

AUDITION SIDES FOR MALE and FEMALE PRINCIPAL actors

THESEUS (#20, 21)

DEMETRIUS (#25, 26, 34)

LYSANDER (#22, 24, 26, 27, 34)

BOTTOM (#28, 29)

OBERON (#30, 31, 32)

HIPPOLYTA (#21, 21, 28)

HELENA (#24, 25, 26, (27))

HERMIA (#22, 23, 24)

PUCK (Male or Female) (#31, 32, 33, 34)

TITANIA (#29, 30)

Memorize at least one monologue and all dialogues for one character.

Optional: add a few lines for another character, but only if you want to, and have time.

Audition Side #20—THESEUS & HIPPOLYTA (Monologues)

Background: Theseus and Hippolyta are preparing for their wedding day. They had fought against each other in battle and Hippolyta lost the battle, but Theseus won her love.

During initial auditions, Theseus and Hippolyta need not actually spar, unless you want to! During callbacks, you will spar with your “opponent”.

THESEUS

Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour

Draws on apace;

(nuptial: wedding ceremony)

(Draws on apace: comes quickly)

(They spar)

Four happy days bring in Another moon.

(They spar)

HIPPOLYTA

Four days will quickly steep themselves in night;

(steep: immerse in liquid)

(They spar)

THESEUS

But, O, methinks, how slow This old moon wanes!

She lingers my desires,

Like to a step-dame or a dowager

Long withering out a young man revenue.

(They spar)

HIPPOLYTA

Four nights will quickly dream away the time;

(They spar)

And then the moon, like to a silver bow

New-bent in heaven, shall behold the night

Of our solemnities.

Audition Side #21—THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA (Dialogue), [PHILOSTRATE monologue]

Background: Theseus is selecting a play for his wedding guests. He is reading from a “menu” of offerings.

THESEUS

“A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus

And his love Thisbe; very tragical mirth.”

Merry and tragical! tedious and brief!

That is, hot ice and wondrous strange snow.

How shall we find the concord of this discord?

PHILOSTRATE

A play there is, my lord, some ten words long, Which is as brief as I have known a play;

But by ten words, my lord, it is too long, Which makes it tedious; for in all the play

There is not one word apt, one player fitted:

And tragical, my noble lord, it is; For Pyramus therein doth kill himself.

Which, when I saw rehearsed, I must confess,

Made mine eyes water; but more merry tears

The passion of loud laughter never shed.

THESEUS

What are they that do play it?

PHILOSTRATE

Hard-handed men that work in Athens here,

Which never labour’d in their minds till now,

And now have toil’d their unbreathed memories

With this same play, against your nuptial.

(some lines are omitted for auditions)

THESEUS

I will hear that play;

For never anything can be amiss,

When simple folk tender it with duty.

Go, bring them in: and take your places, ladies.

(Exit PHILOSTRATE)

HIPPOLYTA

I don’t enjoy seeing earnest people unwittingly make fools of themselves.

THESEUS

Why, gentle sweet, you shall see no such thing.

HIPPOLYTA

He says they can do nothing in this art.

THESEUS

Then we shall be most kind, to give them thanks for nothing.

Audition Side #22—HERMIA, LYSANDER (Dialogue)

Background: Lysander and Hermia ran away to get married. They stop for a rest in the woods.

LYSANDER

Fair love, you faint with wandering in the wood;
And to speak troth, I have forgot our way: *(troth: truth)*
We'll rest us, Hermia, if you think it good.

HERMIA

Be it so, Lysander: find you out a bed;
For I upon this bank will rest my head.

LYSANDER *(moving in to rest beside her)*

One turf shall serve as pillow for us both;
One heart, one bed, and one troth.

HERMIA *(scooting backwards)*

Nay, good Lysander; for my sake, my dear,
Lie further off yet, do not lie so near.

LYSANDER

O, take the sense, sweet, of my innocence! My heart unto yours is knit
So that but one heart we can make of it;
Then by your side no bed-room me deny; *(Pulling her close to him by the waist)*
For lying so, Hermia, I do not lie. *(lying: lying down) (lie: tell an untruth)*

HERMIA *(Pushing him away gently)*

Lysander riddles very prettily:
But, gentle friend, for love and courtesy Lie further off;

Audition Side #23—HERMIA Monologue

Background: Hermia awakens, expecting Lysander to be sleeping nearby, but he is gone.

HERMIA

[Awaking] Help me, Lysander, help me! *(continues to wake, realizing she was dreaming)*
Ay me, for pity! What a dream was here!
Lysander, look how I do quake with fear:
Methought a serpent ate my heart away,
And you sat smiling at his cruel pray.

Lysander! What, removed? Lysander! Lord!
What, out of hearing? Gone? No sound, no word?
Then I well perceive you are not nigh
Either death or you I'll find immediately.
(Exit)

Audition Side #24—LYSANDER, HERMIA, HELENA (Dialogue)

Background: Lysander loves Hermia, but an errant love potion causes him to hate Hermia and love Helena. Hermia, not realizing that he's under magical influence, flies into a rage against Helena.

