

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM: TITANIA AND OBERON

July 2023 ©

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 pavèd fountain or by rushy brook,
Or in the beachèd margin of the sea
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,
But with thy brawls thou hast disturbed our sport.
Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,
As in revenge have sucked up from the sea
Contagious fogs which, falling in the land,
Hath every pelting river made so proud
That they have overborne their continents.
The ox hath therefore stretched his yoke in vain,
The ploughman lost his sweat, and the green corn
Hath rotted ere his youth attained a beard.
The fold stands empty in the drownèd field,
And crows are fattened with the murrain flock.
The nine men's morris is filled up with mud,
And the quaint mazes in the wanton green
For lack of tread are undistinguishable.
The human mortals want their winter cheer.
No night is now with hymn or carol blessed.
Therefore the moon, the governess of floods,
Pale in her anger washes all the air,
That rheumatic diseases do abound;
And thorough this distemperature we see
The seasons alter: hoary-headed frosts
Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose,
And on old Hiems' thin and icy crown
An odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds

Shakespeare, Arden

TITANIA

These are deceptions made of jealousy:
And never, since the middle summer's spring,
Met we on hill, in dale, forest or field,
By man-paved fountain or by nature's brook,
Or in the beaches ringed about the sea,
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,
But all your sneering has disturbed our sport.
And so the winds, which blow on us as if
They seek revenge, have suck'd up from the sea
Contagious fogs; which falling in the land
Have every swelling river made so full
That they have flooded all the lands around:
And so the ox has stretched his yoke in vain;
The plower lost his soil; and all his corn
Has rotted well before it grew its beard;
The sheep-pens empty in the flooded field,
And crows are fattened by the rotting flock;
The fields for sporting overflow with mud,
The tidy mazes in the garden now
From lack of feet are indiscernible:
The human mortals want their winter cheer;
No hymns or carols bless the cursed night;
And so the moon, the Governess of Floods,
Grows pale in [her]anger, washes all the air,
So rheumatic diseases now abound:
And we through this disease and sickness see
The seasons alter: frightful freezing frosts
Make cold intrusion on the crimson rose,
And on the chin and crown of winter's god
A fragrant circle of sweet summer buds

Whitty, 2023

Is, as in mock'ry, set. The spring, the summer,
The childing autumn, angry winter change
Their wonted liveries, and the mazèd 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 fairyland buys not the child of me.
His mother was a vot'ress of my order,
And in the spicèd Indian air by night
Full often hath she gossiped by my side,
And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands,
Marking th' embarkèd traders on the flood,
When we have laughed 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.

Is, as in mock'ry, set: the spring, the summer,
The **pregnant** autumn, angry winter, **now [change]**
Exchange their qualities; the world,
Amazed and frightened, now knows not who's who:
And this same **family** of evils comes
From our debate, borne of our **disputation;**
We are the parents and **progenitors.**

OBERON

Do you **propose a fix?** It lies in you.
Why should Titania cross her Oberon?
I do but beg a little **fairy** boy
To be my henchman.

TITANIA

Set your heart at rest:
The fairy land took not the child for me.
His mother was a **worshipper of mine:**
And, in the spiced Indian air, by night,
Most often **did** she gossip by my side,
And **beach** beside me on **the** yellow sands,
We'd comment as the trading ships set sail,
When we had laugh'd to see the sails **op'n up,**
Becoming billowed **by** the wanton wind;
Which she **would imitate with pretty steps**
Her belly thus ballooning with my squire--
She then would travel all about the land,
To fetch me **presents,** and return again,
As from a voyage, rich with merchandise.
But she, being mortal, of that boy did die;
And for her sake I'm **rearing** up her **child,**
And for her sake I will not part with him.