

A Kidsummer Night's Dream



"Brilliant! A Kidsummer Night's Dream was an excellent script, as students grasped the concepts extremely well and certainly did the production proud. Comments such as 'The best production yet' were numerous.

One that Year 6, 2006, will never forget."

Ben Venue Public School, Armidale, Australia

"I just have to say 'it was FABULOUS!' The kids loved it, the parents thought it was great and for me as director it was so easy to pull together. Thank you so much for making our lives that much easier."

Mt Eder Normal Primary School, Auckland, New Zealand

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You can order *A Kidsummer Night's Dream* at www.bushfirepress.com/kidsummer



Bushfire Press

A Kidsummer Night's Dream

a musical fantasy

Music & lyrics by David Billings, Rob Fairbairn,
Mark Leehy & Kevin O'Mara

Book by Lynne Bartlett, Mark Leehy and Kevin O'Mara
© 1995

based on the play *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
by William Shakespeare

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- *APPLICATION FOR PERFORMANCE of A Kidsummer Night's Dream should be made to the publisher and acknowledged before rehearsals commence.*

Synopsis

Act 1

It is the wedding day of Theseus, Duke of Athens and Hyppolyta, Queen of the Amazons. They are to be married under the Midsummer Moon that night. Theseus is holding court as usual, but on this day will hear only cases of quarrelling lovers (an old custom). Old Egeus drags his rebellious daughter, Hermia, to the Duke. He is furious that she will not marry Demetrius, the boy he has picked out for her. She insists that she should be able to marry her own choice, Lysander. All are present and the quarrelling begins. It seems that Demetrius was going with Helena, Hermia's friend, but then switched his attentions to Hermia when he saw her with Lysander, her true love. The Duke finally silences the argument by telling Hermia to obey her father or face being grounded for life. When the Royals exit, Hermia and Lysander resolve to sneak off to the Woods, sleep there the night and then make their escape to freedom. Hermia makes the mistake of telling Helena of her plan.

In this act, we also meet a group of bumbling but well-meaning Workers who assemble to rehearse a little play (*The Tragedy of Pyramus and Thisbe*) to present that night for the Duke & Queen as a wedding present. It becomes clear that this little play is not going to be the world's best drama.

Act 2

We are now in the Woods, at night, when the fairies (unseen by humans) are abroad. We meet Fairy King, Oberon and Fairy Queen, Titania ... and the King's mischievous fairy, Puck. The King and Queen are arguing over possession a Changeling Child. The Queen will not give him up and the King decides to teach her a lesson. He sends Puck to find a secret flower that possesses love magic. He intends to squeeze a few drops into the Queen's eyes as she sleeps, so that she will fall in love with the first thing she sees when she wakes.

Meanwhile Helena has brought Demetrius to the Woods, to show him where Hermia and Lysander are. She thinks that by doing this he will see how brave she is and want her back. But Demetrius dismisses her callously. This is watched by Oberon, who decides that Demetrius needs a lesson. When Puck returns with the flowers, Oberon instructs him to look for an Athenian boy and girl and squeeze some drops into the boy's eyes when he is asleep. Oberon then goes to the sleeping Queen and administers the drops.

Also to the Woods come Hermia and Lysander. They both lie down and fall asleep, exhausted from their flight. Puck comes upon them, and, believing them to be the Athenians described by Oberon, administers drops to Lysander.

Meanwhile, Demetrius has given Helen the slip and she wanders through the Woods, coming across the sleeping Lysander. She wakes him and ... he immediately falls in love with her. He chases after her. Hermia awakens and finds Lysander gone and goes searching.

Now the Workers enter, to have a moonlight rehearsal before they present their play. Bottom, the weaver, is extremely bossy and thinks he knows how every part of the play should go. Puck comes upon them and thinks to himself what a donkey Bottom is being. Then a mischievous idea occurs to him. With a magic spell, he gives Bottom a donkey's head. This scares off the other workers and Bottom is scared. The noise he makes wakens the Fairy Queen and ... she immediately falls in love with him.

When Oberon realises that Puck has administered the potion to the wrong Athenian he finds a sleeping Demetrius and administers the drops himself. But Lysander enters, chasing Helena and Demetrius wakes and ... immediately falls in love with Helena.

