

## 2: THE REHEARSAL

Adapted by Julia Cranney

### SCENE 3: QUINCE'S HOUSE, ATHENS

- PUCK  
Welcome to the other side of Athens, a place where people live in small houses, not big palaces. This is the house of Mistress Quince, who loves to write plays. Tonight she's gathered together her friends to rehearse her latest effort.
- QUINCE  
Right then...
- SNUG  
Woah, it's cold tonight in't it?
- STARVELING  
I know. Call this summer?
- QUINCE  
Ladies and gentlemen...
- SNOUT  
Oi! Stop hogging the warm!
- FLUTE  
I'll only be a minute... Ow!
- [FLUTE, SNUG AND STARVELING CRASH TO THE FLOOR]*
- QUINCE  
Is everyone here?
- BOTTOM  
Ahem... You're best to call our names, one by one, according to the script.
- QUINCE  
Oh yes. Here's the list of everyone's name, who are thought best to act in our play for the Duke and Duchess on their wedding day at night.
- BOTTOM  
Yes, good Mistress Quince, now tell us what the play is and so get to the point.
- QUINCE  
Our play is the most lamentable story and most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisbe.
- PUCK  
Pyramus and Thisbe? That's a story about a couple of star-crossed lovers that definitely doesn't end well. It's meant to be a tragedy, but if this lot do it, I think it's going to end up a comedy.



A Midsummer Night's Dream

BOTTOM Now, good Mistress Quince, it's time to give out the parts. Company, spread yourselves.

QUINCE Answer as I call you. Nick Bottom, the weaver.

BOTTOM Ready.

QUINCE You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus.

BOTTOM Oh ho, yes, Pyramus! And who is Pyramus? A lover or a tyrant?

QUINCE A lover.

BOTTOM Ooh...

QUINCE And the main part in our play. Now, Francis Flute -

BOTTOM A lover, oh yes. Now that will call for tears. I can do tears... Although I can also play tyrants. Argh! Arrgghh!

*[SNUG, STARVELING, FLUTE AND SNOOT APPLAUD]*

SNUG Oh yes!

STARVELING Bravo!

BOTTOM Thank you. Now name the rest of the players.

QUINCE Francis Flute, the bellows-mender.

FLUTE Here, Mistress Quince.

QUINCE Flute, you will play Thisbe.

FLUTE Who is Thisbe? A wandering knight?

QUINCE It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

FLUTE What? Nay! Let me not play a woman, I have a beard coming.

QUINCE Don't worry, you shall act it in a mask and you may speak as small as you will.

- BOTTOM Oh, I can wear a mask too, let me play Thisbe. I'll speak in a monstrous little voice... "Ah, Pyramus, my dear love. It is I, Thisbe, your sweet lady Thisbe!"
- [SNUG, STARVELING, FLUTE AND SNOOT LAUGH]
- QUINCE No, you must play Pyramus and Flute, you Thisbe.
- BOTTOM Oh fine, proceed.
- QUINCE Robin Starveling, the tailor.
- STARVELING Here, Mistress Quince.
- QUINCE You must play Moonshine.
- STARVELING Mmnh...
- QUINCE Snout the tinker?
- SNOOT Here Mistress Quince.
- QUINCE You the wall.
- SNOOT Got it.
- QUINCE Myself the narrator, Snug the joiner, you the lion's part.
- [SNUG GULPS]
- QUINCE And now, I hope, every actor has their part.
- SNUG Erm... Have you got the lion's part written down? Please give it to me, for I am slow at learning.
- QUINCE Don't worry, it's nothing but roaring.
- BOTTOM Roaarr! Let me play the lion too! I will roar so well that I will make the duke say, "Let him roar again! Again, again, let him roar again!"
- QUINCE No, no, no, Nick Bottom, you can play no part but Pyramus.
- BOTTOM Ah, well. I will undertake it.
- QUINCE Thank you.



A Midsummer Night's Dream

BOTTOM

What beard am I best to play it in?

QUINCE

Oh, what you will. Company, here are your lines. I entreat you, request you and desire you to learn them by tomorrow night. And meet me in the palace wood, by moonlight, after work. There we will rehearse away from the city and prying eyes.

BOTTOM

We will meet and there we may rehearse. Take pains, be perfect, adieu!

*[SNUG, STARVELING, FLUTE AND SNOOT APPLAUD]*

PUCK

Bless my horns! What a funny group of actors. I don't know what Theseus and Hippolyta will make of them at their wedding. But one thing's for sure: a lot can happen in the pale moonlight before we make it to that happy night.

FX

*[PUCK FLIES OFF]*