

Armchair Adventures: An Interactive Story Podcast For Kids

A Midsummer Night's Dream Adventure

Part 1

Intro

Connie: Welcome to the Armchair Adventures Travel Agency, journeys of the imagination. I'm Head Travel Agent and Host, Connie!

Music: Armchair Adventures theme tune

Connie: G'day, afternoon or bonne nuit wherever you're listening from adventurers! The voices of today's join in at home adventurers are...

The Adventurers all say their names

Connie: Hi everyone!

Adventurers: Hi Connie!

Connie: You too can star in an episode of Armchair Adventures as one of our special guest adventurers. All you need to do is ask your grown up if you can join the Armchair Adventures fanclub on patreon. Simply head to patreon.com and search Armchair Adventures for more info!

Music: Short Armchair Adventure's theme underscoring to transition

Scene 1

SFX Connie typing on her laptop

Connie : At school this week it's William Shakespeare week! You know, the writer from over four hundred years ago? There's a big event happening tonight, which all the parents are invited to. My friend, who was supposed to be presenting all about the themes in the play, A Midsummer Night's Dream, is off sick, so the teachers have asked me to present instead. Which is great, but it's happening soon, so I haven't got long! And I don't know where to start!

Luckily, my Uncle Chris and his community theatre company are experts when it comes to plays by William Shakespeare, so I'm going to get straight on the phone to him to see if they can help.

SFX Phone ringing

Connie: Hello! Uncle Chris?

Unc. Chris: Hi Connie, how you doing?

Connie: I'm ok, thanks, but I need help! I've got a presentation to do about the themes of A Midsummer Night's Dream any minute now and I have no idea where to start!!!

Unc. Chris: Argh! Pesky schoolwork! Ok, how can I help?

Connie: Ah, thank you! Ok, so I need to know more about some of the themes in the play, so that I can talk about them.

Unc. Chris: A theme is a lesson or a message in a story.

Connie: Yes! And the themes I need to explore are Mischief, Magic, Reversal...

Unc. Chris: Undoing a transformation and changing the thing back to how it started.

Connie: Yes! And the last theme I need to know more about is Love.

Unc. Chris: Ahhh.

Connie: But I've literally got an hour Uncle Chris, and no idea what I need to include!!

Unc. Chris: Hmm, there's a lot going on in the play, that's for sure! But don't worry, Connie. We've got this. It's going to be easy!

Connie: Is it?

Unc. Chris: Yes! What our community theatre company don't know about the Bard - that's the nickname they used for Shakespeare - and his plays, isn't worth knowing. We once went on an Armchair Adventure back in time to learn about the fella. (remembering)

SFX twinkling sound

SFX from A Shakespeare Adventure Part 1 5'42" to 6'02"

SFX twinkling sounds as above extract fades out

Oh, yes, it was great. I nearly had my head cut off by Elizabeth I! Good times. Anyway, we can definitely cover all of those themes you need to talk about in a jiffy!

Connie: Can we?

Unc. Chris: Yeh! Simple.

Connie: In time for the presentation?

Unc. Chris: Or my name's not Uncle Chris!

Connie: Thanks, Uncle Chris!

Unc. Chris: Let's get our local community theatre company on a group telephone chat. Because with an Armchair Adventure, we can go anywhere we like from the comfort of where we are right now, so they're perfect for everyone, no matter what age you are. Start. Call. Now.

SFX Phone rings

CTC: Various hellos.

Unc. Chris: Hello, hello!

Connie: Hi!

Unc. Chris: Our Connie needs some help with her schoolwork. And who's she gonna call?

John: Well, not us surely? It's been a while since any of us went to school.

Unc. Chris: Oh ye of little faith, John. You're all experts on this subject!

John: Are we?

Chris: Which subject?

Unc. Chris: Here's a clue... the course of true love never did run smooth!

Danny: (excitedly) Ooh, I know, I know! A Midsummer Night's Dream!

Unc. Chris: Exactly! Very good, Danny. Nice to see someone's bright eyed and bushy tailed today. So, with our superb knowledge of that very play, I've said we can help Connie to explore some of the themes, Mischief –

Julia: Magic!

Roz: Reversal.

Chris: And luuuurve!

CTC say ahhh (at any mention of love)

Louise: A lot of the characters are fairies...

Dan: Yes! The King and Queen of the fairies are called Oberon and Titania!

Matthew: That's right.

Jonathan: And a man with a donkey's head!

SFX One of CTC brays like a donkey

Roz: And there are characters who get all mixed up and confused about who they love.

