

A Midsummer Night's Dream abbreviated

Act 2, Scene 2

Love

Situation: Robin Goodfellow, having intended to follow Oberon's instructions, mistakenly placed the magic nectar on Lysander's eyelids, having received less than clear instructions from Oberon. This is a key moment in the play. When Helena awakens Lysander, he instantly falls for her, being the first person he sees, the magic of the skewed flower having worked.

HELENA: O, I am out of breath in this fond chase. 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 awakens and instantly falls for Helena.

Lysander to Helena

O Helena, sweet nature shows its art,
And in all its beauty I see thy heart.
I do repent the tedious minutes
I have here with Hermia spent. Even
Now, I'd run through fire for thy sweet sake. Let's
Leave her, for who'd not exchange a raven
For a dove. The purpose of man is by
His reason swayed, and reason doth show why
You're the worthier maid. All things growing
Are not ripe until their season, so I,
Still young, till now ripe not, am now touching
The point of skill where reason becomes my
Will, leading me to you, where I o'erlook
The best love story written in love's book.

HELENA: Do not say so. Lysander, say not so. Yet Hermia still loves you. Then be content. Good troth, you do me wrong, good sooth, you do, in such disdainful manner me to woo. But fare you well. Perforce I must confess I thought you lord of more true gentleness. O, that a lady of one man refused should of another therefore be abused!

She exits.

LYSANDER: She sees not Hermia. Hermia, sleep thou there, and never mayst thou come Lysander near. The heresies that men do leave are hated most of those they did deceive.