delight;  
 And with the juice of this I'll streak her eyes,  
 And make her full of hateful fantasies.

(He streaks TITANIA's  
 eyes with the flower.)

What thou seest when thou dost wake,  
 Do it for thy true-love take;  
 Love and languish for his sake.  
 Be it ounce, or cat, or bear,  
 Pard or boar with bristled hair,  
 In thy eye that shall appear  
 When thou waks't, it is thy dear.  
 Wake when some vile thing is near.

(Exit OBERON and PUCK.  
 Enter QUINCE, BOTTOM,  
 FLUTE, and SNOUT.)

BOTTOM

Are we all met?

QUINCE

Pat, pat; and here's a marvelous convenient place for our  
 rehearsal. This green plot shall be our stage, this  
 hawthornebrake our tiring-house; and we will do it in  
 action, as we will before the duke.

BOTTOM

Peter Quince -

QUINCE

What sayest thou, bully Bottom?

BOTTOM

There are things in this comedy of Pyramus and Thisbe that  
 will never please. First, Pyramus must draw a sword to kill  
 himself, which the ladies cannot abide. How answer you  
 that?

SNOUT

By'r lakin, a parlous fear.

FLUTE

I believe we must leave the killing out, when all is done.

BOTTOM

Not a whit; I have a device to make all well. Write me a prologue and let the prologue seem to say, we will do no harm with our swords, and that Pyramus is not killed indeed; and for the more better assurance, tell them that I, Pyramus, am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver; this will put them out of fear.

QUINCE

Well, we will have such a prologue, and it shall be written in eight and six.

BOTTOM

No, make it two more; let it be written in eight and eight.

SNOUT

Will not the ladies be afeared of the lion?

FLUTE

I fear it, I promise you.

BOTTOM

Masters, you ought to consider with yourselves; to bring in, G-d shield us, a lion among ladies is a most dreadful thing: for there is not a more fearful wild fowl than your lion living. And we ought to look to't.

FLUTE

Therefore another prologue must tell I am not a lion.

BOTTOM

Nay, you must name his name, and half his face must be seen through the lion's neck; and he himself must speak through, saying thus, or to the same defect: "ladies" or "Fair ladies", "I would wish you", or "I would request you", or "I would entreat you not to fear, not to tremble: I am a man as other men are"; and there indeed let him name his name, and tell them plainly he is Flute.

QUINCE

Well, it shall be so. But there is two hard things, that is, to bring the moonlight into the chamber; for, you know, Pyramus and Thisbe meet by moonlight.

SNOUT

Does the moon shine that night we play our play?

BOTTOM

A calendar, a calendar! Look in the almanac. Find out moonshine, find out moonshine.

QUINCE

Yes, it doth shine that night.

BOTTOM

Why, then may you leave a casement of the great chamber window, when we play, open, and the moon may shine in at the casement.

QUINCE

Ay, or else one must come in with a lantern, and say he comes to disfigure, or to present, the person of moonshine. Then there is another thing. We must have a wall in the great chamber, for Pyramus and Thisbe, says the story, did talk through the chink of a wall.

FLUTE

You can never bring in a wall. What say you, Bottom?

BOTTOM

Some man or other must present wall; and let him have some plaster, or some loam, or some rough-cast about him to signify wall. And let him hold his fingers thus; and through that cranny shall Pyramus and Thisbe whisper.

(Enter PUCK.)

QUINCE

If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit down, every mother's son, and rehearse your parts. Pyramus, you begin; when you have spoken your speech, enter into that brake, and so every one according to his cue.

PUCK

What hempen home-spuns have we swaggering here,  
So near the cradle of the fairy queen?  
What! A play toward? I'll be an auditor;  
An actor, too, perhaps, if I see cause.

QUINCE

Speak, Pyramus. Thisbe, stand forth.