

THE
ENTIRE PLAY
TRANSLATED
INTO PLAIN
ENGLISH!

Classical
COMICS



A
MIDSUMMER
NIGHT'S
DREAM

THE GRAPHIC NOVEL

William Shakespeare

Original Text

Plain Text

RuickText

Act III Scene I

THE FOREST,
NEAR ATHENS.

ARE
WE ALL
HERE?

ALL ON
TIME; AND THIS
IS A PERFECT
PLACE TO
REHEARSE.

THIS GRASSY
SPACE SHALL BE OUR
STAGE, AND THESE BUSHES
CAN BE OUR DRESSING ROOM.
WE WILL PERFORM OUR PLAY
JUST AS WE WILL FOR
THE DUKE.



PETER
QUINCE --

WHAT
IS IT, BULLY
BOTTOM?



THERE ARE
THINGS IN THIS
PYRAMUS AND THISBE
COMEDY THAT WON'T
GO DOWN
WELL.

FIRST,
PYRAMUS HAS TO
KILL HIMSELF WITH HIS
SWORD - THE LADIES
WON'T BE HAPPY WITH
THAT. DO YOU
AGREE?



MY WORD,
THAT IS A
PROBLEM!

NOW YOU
MENTION IT,
I THINK WE WILL
HAVE TO LEAVE
THE KILLING
OUT.

NOT AT ALL!
I KNOW HOW TO
GET AROUND
IT.





WRITE ME AN INTRODUCTION THAT TELLS THE AUDIENCE THAT WE DON'T DO ANY REAL HARM WITH OUR SWORDS, AND THAT PYRAMUS ISN'T REALLY KILLED. FOR THAT MATTER, TELL THEM THAT PYRAMUS ISN'T PYRAMUS AT ALL, BUT ME, BOTTOM THE WEAVER.

THAT WILL STOP THEM GETTING SCARED.



VERY WELL, WE WILL HAVE AN INTRODUCTION. IT WILL BE IN BALLAD-METER: EIGHT BEATS IN A LINE, THEN SIX.

NO, MAKE IT TWO MORE: WRITE IT IN EIGHT AND EIGHT.



WON'T THE LADIES BE AFRAID OF THE LION?

I AM VERY WORRIED ABOUT THAT.



ACTORS - WE NEED TO THINK ABOUT THIS! TO BRING A LION AMONGST LADIES IS A DANGEROUS THING, LORD PROTECT US! THE LION IS THE MOST FRIGHTENING BIRD-OF-PREY ALIVE. WE NEED TO SORT THIS OUT!

ANOTHER INTRODUCTION TO SAY HE ISN'T REALLY A LION?



NO, WE HAVE TO SAY WHO HE IS; AND PART OF HIS FACE HAS TO BE SEEN THROUGH THE LION'S NECK.

HE CAN SPEAK THROUGH IT HIMSELF AND SAY SOMETHING TO THE DEFECT OF --

"LADIES," OR --

"DEAR LADIES, I'D LIKE YOU," OR --

"I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU," OR --

"I'D LIKE TO BEG YOU NOT TO BE AFRAID, NOT TO SHAKE - YOU'RE PERFECTLY SAFE --"

