

THE RUDE MECHANICALS

- **Bottom.** Are we all met?
- **Quince.** Pat, pat; and here's a marvellous convenient place for our rehearsal. This green plot shall be our stage, this hawthorn-brake our tiring-house; and we will do it in action as we will do it before the duke.
- **Bottom.** Peter Quince,—
- **Quince.** What sayest thou, bully Bottom?
- **Bottom.** There are things in this comedy of Pyramus and Thisby that will never please. First, Pyramus must draw a sword to kill himself; which the ladies cannot abide. How answer you that?
- **Snout.** By'r lakin, a parlous fear.
- **Starveling.** I believe we must leave the killing out, when all is done.
- **Bottom.** Not a whit: I have a device to make all well. Write me a prologue; and let the prologue seem to say, we will do no harm with our swords, and that Pyramus is not killed indeed; and, for the more better assurance, tell them that I, Pyramus, am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver: this will put them out of fear.
- **Quince.** Well, we will have such a prologue; and it shall be written in eight and six.
- **Bottom.** No, make it two more; let it be written in eight and eight.
- **Snout.** Will not the ladies be afeard of the lion?
- **Starveling.** I fear it, I promise you.
- **Bottom.** Masters, you ought to consider with yourselves: to bring in—God shield us!—a lion among ladies, is a

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most dreadful thing; for there is not a more fearful wild-fowl than your lion living; and we ought to look to 't.

- **Snout.** Therefore another prologue must tell he is not a lion.
- **Bottom.** Nay, you must name his name, and half his face must be seen through the lion's neck: and he himself must speak through, saying thus, or to the same defect,—'Ladies,'—or 'Fair-ladies—I would wish You,'—or 'I would request you,'—or 'I would entreat you,—not to fear, not to tremble: my life for yours. If you think I come hither as a lion, it were pity of my life: no I am no such thing; I am a man as other men are;' and there indeed let him name his name, and tell them plainly he is Snug the joiner.
- **Quince.** Well it shall be so. But there is two hard things; that is, to bring the moonlight into a chamber; for, you know, Pyramus and Thisby meet by moonlight.
- **Snout.** Doth the moon shine that night we play our play?
- **Bottom.** A calendar, a calendar! look in the almanac; find out moonshine, find out moonshine.
- **Quince.** Yes, it doth shine that night.
- **Bottom.** Why, then may you leave a casement of the great chamber window, where we play, open, and the moon may shine in at the casement.
- **Quince.** Ay; or else one must come in with a bush of thorns and a lanthorn, and say he comes to disfigure, or to present, the person of Moonshine. Then, there is another thing: we must have a wall in the great chamber; for Pyramus and Thisby says the story, did talk through the chink of a wall.
- **Snout.** You can never bring in a wall. What say you, Bottom?

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- **Bottom.** Some man or other must present Wall: and let him have some plaster, or some loam, or some rough-cast about him, to signify wall; and let him hold his fingers thus, and through that cranny shall Pyramus and Thisby whisper.
- **Quince.** If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit down, every mother's son, and rehearse your parts. Pyramus, you begin: when you have spoken your speech, enter into that brake: and so every one according to his cue.