Now both boys are fighting over Helena and when Hermia arrives she is confused (as is Helena). Oberon causes the moon to black out and Puck leads the boys on a merry chase until they both tire and fall asleep, whereupon he administers an antidote.

Oberon and Puck now go to the sleeping Queen and take the baby Changeling. But it has a dirty nappy and the King decides to revue his plan. So he administers the antidote and awakens the Queen. He returns the baby and they reconcile. They hear the Horn of Dawn and all fairies return to the spirit world.

The Duke and Queen arrive with their wedding party, ready to be married and Egeus rushes in to say that Hermia is missing. But then they see Hermia, Helena, Lysander and Demetrius all sleeping soundly. When they are awakened, Demetrius realises that he loves Helena and so all three couples are married.

The happy proceedings are interrupted by the Workers, who present their truly awful, but hilarious play.

Puck enters to explain that it is all but a midsummer night's Dream

CAST

THE COURT

| | |
|--------------|---|
| THESEUS: | Duke of Athens. Wise and fair, like a kindly uncle. |
| HIPPOLYTA: | Queen of the Amazons, betrothed to Theseus. Just and fair, like a kindly aunt. |
| PHILOSTRATE: | Master of the Revels to Theseus. Also looks after the running of the court. |
| EGEUS: | Father to Hermia. A crotchety old dad who doesn't understand the younger generation in general, and his daughter in particular. He doesn't get a lot of fun out of life. |
| HERMIA: | Daughter to Egeus, in love with Lysander. A bit rebellious, and definitely headstrong. She is modern, has a good self-image and is assertive. |
| HELENA: | In love with Demetrius. Wimpy and self-indulgent. She has a low self-image and whinges a lot. |
| LYSANDER: | In love with Hermia. Mr nice guy. A bit of a poet and a dreamer. Sees himself as noble, gallant and chivalrous. |
| DEMETRIUS: | In love with Hermia ... but more in love with himself. A real rotter. Wealthy family, captain of the school football team, always pumping iron and posing. He has sexist attitudes and is dishonest and a bit of a bully. He has already jilted HELENA. |

THE WORKERS

- PETER QUINCE: A Carpenter. Leader of the group of workers who are putting on a surprise play for the Duke's wedding. He is a bit of an organiser and gets frustrated trying to whip his motley crew of incompetents into shape. Plays the NARRATOR in the wedding play.
- NICK BOTTOM: A Weaver. Sees himself as the real manager of the players. Plays PYRAMUS in the wedding play. Stupid, boastful and stubborn. Other workers look up to him because they think he is more intelligent than they.
- SNUG: A Joiner. Dumb. Plays the LION in the wedding play.
- FRANCIS FLUTE: A bellows mender. Plays THISBE in the wedding play.
- ROBIN STARVELING: A tailor. Plays MOONSHINE in the wedding play.
- TOM SNOOT: A tinker. Plays WALL in the wedding play.

THE FAIRIES

- TITANIA: The proud Fairy Queen.
- PEASEBLOSSOM }
COBWEB } The Fairy Queen's attendant servants.
MOTH }
MUSTARDSEED }
- OBERON: The jealous, blustering Fairy King.
- PUCK (or Robin Goodfellow): Oberon's main sprite. The mischievous hobgoblin who thinks all mortals fools, and serves as a link between the fairies and humans. He likes to brag. Considers himself Oberon's jester. High opinion of himself.

ROYAL COURT ATTENDANTS, COURTIERS, LADIES-IN-WAITING
WORKERS AND ATHENIANS
ROYAL FAIRY ATTENDANTS, FAIRIES, GOBLINS AND FOREST FOLK

THE SETTING

A Midsummer Night's Dream is set in court of ancient Athens and the nearby Royal Woods - the setting of the story as told by Shakespeare. The stage can be dressed as sparsely or as imaginatively as required. A basically bare stage is fine, as the action centres on the characters. The court can be represented by a couple of thrones and lots of courtly Athenians and the Woods can be represented by a few shrubs. You may wish to have a tree for Puck to climb in or observe from. A backdrop or hanging fabrics can also be effective. If you have access to lighting you can really create some magical atmospheres in the Woods.

