

## Engaging and funny

Rating: 4 Stars

'Much Ado About Nothing' is a comedy written by William Shakespeare, estimated to have been created around 1598. The main storyline surrounds the wedding of one of the protagonists, Hero. What ensues instead of the fairy tale wedding that was expected is a tremendous amount of drama and deceit. However, while the primary storyline is honestly extremely engaging, my personal opinion is that it is the secondary storyline of this play that captures the audience/reader. The truly interesting secondary storyline offers the audience a far greater amount of depth, humour and connection to the characters as we watch Beatrice and Benedick verbally spar throughout a majority of the play.

While there are many brilliant elements of this play, the portrayal of one of the female protagonists (Beatrice) would have to be one of the leading contenders. In almost every written work of this time period the women are weak, overly obedient and really, quite boring. Beatrice is, beyond a shadow of doubt an exception. Her constant mockery, sarcasm and intelligence is refreshing and hilarious, especially when Benedick is the target of her witty remarks. Such a strong, positive representation of a female within a play created during the late 16<sup>th</sup>/ early 17<sup>th</sup> century is surprising, and a wonderful addition to the story.

Another element of this play that I feel many recent readers must have loved was the humour and the similarity to modern entertainment in certain aspects. A majority of the characters made a joke at some point. Many of the clever puns and innuendos were quite funny and at times a bit shocking. While I'm almost entirely sure some went over my head, the quips I was able to pick up on were genuinely funny and surprisingly forward for the time period. I suppose overall, this may be what draws a modern audience in. Some of the characters feel quite similar to many of those we see in modern film. The storyline isn't dull and outdated and has clearly appealed to a majority of the audiences it has been seen by for centuries. Perhaps it will always feel modern, as it depicts basic human nature. I am certain humans have humorously ridiculed one another for millennia; and can say with an even higher degree of certainty we will continue to do so. This aspect of humour and familiarity, I believe, would make this a brilliant introduction to Shakespeare.

To conclude, while the term 'comedy' once meant a story or play that ended happily, I feel this play is a comedy in every aspect of the word. While it may, for the most part lack the stunning poetic portrayal of human emotion that has become synonymous with Shakespeare, I enjoyed reading it very much; and would recommend 'Much Ado About Nothing' to anyone who is unsure