

I want to talk about the character of the confidant in the Shakespearean plays and I think the best form is getting the definition of this word: The confidant (feminine: confidante, same pronunciation) character is usually someone the lead character confides in and trusts. Typically, these consist of the best friend, relative, doctor or boss. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confidant>). This character appears in all the plays of Shakespeare. We always have a main character that needs to tell his/ her problems to a secondary one, who everytime is the accomplice and helps the protagonist to resolve the plot and that never betrays him/ her. And I want to demonstrate that we always need a confidant, we feel secure if someone shares our secrets and this creates an atmosphere of complicity and friendship. I will show some confidants at different plays.

First of all and following the line of my first work, I will talk about Puck the confidant of *Midsummer Night's Dream*. He is Oberon's servant and best friend, we can see this since the very beginning of the play, when he appears at the first time and defends Oberon when a Fairy criticizes him. Then we see their complicity when Oberon tells Puck his plan to get Titania's child and the confidence when Oberon asks Puck for his help. Of course Puck never fails his friend and, since the beginning to the end, he makes everything his lord orders. The relation between them is of friendship, Puck is Oberon's best friend. They have a close relation, they know the plan and they work together to get the solution.

OBERON : This falls out better than I could devise.

But hast thou yet latch'd the Athenian's eyes
With the love-juice, as I did bid thee do?

PUCK : I took him sleeping, --that is finish'd too, --
And the Athenian woman by his side:
That, when he waked, of force she must be eyed.

Enter HERMIA and DEMETRIUS

OBERON : Stand close: this is the same Athenian.

PUCK : This is the woman, but not this the man.

(Act III, scene 2, lines 35-42)

Secondly we have a relative relation in *As you like it*. And this time we are going to talk about a confidant between two women: Rosalind and Celia who are cousins and friends. They share their secrets since they were born because they were educated as they would be sisters, due to that when Rosalind must leave her uncle's home, Celia decides to go with her. They show the love of two real friends and the eternal devotion they feel to each other. The difference with the relation between Puck and Oberon is that Rosalind and Celia are at the same stage, both of them are princess while Oberon is the Lord and Puck his servant.

Enter CELIA and ROSALIND

CELIA: I pray thee, Rosalind, sweet my coz, be merry.

ROSALIND: Dear Celia, I show more mirth than I am mistress of; and would you yet I were merrier? Unless you could teach me to forget a banished father, you must not learn me how to remember any extraordinary pleasure.

CELIA: Herein I see thou lovest me not with the full weight that I love thee. If my uncle, thy banished father, had banished thy uncle, the duke my father, so thou hadst been still with me, I could have taught my love to take thy father for mine: so wouldst thou, if the truth of thy love to me were so righteously tempered as mine is to thee.

ROSALIND: Well, I will forget the condition of my estate, to rejoice in yours.

(Act I, scene II, lines 1-15)

We can find the confidant relation between a character and a doctor in *The Comedy of Errors*. Here we have a very mix-up plot because two pairs of twins appear in scene. On one hand we have Antipholus of Ephesus and his friend Dromio of Ephesus and on the other hand we have Antipholus of Syracuse with his friend Dromio of Syracuse. Both Antipholus are twins separated when they were child and with them both Dromios. During the whole play there is a lot of mistakes that pretend to be solved with the role of the doctor confidant, who knows the story because Antipholus of Ephesus' wife told it to him. And here we have a very big difference with the other two plays, in *Midsummer Night's Dream* and *As you like it* we had a direct relation between the protagonist and the confidant, they were friends and they spoke each other, while in *The Comedy of Errors* the confidant knows the story because a third person told it.

ADRIANA : His incivility confirms no less.

Good Doctor Pinch, you are a conjurer;

Establish him in his true sense again,

And I will please you what you will demand.

LUCIANA : Alas, how fiery and how sharp he looks!

Courtezan : Mark how he trembles in his ecstasy!

PINCH : Give me your hand and let me feel your pulse.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS: There is my hand, and let it feel your ear.

Striking him

PINCH : I charge thee, Satan, housed within this man,

To yield possession to my holy prayers

And to thy state of darkness hie thee straight:

I conjure thee by all the saints in heaven!

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHEBUS: Peace, dotting wizard, peace! I am not mad.

(Act IV, scene IV, lines 48-61)

And finally the confidant relation between a main character and a boss that we can find in *The Taming of the Shrew*, with the roles of Lucentio who is in love with Bianca and his servant Tranio. Lucentio arrives to Padua with his servant Tranio and he falls in love with Bianca, Lucentio develops a plan to get Bianca's love and he needs Tranio's help. Tranio is the servant at the same time he is the friend.

Enter LUCENTIO and his man TRANIO

LUCENTIO: Tranio, since for the great desire I had
To see fair Padua, nursery of arts,
I am arrived for fruitful Lombardy,
The pleasant garden of great Italy;
And by my father's love and leave am arm'd
With his good will and thy good company,
My trusty servant, well approved in all,
Here let us breathe and haply institute
A course of learning and ingenious studies.
Pisa renown'd for grave citizens
Gave me my being and my father first,
A merchant of great traffic through the world,
Vincetino come of Bentivolii.
Vincetino's son brought up in Florence
It shall become to serve all hopes conceived,
To deck his fortune with his virtuous deeds:
And therefore, Tranio, for the time I study,
Virtue and that part of philosophy
Will I apply that treats of happiness
By virtue specially to be achieved.
Tell me thy mind; for I have Pisa left
And am to Padua come, as he that leaves
A shallow plash to plunge him in the deep
And with satiety seeks to quench his thirst.
TRANIO: Mi perdonato, gentle master mine,
I am in all affected as yourself;
Glad that you thus continue your resolve
To suck the sweets of sweet philosophy.
Only, good master, while we do admire
This virtue and this moral discipline,
Let's be no stoics nor no stocks, I pray;
Or so devote to Aristotle's cheques
As Ovid be an outcast quite abjured:
Balk logic with acquaintance that you have
And practise rhetoric in your common talk;
Music and poesy use to quicken you;
The mathematics and the metaphysics,
Fall to them as you find your stomach serves you;
No profit grows where is no pleasure ta'en:
In brief, sir, study what you most affect.

(Act I, scene I, lines 1-41)

In conclusion I have chosen this topic because I think that everybody needs a confidant who hears and helps him/her. Shakespeare shows us this in all his plays, we have studied the comedies this year, but we can find this character in the tragedies too, like in *Romeo and Julliet* where the priest is the confidant of both lovers. The confidant is normally a very closed person to the protagonist, generally a friend or a relative, the unique case where we find an external confidant is in *The Comedy of Errors*. The confidant always help the protagonist and never breaks with the confidence of a secret. The confidant can be a woman or a man, always the confidant of a man is another man and the confidant of a woman another woman, the line that the writer follows is that this confidant knows everything about the protagonist, he/she plays a role around the protagonist and he/she is essential to the solution of the plot.