

# Much ado about nothing – character study on beatrice essay sample

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When reading “ Much Ado About Nothing” I found the most interesting and entertaining character was Beatrice, this is because there are many aspects to her nature. This may have been difficult express in a play in Shakespeare’s time as all of the actors were male. Her attitude towards Benedick was cynical and unpleasant, such as when she was talking to messenger about him, Beatrice refers to him as “ Signor Mountanto” which means she believes that he is “ stuck up” or a social climber, and this makes her appear in this scene to be very unloving. However in the love scenes between Beatrice and Benedick, towards the end of the play, you see the more likeable side of her, “ I love nothing so well as you,” Beatrice confesses to Benedick.

As the play starts I do think that the wrong impression of Beatrice is evident, when she talks about Benedick in an unpleasant way, when it’s apparent that Benedick is an honourable and upstanding soldier, “ He hath done good service, lady, in these wars” “ And a good soldier too, lady,” the messenger refers about Benedick. However, when Beatrice and Benedick meet, it is apparent that there is tension between them, and probably they were together before. This shows that it’s not all Beatrice being so obnoxious, but Benedick also, “ My dear lady distain! Are you yet living?”

The Masked Ball doesn’t make Beatrice seem too companionable either. Benedick is talking to Beatrice, which implies that he’s making an effort, Beatrice: “ will you not tell me who you so?” Benedick: “ No, you shall pardon me.” On the other hand Beatrice, not knowing that she was talking to Benedick, refers to him as “ the prince’s jester, a very dull fool, only his gift

is, in devising impossible slander.” This comment again makes her seem unkind and bitter. Later on, at the same Ball, Beatrice shows her kind side as she pairs together her cousin Hero with Claudio. “ Speak, cousin, or (if you cannot) stop his mouth with a kiss, and let not him speak neither.” She says this with the intent for them to be happy together. Don Pedro sees this kindness and replies to it; “ In faith, lady, you have a merry heart.” Only a few moments later, when they are talking about a husband for Beatrice, does it show his intent of his merry hearted view of Beatrice “ Will you have me, lady?” Beatrice quickly replies to this with “ No, my lord, unless I might have another for working days.” This I think shows her humorous side to her personality.

On the night of the Masked Ball Don Pedro, after being rejected by Beatrice, decided that she would make a good wife for Benedick “ She were an excellent wife for Benedick.” The others at the Ball laughed at this thought, but agree that they would help in setting both Beatrice and Benedick up so they fall in love with each other. The way that they do this is by talking about how much Beatrice ‘ loves’ Benedick, while he over hears, and in the same way they trick Beatrice. The first to hear this is Benedick, who then falls in love with her, “ She’s a fair lady, I do spy some marks of love in her.” He declares this after he hears Don Pedro, Claudio and Leonato talking. Moments after this Beatrice is sent to ask Benedick to come to dinner “ Against my will I an sent to bid you come to dinner.” I don’t think this was made to make her sound unkind, but just as a reminder that she is not in love with him, yet!

Benedick fails to believe that this was said without anything less than pure affection, “ Ha, against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner: there is a double meaning in that.” Perhaps Benedick sees the double meaning to be “ against my will” as meaning that she does not want him to come to dinner, but stay in the garden with her. Later on, when Beatrice finds out that Benedick ‘ loves’ her, she breaks into a beautiful sonnet, that I think is the part of the play that shows the most delicate side of Beatrice,

What fire is in mine ears? Can this be true?.....

.....Believe it better than reportingly.

You see Beatrice next at the wedding of Hero, her cousin, and Claudio. Once Claudio declares that Hero has been with another man, he does not want to continue with the marriage. Beatrice is distressed by this as she is almost certain that it was a lie, “ Oh on my soul my cousin is belied.” This scene, I think shows her more protective side. Beatrice later has a love scene with Benedick when they both declare their love for one another, “ I protest I love thee.” Once they have both expressed their feelings, the mood changes when Beatrice requested to Benedick, “ Kill Claudio” Beatrice distinctly will not have a damaging word said against her cousin “ Sweet hero, she is wronged, she is slandered, she is undone.”

Throughout this play, the many facets of Beatrice’s personality are shown. At the beginning you see the cynical and unpleasant aspect “ I had rather hear my dog bark than a man swear he loves me.” However I believe that she has a sense of fun and much of Beatrice’s comments to Benedick are to tease

him and not to be vindictive. Towards the end of the play, the much more affectionate and compassionate side of her personality shines through “ You have stayed me in a happy, I was about to protest I love you.” and shows the more pleasant person that she really is.