

THESEUS

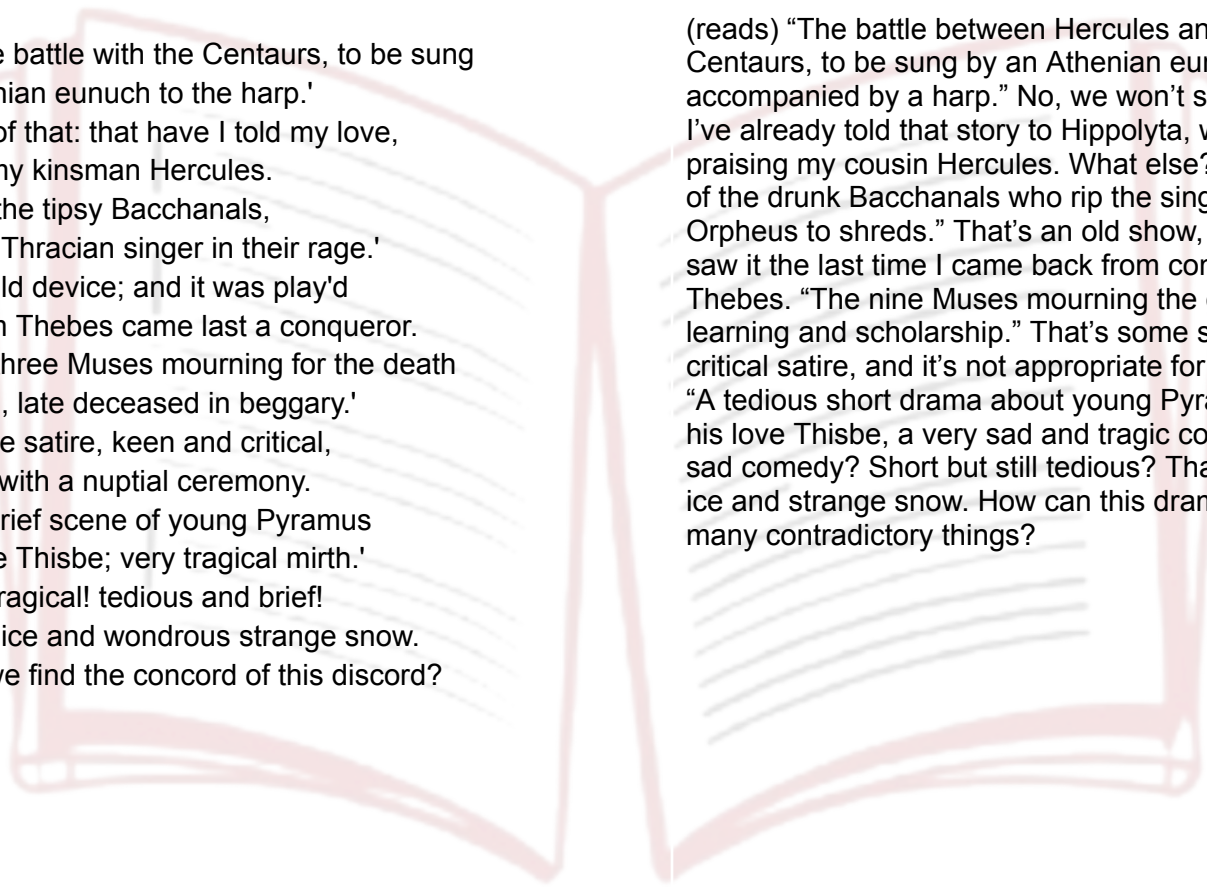
Say, what abridgement have you for this evening?
What masque? what music? How shall we beguile
The lazy time, if not with some delight?

(reads) 'The battle with the Centaurs, to be sung
By an Athenian eunuch to the harp.'
We'll none of that: that have I told my love,
In glory of my kinsman Hercules.
'The riot of the tipsy Bacchanals,
Tearing the Thracian singer in their rage.'
That is an old device; and it was play'd
When I from Thebes came last a conqueror.
'The thrice three Muses mourning for the death
Of Learning, late deceased in beggary.'
That is some satire, keen and critical,
Not sorting with a nuptial ceremony.
'A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus
And his love Thisbe; very tragical mirth.'
Merry and tragical! tedious and brief!
That is, hot ice and wondrous strange snow.
How shall we find the concord of this discord?

THESEUS

Tell us what entertainment you've prepared for
the evening. Which plays, what music? How will
we pass the time without some entertainment?

(reads) "The battle between Hercules and the
Centaurs, to be sung by an Athenian eunuch,
accompanied by a harp." No, we won't see that.
I've already told that story to Hippolyta, while
praising my cousin Hercules. What else? "The riot
of the drunk Bacchanals who rip the singer
Orpheus to shreds." That's an old show, and I
saw it the last time I came back from conquering
Thebes. "The nine Muses mourning the death of
learning and scholarship." That's some sharp,
critical satire, and it's not appropriate for a wedding.
"A tedious short drama about young Pyramus and
his love Thisbe, a very sad and tragic comedy." A
sad comedy? Short but still tedious? That's like hot
ice and strange snow. How can this drama be so
many contradictory things?



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