
A Midsummer Night's Dream: Comedy Or Tragedy?

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare, the differences between comedy and tragedy are often mentioned throughout this comedy. Although it is often described as a comedy; however, it can also be looked at as a tragedy as well. William Shakespeare focused on the aspects of the character Bottom and him being a perfect example of a fool, but also often viewing comedies as tragedies. Shakespeare centers in on comedic elements in the book by showing happy events such as marriages, relationships, and so on. But he also incorporates tragedy by looking at Pyramus and Thisbe and also how love is incorporated in the beginning of the play.

Bottom was known as the "fool" or the overconfident one in the play. He added comedy and humorous statements as well as often using malapropisms and puns. When using examples of these, it carries the play along and makes it more entertaining. Puns often keep the reader more intrigued and think harder sometimes. Bottom is in shock of what he has experienced hinting of what is reality, using malapropisms of making him not able to believe what he has dreamed: "The eye of man hath not heard, the ear of man hath not seen, man's hand is not able to taste, his tongue to conceive, nor his heart to report what my dream was." Bottom was always misusing words; adding comedy to the play. This quote is referred to as an allusion to a verse in the bible; however, Bottom mixed the words around. It is also synesthesia because of the way Bottom misuses his senses like, "the ear of man hath not seen...man's hand is not able to taste..." and what it actually is supposed to be is which it is displayed in the bible as, "no eye has seen, no ear has heard...". The meaning of this quote is basically suggesting and revealing his incapability to make sense of his dream because this whole time Bottom seems very confused of what is happening. For this reason, Bottom's use of malapropisms added humor and comedy to the play, making it intriguing and enjoyable. Shakespeare's common use of puns solidified the character of Bottom. Puns are good to keep the reader interested and is used to be humorous as well. During this scene, Bottom was being recognized as an "ass" seeing as his name is Bottom, "I see their knavery: this is to make an ass of me, to fright me if they could. But I will not stir from this place, do what they can. I will walk up and down here and I will sing, that they shall hear I am not afraid"(3.1.). This is a pun because his name is Bottom and his head turns into that of an ass. Bottom's head gets turned into the head of a Donkey, and because of that he is made out to be an "ass." But it is not the fact that he has a Donkey's head on him, it refers to another meaning of the word "fool." He is very unaware of that, though. As soon as his friends see him, they immediately run from him, afraid. But he is very much confused. In conclusion, Shakespeare's use of puns and malapropisms keeps the reader into it and thought provoking.

In this play, the use of tragedy was not common. Being that this play is a comedy, some of the happy endings or outcomes could be looked at as a tragedy. Once the play started, Hermia's father wanted her to marry Demetrius and not Lysander and he made sure of it. He stated that he did not want Hermia marrying Lysander because of his actions or just the way he saw Lysander. He stated, "As she is mine, I may dispose of her. Which shall be either to this gentleman, or to her death" (1.1.44-46). This surely did not sound humorous at all. It was very harsh and forward, and Egeus wanted that to be clear. Egeus points out his wrongdoings in the lines before this quote and how he did not like the man he was. Lysander was very much in love

with Hermia, serenading her and just simply being in love with her. The quote is stating that Egeus is Hermia's father, therefore he determines who she marries. According to Athenian Law, the father of the bride is to pick out who he thinks is best for his daughter or he has to have the man be killed. Another example of a tragedy in this is the play of Pyramus and Thisbe. This play is very much like Romeo and Juliet, unfortunately ending in a tragedy. They are forbidden to see each other because of their parents rivalry, so when they're not around, they get to see each other. These two plays are both alike because in A Midsummer Night's Dream, they are very much inspired by the Pyramus and Thisbe play. They are some things that they have in common. And that is that both couples are forbidden to be together. Hermia loves Lysander and is not liking the fact that she is having to be with a man she doesn't love, so she plans to run away with Lysander. The mechanicals decided to re-enact the play of Pyramus and Thisbe, but it was not the greatest. The play was performed at the triple wedding of Hermia, Lysander, Demetrius, Duke Theseus and his newlywed Hippolyta. Having a play-in-a-play in A Midsummer Night's Dream added originality and it was authentic. In conclusion, Shakespeare's use of tragedy kept the suspense to such a comedy and have readers come to conclusion that not all comedies have happy outcomes.

In summary, Shakespeare centers in on comedic elements in the book by showing happy events such as marriages, relationships, and so on. But he also incorporates tragedy by looking at Pyramus and Thisbe and also how love is incorporated in the beginning of the play. Shakespeare not only made this play a comedy, but alluded to the fact the some happy endings don't have a happy ending. Also, how puns and malapropisms carry a play along keeping the reader focused. Therefore, not all comedies are tragedies and vise versa. Shakespeare had a very unique way of making use of that.