

[Scene 2]

Enter Quince the carpenter, and Snug the joiner, and Bottom the weaver, and Flute the bellows-mender, and Snout the tinker, and Starveling the tailor.

FTLN 0258	QUINCE	Is all our company here?	
FTLN 0259	BOTTOM	You were best to call them generally, man by	
FTLN 0260		man, according to the scrip.	
FTLN 0261	QUINCE	Here is the scroll of every man's name which	
FTLN 0262		is thought fit, through all Athens, to play in our	5
FTLN 0263		interlude before the Duke and the Duchess on his	
FTLN 0264		wedding day at night.	
FTLN 0265	BOTTOM	First, good Peter Quince, say what the play	
FTLN 0266		treats on, then read the names of the actors, and so	
FTLN 0267		grow to a point.	10
FTLN 0268	QUINCE	Marry, our play is "The most lamentable	
FTLN 0269		comedy and most cruel death of Pyramus and	
FTLN 0270		Thisbe."	
FTLN 0271	BOTTOM	A very good piece of work, I assure you, and a	
FTLN 0272		merry. Now, good Peter Quince, call forth your	15
FTLN 0273		actors by the scroll. Masters, spread yourselves.	
FTLN 0274	QUINCE	Answer as I call you. Nick Bottom, the weaver.	
FTLN 0275	BOTTOM	Ready. Name what part I am for, and	
FTLN 0276		proceed.	
FTLN 0277	QUINCE	You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus.	20
FTLN 0278	BOTTOM	What is Pyramus—a lover or a tyrant?	
FTLN 0279	QUINCE	A lover that kills himself most gallant for love.	
FTLN 0280	BOTTOM	That will ask some tears in the true performing	
FTLN 0281		of it. If I do it, let the audience look to their	
FTLN 0282		eyes. I will move storms; I will condole in some	25
FTLN 0283		measure. To the rest.—Yet my chief humor is for a	
FTLN 0284		tyrant. I could play Ercles rarely, or a part to tear a	
FTLN 0285		cat in, to make all split:	
FTLN 0286		<i>The raging rocks</i>	
FTLN 0287		<i>And shivering shocks</i>	30
FTLN 0288		<i>Shall break the locks</i>	

FTLN 0289	<i>Of prison gates.</i>	
FTLN 0290	<i>And Phibbus' car</i>	
FTLN 0291	<i>Shall shine from far</i>	
FTLN 0292	<i>And make and mar</i>	35
FTLN 0293	<i>The foolish Fates.</i>	
FTLN 0294	This was lofty. Now name the rest of the players.	
FTLN 0295	This is Ercles' vein, a tyrant's vein. A lover is more	
FTLN 0296	condoling.	
FTLN 0297	QUINCE Francis Flute, the bellows-mender.	40
FTLN 0298	FLUTE Here, Peter Quince.	
FTLN 0299	QUINCE Flute, you must take Thisbe on you.	
FTLN 0300	FLUTE What is Thisbe—a wand'ring knight?	
FTLN 0301	QUINCE It is the lady that Pyramus must love.	
FTLN 0302	FLUTE Nay, faith, let not me play a woman. I have a	45
FTLN 0303	beard coming.	
FTLN 0304	QUINCE That's all one. You shall play it in a mask, and	
FTLN 0305	you may speak as small as you will.	
FTLN 0306	BOTTOM An I may hide my face, let me play Thisbe too.	
FTLN 0307	I'll speak in a monstrous little voice: "Thisne,	50
FTLN 0308	Thisne!"—"Ah Pyramus, my lover dear! Thy Thisbe	
FTLN 0309	dear and lady dear!"	
FTLN 0310	QUINCE No, no, you must play Pyramus—and, Flute,	
FTLN 0311	you Thisbe.	
FTLN 0312	BOTTOM Well, proceed.	55
FTLN 0313	QUINCE Robin Starveling, the tailor.	
FTLN 0314	STARVELING Here, Peter Quince.	
FTLN 0315	QUINCE Robin Starveling, you must play Thisbe's	
FTLN 0316	mother.—Tom Snout, the tinker.	
FTLN 0317	SNOUT Here, Peter Quince.	60
FTLN 0318	QUINCE You, Pyramus' father.—Myself, Thisbe's	
FTLN 0319	father.—Snug the joiner, you the lion's part.—	
FTLN 0320	And I hope here is a play fitted.	
FTLN 0321	SNUG Have you the lion's part written? Pray you, if it	
FTLN 0322	be, give it me, for I am slow of study.	65
FTLN 0323	QUINCE You may do it extempore, for it is nothing but	
FTLN 0324	roaring.	

FTLN 0325	BOTTOM	Let me play the lion too. I will roar that I will	
FTLN 0326		do any man's heart good to hear me. I will roar that	
FTLN 0327		I will make the Duke say "Let him roar again. Let	70
FTLN 0328		him roar again!"	
FTLN 0329	QUINCE	An you should do it too terribly, you would	
FTLN 0330		fright the Duchess and the ladies that they would	
FTLN 0331		shriek, and that were enough to hang us all.	
FTLN 0332	ALL	That would hang us, every mother's son.	75
FTLN 0333	BOTTOM	I grant you, friends, if you should fright the	
FTLN 0334		ladies out of their wits, they would have no more	
FTLN 0335		discretion but to hang us. But I will aggravate my	
FTLN 0336		voice so that I will roar you as gently as any sucking	
FTLN 0337		dove. I will roar you an 'twere any nightingale.	80
FTLN 0338	QUINCE	You can play no part but Pyramus, for Pyramus	
FTLN 0339		is a sweet-faced man, a proper man as one	
FTLN 0340		shall see in a summer's day, a most lovely gentlemanlike	
FTLN 0341		man. Therefore you must needs play	
FTLN 0342		Pyramus.	85
FTLN 0343	BOTTOM	Well, I will undertake it. What beard were I	
FTLN 0344		best to play it in?	
FTLN 0345	QUINCE	Why, what you will.	
FTLN 0346	BOTTOM	I will discharge it in either your straw-color	
FTLN 0347		beard, your orange-tawny beard, your purple-in-grain	90
FTLN 0348		beard, or your French-crown-color beard,	
FTLN 0349		your perfit yellow.	
FTLN 0350	QUINCE	Some of your French crowns have no hair at	
FTLN 0351		all, and then you will play barefaced. But, masters,	
FTLN 0352		here are your parts, <i>「giving out the parts,」</i> and I am	95
FTLN 0353		to entreat you, request you, and desire you to con	
FTLN 0354		them by tomorrow night and meet me in the palace	
FTLN 0355		wood, a mile without the town, by moonlight. There	
FTLN 0356		will we rehearse, for if we meet in the city, we shall	
FTLN 0357		be dogged with company and our devices known. In	100
FTLN 0358		the meantime I will draw a bill of properties such as	
FTLN 0359		our play wants. I pray you fail me not.	
FTLN 0360	BOTTOM	We will meet, and there we may rehearse	

FTLN 0361

most obscenely and courageously. Take pains. Be

FTLN 0362

perfit. Adieu.

105

FTLN 0363

QUINCE At the Duke's Oak we meet.

FTLN 0364

BOTTOM Enough. Hold or cut bowstrings.

They exit.
