**PROMPTER**

Prompter will read **stage directions**, distribute/manage the props (properties), and keep the actors on script.

**Speaking Parts**

Quince/Prologue

Theseus

Demetrius

Snout/Wall

Bottom/Pyramus [dagger/sword] [finds mantle]

Flute/Thisbe [drops mantle] [finds sword]

Hippolyta

Snug/Lion [picks up mantle after Thisbe flees]

Lysander

Starveling/Moonshine [holds Bush, Dog, Lantern]

**Bill of Properties**

[Name Tags for Actors/Prompter]

Bush of Thorns

Dog

Lantern

Thisbe’s Mantle

Dagger/Sword

***Enter All***

**QUINCE/PROLOGUE**

Gentles, perchance you wonder at this show,

But wonder on, till truth make all things plain.

This man is Pyramus, if you would know;

This beauteous lady Thisbe is, certain.

This man, with lime and roughcast, doth present

Wall, that vile wall, which did these lovers sunder;

And through Wall's chink, poor souls, they are content

To whisper— at the which, let no man wonder.

This man, with lantern, dog, and bush of thorn,

Presenteth moonshine. For, if you will know,

By moonshine did these lovers think no scorn\* *\*think it no disgrace*

To meet at Ninus' tomb, there, there to woo.

This grizzly beast, which “Lion” hight\* by name, *\* is called*

The trusty Thisbe, coming first by night,

Did scare away, or rather did affright;

And, as she fled, her mantle she did fall,\* *\*drop*

Which Lion vile with bloody mouth did stain.

Anon comes Pyramus, sweet youth and tall,

And finds his Thisbe's mantle slain;

Whereat, with blade, with bloody blameful blade,

He bravely broached\* his boiling bloody breast. *\*stabbed*

And Thisbe, tarrying in mulberry shade,

His dagger drew, and died. For all the rest,

Let Lion, Moonshine, Wall, and lovers twain

At large\* discourse, while here they do remain. *\*at length*

***Exit Quince, Snug, Flute, Starveling***

**THESEUS**

I wonder if the lion be to speak.

**DEMETRIUS**

No wonder, my lord: one lion may, when many asses do.

**SNOUT/WALL**

In this same interlude\* it doth befall *\*play*  
That I, one Snout by name, present a wall;  
And such a wall, as I would have you think,  
That had in it a crannied hole or chink,  
Through which the lovers, Pyramus and Thisbe,  
Did whisper often very secretly.  
This loam, this rough-cast and this stone doth show  
That I am that same wall; the truth is so:  
And this the cranny is, right and sinister,  
Through which the fearful lovers are to whisper.

**THESEUS**

Would you desire lime and hair to speak better?

**DEMETRIUS**

It is the wittiest partition that ever I heard discourse, my lord.

**THESEUS**

Pyramus draws near the wall: silence!

**PYRAMUS**

O grim-look'd night! O night with hue so black!  
O night, which ever art when day is not!  
O night, O night! alack, alack, alack,  
I fear my Thisbe's promise is forgot!  
And thou, O wall, O sweet, O lovely wall,  
That stand'st between her father's ground and mine!  
Thou wall, O wall, O sweet and lovely wall,  
Show me thy chink, to blink through with mine eyne!

***Wall holds up his fingers***

Thanks, courteous wall: Jove shield thee well for this!  
But what see I? No Thisbe do I see.  
O wicked wall, through whom I see no bliss!  
Cursed be thy stones for thus deceiving me!

**THESEUS**

The wall, methinks, being sensible,\* should curse again.\* *\*capable of feeling*

*\*curse back*

**BOTTOM**

No, in truth, sir, he should not. 'Deceiving me'  
is Thisbe's cue: she is to enter now, and I am to  
spy her through the wall. You shall see, it will  
fall pat as I told you. Yonder she comes.

***Enter Thisbe***

**THISBE**

O wall, full often hast thou heard my moans,  
For parting my fair Pyramus and me!  
My cherry lips have often kiss'd thy stones,  
Thy stones with lime and hair knit up in thee.

**PYRAMUS**

I see a voice: now will I to the chink,  
To spy an\* I can hear my Thisbe’s face. Thisbe? *\*if*

**THISBE**

My love thou art, my love, I think.

