

Athens

Puck (or Robin Goodfellow) :

- **Traditionally gendered as** a he/him faerie.
 - Faeries are often presented as more genderfluid than human characters; it would be possible to play Puck with any gender expression, and as important/unimportant as the player prefers.
- **Status/class** - upper-middle faerie; outside of human hierarchies.
 - Puck is lieutenant to Oberon, King of the Faeries (who outranks him, along with Titania, Queen of the Faeries), but his status as a faerie means he isn't subject to the rule of Theseus and Hippolyta (King and Queen of Athens); he doesn't out-rank them per se so much as exist within a different sphere. He does outrank most other faeries/spirits, other than the Monarchs.
- **Character traits:**
 - Mischievous - given any opportunity to prank mortals, Puck takes great delight in doing so, recently transforming an unsuspecting Nick Bottom to have an ass's head, for no reason other than that Puck relishes chaos and pandemonium above all else.
 - Impulsive and impatient, to a degree that his rashness may well have unintended but severe consequences, often for others more than himself. He is currently tasked with brewing a powerful alchemical love potion to intervene in the mortal lovers' quadrangle, but he does not know (nor particularly care) which Athenian is the mortal that Oberon's scheme involves.
 - It appears that Puck's unpredictable and capricious tendencies are only curbed by Oberon's strict authority. Out of his familiar surroundings, on the island, encountering unknown spirits as well as mortals from strange, far-off lands, if Puck is given a longer leash, operating outside of King Oberon's domain, his recklessness could go unchecked, which has potential for more catastrophic (or even fatal) results than usual..
 - Wild, uninhibited and witty. As well as being Oberon's jester, always prepared for entertainment, Puck prides himself on his swift, sharp repartee, his impish humour and his infamous reputation amongst the other goblins, pixies and fae spirits.
- **You may wish to play Puck if** you want to play a whimsical faerie with the "Unnatural Ability" archetype, if you want to play a more morally grey character, or if you want to play an outgoing mischief-maker.
- **You may not wish to play Puck if** you want to play a more temperate or reserved character, if you want to begin with a paired love interest, or if you are more interested in other elements of the game, such as the Alchemy mechanic.
- **Key Quote:** *"Then will two at once woo one; That must needs be sport alone; And those things do best please me That befall preposterously."*

Nick Bottom, the Weaver:

- **Traditionally gendered as** a he/him man.
 - Gender is largely irrelevant to the character - players may choose to do something with this or ignore it as they see fit.
- **Status/class** - lower/working class.
 - A weaver by trade, but also an aspiring/amateur actor.
- **Character traits:**
 - Confident, proud and self-assured; Bottom is enthusiastic to take on any (and all) roles to perform in a Masque before Theseus and Hippolyta, and has no doubts in his own abilities to perform as the greatest actor of all time, warranted or no.
 - Able to roll with any given situation, no matter how bizarre, taking things in his stride; unfazed and able to improvise.
 - Bottom rarely questions anything - a faerie Queen could court him as a paramour, and he would casually accept this without necessarily considering it to be peculiar or extraordinary. Faced with confusing and unexpected occurrences on the island - even whilst transformed to have equine features - he may be more surefooted than more easily spooked companions. That being said, this unfaltering attitude can be dangerous, and without a careful, shrewd eye for tricks and traps, he could easily stumble into mortal peril here without realising.
 - A problem-solver - albeit not necessarily competently so. Bottom will scour a situation for obstacles (such as their Masque requiring moonshine and a wall per their script) and will devise "solutions" (in this case, actors portraying these elements of scenery) - whilst this has potential to overcomplicate circumstances that did not require intervention, the eagerness to find practical solutions might actually help on occasion.
- **You may wish to play Nick Bottom if** you want to play a brash, reckless character with the "Entertainer" archetype (especially if you are particularly interested in the Masque mechanic), if you want to play a low-status character, or if you would enjoy starting the game under magical transfiguration effects (an ass's head).
- **You may not wish to play Nick Bottom if** you are not comfortable being the centre of attention, if you want to play a more thoughtful or reserved character, or if you are more interested in other areas of the game, such as military leadership, Alchemy, or marriage.
- **Key Quote:** *"Let me play the lion too: I will roar, that I will do any man's heart good to hear me; I will roar, that I will make the duke say 'Let him roar again, let him roar again.'"*

Hermia:

