



COMMONWEALTH
SHAKESPEARE
COMPANY

#STAGE2SCHOOL



Lesson Packet

Video One: A Midsummer Night's Dream

Titania and Oberon: Act II, Scene 1

Helena and Demetrius: Act II, Scene 1

This lesson packet is designed to go along with Commonwealth Shakespeare Company's series of #Stage2School videos. Please note that some scenes are cuttings and were edited for time, not for content.

Teachers: Please let us know if your school would like to participate in a follow-up live workshop with the director and actors by writing to:
education@commshakes.org

Titania and Oberon: Act II, Scene 1

Enter OBERON, with his train; enter TITANIA, with hers.

OBERON

Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania.

TITANIA

What, jealous Oberon! Fairies, skip hence:
I have forsworn his bed and company.

OBERON

Tarry, rash wanton: am not I thy lord?

TITANIA

Then I must be thy lady: but I know
When thou hast stolen away from fairy land,
And in the shape of Corin sat all day,
Playing on pipes of corn and versing love
To amorous Phillida. Why art thou here,
Come from the farthest Steppe of India?
But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,
Your buskin'd mistress and your warrior love,
To Theseus must be wedded, and you come
To give their bed joy and prosperity.

OBERON

How canst thou thus for shame, Titania,
Glance at my credit with Hippolyta,
Knowing I know thy love to Theseus?
Didst thou not lead him through the glimmering night
From Perigenia, whom he ravished?
And make him with fair AEgle break his faith,
With Ariadne and Antiopa?

TITANIA

These are the forgeries of jealousy:
And never, since the middle summer's spring,
Met we on hill, in dale, forest or mead,

By paved fountain or by rushy brook,
Or in the beached margent of the sea,
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,
But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.
Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,
As in revenge, have suck'd up from the sea
Contagious fogs; which falling in the land
Have every pelting river made so proud
That they have overborne their continents:
The ox hath therefore stretch'd his yoke in vain,
The ploughman lost his sweat, and the green corn
Hath rotted ere his youth attain'd a beard;
And the quaint mazes in the wanton green
For lack of tread are undistinguishable:
The human mortals want their winter here;
No night is now with hymn or carol blest:
And thorough this distemperature we see
The seasons alter: the spring, the summer,
The childing autumn, angry winter, change
Their wonted liveries, and the mazed world,
By their increase, now knows not which is which:
And this same progeny of evils comes
From our debate, from our dissension;
We are their parents and original.

OBERON

Do you amend it then; it lies in you:
Why should Titania cross her Oberon?
I do but beg a little changeling boy,
To be my henchman.

TITANIA

Set your heart at rest:
The fairy land buys not the child of me.
His mother was a votaress of my order:
And, in the spiced Indian air, by night,
Full often hath she gossip'd by my side,
And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands,
Marking the embarked traders on the flood,
When we have laugh'd to see the sails conceive
And grow big-bellied with the wanton wind;
Which she, with pretty and with swimming gait
Following,--her womb then rich with my young squire,--
Would imitate, and sail upon the land,
To fetch me trifles, and return again,
As from a voyage, rich with merchandise.

But she, being mortal, of that boy did die;
And for her sake do I rear up her boy,
And for her sake I will not part with him.

OBERON

How long within this wood intend you stay?

TITANIA

Perchance till after Theseus' wedding-day.
If you will patiently dance in our round
And see our moonlight revels, go with us;
If not, shun me, and I will spare your haunts.

OBERON

Give me that boy, and I will go with thee.

TITANIA

Not for thy fairy kingdom. Fairies, away!
We shall chide downright, if I longer stay.

Exit TITANIA with her train

OBERON

Well, go thy way: thou shalt not from this grove
Till I torment thee for this injury.

Helena and Demetrius: Act II, Scene I

Enter DEMETRIUS, HELENA following him

DEMETRIUS

I love thee not, therefore pursue me not.
Where is Lysander and fair Hermia?
The one I'll slay, the other slayeth me.
Thou told'st me they were stolen unto this wood;
And here am I, and wode within this wood,
Because I cannot meet my Hermia.
Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.

HELENA

You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant;
But yet you draw not iron, for my heart
Is true as steel: leave you your power to draw,
And I shall have no power to follow you.

DEMETRIUS

Do I entice you? do I speak you fair?
Or, rather, do I not in plainest truth
Tell you, I do not, nor I cannot love you?

HELENA

And even for that do I love you the more.
I am your spaniel; and, Demetrius,
The more you beat me, I will fawn on you:
Use me but as your spaniel, spurn me, strike me,
Neglect me, lose me; only give me leave,
Unworthy as I am, to follow you.
What worser place can I beg in your love,--
And yet a place of high respect with me,--
Than to be used as you use your dog?

DEMETRIUS

Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit;
For I am sick when I do look on thee.

HELENA

And I am sick when I look not on you.

DEMETRIUS

You do impeach your modesty too much,
To leave the city and commit yourself
Into the hands of one that loves you not;
To trust the opportunity of night
And the ill counsel of a desert place
With the rich worth of your virginity.

HELENA

Your virtue is my privilege: for that
It is not night when I do see your face,
Therefore I think I am not in the night;
Nor doth this wood lack worlds of company,
For you in my respect are all the world:
Then how can it be said I am alone,
When all the world is here to look on me?

DEMETRIUS

I'll run from thee and hide me in the brakes,
And leave thee to the mercy of wild beasts.

HELENA

The wildest hath not such a heart as you.
Run when you will, the story shall be changed:
Apollo flies, and Daphne holds the chase;
The dove pursues the griffin; the mild hind
Makes speed to catch the tiger; bootless speed,
When cowardice pursues and valour flies.

DEMETRIUS

I will not stay thy questions; let me go:
Or, if thou follow me, do not believe
But I shall do thee mischief in the wood.

HELENA

Ay, in the temple, in the town, the field,
You do me mischief. Fie, Demetrius!
Your wrongs do set a scandal on my sex:
We cannot fight for love, as men may do;
We should be wood and were not made to woo.
Exit

DEMETRIUS

I'll follow thee and make a heaven of hell,
To die upon the hand I love so well.
Exit

Try it out on your own:

TEXT: With a partner each reading one role—or on your own—read through the end of *Midsummer's* Act I Scene 1 between Lysander and Hermia, and 'beat out' the scene together; clap it out using the "heartbeat," beat by beat. What do you discover about the characters after doing this? What clues has Shakespeare given you to work with?

ACTING: With a partner each reading a role—or on your own, you can pick one role—read the Titania/Oberon scene again trying different tactics: for each line or group of lines, pick a new action verb to play.

For example: to smother with kindness, to guilt trip her/him, to beg, to shrug off, to intimidate. You can think of other action verbs, too. You can even try playing the opposite of what you think is going on!

WRITING: Shakespeare's writing is considered "heightened language," which just means that it usually uses a rhythmic structure (like iambic pentameter) and it uses lots of imagery (uses descriptive language to paint a mental picture) to get its point across.

In your journal or notebook, think of the last thing you really wanted to do or a place you wanted to go but couldn't. Thinking of similes or metaphors to get you going, can you describe how you felt in that moment, using heightened language? Can you create an exaggerated or heightened image of what that felt like, so that you can convey how much you really wanted that thing?

For instance, imagine I really wanted to go to my favorite restaurant for my favorite meal, but it was closed when I got there. Seeing the restaurant closed was like being in my best and finest outfit, looking my very best, and having a giant thunderstorm just pour down over my head.

What are other emotional moments that you can translate into extended metaphors and similes?