

Various ways of love representation

Literature, William Shakespeare



Can the ocean be considered a lover? Is it possible for someone to find a strong infatuation with the rolling waves and the smell of salt water? Does the sea have the capacity to love someone? Looking out into the waters, the female character in Emily Dickinson's Poem entitled, " I started Early – Took my Dog," is intrigued by the mystifying qualities of the sea. Ranging from the puzzling creatures, to the vast ships, and even the crashing waves, the main character cannot help from slowly moving into the water until almost entirely engulfed. In this same manner, in William Shakespeare's play, " A Midsummer Night's Dream," Bottom, even though being changed into an ass, cannot help but to slowly become interested in Titania's eager advances. Using small compliments, loving praise, and even servants by her side, she is able to bring in Bottom to try to convince him to stay in the woods with her. In both pieces of literature, even though the woman and Bottom are cautious at first, the sea and Titania use various devices to help demonstrate their love.

As the poem, " I started Early – Took my Dog," opens, the first reference made to the mysterious nature of the sea is through the use of the line, " The Mermaids in the Basement Came out to look at me -." Mermaids have been of great ambiguity since the beginning of sailors' tales. Claiming to only come out on certain occasions or to only be seen by a select few, mermaids are thought to be very rare. To have the main character in the poem have mermaids come from the depths of the ocean just to look at her must mean that she is of great importance to the sea. It is almost as if the ocean is summoning up the mermaids to come together and offer themselves as a gift. The ocean has a love for the woman in the poem and is trying to gain

her appreciation with such a present. In William Shakespeare's, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," Titania tries to lure in her newfound love by potion through the usage of complimentary language. It is known that Bottom does not have a great voice, but after hearing him sing she says, "I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again." She is using her abilities of praise in the same way the ocean is using its rare mermaids to try to win over Bottom. He may know that his voice is not perfect, but her admiration intrigues him and makes him question the situation.

"And Frigates – in the Upper Floor Extend Hempen Hands –," writes Dickinson in her poem on page 129 of *Final Harvest*. Even though the large ships on the surface may appear intimidating, they give forth their ropes down to the woman. The sea is trying to impress the woman once again with the massive ships of the upper floor. In contrast to the mystery of the mermaids, large ships are seemingly everywhere. These ships may be ubiquitous, but rarely does one think of such steel vessels as gentle giants. It is the tender nature of the ships in the poem that help to win the woman over. She realizes now that there is a softer side to the sea that she did not see before. In "A Midsummer Night's Dream," Bottom begins to question the admirable nature of Titania when he says, "Methinks, mistress, you should have little reason for that [her love towards him]." After she begins to woo him with small talk and appreciation of his songs, Titania, using a grand and all encompassing statement, replies calmly, "Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful." Although the declaration may be of bold nature, the word usage of wise and beautiful adds a sense of tenderness to the sentence. In most cases, such a striking statement would be thought as sarcastic, but showing

her tender side, Titania slowly reels in Bottom proving her love more and more as time goes forth.

Perhaps the boldest advance presented by the ocean, the waves on the beach engulfing the woman, shows the final method used by the sea to present forth its love. “ But no Man moved Me – till the Tide Went past my simple Shoe – And past my Apron – and my Belt And past my Bodice – too -,” declares Dickinson in the poem, “ I started Early – Took my Dog.” As the female character begins to feel affection for the sea, she moves down the shore break and into the rolling waves. With the tide moving upward, the water slowly begins to climb up her body. The ocean realizes that pleasant sites alone cannot win over the woman and action must be taken. In this very same manner, Titania uses her four fairies to bring action into her advances. Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Mote, and Mustardseed are brought forth to care to Bottom’s every need. On page 81 of “ A Midsummer Night’s Dream,” Titania commands to the fairies, “ Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies.” Using her servants as objects of affection, she is trying to rid Bottom of any doubt that she does not truly love him. Although the fairies prove to complete some rather worthless actions, they give Bottom the sense that Titania is there for his every need, not only to praise him, but also to have her servants take care of him. Using her one last method, she is trying to prove her love to Bottom.

With its mysterious nature and deep blue color, the ocean sits like an endless gem begging to be loved. From the unknown depths, to the glassy surface, and crashing shore break, the sea is one amazing jewel trying to pull

attention towards itself. Titania is in the same way a character of ambiguity. Hidden in the forest, her secrets are only known by a select few. Her love for Bottom led to compliments, overwhelming praise, and even the use of her servants to try to win him over. In two different worlds, love had been truly one sided. Both the sea and Titania felt great love toward their partner, and used an entire bag of tricks in hopes to gain the oppositions approval, but skepticism reigned in the end. True love is felt from the heart and not from gifts or actions.