LYSANDER *(To Hermia)*

Therefore be out of hope, of question, of doubt;
Be certain, nothing truer; 'tis no jest
That I do hate thee and love Helena.

HERMIA

(To Lysander) O me! *(To Helena)*
You juggler! You canker-blossom!
You thief of love! What, have you come by night
And stolen my love's heart from him?

HELENA

Have you no modesty, no maiden shame,
No touch of bashfulness?
Fie, fie! You counterfeit, you puppet, you!

HERMIA

Puppet? Why so? Ay, that way goes the game.
Now I perceive that she hath made compare
Between our statures; she hath urged her height;
And with her personage, her tall personage,
She hath won his love.

Have you grown so high in his esteem;
Because I am so dwarfish and so low?

How low am I, thou painted maypole? Speak;
How low am I? I am not yet so low
But that my nails can reach unto thine eyes.

(HERMIA lunges for HELENA; DEMETRIUS and LYSANDER hold HERMIA back)

HELENA

I pray you, though you mock me, gentlemen,
Let her not hurt me: I was never curst;
I have no gift at all in shrewishness;
I am a right maid for my cowardice:
Let her not strike me. You perhaps may think,
Because she is something lower than myself,
That I can match her.

Audition Side #25—DEMETRIUS (Monologue) AND HELENA (Dialogue)

Background: Helena followed Demetrius into the woods because she still loves him, even though he loves Hermia.

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 wood within this wood,
Because I cannot meet my Hermia.
Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.

(wood: go crazy)

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.

(leave: permission)

Audition Side #26—HELENA (Monologue), DEMETRIUS, LYSANDER (Dialogue)

Background: Lysander was cursed to fall in love with the first person he sees, and it is Helena.

HELENA

Stay, though thou kill me, sweet Demetrius.

DEMETRIUS

I charge thee, hence, and do not haunt me thus.
Stay here at thy peril: for I alone will go. *(Exit DEMETRIUS)*

HELENA

O, I am out of breath in this fond chase! *(fond: foolish)*
The more my prayer, the lesser is my grace.
Happy is Hermia, wheresoe'er she lies;
For she hath blessed and attractive eyes.
How came her eyes so bright?

But who is here? Lysander! on the ground!
Dead? Or asleep? I see no blood, no wound.
Lysander if you live, good sir, awake.

LYSANDER

[Awaking] And run through fire I will for thy sweet sake. *(transparent: honest, open)*
Transparent Helena! Nature shows art, That makes me see thy heart.
Where is Demetrius? He shall perish on my sword!

Audition Side #27—DEMETRIUS [HELENA, LYSANDER]

Background: Lysander and Demetrius have both been struck by love potion & fall in love with Helena

LYSANDER

Why should you think that I should woo in scorn? Look! My love with tears is borne.

HELENA

You do advance your cunning more and more.
These vows are Hermia's: will you give her o'er? *(o'er: over; away)*

LYSANDER

Demetrius loves her, and he loves not you.

DEMETRIUS

[Awaking] O Helena, goddess, nymph, perfect, divine!
To what, my love, shall I compare thine eyne?
Crystal is muddy. O, how ripe in show
Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow!
When thou hold'st up thy hand: O, let me kiss
This princess of pure white, this seal of bliss!

Audition Side #28—BOTTOM Monologue (with Hippolyta)

Background: Bottom is playing the part of Pyramus in the play-within-a-play. He is not a good actor and over-acts his part. This is a Romeo and Juliet-type story. Thisby isn't dead, but he thinks she is, so he 'kills' himself dramatically.

BOTTOM (as Pyramus)

Sweet Moon, I thank thee for thy sunny beams;
I thank thee, Moon, for shining now so bright;
For, by thy gracious, golden, glittering gleams,
I trust to take of truest Thisbe sight.

But stay, O spite!

But mark, poor knight,
What dreadful dole is here!

Eyes, do you see?

How can it be?

O dainty duck! O dear!

Thy mantle good, *(Mantle: Thisby's scarf is stained with blood)*

What, stain'd with blood!

Approach, ye Furies fell! *(Furies: Greek myth: punished people for crimes)*

O Fates, come, come, *(Fates...cut thread and thrum: goddesses who weave*

Cut thread and thrum; *our lives have cut the thread (ended a life).)*

Quail, crush, conclude, and quell! *(thrum: weaving term: tufted end of a thread)*

HIPPOLYTA

Beshrew my heart, but I pity the man.

BOTTOM (as Pyramus)

Come, tears, confound;

Out, sword, and wound

The pap of Pyramus;

Ay, that left pap,

Where heart doth hop:

(Stabs himself)

Audition Side #29—BOTTOM AND TITANIA [Dialogue]

Background: Puck has just turned Bottom's head into a donkey head, but Bottom doesn't realize it. His friends run away in fright.

