

Free taming of the shrew essay sample

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Introduction

The Taming of the Shrew is one of the Shakespearean plays that are not traditionally taught in English courses. However, its lively plot and interesting characters make for a remarkable introduction to the Bard. This is because the story is mostly about various “courting” couples, which can be a lively topic as it elicits the timeless battle between the sexes. However, there are other themes and meanings which are explored in the play. The induction scene is an important part of this play because it shows how important different senses, particularly sight, are to humans. The induction scene begins with a drunken sailor, known as Christopher Sly, who is removed from an alehouse because of being rowdy. Sly collapses and is tricked by a group of noblemen. When he comes to, he finds himself dressed in fine garments. The noblemen pretend that he is one of them and that he has lost his memory. They provide a play for his amusement. This paper presents several reasons why the induction, scene one is the most important scene in The Taming of the Shrew based on how central it is to the entire play. First, the induction act scene one is central to this play because it lays the foundation for the entire story. It underlines the importance of a sense of sight to human beings. Christopher the beggar loses his sense of sight when he falls asleep drunk. He is unable to perceive what is happening around him such as when he is picked up by the noble men and taken to a room. Christopher loses his sense of sight, and this is the beginning of losing his entire sense of who he is. This is because when he comes to, he finds himself clothed in fine clothes and wealthy surroundings. The nobles instruct that he should be misled into believing that he had lost his memory and that the

thoughts that he may have are not real. In this regard, the importance of a sense of sight is underlined. In the wider perspective of the play, it could be a warning to the audience or a way of telling the audience to remain alert. This makes this scene very important. In addition, the fact that the audience knows what has happened to Christopher, the story told in the play is interesting. This is because the audience slowly shifts into the position of Christopher. The play then becomes a teaching to the entire audience. This scene is pivotal in making this work. In addition, the value of one's image, which cannot be deciphered without the senses, is indicated:

Monstrous beast! How like a swine he lies!

Grim death, how foul and loathsome is thine image!

Sirs, I will practice on this drunken man.

(Induction. i. 35-37).

The lines indicate the value associated with one's image. The noble refers to the beggar as being foul and loathsome. He also says that he will wrap sweet cloths around him and place rings on his fingers. Since one's image is valued to this extent, it only means that the value accorded to the sense of sight is very high.

Secondly, the induction scene one is important to the entire play because it is called upon for the audience to understand what is happening in the play. The sense of hearing is equally important to that of sight. In the induction scene, Christopher does not hear what is happening around him. From the moment the hostess of the bar threatens to call the order, Christopher Sly's hearing fails him completely after he falls asleep drunk. He does not hear the first huntsman and the noble man discussing him and as a result of this, a

trick is played on him. This is also a strategy by the author to draw the attention of the audience and let them know that hearing will be an important part of the experience:

Monstrous beast! How like a swine he lies!

Grim death, how foul and loathsome is thine image!

Sirs, I will practice on this drunken man.

What think you, if he were conveyed to bed,

Wrapped in sweet clothes, rings put upon his fingers,

A most delicious banquet by his bed,

And brave attendants near him when he wakes,

Would not the beggar then forget himself?

(Induction. i. 35-42).

These words show the importance of hearing because Sly the beggar would not have countenanced being tricked or insulted by the nobleman and the huntsman. This is important to the rest of the play because it indicates the value of listening which should be exercised within the entire play

The third reason the induction scene one is important to the play is because it shows the role of women in society. When Bartholomew is disguised as a woman, the role of a wife in a marriage is clearly outlined. This is evident in the words:

Such duty to the drunkard let him do

With soft low tongue and lowly courtesy,

And say " What is it your honor will command,

Wherein your lady and your humble wife

May show her duty and make known her love?”

And then with kind embracements, tempting kisses,

And with declining head into his bosom,

Bid him shed tears, as being overjoyed

(Induction. i. 113-120)

These lines show the subservient nature of women at that time. This is because the disguised page, Bartholomew, mimics what the wife of a noble would do. This indicates the duty of the wife to her husband. This is important to the rest of the play because it sets the context in which other conversations within the play would be held. Although there are instances in the play where the role of a woman in marriage is contested, it is clear from the outset how the wife should behave towards the husband. In this regard, the importance of the senses is important because it is used to disguise the page to appear as the wife to a noble. The beggar's senses are not present because he is not able to use his sense of sight, smell and hearing in knowing that the page is not a woman, but a man disguised in a woman's clothes.

Fourth, the importance of the senses is important in enabling the audience to distinguish between the characters represented in the play. This is because Christopher the beggar has to have the appearance of a beggar in the manner of his dressing and behavior. The sense of sight is called upon to make the audience know the various roles played by different people in the play. For example, the Lord, the beggar, the hostess, the huntsman and the page all lend themselves to interpretation by the audience. The audience does this using their senses of sight, hearing and smell. In this regard, this

scene is important to the rest of the play because it forms the dress and language that is spoken throughout the entire play.

Conclusion,

The Taming of the Shrew is one of the Shakespearean plays. It lends itself to varying interpretations in different scenes. At the first scene of the induction, a drunken beggar, Christopher Sly, is tricked into believing that he is a lord/noble. After falling asleep, he is carried into a nice chamber and clothed in finery. All those around him are then instructed to behave like servants around him and treat him like royalty. He is tricked into believing that he is a noble who has lost his memory. This scene is important to the rest of the play because it sets the mood, characters and language for the scenes that follow. In this scene, the importance of the human senses is reiterated. For example, a sense of sight is important to the audience because they need to examine the different characters in the play, importance of the sense of sight is important as seen through Sly's deception. The sense of hearing is also important to the audience to enable them follow the play. At the same time, this scene is important because it uses the theme of gender roles as a setting for the remainder of the play.

Work Cited

Shakespeare, William. The Taming of the Shrew. Pp. 84. J. Tonson & the rest of the Proprietors: London, 1734. Print.