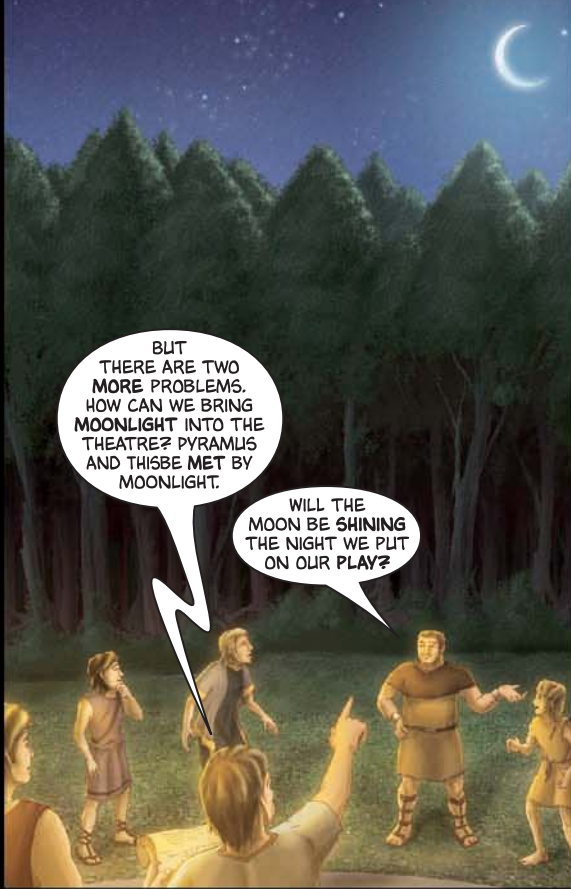


"-- MY OWN LIFE WOULD BE AT RISK IF YOU THINK I AM A REAL LION. I AM NO SUCH THING! I AM A MAN, JUST LIKE OTHER MEN."

THEN HE CAN SAY WHO HE IS, AND TELL THEM CLEARLY, HE IS SNUG THE JOINER.

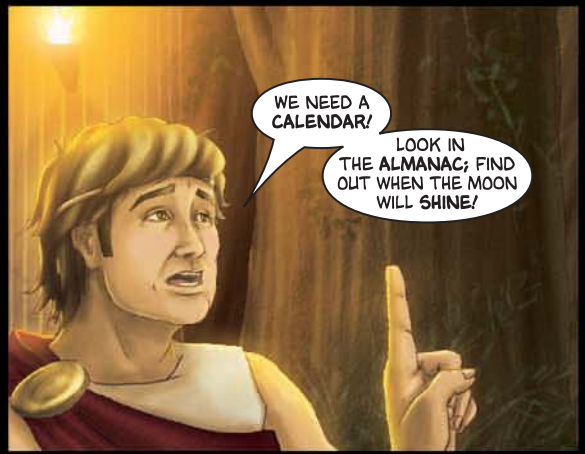


VERY WELL, THAT IS WHAT WE WILL DO.



BUT THERE ARE TWO MORE PROBLEMS. HOW CAN WE BRING MOONLIGHT INTO THE THEATRE? PYRAMUS AND THISBE MET BY MOONLIGHT.

WILL THE MOON BE SHINING THE NIGHT WE PUT ON OUR PLAY?



WE NEED A CALENDAR!

LOOK IN THE ALMANAC; FIND OUT WHEN THE MOON WILL SHINE!



YES, THE MOON SHINES THAT NIGHT.

THEN, JUST LEAVE A WINDOW OPEN IN THE THEATRE - THE MOON CAN SHINE IN THROUGH IT.



PERHAPS, OR IT MIGHT BE BETTER IF SOMEONE COMES ONSTAGE WITH A THORN-BUSH AND A LANTERN, AND SAYS HE REPRESENTS THE SHINING MOON.

THE OTHER PROBLEM IS THAT WE MUST HAVE A WALL IN THE THEATRE. THE STORY SAYS THAT PYRAMUS AND THISBE TALKED THROUGH A HOLE IN A WALL.

WE'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO BRING A WALL ONSTAGE. WHAT DO YOU SAY, BOTTOM?



SOMEONE MUST REPRESENT A WALL. HE CAN CARRY SOME PLASTER, OR CLAY, OR GRAVEL TO SYMBOLISE A WALL; AND HE CAN HOLD HIS FINGERS LIKE THIS -

THEN PYRAMUS AND THISBE CAN WHISPER THROUGH THAT HOLE.



IF THAT WORKS, THEN EVERYTHING SHOULD BE ALL RIGHT.



EVERYONE, COME AND SIT DOWN TO REHEARSE YOUR PARTS.

YOU BEGIN, PYRAMUS, AND WHEN YOU HAVE MADE YOUR SPEECH, GO INTO THE BUSHES.

EVERYONE ELSE DO THE SAME, ACCORDING TO HIS CLUE.



