

LYSANDER.

I am, my lord, as well deriv'd as he,  
As well possess'd; my love is more than his;  
My fortunes every way as fairly rank'd,  
If not with vantage, as Demetrius';  
And, which is more than all these boasts can be,  
I am belov'd of beauteous Hermia.  
Why should not I then prosecute my right?  
Demetrius, I'll avouch it to his head,  
Made love to Nedar's daughter, Helena,  
And won her soul; and she, sweet lady, dotes,  
Devoutly dotes, dotes in idolatry,  
Upon this spotted and inconstant man.

O take the sense, sweet, of my innocence!  
Love takes the meaning in love's conference.  
I mean that my heart unto yours is knit,  
So that but one heart we can make of it:  
Two bosoms interchainèd with an oath,  
So then two bosoms and a single troth.  
Then by your side no bed-room me deny;  
For lying so, Hermia, I do not lie.

Content with Hermia? No, I do repent  
The tedious minutes I with her have spent.  
Not Hermia, but Helena I love.  
Who will not change a raven for a dove?  
The will of man is by his reason sway'd,  
And reason says you are the worthier maid.  
Things growing are not ripe until their season;  
So I, being young, till now ripe not to reason;  
And touching now the point of human skill,  
Reason becomes the marshal to my will,  
And leads me to your eyes, where I o'erlook  
Love's stories, written in love's richest book.