BOTTOM

Why do they run away? This is a knavery of them

To make me afeard. To fright me, if they could.

But I will not stir from this place, do what they can:

I will walk up and down here, and I will sing, that they shall hear

I am not afraid.

(Sings)

(Make up a tune for auditions--anything will do!)

The ousel cock so black of hue,

With orange-tawny bill,

The throstle with his note so true,

The wren with little quill--

TITANIA *[Awaking; speaks while BOTTOM sings]*

What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?

BOTTOM *(sings)*

The finch, the sparrow, and the lark,

The plainsong cuckoo grey...

TITANIA

I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again:

Mine ear is much enamour'd of thy note;

So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape;

And thy fair virtue's force perforce doth move me

On the first view to say, to swear, I love thee.

BOTTOM

Methinks, mistress, you should have little reason

for that: and yet, to say the truth, reason and

love keep little company together now-a-days;

TITANIA *(Rise and cross to Bottom)*

Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.

BOTTOM

Not so, neither: but if I had wit enough to leave this wood...I would.

(Turns to leave)

TITANIA

Out of this wood do not desire to go:

Thou shalt remain here, whether thou wilt or no.

Audition Side #30—OBERON (Dialogue), TITANIA (Monologue)

Background: Oberon and Titania are fighting over who keeps a young boy that Titania adopted.

OBERON

Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania.

TITANIA

What, jealous Oberon! Fairies, skip hence:
I have forsworn his company. *(She begins to exit)*

OBERON

Tarry, rash wanton: am not I thy lord? *(tarry: wait) (wanton: mischievous, immoral)*

TITANIA *(She returns)*

Then I must be thy lady: *(lord/lady: they are husband and wife)*

But 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, *(ringlets: dance in a circle)*

But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.

Therefore the winds, As in revenge,
have suck'd up from the sea Contagious fogs;
and rheumatic diseases do abound.

And thorough this distemperature we see *(thorough: 'through')*

The seasons alter: hoary-headed frosts

Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose.

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:

These evils come 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. *(henchman: horse groom—cares for the horses)*

Audition Side #31—OBERON Monologue (with PUCK-Dialogue)

Background: Oberon sent Puck to find a flower, the juice of which will act as a love potion. Puck has returned with the flower. Oberon will use it to make Titania fall in love with a vile creature, and he will have Puck use it to help Helena (the Athenian lady).

[Re-enter PUCK]

OBERON

Hast thou the flower there? Welcome, wanderer.

PUCK

Ay, there it is.

OBERON

I pray thee, give it me.

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.

PUCK

Fear not, my lord, your servant shall do so.

[Exeunt]

Audition Side #32—PUCK, OBERON Dialogue

Background: Puck accidentally caused Lysander to fall in love with Helena, through careless use of the love potion. Puck has now put the potion in Demetrius' eyes. Demetrius will soon wake and then both men will be in love with Helena. Puck thinks this will be great fun to watch!

PUCK

Captain of our fairy band,
Helena is here at hand;
And the youth, mistook by me,
Pleading for a lover's fee.
Shall we their fond pageant see?
Lord, what fools these mortals be!

OBERON

Stand aside: the noise they make
Will cause Demetrius to awake.

PUCK

Then will two at once woo one;
That must needs be sport alone;
And those things do best please me
That befall preposterously.

Audition Side #33—PUCK Monologue

Background: Puck gives the epilogue for A Midsummer Night's Dream. He repeatedly apologizes the the play. In his apology, he suggests that the audience think of it as a dream.

PUCK

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.

Audition Side #34—PUCK, DEMETRIUS, LYSANDER (w/ Night. & Hem.)

Background: Lysander and Demetrius have drawn their swords and plan to fight to the death for the love of Helena. Puck is following Oberon's orders to lead the two men in opposite directions until they become so tired that they fall asleep. Puck is leading the men astray and imitating their voices to trick them.

PUCK

Up and down,

NIGHTSHADE and HEMLOCK [PUCK read this line for auditions, to keep the flow]

Up and down,

PUCK, NIGHTSHADE, and HEMLOCK

We will lead them up and down:

PUCK

I am fear'd in field and town:
Goblins, lead them up and down.

HEMLOCK

Here comes one.

(Re-enter LYSANDER)

LYSANDER

Where art thou, proud Demetrius? Speak thou now.

PUCK *(Imitating DEMETRIUS)*

Here, villain; drawn and ready. Where art thou?

LYSANDER

I will be with thee straightaway.

PUCK

Follow me, then, to plainer ground.

(Exit LYSANDER, as following the voice)

(Re-enter DEMETRIUS)

DEMETRIUS

Lysander! Speak again:
Thou runaway, thou coward. Speak! Art thou fled?
In some bush? Where dost thou hide thy head?

PUCK *(Imitating LYSANDER)*

Thou coward, art thou bragging to the stars,
Telling the bushes that thou look'st for wars,
And wilt not come?