

Benedick's change in much ado about nothing essay sample

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Throughout all of Shakespeare's comedies, there is no other character like Benedick. This is because Benedick undergoes a transformation like no other. The Character of Benedick appears in Shakespeare's comedy, " Much Ado About Nothing." Benedick is a good, honorable man, but his only problem is that he does not like to, or want to, fall in love. At least, this is how he felt at the beginning of the play. By the ending of the play he was willing to get married. So how did this change came about and why?

In act one of the play, one can see almost immediately Benedick's opinion on love and women. Some of his first lines are Beatrice and him bickering with one another. This was started because he said, "...I would I could find in my heart that I had not a hard heart, for truly I love none." What he is saying here is that he dose not think of himself as a cold hearted person, but just someone who can not fall in love. Of course Beatrice, who goes through almost the exact same change as Benedick, would not pass up an opportunity and made a joke about that comment. Even after Beatrice leaves, Benedick begins talking to Claudio. Here he calls himself a, " tyrant to their sex," with the word " their" meaning woman. This shows that Benedick is not just flirting with Beatrice because his thoughts and comments about love are the same when she is there or not there. At the end of Claudio's and Benedick's discussion, Benedick says, " because I will not do them the wrong to mistrust any, I will do myself the right to trust none. And the fine is - for the which I may go the finer - I will live a bachelor." Here he is just emphasizing his feelings on women and love. " I will live a bachelor," are strong words but he acts much differently when the temptation of love comes about.

In the ending of act two, Claudio, Leonato, and Don Pedro pull a trick on Benedick and made him believe that Beatrice loves him. Upon overhearing the conversation between the three, Benedick receives his first feelings of love. At first, he tries to reason why she likes him. Benedick says, "and wise, but for loving me." He is saying that Beatrice is smart for having feelings for him. Then he goes on to reason why he should like her. He says, "the world must be peopled." This means that he must reproduce, that raising a family is only natural to humans, so he might as well do it. This is giving himself a reason to like Beatrice. He would not accept the fact that he is just beginning to love her.

He ends off his speech by saying, "when I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married." Now he is changing his words from what he said at the beginning of the play. Beatrice then appears and says, "against my will I am sent to bid you come into dinner." Now Benedick is acting like all stereotypical men who first fall in love and he jokes around with her saying, "you take pleasure then in the message." Beatrice wittily responds with, "yea, just so much as you may take upon a knife's point and choke a daw withal." Now there is a difference in views because Benedick believes that Beatrice loves him but Beatrice however does not. When she leaves he says that Beatrice has a "double meaning" in her message. That is a common action amongst newfound lovers. They start looking too deep and overanalyze what the other person is saying.

Ultimately by the end of the play Benedick is really in love with her. He begins to write her poetry and he is thinking about her. The poetry he writes

however is really bad. This is because the play is a comedy and Shakespeare needed to keep the comic relief in the script. Upon hearing news that Hero, Claudio's fiancée and Beatrice's best friend that she is a whore, Claudio calls off the marriage and really slanders Hero. Due to this, Beatrice asked Benedick to show his love and kill Claudio. Unwillingly, he agrees to do it. This goes along with the stereotype that men will do anything just for love. But he never really admits to loving her. Even in the end when Beatrice says, "do not you love me," Benedick responds, "troth no, no more than reason." She also responds with the same line to Benedick when he asks her if she loves him. So here they are still embarrassed to admit that they love each other even though they are about to get married. He says "no more than reason," saying that it is only logical that they should love each other get married.

Now how is this different than any other relationship in the play? Well the other major relationship in the play is Hero and Claudio. Their relationship developed much differently than Benedick and Beatrice. In the beginning of the play the reader finds out that Claudio and Hero started their relationship with, as the cliché goes, love at first sight. Hero and Claudio seemed to be the perfect couple too. They immediately fell in love and are both very popular in society. Beatrice and Benedick began their relationship through bickering and hiding their love, (if it even existed at all). I think what Shakespeare was trying to do here was show the difference between the two different starts for lovers. As the plot develops, Don John tells Claudio that Hero was, "everyone's hero." This meaning that she was unfaithful to Claudio and she

already lost her sacred virginity. Without putting much thought and questioning behind it, Claudio believes everything that Don John tells him. This leads to a public assault on Hero's character on the day of their wedding.

The point that Shakespeare was trying to make is that love at first sight is not what it is always cracked up to be. This shows that at the root of Hero and Claudio's relationship lies not only love, but jealousy and mistrust. Now as portrayed in the beginning of this essay, the relationship between Benedick and Beatrice was a much slower start. Then when the seeds of love were planted they began to contemplate if their love is true or not. So their love was actually thought about before hand. This is why at the end when Beatrice asked Benedick to prove his love, Benedick said he would. So one can say that the relationship between Benedick and Beatrice is much more stable than the relationship between Claudio and Hero. This is the point that Shakespeare was trying to make by showing the reader the complete development and change in Benedick and Beatrice's views on love.

So as one can see, Benedick went from the sworn bachelor to a loving husband. This was not easy for him to do but when all was said and done, he was happy to be married. In the end both couples got married, but Shakespeare cleverly shows how love at first site is flawed.