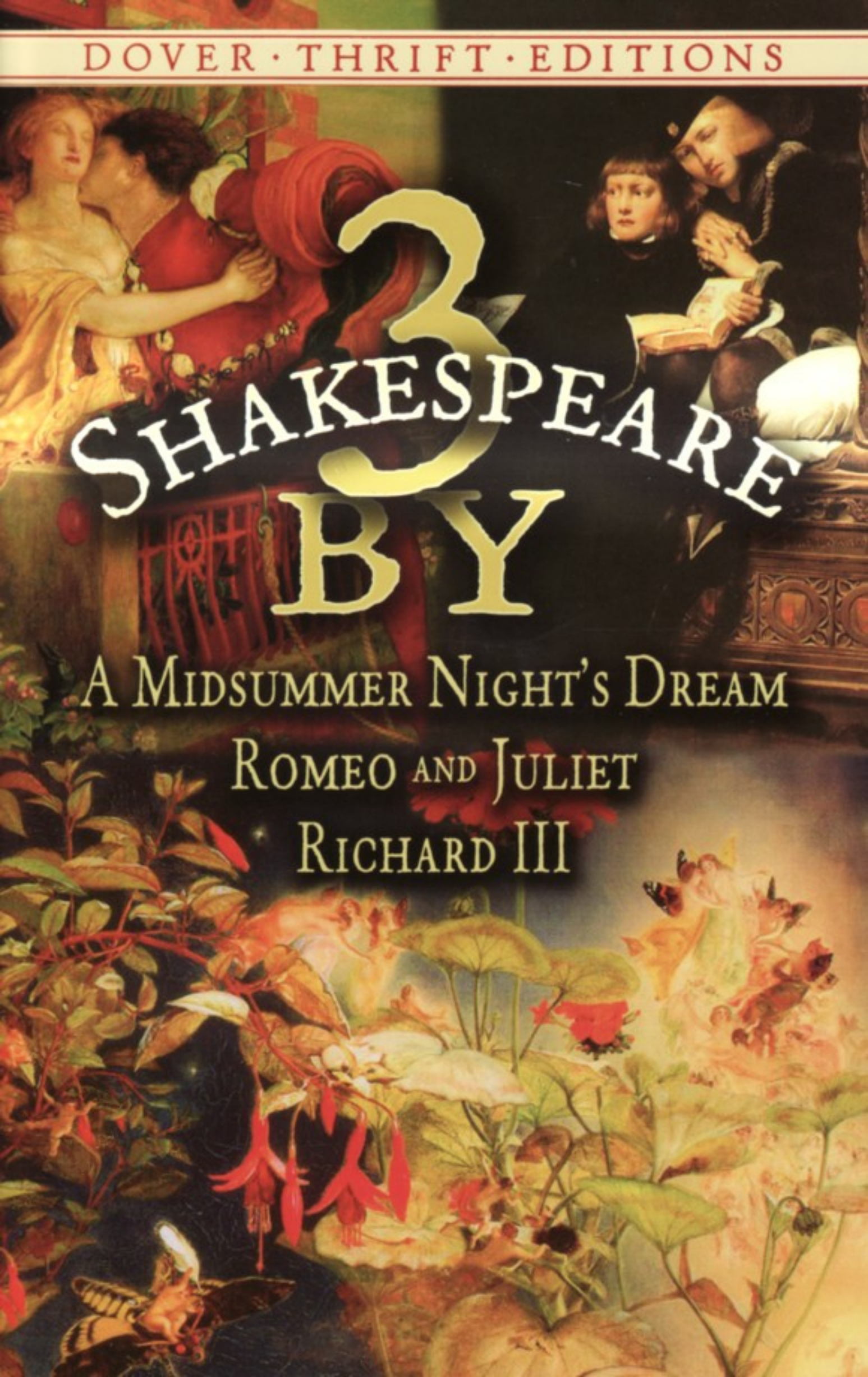


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3
SHAKESPEARE
BY

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

ROMEO AND JULIET

RICHARD III

Act I—Scene I—Athens

THE PALACE OF THESEUS

Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, PHILOSTRATE, and Attendants.

THE. Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour
Draws on apace; four happy days bring in
Another moon: but, O, methinks, how slow
This old moon wanes! she lingers¹ my desires,
Like to a step-dame, or a dowager,
Long withering out a young man's revenue.

