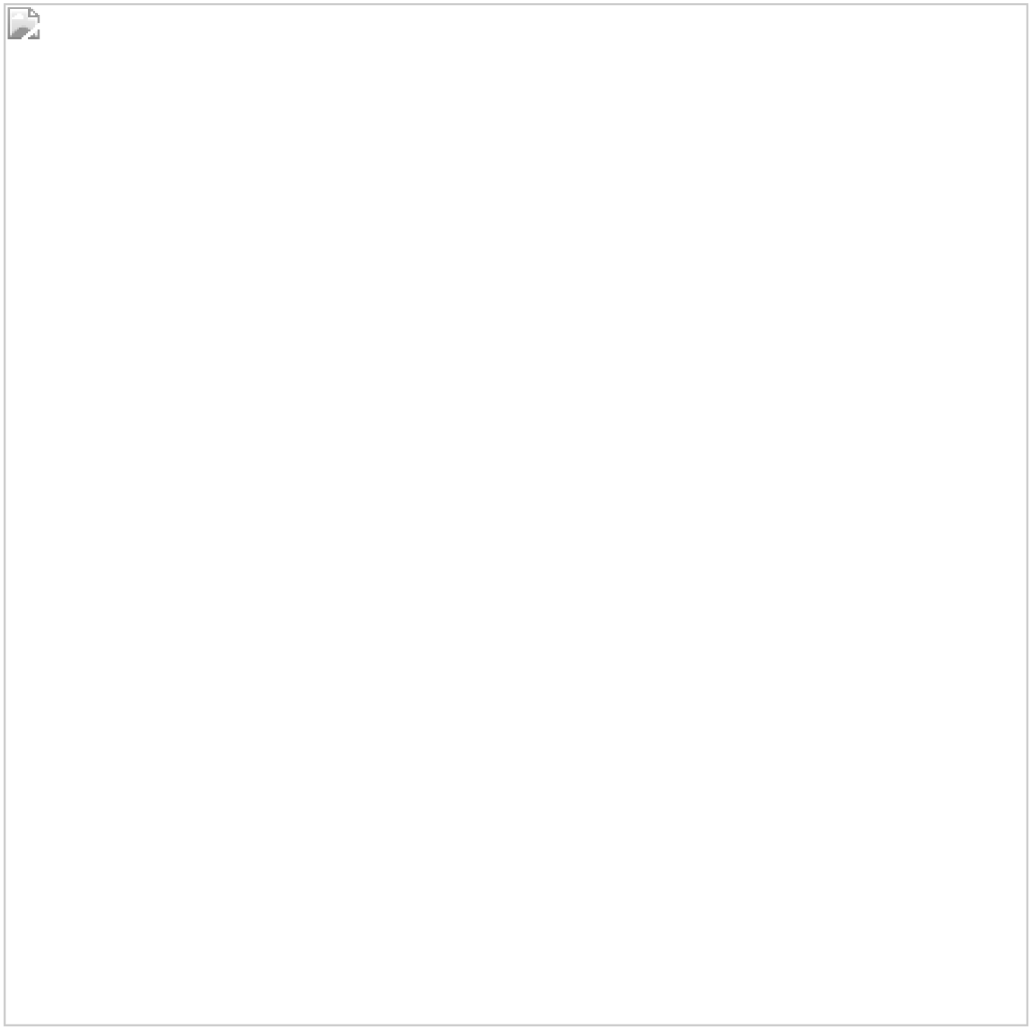
COLORING THE CLASSICS

A Midsummer Night's Dream

A Play by Shakespeare



In the city of Athens, long ago, Duke Theseus was going to marry Queen Hippolyta. Only "four happy days" were left until the wedding, and everyone was getting ready.

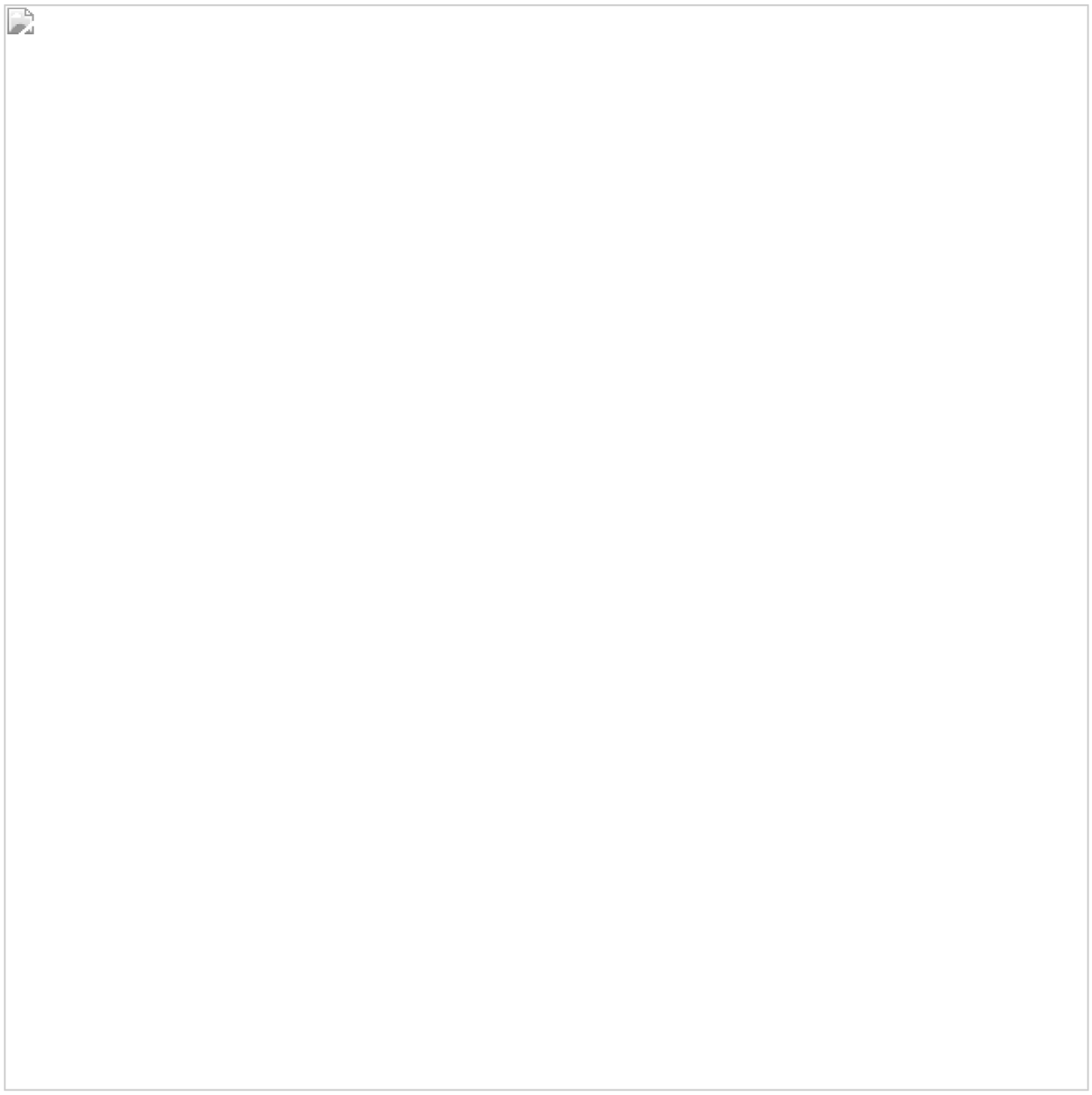
But not everyone in Athens was happy.

TALK ABOUT IT

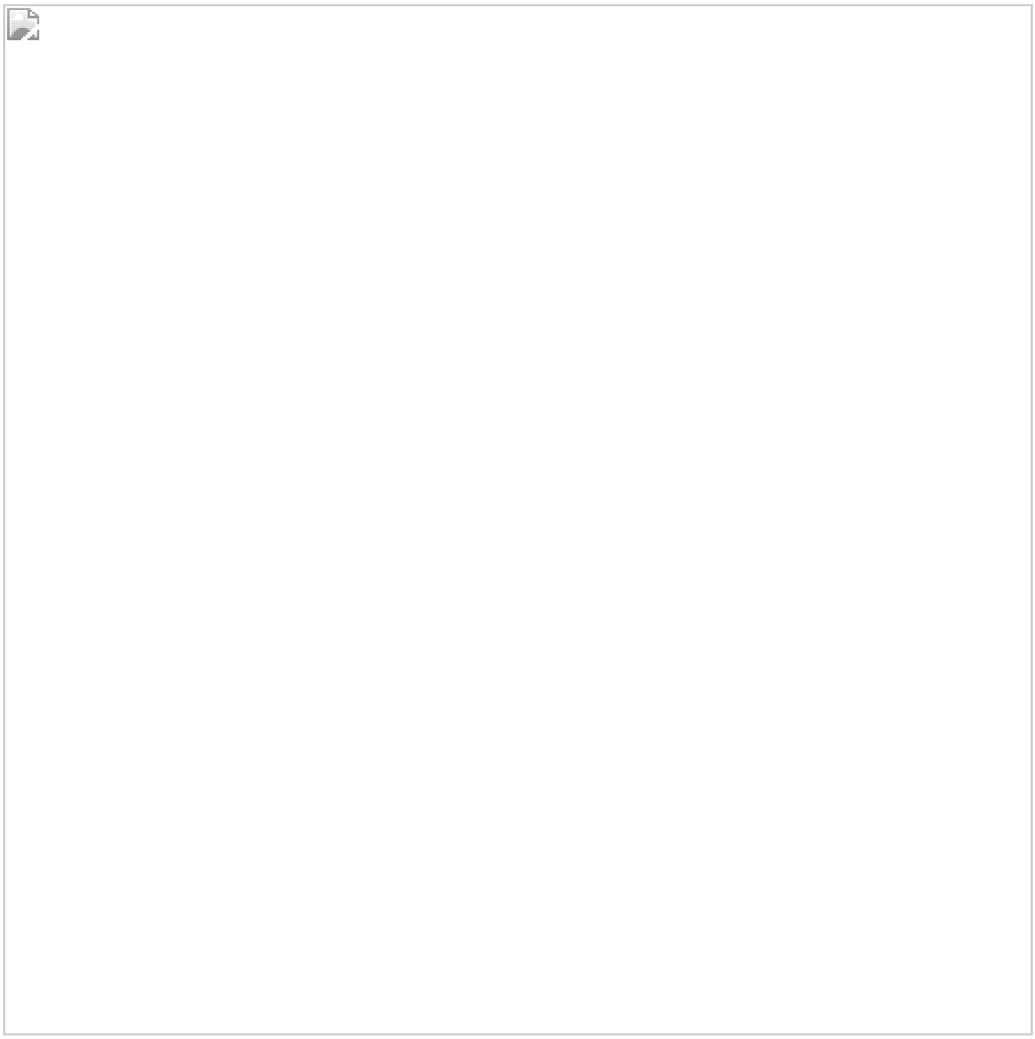
A wedding is coming. Who do you think is not happy?

This book belongs to _____

A Midsummer Night's Dream · another picture



Hermia Says No



A girl named Hermia loved a young man named Lysander, and Lysander loved her.

But Hermia's father, Egeus, wanted her to marry Demetrius. He brought Hermia to the Duke and asked for the old law of Athens: a daughter must marry the man her father chose.

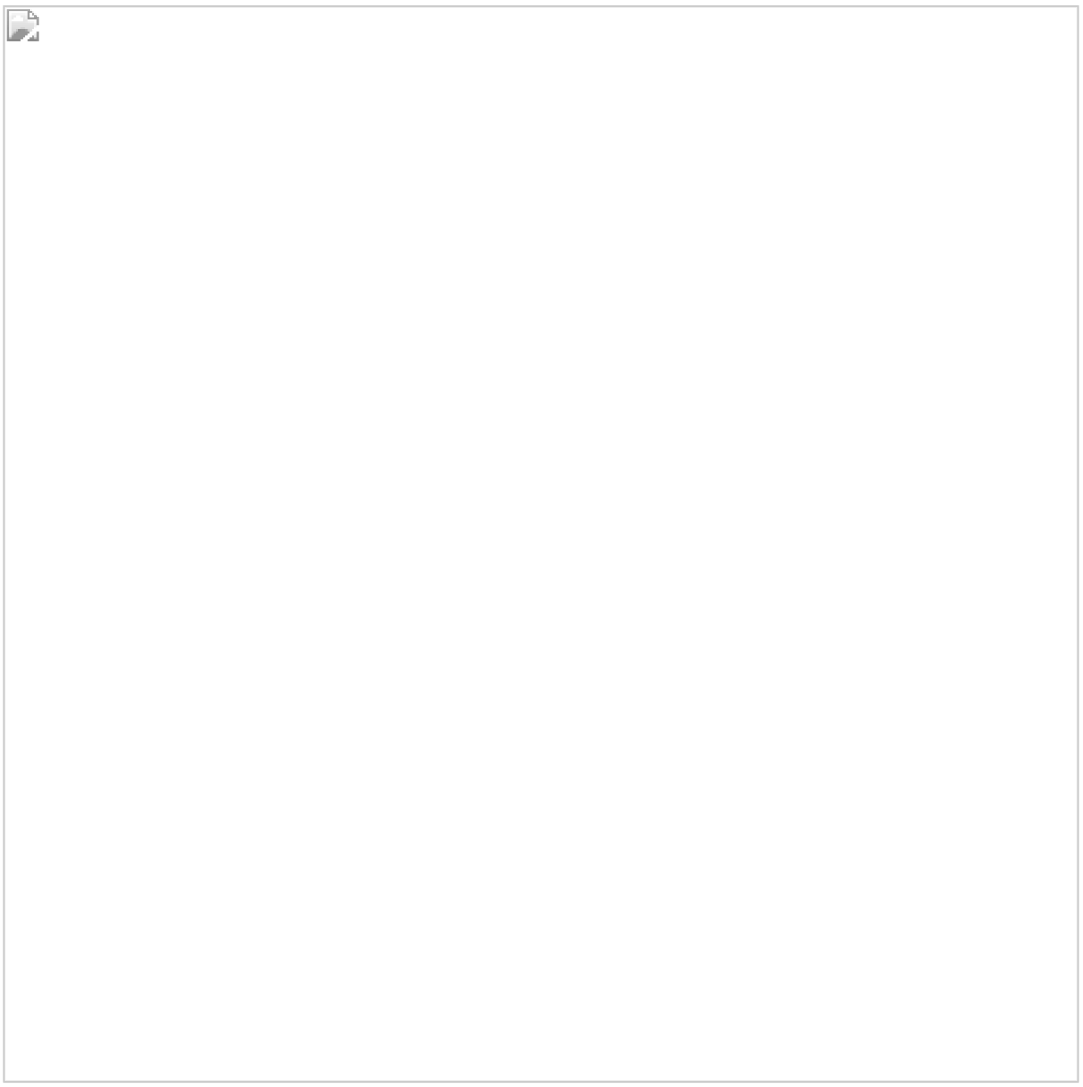
"I would my father look'd but with my eyes," said Hermia. She wished her father could see Lysander the way she did.

