

"tragedies are presided over by time, which urges the hero on to fulfill his destiny,.... Comedies are dominated by a sense

of place rather than time." These generalizations of Helen Gardner will serve as the basis of analysis of Hamlet and Midsummer's Night Dream, as generalizations are usually lacking as basic rules and universality these two plays will ^{poss. etc} consistency, or lack of it, in the above statements.

Besides being one of Shakespeare most fantastical comedies Midsummer's Night Dream is predominated by a mystical ~~fair~~ faerie sense which is the main property of the Athenian woods were ~~most of~~ *all* of the comic romantic mixup, ~~take place~~ or main action of the play, takes place. The Athenian woods is the place that Helen Gardner would have conducive of the comic sense, though it is indeed more than this. The first mention of the woods is in the first act and it is seen as a place of refuge for the forbidden liason between Lysander and Hermia who use it as a place to start thier elopement. It offers these two a place to escape the directives of Theseus as to Hermia's troth, in the beginning action of the at least the woods isa place of refuge and freedom.

Act two enters the comic influence of the fairies into the action of the lovers. Puck by mistake annoints Lysanders eyes with the magic love juice, and Helena left behind by Demetrius, awakens him and Lysander instantaneously is enamored of Helena. By pucks mistake we have the the main comic action of the play between the lovers started. Oberon sent puck out to rectify matters and produce two loving pairs, but instead with another application of the juice to Demetrius, both the male contestants find themselves after the once ugly duckling Helena. The scornful reactions of the women provide the bulk of the comic here as they can not understand the double change of heart and suspect some sort of cruel liason in a joke on the part of Demetrius and Lysander who vow they are full earnest and nearly fight, or at least talk about it. The next night the fairies get Lysander on the right track again, and the two couples are set straight by the time Theseus and his party find them. The woods has been a strange and wonderful for these four and as the results are favorable they take the previous action as a bad dream.

The forest is a place of mysterious sport where anything can happen. A poor weaver practicing with his friends for a play to be presented to the duke, is, to his surprise, found in a lover's quarrel between the King and Queen of Fairies, and is transformed into a satyric character with an asses head. His looks notwithstanding Titania, the Queen of the Fairies, under the influence of the magic love juice, falls passionately in love with him. This affair is soon dissolved, Titania awakening to tell her husband of the strange dream she has had. The other persons practicing the play in the woods provide a funny helter-skelter scene when they first see botton with his asses head running out of the bushes. They yell and run at first not realizing that it is Bottom, not Bottom himself realizing he is "translated".

The importance of place in this comedy is emphasized by the contrast between the Palace in Athens and the woods. The relationship between Theseus and Hippolyta is a reference point to the comic mixup of the lovers in the woods. They are calm as a rock in their faith towards each other, while the juice laden eyelids of the adolescent lovers in the woods see nothing but distrust and