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Dramatic Publishing

ROBIN

GOODFELLOW

Aurand Harris and William Shakespeare



ROBIN GOODFELLOW

Premiered by the Harwich Junior Theatre of Massachusetts. A fun-filled and enchanting fantasy based on English folktales and scenes from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The play is a felicitous blend of slapstick, suspense, music, dancing, and Shakespeare's lyric poetry—a refreshing way to introduce children and teens to the wonderful world of Shakespeare.

Fantasy. By Aurand Harris. Based on the English folk tales of Robin Goodfellow and scenes from William Shakespeare's play A Midsummer Night's Dream. Cast: 4m., 1w., 1 either gender with doubling, or up to 12 (4m., 1w., 7 either gender). Mischievous young Robin sets out to find his fortune and encounters Oberon, king of the Wee People. Oberon, himself a merry prankster, auditions Robin for the position of his royal jester. In the wood, Robin hoodwinks two rustics, Bottom the Weaver and Quince the Carpenter. Through magical means, he tricks Queen Titania into falling in love with Bottom, who sports a donkey's head. But the comic confusion and the merry madness of a midsummer night end happily. Two simple sets. Elizabethan rustics and elfin sprite costumes. Code: R99

ISBN-10 1-58342-767-8
ISBN-13 978-1-58342-767-5



9 781583 427675 >
Robin Goodfellow (Harris)



Dramatic Publishing

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www.dramaticpublishing.com

ROBIN GOODFELLOW

by

AURANDHARRIS

and

WILLIAMSHAKESPEARE

Based on the English folktales of
Robin Goodfellow and on scenes
from the play *A Midsummer Night's
Dream*.



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(ROBIN GOODFELLOW)

ISBN: 978-1-58342-767-5

DEDICATED

to the many people who helped in many ways. In England: the research staff, Kensington Library—Frith Banbury, Allan Davis, Alan Ditweiler, John Errington, Christopher Taylor. In the United States: Mary Aurand, Betty Bobp, Hazel Easton, George Eells, Larry Mangel, Arthur Rye, Winifred Ward: the cast and technical crews in the tryout production, and all the staff of the Harwich Junior Theatre.

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CHARACTERS

Robin Goodfellow

Oberon, King of the Fairies

Titania, Queen of the Fairies

Cobweb, a Fairy (Other fairies may be added)

Nick Bottom, a weaver

Peter Quince, a carpenter

SCENE

England, 1600, in a woods.

The night before and Midsummer Night.

The cover graphic of this play-book was
designed by Irene Corey Barr.

THE AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

William Shakespeare undoubtedly turned his cloak when he thought he spied a sprite hiding in an oak—a sprite that might trick and lead him on a merry chase. Anne Hathaway probably set a bowl of milk and white bread outside her door at night to bribe the wee people to make the rooster crow at dawn which would cause the hens to lay eggs. Certainly, Queen Elizabeth must have believed that a hawthorn tree was the fairies' favorite gathering place. In the morning couldn't she see circles in the grass where they had danced the night away?

In Shakespeare's time the wee people were believed to be real. They could bring you luck or help you by grinding the malt and mustard at midnight, or by leaving money in your shoe. They enjoyed tricking and teasing you. They'd knock at your door at night and, when you opened it, blow out your candle. They'd change into different shapes, a horse, a fire, a headless bear, and lead you to a river and dunk you there.

I spent several months in London researching the little people's activities with the idea of writing a children's play about an English folk hero. After days of reading in the Kensington Library, I decided that my favorite character was Robin Goodfellow, the "Robin" or "Puck" of Elizabethan England. The problem was that although his tricks and escapades were amusing and theatrical, I had no strong central plot.