The law was harsh. If Hermia said no, she could be punished terribly, or sent away to live shut off from the world for the rest of her life. The Duke gave her until his wedding day to decide.

TALK ABOUT IT

Hermia wanted her father to see with her eyes. Why is it hard when people who love each other want different things?

Hermia Says No · another picture

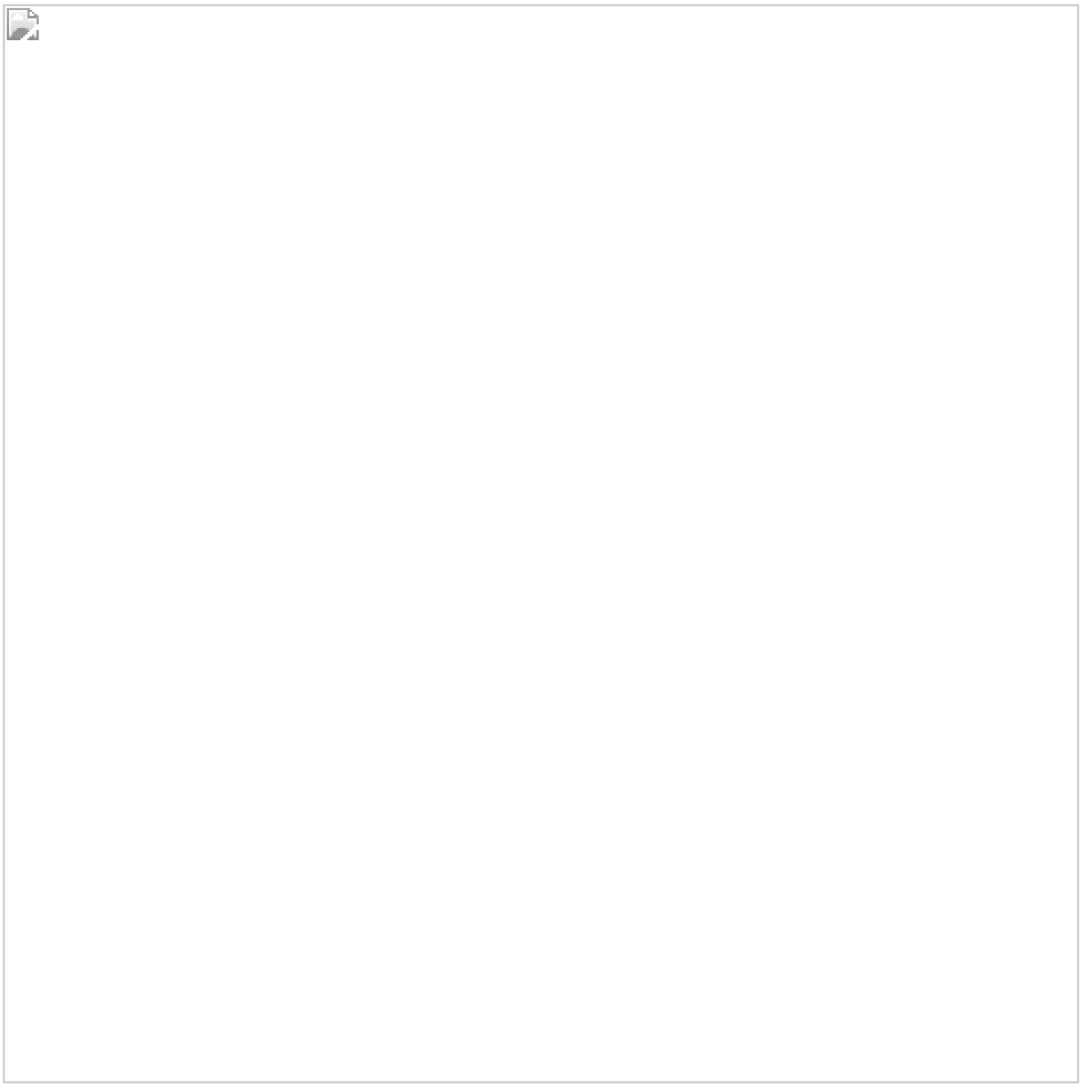


Think about it

1. Who did Hermia love?

- ○ Demetrius
- ○ Lysander
- ○ Theseus

True Love Is Never Smooth



When they were alone, Lysander comforted Hermia. “The course of true love never did run smooth,” he said. In all the old stories, love always had trouble on its way.

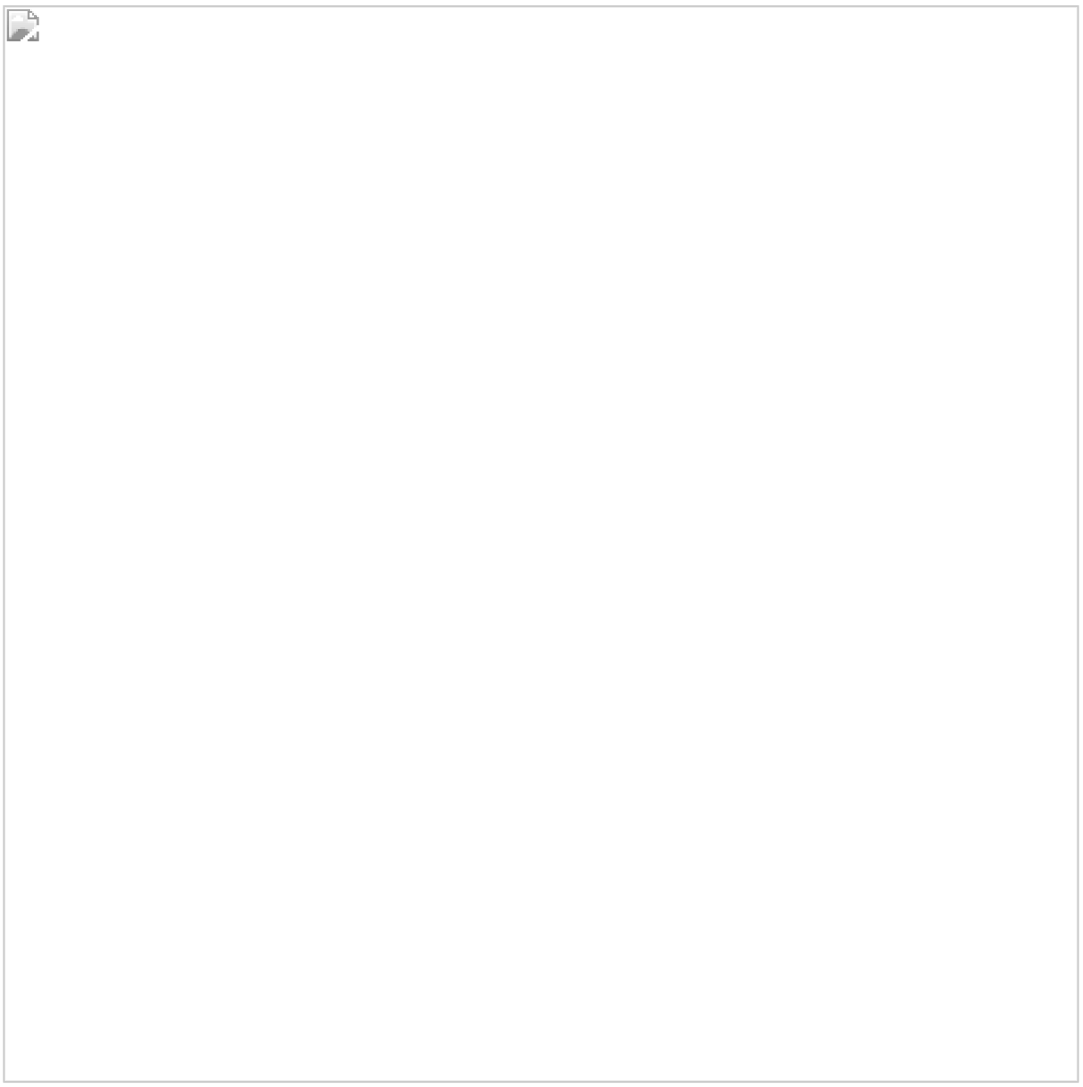
So they made a plan. The next night they would meet in the wood outside Athens and run away to Lysander’s aunt, far from the hard law.

They told their plan to Hermia’s friend Helena. Poor Helena loved Demetrius, but Demetrius loved Hermia and would not even look at Helena.

Helena thought that if she told Demetrius, he would follow Hermia into the wood, and maybe he would thank her. So she told him.

TALK ABOUT IT

Helena told the secret to try to win Demetrius. Was that a good way to be loved? What else could she have done?



Think about it

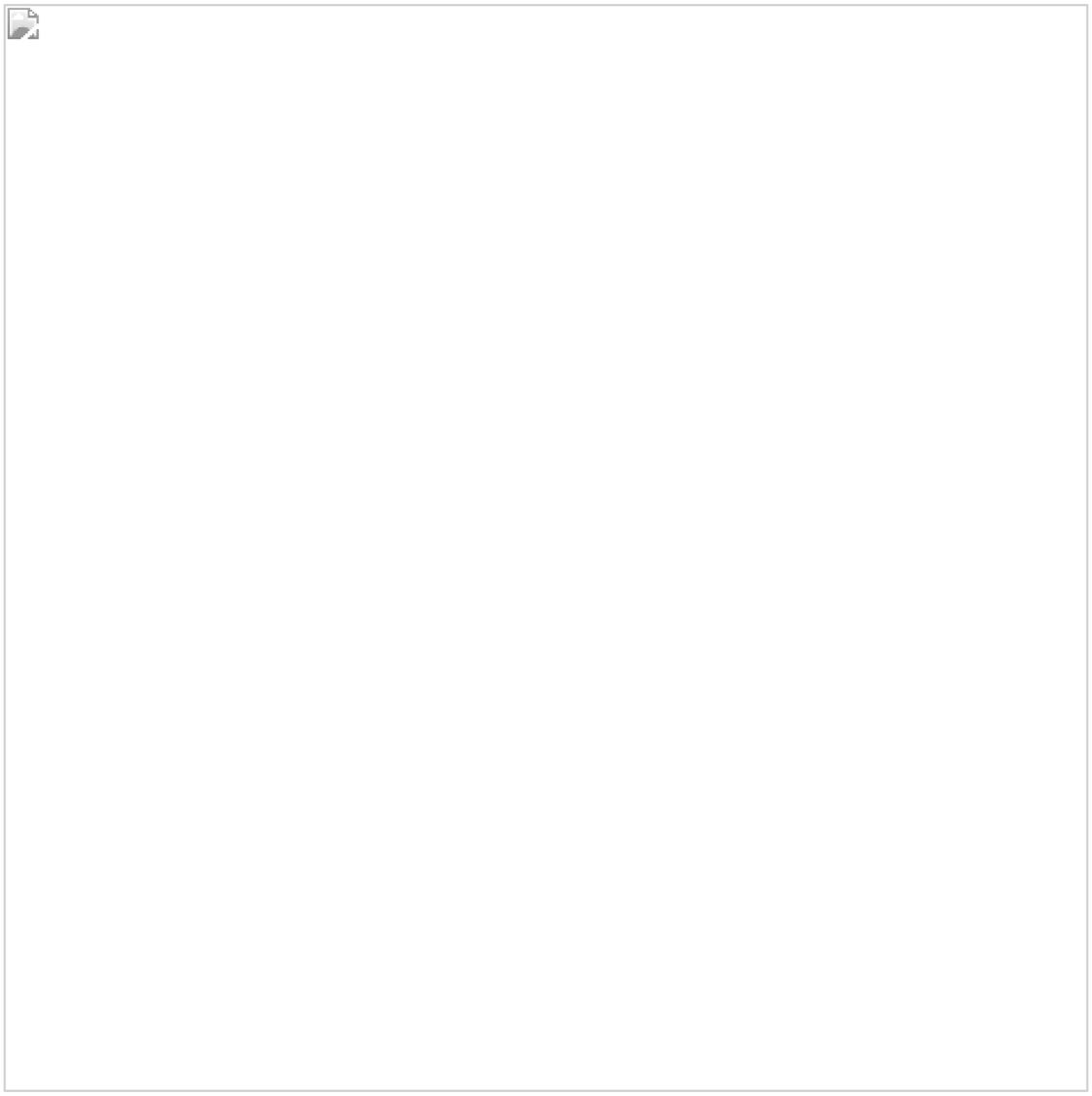
1. What did Lysander say about true love?

