upon the ground and, with her bloodstained jaws, 
tears it to tatters.

Pyramus had left 
a little later than his Thisbe had, 
and he could see what surely were the tracks 
of a wild beast left clearly on deep dust. 
His face grew ashen. And when he had found 
the bloodstained shawl, he cried: “Now this same night 
will see two lovers lose their lives: she was 
the one more worthy of long life: it’s I 
who bear the guilt for this. O my poor girl, 
it’s I who led you to your death; I said 
you were to reach this fearful place by night; 
I let you be the first who would arrive. 
O all you lions with your lairs beneath 
this cliff, come now, and with your fierce jaws feast 
upon my wretched guts! But cowards talk 
as I do—longing for their death but not 
prepared to act.” At this he gathered up 
the bloody tatters of his Thisbe’s shawl 
and set them underneath the shady tree 
where he and she had planned to meet. He wept 
and cried out as he held that dear shawl fast: 
“Now drink from my blood, too!” And then he drew 
his dagger from his belt and thrust it hard 
into his guts. And as he died, he wrenched 
the dagger from his gushing wound. He fell, 
supine, along the ground. The blood leaped high; 
it spouted like a broken leaden pipe 
that, through a slender hole where it is worn, 
sends out a long and hissing stream as jets 
of water cleave the air. And that tree’s fruits, 
snow-white before, are bloodstained now; the roots 
are also drenched with Pyramus’ dark blood, 
and from those roots the hanging berries draw 
a darker, purple color.

Now the girl 
again seeks out the tree: though trembling still, 
she would not fail his tryst; 
with eyes and soul 
she looks for Pyramus; she wants to tell 
his lover how she had escaped such perils. 
She finds the place—the tree’s familiar shape; 
but seeing all the berries’ color changed,

---

8. **fail his tryst**: neglect to meet him.