

The 'gulling' scenes in shakespeare's much ado about nothing: act 2 scene 3 essay...

[Literature](#), [William Shakespeare](#)



Deception- to mislead, delude or cheat a person. In both scenes a character is deceived. In Act 2 Scene 3 Claudio, Don Pedro and Leonato deceive Benedict. They tell him that Beatrice is in love with him. In Act 3 Scene 1 Beatrice is deceived by Hero and Ursula. Both Benedick and Beatrice are deceived indirectly . All of the deceivers know that the person they are trying to deceive is listening to the conversation but Benedick and Beatrice think that they are simply just eavesdropping on a confidential conversation. This, however, makes it more believable for Beatrice and Benedick because they are not being directly spoken to and if the people that they overheard didn't know they were there which both Beatrice and Benedick think then there would be no point in lying about such a sensitive matter.

Both scenes are single sex scenes. This is probably because the women and the men would handle the situation in two completely different ways and it is easier for people to relate to other people of the same sex. They probably find it easier to express their true feelings in front of their own sex too. For example Hero is a minor role throughout the play except in her only single sex scene which is the gulling of Beatrice where her character increases status dramatically. Benedick's gulling scene is more of a comic scene rather than the more serious deception of Beatrice. This is probably because Benedick is a man and in this play men play a very insensitive, tough role. Leonato, Don Pedro and Claudio must. They said that Benedick was going to be a bachelor for the rest of his life. They have put a lot of thought into planning this deception because they used reverse psychology.

' When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married '

Benedick Act 2 Sc 3 (198)

They torment him by saying he could never care about her and that he would just lead her on.

' He would make but a sport of it, and torment the poor lady worse '

Claudio Act 2 Sc 3 (134)

At this point Benedick became intent on proving them wrong.

' I must not seem proud, happy are they that hear their detractions, and can put them to mending'

Benedick Act 2 Sc 3 (187)

' for I will be horribly in love with her'

Benedick Act 2 Sc 3 (191)

By emphasising his worst characteristics and insulting him Benedick has deceived himself because he doesn't want to believe he could do and be such horrendous things. However he could also have deceived himself purely because he believed his close friends and be genuinely flattered that Beatrice was in love with him.

Beatrice would probably be more reluctant to love Benedick than Benedick would be to love Beatrice . He must have seen it as a second chance to prove himself because he has hurt her in the past.

' once I gave him two hearts for his one '

Beatrice Act 2 Sc 1

' I know you of old '

Beatrice Act 2 Sc 1

But Beatrice went against her better judgement and decided to fall in love with Benedick again. However this may have been because of certain reasons which were not clear to her at the time . Because Elizabethan women had to rely on their husbands for all financial support . Beatrice could have been thinking into the future because she was getting older and was still not married but she did not want to get married.

' I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me '

Beatrice Act 1 Sc1 (98)

Eventhough she declared this Beatrice still has to get married because she would not inherit and money from Leonato and would not have the opportunity nor the qualifications to work. Also not getting married was completely against the social expectations of the society. But Beatrice would not want to appear shallow by saying this and therefore made reasons why

she was always subconsciously in love with Benedick and she made herself believe that she was genuinely in love with him too.

Benedick's gulling scene is written in prose. This is because it is more of a comic scene and is meant to be funny. This is a very comic scene because it is supposed to appeal to a male audience who could relate to Benedick, the situation he is in and the way he is feeling. This is the complete opposite of Beatrice's scene which is written in poetry. This makes the scene more serious and emotional for Beatrice because after they leave she has a soliloquy in blank verse which shows that she has taken everything they have said seriously. Later on in the play there is a short scene to show that Beatrice and Benedick are both utterly convinced that they are in love with each other.

There are many interpretations of these two scenes. Some people think that Beatrice and Benedick are genuinely in love and other people think that they have just tricked themselves into believing something which they don't actually feel. Beatrice and Benedick are both portrayed as very idle and stupid. This may be because in the plays performed of this script the deceivers are always smiling, laughing or wanting to smile and this makes the scenes comic and therefore make Beatrice and Benedick look even more gullible.