

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QAvS3AypOfI>

Henry Purcell 1692:

For the plot of the play see [A Midsummer Night's Dream](#). A synopsis of scenes is given here.

- Acts 1 and 2: The first scene set to music occurs after Titania has left Oberon, following an argument over the ownership of a little Indian boy. Two of her fairies sing of the delights of the countryside ("Come, come, come let us leave the town"). A drunken, [stuttering](#) poet enters, singing "Fill up the bowl then". The stuttering has led many to believe the scene is based on the habits of [Thomas d'Urfey](#): however, it may also be poking fun at [Elkanah Settle](#), who also stuttered and was long thought to be the librettist, due to an error in his 1910 biography. The fairies mock the drunken poet and drive him away. Act 1 ends. Act 2 begins after Oberon has ordered to Puck to anoint the eyes of Demetrius with the love-juice. Titania and her fairies merrily revel ("Come all ye songsters of the sky"), and Night ("See, even Night"), Mystery ("I am come to lock all fast"), Secrecy ("One charming night") and Sleep ("Hush, no more, be silent all") lull them asleep and leave them to pleasant dreams.
- Acts 3, 4, and 5: Act 3 commences after Titania has fallen in love with Bottom (now equipped with his ass's head), much to Oberon's gratification. A Nymph sings of the pleasures and torments of love ("If love's a sweet passion") and after several dances, Titania and Bottom are entertained by the foolish, loving banter of two haymakers, Corydon and Mopsa. Act 4 (which begins after Titania has been freed from her enchantment) commences with a brief [divertissement](#) to celebrate Oberon's birthday ("Now the Night", and the abovementioned "Let the fifes and the clarions"), but for the most part it is a masque of the god Phoebus ("When the cruel winter") and the Four Seasons (Spring; "Thus, the ever grateful spring", Summer; "Here's the Summer", Autumn; "See my many coloured fields", and Winter; "Now Winter comes slowly"). Act 5 (after Theseus has been told of the lovers's adventures in the wood) commences with the goddess Juno singing an [epithalamium](#), "Thrice happy lovers", followed by a woman who sings the well-known "The Plaint" ("O let me weep"). A Chinese man and woman enter singing several songs describing Paradise ("Thus, the gloomy world", "Thus happy and free" and "Yes, Xansi"). Two further women summon Hymen, the god of marriage, who is persuaded to bless the union of all the faithful lovers in the final masque.

The Fairy Queen

Act I

Come, come, come, let us leave the Town
And in some lonely place,
Where Crowds and Noise were never known,

Resolve to spend our days.
In pleasant Shades upon the Grass
At Night our selves we'll lay;
Our Days in harmless Sport shall pass,
Thus Time shall slide away.

Drunken Poet:

Fill up the Bowl, then, &c.

1st Fairy, Chorus :

Trip it, trip it in a Ring;
Around this Mortal Dance, and Sing.

Poet:

Enough, enough,
We must play at Blind Man's Buff.
Turn me round, and stand away,
I'll catch whom I may.

1st Fairy, Chorus:

About him go, so, so, so,
Pinch the Wretch, from Top to Toe;
Pinch him forty, forty times,
Pinch till he confess his Crimes.

Poet:

Hold you damn'd tormenting Punk,
I do confess ?

Both Fairies:

What, what, &c.

Poet:

I'm Drunk, as I live Boys, Drunk.

Both Fairies:

What art thou, speak?

Poet:

If you will know it,
I am a scurvy Poet.

Chorus:

Pinch him, pinch him for his Crimes,
His Nonsense, and his Doggerel Rhymes.

Poet:

Hold! Oh! Oh! Oh!

Both Fairies:

Confess more, more.

Poet:

I confess, I'm very poor.
Nay prithee do not pinch me so,
Good dear Devil, let me go;
And as I hope to wear the Bays,
I'll write a Sonnet in thy Praise.

Chorus:

Drive 'em hence, away, away
Let 'em sleep till break of Day.

Act II

Come all ye Songsters of the Sky,
Wake, and Assemble in this Wood;
But no ill-boding Bird be nigh,
None but the Harmless and the Good.

Trio:

May the God of Wit inspire,
The Sacred Nine to bear a part;
And the Blessed Heavenly Quire,
Shew the utmost of their Art.
While Echo shall in sounds remote,
Repeat each Note,
Each Note, each Note.