Robin has a long history with many names, shapes and adventures. He was first a hairy, evil Hobgoblin who lived in a cave. Later he was Puck, a helpful household sprite. And some believe that he was the popular outlaw, Robin Hood. My researches turned up the following: A boy named Robin Goodfellow was born in a house favored by the fairies. Some thought his father was King Oberon. His mother, a mortal, out of patience with his mischievousness, threatened to whip him and he ran away. Tired, he closed his eyes and, while asleep, thought he saw fairies dancing and singing. When he awoke he found a scroll inscribed with golden letters, reading:

Robin, my only son and heir,
How to live take thee no care:
By nature thou hast cunning shifts,
Which I'll encrease with other gifts.
Wish what thou wilt, thou shalt have it;
And for to fetch both fool and knave,
Thou hast the power to change thy shape,
To horse, to hog, to dog, to ape.
Transformed thus, by my means,
See none thou harms't but knaves and queens:
But love thou those that honest be,
And help them in necessity.
Do thus and all the world shall know
The pranks of Robin Goodfellow,
For by that name thou called shall be
To age's last posterity;
And if thou keep my just command,
One day thou shalt see Fairy Land!

King Oberon liked the tricks Robin played and called him:

Robin, my son, come quickly rise:
First stretch, then yawn, and rub your eyes,
For thou must go with me tonight,
And taste of Fairy-land's delight.

They went to Fairyland and danced to music of crickets and Tom Thumb's bagpipe.

When'ere you hear the piper blow,
Round and round the fairies go!
And nightly you must with us dance
In meadows where moonbeams glance,
And make the circle, hand-in-hand —
That is the law of Fairy-land!
There thou shalt see what no man knows,
While sleep the eyes of men doth close.

Then did King Oberon show Robin Goodfellow many secrets which he never did open to the world.

Tom Stoppard had written an exciting play, ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD, using Shakespeare's HAMLET as a springboard, and it occurred to me that in the same way I could use Shakespeare's A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM in which he immortalized Robin. (After all, Shakespeare usually used the plots of other writers.) So I combined the folk tales of Robin with the "Puck" scenes from Shakespeare, and devised as a plot the test of Robin proving to Oberon on Midsummer Night that he could be a witty, cunning jester worthy to serve the Fairy King.

I tried to retain the feeling, the fun, the fantasy, the poetry and the picturesque speech of Shakespeare. I hope the play will prove enjoyable and rewarding entertainment for American children. I also hope that it will be a good way to introduce them to classical literature by SEEING and enjoying a play *in A THEATRE* — the proper way to meet Mr. Shakespeare so that he may become an enduring favorite friend.

"Let's tune, and to it lustily a while."

—Aurand Harris
New York City

The premiere production of **ROBIN GOODFELLOW** was staged at the Harwich Junior Theatre, Harwich, Massachusetts, in mid-August, 1974. Following is a copy of the program:

HARWICH JUNIOR THEATRE

HARWICH, MASSACHUSETTS

presents

The Premiere Production of

ROBIN GOODFELLOW

by

AURAND HARRIS AND WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

A Children's play based on the folk tales of Robin Goodfellow and scenes from the play **MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM**.

CAST

ROBIN GOODFELLOWChris Fehrstrom
OBERON, King of the fairies.....Chuck Stockdale
TITANIA, Queen of the fairies.....Colette Anusewicz
FAIRIES: COBWEBKathy Reid
MUSTARDSEED Mary Barr
MOONBEAMBarre Conant
PEASEBLOSSOM Sherill Baldwin
MOTH Susan Hardy
THISTLEPOINT Michael Healy
TICKLEFEATHER Peter Conant
NICK BOTTOM, a weaver.....Sheldom Thayer
PETER QUINCE, a carpenter.....Ed York

SCENES

England 1600. In a woods.
The night before and Midsummer Night
(There will be one intermission)

THE STAFF

DIRECTOR Aurand Harris
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR.....Peter B. Turko
COSTUME CONSTRUCTION.....Patricia E. Brundage
SET DESIGN AND COSTUMES.....Steve Childs
PRODUCER Mary Clark

ROBIN GOODFELLOW

by

AURAND HARRIS

and

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

ACT I

[There is a bare stage, typical of the time of Shakespeare. There are exits down right and down left. In the center, upstage, hangs a small curtain. It is on rings that slide on a pole at top of frame, masking an Elizabethan inner-stage. The curtain is made with free panels of green and blue through which fairies may appear. There is soft light and forest music. Robin Goodfellow enters from the side or up the aisle. He is a happy young fellow, carefree and full of tricks.]

ROBIN: I have walked up a hill and down a hill,
Betwixt a hill, and thither I walk still.
If perchance you wonder whither and why,
"I'm out to find my fortune," answer I.