ACTS, SONGS, MUSIC & FX

ACT ONE THE ROYAL COURT OF ATHENS

Prologue (Instrumental)

Summer Nights Company

The Workers' Song The Workers and chorus

ACT TWO A WOOD NEAR THE CITY

It's Only Magic Puck, Fairies and Forest Folk

FX - Thunder & Lightning (Five Times)

Lullaby Company

The Workers' Song (Reprise) The Workers

FX - Shimmering Sting (Puck's Magic Spell)

I Can Handle It (Bottom's Song) Bottom and chorus

Ones And Twos (Helena's Lament) Helena

FX - Thunder & Lightning (Twice)

ACT THREE THE WOOD, NEARING DAWN

Lullaby (Instrumental Reprise)

FX - The Horn Of Dawn

In Dreams Fairies and Forest Folk

FX - The Horn Of Dawn

Finale (It's Only Magic) Company

Curtain (Summer Nights) Company

MUSIC

The music can be played by solo piano or stage band (a full piano score and chord charts are in the back of this book) or CD 2 (instrumental backing tracks) of the accompanying CD can be used.

SOUND EFFECTS (FX)

All FX sounds are on the accompanying Instrumental Backing CD.

DVD

Available from the publisher.

ACT THREE

Scene 2: Theseus and Hippolyta in the Woods

FX: **HORN**

[ENTER PHILOSTRATE *blowing the Royal Hunting Horn, followed by THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA and the COURTLY ATHENIANS, OP*]

HIPPOLYTA: Ah, the Woods by the moonlight. How romantic ... What a beautiful setting for our wedding, dear

THESEUS: [*Smiling*] But we'd better not delay, my sweet - we're fast running out of moonlight. The dawn approaches. [*To PHILOSTRATE*] Philostrate - do your duty: perform the ceremony! [*ALL cheer*]

PHILOSTRATE: [*Taking out an official book and addressing THESEUS and HIPPOLYTA*] As the Royal Athenian Master of Ceremonies, it is my duty ... and my pleasure ... to ask the following questions: Do you, Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons, take this man, Theseus, Duke of Athens, to be your lawful wedded husband?

[*Enter EGEUS PS, running on excitedly*]

EGEUS: Hold it! Hold it! Gov'nor, Gov'nor!

THESEUS: Not now, Egeus - we're about to tie the knot. [*To PHILOSTRATE*] proceed.

PHILOSTRATE: As the Royal Athenian Master of Ceremonies, it is my duty -

EGEUS: - It's me daughter, Hermia. She's run away!

THESEUS: [*Annoyed*] That's not MY problem. [*To PHILOSTRATE*] Philostrate!

PHILOSTRATE: As the Royal Athenian -

EGEUS: - If I don't find her, she'll marry that Lysander boy.

THESEUS: Tell someone who cares! [*To PHILOSTRATE*] Philostrate!

PHILOSTRATE: As the Royal Athenian -

HIPPOLYTA: - [*Noticing the sleeping couples*] Dear ... you did say you wanted this matter settled before we got married?

THESEUS: But if he can't find the girl -

HIPPOLYTA: - [*Tapping THESEUS on shoulder and pointing to the sleeping couples and saying quietly*] Ahem.

[*Everybody looks*]

EGEUS: HERMIA!

[*The sleeping couples wake and jump up, looking around in astonishment.*]

HERMIA: Dad!

EGEUS: Where have you been? I've been worried sick about you. I told you - if you know you're going to be late, call! You've got no idea -

HERMIA: - I don't know what happened.

EGEUS: Well you've done your dash, now. The Duke's not very happy with you. Not happy at all -

THESEUS: - Egeus - WHAT is going on?

HIPPOLYTA: [*Calmly*] Perhaps we should ask the young people?

EGEUS: What would they know? They've got no respect -

THESEUS: - Of course, dear. A sensible suggestion, as always.

HERMIA: I'm sorry, father, but Lysander is the one for me - and that's all there is to it.

EGEUS: You know what the Duke said. You were promised to Demetrius, and -

DEMETRIUS: But I don't want her.

EGEUS: WHAT?!? MY DAUGHTER ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH FOR YOU?

DEMETRIUS: I'm going with Helena.

EGEUS: [*Bewildered, and throwing up arms*] Who'd be a parent?

HIPPOLYTA: Everything seems to have worked out nicely. Your daughter will marry a young man of wealth and breeding - AND of her own choosing. Demetrius keeps his former promise to Helena, and all families are reunited. So everybody's happy.

EGEUS: I'M not happy.

