

Audition Packet for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
Advice to the Players

Please look over the ENTIRE packet. We may ask you to read *any* of the scenes; this helps us hear your voice in multiple ways and to see different people interact. Please be prepared to step in to any of the scenes.

Because there are 20+ characters in the play, we won't read for each individual character at the auditions. Your audition will give us an idea of your voice, stage presence, chemistry, and flexibility and we will sort the best person into each role. Please trust us to put people in the best spots.

We are also looking for performers for our festival: folks who are comfortable with improvising and interacting with the audience, as well as singers to entertain pre-show. You can be part of the improv troupe OR part of the *Midsummer* cast OR part of BOTH groups...we will ask you for your preference. We will do some improv games at auditions with those actors who are interested.

Know the play. Read a synopsis, read the whole play, watch a movie version—something to get a sense for the world of the play, the characters and the plot. You don't have to be a scholarly expert.

Know what you are saying. There are plenty of Shakespeare resources, so look up any unfamiliar words, phrases or references.

No accents, please! But do use clear diction. You don't need to imitate anyone.

Please make sure you can spend about 90+ minutes with us at your audition time. We will do our best to keep things moving. Callbacks, if necessary, will be by invitation.

Please make sure you list ALL conflicts!

All best wishes! We look forward to seeing you!

Questions tandc.producer.01@gmail.com



Shakespeare Warm-Up

At the start of each audition session, everyone is going to stand in a circle and speak some Shakespeare to warm-up. Choose a few lines from this list that appeal to you and practice saying them—there's no right or wrong way to do this! You don't have to "act" as if you are playing the character who says the line (unless you want to). We just want everyone to get the jitters out and play with words. Choose any lines you like; say them any way you choose.

Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown.

To be, or not to be: that is the question.

Life's but a walking shadow,
a poor player, that struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
and then is heard no more;
it is a tale told by an idiot,
full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.

My tongue will tell the anger of my heart,
or else my heart concealing it will break.

Look like the innocent flower,
but be the serpent under it.

O, beware, my lord, of jealousy;
it is the green-eyed monster, which doth mock the meat it feeds on.

He jests at scars that never felt a wound.

Doubt thou the stars are fire,
doubt that the sun doth move.
Doubt truth to be a liar, but never doubt I love.

My bounty is as boundless as the sea, my love as deep;
the more I give to thee, the more I have, for both are infinite.

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?

Thou art more lovely and more temperate.

See how she leans her cheek upon her hand.

O, that I were a glove upon that hand that I might touch that cheek!

Good night, good night! Parting is such sweet sorrow,
that I shall say good night till it be morrow.

I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow, than a man swear he loves me.

We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.

This above all: to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
For he to-day that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother;

By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes.

If music be the food of love, play on,
Give me excess of it; that surfeiting,
The appetite may sicken, and so die.

Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits and
Are melted into air, into thin air:

Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more,
Or close the wall up with our English dead!

Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears;
I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.

A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse!

Lysander/Hermia (Act I Scene 1)



LYSANDER

How now, my love! why is your cheek so pale?
How chance the roses there do fade so fast?

HERMIA

Belike for want of rain, which I could well
Beteem them from the tempest of my eyes.

LYSANDER

Ay me! for aught that I could ever read,
Could ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth;
But, either it was different in blood,--

HERMIA

O cross! too high to be enthrall'd to low.
If then true lovers have been ever cross'd,
It stands as an edict in destiny:
Then let us teach our trial patience,

LYSANDER

A good persuasion: therefore, hear me, Hermia.
I have a widow aunt, a dowager
Of great revenue, and she hath no child:
From Athens is her house remote seven leagues;
And she respects me as her only son.
There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee;
And to that place the sharp Athenian law
Cannot pursue us. If thou lovest me then,
Steal forth thy father's house to-morrow night;
And in the wood, a league without the town,
Where I did meet thee once with Helena.
There will I stay for thee.

