



A Midsummer Night's Dream

William Shakespeare (1564 - 1616)

Read by:	Multiple readers	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case
Length:	2 hours 13 minutes	Catalog:	DB-1127
Language:	English	UPC:	0683422134487
Style:	Dramatic	MSLP:	\$9.99
Genre:	Plays, Comedy		

As Theseus, Duke of Athens, is arranging festivities to celebrate his wedding to Hippolyte, Queen of the Amazons, a nobleman storms into court to seek his judgment. His daughter, Hermia, loves Lysander and refuses to marry Demetrius, the suitor her father has chosen. Theseus gives her until his wedding day to decide upon the marriage, a life of chastity, or possible death. Hermia and Lysander plan to elope. Hermia tells her friend Helena, who loves Demetrius, of her plans, which sets all four off to the woods falling in and out of love during an enchanted evening among the fairies. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, one Shakespeare's most popular plays, weaves four intertwined plots around the themes of love, magic, and dreams. On another level there is a tiff between

Oberon, king of the fairies, and Titania, his queen, over an Indian boy, son of one of her followers. Lastly, there is the comic relief of a crew of craftsmen in the woods rehearsing a wretched version of "Pyramus and Thisbee" to perform at the Duke's wedding. Throughout the action, Puck, Oberon's "shrewd and knavish sprite", dispenses love potions to guide the course of the various romances for better and for worse. After an evening of mishaps and turnabouts in the woods, attachments come into alignment. The Duke and Hippolyte discover the parties on a hunt early the following morning. As they recount their bizarre adventures all agree that they must have been dreaming. We, meanwhile, are thoroughly convinced of the truth of Lysander's remark that "the course of true love never did run true".

William Shakespeare (April 26, 1564 – April 23, 1616) was an English playwright and poet widely considered as the world's greatest dramatist and the greatest writer in the English language. He produced 38 plays, 154 sonnets, two narrative poems and other verse, most between the years 1589 and 1613. His earlier works consist mostly of comedies and histories, considered as some of the best work ever done in these genres. He turned to tragedies from about 1600 until about 1608, producing *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth* in this phase, considered the finest works in English. His last phase brought us the tragicomedies and romances such as *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest*. All but two of his plays were collected in the First Folio in 1623.

Little is known of his personal life apart from his marriage to Anne Hathaway at age 18, his three children, and his work as an actor and part owner of the King's Men theatre company in addition to his writing. The paucity of information has led to speculation about his appearance, beliefs, sexuality, and even the authenticity of his works. He retired to Stratford in 1613 and died three years later.