

and confusion before things are finally settled. ~~Then~~ Oberon and Titania provide another contrast of place, these woodland royalty showing the mischievous steps the fairy counterpart takes in resolving affairs of the heart.

When things finally reach a status quo it is in the palace with the triple marriage ceremony. The comic action is over and we see the earthly royalty in their marriage revels and anticipating the "happily ever after". The fairies are not quite through with them even in the shelter of the palace, but this time they get things straight and bestow their blessings on the newly joined couples.

Shakespeare has made the woods a place of dreams and fantasy. Despite the mixup of Oberon's liege the woods has been a beneficial place for the lovers. It can almost be seen as a *deus ex machina* that takes care of the love affairs of the wrongly aimed but determined lovers. Without the woods personified by the fairies as a place where things mystically take care of themselves, Lysander and Hermia may have been in serious physical trouble much less gotten married. The woods and its lurking fairies made this play and made it comic. Without their interaction with the mortals ~~change~~ the comic action of the play would never have developed and would never have been resolved in the sympathetic and benevolent way that they were.

Time is hardly mentioned in the play. People sleep, but there is no mention of sunsets or dawns. A number of scenes are at night and one is definitely in the morning. At the least two days pass but no importance is placed on it. The lack of a definite time element again places the importance back on the conception of place, which is the main formative element of this play.

Where place is the main ingredient of comedy time should be the main ingredient of tragedy, ~~or~~ so Helen Gardner would lead us to believe. How time urged Hamlet on to fulfill his destiny will be the basis of this analysis of the time element of tragedy.

The urging quality of time in Hamlet is quite weak. Had Hamlet been a vengeful sort and less introspective and calculating Claudius would have been dead in the first act after Hamlet first met the ghost and learned that his father had been poisoned by the current king and queen. Time hardly urges Hamlet at all. His revenge of his father's murder will be calculated and proven as well as possible.

Hamlet is thought mad and realizes that any rash action to square things with Claudius would mean his death as he has no proof of what the ghost has told him besides the fact that Horatio and some of the guards have seen the ghost, although none have heard it speak. He knows he is being watched carefully and being probed by almost all of the members of the court, and has good reason to be careful. In the third act scene two Hamlet gets all the evidence he needs to prove that Claudius has been in on the murder of his father from Claudius's reaction to the play that he puts on, but misses his chance again feeling that somehow it would not be right to kill Claudius as he sleeps. So we see again that Hamlet's urge to even the score is not rushed, but seeking the right time. Between acts one and two a total of two months pass, and the amount of soul searching and despondency Hamlet must have been through must have been akin to hell. Time is doing something to Hamlet rather than the urgency of the time element in the ghost's request being acted upon by Hamlet.

In all of his soliloquies Hamlet is self-abusive and deeply mentally involved with his inability to carry out the ~~his~~ ghost's request. He gets himself in deeper by rashly killing Polonius, thus deepening his suspicion of insanity around the court. He is indecisive about getting into action and lets many times that would ripen the