



Arts Engagement
and Education

PUCK

“My mistress with a monster is in love.”

From *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

by William Shakespeare: <https://www.shakespeare.org.uk>

Gender: Male/Male Presenting

Style: Classical Comedic

Age Range: Mid 18-39

Link to buy Script: www.amazon.com

Play Synopsis

Theseus, the Duke of Athens, is preparing for his marriage to Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons, A courtier seeks the Duke's intervention because his daughter, Hermia, will not agree to his choice of Demetrius as a husband: she's in love with Lysander. The Duke tells Hermia to obey her father, or either die or accept a life as a nun in Diana's temple. Lysander and Hermia plan to elope, and they tell Helena, who is in love with Demetrius, but he hates her and loves Hermia. The lovers run away from Athens but get lost in the woods. They are followed by Demetrius, and then by Helena, who has told him of their intentions.

Oberon, king of the fairies, who lives in the woods, argues with his queen, Titania, over an Indian boy she refuses to give him. Oberon overhears Helena and Demetrius arguing and sends his mischievous servant, Puck, to get a flower whose juice has the power to make people fall in love with the first creature they see when the juice is placed on their eyelids while asleep. He instructs Puck to put some drops on Demetrius' eyes. Mistaking the Athenian, he seeks, Puck puts the flower juice on the eyes of the sleeping Lysander so that when he is woken by Helena, he immediately falls in love with her and rejects Hermia.

In this Moment

Puck encounters Oberon and explains the outcome of his experiments with the love potion. Oberon is pleased to learn that Titania has fallen in love with the monstrous Bottom and that Puck has also fixed the disdainful Athenian. Just after Puck assures him that Demetrius must now love Helena, Demetrius and Hermia enter the scene. Oberon recognizes Demetrius, but Puck realizes this is not the same Athenian he bewitched with the potion. Because her darling Lysander has mysteriously disappeared, Hermia accuses Demetrius of murdering him and hiding the body. Demetrius insists that he didn't kill his enemy, but Hermia refuses to believe him. Giving up the argument in despair, Demetrius sinks to the ground and falls asleep, while Hermia continues her search for the missing Lysander.

Oberon reprimands Puck for anointing the wrong Athenian with the love juice. To correct the situation, Oberon sends Puck in search of Helena and then squeezes the magic potion into the cold-hearted Demetrius' eyes. Lysander and Helena enter the scene, still bickering because Helena thinks he is mocking her. Their voices wake Demetrius, who falls in love with Helena at first sight, compliments of Oberon's potion. Hearing what she believes are Demetrius' phony declarations of love, Helena is furious:

Both Lysander and Demetrius are now making fun of her. When Hermia enters, the situation gets even worse.

Monologue (Act III, Scene II)

My mistress with a monster is in love.
Near to her close and consecrated bower,
While she was in her dull and sleeping hour,
A crew of patches, rude mechanicals,
That work for bread upon Athenian stalls,
Were met together to rehearse a play
Intended for great Theseus' nuptial-day.
The shallowest thick-skin of that barren sort,
Who Pyramus presented in their sport,
Forsook his scene, and enter'd in a brake,
When I did him at this advantage take:
An ass's nole I fixed on his head.
Anon, his Thisbe must be answered,
And forth my mimic comes. When they him spy—
As wild geese that the creeping fowler eye,
Or russet-pated choughs, many in sort,
Rising and cawing at the gun's report,
Sever themselves and madly sweep the sky,
So, at his sight, away his fellows fly;
And, at our stamp, here o'er and o'er one falls;
He murder cries and help from Athens calls.
Their sense thus weak, lost with their fears thus strong,
Made senseless things begin to do them wrong:
For briers and thorns at their apparel snatch;
Some sleeves, some hats, from yielders all things catch.
I led them on in this distracted fear,
And left sweet Pyramus translated there;
When in that moment, so it came to pass,
Titania wak'd, and straightway lov'd an ass.

Helpful Links: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2CnFtrICQD8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JE9vCqoeO4g>