CTC say ahhh

John: Mostly because of a very mischievous sprite called Puck.

Connie: Wow! You all really know your stuff!

Unc. Chris: Well remembered, everyone! I reckon there's only one thing for it here, Connie. We've not got a lot of time, so let's go there in person. We'll step into the story and learn about each of the themes! We're going on an Armchair Adventure into the world of the play, A Midsummer Night's Dream!

Ann: Magic!

Habib: Ooh, that sounds good!

Unc. Chris: I'll pack us a picnic! I don't know if we'd like what fairies eat? And I doubt they'll have any corner shops in the magical forest!

Katie: What do fairies eat?

Unc. Chris: I've no idea! Adventurers, what do fairies eat?

SFX Ding

Adventurer: Unicorn poop.

Adventurer: Magic stars.

Adventurer: Buttercup petals.

Adventurer: Fairy cakes.

Adventurer: Rainbow sugar.

Unc. Chris: They don't sound too bad, actually! Well, I think we're ready...

Connie: A journey of the imagination here we come!

Music: Armchair Adventures theme tune

Scene 2

SFX Magical twinkly windchime sound

SFX wind rustling through the trees, owl twit twoo, nighttime animals scurrying, fox in the leaves for example. These SFX continue all the way until the end of scene 2.

Unc. Chris: Here we are, in the world of A Midsummer Night's Dream!

CTC make wow and awesome sounds

Connie: This is amazing!

Jonathan: It's nighttime, so there's a huge moon.

Katie: It's really bright. And there are shooting stars!

Danny: There are big, fluffy toadstools. With red and white spots!

Louise: Rabbits,

Julia: Squirrels,

Gary: Birds,

Nick: Deer,

Kim: Foxes,

Ann: That fox is lilac!

Chris: Magic!

Unc. Chris: What can you see in the world of A Midsummer Night's Dream, adventurers?

SFX Ding

Adventurer: Magical shadows.

Adventurer: They keep moving when I look away.

Adventurer: Fallen trees, covered in moss.

Adventurer: I think I saw a pixie riding a dragon.

Connie: Being in the magical forest is awesome! Let's get going, then. We need to look around it to find our first theme.

John: Which is... mischief!

Dan: Mischief is an important theme in A Midsummer Night's Dream.

Roz: That's because it makes the story funny and very dramatic.

Connie: What will we look for to find some mischief in action?

Dan: There's only one place to start. We need to find Puck!

Katie: Yes, Puck is the trickster of the story, they're the one who causes chaos with their magical powers!

Unc. Chris: Good plan! Let's search the forest for them, they have to be here somewhere.

Matthew: Which way?

CTC all say "this way/that way!"

SFX CTC are walking in a forest with leaves on the floor, looking behind bushes etc

Katie: They're not behind this bush.

Gary: Or inside the hole of this tree trunk.

Connie: Hmm... we're not getting anywhere fast! This is our first theme and we've still got three more to find!

Unc. Chris: It's ok, Connie. Adventurers, please can you help us look for Puck, too?

SFX Ding

Adventurer: They aren't up this tree.

Adventurer: They aren't under this rock.

Adventurer: They aren't in this long grass either.

Mike: They're not in this little burrow, either.

Unc. Chris: Hmm... Puck! Puck! Adventurers, can you help us call for Puck?

SFX Ding

The Adventurers all shout for Puck

The community theatre company call for Puck

Roz: Look! Some of the fairies of the forest! They might be able to help.

SFX fairies wings fluttering, twinkling fairy dust

Unc. Chris: Hello fairies!

Fairies: (with ethereal effect) Helloooo!

Unc. Chris: We're looking for Puck. Do you have any idea where we could find them, please?

Fairies: (with ethereal effect) Puck can't be found unless they want to be found. And in that case, they'll find you.

Unc. Chris: Oh, ok. Fair(y) enough. Well, thanks anyway.

Connie: Look, Uncle Chris, there's a sign! Let's follow it!

John: (reads) The sign says, 'this way for Puck!'

Unc. Chris: Very handy. Come on, then!

SFX CTC walking on leaves

Chris: I can't tell if we're walking in circles! All these trees look the same!

Katie: They do, don't they?

SFX Puck giggling, cartoon style

Habib: Hmm. This sign says to go this way.

SFX CTC walking

Ann: But this sign says go this way!

SFX the community theatre company walking then cartoon SFX bang into each other

Danny: Woah! Watch where you're going!

Connie: This is getting very confusing.

Louise: Oh, this sign says to hop around like bunnies.