Chorus:

Now joyn your Warbling Voices all.

Song and Chorus:

Sing while we trip it on the Green;
But no ill Vapors rise or fall,
Nothing offend our Fairy Queen.

Night:

See, even Night her self is here,
To favor your Design;
And all her Peaceful Train is near,
That Men to Sleep incline.
Let Noise and Care,
Doubt and Despair,
Envy and Spite,
(The Fiends delight)
Be ever Banish'd hence,
Let soft Repose,
Her Eye-lids close;
And murmuring Streams,
Bring pleasing Dreams;
Let nothing stay to give offence.

Mystery:

I am come to lock all fast,
Love without me cannot last.
Love, like Counsels of the Wise,
Must be hid from Vulgar Eyes.
'Tis holy, and we must conceal it,
They profane it, who reveal it.

Secresie:

One charming Night
Gives more delight,
Than a hundred lucky Days.
Night and I improve the taste,
Make the pleasure longer last,
A thousand, thousand several ways.

Sleep:

Hush, no more, be silent all,
Sweet Repose has clos'd her Eyes.
Soft as feather'd Snow does fall!
Softly, softly, steal from hence.
No noise disturb her sleeping sense.

Act III

If Love's a Sweet Passion, why does it torment?
If a Bitter, oh tell me whence comes my content?
Since I suffer with pleasure, why should I complain,
Or grieve at my Fate, when I know 't is in vain?
Yet so pleasing the Pain is, so soft is the Dart,
That at once it both wounds me, and tickles my Heart.

I press her Hand gently, look Languishing down,
and by Passionate Silence I make my Love known.
But oh! I'm blest when so kind she does prove,
by some willing mistake to discover her Love.
When in striving to hide, she reveals all her Flame,
and our Eyes tell each other, what neither dares Name.

Ye Gentle Spirits of the Air, appear, appear;
Prepare, and join your tender Voices here.
Catch, and repeat the Trembling Sounds anew,
Soft as her Sighs and sweet as pearly dew,
Run new Divisions, and such Measure keep,
As when you lull the God of Love asleep.

Coridon:

Now the Maids and the Men are making of Hay,
We have left the dull Fools, and are stolen away.
Then Mopsa no more
Be Coy as before,

But let us merrily Play,
And kiss the sweet time away.

Mopsa:
Why, how now, Sir Clown, what makes you so bold?
I'd have ye to know I'm not made of that mold.
I tell you again,
Maids must never Kiss no Men.
No, no: no Kissing at all;
I'll not Kiss, till I Kiss you for good and all.

Coridon:
Not Kiss you at all?

Mopsa:
No, no, no Kissing at all!

Coridon:
Why no Kissing at all?

Mopsa:
I'll not Kiss, till I Kiss you for good and all.

Coridon:
Should you give me a score,
'T would not lessen your store,
The bid me cheerfully, cheerfully Kiss,
And take, and take, my fill of your Bliss.

Mopsa:
I'll not trust you so far, I know you too well;
Should I give you an inch, you'd soon take an Ell.
The Lord-like you Rule,
And laugh as the Fool,
No, no, etc.

Coridon:
So small a Request,
You must not, you cannot, you shall not deny,
Not will I admit of another Reply.

Mopsa:
Nay, what do you mean?
O fie, fie, fie!

A Nymph:
When I have often heard young Maids complaining,
That when Men promise most they most deceive,
The I thought none of them worthy of my gaining;
And what they Swore, resolved ne're to believe.

But when so humbly he made his Addresses,
With Looks so soft, and with Language so kind,
I thought it Sin to refuse his Caresses;
Nature o'ercame, and I soon changed my Mind.
Should he employ all his wit in deceiving,
Stretch his Invention, and artfully feign;
I find such Charms, such true Joy in believing,
I'll have the Pleasure, let him have the Pain.
If he proves Perjured, I shall not be Cheated,
He may deceive himself, but never me;
'Tis what I look for, and shan't be defeated,
For I'll be as false and inconstant as he.

A Thousand Thousand ways we'll find
To Entertain the Hours;
No Two shall e're be known so kind,
No Life so Blest as ours.

Second Part: Act IV

One of the Attendants:

Now the Night is chased away,
All salute the rising Sun;
'Tis that happy, happy Day,
The Birth-Day of King Oberon.