- **Traditionally gendered as** a she/her woman.
 - It would be possible to play the character's gendering as *either* relevant or irrelevant according to the player's preferences, although there is a lot to be explored re: the importance of their relationship to gender and gender roles.
- **Status/class** - upper-middle/noble/aristocratic.
 - From a noble household, interacts with royalty (with deference).
- **Character traits:**
 - Fiercely independent - she boldly tells Duke Theseus and her father Egeus that she would rather die or become a nun than acquiesce to the arranged marriage to Demetrius, and fearlessly elopes through the faerie woodlands to pursue her own desires.
 - Loving and trusting - she confides in Helena, her best friend, with all of the details of her and Lysander's secret plans, and has complete faith in both herself and Lysander to ensure their safe passage through the dangers of the Athenian woodlands.
 - However, if she perceives one of her companions to have betrayed this love and trust, she has a vicious temper and knows exactly which words will be the most cutting to wound her friends or loved ones should she have need. With unforeseen events unfolding on the island, and/or faerie interference, it is possible that she may do irreparable damage to one or more of her relationships if she indulges this cruel streak, unless she learns a more moderate way to vent her frustrations without burning her bridges.
 - Principled, proper and posh - she urges Lysander to keep a respectable distance from her when bedding down for the night in the forest, and does not stray from the decorum expected of nobility even when away from the pressures and scrutiny of any witnesses or prying eyes, despite Lysander's charms.
- **You may wish to play Hermia if** you want to play a principled, high-status character with the "Noble Might" archetype, if you want romantic love to be a key theme of your personal plotline, or if you want to play a fierce, rebellious character, driven by a strong sense of her own autonomy and independent decision-making.
- **You may not wish to play Hermia if** you want to play a more timid or weak-willed character, if you do not want your personal plot to be too entangled with others', or if you want more engagement with supernatural or magical elements of the game, including any affinity or special proficiency with Monologues, Alchemy or Masques.
- **Key Quote:** *"So will I grow, so live, so die, my lord, ere I will my virgin patent up unto his lordship, whose unwished yoke my soul consents not to give sovereignty."*

Lysander:

- **Traditionally gendered as** a he/him man.
 - It would be possible to play the character's gendering as *either* relevant or irrelevant according to the player's preferences, although there is a lot to be explored re: the importance of their relationship to gender and gender roles.
- **Status/class** - upper-middle/noble/aristocratic.
 - From a noble household, interacts with royalty (with deference).
- **Character traits:**
 - Gallant, chivalrous and valiant - Lysander is prepared to leave everything he knows behind and face unknown dangers in the faerie woodlands to seek out a new life with his love.
 - A passionate romantic at heart - he feels his love deeply, with burning intensity, and should his emotions be interfered with via any magical means, he will feel any enchanted love or hatred with the same heightened magnitude and zeal.
 - It can be dangerous to be led so boldly by one's heart and affections. Lysander's fervor can be both his greatest strength and his greatest weakness, and if he is given a push - perhaps a supernatural one - this same focus moved onto another track could be devastating. His tendency towards a singular focus and black-and-white thinking means his sympathies usually lie at one extreme or another, and with unexpected events occurring on the island, this relentless focus is just as likely to lead to heartbreak and bloodshed as it is to a happily-ever-after.
 - A dry, sarcastic sense of humour - whether teasing his romantic rival or offering heckling comments from the audience when watching a Masque, Lysander enjoys an element of snark, sass and banter, and is just as likely to engage in a battle of wits as a sword-fighting duel, with an element of showmanship.
- **You may wish to play Lysander if** you want to play a romantic with the "Lover's Heart" archetype, if you want romantic love to be a key theme of your personal plotline, or if you want to play a relatively uncomplicated character, led by powerful emotion.
- **You may not wish to play Lysander if** you want to play a careful, thoughtful character, if you do not want your personal plot to be too entangled with others', or if you want more engagement with supernatural or magical elements of the game, including any affinity or special proficiency with Monologues, Alchemy or Masques.
- **Key Quote:** *"You have her father's love, Demetrius; Let me have Hermia's: do you marry him."*

Helena:

