

There is not one word  
apt final



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Shakespeare uses the antics of Oberon and Puck at the forefront of this comedy, using the "juice" to make everyone fall in love, however they err due to their arrogance as Oberon vaguely describes Demerits by "by the Athenian garments he hath on". The iambic meter indicates these characters are powerful, yet their actions are unintelligent: the concept of incompetent leadership is a humorous stereotype, frequently used in dramatic comedy. Here, however, the joke is mocking power, or rather who we give power to, as Shakespeare portrays Oberon as using his power recklessly.

The reason Oberon and Puck start squeezing the juice on the lovers is that the character overheard "A sweet Athenian girl" and a "d disdainful youth", and so, in the guise of trying to help them, he creates havoc. Boron's aid, however, is a facade: he only desires control; he knows that Demerits doesn't love Helena back, and so he interferes. This attitude reflects that of the Queen's court: as Louis Monitors puts it, "Queen Elizabeth Xi's marital status and her sexual condition were matters of the state", reflected when Oberon plans to put the juice on Titanic so that she "renders [her] page" to him.

Oberon and Puck, therefore, are shown as metaphors for the male Elizabethan state where the men knew everything about the Queen and tried to control her in order to fulfill their interests: they tried to force her into getting married, and reproducing in order for the country to have an heir, just as Oberon tried to force Titanic to change her mind when she defies him saying "the fairy land buys not the child off me".

Ultimately, despite Titanic's rebellion, "she straight away gave" the changeling child to Oberon because he manipulates her with his juice, rendering her love an "ass"; this is comedic, especially when the character awakens and worries about being "enamored" to an "ass". The fact that it was the "fairy queen" to whom this occurred is significant as this term was often a metaphorical reference to Queen Elizabeth in Renaissance literature.

The juice is symbolic of ultimate patriarchal power; however, in reality there is no juice to make the Queen yield and produce an heir for the State.

Shakespeare therefore is mocking State power as they can never obtain their desires because for once there was a ruler who resisted male authority. The state also is shown through Oberon and this reference to an "ass" may actually be a reference to Oberon- whom is the one who has acted truly the "ass" and has Titanic's love- and so the state itself.

This male lust for power is seen, moreover, in the disorder at the start of the play in Shakespearean portrayal of the relationship between Hermit and Segues in regard to her choice of husband. Segues believes "this hath bewitched the bosom of my daughter"; Shakespeare refers to Alexander here as "this", dehumanizing the character and therefore highlighting the Segues has towards Alexander. Segues wants to "dispose" of his daughter "to her death" because she chooses someone other than who he wants: a seeming betrayal.

Segues' parental constraint mirrors the expectations Elizabethan parents had for their children, leading to the 1753 The Hardwired Act which invalidated any marriages of people under 21 or if parental/ guardian consent was not

granted; 1753 was after the play was written demonstrating the dangerous legacy patriarchal Elizabethan England left. Segues also does not refer to Hemi by name through this passage, instead only using pronouns such as "her", yet, the men are named twice in it.

This highlights the misogyny as the men, unlike Women, are worthy of name- even Alexander who was previously simply a "this". The namelessness inflicted on Hermit reflects the fact that before the 17th century married females had no second name, emphasizing the fact that she was lower than men and just a possession of either her husband or father, as seen as Segues claims "[Hermit] is mine". Moreover, the idea of a Helena, a love-struck teenager, following her love who has rejected her is funny, until Demerits threatens to "do thee mischief in the woods".

The imperative highlights how threatening this character is, and therefore- because Demerits represents a sort of "Everyman"- is symbolic of the threatening nature of man, a nature also seen in the forcefulness of Oberon. This scene takes place on the outskirts of the "green world" (the forest) and so in a limbo between reality, sensuality and disorder; we don't know what is possible here therefore making Demerits even more dangerous and thus amplifying the danger of his, and every man's, authority in this world, as we can see by Oberon's greater power. This scene between

Demerits and Helena also emphasizes inequality; he threatens this terrible act because a female character is stalking him for love, while he does the same to another. This is ironic and paradoxical, making us question the attitudes Demerits represents; it would appear that it is fine for a bold man

to stalk someone because they are- as Dorothy Leigh says- " amongst the wise", while when a woman is strong other women 'Will blush at [their] boldness" 2. The motif of rape appears symbolically when Oberon plans to manipulate Demerits, Alexander and Titanic " when [they are] asleep": at the eight vulnerability and exposure.

Oberon attacks them with the juice, thus taking away their will and dignity, in its place leaving distress- as a rape would do. In this case, Boron's metaphorical actions are tearing apart the " double cherry" of Hermit and Helena, striping their symbolic sisterhood to a " union in partition". However, this violent authority was not uncommon in the 17th century, and neither was it a crime that was prosecuted. It was a popular attitude that women were objects of beauty and obedience, as shown in Dry Faustus.

Faustus just wants a " where" wife, or an illusion of Helen of Troy, neither of whom had free will, and although these two plays are of opposite genres, the aggression towards women is seen in both. This shows how it is not only the genre of dramatic comedy, but renaissance theatre in general which holds a mirror to the darker issues of the day. Misogyny is further seen at the start of the play where Theses claims to have " won thy heart doing [Happily] injury', the connotations here of violencereflect the patriarchal period of the play.

This is emphasizes because Theses took Happily from a injunction matriarchal Amazoniancultureto one where she is objectified as nothing more than a prize (coven thy... ") - implying that this " love" between them is not what it appeared to be, but is actually another example of male control. As Alison Plowmen explains, " nobody had any objections to love as long as

the price was right"; Thesees will gain status and the potential for an heir. Contrastingly, Happily loses her independence and Persephone, thus foregrounding the both the literal and symbolic battle of the sexes throughout the play due to the male coercion.