Unc. Chris: Ready, adventurers?

SFX Ding

Adventurers: Boing, boing, boing!

Adventurers: I've always wanted to be able to hop up high.

Adventurers: But I don't like carrots!

Adventurer: Check out my floppy ears.

John: Still no Puck!

Roz: Oh, this one says to sneak around like a fox.

Unc. Chris: Let's do that, adventurers!

SFX Ding

Adventurer: I'm keeping low to the ground, so I don't get seen.

Adventurer: Hey, watch your tail – it just hit me in the face!

Adventurer: Lock up your chickens because I'm a pro fox.

John: This one says to go to the centre of these trees, put your left arm in, your left arm out, in, out, in, out, shake it all about.

Connie: We haven't got time for the hokey cokey! Where's Puck?!

Roz: Hang on a minute, these signs are playing tricks on us.

Connie: Let's just keep walking in the direction that the first sign told us to. It can't be much further.

SFX CTC walking

Julia: Oh, look!

Community theatre company exclaim in fear/horror – woah!!!

SFX Cartoon like cliff edge effect, screech of brakes, wind, bird squawking

Dan: We're at the edge of a cliff! Are you sure this is the right way, Uncle Chris?

Unc. Chris: I don't think it can be. The sign says this way, but we're not gonna find them if we walk off the edge of a cliff, are we?!

Connie: Maybe somebody turned the sign around?

Katie: I bet they did!

Mike: Was it you?

John: No, it wasn't me! Was it you?

Gary: No!

Unc. Chris: Was it you, adventurers?

SFX Ding

Adventurers: No! It wasn't us!

SFX Puck giggling

Julia: What do we do now?

Connie: This is wasting time!

Katie: All this walking has made me thirsty. Has anybody brought anything to drink?

Unc. Chris: I have! Luckily, I came prepared with this picnic, containing refreshments for us all. Let's sit under this tree and get the flask out.

SFX removing things from the rucksack, unscrewing the flask lid.

Danny: Ooh, have you got a brew in that flask, Uncle Chris? Lovely!

SFX pouring tea into mugs

Unc. Chris: Yeh! This should keep us going. Pass the mugs along will you, please?

SFX the community theatre company pass the mugs

Gary: I'll get the biscuits!

Connie: Ok, let's make it a very quick tea break though, we have a lot to do!

SFX rustling in the rucksack for biscuits

Mike: Lovely jubbly.

SFX passing biscuits and eating them

John: Just what we needed!

SFX community theatre company slurp their tea in unison

*SFX community theatre company spit out their tea with cries of eww! What's that?
It's disgusting!*

Connie: What's going on, Uncle Chris? This tea is disgusting, isn't it adventurers?

SFX Ding

Adventurers: Ewwwww!

Adventurer: Eurgh, it tastes like cheesy feet.

Adventurer: Where do you keep your milk, on the sun?

Adventurer: Eurgh, that's really bad, Uncle Chris.

Unc. Chris: It was perfectly fine when I made it! I don't know what's happened.

SFX Unc. Chris sniffs the flask

Unc. Chris: I think the milk's curdled!

Chris: It's gone off!!!

Katie: Eww!

Julia: I can't drink that!

Unc. Chris: Pour it away. I don't know how it could've happened. Sorry everybody.

SFX pouring away the tea, wiping their mouths, eww

SFX Puck giggling

Unc. Chris: Something strange and mischievous – is going on! If I didn't know better, I'd think we were in the company of that Merry Wanderer of the Night!

SFX rustling of trees as Puck reveals himself, laughing hard

Puck: It is I, Puck!

Unc. Chris: I knew it!

Puck: Well done, my good friend!

Katie: Was that you with the milk?

Connie: And the dodgy directions?

Puck: It was indeed, I. I am the master of mischief!

Julia: You tricked us!

Connie: It's not very nice, playing tricks on people you know.

Puck: Hmm. I'm sorry. I meant no harm!

Roz: We could've walked off the edge of a cliff!!

Puck: I was watching, I never would have allowed anybody to get hurt. We're in the world of play here, it's all make believe. We can have fun, but no harm will come to anybody. So, you are the Adventurers from the Armchair?

Connie: Yes, we're Armchair Adventurers!

Mike: How did you know?

Puck: I know everything that happens in this forest.

John: How?

Puck: We fairies have powers!

Chris: That's true. Fairies can fly.

Danny: Mine just sits on the top of the Christmas tree!

Julia: They can change size!

Katie: Or run around very fast!

Unc. Chris: What other powers do fairies have, adventurers?

