

Trevor Meeks

Rhonda Kelley

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4 Relationships in A Midsummer Night's Dream that You Have Been In

Shakespeare is so old and outdated right? I mean having it as required reading was never any fun. Just like math, it leaves you wondering how you will ever use any of this. But really, the relationships that Shakespeare wrote about in A Midsummer Night's Dream aren't all that different from the ones you and I have been in. Unless you happen to be more of a Romeo and Juliet kind of person; in which case, stop reading this Ghost!



#4. Demetrius and Helena (before Demetrius is poisoned): One-Sided

Helena is head over heels for Demetrius. She literally compares herself to being a pet of Demetrius that he can abuse, "I am your spaniel; and Demetrius,/ The more you beat me I will fawn on you." (2.1.578-579). Helena is obviously in a bad situation when you realize Demetrius could care less about her and realizes her foolishness saying, "To leave the city and commit yourself/ Into the hands of someone who loves you not;" (2.1.590-591). I can feel you saying that you've never been in this relationship, but think about it. You may not have fell into this

relationship to the degree that Helena has, but we have all repeatedly sent love to someone who refused to reciprocate the affection. Perhaps we do this because we latch onto something like an idea that we think holds meaning. In the play its unclear if Demetrius had taken Helena's virginity; if Demetrius had, it's totally understandable as to why Helena would latch onto Demetrius and see him in the light that she does. Like Helena, we may believe that the other person some how gives us meaning. In the end its best to move on; that is unless there are magical fairies around...



Helena

wasn't this type of whipped....doesn't mean she wasn't up for it

#3. Demetrius and Helena (after Demetrius is poisoned): Love Drunk

Now what could make Demetrius goes from threatening to rape Helena (which Helena is totally cool with by the way) to getting married to Helena? Oh you know, just some magic fairy juice administered by Puck. Puck is basically the Joker crafted into fairy form. Puck's boss Oberon is totally cool with Puck doing pucked up things (you know you like terrible puns). Oberon actually tells Puck to poison Demetrius with a love juice. This juice turns Demetrius

from possible rapist to the most romantic guy on the Earth, “O Helena, goddess, nymph, perfect, divine! To what, my love, shall I compare thyne eye?”(3.2.1175-1176).



“Thyne eye” is totally code for whispering eye isn't it Demetrius?

Addressing this relationship in a reflective manner can be a little embarrassing, but we need to do this guys. Raise your hand if you've ever used the words goddess, perfect, or divine to describe someone who you were in a relationship with. You better all be raising your hands. When anyone is in this relationship you're really stuck in fake love. You're not accepting the other person for who they are and allowing them to grow; you're just showing complete ignorance towards all the flaws. Demetrius wasn't in love with Helena, shown by all their interactions prior to Puck's interference, Demetrius' knowledge of Helena's flaws was taken away from him. What people really love is the idea of love, and most are willing to bend their own perceptions to fulfill the thirst for love within. It could be said that the poison Puck used on Demetrius didn't cause people to fall in love, it only intensified the hunger for it causing the

effected to compromise in order to reach a new equilibrium. Today men and women may overlook things like the other spouse being clingy, a complete loser, or even an archeology major to find their own inner equilibrium.

#2. Theseus and Hippolyta: Stuck in the Sand

So Theseus is a king that Hippolyta is being forced to marry. I can feel most of you asking how exactly this is a bad situation. Hippolyta just happens to be an Amazon. You know, those women who hate men and are willing to cut off one breast to throw a spear better.

Hippolyta was literally stuck in this relationship; those feelings of being trapped arise in most long term relationships. Lets face it, humans suck for the most part. We fart 15 times a day, can be completely selfish, and turned Justin Bieber into a phenom. Hippolyta didn't even get a cupcake phase; her emotions just went straight to hate and there was no way to get out. With us we hook up, have a drunk love phase, and then realize our partner is a straight sociopath. Okay, maybe sociopath is a stretch, but don't tell me eating Lays chips with ketchup is normal! The thing is, once you realize your partner is totally not right for you, you're already in the deep end. Hippolyta was more or less stuck in chains, so she had a pretty good excuse for not leaving. Why don't most humans leave these relationships sooner? We let fear of the unknown keep us. Leaving one person and starting over can be hard, so we settle for the comfort of fear. Its understandable that people stay, I mean how long would it take to find someone else to do all your laundry for you.