THESEUS: Egeus - let me explain: I'M the Duke of Athens, it's MY wedding, and EVERYBODY'S happy - including YOU! Do I make myself clear?

EGEUS: [*Crawling*] Yes, Gov'nor. I'm very happy, very happy indeed.

THESEUS: Good! [*To PHILOSTRATE*] Philostrate!

PHILOSTRATE: As the Royal ... Oh, the heck with it - [*To THESEUS and HIPPOLYTA*] Do you ... [*Suddenly getting an idea and turning to LYSANDER and HERMIA*] and do you ... [*To DEMETRIUS and HELENA*] and do YOU ... in fact, does everyone take everyone?

THE WHOLE COMPANY : WE / THEY DO!!!

PHILOSTRATE: Then you're all married! [*Cheers etc*]

[*Enter QUINCE, SNUG, FLUTE, SNOUT, and STARVELING, OP.*
QUINCE has a small drum around his neck and the others carry a 'prop box']

QUINCE: My lord, my lord - are we too late?

[*Everybody is surprised and confused by this interruption*]

SNUG: We have a play to present -

FLUTE: - As a present -

SNOUT: - A wedding present -

STARVELING: - It's very good.

[COURTLY ATHENIANS *groan*]

HIPPOLYTA: [*Concerned*] Oh dear.

THESEUS: [*Touched*] How very thoughtful!

HIPPOLYTA: It's getting late, dear. [*Stage whisper*] And they're probably dreadful.

THESEUS: [*To HIPPOLYTA*] But they mean well.

HIPPOLYTA: [*Smiling*] You're quite right.

THESEUS: [*To workers*] And I'm sure these honest workers won't keep us long, will you?

WORKERS: No, my lord.

THESEUS: Let's have your play, then.

WORKERS: Hooray!

[COURTLY ATHENIANS *groan*]

SNUG: 'Ere - what about Bottom?

FLUTE: We don't know what's become of him.

QUINCE: We shall have to go on without him. [*Announcing*] Royal Highnesses, distinguished guests -

ATHENIANS: Get on with it!

[BOTTOM *enters, running on PS*]

BOTTOM: Am I too late? Has the show started?

WORKERS: [*Together*] Bottom! You made it! [*Etc*]

BOTTOM: You won't believe the dream I had.

DEMETRIUS: [*Interrupting*] Can we start, please? [*Helena digs him in the ribs*]

QUINCE: [*To WORKERS*] Quick - everybody off. [*They exit PS. QUINCE does a drum roll*] We present "The Tragic Tale of Pyramus and Thisbe." [*Drum roll*] ... Pyramus was a handsome young man.

BOTTOM: [*Entering PS in a robe and cloak*] That's me!

QUINCE: And Thisbe ... was the girl next door.

FLUTE: [*Entering PS, dressed as a girl*] That's me ... but I don't like this mushy stuff.

QUINCE: Quiet, you! ... Their two families were fighting, and Thisbe's father refused to let her see her beloved Pyramus.

FLUTE: BOO-HOO.

[QUINCE *holds up a card reading 'AWWWW!' and shows it to everyone. The COMPANY (everyone) all sigh*]

QUINCE: There was a wall between their two houses ... There was a WALL between their two houses ... [*Calling*] WALL!

SNOUT: [*Entering PS, dressed as a wall*] I'm the wall.

QUINCE: So they spoke to each other through a hole in this wall.

[BOTTOM and FLUTE *stand either side of SNOUT*]

SNOUT: [*Holding up fingers*] This is the hole.

FLUTE: Hi, Pyramus.

BOTTOM: Hi, Thisbe.

QUINCE: Bye and bye they decided to run away and be together.

FLUTE: Oh, Pyramus, Pyramus, my gorgeous hunk
I love you and my heart is sunk!
Tonight my promise I will keep,
And while my old man is asleep
Together we will run away
And live and [*hands over mouth to block out the word "love"*]
another day.

BOTTOM: We'll meet in the Woods by moonlight.

[BOTTOM, FLUTE and SNOUT *exit PS*]

QUINCE: So they met in the Woods by moonlight ... by moonlight ... MOONLIGHT!

STARVELING: [*Entering PS with a MOON CRESCENT on a STICK*] I'm moonlight. [*All laugh*]

SNUG: [*Entering PS, pouncing on dressed as a lion*] ROAR! ROAR! [*All laugh harder*]

QUINCE: Suddenly a fierce lion came into the Woods!

