

A Midsummer nights Dreame.

Bot. Masters, I am to discourse wonders; but aske mee not what. For if I tell you, I am not true *Athenian*. I will tel you euery thing right as it fell out.

Quin. Let vs heare, sweete *Botome*.

Bot. Not a word of me: all that I will tell you, is, that the Duke hath dined. Get your apparell together, good strings to your beards, new ribbands to your pumps, meete presently at the Palace, euery man looke ore his part: for the short and the long is, our play is preferd. In any case let *Thisby* haue cleane linnen: and let not him that plaies the Lion, paire his nailes, for they shall hang out for the Lions claws. And most deare Actors, eate no Onions, nor Garlicke; for we are to vtter sweete breath, and I do not doubt but to heare them say, it is a sweete Comedy. No more words: away, go away.

Enter Theseus, Hippolita, and Philostrate.

Hip. Tis strange my *Theseus*, that these louers speake of.

The. More strange then true. I neuer may belecue These anticke fables, nor these Fairy toies, Louers and mad men haue such seething braines, Such shaping phantasies, that apprehend more Then coole reason euer comprehends. The Lunaticke, the Louer, and the Poet, Are of imagination all compact. One sees more diuels then vaste hell can hold; That is the mad man. The Louer, all as franticke, Sees *Helens* beauty in a brow of *Egypt*. The Poets eie in a fine frenzy rolling, doth glance From heauen to earth, from earth to heauen. And as imagination bodies forth the formes of things Vnknowne; the Poets pen turnes them to shapes, And giues to airy nothing, a locall habitation, And a name. Such trickes hath strong imagination,

That

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That if it would but apprehend some ioy,
It comprehends some bringer of that ioy.
Or in the night, imagining some feare,
How easie is a bush suppos'd a Beare?

Hip. But all the story of the night told ouer,
And all their mindes transfigur'd so together,
More witnesseth than fancies images,
And growes to something of great constancy;
But howsoeuer, strange and admirable.

Enter louers: Lysander, Demetrius, Hermia, and Helena.

Thef. Here come the louers, full of ioy and mirth:
Ioy, gentle friends, ioy and fresh daies
Of loue accompany your hearts.

Lys. More then to vs, waite in your roiall walkes, your
boord, your bed.

Thef. Come now, what maskes, what dances shall wee
haue,

To weare away this long age of three houres,
Betweene or after supper, and bed-time?

Where is our vsuall manager of mirth?

What Reuels are in hand? Is there no play,

To ease the anguish of a torturing houre?

Call *Philostrate*.

Philo. Heere mighty *Theseus*.

Thef. Say, what abridgment haue you for this euening?
What maske, what musicke? how shall we beguile
The lazie time, if not with some delight?

Phil. There is a brieft, how many sports are rife.
Make choise of which your Highnesse will see first.

Thef. The battell with the *Centavrs* to be sung
By an *Athenian* Eunuch, to the Harpe.

Wee'l none of that. That haue I tolde my Loue,

In glory of my kinsman *Hercules*.

The riot of the tipsie *Bachanals*,

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Tea-

