

A midsummer's night dream essay sample



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A midsummer's night dream is a romantic comedy play written by William Shakespeare. For this essay I am examining events that support Lysander's quote; 'The course of true love never did run smooth.' This quote refers to the idea that when people are in love, there will be many problems they will have to face on their way, but true love will always stand the test of time. In Elizabethan times the type of love that would be desirable is shown by Lysander's love for Hermia, such as gifts and love poems, equivalent to modern day would now be a text message or chocolates and roses

In the opening of the play the audience are introduced to the idea of Lysander's quote. We are introduced to two characters called Theseus and Hippolyta, Theseus is the Duke of Athens and Hippolyta is the Queen of the Amazons, fiancée to Theseus. Theseus and Hippolyta have a mature love but it has been arranged, since Theseus fought a battle to win her heart. They both are getting married to produce harmony. 'Hippolyta, I wooed thee with my sword, and won thy love, doing thee injuries.

But I will wed thee in another key, with pomp, triumph and revelling' This quote tells me he fought for her and was still victorious even though he had injuries, he is going to have a very glamorous celebration in honour of Hippolyta, Then Lysander, Demetrius, Hermia and Egeus are introduced to us next. Egeus is having a dilemma, his daughter Hermia because she will not follow his wishes. Egeus wants Hermia to marry Demetrius but Lysander is in love with her, so Egeus is asking Duke Theseus for advice.

Egeus prefers Demetrius to Lysander because he believes that Lysander is buying presents and wooing her but he doesn't really love her and he putting

on a act. The historical and social context of the play is set in ancient Athens. It is the law which shows that a daughter must follow her father, or she will live as a nun in a convent or she will be executed. Hermia is so openly disobeying her father and breaking the law which shows that Hermia is very brave.

Lysander is truly in love with Hermia because Egeus accuses lysander of 'bewitching' Hermia into loving him when lysander truly loves her. 'this man has bewitched the bosom of my child. Thou, thou Lysander, thou hast given her rhymes and interchanged love-tokens with my child. Thou hast by moonlight at her window sung....' This quotation shows that lysander and hermia truly love each other but her father threatens it. The two lovers plan to elope into the woods to the border of Athens, to Lysander's aunts house where the law doesn't apply there and they can marry.

In ancient Athens they are breaking the law and they risk getting executed, so this shows that they are prepared to risk breaking the law for the sake of love and to ensure that their true love survives. Helena is a childhood friend of hermia and she is desperately in love with with demetrius but it is unrequited love because Demetrius does not give any love back. Helena is so determined to win Demetrius's love that she dotes on him.

She is even prepared to get her 'true love' by acting as Demetrius's dog and to chase after him. use me but as your spaniel; and Demetrius the more you beat me the more, I will fawn on you... ' This quotation shows that Helena wants to be a 'spaniel' for Demetrius and is even prepared to get 'beaten' for his love, the audience who watch this play cannot appreciate Helena as

someone who is in love because she degraded herself to an animal and a bit foolish but at the same time the audience will definitely feel sympathy for her because she is so desperate and hopeful for Demetrius's love.

Helena's perception of true love is that woman should be wooed and doted upon and it is not usual for women to fight for love, we cannot fight for love, as men do; we should be wooed, not made to woo.. ' This quotation shows that Helena is sad because she is forced to be acting like how women shouldn't. her behaviour contradicts the traditional view of womens behaviour at the time, this shows that love can make people can change people and make them do unexpected things. Though Helena does foolish and desperate things for love, it shows what kind of actions people can do to win love. Oberon and Titania Are both king and queen of faries and they live in the woods.

They both have true love but they are jealous of each other. Their dilemma is that titania is taking care of a Indian boy and Oberon wants to have him for a servant and because Titania refuses to give the boy over to Oberon their love is not running smooth. The Elizabethan audience would view Titania as a quite disobedient but brave woman for not giving to her husbands demands. We realise that Titania is quite similar to Hermia as they both disobey their husband or father and they are both quite feisty women. Oberon plans to take revenge on Titania for humiliating him.

His plan is to squeeze love juice from the flower ' love-in-idleness' into Titania's eyes while she is sleeping and she will fall in love with whoever she first sees even if it is an animal. Oberons reaction is quite childish and cruel

but it is an example of how there can be conflict in true love, and that true love does not always run smooth. Oberon, however is not such a cruel character.

Because earlier he sees Helena and Demetrius arguing and how desperately she dotes on him and he plans to make Demetrius love her by squeezing 'love-in-idleness' into Demetrius's eye. A sweet Athenian lady is in love with a disdainful youth. Anoint his eyes.. ' this shows that Oberon has respect for true love and he understands Helena. however His plan goes awry because Puck, his henchman puts the potion in the lysanders eye by mistake. Puck is a very jolly character and likes using his magic to play practical jokes on humans, he makes many mistakes but we do not know if they were for jokes or genuinely accidental. His action causes problems for the lovers as he accidentally makes lysander fall in love with Helena.

It makes lysander act cruelly and irrationally towards Hermia. ' Thy love? Out tawny tartar! Loathed medicine, o hated potion, hence! ' ' Ay, by my life. And never did desire to see thee no more... I do hate thee and love Helena. '

These quotations are spoken by Lysander when he is under the love potion, he says that he hates Hermia and is insulting her, they show the behavior of Lysander is pugnacious as he challenges Demetrius for Helena's love, his language is angry and insulting towards Hermia.

Helena and Hermia, at this stage of the play These points all sum up that true love never does run smooth, Helena and Hermia argue, both of them believe that some cruel joke has been played on them; ' O me, you juggler, you canker blossom, you thief of love. What, have you come by night and

stolen my love's heart from him? ' This is spoken by Hermia and she is calling Helena a trickster and that she stole lysander's love away from her.

Helena is angry because she does not believe that Demetrius will suddenly change his mind and love her overnight, she says 'fine, I'faith' this means that she is sarcastic and she thinks Hermia has joined in making fun of her. They argue bitterly and are even prepared to risk their friendship over love. After a fiery argument between the lovers, puck does a spell to stop Lysander and Demetrius fighting their duel, then he restores order to all the lovers. Oberon feels pity for Titania and tells Puck to reverse the spell and the next morning everybodys love is back on course. The lovers marry alongside Theseus and Hippolyta.

Helena has got her lover back but it is a bit of a illusion because Demetrius is under the love potion, thou it could also be that after all the events Demetrius sees sense and realises his wrong. The audience might view this and be happy that the play ended this way, with Helena and Demetrius happily married and in love. The audience may also feel a tinge of sympathy for Helena as well because if Demetrius is under a spell, it may be reversed and Demetrius may leave her again. Whilst examining and reading this play I have realised that the events do support lysander's quote.

The lovers go through many problems . Shakespeare wrote his plays centuries ago and the themes still apply to modern day. The message in this play to the audience is to make us appriciate how difficult true love can run smooth, by placing the characters in testing and difficult situations but also to show the happiness when difficulties are overcome, such as the

celebrations and wedding. A midsummer's night Dream has taught me that true love is the most strongest emotion of all and it can make people do anything to make sure this love survives.