[SNUG *roars again and everybody laughs*]

SNUG: Don't be afraid, I'm not a real lion. I'm Snug the Joiner.

QUINCE: Then Thisbe arrived.

FLUTE: [*Entering PS*] Here are the Woods and here is the moonlight ... but where is my Pyramus? [*The lion roars*] OH! OH! A lion.

SNUG: A very HUNGRY lion - ROAR!

FLUTE: Eek!

SNUG: [*To everybody*] I'm not REALLY hungry.

FLUTE: I must distract him and make my escape.

QUINCE: So she took off her scarf and threw it at the lion as she fled. [FLUTE *does so, exiting* PS]

SNUG: [*Pouncing on the scarf and shaking it*] Growwl! ... Hey ... this is no good ... I want a real meal - not a snack.

QUINCE: So the lion went off in search of food.
[SNUG *exits* PS, *roaring as he goes*. STARVELING *also exits* PS]

DEMETRIUS: Bring back the lion - he's the best bit in this crummy play!
[*Everyone laughs and HELENA digs him in the ribs again*]

QUINCE: Bye and bye, Pyramus arrived in the wood.

BOTTOM: [*Entering* PS] Here are the Woods and here is the moonlight, but where is ... where is ... wait a minute - where is the moonlight?

EVERYONE: [*Calling*] MOONLIGHT!

STARVELING: [*Entering* PS *in a hurry*] Sorry ... I thought my part was over.

BOTTOM: Your part isn't over till I die! What are you trying to do - make a fool of me?

DEMETRIUS: You don't need any help with that! [*All laugh and he gets another dig in the ribs*]

BOTTOM: [*Composing himself*] Ahem ... Here are the Woods and here is the moonlight, but where is my Thisbe? Thisbe, Thisbe, wherefore art thou, Thisbe?

QUINCE: Then Pyramus spied Thisbe's scarf.

BOTTOM: [*Picking up scarf*] But what's this I spy? 'Tis Thisbe's scarf ... with big teeth marks ... I can't stop 'cryin' - she's been eaten by a lion! Alas, alack.

QUINCE: Pyramus could not stand to live without his Thisbe.

BOTTOM: To you, Thisbe I'll be true
Hold on, girl - I'm comin', too!
[*Taking out sword*] I die, I die [*To audience*] I don't really die - I'm only pretending ...
[*Pretending to stab himself*] Die! Die! [*He does an elaborate death, keeling over, legs in the air etc., then gets up and says*] I'm not really dead. [*He lays down again*]

[QUINCE *holds up the other side of his card. It reads 'APPLAUSE'. Everybody applauds etc. Enter THISBE* PS]

FLUTE: Oh, no - my Pyramus! [*She checks his pulse*] He's dead! ... [*To audience*] Of course, he's not really dead.

DEMETRIUS: Get on with it. [*Another dig in the ribs*]

FLUTE: That's it. I'm out of here. I will take his sword and follow him. [*To BOTTOM in a very audible whisper*] Give me the sword. [*Taking sword*] Goodbye, cruel world. [*A quick death*]

[*QUINCE holds up 'APPLAUSE' sign and all applaud*]

SNOUT: Is my part over, yet? [*All laugh*]

QUINCE: And that is the end of our play.

ALL: [*In relief*] HOO - RAY!!!

[*The WORKERS come CENTRE and bow to the ROYAL AUDIENCE, while everyone claps them, then turn to the REAL AUDIENCE and freeze as PUCK ENTERS, moving through them to arrive CENTRE STAGE, addressing the REAL AUDIENCE*]

PUCK: If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended:
That you have merely slumbered here,
While these visions did appear.
And all you've heard and all you've seen
Was nothing but a summer dream.
But now another dream does call -
Goodnight - good luck - unto you all!

[*PUCK bows*]

BLACKOUT

LIGHTS UP IMMEDIATELY

THE WHOLE CAST ENTERS AND SINGS:

| |
|--------------------------------|
| FINALE: IT'S ONLY MAGIC |
|--------------------------------|

BLACKOUT

LIGHTS UP. THE COMPANY TAKE BOWS AS THEY SING:

| |
|-------------------------------|
| CURTAIN: SUMMER NIGHTS |
|-------------------------------|

FINIS