- ○ It is always easy
- ○ It never did run smooth
- ○ It only happens in the wood

2. Why did Helena tell Demetrius the secret?

- ○ She wanted to stop the wedding
- ○ She loved him and hoped he would thank her
- ○ Hermia asked her to

The Workmen's Play



Meanwhile, some workmen of Athens met at Peter Quince's house to plan a play for the Duke's wedding: the sad old story of Pyramus and Thisbe, who loved each other through a crack in a wall.

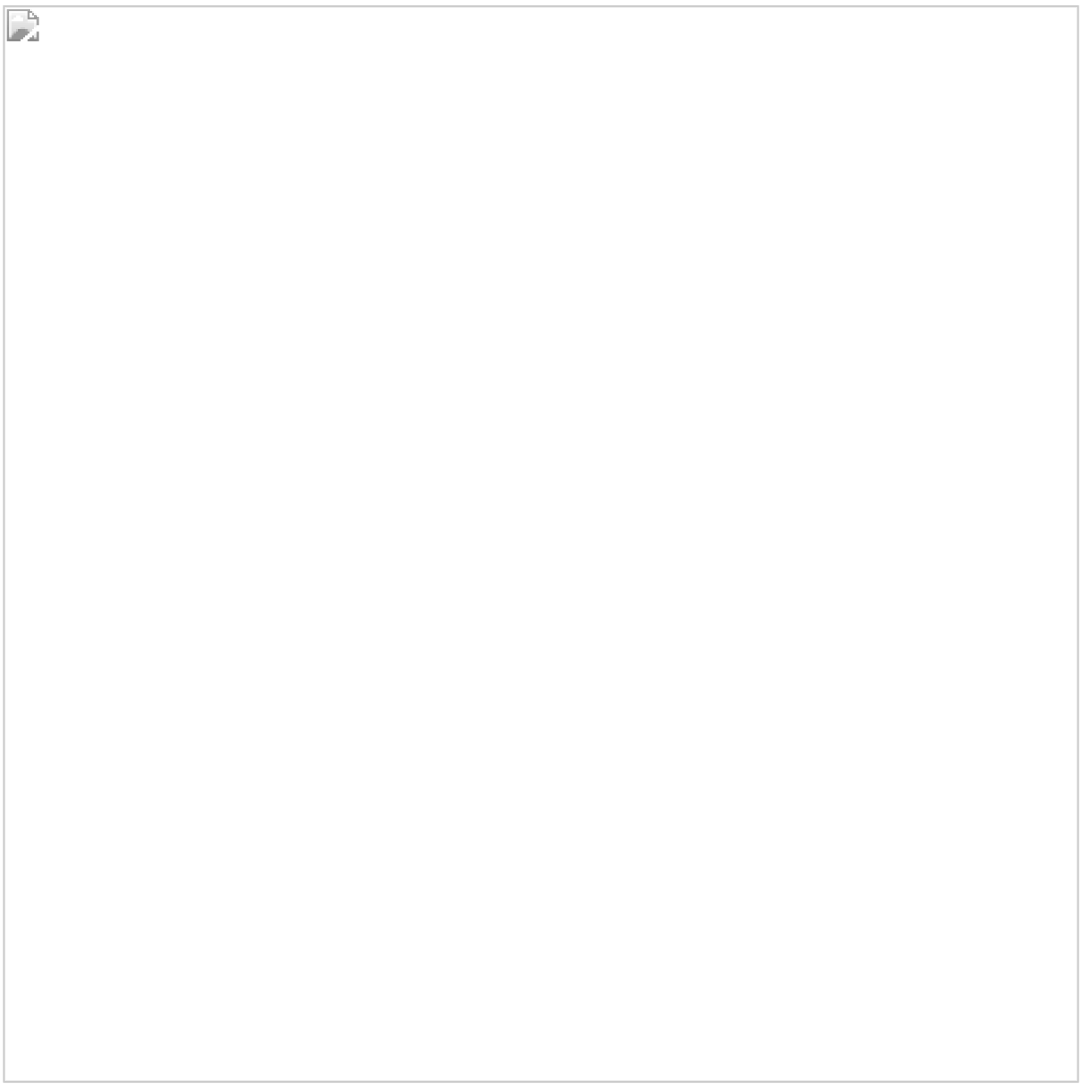
Nick Bottom the weaver was to play Pyramus. But Bottom wanted to play every part! "Let me play the lion too. I will roar that I will do any man's heart good to hear me."

Quince said that if Bottom roared too loud, he would frighten the ladies.

"I will roar you as gently as any sucking dove," said Bottom. They agreed to practice in the wood the next night, by moonlight.

TALK ABOUT IT

Bottom wanted every part for himself. Why is it good to let other people have a turn?

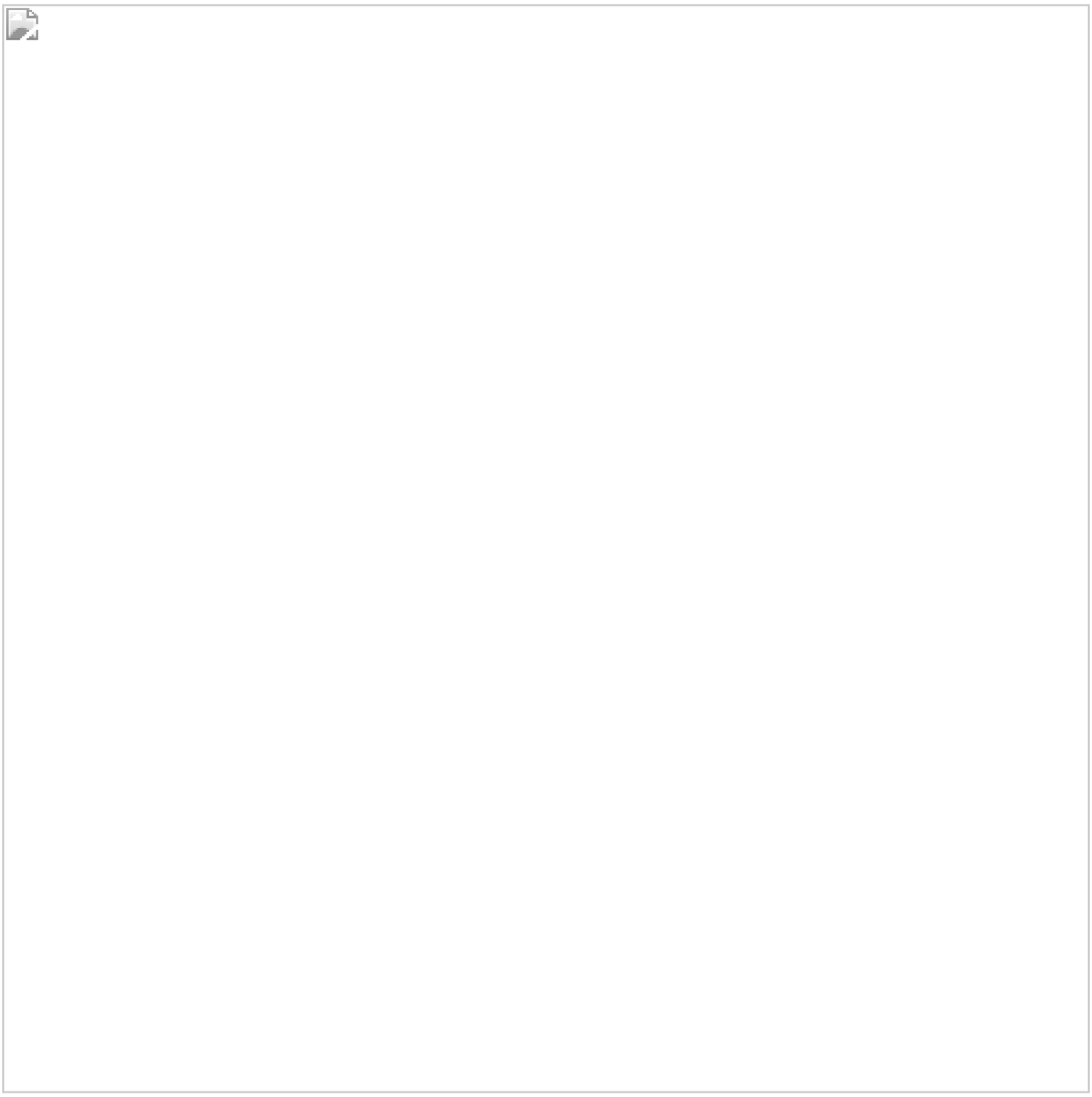


Think about it

1. What part did Bottom want to play as well as Pyramus?

- ○ The lion
- ○ The Duke
- ○ The moon

The Fairy King and Queen



That same wood belonged to the fairies. Oberon, their King, and Titania, their Queen, were having a bitter quarrel. “Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania,” said Oberon.

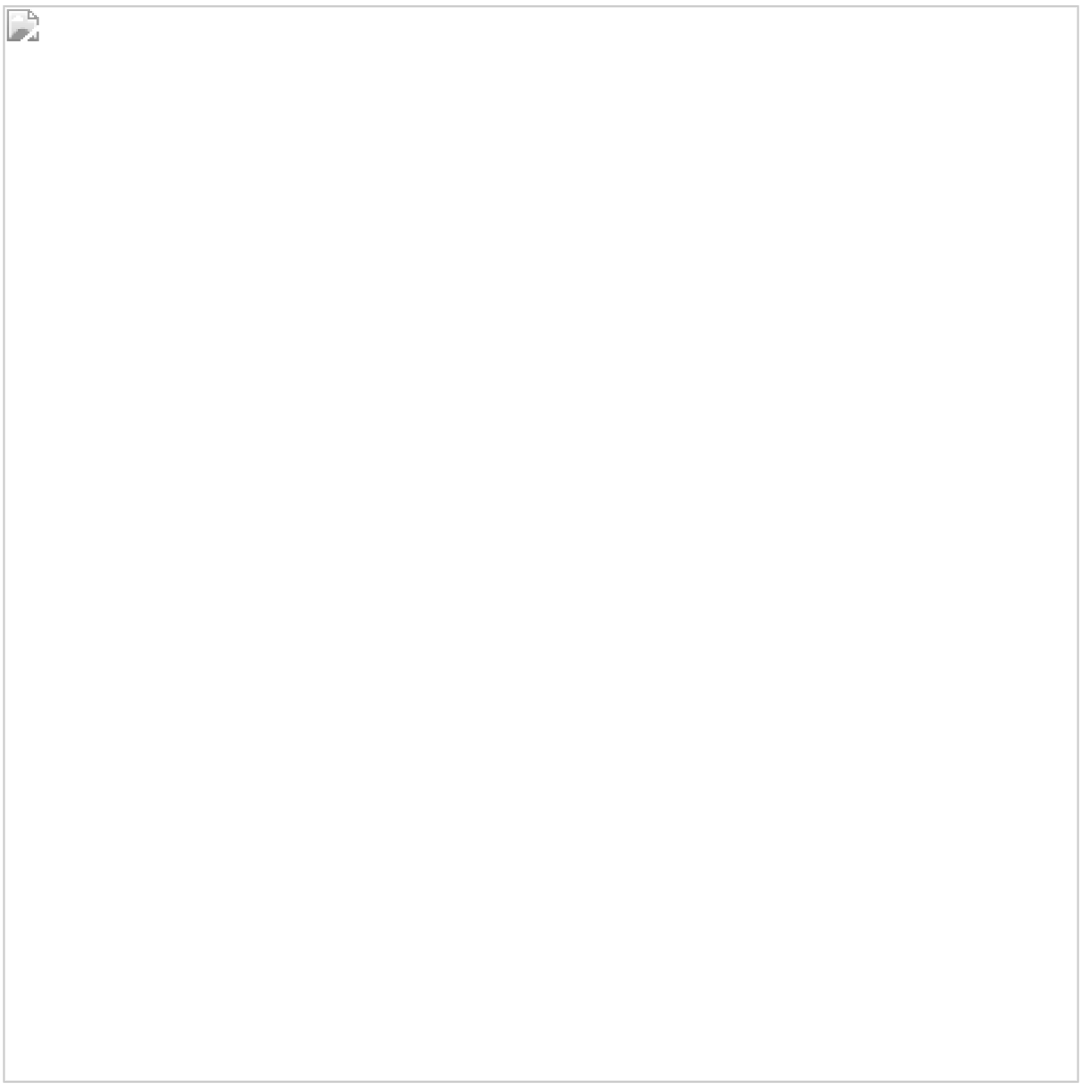
They were quarrelling over a little boy Titania was caring for. His mother, Titania’s dear friend, had died. “For her sake do I rear up her boy,” said Titania, “and for her sake I will not part with him.” Oberon wanted the boy to serve him, but Titania would not give him up.

