

Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Major Characters

- **THESEUS** – The fair-minded Duke of Athens
- **EGEUS** – A nobleman, Hermia's strict father
- **LYSANDER** – Young nobleman, in love with Hermia
- **DEMETRIUS** – Young nobleman, currently in love with Hermia, formerly with Helena
- **QUINCE** – Commoner, a carpenter
- **SNUG** – Commoner, a joiner (a kind of carpenter)
- **BOTTOM** – Commoner, a weaver and amateur actor
- **FLUTE** – Commoner, a bellows-mender
- **SNOOT** – Commoner, a tinker or metal repairman
- **STARVELING** – Commoner, a tailor
- **HIPPOLYTA** - Queen of the Amazons, engaged to Theseus
- **HERMIA** – Young noblewoman, Egeus' daughter who is in love with Lysander
- **HELENA** – Young noblewoman, in love with Demetrius
- **OBERON** - King of the Fairies
- **TITANIA** - Queen of the Fairies
- **PUCK** or **ROBIN GOODFELLOW** - A mischievous Fairy

Plot Summary:

A Midsummer Night's Dream is one of Shakespeare's most beloved and often performed comedies. It is the story of a complex love triangle.

The play begins in the palace of Duke Theseus who is preparing to wed the Amazon queen, Hippolyta. The festivities are interrupted by a dispute, however. The beautiful young Hermia is in love with Lysander, but the two cannot get married. Her father, Egeus, wants her to marry the unfaithful Demetrius, and refuses to budge. So Hermia and Lysander run away together. They head to the woods outside Athens where they plan to marry in secret. Before they leave, they share their plan with their good friend Helena, who tells Demetrius, because she is in love with him.

In the forest, the four are caught in the middle of a battle between members of the spirit world. The King of the Fairies, Oberon, is furious with his wife Titania. To get revenge on her for keeping an Indian boy he wants for a servant, he sends his fairy, Puck, to fetch a magical love flower. He will use this flower against Titania, but he tells Puck to use it to force Demetrius to love Helena. However, Puck makes a mistake and charms Lysander, who falls in love with Helena

Oberon places the spell on Titania as she sleeps. The first thing she sees, she is bound to fall madly in love with. Meanwhile, Puck happens upon a group of local workingmen clumsily and hilariously rehearsing a play for Theseus's wedding. On a whim, he transforms one of them, Bottom, into a donkey-headed creature. As luck would have it, Titania awakens just in time to spy him and fall head over heels in love.

Puck tells Oberon the good news, but the celebration is short-lived when Oberon discovers Puck's mistake with the young people. In trying to fix it, Oberon puts the love spell on Demetrius who also falls in love with Helena. Comedic chaos ensues as the young couples battle with each other over love gone awry.

Finally, Oberon and Puck set things right; Lysander returns to Hermia and Helena gets to keep her Demetrius. The four are married together with Theseus and Hippolyta, and everyone is treated to Bottom and his friends' hilariously misguided attempts at high drama.