

**THIS IS THE MONOLOGUE YOU SHOULD READ:**

**(IMPORTANT NOTE: THIS DOES NOT HAVE TO BE MEMORIZED)**

**Puck:**

Thou speak'st aright;

I am that merry wanderer of the night.  
I jest to Oberon and make him smile,  
When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,  
Neighing in likeness of a filly foal:  
And sometime, lurk I in a gossip's bowl,  
In very likeness of a roasted crab,  
And when she drinks, against her lips I bob  
And on her wither'd dewlap pour the ale.  
The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,  
Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me;  
Then, slip I from her bum, down topples she,  
And 'tailor' cries, and falls into a cough;  
And then the whole quire hold their hips and laugh,  
And waxen in their mirth and neeze and swear  
A merrier hour was never wasted there.  
But, room, fairy! here comes Oberon.

Here's info to help with the monologue. But please audition with the text above.

Here is a contemporary English Version (but this is NOT the audition selection. Use the one above for the audition)

**Puck:**

You are right;

I am that mischievous wanderer of the night.

I joke with Oberon and make him smile,  
When I trick a fat, well-fed horse,  
By neighing like a young female horse:  
And sometimes I hide in an old gossip's cup,  
In the shape of a roasted crab-apple,  
And when she takes a sip, I bob against her lips  
And make her spill beer all down her old wrinkled neck skin.

The wisest old woman, telling the most boring, sombre story,  
Will mistake me for a three-footed stool,  
Then I slip out from under her bum, letting her topple over,

And she cries 'Tailor'! Falling into coughing,

As her whole audience holds their sides laughing,  
Growing in hilarity to point of sneezing with laughter as they swear,  
That they never wasted an hour having more fun.

But make way fairies, here comes Oberon.

### Unfamiliar Words & Phrases

**Aright:** Right, correctly.

**Merry:** Mischievous.

**Jest:** Joke.

**Bean-fed:** Well fed, fat.

**Beguile:** Trick, to play a joke on.

**Filly:** Female.

**Foal:** A young horse.

**Gossip:** An old gossipy person, or an old friend.

**Roasted crab:** A type of tart apple that is only tasty when cooked. A crab-apple.

**“Withered dewlap”:** Loose folds of skin on the neck, usually of an animal like a cow. In this case, the woman’s old wrinkly neck skin.

**“And ‘tailor’ cries”:** Sitting on the floor was the typical posture for tailors to be in as they worked. Possibly a reference to sitting on her ‘tail’ as well. In this context, it is a cry of surprise at having fallen onto the floor.

**Quire:** Company, the audience of the story.

**Waxen:** Increase, grow.

**Mirth:** Amusement, revelry, joy and laughter.

**Neeze:** Sneeze.

### Conclusion

It may read simply like a funny little story about tricking people, but in fact this speech establishes some of the powerful magic that Puck is capable of, specifically; shape shifting and mimicry that he will use to great effect in the second half of the play.

The speech also gives us a sense of Puck’s attitude. He is not only mischievous and cheeky! Puck performs these tricks and acts of ‘mischief’ for the pleasure of his master. While it all seems like fun and games, there aren’t any signs of remorse about making others look foolish and it begs the question – is there something more sinister at play here? We discover that Puck will do almost anything that his master bids him to do and as the play progresses, we see that Puck will toy with mortals for his own pleasure also – to the point where he stumbles across a group of strangers, fixes the head of a donkey to one of them and torments the group into fleeing, purely for his own

amusement.