Because the King and Queen were quarrelling, the whole world was out of order. The seasons were mixed up and the crops grew poorly.

TALK ABOUT IT

Titania kept the boy for love of his mother. Oberon wanted him for himself. Which of them do you think was being more loving?

The Fairy King and Queen · another picture

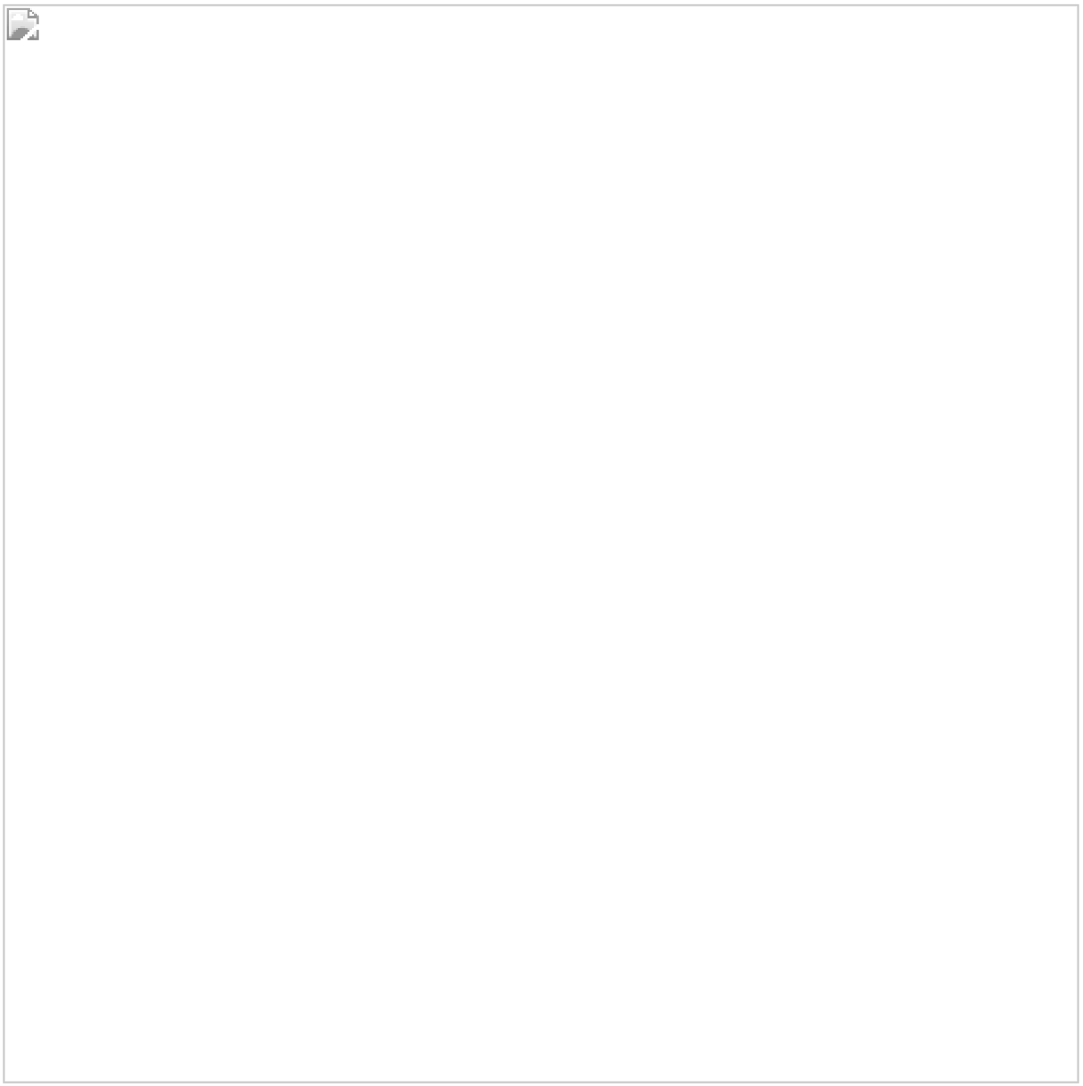


Think about it

1. Why would Titania not give up the little boy?

- ○ He was her servant
- ○ She loved his mother, who had died
- ○ Oberon did not want him

The Magic Flower



Oberon called his servant Puck, a quick and mischievous fairy also called Robin Goodfellow.

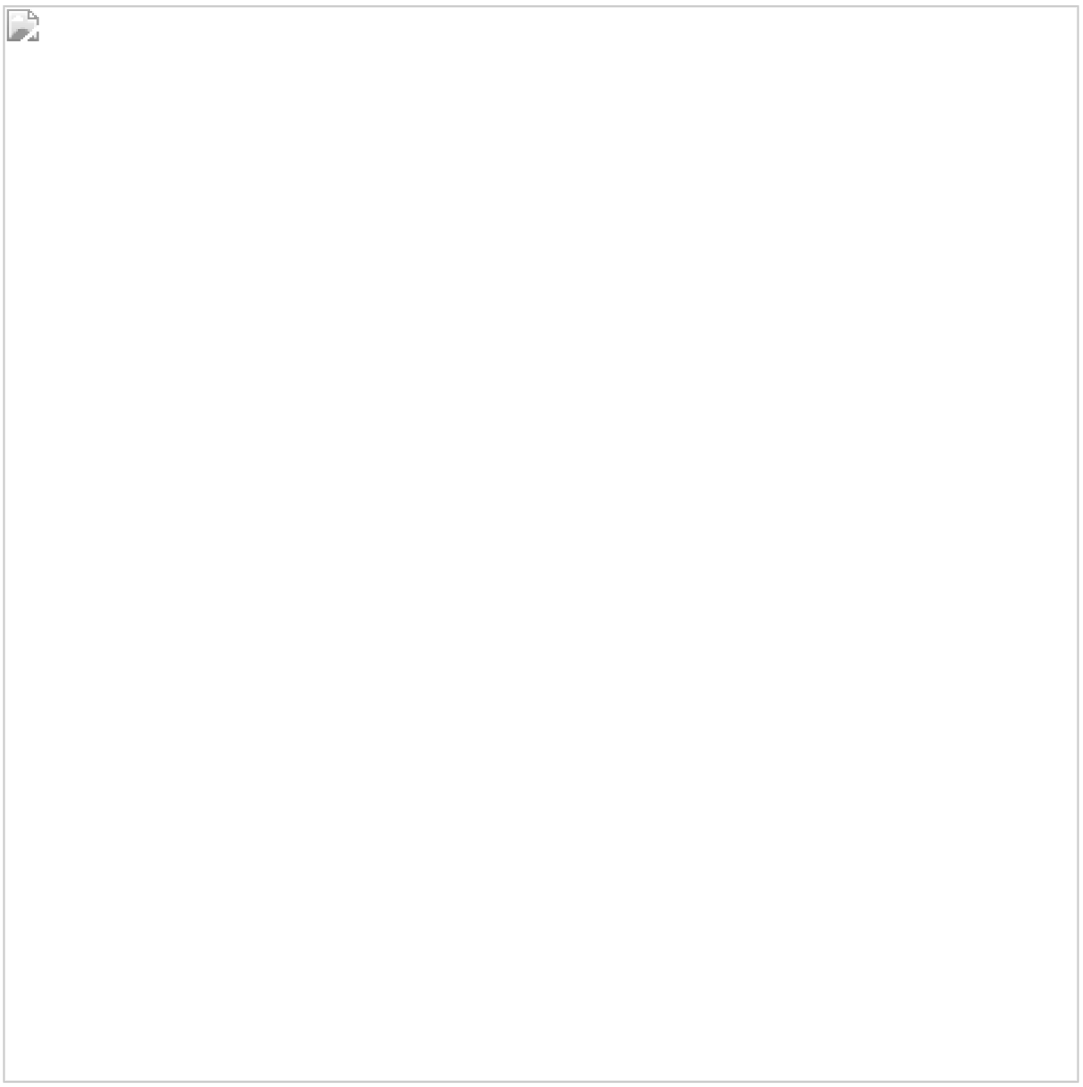
Oberon told him about a little purple flower that “maidens call it love-in-idleness.” If its juice is dropped on sleeping eyes, the sleeper falls in love with the very first living thing they see when they wake.

“Fetch me that flower,” said Oberon. Puck was off at once: “I’ll put a girdle round about the earth in forty minutes.”

Oberon planned to drop the juice on Titania’s eyes while she slept, so he could take the boy while she was busy loving something else.

TALK ABOUT IT

Oberon used magic to get his way instead of making peace. What could he have done instead?



Think about it

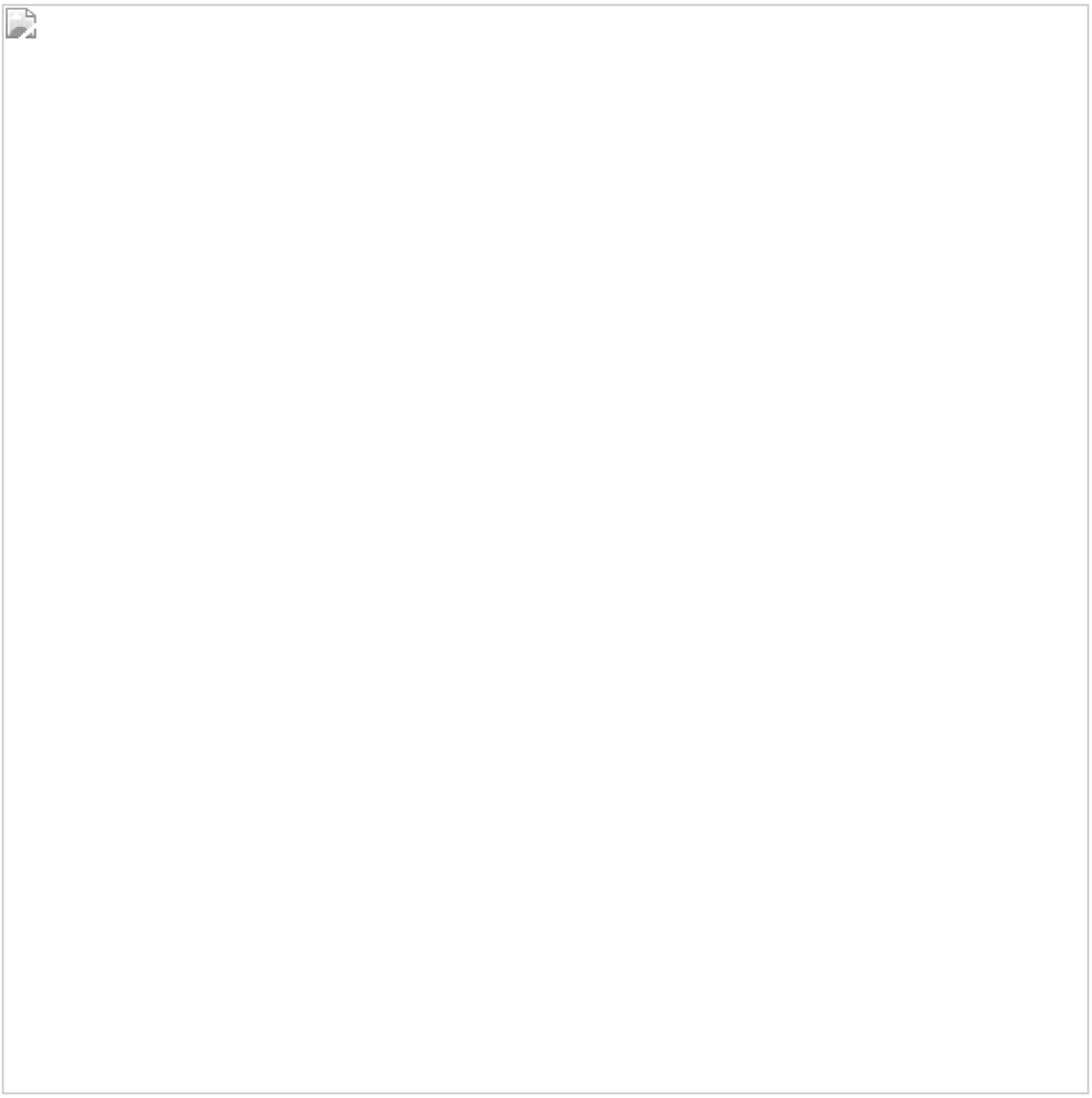
1. What happens when the flower's juice is put on sleeping eyes?

- ○ The sleeper turns into an animal
- ○ The sleeper loves the first living thing they see
- ○ The sleeper sleeps for a hundred years

2. How fast did Puck say he could go round the whole earth?

- ○ In forty minutes
- ○ In forty days
- ○ In one year

Puck's Mistake



While Puck was gone, Oberon saw Demetrius being unkind to Helena, and felt sorry for her. When Puck came back, Oberon dropped juice on sleeping Titania's eyes and told Puck to put some on the eyes of a young man from Athens, so that he would love the lady who loved him.