[Intimately]

When I was born, 'tis said fairies came
And called me "Robin Goodfellow" which is my name.
And a gypsy did foretell, as the moon waxed yellow,
Wonderous things would hap to Robin Goodfellow.

[Walks]

I'm out to find my fortune, where ere it be.
Perchance tomorrow it will befall to me!

[Yawns]

This night, this grassy knoll I'll use for sleeping.
No pillow — no cover spread — 'tis in keeping.

[Sits]

O moon and stars who twinkle as you meet,
Behold me beneath — shivering — with cold feet.

[Lifts bare feet and wiggles toes]

'Twould be good fortune if I had but a shoe;
So dreaming of my fortune, good-night to you.

[Robin lies back, asleep. Fairy music is heard and the lights change in beautiful colored patterns. Oberon enters. He and all the fairies are dressed in shades of green. The costumes are not elegant or shiny new, but are quaint and a bit used, having been worn for a hundred years. The fairies are nimble and quick and move with jumps and leaps and whirls. They are happy mischievous elfin sprites and should be played with fun and delight. They could even fly if there is rigging. Oberon would surely turn a somersault but he might lose his kingly crown. He moves, almost dancing, cautiously to Robin, sees him, spins in a happy whirl. He holds up his index finger, then points it to the ground and carefully goes around Robin, drawing an imaginary magic circle. He claps his hands. Cobweb,

an appealing little fairy, enters at back between the panels. He/she dances to Oberon who motions to Robin. Oberon pantomimes a pillow for Robin's head. Cobweb watches questioningly, then nods his head excitedly, and whirls to the side, snatching a pillow covered with leaves which is held off stage, and continuing to whirl, returns to Robin and places it under his head. Oberon pantomimes a cover to spread over Robin. Cobweb nods and whirls to side where he snatches a small cover of vine-net with flowers, and never missing a turn, he whirls back to Robin. He puts the cover over him, leaving two bare feet exposed. Oberon points to them and pantomimes shoes. Cobweb holds up two fingers, but Oberon already enjoying his own joke, holds up one finger for one shoe. Cobweb gets one small green shoe from the side and puts it on one foot. The foot immediately starts kicking in the air. Oberon points and shakes his finger at the shoe. The foot stops. Cobweb turns around. The foot suddenly kicks Cobweb in the seat. He jumps and yells, but without a sound, looks back, but the foot is innocently asleep. Oberon waves his hand three times and pulls from his sleeve a scroll of parchment. Oberon points and Cobweb puts the scroll by Robin's head. There is a faint sound of "Cook-a-doodle-do" off. Oberon and Cobweb listen and look. The rooster crows again. They nod and Oberon waves away Cobweb who runs and disappears between the curtains at back. Oberon quickly points to the imaginary circle and, reversing the direction, circles once around Robin, undoing the magic circle. The rooster crows louder. Oberon spreads and waves his arms in farewell, and exits at side in a whirl. Cobweb peeks out and quickly runs to Robin. Rooster crows louder. Cobweb quickly puts a second shoe on Robin's bare foot. Immediately the shoe starts kicking and dancing. Cobweb points and shakes his finger at it, but the foot dances more. The rooster crows and the light of the rising sun begins to grow. Cobweb is desperate. He tries to hold the kicking foot down, but when he lets go, it kicks again. He solves the problem by holding the kicking leg and putting the other leg across it so the sleeping foot is on top. The rooster gives a long and final crow and the sun brightens the stage just as Cobweb escapes safely at side. Fairy music stops. Robin sits up, yawns and stretches, then opens his eyes in wonderment.]

ROBIN: I had a dream. Fairies did come and dance;
 One wore a crown — King Oberon, perchance! [*Rises*]
 Methought a flower-cover they gently spread —
 [*Surprised, sees cover, holds it up, then drops it.*]
 Methought a leafy pillow cradled soft my head —
 [*Surprised, sees pillow, picks it up.*]
 I'll prove if this be a dream or this be true — [*Afraid to look.*]
 They did set upon each foot a shoe. [*Slowly looks at feet,*
 sees and points at shoes and jumps with joy.]
 Ho, ho, ho, the owl hoots. [*His feet dance a sprightly jig.*]
 My feet doth wear a pair of fairy boots.
 And — in my dream methought I spied
 A scroll neatly bound around and tied;
 On it great words should be writ,
 Which will explain, and all will fall to fit. [*Looks and sees*
 scroll.]
 Ah, 'tis here, embraced with hair and fern.
 And now these wonderous haps the why I'll learn.

