

SHAKESPEARIENCE!

Romeo & Juliet

Mercutio, Act I scene 4

O, then, I see Queen Mab hath been with you.

She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
On the fore-finger of an alderman, Drawn with a team of little atomies Over men's
noses as they lie asleep;

Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut Made by the joiner squirrel or old grub, Time out
o' mind the fairies' coachmakers.

Her wagon-spokes made of long spinners' legs, The cover of the wings of
grasshoppers, The traces of the smallest spider's web, The collars of the
moonshine's watery beams,

Her whip of cricket's bone, the lash of film, Her wagoner a small grey-coated
gnat, Not so big as a round little worm Prick'd from the lazy finger of a maid;

And in this state she gallops night by night Through lovers' brains, and then they
dream of love;

O'er courtiers' knees, that dream on court'sies straight, O'er lawyers' fingers, who
straight dream on fees, O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream, Which oft
the angry Mab with blisters plagues, Because their breaths with sweetmeats
tainted are:

Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose, And then dreams he of smelling out a
suit;

And sometime comes she with a tithe-pig's tail Tickling a parson's nose as a' lies
asleep, Then dreams, he of another benefice:

Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck, And then dreams he of cutting foreign
throats, Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades, Of healths five-fathom deep;
and then anon Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes, And being thus
frighted swears a prayer or two And sleeps again.

This is that very Mab That plaits the manes of horses in the night, And bakes the
elflocks in foul sluttish hairs, Which once untangled, much misfortune bodes:

This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs, That presses them and learns them
first to bear, Making them women of good carriage: This is she!