

## 1: WELCOME TO ATHENS

Adapted by Julia Cranney

### SCENE 1: THE WOODS OUTSIDE ATHENS

PUCK  
Hello everyone, gather round and let me introduce myself. I am a merry wanderer of the night. Some call me Hobgoblin, but I prefer Puck. I work for my master Oberon and make sure he has good luck.  
  
But I'll tell you a bit more about him later... I need to let you know what's happening in Athens first. Are you ready to see some magic? Shalakazoo... Woops! Let's try again... Mnnn-ha!

### SCENE 2: THE CITY OF ATHENS

PUCK  
Welcome to Athens! A city all in a flutter... Because in just four days, the noble Duke Theseus is marrying the warrior Queen Hippolyta. Most people are excited, but others are feeling stressed, like the young lady Hermia - who's in a proper mess.  
  
Hermia's dad, Egeus, wants her to marry Demetrius. But Hermia's in love with another, who goes by the name of Lysander. Egeus isn't happy - a daughter should respect her father, so off he goes to Theseus to try to sort out the bother.  
  
"Put duty over desire," says the lord of the land; "fit your fancies to your father's will; it's what the law demands. Take four days to think it over," says the Duke to the young lover, "but upon our wedding day, be ready to do as we say."

### SCENE 3: HERMIA'S HOUSE, ATHENS

PUCK  
Poor Hermia! Let's see how she's doing. Don't mind me, I'm just going to wait up here. Don't worry, they can't see me. Here she comes!

LYSANDER  
O Hermia! Why is your cheek so pale?

HERMIA  
Lysander, it's so unfair. To have to choose my love by my father's eyes...

LYSANDER  
The course of true love never did run smooth...



A Midsummer Night's Dream

HERMIA

But couldn't it run a little less bumpy?

LYSANDER

Hear me, Hermia, I have an idea. We should get out of this city and head for the far side of the woods where Athenian law doesn't reach. And instead of marrying Demetrius, you can marry me! Tomorrow night I'll wait for you in the woods and we'll travel together, if you'll have me?

HERMIA

My good Lysander, I swear to you by Cupid's strongest bow that I'll meet you tomorrow in the wood.

PUCK

Ahh! The best-laid plans of young lovers...

HELENA

Oh woe...

PUCK

Who's this now?

HELENA

Oh woe, woe, woe, woe, woe, woe, woe...

PUCK

That's Hermia's friend Helena, and she's not happy...

HERMIA

Fair Helena!

HELENA

You call me fair? That fair again unsay. Demetrius loves your fair. Ah, why can't I look like you? Why can't I sound like you? Why can't I be you? O, teach me how to make Demetrius love me like he loves you.

HERMIA

I frown at him, yet he loves me still.

HELENA

O that you could teach me that skill!

HERMIA

Helena, honestly, the more I hate him, the more he follows me.

HELENA

The more I love him, the more he hates me.

HERMIA

Take comfort Helena. Demetrius is no more going to see my face, because Lysander and I are planning to flee this place.

HELENA

What?!

HERMIA

Shh! Tomorrow night...

LYSANDER

When it's dark and nobody can see us...

HERMIA

We're going to sneak out of Athens' gates.

- HELENA                                   You're running away?
- HERMIA                                   It's the only way for us to be together. You understand don't you?
- HELENA                                   I... I...
- HERMIA                                   Farewell, dear Helena, pray for us. Be safe Lysander and hide from my sight. I won't see you 'til tomorrow when we flee at midnight.
- LYSANDER                               Farewell my Hermia. Helena adieu; as you dote on him, I hope Demetrius will now start to dote on you.
- HELENA                                   Ugh! Why should Hermia be so much happier than me? Through Athens I am thought as fair as she. But what of that? Demetrius doesn't think so. He used to love me, but then he changed his mind. And since he started to fancy Hermia he's been really, really unkind. I will go and tell him of Hermia and Lysander's plan and maybe then he'll thank me for sharing their secret and start to be a kinder man?
- PUCK                                       So, it looks like Lysander and Hermia's secret plan isn't so secret any more. When they meet by moonlight tomorrow, something tells me Demetrius and Helena won't be far behind.
- [PUCK FLIES OFF]*