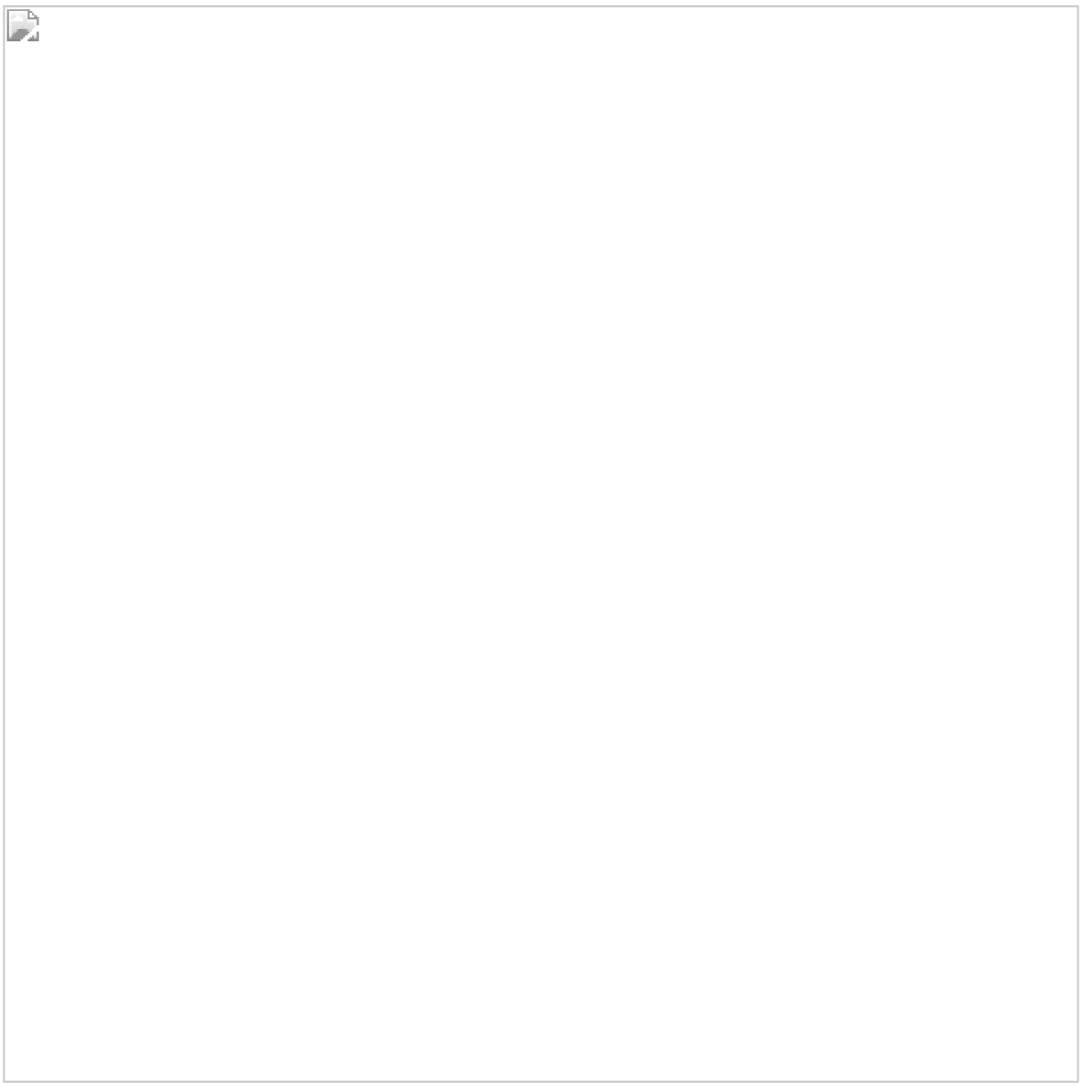
Puck found a young man from Athens asleep in the wood and put the juice on his eyes. But it was the wrong one: Lysander, asleep near Hermia!

Then Helena came by and woke him. Lysander loved her at once. He ran after her and left Hermia sleeping all alone. When she woke, he was gone.

TALK ABOUT IT

Lysander left Hermia alone because of the magic. How do you think Hermia felt when she woke? What would you say to her?

Puck's Mistake · another picture

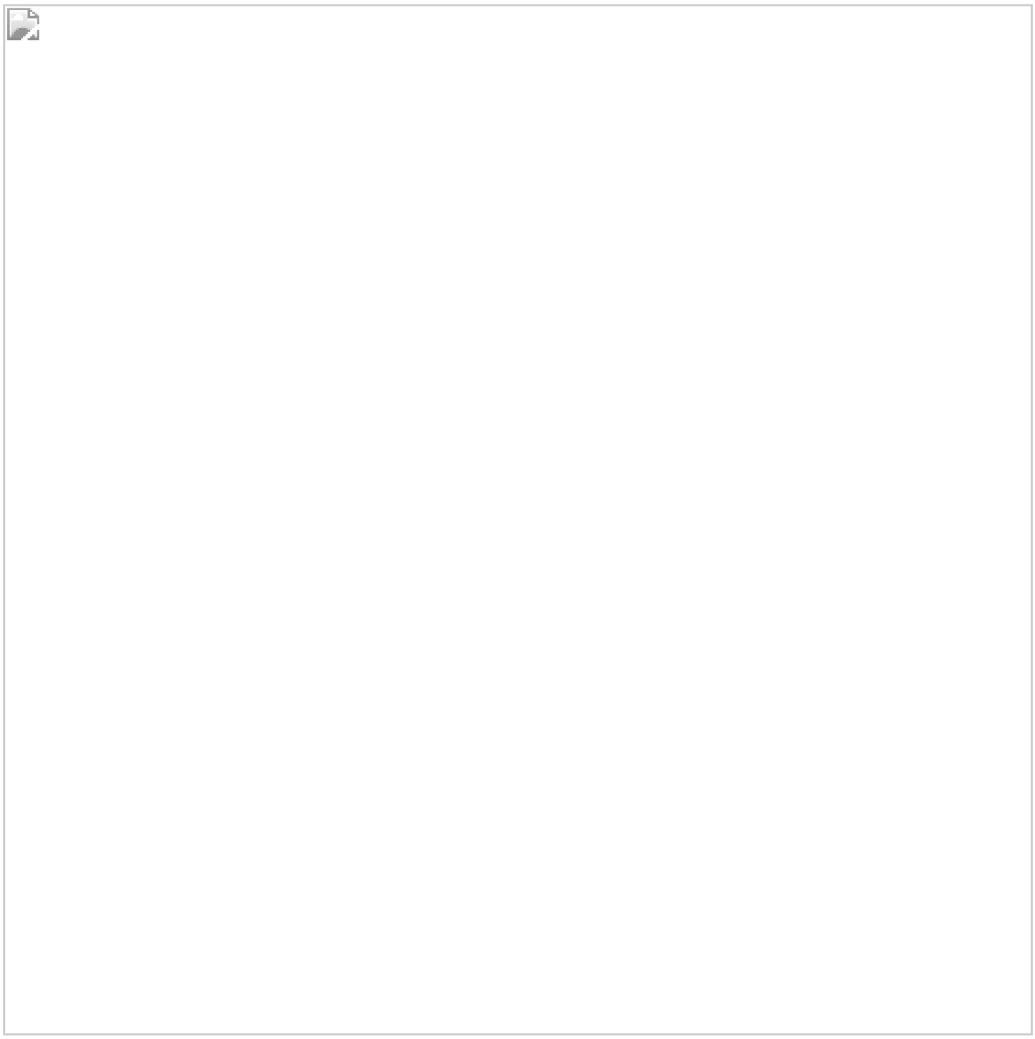


Think about it

1. Whose eyes did Puck put the juice on by mistake?

- ○ Demetrius's
- ○ Lysander's
- ○ Bottom's

Bottom Gets a Donkey's Head



Nearby, the workmen were practicing their play. When Bottom stepped away, Puck put a donkey's head on him!

When Bottom came back, his friends screamed and ran. "Bless thee, Bottom! bless thee! Thou art translated," cried Quince. Bottom did not know his head had changed. He thought they were playing a trick, so he sang to show he was not afraid.

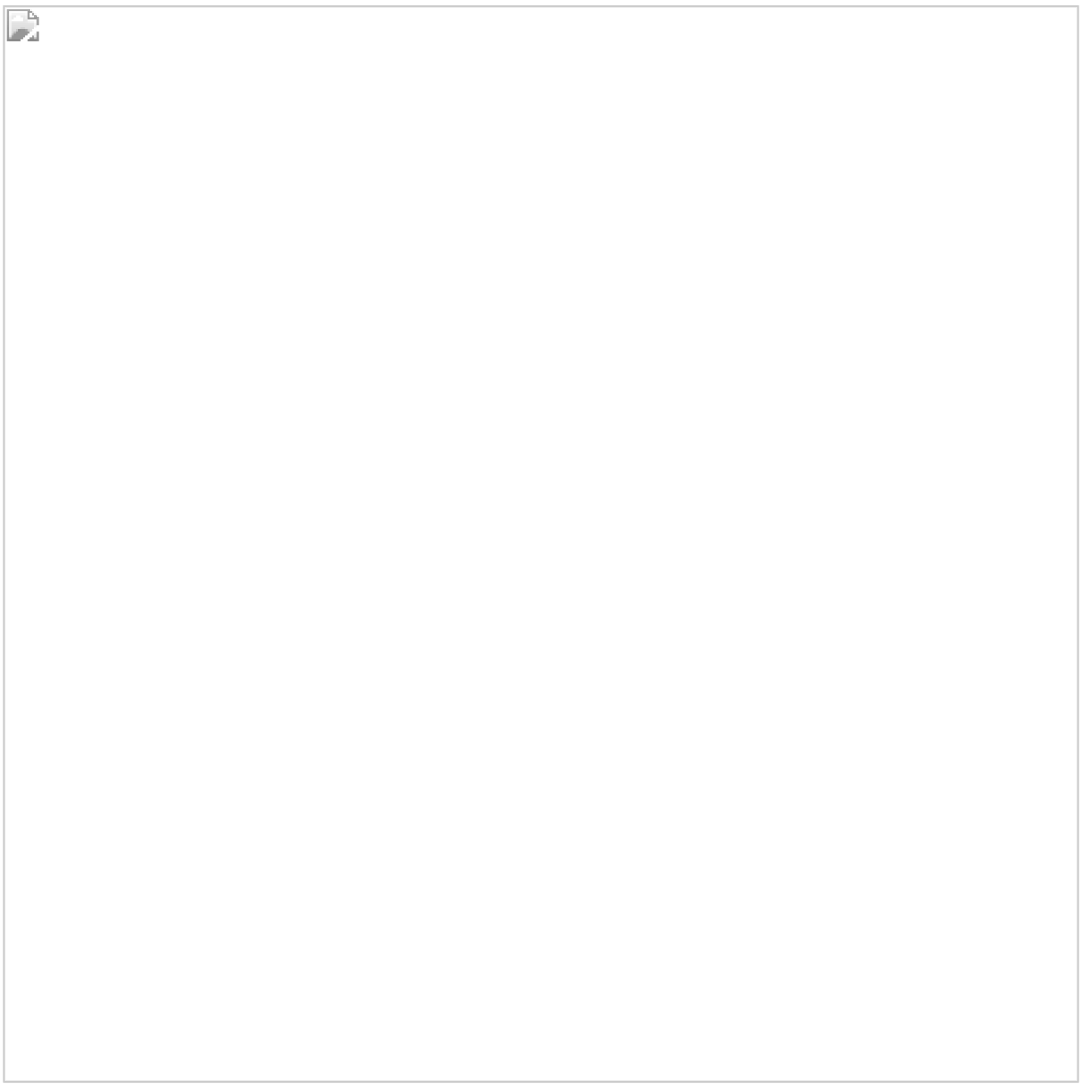
His singing woke Titania. She looked at him, and because of the magic juice, she loved him at once, donkey head and all!

She called her fairies, Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Moth and Mustardseed, to wait on him. They brought him honey and fanned him while he slept.

TALK ABOUT IT

Titania loved Bottom because of a trick, not because she really knew him. What makes love real?