Two Others:

Let the Fifes, and the Clarions, and shrill Trumpets sound,
And the Arch of high Heav'n the Clangor resound.

Phoebus:

When a Cruel long Winter has frozen the Earth,
And Nature Imprisoned seeks in vain to be free;
I dart forth my Beams, to give all things a Birth,
Making Spring for the Plants, every Flower, and each Tree.
'Tis I who give Life, Warmth, and Vigor to all,
Ev'n Love who rules all things in Earth, Air, and Sea;
Would languish, and fade, and to nothing would fall,
The World to its Chaos would return, but for me.

Hail! Great Parent of us all,
Light and Comfort of the Earth;
Before your Shrine the Seasons fall,
Thou who givest all Nature Birth.

Spring:

Thus the ever grateful Spring,
Does her yearly Tribute bring;
All your Sweets before him lay,
They round his Altar, Sing and Play.

Summer:

Here's the Summer, Sprightly, Gay,
Smiling, Wanton, Fresh and Fair;
Adorn'd with all the Flowers of May,
Whose various Sweets perfume the Air.

Autumn:

See my many Colored Fields
And loaded Trees my Will obey;
All the Fruit that Autumn yields,
I offer to the God of Day.

Winter:

Now Winter comes Slowly, Pale, Meager, and Old,
First trembling with Age, and then quiv'ring with Cold;
Benumbed with hard Forsts, and with Snow covered over,
Prays the Sun to Restore him, and Sings as before.

Act V

Juno:

Thrice happy Lovers,
may you be for ever, ever free,
From that tormenting Devil, Jealousy.
From all that anxious Care and Strife,
That attends a married Life;
Be to one another true,
Kind to her as she to you,
And since the errors of this Night are past,
May he be ever Constant, she be ever Chaste.

Oh let me weep, for ever weep,
My Eyes no more shall welcome Sleep;
I'll hide me from the sight of Day,
And sigh, and sigh my Soul away.
He's gone, he's gone, his loss deplore;
And I shall never see him more.

A Chinese Man:

Thus the gloomy World
At first began to shine,
And from the Power Divine
A Glory round about it hurled;
Which made it bright,
And gave it Birth in light.
Then were all Minds as pure,
As those Ethereal Streams;
In Innocence secure,
Not Subject to Extremes.
There was no Room then for empty Fame,
No cause for Pride, Ambition wanted aim.

Chinese Woman:
Thus Happy and Free,
Thus treated are we
With nature's chiefest Delights.
We never cloy,
But renew our Joy,
And one Bliss another Invites.

Chorus:
Thus wildly we live,
Thus freely we give,
What Heaven us freely bestows.
We were not made
For Labor and Trade,
Which Fools on each other impose.

Chinese Man:
Yes, Daphne, in your Looks I find
The Charms by which my Heart's betray'd;
Then let not your Disdain unbind
The Prisoner that your Eyes have made.
She that in Love makes least Defense,
Wounds ever with the surest Dart;
Beauty may captivate the Sense,
But Kindness only gains the Heart.

1st Woman:
Hark how all things with one Sound rejoice,
And the World seems to have one voice.

2nd Woman:
Hark now, the Echoing Air a Triumph Sings,
And all around pleased Cupids clap their Wings.

Chorus:
Hark! Hark!

2nd Woman:
Sure the dull God of Marriage does not hear;

Both:
We'll rouse him with a Charm, Hymen appear!

Chorus:
Hymen appear!

Both:
Our Queen of Night commands thee not to stay, Appear!

Hymen:
See, see, I obey.

My torch has long been out, I hate
On loose dissembled Vows to wait,
Where hardly Love out-lives the Wedding-Night,
False Flames, Love's Meteors, yield my Torch no Light.

Both Women:

Turn then thine Eyes upon those Glories there,
And catching Flames will on thy Torch appear.

Hymen:

My Torch, indeed, will from such Brightness shine:
Love ne'er had yet such Altars, so divine.

Chorus:

**They shall be as happy, happy as they're fair;
Love, love shall fill all, all the Places of Care:
And every time the Sun shall display his Rising Light,
It shall be to them a new Wedding-Day;
And when he sets, and when he sets,
a new, a new Nuptial-Night**