**PYRAMUS**

Think what thou wilt, I am thy lover's grace;\* \**gracious lover*And, like Limander**,\*** am I trusty still.

*\*Blunder for “Leander” who drowned while swimming across the Hellespont to meet his lover, hero*

**THISBE**

And I like Helen, till the Fates me kill.

**PYRAMUS**

Not Shafalus to Procrus\* was so true. *\*Blunder for “Cephalus” and “Procris.” Procris was in fact seduced by her husband in disguise of another man; he later accidentally killed her*

**THISBE**

As Shafalus to Procrus, I to you.

**PYRAMUS**

O kiss me through the hole of this vile wall!

**THISBE**

I kiss the wall's hole, not your lips at all.

**PYRAMUS**

Wilt thou at Ninny's tomb meet me straightway?

**THISBE**

'Tide\* life, 'tide death, I come without delay. *\*come*

***Exeunt Pyramus and Thisbe***

**WALL**

Thus have I, Wall, my part discharged so;  
And, being done, thus Wall away doth go.

***Exit***

**THESEUS**

Now is the mural\* down between the two neighbours. *\*wall*

**DEMETRIUS**

No remedy, my lord, when walls are so wilful to hear  
without warning.

**HIPPOLYTA**

This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard.

**THESEUS**

The best in this kind are but shadows;\* and the worst  
are no worse, if imagination amend them.

*\*The best in this profession (acting) are mere likeness without substance*

**HIPPOLYTA**

It must be your imagination then, and not theirs.

**THESEUS**

If we imagine no worse of them than they of  
themselves, they may pass for excellent men. Here  
come two noble beasts in, a man and a lion.

***Enter Lion and Moonshine***

**LION**

You, ladies, you, whose gentle hearts do fear  
The smallest monstrous mouse that creeps on floor,  
May now perchance both quake and tremble here,  
When lion rough in wildest rage doth roar.  
Then know that I, one Snug the joiner, am  
A lion fell,\* nor else no lion's dam; *\*fierce*  
For, if I should as lion come in strife  
Into this place, 'twere pity on my life.

**THESEUS**

A very gentle beast, of a good conscience.

**DEMETRIUS**

The very best at a beast, my lord, that e'er I saw.

**LYSANDER**

This lion is a very fox\* for his valour. *\*symbol of cunning, not courage*

**THESEUS**

True; and a goose\* for his discretion. *\*symbol of foolishness*

**DEMETRIUS**

Not so, my lord; for his valour cannot carry his  
discretion; and the fox carries the goose.

**THESEUS**

His discretion, I am sure, cannot carry his valour;  
for the goose carries not the fox. It is well:  
leave it to his discretion, and let us listen to the moon.

**MOONSHINE**

This lanthorn doth the horned moon present;--

**DEMETRIUS**

He should have worn the horns on his head.\* *\*sign for a cuckold*

**THESEUS**

He is no crescent,\* and his horns are  *\*waxing moon*  
invisible within the circumference.

**MOONSHINE**

This lanthorn doth the horned\* moon present; *\*crescent*   
Myself the man i' the moon do seem to be.

**THESEUS**

This is the greatest error of all the rest: the man  
should be put into the lanthorn. How is it else the  
man i' the moon?

**DEMETRIUS**

He dares not come there for the candle;\* for, you

see, it is already in snuff.\* *\*for fear of the candle*

*\*in need of snuffing: angry*

**HIPPOLYTA**

I am aweary of this moon: would he would change!

**THESEUS**

It appears, by his small light of discretion, that  
he is in the wane; but yet, in courtesy, in all  
reason, we must stay the time.

**LYSANDER**

Proceed, Moon.

**MOONSHINE**

All that I have to say, is, to tell you that the  
lanthorn is the moon; I, the man in the moon; this  
thorn-bush, my thorn-bush; and this dog, my dog.

**DEMETRIUS**

Why, all these should be in the lanthorn; for all  
these are in the moon. But, silence! here comes Thisbe.

***Enter Thisbe***

**THISBE**

This is old Ninny's tomb. Where is my love?

**LION**

**[Roaring]** Oh--

***Thisbe runs off***

**DEMETRIUS**

Well roared, Lion.

**THESEUS**

Well run, Thisbe.

**HIPPOLYTA**

Well shone, Moon. Truly, the moon shines with a  
good grace.