HERMIA

My good Lysander!
I swear to thee, by Cupid's strongest bow,
By all the vows that ever men have broke,
In number more than ever women spoke,
In that same place thou hast appointed me,
To-morrow truly will I meet with thee.

Puck/Fairy 1/Fairy 2 (Act II Scene 1)

PUCK

How now, spirit! whither wander you?

FAIRY 1

Over hill, over dale,

FAIRY 2

Through bush, through brier,

FAIRY 1

Over park, over pale,

FAIRY 2

Through flood, through fire,

FAIRY 1

I do wander everywhere,

Swifter than the moon's sphere;

FAIRY 2

And I serve the fairy queen,

To dew her orbs upon the green.

FAIRY 1

I must go seek some dewdrops here

And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.

FAIRY 2

Farewell, thou lob of spirits; I'll be gone:

FAIRY 1

Our queen and all our elves come here anon.

PUCK

The king doth keep his revels here to-night:
Take heed the queen come not within his sight;
For Oberon is passing fell and wrath,
Because that she as her attendant hath
A lovely boy, stolen from an Indian king;
She never had so sweet a changeling;
And jealous Oberon would have the child
Knight of his train, to trace the forests wild;
But she perforce withholds the loved boy,
Crowns him with flowers and makes him all her joy:
And now they never meet in grove or green,
By fountain clear, or spangled starlight sheen,
But, they do square, that all their elves for fear
Creep into acorn-cups and hide them there.

FAIRY 2

Either I mistake your shape and making quite,
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite
Call'd Robin Goodfellow:

FAIRY 1

are not you he
That frights the maidens of the villagery;
Mislead night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?

FAIRY 2

Those that Hobgoblin call you and sweet Puck,
You do their work, and they shall have good luck:

BOTH

Are not you he?

Demetrius/Helena (Act II SCENE 1)

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:

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.

Quince/Bottom/Flute (Act I Scene 2)

QUINCE

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

BOTTOM

Ready. Name what part I am for, and proceed.

QUINCE

You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus.

BOTTOM

What is Pyramus? a lover, or a tyrant?

QUINCE

A lover, that kills himself most gallant for love.

BOTTOM

That will ask some tears in the true performing of it: if I do it, let the audience look to their eyes; I will move storms, I will condole in some measure. To the rest: yet my chief humour is for a tyrant: I could play Ercles rarely, or a part to tear a cat in, to make all split.

The raging rocks
And shivering shocks
Shall break the locks
Of prison gates;
And Phibbus' car
Shall shine from far
And make and mar
The foolish Fates.

This was lofty! Now name the rest of the players.
This is Ercles' vein, a tyrant's vein; a lover is more condoling.

QUINCE

Francis Flute, the bellows-mender.

FLUTE

4

Here, Peter Quince.

QUINCE

Flute, you must take Thisby on you.

FLUTE

What is Thisby? a wandering knight?

QUINCE

It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

FLUTE

Nay, faith, let me not play a woman; I have a beard coming.

QUINCE

That's all one: you shall play it in a mask, and
you may speak as small as you will.

BOTTOM

An I may hide my face, let me play Thisby too, I'll
speak in a monstrous little voice. 'Thisne,
Thisne;' 'Ah, Pyramus, lover dear! thy Thisby dear,
and lady dear!'

QUINCE

No, no; you must play Pyramus: and, Flute, you Thisby.

BOTTOM

Well, proceed.

Monologues and Soliloquies

EGEUS (Act I Scene 1)

Full of vexation come I, with complaint
Against my child, my daughter Hermia.
Stand forth, Demetrius. My noble lord,
This man hath my consent to marry her.
Stand forth, Lysander: and my gracious duke,
This man hath bewitch'd the bosom of my child;
Thou, thou, Lysander, thou hast given her rhymes,
And interchanged love-tokens with my child:
Thou hast by moonlight at her window sung,
With feigning voice verses of feigning love,
And stolen the impression of her fantasy
With bracelets of thy hair, rings, gawds, conceits,
Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweetmeats, messengers
Of strong prevailment in unhardened youth:
With cunning hast thou filch'd my daughter's heart,
Turn'd her obedience, which is due to me,
To stubborn harshness: and, my gracious duke,
Be it so she; will not here before your grace
Consent to marry with Demetrius,
I beg the ancient privilege of Athens,
As she is mine, I may dispose of her:
Which shall be either to this gentleman
Or to her death, according to our law
Immediately provided in that case.