- **Traditionally gendered as** a she/her woman.
 - Her relationship with gender is often a key theme for the role; whilst it would be possible to do something different with it or de-emphasise it, there is a lot to be explored here.
- **Status/class** - upper-middle/noble/aristocratic.
 - From a noble household, interacts with royalty (with deference).
- **Character traits:**
 - A hopeless romantic, compelled by a self-destructive and lovesick obsession with her ex, Demetrius. *Note: whilst she may be desperate, this should not be an aggressive advance.* Although her dreams that this love will once again be requited may be futile, Helena is not delusional: she has spent a lot of time considering the nature of love, and even if her instincts to fawn over Demetrius may be ill-advised, she fully knows and understands that her actions are illogical, even if she still cannot help but fall into the same toxic patterns regardless.
 - Hesitant, cynical and self-critical - even if Demetrius were suddenly to declare his love renewed for her again, as she dreams of, her first instinct would be disbelief or fear that she was being mocked. This doubt is potentially a life-saving trait, though, as although she may lack self-assurance, this second-guessing means she is not easily tricked or manipulated.
 - Helena's confidence has been knocked by Demetrius abandoning her to pursue her best friend, Hermia, who has no interest in him. Although she is currently fruitlessly pursuing someone who has treated her cruelly, perhaps encountering others on the island may prompt her to value herself more, or to hold others accountable; especially if she were to meet people who refuse to excuse such disrespect, or who would never treat a loved one this way.
 - Melodramatic - a greeting from her best friend might be met with thirteen lines of self-pity, and her determined pursuit of Demetrius (whilst bemoaning that she isn't being wooed) is often peppered with declarations that his rejection is killing her. She claims not to be adept at physical combat, but it is possible she merely wishes for others to fight on her behalf.
- **You may wish to play Helena if** you want to play a romantic with the "Lover's Heart" archetype, if you want to explore themes of unrequited love, or if you want to play a more cynical character.
- **You may not wish to play Helena if** you don't want to RP romantic rejection, if you do not want your personal plot to be too entangled with others', or if you want more engagement with supernatural or magical elements of the game, including any affinity or special proficiency with Monologues, Alchemy or Masques.
- **Key Quote:** *"Fie, Demetrius! Your wrongs do set a scandal on my sex: We cannot fight for love, as men may do; We should be wooed and were not made to woo. I'll follow thee and make a heaven of hell, to die upon the hand I love so well."*

Demetrius:

- **Traditionally gendered as** a he/him man.
 - It would be possible to play the character's gendering as *either* relevant or irrelevant according to the player's preferences, although there is a lot to be explored re: the importance of their relationship to gender and gender roles.
- **Status/class** - upper-middle/noble/aristocratic.
 - From a noble household, interacts with royalty (with deference).
- **Character traits:**
 - Confident and self-assured, to the point of being entitled. The moment that the wealthy nobleman Egeus expressed a desire for him to marry his daughter, Hermia, Demetrius not only abandoned his own paramour, Helena, but simply expected that Hermia would obey her father and that her own partner, Lysander, would stand aside so that he could claim her hand without resistance.
 - Blunt, forthright and honest. Although he may be callous and cruel at times, Demetrius is extremely direct and wears his heart on his sleeve - whether he is wooing, rejecting someone, or challenging a rival to a duel, there is no duplicity to his bearing, even if he may come across as insensitive with this.
 - This candid sincerity and inability to bluff or be tactful could get him into trouble. Whilst it would probably take some kind of magical interference to distract him from his current (unsuccessful) mission to convince Hermia to wed him, perhaps unexpected encounters on the island may teach him the art of prudence and subtlety, or else his brusque manner could prove fatal in the wrong circumstances...
 - Distinguished, reputable and posh - an esteemed gentleman with sufficient social sway to impress Egeus, who insists that his daughter marry Demetrius. Even if he is openly lecherous or roguish at times, his status allows him to continue unchecked.
- **You may wish to play Demetrius if** you want to play an aristocrat with the "Noble Might" archetype, if you are comfortable exploring themes of unrequited romantic love, or if you want to play a straightforward character who is always outspoken and (painfully) truthful.
- **You may not wish to play Demetrius if** you want to play someone who is always thoughtful, kind and considerate, if you do not want your personal plot to be too entangled with others', or if you want more engagement with supernatural or magical elements of the game, including any affinity or special proficiency with Monologues, Alchemy or Masques.
- **Key Quote:** *"Do I entice you? do I speak you fair? Or, rather, do I not in plainest truth tell you, I do not, nor I cannot love you?"*