[*Opens scroll.*]

'Tis writ in letters bold — and each in gold!
I'll quick compound it. My curiosity feed.

[*Starts to read, stops.*]

Forsooth, I forgot. I cannot read.

OBERON: [*Off, his voice is clearly heard as if through a megaphone.*]
Look and listen, behold and know,
Here with is writ to Robin Goodfellow.

ROBIN: 'Tis for me. Be it so.

OBERON: Harken ye, each fairy and elf —

ROBIN: A magic scroll that reads itself!

OBERON: I, King Oberon, do decree —

ROBIN: King Oberon speaks to *me*!

OBERON: To trick and tease thou hast cunning shifts
Which I'll encrease with other gifts.

ROBIN: O tricks I like to play, I wis!
I was sent away from home for this.

OBERON: Thou will have from this hour
Fairy magic and fairy power.

ROBIN: Fairy tricks to do? Magic power, too?

OBERON: Wish what thou wilt, it shall be thine.

ROBIN: Wish what I want and it is mine?

OBERON: Invisible you can be, or change your shape
To horse, to hog, to dog, to ape.
Transformed thus by fairy rules,
Reward the good and trick the fools. [*Robin nods.*]
Do thus and all the world will know
The name of Robin Goodfellow.

[*Thinking it is the end of the message,
Robin starts to roll up the scroll.*]

And if — [*Robin quickly unrolls scroll.*]
— thou keep my just command,
YOU with me will come and see Fairy Land!

ROBIN: [*Rolls up scroll and drops it on grassy knoll.*]
Blessed I am by fairies! King Oberon himself
Hath promised may be I'll be his jester elf!
And — [*In great wonder.*]

— if I follow his command
I—a mortal—will see Fairy Land!
He said, make a wish. That I'll do.
I'll make a wish and see if it comes true.
I wish—but with what wish should I begin?
I wish ——— [*Feels stomach.*]
—for FOOD for I am fain thin within.

[He closes his eyes. Magic music plays as Cobweb enters from side, puts food into Robin's hand, and exits. Music stops. He opens his eyes.]

'Tis here! 'Tis true! O fairies where ere you be,
My stomach doth a full thanks give to thee.

[Swallows the dainty food in one bite.]

I can be — invisible, he promised me.
Or — change my shape, to dog or ape, he stated.
Therefore, hear me, I will be translated!
First I'll be — first I'll try — to fly.
A bird I'll be and thither into the sky.

[He mimes this with great noise and joy, as he does the following with comic actions and sounds.]

I wish to be—
A bee—a flea—
A bear—a chair—
A cat—a rat—
An owl, who-who—
A cow, moo-moo—
A frog—a dog—
A monkey with a tail—
The wind, a gale ——— [*Stops.*]
A tree with a little nest
So I ——— [*Pants*]
—can take a rest.

[Robin stands, panting, with arms raised as a tree. Quince, a carpenter, enters L. Bottom, a weaver, enters R. They are two rustic comics.]

BOTTOM: Good morrow, Peter Quince.

QUINCE: And many good morrows to you, Nick Bottom.

BOTTOM: I am ready to rehearse the play. Have you the script and the scroll?

QUINCE: Here it is all writ. [*Unrolls scroll.*]

ROBIN: What two homespuns have we swaggering here?
I'll use my eye and ear, and invisible appear.

BOTTOM: Name what part I am to play.

