

## SCENE 1.

*Athens. The palace of THESEUS.*

*(Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, and Attendants)*

**THESEUS**

Hippolyta, dear, well, here's your new home.  
It may not be so fancy but at least it's not Rome.  
In Athens we have far more manners and taste  
So your beauty and charm will not go to waste.

**HIPPOLYTA**

Manners and taste? Have you muddled<sup>4</sup> your brains?  
You stole me from home, and you keep me in chains

**THESEUS**

Oh, don't be like that my dear Amazon queen  
It's old-fashioned romance . . .

**HIPPOLYTA**

. . . it's not, it's obscene!  
I have not got a choice but to marry you here

**THESEUS**

Then you may as well face it. Crack open a beer

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4—Mixed up, scrambled

(THESEUS *passes* HIPPOLYTA *a beer*)

Philostrate, Philostrate! Where the heck is he now?

(PUCK *enters disguised as* PHILOSTRATE)

**PHILOSTRATE**

I'm right here, your Highness

**THESEUS**

... There is no need to bow

**PUCK (*ASIDE*)**

Yes, it's Puck here-you knew that-disguised as a man  
I do this sometimes just to make good my plan

**THESEUS**

I'm worried my queen is getting cold feet.  
And a little bit drunk. (*To* HIPPOLYTA) Here, love, take a  
seat.  
(*To* PHILOSTRATE) This wedding you promise will win  
me her heart?

**PHILOSTRATE**

Don't you worry 'bout that Lord, I'll just make a start

(*He exits*)

**HIPPOLYTA**

How long do I have to sit here like this?

**THESEUS**

Not long now, dear. Perhaps one little kiss?

**HIPPOLYTA**

Not likely, you heathen<sup>5</sup>, not 'til I am freed.  
And even after we're married, it's not guaranteed

*(Enter EGEUS and HERMIA)*

**EGEUS**

Happy be Theseus . . .

**THESEUS**

. . . Oh, not you again?

**EGEUS**

It's my eldest girl Hermia. She's being a pain.  
I told her to marry this upstanding lad:  
Demetrius, step forward

*(Enter DEMETRIUS)*

**HERMIA**

. . . He's an absolute cad!

**EGEUS**

Stop lying my child. He's as sweet as a panda.

**HERMIA**

But I want to marry this man Lysander.

*(Enter LYSANDER)*

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5—Someone who is uncivilized

**LYSANDER**

We had a few dates and we saw some good bands.

**EGEUS**

And now she won't do what her father commands  
Please tell her, my Lord. I am wasting my breath  
She either gets married or we put her to death

**HIPPOLYTA**

I'm with you, dear Hermia. It seems that we women  
Around here in Athens don't get an opinion

**THESEUS**

(*To EGEUS*) Well, thanks a lot, Egeus, your timing is great.  
I know it's a problem, but couldn't it wait?  
(*turns to HERMIA*) Now listen Hermia, it's Demetrius or  
bust  
And I'll even let you get married with us

**HERMIA**

Well I don't want to die, but this man ain't no fun

**THESEUS**

Either marry him, dear, or you'll live as a nun!

**EGEUS**

Oh, thank you, my Lord. I'm sure she'll agree

**THESEUS**

She'd better do, mate . . . Now let's go have tea.

*(Exit all but LYSANDER and HERMIA)*

**LYSANDER**

Well, the course of true love in our case is dead,  
So I'd better be going, you heard what he said.

**HERMIA**

Is that it? Not so fast. Are you a man or a mouse?  
Let's run off to your Auntie's house

**LYSANDER**

That cute little shack on the edge of the wood?

**HERMIA**

And there we'll get married. You got it?

**LYSANDER**

Yes . . .

**HERMIA**

. . . Good!

*(Enter HELENA)*

**HERMIA**

Oh, Hi there, Helena. How are you?  
Your hair looks great. Did you do something new?

**HELENA**

I'm trying to look more serious  
To win that man Demetrius,  
But whatever I say and whatsoever I do  
He has only got eyes for you,  
Your eyes, your ears, your mouth, your nose . . .

**HERMIA**

My head and shoulders, knees and toes?

**HELENA**

Don't tease me so, it's not a joke.  
I'm obsessed with that Demetrius bloke.  
I wish I had your gorgeous looks  
To get in that man's good books.

**HERMIA**

All other men, they say you're hot  
But Demetrius has lost the plot.<sup>6</sup>  
It doesn't matter what I say.  
He's waiting for our wedding day!

**HELENA**

But you love him (*indicates* LYSANDER). Did I get that  
right?

**HERMIA**

(*nodding*) Which is why we're skipping town tonight

**LYSANDER**

Well, actually we leave tomorrow,  
But we'll put an end to all your sorrow.

**HERMIA**

We'll never come back . . .

**LYSANDER**

. . . I swear it's true

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6—Lost touch with reality

**HERMIA**

And then he'll only have eyes for you.

*(Exit HERMIA and LYSANDER)*

**HELENA**

Oh, Cupid, such a cruel sprite

To land me in this awful plight.

He loved me once: Demetrius.

But Hermia she did ruin us.

And even when he knows their plan

I'm sure he'll never be my man.

He'll follow them into the trees

To catch a peek, but if you please

I'll follow him to enrich my pain

Just to see him go . . . (hopefully) and come back again

*(Exit all)*