Bottom Gets a Donkey's Head · another picture



Think about it

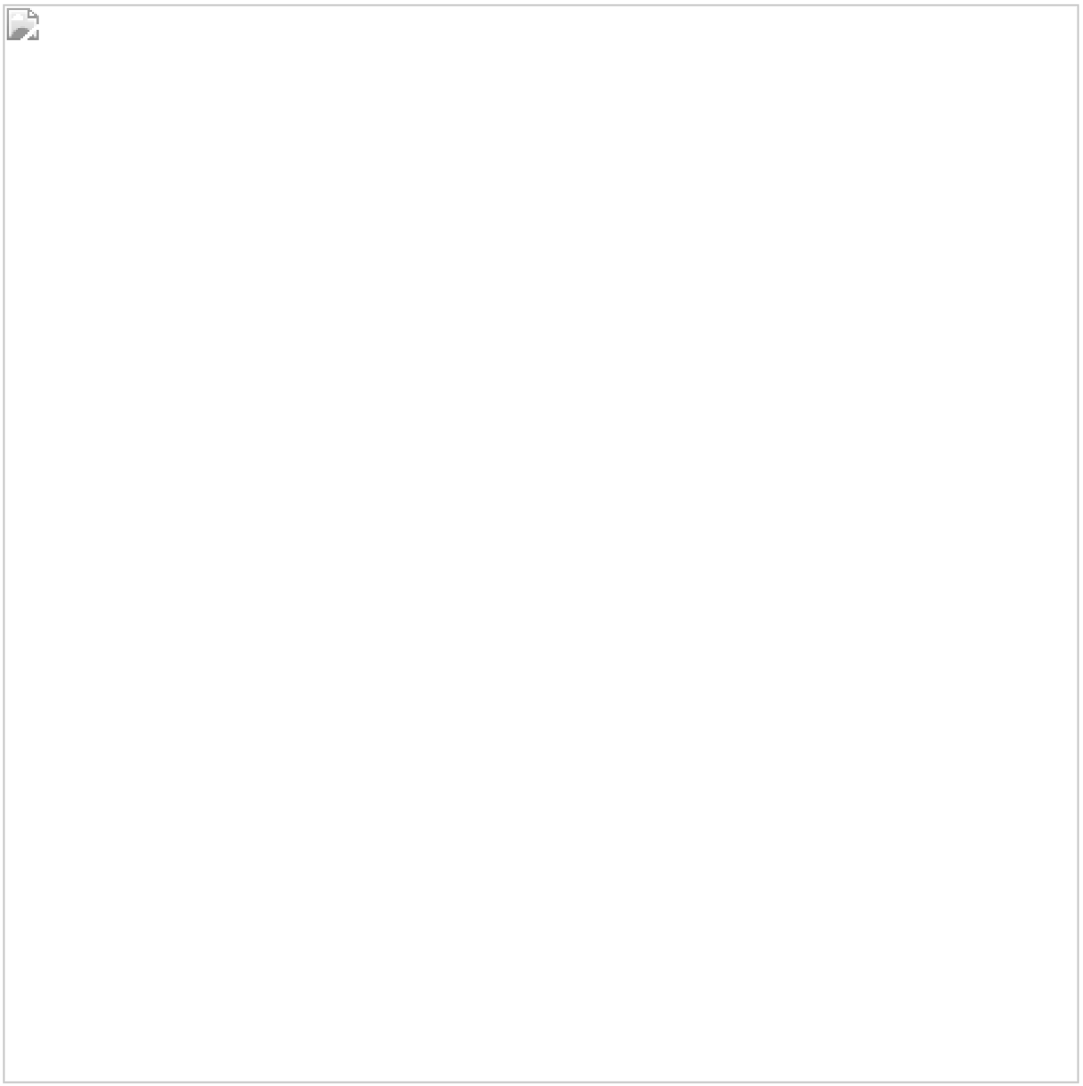
1. What did Puck put on Bottom?

- ○ A crown
- ○ A donkey's head
- ○ A lion's mane

2. Who fell in love with Bottom?

- ○ Helena
- ○ Hermia
- ○ Titania

Everything Goes Wrong



Oberon saw Puck had enchanted the wrong man. So he put the juice on Demetrius's eyes too, and Demetrius woke and loved Helena.

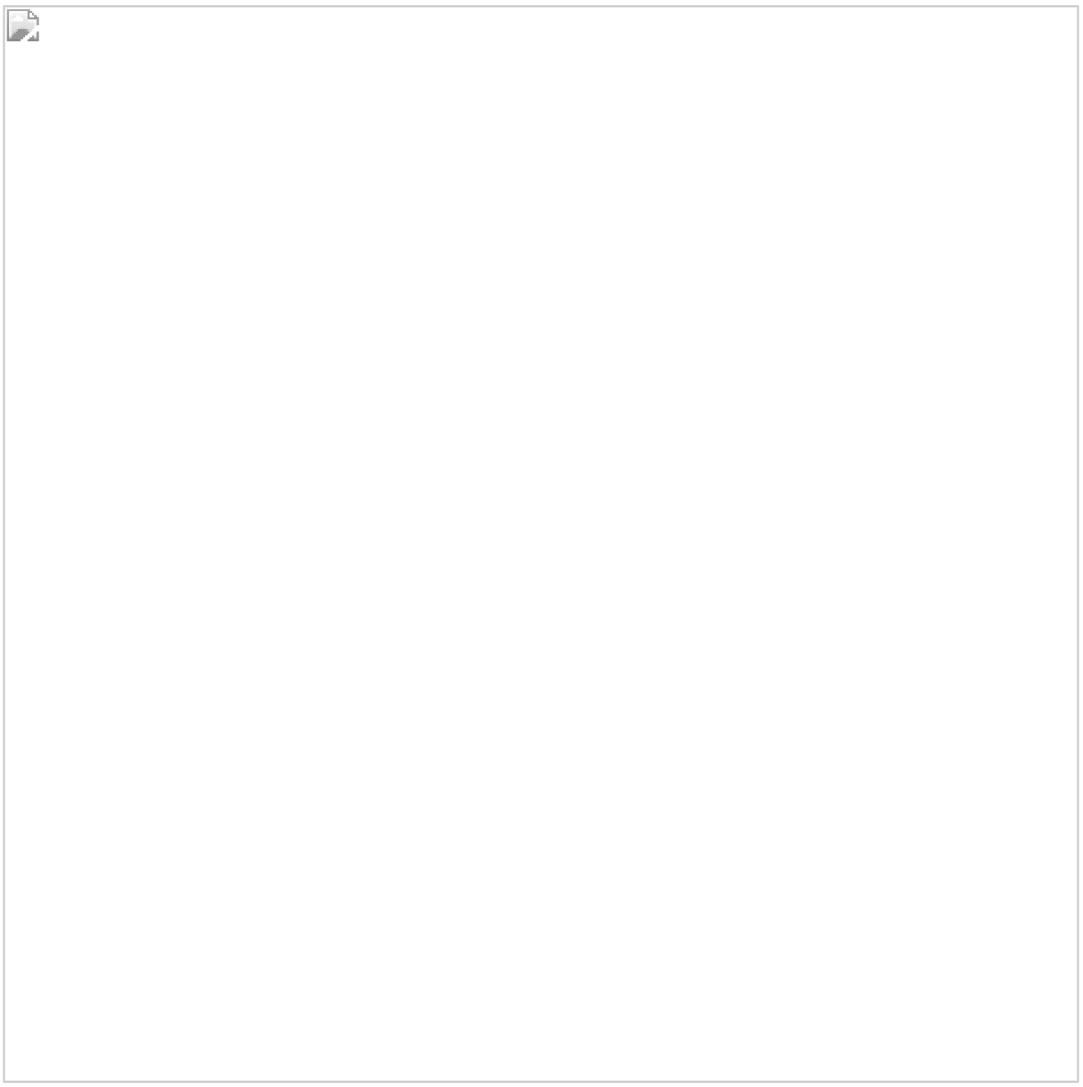
Now both young men loved Helena, and neither loved Hermia! Helena thought they were making fun of her. Hermia thought Helena had stolen Lysander. The two friends began to quarrel.

Helena was tall and Hermia was small. "Though she be but little, she is fierce," said Helena.

Puck watched the four of them and laughed. "Lord, what fools these mortals be!"

TALK ABOUT IT

Helena and Hermia had been friends since they were small. What could help two friends stop a quarrel like this?



Think about it

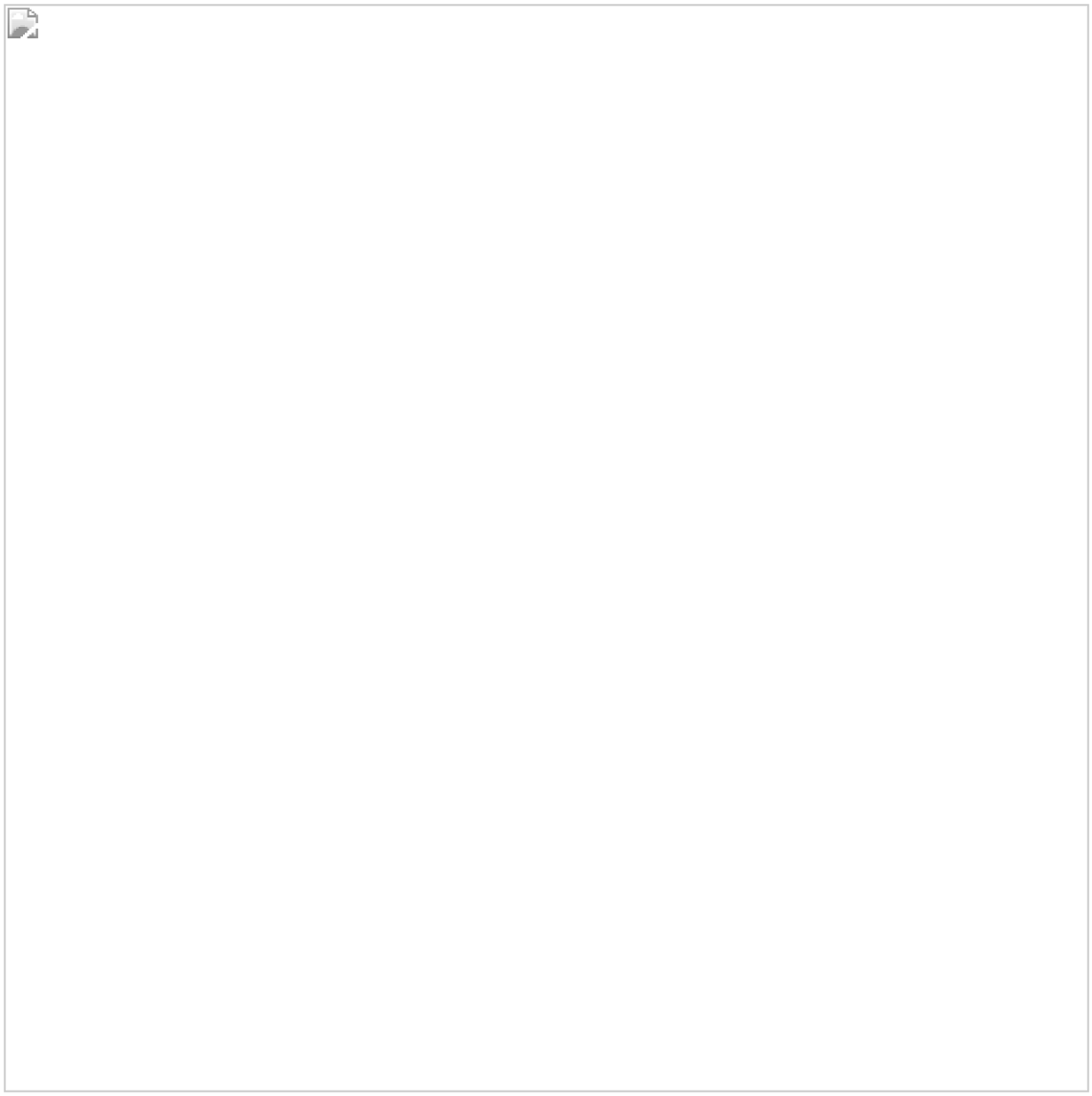
1. Why did Helena think the young men were being unkind?

- ○ She thought they were making fun of her
- ○ They would not talk to her
- ○ They took her ring

2. What did Helena say about little Hermia?

- ○ She is very quiet
- ○ Though she be but little, she is fierce
- ○ She is the tallest of all

Putting Things Right



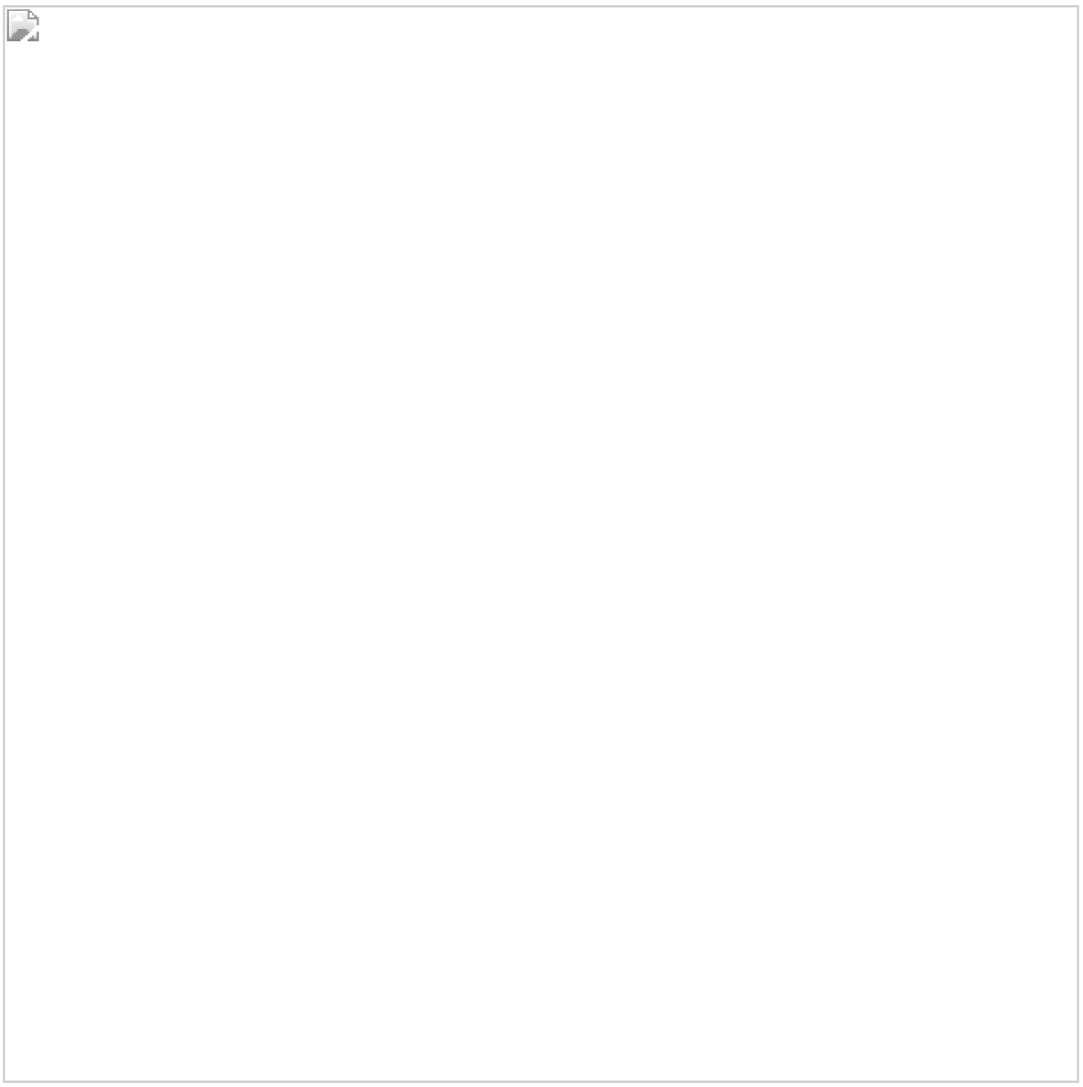
Oberon told Puck to fix it. Puck made a thick fog and led the four young people round and round until they lay down and slept. He put a cure on Lysander's eyes, so he would love Hermia again. "Jack shall have Jill; nought shall go ill."