QUINCE: [*Announces.*]
Nick Bottom, the weaver —

- BOTTOM:** 'Twas my name yesterday. 'Tis my name today. And I hope 'twill be for aye.
- QUINCE:** You are set down to play the part of Pyramus.
- BOTTOM:** What is Pyramus? A lover or a tyrant?
- QUINCE:** A lover that kills himself, most gallant, for love.
- BOTTOM:** When I do it let the audience look to their eyes.
[Robin steals scroll from Quince.]
 Now name the rest of the players.
- QUINCE:** *[Looks and is surprised that the scroll is gone.]*
 How now! 'Twas here. 'Tis gone.
- BOTTOM:** Read what is writ, and so grow to a point.
- QUINCE:** Ay, marry, that that is the point! How can I read here what is not there. The scroll is gone.
[Robin puts scroll in Quince's outstretched hand.]
- BOTTOM:** *[Sees scroll.]*
 Good Peter Quince, your eyes are misgraff'ed. The scroll is there!
[Points at scroll.]
- QUINCE:** 'Tis here!
- BOTTOM:** Read it generally, man by man, according to the script.
- QUINCE:** Francis Flute will take on Thisby, the lady that Pyramus must love.
- BOTTOM:** Let me play Thisby, too. I'll speak in a monstrous little lady voice; "Thisby. Thisby." "Ah, Pyramus, my lover dear; thy Thisby, dear, and lady dear."
- QUINCE:** No, no; you must play Pyramus.
[Robin takes scroll from Quince.]
- BOTTOM:** Well, proceed.
- QUINCE:** *[Looks, is surprised that the scroll is gone again.]*
 How now! Again! 'Twas here. 'Tis gone. *[Looks on ground.]*
 O pity, pity, pity.
- BOTTOM:** What call ye? Chickens! Bidly, bidly, bidly!
- QUINCE:** *[Sees scroll which Robin has put into Bottom's hand.]*
 You deceiver. You rascal, yea—forsooth, you knave!
 You hold the scroll!

BOTTOM: I?

QUINCE: Ay!

BOTTOM: If that be true, and I do, let my feet jump up and down.
[*He starts jumping. He sees scroll.*]
I will none! Here, discharge your duty and with speed make friends. [*He hands scroll to Quince, but Robin takes it. Quince stands with hand out, waiting.*]
Prithee, master, begin. Undress us now!

QUINCE: I do tend upon the scroll.

BOTTOM: By lark'en, your wit is as single as your chin is double.
I gave to you the scroll.

QUINCE: [*Robin puts scroll in Quince's hand.*]
If I hold the scroll, let me hit thee with it on thy nose.
[*Quince starts hitting Bottom over the head with scroll.*]

BOTTOM: Cease! Soft! [*Draws fist.*]
My distempature doth rise!

QUINCE: Prithee peace! Methinks there is afoot some skimble-skamble.
Belike a fairy trick.

BOTTOM: [*Disdainfully.*]
Ha, fairies! My back to them and face from them!
[*Prepares to leave.*]
Come, take thy gait.

QUINCE: Con well your part and know it before night by heart.
[*Hands scroll to Bottom, but Robin takes it.*]

BOTTOM: Fear no fear, I will imprint it most vilely. Give it me.

QUINCE: 'Tis given.

BOTTOM: Nay.

QUINCE: Yes. You took it.

BOTTOM: Not I. [*Robin puts it in Bottom's hand.*]

QUINCE: 'Tis there.

BOTTOM: Where?

QUINCE: In your hand.
[*Robin takes scroll. Bottom looks and sees nothing.*]

BOTTOM: Fie, man! I have two eyes.

QUINCE: Look with one and you will see.

[Robin puts scroll in Quince's hand.]

BOTTOM: I see you'd make a fool of me by saying what is not, is; and what is—is in your hand.

QUINCE: *[Sees scroll in his hand.]* It is! Take it, I beseech you!
[Quince holds scroll to Bottom who grabs it, but Robin takes it]

BOTTOM: 'Tis mine.

[Robin waving the scroll, crosses in front of them and they see it, to them it is suspended in air.]

QUINCE: Look to and affront. It floats in the air!

BOTTOM: 'Twas filched! But 'twill be mine.

[Bottom reaches for scroll. Robin moves away. Bottom follows, grabbing at the scroll, as Robin leads him in a merry chase in circles, in leaps, in crawls, and all in vain.]

QUINCE: We are undone. It is—with no betwixt—a fairy trick.

[Dizzy, Bottom falls to the ground—outstretched. Robin stands the scroll upright in Bottom's hand which rests on his chest.]

