

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. I want to show what attracted my attention of this character that I think is envious, we can see it when he is angry with his wife because she has a magical boy and she does not want to leave the boy to Oberon; possessive, he is capable to develop a very difficult plan only to get the boy and he is also male chauvinist and he shows this during the whole play when he says that he is the man and his wife has to obey him. I could talk about more aspects of Oberon, but it would be a very long work and these are the three characteristics I like to comment. And of course, I think that he has positive feelings too like when he tries helping Helena to get Demetrius' love.

First of all I want to introduce everybody in the Fairies' world and the best form is saying that 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. (http://www.fortunecity.es/poetas/poemas/141/rincon_de_las_hadas.htm)

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 in the real world and make problems to humans, I mean, Oberon is envious 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, he wants to get the boy his wife has, he thinks he is the male and he must have the boy but not his wife.

The first time we see Oberon is in 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 then that we know why they are angry with each other. When I read this act, I thought that Oberon was so capricious. I think he seems a spoilt child who gets what he wants and if not, it becomes annoyed. Another important thing is his intention to demonstrate that he is the man and because of that he can obtain all that he wants. We have to remember the low role women had in 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 what 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?

[.....]

(Act II scene I lines 60- 65)

All his jealousy makes him 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 has also “ 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 in 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. [...]

(Act II scene I lines 259-263)

What I do not understand is Oberon’s behaviour with his wife, I mean, why can you lead your lover into loving someone else, I do not know how he can refuse his wife to get his proposal. Oberon shows a very “ cold” attitude with the fact that his wife could love Bottom. He wants his wife to fall in love with another man or beast, because while she would be in love she will forget that she has the child because she made the promise to take care of this 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.
[...]

(Act III scene II lines 1-5)

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 make mistakes.

We can also see that Oberon likes to have funny time, when he and Puck laugh about the lovers’ problems in 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.
[...]

(Act III scene II lines 102-110)

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.
[...]

(*Act IV scene I lines 61-62*)

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.

(*Act V scene I lines 392-411*)

My conclusion is that Oberon is a very attractive character because he shows very common attitudes, attitudes we can see everyday in every person, attitudes that make us to act according to other people, because everybody in a moment has felt envious of someone and has made something stupid and I think that we are possessive, a very good example of this is the child that has a ball and he/ she does not want to play with it, but then another child catches the ball and now he/ she wants the ball too. And of course the topic of the male chauvinist, I like this topic because I have heard "because I am the man" a lot of times. And finally it is important that the character makes mistakes but he has also virtues, it is nice to see how a person takes care of another person's problem even though they have not meet them before.