HELENA (Act I Scene 1)

How happy some o'er other some can be!
Through Athens I am thought as fair as she.
But what of that? Demetrius thinks not so;
He will not know what all but he do know:
And as he errs, doting on Hermia's eyes,
So I, admiring of his qualities:
Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind;
And therefore is wing'd Cupid painted blind:
For ere Demetrius look'd on Hermia's eyne,
He hail'd down oaths that he was only mine;
And when this hail some heat from Hermia felt,
So he dissolved, and showers of oaths did melt.
I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight:
Then to the wood will he to-morrow night
Pursue her; and for this intelligence
If I have thanks, it is a dear expense:
But herein mean I to enrich my pain,
To have his sight thither and back again.

TITANIA (Act II Scene 1)

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 moon, the governess of floods,
Pale in her anger, washes all the air,
And through 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 (Act II Scene 1)

...I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,
Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses and with eglantine:
There sleeps Titania sometime of the night,
Lull'd in these flowers with dances and delight;
And there the snake throws her enamell'd skin,
Weed wide enough to wrap a fairy in:
And with the juice of this I'll streak her eyes,
And make her full of hateful fantasies.
Take thou some of it, and seek through this grove:
A sweet Athenian lady is in love
With a disdainful youth: anoint his eyes;
But do it when the next thing he espies
May be the lady: thou shalt know the man
By the Athenian garments he hath on.
Effect it with some care, that he may prove
More fond on her than she upon her love:
And look thou meet me ere the first cock crow.

BOTTOM (Act IV Scene 2)

When my cue comes, call me, and I will
answer: my next is, 'Most fair Pyramus.' Heigh-ho!
Peter Quince! Flute, the bellows-mender! Snout,
the tinker! Starveling! God's my life, stolen
hence, and left me asleep! I have had a most rare
vision. I have had a dream, past the wit of man to
say what dream it was: man is but an ass, if he go
about to expound this dream. Methought I was--there
is no man can tell what. Methought I was,--and
methought I had,--but man is but a patched fool, if
he will offer to say what methought I had. The eye
of man hath not heard, the ear of man hath not
seen, man's hand is not able to taste, his tongue
to conceive, nor his heart to report, what my dream
was. I will get Peter Quince to write a ballad of
this dream: it shall be called Bottom's Dream,
because it hath no bottom; and I will sing it in the
latter end of a play, before the duke:
peradventure, to make it the more gracious, I shall
sing it at her death.

FLUTE —as Thisbe (Act V)

Asleep, my love?
What, dead, my dove?
O Pyramus, arise!
Speak, speak. Quite dumb?
Dead, dead? A tomb
Must cover thy sweet eyes.
These My lips,
This cherry nose,
These yellow cowslip cheeks,
Are gone, are gone:
Lovers, make moan:
His eyes were green as leeks.
O Sisters Three,
Come, come to me,
With hands as pale as milk;
Lay them in gore,
Since you have shore
With shears his thread of silk.
Tongue, not a word:
Come, trusty sword;
Come, blade, my breast imbrue:

Stabs herself

And, farewell, friends;
Thus Thisby ends:
Adieu, adieu, adieu.

Dies

PUCK (Act V)

If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended,
That you have but slumber'd here
While these visions did appear.
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream,
Gentles, do not reprehend:
if you pardon, we will mend:
And, as I am an honest Puck,
If we have unearned luck
Now to 'scape the serpent's tongue,
We will make amends ere long;
Else the Puck a liar call;
So, good night unto you all.
Give me your hands, if we be friends,
And Robin shall restore amends.