#1. Lysander and Hermia: Young Love

Young love has certain requirements that need to be met: disobedience towards parents,

running away, and a rushed marriage (optional). Hermia and Lysander check out on all three.

Hermia refuses to marry her dad's choice, Hermia and Lysander run away into the woods when their love isn't accepted, and of course they get married in the end.



Yeah I know, I can't believe Britney and K-Fed didn't last either

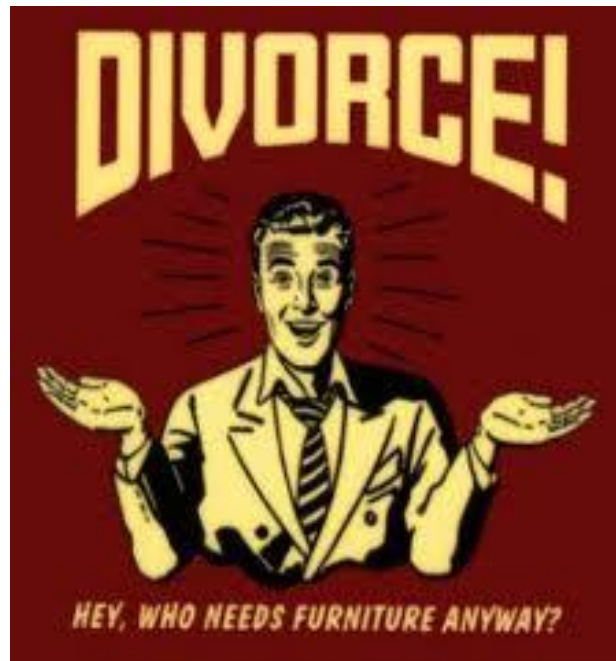
In the play Shakespeare doesn't give much reason to believe this love is so strong besides letting us know Lysander romanticizes Hermia with his words. Sure, at one point Hermia threatens to become a nun, but how is that different than any young girl swearing she'll never speak to her parents again after being told she couldn't see someone. I'm not saying Lysander and Hermia weren't in true love, but their actions have many parallels with young teen couples around the world. This relationship is present throughout almost everyone's life because young love is an idea. Young love is an expression of wanting to believe everything can be solely good. Young love is unrestrained causing those involved to be oblivious to everything around them. Lysander and Hermia totally ignored the entire culture that surrounded them. Even though everything Lysander and Hermia did went against their society, the love they felt made their actions seem like the only logical decisions to make.

Bonus. Oberon and Titania: Marriage

Oberon and Titania are the king and queen of the fairies. These two hold all kinds of powers and are the longest standing couple in this play, so they should obviously have their relationship on solid ground.

Actually not so much. The main friction between these two is a fight over the ownership of an Indian boy. Oberon wants the boy that is currently in Titania's possession. Does Oberon need an Indian boy? Not really, he already has Puck to do his bidding. This argument isn't really due to the Indian boy, it is due to the resentment Oberon had allowed to build up within himself. This type of thing happens in marriages all the time. So the next time you hear a married couple arguing over something that is senseless, please don't judge them.

The resentment built up during marriage doesn't just cause arguments. When the disdain reaches certain levels even more severe actions are taken. Oberon actually gets Puck to poison Titania, his wife, so she would fall in love with a hideous creature. Sounds pretty terrible until you realize humans will secretly lawyer up and take half your shit legally.



I'm pretty sure after what happens in the courtroom you'll be too sore to sit down anyways...

You know what the craziest thing about Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream is?

All the couples end up happy in the end. Maybe there is hope after all.

Works Cited

Shakespeare, William. *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*. London: The Hamlyn Publishing Group Limited, 1971. Print.