

A Midsummer Night's Dream abbreviated

Act 3, Scene 2.4

Anger

Situation: Taken back by Helena's comments, Hermia tries to respond to the accusations, only to have Helena continue her tirade. Hermia remains confused. Lysander and Demetrius each claim he loves Helena more than the other, further infuriating Helena.

HERMIA: I am amazed at your words. I scorn you not. It seems that you scorn me.

Helena to Hermia, No. 2

Have you not set Lysander to follow
Me and praise my face, and made this shallow
Demetrius call me goddess to woo
Me falsely? Wherefore he speaks this to her
He hates? And wherefore doth Lysander, who
Loves you, deny you his love and tender
Me with affection? Have you not shared that
By your own mean consent? Ay, do wink at
Each other and make demeaning faces
When I turn my scorned back. Since I, as you,
Am not hung upon with love and graces,
Then to you that it's most miserable to
Love, yet be unloved, may be a surprise.
This you should pity rather than despise.

HERMIA: I understand not what you mean by this.

HELENA: But fare you well. 'Tis partly my own fault, which death or absence soon shall remedy.

LYSANDER: Stay, gentle Helena. Hear my excuse, my love, my life, my soul, fair Helena.

HELENA: O excellent!

HERMIA TO LYSANDER: Sweet, do not scorn her so.

LYSANDER: Helena, I love thee. By my life, I do.

DEMETRIUS: I say I love thee more than he can do.

LYSANDER: If thou say so, withdraw and prove it too.