Oberon found Titania asleep beside Bottom, and he began to feel sorry for her. She had given him the little boy at last. So Oberon lifted the spell from her eyes.

Titania woke and saw the donkey. "What visions have I seen!" Puck took the donkey's head off Bottom, and the King and Queen of the Fairies took hands and were friends again.

TALK ABOUT IT

Oberon began to feel sorry for Titania, and then he set things right. Why does feeling sorry for someone help us do the right thing?

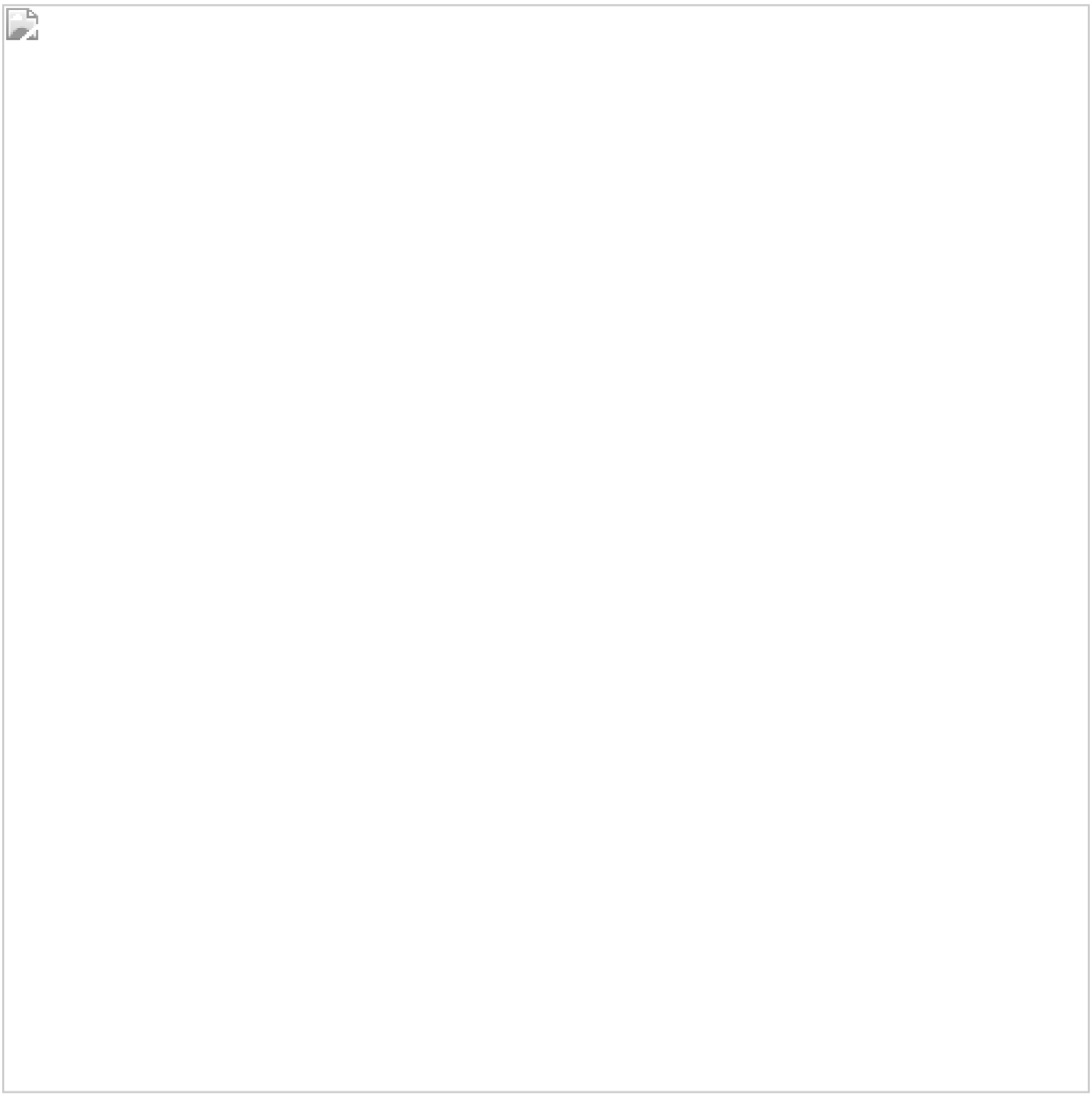


Think about it

1. How did Puck make the four young people fall asleep?

- ○ He sang a song
- ○ He led them round in a fog until they were tired
- ○ He gave them honey

Morning



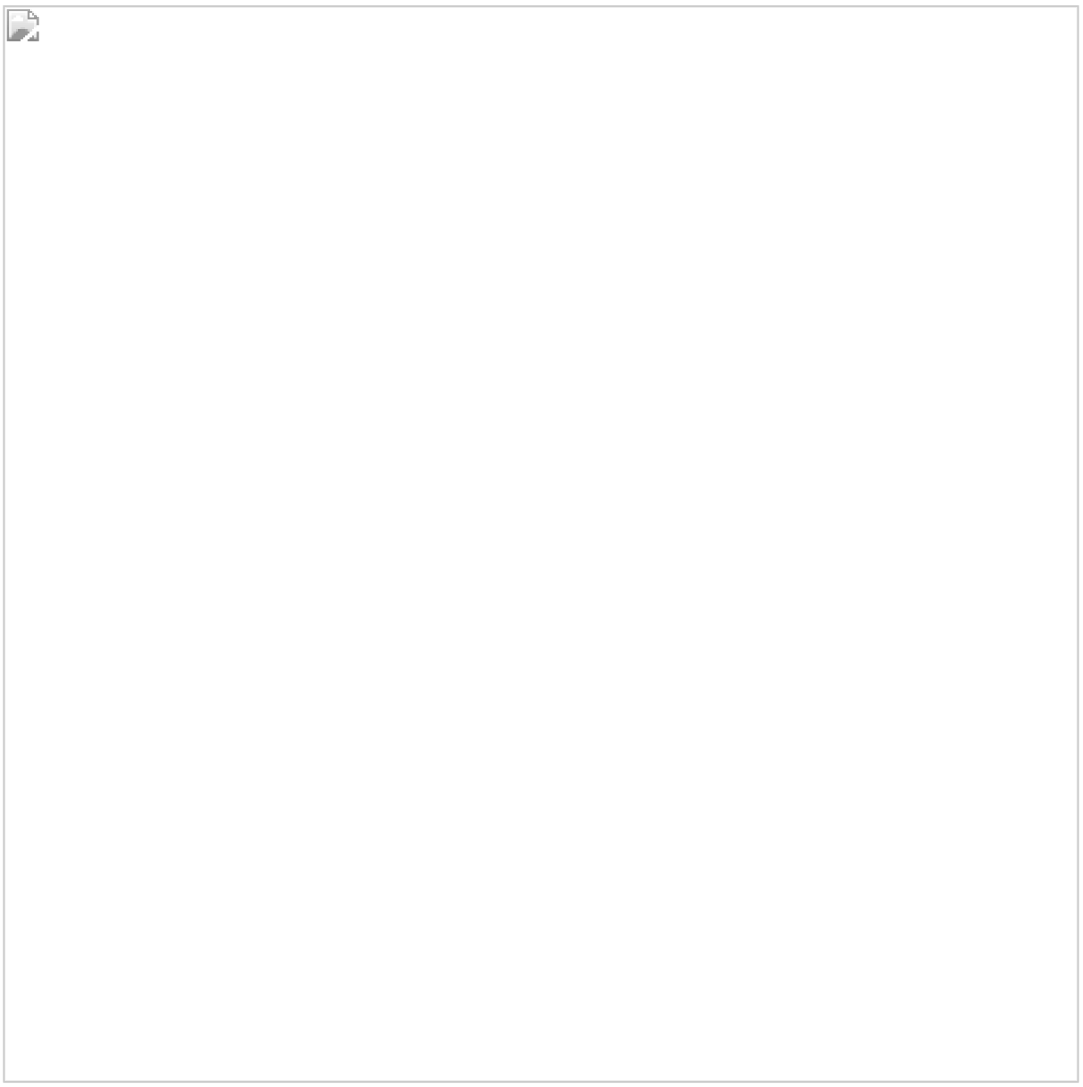
In the morning, Duke Theseus and Hippolyta came hunting and found the four young people asleep. They woke up, and everything was right. Lysander loved Hermia again, and Demetrius loved Helena. The magic on Demetrius's eyes was never taken off.

Egeus still wanted his law. But the Duke said, "Egeus, I will overbear your will." Both couples would be married that very day, together with the Duke and Hippolyta!

Last of all, Bottom woke up alone. "I have had a most rare vision. I have had a dream, past the wit of man to say what dream it was." He ran to find his friends.

TALK ABOUT IT

Bottom could not explain his strange dream. Have you ever had a dream you could not explain?

