

Shreya enmity. love is
not accepted by
authority



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In Renaissance traditions, love was said to be inconstant and merciless. In Shakespeare's, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the characters trust in love is tested. The role of magic -symbolized by the love potion- is mixed with love and chaos follows.

In this play, the magic love juice causes the characters to fall in and out of love repetitively making them seem like madmen. This shows how magic through the flower juice makes the love inconstant and blinds even the truest love. The pursuit and loss of love has the capacity to make us irrational and can result in violence, breaks friendships in bloodshed, and leads to the likeliness to enmity. Love is not accepted by authority and parents viewed that love is likened to war. Lovers usually retreat to isolation, ignorance, and jealousy, which makes love inconstant. The imbalance of love caused by the flower juice can ruin the harmony of a relationship.

Hermia and Lysander both loved each other very much and could do anything to be with each other, even going against authority. Hermia: " So, I will grow, so live, so die, my lord, Ere I will yield my virgin patent up, Unto his lordship, whose unwished yoke. My soul not to give sovereignty."

(Shakespeare. 1. 1.

79-83) However, this changes as the story proceeds. As per plan they elope and reach the mystical forest. The tension grows between them when Puck mistakes Lysander for Demetrius. Lysander: Transparent Helena, nature shows art, That through thy bosom makes me see thy heart. Where is

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Demetrius? O, how fit a word is that vile name to perish on my sword!”

(Shakespeare.

2. 2. 110-113). The love potion made Lysander blinded by love, and completely forgetting the bond he shared with Hermia. After hearing whatever he said about Helena, she was heartbroken and out of words.

Lysander: Thy love? – out tawny Tartar out/ Out, loath'd medicine! O hated potion hence!/ Hermia: Do you not jest?” (Shakespeare. 3. 2. 262-264). As Lysander was mocking her she lost hope and trust in Lysander, but also looked down upon Helena, because she was jumping to conclusions. This is how the flower juice acts as magic and develops an inconsistent love for Hermia and Lysander.

The love juice breaks friendship, and can lead to the likelihood of war. The pursuit of love can be blinding and overpowering to one's mind which can even lead a person to violence if anything gets in the way of their love. This is seen when the strong friendship of Helena and Hermia is broken when both Demetrius and Lysander love Helena.

Helena and Hermia were always jealous of each other. Hermia was conscious of the fact that she is smaller than Helena, and is jealous of her friends' beauty. Helena, on the other hand, suffers from the agony that the man she loves, loves her best friend instead.

Going to the forest made the jealousy even more vivid. Helena: “ Now I perceive they have conjoin'd all three To fashion this false sport in spite of me. Injurious Hermia, most ungrateful maid, have you conspir'd have you

with these contriv'd To bait me with this foul decision? The sister's vows, the hours that we have spent. When we have child the hasty-footed time For parting us – o is all forgot?"

(Shakespeare. 3. 2.

194- 203) The confusion and misunderstanding caused by the magical flower juice broke their years of friendship into a war of hatred and revenge. Love is not accepted by authority and parents viewed that love is likened to war. It is seen as something that can be easily controlled by parents and can be treated like a disposable material that can be thrown away when the use is done. Egeus: " Consent to marry with Demetrius, I beg the ancient privilege of Athens; As she is mine, I may dispose of her. Which shall be either to this gentleman or to death, according to our law. Immediately provided in that case." (Shakespeare.

1. 1. 40-45). He had the power to choose her life, leading the lovers to be depressed and face inconstant love. Egeus who is extremely possessive of her, wants her married to the man of his choice, irrespective of her opinion. What made Hermia unique is that she was determined and she fought for what she wanted, even though Theseus warns her about the consequences of being disobedient. Hermia: " So I will grow, so live, so die, my lord, Ere I will yield my virgin patent up, Unto his lordship, whose unwished yoke.

My soul consents not to give sovereignty." (Shakespeare. 1. 2.

79-82). This quote can also show us that how true love is so powerful that it goes against authority if it is tested. Even though she stood up for her love,

lovers face still face parental disapproval, making love inconsistent and often leads to the likeliness of war and consequences.

When new challenges are faced, lovers usually retreat to ignorance and find new ways to fix problems, which makes love inconstant. We can see that tension develop with Titania and Oberon. The whole situation started when Titania accuses Oberon of being in love with Hippolyta; and Oberon accused Titania of giving too much assistance to Theseus. Oberon: How canst thou thus, for shame Titania, Glance at my credit with Hippolyta, Knowing I know thy love to Theseus? Didst not thou lead him through the glimmering night, From Perigenia, whom he ravished, And make him fair Aegles break his faith, With Ariadne and Antiopa? (Act 2, scene 1, Lines; 75- 81). There is no truth in these accusations and these are just “ the forgeries of love” From this we can already see that their love is inconsistent and their jealousy is likened to war. Also, Titania has the responsibility of taking care of the Indian boy until the wedding of Theseus. This creates even more tension against them because Oberon sees the boy as an obstacle feel that the boy is creating more gap between Titania. Oberon says: “ Give me the boy, and I will go with thee” (act 2 scene 1 lines; 144).

With this new obstacle in the way Oberon makes a plan to find the flower potion, to make instantly fall in love with him. Oberon: “ I’ll watch Titania when she is asleep, And drop the liquor of it in her eyes: The next thing then she, waking looks upon- Be it a lion, bear, or a wolf or bull, On meddling monkey, or on busy ape-she shall pursue it with the soul of love. And ere I take this charm from her sight, I’ll make her render up her page to me.

” (Act 2 scene 1 lines- 178-185) This is when the real problem starts with the magic potion. Titania was convinced that her quarrels with Oberon have caused havoc in the lives of the humans (Lysander, Hermia, Helena and Demetrius), as by getting her to love Oberon, he misused the flower juice that affected the lovers and caused tensions we saw from before.

The flower juice portrayed that love can be inconsistent if it is not true and used greedily. A Midsummer Night’s Dream also shows how jealousy can get in the way of love and creates not only problems for lovers but, also friends and family. Love can end war, but also be the reason of war. Although there were bad instances where the magical juice went wrong, ultimately the story ended of well, with the love being balanced, and the fairies coming together.

This is how maybe the renaissance era saw love, because love was never given a chance, and could be thought of some kind of spell, or witchcraft, which blinded if from the reality.