SFX Ding

Adventurer: They can change the weather

SFX Thunderstorm then rain, then sun/tweeting birds

Adventurer: They can tell if someone's lying

SFX Swanee whistle low to high pitch

Adventurer: They can turn things invisible. Hey, where'd the floor go?!

SFX magic twinkling sound and whoosh

Adventurer: They can bring drawings to life.

SFX drawing pencil on paper, magic twinkling sfx and then the roar of a lion!

Danny: Cool.

Puck: Would you all like to get up to some mischief with me?

The community theatre company respond enthusiastically

Ann: Of course!

Matthew: Yes, please!

Puck: Ok, I'll show you a mischievous trick. Watch this!

SFX whoosh/twinkling magic sound

SFX of wooden blocks against each other as Puck transforms into a stool

Connie: What is Puck doing?

Louise: Hmm, not sure. They're on their hands and knees on the floor.

Puck: I've become a stool!

Gary: Oh, yes! Look, they've got four wooden legs!

Puck: Now one of you come and sit on me. Come on, I won't bite!

Chris: Ok, I'll sit down.

SFX Chris goes to sit down, and Puck moves. Chris falls over, Puck laughs.

Everybody laughs

Connie laughs

Chris: Ha ha, very good.

Puck: I did say I'd show you some mischief!

Connie: (laughing) That was a good one.

Puck: But not a trick to play on other people, it's only make believe after all!
What tricks would you all like to play?

Michelle: If I had magical powers, I'd make things disappear before our eyes!

Chris: Good idea Michelle! I remember when I wa....

SFX magic sound effect as Chris has disappeared

Michelle: Oooooops!

A few of the gang are shouting/looking for Chris

Dan: I'd pretend to throw magic dust, but I'd throw itching powder instead!

SFX throwing dust and everyone scratching

John: I'd pull money from behind somebody's ear!

SFX pulling a coin from somebody's ear

Puck laughs

Unc. Chris: What tricks would you play, adventurers?

SFX Ding

Adventurer: I'd grant wishes to my friends!

SFX magic sound

Adventurer: I'd make someone go bald!

SFX clippers and man yelling

Adventurer: I'd turn a cat into a tiger!

SFX a cat miaow, SFX magic twinkling sound, SFX tiger roar

Puck: They're all very good!

Promo swap:

Connie: *(laughing) While we're playing tricks on each other, let's pause our journey of the imagination to hear from another podcast I think you'd like!*

ADVERT

Connie: *Let's get back to our journey of the imagination.*

Puck: Thank you all for showing me some new tricks. I'm going to use some of those! (laughs)

Connie: So we've learned about the theme of mischief. In the play, Puck plays tricks on everybody which helps make the story funny! Now we need to learn about our second theme – magic! And quickly!!

Puck: If it's magic you're after, I do believe there's only one place you must go! You must meet Oberon! And swiftly!

Connie: Thank you!

Puck: Follow me, adventurers!

Scene 3

SFX Oberon and Titania's argument is further away from the listeners, who are with Connie and co.

Oberon: Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania.

Titania: What, jealous Oberon! – Fairies, skip hence!

SFX of argument between Oberon and Titania continue in the background.

SFX Titania storming off, rustle of leaves and wind to show Titania has left the building, grumbles from Oberon continue...

Gary: (whispering) That's Oberon and Titania.

Unc. Chris: The King and Queen of the fairies.

Connie: (whispering) What's happening?

John: (whispering) They've had a bit of a row!

Dan: So now, Oberon is going to play a trick on her.

Habib: He's going to make a magical love potion -

Jonathan: (whispering) That he puts on Titania, his wife's eyes, when she's asleep –

Dan: So that when she wakes up, she falls in love with the first creature she sees!

Connie: That is wicked!

Chris: Funny, though! Hahaha.

Ann: And don't worry Connie, we'll have it all changed back before the end!

Oberon: (Stern) Puck? Is that you?

Unc. Chris: No, it's us. We didn't want to disturb you. Good day, your Majesty.

Oberon: (Stern) Who comes here?

Unc. Chris: I'm Uncle Chris and this is my niece, Connie.

Connie: Good morrow!

Unc. Chris: And our community theatre company.

CTC: Fare thee well! Alright? Hiya! Ey up!

Oberon: (Stern) Yes?

Connie: We'd like to find out more about magic, er please?

Oberon: Oh! Then, why didn't you say? Of course! Now, merry adventurers. Would you like to make the magical love potion with me?

The community theatre company are all up for it – yes please etc!

