

The character I am going to analyse is Oberon, the King of the Fairies and the Elves from the play by Shakespeare: *Midsummer night's dream* written around 1590.

The word Fairy comes from the Latin *Fata* derived from *Fatum* that means "destiny". When we talk about an Elve or a Fairy we must imagine a very beautiful living being, they live in the forest, they know about music and arts in general and they are related with spring, light and white magic. They always play with love and because that lovers are connected with them and with the smell of the flowers. We can see all this on the play by Shakespeare, when Oberon uses Cupid's flower to make the lovers to fall in love, we can also read some Fairies' songs: act three, scene one.

But I am going to centre the idea only on Oberon, I want to demonstrate that this magic world is also corrupted by ambition and envy, and this can have repercussions on the real world and to make problems to humans, I mean, Oberon has envy of Titania, because she has a child with supernatural power and he wants it, this feeling provokes his ambition and because that he plays with Cupid's flower, to get his proposal of having that his wife but not him.

The first time we see Oberon is on act two scene one, he appears in the forest and goes to talk with his friend and servant Puck, at the same time his wife Titania appears by the other side. It is when we know why they are angry with the other. When I read this act, I thought that Oberon was so capricious. I think he seems a spoilt child who gets that it wants and if not, it becomes annoyed. Another important thing is his intention to demonstrate that he is the man and because that he can obtain all he wants. We have to remember the low paper women had at Shakespeare's time, they were like objects, first under control of the father and later under the husband, they had not the possibility to choose and they obeyed their "lord". Oberon has a problem with his wife and it is that she never does her husband's will. He becomes so irritated with her. I am going to reproduce a passage of the play where we can see that I said before:

OBERON: Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania!

TITANIA: What, jealous Oberon? Fairy, skip hence.

I have forsworn his bed and company.

OBERON: Tarry, rash wanton. Am not I thy lord?

[ ..... ]

(from act II scene I of *Midsummer night's dream* by Shakespeare. Penguin Shakespeare).

All his jealousy makes him to develop a plan to get the kid and during his approach, four persons pass his way and here the problem with the lovers starts. We can see in this part that Oberon apart of his envy he also has "good" feelings, when he sees the suffering of Helena due to that Demetrius does not love her, Oberon wants to help her. All this happens on act two scene one too:

OBERON: [...] take thou some of it, and seek through this grove.

A sweet Athenian lady is in love

With a disdainful youth- anoint his eyes;

But do it when the next thing he espies

May be the lady. [...]

( from act II scene I of Midsummer night's dream by Shakespeare. Penguin Shakespeare).

That I do not understand is Oberon's behaviour with his wife, I mean, why can you lead your lover into loving someone else, only to snatch her/ him a whim? Oberon looks a very " cold" attitude with this theme. He wants his wife falls in love with another man or beast, because while she was in love she will forget why she has now the child and she will permit Oberon to have it. During most of the time of the play, Titania is in love with Bottom and Oberon is happy, I think he is so selfish, he only loves himself and his wills, and he does not take care of his wife's feelings.

OBERON: I wonder if Titania be awaked;  
Then what it was that next came in her eye,  
Which she must dote on, in extremity.  
[...]

( from act III scene II of Midsummer night's dream by Shakespeare. Penguin Shakespeare).

But when Oberon realises the error of Puck instead of becoming angry, he tries to get a solution. This shows his understanding that a person can have a mistake.

We can also see that Oberon likes to have funny time, when he and Puck laugh of the lovers' problems on act III scene II.

Another important thing is the knowledge Oberon has about magic when he makes incantations to make Cupid's flower to work, such as:

OBERON: Flower of this purple dye,  
Hit with Cupid's archery,  
Sink in apple of his eye.  
*He squeezes the flower on Demetrius's eyes*  
When his love he doth espy,  
Let her shine as gloriously  
As the Venus of the sky.  
When thou wakest, if she be by,  
Beg of her for remedy.  
[...]

( from act III scene II of Midsummer night's dream by Shakespeare. Penguin Shakespeare).

Oberon only wants to achieve Titania's child and when he gets his proposal he returns to his lover, it is the time to resolve the story between Titania and Bottom. Oberon does not attach importance to people's feelings and he lies to everybody. The last swindle is concerning Bottom who at least will not know certainly if he had a dream or all was real, Oberon does not take care, at this moment he only wants to have Titania's love again. I like this sentence said by Oberon that resumes his egoism:

OBERON: [...] and now I have the boy I will undo

This hateful imperfection of her eyes.  
[...]

( from act IV scene I of Midsummer night's dream by Shakespeare. Penguin Shakespeare).

At the end of the play, when Oberon has made everything to his own willingly, he has time to make a spell wishing everybody's happiness:

OBERON: Now, until the break of day,  
Through this house each fairy stray.  
To the best bride-bed will we,  
Which by us shall blessed be;  
And the issue there create  
Ever shall be fortunate.  
So shall all the couples three  
Ever true in loving be;  
And the blots of Nature's hand  
Shall not in their issue stand;  
Never mole, hare lip, nor scar,  
Nor mark prodigious, such as are  
Despised in nativity,  
Shall upon their children be.  
With this field-dew consecrate,  
Every fairy take his gait;  
And each several chamber bless,  
Through this palace, with sweet peace;  
And the owner of it blest  
Ever shall in safety rest.  
Trip away; make no stay;  
Meet me all by break of day.

( from act V scene I of Midsummer night's dream by Shakespeare. Penguin Shakespeare).

To conclude , it seems clear that Oberon is a good character to show the world of the Fairies, a very good election to add magic to the real world, but also to show the ambition and the selfish of human beings. I think it is a nice play that combines very well two different worlds which become confused in a midsummer night.