HIP. Four days will quickly steep themselves in night;
Four nights will quickly dream away the time;
And then the moon, like to a silver bow
New-bent in heaven, shall behold the night
Of our solemnities.²

THE. Go, Philostrate,
Stir up the Athenian youth to merriments;
Awake the pert³ and nimble spirit of mirth:
Turn melancholy forth to funerals;
The pale companion is not for our pomp. [*Exit PHILOSTRATE.*
Hippolyta, I woo'd thee with my sword,
And won thy love, doing thee injuries;
But I will wed thee in another key,
With pomp, with triumph⁴ and with revelling.

Enter EGEUS, HERMIA, LYSANDER, and DEMETRIUS.

¹ *lingers*] prolongs.

² *solemnities*] celebration (of the wedding).

³ *pert*] lively.

⁴ *triumph*] public festivity.

- EGE. Happy be Theseus, our renowned duke!
- THE. Thanks, good Egeus: what's the news with thee?
- EGE. Full of vexation come I, with complaint
 Against my child, my daughter Hermia.
 Stand forth, Demetrius. My noble lord,
 This man hath my consent to marry her.
 Stand forth, Lysander: and, my gracious duke,
 This man hath bewitch'd the bosom⁵ of my child:
 Thou, thou, Lysander, thou hast given her rhymes,
 And interchanged love-tokens with my child:
 Thou hast by moonlight at her window sung,
 With feigning⁶ voice, verses of feigning love;
 And stolen the impression of her fantasy⁷
 With bracelets of thy hair, rings, gawds,⁸
 Knacks,⁹ trifles, nosegays, sweetmeats, messengers
 Of strong prevailment¹⁰ in unhardened¹¹ youth:
 With cunning hast thou filch'd my daughter's heart;
 Turn'd her obedience, which is due to me,
 To stubborn harshness: and, my gracious duke,
 Be it so she will not here before your Grace
 Consent to marry with Demetrius,
 I beg the ancient privilege of Athens,
 As she is mine, I may dispose of her:
 Which shall be either to this gentleman
 Or to her death, according to our law
 Immediately¹² provided in that case.
- THE. What say you, Hermia? be advised, fair maid:
 To you your father should be as a god;
 One that composed your beauties; yea, and one
 To whom you are but as a form in wax
 By him imprinted and within his power
 To leave the figure or disfigure it.
 Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.
- HER. So is Lysander.

⁵ *bosom*] heart.

⁶ *feigning*] soft.

⁷ *stolen . . . fantasy*] captured her imagination and love.

⁸ *gawds, conceits*] baubles, fanciful presents.

⁹ *Knacks*] knickknacks.

¹⁰ *prevailment*] influence.

¹¹ *unhardened*] impressionable.

¹² *Immediately*] expressly.

- THE. In himself he is;
But in this kind, wanting your father's voice,¹³
The other must be held the worthier.
- HER. I would my father look'd but with my eyes.
- THE. Rather your eyes must with his judgement look.
- HER. I do entreat your Grace to pardon me.
I know not by what power I am made bold,
Nor how it may concern¹⁴ my modesty,
In such a presence here to plead my thoughts;
But I beseech your Grace that I may know
The worst that may befall me in this case,
If I refuse to wed Demetrius.
- THE. Either to die the death, or to abjure
For ever the society of men.
Therefore, fair Hermia, question your desires;
Know of your youth, examine well your blood,
Whether, if you yield not to your father's choice,
You can endure the livery of a nun;
For aye¹⁵ to be in shady cloister mew'd,¹⁶
To live a barren sister all your life,
Chanting faint hymns to the cold fruitless moon.
Thrice-blessed they that master so their blood,
To undergo such maiden pilgrimage;
But earthlier happy is the rose distill'd,¹⁷
Than that which, withering on the virgin thorn,
Grows, lives, and dies in single blessedness.
- HER. So will I grow, so live, so die, my lord,
Ere I will yield my virgin patent¹⁸ up
Unto his lordship, whose unwished yoke
My soul consents not to give sovereignty.
- THE. Take time to pause; and, by the next new moon,—
The sealing-day betwixt my love and me,
For everlasting bond of fellowship,—
Upon that day either prepare to die
For disobedience to your father's will,

¹³ *in this kind . . . voice*] in business of this nature, lacking your father's approval.

¹⁴ *concern*] befit.

¹⁵ *aye*] ever.

¹⁶ *mew'd*] confined.

¹⁷ *earthlier . . . distill'd*] i.e., happier on earth is the one who will live on after death through his or her child.

¹⁸ *virgin patent*] privilege of remaining a virgin.

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