Unc. Chris: What ingredients will you all add to the love potion?

SFX bubbling potion

Danny: Wart of a toad!

SFX frog ribbits

Julia: Rose petals.

SFX sniff and ahhh

Habib: Dash of sunshine!

SFX twinkling glow of sunshine

Unc. Chris: Lovely. What about you, adventurers? What ingredients will you add?

SFX Ding

Adventurer: Rats tails.

Adventurer: Moonshine.

Adventurer: Some green slime!

Unc. Chris: Awesome. Let's take all of our ingredients, put this here, this there and give it a good old shake. Are you with me, adventurers?

SFX Ding

SFX shaking the potion

Adventurers: Shake, shake, shake!

SFX back to the nighttime like at the start of scene 2

SFX footsteps of Uncle Chris walking over to Oberon

Unc. Chris: Here you are, Oberon. One magical love potion.

SFX Uncle Chris passes the cauldron over to Oberon (clinking, swirling of the potion)

Oberon: Thank you! Now, I pray thee, quiet please. Look, there my wife is, asleep under the tree.

SFX Titania sleeping further off

Oberon: Now I will put this love potion onto her sleeping eyes so that she will fall in love with the next creature she sees... then my trick will be complete!

Group ssssshhhh

SFX Oberon tiptoes over to Titania. Listener is with Connie and co.

SFX Titania snorts, as if she might wake, and rolls over

Oberon: When she wakes, the magic will be done.

Connie: (whispering, from a distance that Oberon won't hear her). What? Why would he do that?

Habib: He's playing a trick on her.

Connie: Seems a bit mean!

SFX Titania snores

SFX twinkly sound for magical potion application

Oberon: Done. And now I'll give the rest of the potion to Puck, he can use it wherever else love needs to blossom in the forest.

Danny: Then this story can have a happy ending!

Gary: Yes, there might even be a wedding!

Oberon: Now, I'll away. Best of wishes on your quest, adventurers!

Connie: Thank you!

SFX Oberon exits in a flurry of rustling leaves

Scene 4

SFX Nighttime

SFX Titania is further off. She rouses from sleep

Dan: Oh, Titania's waking up now!!!

SFX Nick Bottom enters further off, in a clumsy way. The listeners are with Connie & the community theatre company

Julia: Look! There's the man with a donkey's head.

Connie: Oh no! This is going to be the first creature that Titania sees!

Katie: (whispering) Yes! So she falls in love with him!

Group say ahhhhh

Connie: A donkey?

SFX One of the CTC makes a donkey sound

The community theatre company sssshhh

Titania: What angel wakes me from my flowery bed? On the first view, to say, to swear, I love thee.

SFX Titania loving donkey

SFX two couples squabbling further off in the woods. The listener is with Connie & co.

Connie: Who's that arguing now?!

Ann: Let's go and investigate...

SFX arguing gets a little louder as Connie and the gang walk towards them

Lysander: No, I love her!

Demetrius: No, I love her!

Helena: You can't both love me?

Hermia: But you used to love me, wahhhh!

Unc. Chris: Ah...these are the characters Puck was supposed to make fall in love, using Oberon's magical potion! But it's all gone wrong!

Katie: It has! Two men are now in love with the same woman.

Connie: That can't be what Oberon wanted?

Gary: It's not!

Connie: It won't give us our happy ending?

Kim: Here comes Oberon now.

Danny: And he doesn't look very happy with Puck!

SFX Oberon enters in a flurry of rustling leaves

SFX Oberon and Puck are further away. The listener is with Connie & co.

Oberon: What hast thou done? Thou hast mistaken quite.

Julia: Puck is going to have to sort this out!

Connie: But we haven't got time for all of the mischief and mistakes! We need to get onto our next theme, reversal.

Matthew: I don't know if I can take any more!!

Katie: We've got characters in love with the wrong people...

Dan: People with the wrong heads that are gonna need to be put right again...

Chris: And time is ticking!

Julia: Connie needs to make her presentation at school!

Connie: Will all of the magic and mischief be reversed in time, adventurers? Will the man's head be turned back from a donkey into a human? Will I find everything I need to learn for my presentation?

Unc. Chris: And is anyone around here going to make me a decent brew?!

Connie: Join us for our next episode to find out.

Did you know that we have all our episodes on YouTube too, so you can follow the words whilst joining in with the action? Simply search Armchair Adventures in YouTube!

Music: Armchair Adventures theme tune

Credits: This was a Made By Mortals production generously funded by the Arts Council of England.

END OF PART 1.