Arise, good Bottom, arise! Rise as doth the sun when the rooster calls. *[Comically flaps his arms and calls.]*
Cock—a—doodle—do—do. Cock—a—doodle—do—do.

BOTTOM: *[Sits up suddenly.]* Biddy. Biddy. Biddy.

QUINCE: O, Bottom, take care. We are bound—around—in a fairy circle.

BOTTOM: *[Rises with comic bravado.]* Nay, you have it turned tail to head. If there be sprites about, let THEM beware of me. I will meet any elfin sprite bravely and contagiously! My motto reads: scout 'em, flout 'em.

ROBIN: Ho, ho, ho, we'll see if that be true
When I am through with you.

[Pinches the air with his fingers directed toward Bottom.]
Pinch. Pinch. Pinch.

BOTTOM: *[Starts comically hopping about, grabbing at his body and yelling.]* Oh! Oh! Oh!

QUINCE: Why jump you so with jerks and flinches?

- BOTTOM:** From toe to head my skin is full of pinches.
- QUINCE:** Quick! We can untie the magic spell.
[Takes off his vest and puts in on backwards.]
 Turn your cloak. A fairy is in the oak.
- BOTTOM:** *[Frightened.]* Turn your cloak. A fairy is in the oak.
[He has no coat, but turns his hat around and wears it backwards over his eyes.]
- QUINCE:** With no more ado, I say adieu. Meet me in the wood tonight a mile without the town. And there we will rehearse our play unknown. I pray you, fail me not.
- BOTTOM:** Tonight in the wood we will meet and there we may rehearse most obscenely and courageously.
- QUINCE:** At the Duke's oak we meet.
- BOTTOM:** To the wood! *[Bottom starts R. Quince exits L.]*
- ROBIN:** Pinch. Pinch. Pinch. *[Robin pinches his fingers toward Bottom who jumps and yells and exits R. Robin laughs. Loud laughter is heard off, echoing from all sides. Robin looks about.]*
 King Oberon laughs. He shakes this ball of earth.
[Calls to world.]
 O King, more tricks I'll play and increase thy mirth!
- OBERON:** *[Off]*
 O Robin, in truth you are a merry madcap rake!
 Lend me thy hand, that it I may shake.
- ROBIN:** *[Holds out right hand, then left. Puzzled he looks about trying to locate a hand to shake. Then he smiles happily and pantomimes shaking vigorously his right hand with an imaginary hand.]*
 O King Oberon, by thy hand
 Which I hold, I bow to your command.
- OBERON:** Stand near. *[Robin, puzzled, steps to right.]*
 Attend and hear. *[Robin steps to left and listens.]*
- ROBIN:** I am all one ear.
- OBERON:** Tonight in a woodland dell I'll appear to thee.
- ROBIN:** Thee I would truly like to see!
- OBERON:** 'Twill be your chance to prove if you can be
 Forever my jester in fairy revelry.

Your hand again, good Robin. [*Echoes.*] Robin... Robin,
[*Robin holds out right hand, then left; walks about trying to touch an unseen hand; smiles broadly as he finds an imaginary hand and shakes it vigorously with his left hand.*]
May all be fair and well for thee.

ROBIN: And a fare and a well I give to thee.

OBERON: 'Till it be night and the moon doth glow,
Goodbye, good Robin Goodfellow. [*Echoes.*]
Goodfellow... Goodfellow.

ROBIN: [*Waves, then to audience*]
O hasten midsummer night, that I
May go — and know — my fortune. To the wood!
[*Robin exits L. Lights change to beautiful colored patterns. Fairy music is heard. Cobweb dances in from R, carries off the grassy knoll, then returns with a basket. From it he/she picks up a large star, blows on it and rubs it, making it shine; then hangs it up at side; takes a second star, blows, shines and hangs it; then picks up two small stars, one in each hand, blows on them and then rubs them on his hips, and happily hangs them up. Or several fairies may hang the stars and speak various lines during the following scene.*]

COBWEB: [*Points to stars.*]
One, two, three—four—and a sky full more!
[*Circles his arms high, embracing the sky. Many Christmas tree lights may twinkle.*]
O fairy lanterns and stars and tapers bright,
Sparkle, gleam, twinkle twice, and light
Our fairy circle this Midsummer Night!
[*He, or a chorus of fairies, dances impishly and sings.*]
Over hill, over dale,
Through bush, through briar,
Over park, over pale,
Through flood, through fire —
I do wander everywhere
Swifter than the whirling air,
Tonight I serve the Fairy Queen,
To dew her orbs upon the green.
[*Fairy lights and music stop.*]

ROBIN: [*Enters L.*]
I'm out to find my fortune, where'er it be;
And in this wood tonight—surely—it'll hap to me.