***The Lion shakes Thisbe's mantle, and exits***

**THESEUS**

Well moused,\* Lion. *\*well hunted (like a cat would hunt a mouse, the lion has caught and captured the mantle)*

**DEMETRIUS**

And then came Pyramus.

**LYSANDER**

And so the lion vanished.

***Enter Pyramus***

**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! \**grief*  
Eyes, do you see?  
How can it be?  
O dainty duck! O dear!  
Thy mantle good,  
What, stain'd with blood!  
Approach, ye Furies fell!  
O Fates, come, come,  
Cut thread and thrum;\* \**tufted end of a weaver’s warp*  
Quail, crush, conclude, and quell\*! *\*overpower \*kill*

**THESEUS**

This passion, and the death of a dear friend, would  
go near to make a man look sad.

**HIPPOLYTA**

Beshrew\* my heart, but I pity the man. *\*blame*

**PYRAMUS**

O wherefore, Nature, didst thou lions frame?  
Since lion vile hath here deflower'd\* my dear: *\*devoured; pun on lost virginity*

Which is--no, no--which was the fairest dame  
That lived, that loved, that liked, that look'd  
with cheer.  
Come, tears, confound;  
Out, sword, and wound  
The pap\* of Pyramus; *\*breast*

Ay, that left pap,  
Where heart doth hop:

***Stabs himself***

Thus die I, thus, thus, thus.  
Now am I dead,  
Now am I fled;  
My soul is in the sky:

Tongue, lose thy light;  
Moon take thy flight:

***Exit Moonshine***

Now die, die, die, die, die.

***Dies***

**DEMETRIUS**

No die,\* but an ace, for him;\* for he is but one. *\*Pun on ‘die’ as one of a pair of dice*

*\*one: the ace or lowest throw*

**LYSANDER**

Less than an ace,\* man; for he is dead; he is nothing. *\*lowest throw in dice*

**THESEUS**

With the help of a surgeon he might yet recover, and  
prove an ass.

**HIPPOLYTA**

How chance Moonshine is gone before Thisbe comes  
back and finds her lover?

**THESEUS**

She will find him by starlight. Here she comes; and  
her passion ends the play.

***Re-enter Thisbe***

**HIPPOLYTA**

Methinks she should not use a long one for such a  
Pyramus: I hope she will be brief.

**DEMETRIUS**

A mote\* will turn the balance, which Pyramus, which Thisbe,\* *\*speech*  
is the better; he for a man, God warrant us;  
she for a woman, God bless us.

*\*whether Pyramus or Thisbe*

**LYSANDER**

She hath spied him already with those sweet eyes.

**DEMETRIUS**

And thus she means,\* videlicet:\* *\*moans; lodges a formal legal complaint*

*\*Latin for ‘as follows’*

**THISBE**

Asleep, my love?  
What, dead, my dove?  
O Pyramus, arise!  
Speak, speak. Quite dumb?  
Dead, dead? A tomb  
Must cover thy sweet eyes.  
These My lips,  
This cherry nose,  
These yellow cowslip cheeks,  
Are gone, are gone:  
Lovers, make moan:  
His eyes were green as leeks.  
O Sisters Three,\* \**the fates*  
Come, come to me,  
With hands as pale as milk;  
Lay them in gore,  
Since you have shore\* *\*shorn*

With shears his thread of silk.  
Tongue, not a word:  
Come, trusty sword;  
Come, blade, my breast imbrue:\* *\*stain with blood*

***Stabs herself***

And, farewell, friends;  
Thus Thisbe ends:  
Adieu, adieu, adieu.

***Dies***

**THESEUS**

Moonshine and Lion are left to bury the dead.

**DEMETRIUS**

Ay, and Wall too.

**BOTTOM**

[Starting up] No assure you; the wall is down that  
parted their fathers. Will it please you to see the  
epilogue, or to hear a Bergomask\* dance between two *\*rustic dance*  
of our company?

**THESEUS**

No epilogue, I pray you; for your play needs no  
excuse. Never excuse; for when the players are all  
dead, there needs none to be blamed. Marry, if he  
that writ it had played Pyramus and hanged himself  
in Thisbe's garter, it would have been a fine  
tragedy: and so it is, truly; and very notably  
discharged. But come, your Bergomask: let your  
epilogue alone.

***A dance. EXIT.***