

## Key Scene/Aria in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Video excerpt and timestamp are pulled from YouTube.

### KEY SCENE/ARIA: Act I, Scene 2: "I know a bank"

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00:07 – 4:14

Oberon is giving Puck instructions on how to carry out his plan to enchant Tytania. He describes the magical flower, the "love-in-idleness," and tells Puck to fetch it so they can use its juice to cast a spell. This flower will make Titania fall in love with the first creature she sees when she wakes up, leading to the humorous and chaotic events that follow.

#### Libretto Excerpt

OBERON

Welcome, wanderer!

Hast thou the flower there?

*(Puck gives Oberon the flower and lies at his feet.)*

I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,  
where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,  
quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine,  
with sweet musk-roses and with eglantine:  
There sleeps Tytania sometime of the night,  
lull'd in these flowers with dances and delight;  
and there the snake throws her enamell'd skin,  
weed wide enough to wrap a fairy in:  
and with the juice of this I'll streak her eyes,  
and make her full of hateful fantasies.  
Take thou some of it, and seek through this grove:  
a sweet Athenian lady is in love  
with a disdainful youth: anoint his eyes;  
but do it when the next thing he espies  
may be the lady: thou shalt know the man  
by the Athenian garments he hath on.

*Libretto excerpts courtesy of [opera-arias](#).*