WHO ARE THESE TALENTLESS PUPPETS, STRUTTING ABOUT SO CLOSE TO THE FAIRY QUEEN'S RESTING PLACE?

ARE THEY DOING A PLAY? I'LL BE A CRITIC - AND AN ACTOR TOO, IF I DECIDE TO BE.

SPEAK, PYRAMUS. THISBE, COME FORWARD.



THISBE, FLOWERS HAVE A SWEET AND ODOUS SMELL -



ODOURS! ODOURS!



- A SWEET ODOURS AND SMELL. SO HAS YOUR BREATH, MY DARLING LOVE, THISBE. LISTEN - A VOICE! WAIT HERE A SHORT SPELL, AND I WILL RETURN TO YOU PRESENTLY.

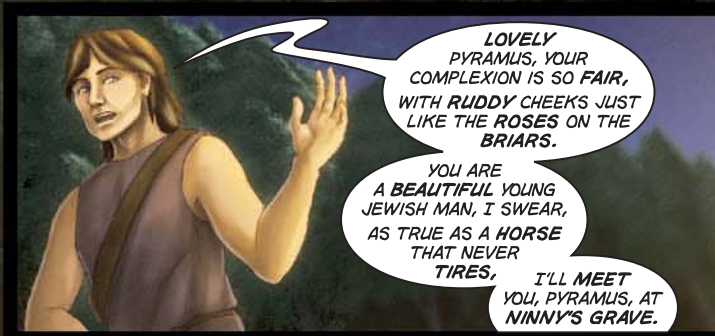


THE STRANGEST PYRAMUS THAT HAS EVER BEEN ACTED!



AM I SUPPOSED TO SPEAK NOW?

YES, YOU ARE. YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO UNDERSTAND THAT HE HAS JUST GONE TO SEE WHAT THE NOISE WAS, AND HE WILL SOON RETURN.





I'LL FOLLOW AND LEAD YOU ROUND AND **ROUND**, THROUGH MARSHES, BUSHES, TREES AND THORNS.

SOMETIMES A **HORSE**, SOMETIMES A **HOUND**, A **HOG**, OR **BEAR**, OR **FIRE** THAT BURNS.

I'LL NEIGH, AND BARK, AND GRUNT, AND ROAR, AND **FLARE**, LIKE A HORSE, HOUND, HOG, BEAR, **FIRE** - EVERYWHERE!



WHY DID THEY RUN AWAY? THIS MUST BE A JOKE, TO SCARE ME.



YOU HAVE CHANGED, BOTTOM! WHAT DO YOU LOOK LIKE?



I LOOK LIKE WHAT YOU SEE, YOU **DONKEY-BRAIN!**



GOD HELP
YOU, BOTTOM -
YOU'VE BEEN
TRANSFORMED!



I SEE
WHAT THEY'RE
UP TO - THEY'RE
TRYING TO MAKE AN
ASS OUT OF ME -
TO FRIGHTEEN ME,
IF THEY CAN.

BUT I WON'T
RUN AWAY; THEY CAN
DO WHAT THEY LIKE.
I'LL STROLL UP AND DOWN
HERE, AND I'LL SING -
THEN THEY'LL HEAR
THAT I'M NOT
AFRAID.



THE
BLACKBIRD WITH
ITS DARKENED GOWN
AND ORANGE-YELLOW
BILL.

THE SONG
THRUSH WITH
ITS TUNEFUL SOUND,
THE WREN SO SHARP
AND SHRILL.



WHO
IS THAT ANGEL,
WAKING ME FROM
MY FLOWER
BED?



THE FINCH,
THE SPARROW,
AND THE LARK,
THE CUCKOO
PLAIN AND
GREY,

SINGING
A MESSAGE ALL
MEN SHOULD MARK
AND DARE NOT
ANSWER
NAY.

WHO
WOULD WASTE
THEIR TIME TALKING
TO A FOOLISH
BIRD?

WHO
WOULD BOTHER
TO QUESTION A BIRD,
NO MATTER HOW
MUCH IT SANG,
"CUCKOO?"