



## Mendelssohn - A Midsummer Night's Dream

[Orchestra play **Overture**]

That was Mendelssohn's Overture to A Midsummer Night's Dream. In it we heard some of the themes of Shakespeare's play in which several sets of characters end up in a forest full of enchantments. You heard the scampering of fairy feet and the braying of an ass after Bottom the Weaver had been magically transformed by Puck.

Hermia loves Lysander.  
Lysander loves Hermia.  
Helena loves Demetrius.  
Demetrius loves Hermia.  
Hermia's father wants her to marry Demetrius.  
Got that?

**I have had a most rare vision. I had a dream, past the wit of man to say what dream it was... 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.**

Next we play the Scherzo, which sets the light-hearted tone for the multiple entanglements and transformations of Shakespeare's story. Puck, the mischievous agent of the fairy king Oberon, is tasked with magically sorting out a tangled web of love between four young Athenians, but makes a bad mistake, causing further chaos.

[Orchestra play **Scherzo - No. 1**]

Titania, Oberon's queen, is attended by a company of fairies, who protect her and entertain her with their music and dances.

**You spotted snakes with double tongue  
Thorny hedgehogs be not seen  
Newts and blindworms do no wrong  
Come not near our fairy queen.**

Next we play the Fairies' March.

[Orchestra play **Fairies' March - No. 2 from Allegro Vivace**]

Oberon decides to punish Titania for her refusal to hand over to him an Indian orphan child she has adopted. He decides to put a magic potion on her eyes as she sleeps so that she will fall passionately in love with the first creature she beholds on waking, hoping this will be something vile.

**I know a bank where the wild thyme blows  
Where oxslips and the nodding violet grows...  
There sleeps Titania some time of the night  
Lulled in these flowers with dances and delights...  
And with the juice of this I'll streak her eyes  
And make her full of hateful fantasies**

What we will play next is the nocturne accompanying Titania's sleep.

[Orchestra play **Nocturne - No. 7**]

Titania wakes up and falls in love with Bottom, who is now an ass. The wrong young lover is treated with the love potion and things go from bad to worse until the four lovers fall asleep on the ground, exhausted. Then Puck removes the mistaken potion to bring the play to a happy conclusion..

Shakespeare's play ends with all the couples getting married and Oberon and Titania reconciled.

**Here come the lovers, full of joy and mirth,  
Joy, gentle friends, joy and fresh days of love  
Accompany your hearts.**

Lysander marries Hermia  
Helena marries Demetrius  
Theseus marries Hippolyta  
Oberon and Titania are reconciled

We end our concert with Mendelssohn's famous Wedding March.

[Orchestra play **Wedding March - No. 9**]