

**HIPPOLYTUS**

'Tis strange, my Theseus, that these lovers speak of.

**THESEUS**

More strange than true. I never may believe These antique fables nor these fairy toys. Lovers and madmen have such seething brains, and in the night, imagining some fear, How easy is a bush supposed a bear!

**HIPPOLYTUS**

But, howsoever, strange and admirable.

**THESEUS**

Here come the lovers, full of joy and mirth.—

Joy, gentle friends! Joy and fresh days of love 30 Accompany your hearts!

**LYSANDER**

More than to us

Wait in your royal walks, your board, your bed!

**THESEUS**

Come now, what masques, what dances shall we have

To wear away this long age of three hours

Is there no play, To ease the anguish of a torturing hour? Call Philostrate.

**PHILOSTRATE**

Here, mighty Theseus.

**THESEUS**

Say, what abridgement have you for this evening? How shall we beguile

The lazy time if not with some delight?

**PHILOSTRATE**

Make choice of which your highness will see first.

**THESEUS**

*(reads)*

"The battle with the Centaurs, to be sung By an Athenian eunuch to the harp."

We'll none of that. That have I told my love, In glory of my kinsman Hercules.

"The riot of the tipsy Bacchanals,

Tearing the Thracian singer in their rage." That is an old device, and it was played

When I from Thebes came last a conqueror.

"A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus And his love Thisbe. Very tragical mirth."

"Merry" and "tragical"? "Tedious" and "brief"? That is hot ice and wondrous

strange snow. How shall we find the concord of this discord?

**PHILOSTRATE**

The passion of loud laughter never shed.

**PHILOSTRATE**

With this same play against your nuptial.

**THESEUS**

And we will hear it.

**PHILOSTRATE**

Extremely stretched and conned with cru 'l pain  
To do you service.

**THESEUS**

I will hear that play.  
For never anything can be amiss  
When simpleness and duty tender it.  
Go, bring them in.—And take your places, ladies.

**HIPPOLYT A**

I love not to see wretchedness o'er charged  
80 And duty in his service perishing.

**THESEUS**

Why, gentle sweet, you shall see no such thing.

**Hippolyta**

He says they can do nothing in this kind.

**THESEUS**

The kinder we, to give them thanks for nothing.  
Our sport shall be to take what they mistake. 85 And what poor duty cannot do,  
noble respect  
Takes it in might, not merit.  
Where I have seen them shiver and look pale,  
Make periods in the midst of sentences, Throttle their practiced accent in their  
fears,  
And in conclusion dumbly have broke off, Not paying me a welcome, I read as  
much as from the rattling tongue Of saucy and audacious eloquence. Love,  
therefore, and tongue-tied simplicity In least speak most, to my capacity.

**PHILOSTRATE**

100 So please your grace, the Prologue is addressed.

**THESEUS**

Let him approach.

**PROLOGUE**

You shall know all that you are like to know.

**THESEUS**

This fellow doth not stand upon points.

**THESEUS**

His speech was like a tangled chain. Nothing impaired, but all disordered. Who is next?

**PROLOGUE**

\*Long thing explaining what play is about\*

**THESEUS**

I wonder if the lion be to speak.

**DEMETRIUS**

No wonder, my lord. One lion may when many asses do.

**WALL**

\*Presents herself.\*

**THESEUS**

Would you desire lime and hair to speak better?

**DEMETRIUS**

160 It is the wittiest partition that ever I heard discourse, my lord.

**THESEUS**

Pyramus draws near the wall. Silence!

**PYRAMUS**

Alack Alack Alack

\*Blah blah blah\*

Cursed be thy stones for thus deceiving me!

**THESEUS**

The wall, methinks, being sensible, should curse again.

**BOTTOM**

\*Talks to audience, best part of the play IMO.\*

(Long thing where you don't have to talk. Pyramus and Thisbe agree to meet at the tomb.)

**WALL**

Thus have I, Wall, my part discharged so.

And, being done, thus Wall away doth go.

**THESEUS**

200 Now is the mural down between the two neighbors.

**HIPPOL YT A**

This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard.

**THESEUS**

The best in this kind are but shadows, and the worst are no worse if imagination amend them.

**HIPPOL YT A**

It must be your imagination then, and not theirs.

**THESEUS**

205 If we imagine no worse of them than they of themselves, they may pass for excellent men. Here come two noble beasts in, a man and a lion.

**LION**

\*Lion delivers monologue. Acted with good energy, but the shakespeareian dialogue causes trip-ups.\*

**THESEUS**

A very gentle beast, of a good conscience.

**LYSANDER**

This lion is a very fox, for his valor.

**THESEUS**

220 True. And a goose for his discretion.

**DEMETRIUS**

Not so, my lord. For his valor cannot carry his discretion, and the fox carries the goose.

**THESEUS**

His discretion, I am sure, cannot carry his valor, for the goose carries not the fox. It is well. Leave it to his discretion, and let us listen to the moon.

**MOONSHINE**

*(played by STARVELING)*

This lanthorn doth the hornèd moon present—

**DEMETRIUS**

He should have worn the horns on his head.

**THESEUS**

He is no crescent, and his horns are invisible within the circumference.

**MOONSHINE**

This lanthorn doth the hornèd moon present. Myself the man i' th' moon do seem to be—

**THESEUS**

This is the greatest error of all the rest. The man should be put into the lanthorn. How is it else the "man i' th' moon"?

**DEMETRIUS**

235 He dares not come there for the candle. For you see, it is already in snuff.

**HIPPOL YT A**

I am weary of this moon. Would he would change!

**THESEUS**

It appears by his small light of discretion, that he is in the wane. But yet, in courtesy, in all reason, we must stay the time.

**LYSANDER**

Proceed, Moon.

\*Wait until AJ roars\*

**DEMETRIUS**

Well roared, Lion!

**THESEUS**

Well run, Thisbe!

**HIPPOLYT A**

Well shone, Moon!—Truly, the moon shines with a good grace.

\*AJ should do something with the boa, if he takes too long, deliver next line.\*

**THESEUS**

Well moused, Lion!

**DEMETRIUS**

And then came Pyramus.

**LYSANDER**

And so the lion vanished.

**PYRAMUS**

\*Waxes poetic. Your cue is some q words.\*

**THESEUS**

This passion and the death of a dear friend would go near to make a man look sad.

**HIPPOLYT A**

Beshrew my heart, but I pity the man.

**PYRAMUS**

\*Lots of nonsense, then "Die die die"\*

**DEMETRIUS**

No die, but an ace for him, for he is but one.

**LYSANDER**

Less than an ace, man. For he is dead. He is nothing.

**THESEUS**

With the help of a surgeon he might yet recover and prove an ass.

**HIPPOLYT A**

How chance Moonshine is gone before Thisbe comes back and finds her lover?

**THESEUS**

She will find him by starlight. Here she comes, and her passion ends the play.

**(The other sitters talk for a minute, then thisbe comes and finds dead**

**pyramus.)**

**THISBE**

Adieu, adieu, adieu

**THESEUS**

Moonshine and Lion are left to bury the dead.

**BOTTOM**

*(out of character)* No, assure you. The wall is down that parted their fathers. Will it please you to see the epilogue, or to hear a Bergomask dance between two of our company?

**THESEUS**

No epilogue, I pray you, for your play needs no excuse. When all the players are dead, there needs none be blamed. But come your bergomask. Let your epilogue alone.

(The dance goes on)

**THESEUS**

The iron tongue of midnight hath told twelve.

Lovers, to bed. 'Tis almost fairy time.

Sweet friends, to bed. A fortnight hold we this solemnity,

(Chill, or leave. ldk)