COBWEB: 'Tis Robin Goodfellow, I know 'tis he.
But I must away ere he sees me.
[*If several fairies, the line can read:*
"But we must away or us he'll see."]

ROBIN: Either I mistake your shape and making quite
 Or else you are a true and fairy sprite!

COBWEB: [*Anxious*]
 Farewell, Robin Goodfellow. You must be gone!
 Our Queen and all her elves come here anon.

ROBIN: The King doth keep his revels here tonight.

COBWEB: O let not the Queen come within his sight!
 Oberon is angry because the Queen
 A boy hath stolen and HE would have the boy.
 O they quell and quarrel 'til their elves for fear
 Creep into acorn cups and disappear. [*Looks R*]
 But room. He comes. I go. Nay, I am gone.
 Protect thyself from raging Oberon. [*Exits L.*]

ROBIN: 'Tis he. King Oberon at last I'll see.

OBERON: [*Enters R, walking angrily.*]
 All elves in woods and dells, hark to my rage!
 All sprites of the night mark my fury!

ROBIN: What happy jolly cheer standeth here?

OBERON: [*Turns on Robin.*] Murmur again and I will peg thee to an oak!

ROBIN: Nay, sir, be not huffed with me.

OBERON: My Robin, my good fellow. You are here.
 Forgive me. I am vexed and full of tantrum.
 'Tis my wife, her contrayness. [*Angrily.*]
 I will set a roaring war unless ——

ROBIN: Unless?

OBERON: [*Impishly.*] Unless my wife doth change her mind.

ROBIN: Perchance she will. Women often do.

OBERON: [*Beams with a happy idea.*]
 Robin! This will be your test, your trial.
 If you aid me this night in frolic,
 And we can, by foul or fair, outwit
 Titania and win the boy as mine,
 'Twill prove true, you are the chosen one;
 You'll be my son and all that's mine will be yours.
 But soft. She comes. My Queen Titania,
 With all her fairy finery — and shrewd wit.
 Stand. Attend me bravely. I will for show

Wax again the flame and blow with rage.

[*Stamps feet and strikes a pose.*]

[*Fairy music is heard. Cobweb enters L, dancing and ushering in Titania. Or many fairies may dance attendance. Music stops.*]

OBERON: Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania!

TITANIA: I know your tricks, O jealous Oberon,
And never since the middle summer's spring
Met we on hill, in dale, forest, or mead,
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,
But with thy brawls thou hast disturbed our sport.

OBERON: Then do you change it! Why should Titania cross me?
I do but beg a little changeling boy
To be my henchman.

TITANIA: Set your heart at rest.
Thy fairy land buys not the child of me.

OBERON: Give me the boy and I will be a friend with thee.

TITANIA: Not for thy fairy kingdom! Fairies away.
We shall chide downright if I longer stay.

[*Fairy music. Titania exits, followed by Cobweb.
Or by all her fairy attendants.*]

OBERON: Well go thy way! thou shalt not from this grove
Till I torment thee for this injury! [*Laughs with an idea.*]
Ha, ha! Robin, my good fellow, this be
Your test. Titania you must outbest.

ROBIN: This be — Midsummer Night we celebrate
When each lover doth find his mate —
So I'll do for you a trick in keeping!
I'll find for Titania a monstrous
Mate while this night she is sleeping.

OBERON: [*Elated.*] Yes, Robin, thou hast hit it supreme!
Titania shall have a Midsummer Night's dream,
Away! Haste! Ere the moon curves a pace.
Find where once cupid's dart did fall
Piercing the heart of a little western flower.
The juice of it on sleeping eyelids laid
Will make or man or woman madly dote
Upon the next live creature that it sees.

ROBIN: Ho, ho, ho, this flower with me
Will do a trick of cunning knavery!