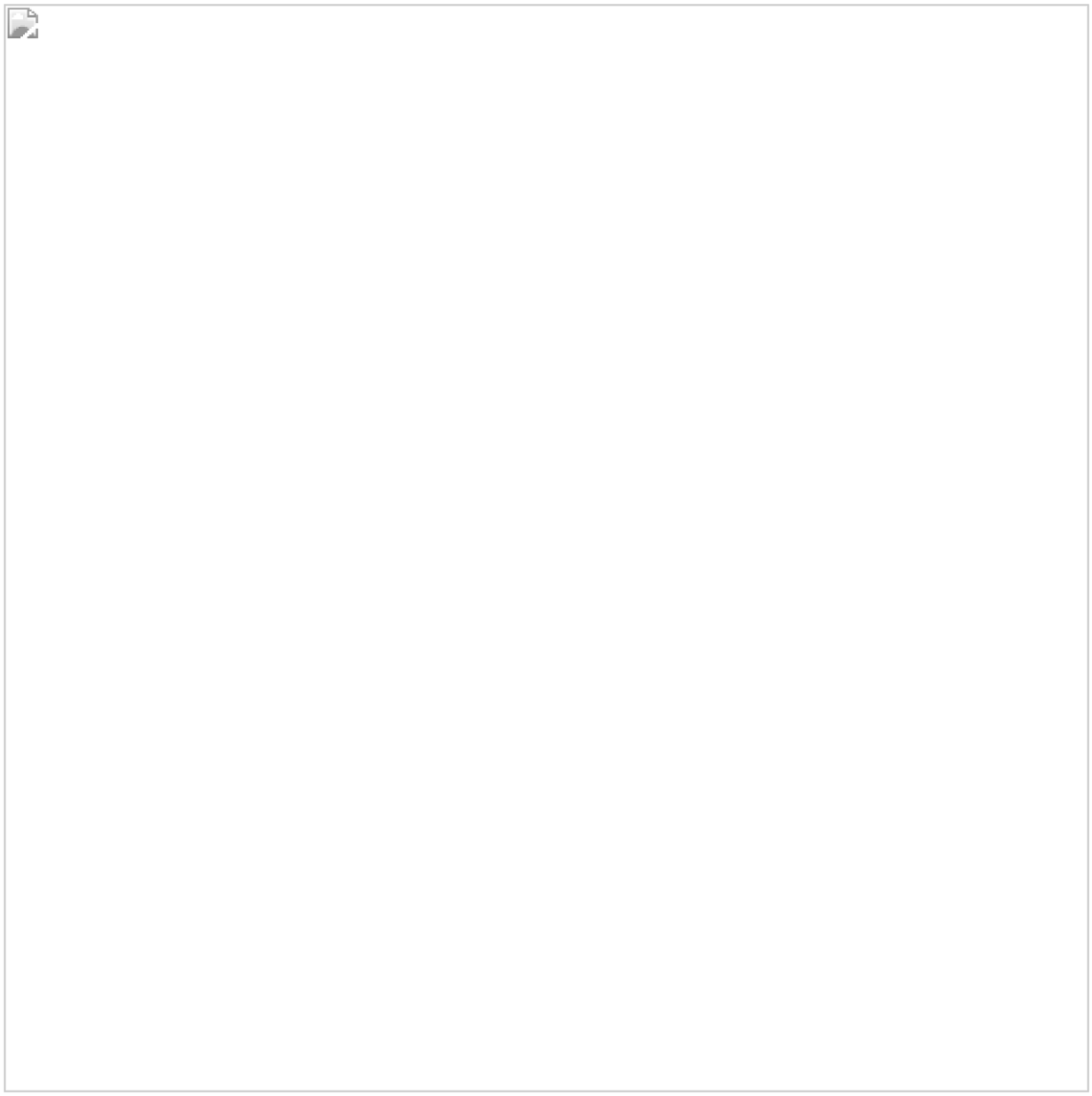


Think about it

1. Who stopped Egeus from forcing Hermia to marry Demetrius?

- ○ Puck
- ○ Duke Theseus
- ○ Helena

The Silliest Play



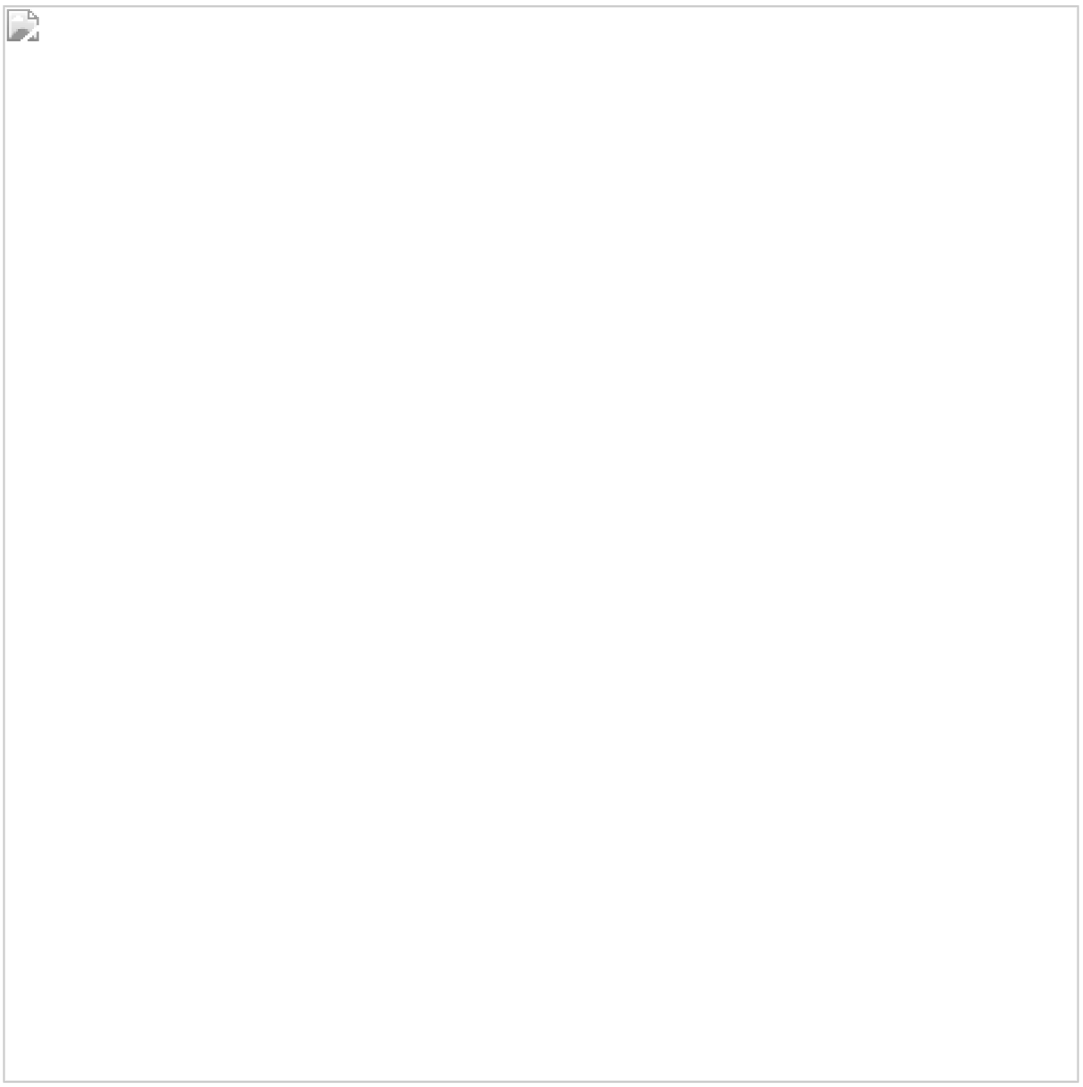
That night, after the three weddings, the workmen put on their play. Snout played the Wall and held up his fingers for the crack. Starveling played Moonshine with a lantern. Snug played the Lion, and told the ladies first that he was only Snug, so they would not be frightened.

It was supposed to be a sad play, but it was so silly that everyone laughed. Bottom took a very, very long time pretending to die as Pyramus.

Then he jumped right up. “No, I assure you; the wall is down that parted their fathers.” And the workmen danced a merry country dance.

TALK ABOUT IT

Snug made sure the lion would not frighten anyone. How did the workmen show they cared about their audience?



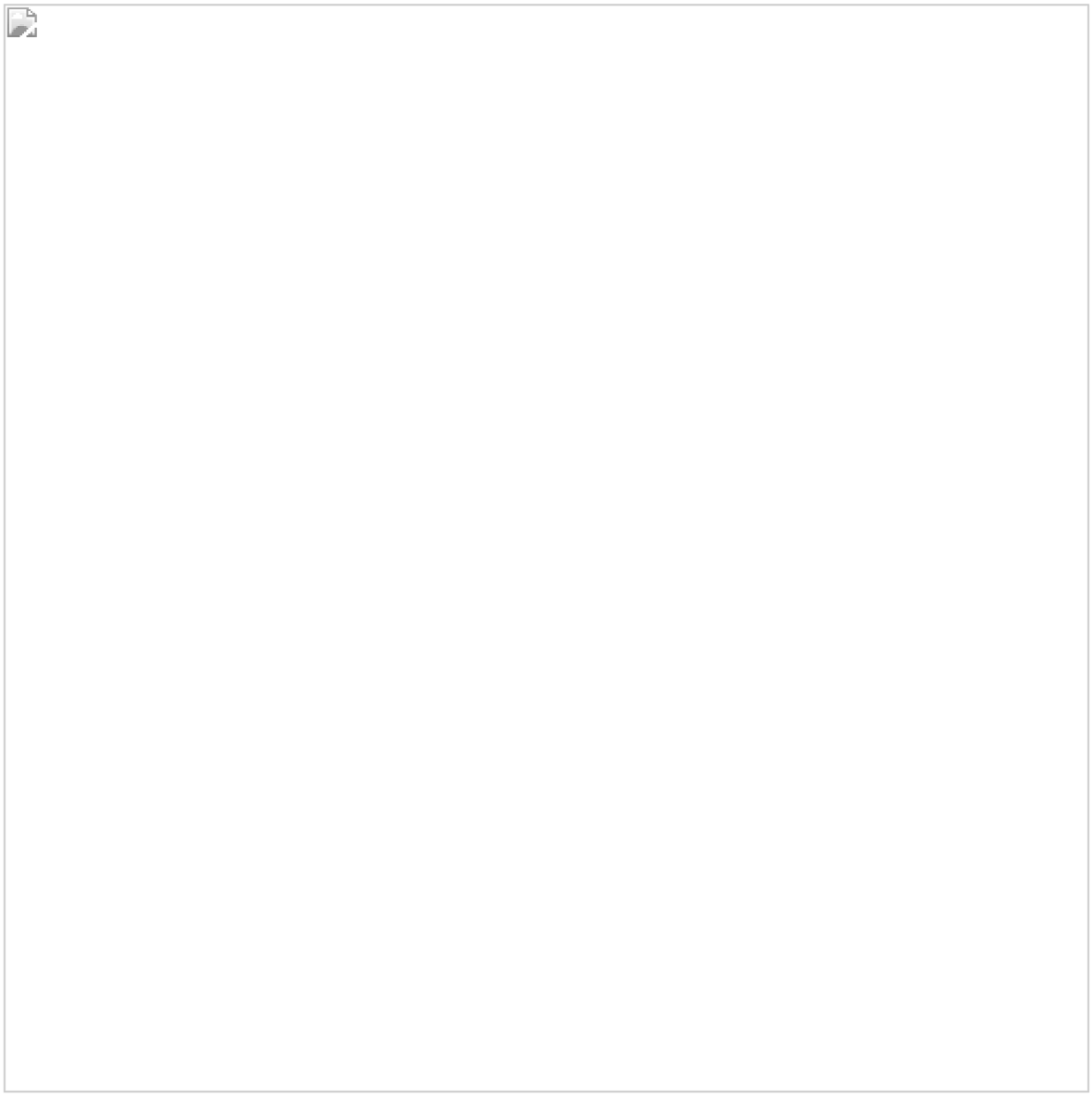
Think about it

1. Who played the Wall?

- ○ Snout
- ○ Snug
- ○ Bottom

2. The workmen were not good actors, but they tried their best for the Duke. Why does trying your best for someone matter?

Good Night



At midnight, when everyone was asleep, the fairies came softly into the palace. Oberon and Titania blessed the house and the three couples, so their love would last and their children would be well.

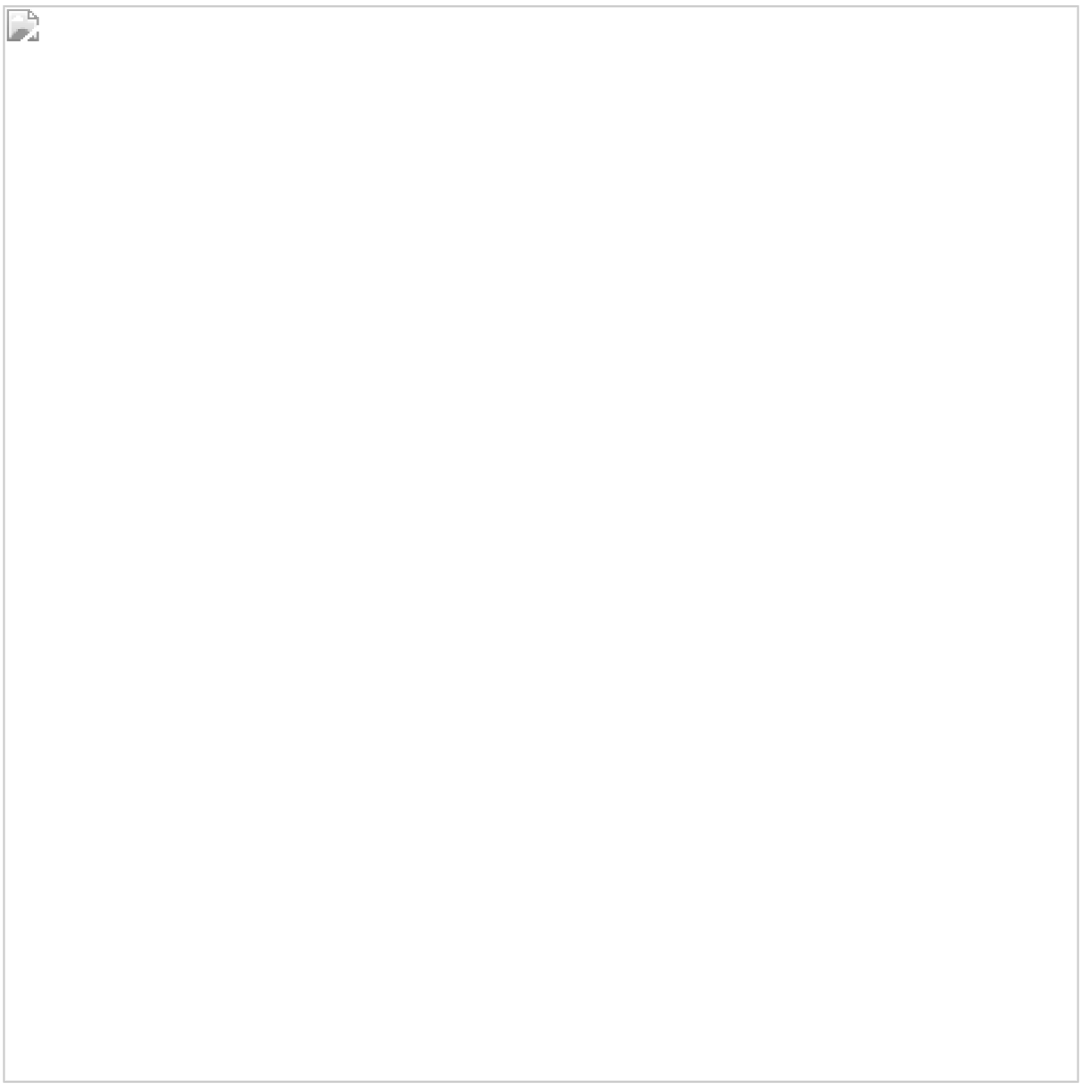
Then Puck stepped forward to speak to us:

“If we shadows have offended, think but this, and all is mended, that you have but slumber’d here while these visions did appear.”

“Give me your hands, if we be friends, and Robin shall restore amends.”

TALK ABOUT IT

Puck asks us to give him our hands, if we are friends. After everything that went wrong, what made this story end well?



Think about it

1. What did the fairies do at midnight?

- ○ They played more tricks
- ○ They blessed the house and the couples
- ○ They took the boy away

2. Puck says, if you did not like the play, think of it as a dream. Which part of this story would you most like to dream about?

“There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

— Yeshua HaMashiach

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