5) Many readers have commented that the final scene of "Much Ado About Nothing" does not provide a satisfactory comic resolution. How do you respond to this view?

In the final scene of "Much Ado About Nothing" the audience see Claudio about to marry somebody he doesn’t know to repay Leonato for killing Hero, however in the end Hero reveals herself from under the veil and the audience see Hero marry the man she always wanted. After that the audience see Benedick and Beatrice declare their love for each other.

There are many different views on whether or not ‘Much Ado About Nothing’ provides a satisfactory comic resolution.

The final scene in “Much Ado About Nothing” provides a comic resolution as conventionally comedies conclude with a marriage ceremony. There are two pairs of lovers in the final scene, which is traditional in the final scene of a comedy. The first pair of lovers is Claudio and Hero; they get married first then followed by Benedick and Beatrice. “Give me your hand; before this holy friar, I am your husband, if you like of me” (Claudio), suggests that Claudio feels guilty for killing Hero and is full filling the request of Leonato, who is revenging Hero’s death. “I was your other wife, and when you loved me, you were my other husband” (Hero), this suggests that Hero is happy to be marrying the man she loves, Claudio. The second pair of lovers is Beatrice and Benedick. “Come, I will have thee; but, by this light, I take thee for pity” (Benedick), suggests that Benedick is trying to hide his true feelings for Beatrice by adding an insult into his proposal. “I would not deny you; but, by this good day, I yield upon great persuasion; and partly to save your life, for I was told you were in consumption” (Beatrice) Like Benedick, Beatrice also tries to hide her love for Benedick but can’t quite refuse him all the same. This suggests that Shakespeare has ended the play with
a traditional happy ending and includes many features of a comedy. E.g. Two pairs of lovers and everything is resolved in the end. This links back to Act 1, scene 1 where when Claudio and Hero first meet for the first time he is drawn to her. "Benedick, didst thou note the daughter of Signor Leonato?", this suggests that Claudio has fallen for Hero because of her looks not who she is. "If this should ever happen, thou would be horn—mad." (Claudio to Don Pedro) this suggests that Claudio has immediately fallen in love with Hero even though he has never met her before, at the end after all the unfortunate events Hero and Claudio still get married.

Secondly, the final scene in "Much Ado About Nothing" provides a satisfactory comic resolution by the use of disguise of the women. Claudio doesn’t know it is Hero he is about to marry as she wears a veil that hides her face, and so he expects that he is marrying Hero’s cousin. (Claudio) "Sweet, let me see your face", suggesting that even though he is repaying his debt for killing Hero his still wants to marry on looks not love. After the ceremony Hero reveals herself, “When I lived I was your other wife”, (Claudio) “Another Hero” this shows Claudio’s surprise and suggests that Shakespeare has tried to keep to the traditional aspects of comedy by putting disguise in the last scene. Another use of disguise is when Benedick wants to marry Beatrice, “Which is Beatrice?” as she too is also wearing a veil as well as two other women. This implies that Shakespeare has tried to keep to traditional comedy features by including disguise and by using two sets of design emphasises comedy.

The last scene of “Much Ado About Nothing” provides a comic resolution as there is a lot of comic language between Beatrice and Benedick. Beatrice speaks her mind and tries to outwit Benedick throughout the whole play and even in the final scene she is still keeping
the witty dialogue going on between her and Benedick. “I would not deny you; but, I speak by this good day, I yield upon great persuasion; and partly to save your life, for I was told you were in consumption”. This suggests that even though Benedick has asked Beatrice to marry him, she still wants the last say. (Benedick) “Here are our own hands against our hearts. Come I take thee; but, I take thee for pity. (Beatrice) “I would not deny you; but, by this good day, I yield upon great persuasion; and partly to save your life, for I told you were in consumption”. The use or repartee provides a satisfactory comic solution as wit is vital in a comedy; it helps keep the audience interested and captured by the play. Act 1, scene 1 is the first time we see the witty relationship between Beatrice and Benedick. “I wander that you will still be talking, Signor Benedick; nobody marks you.” Suggests hatred towards Benedick and so insults him throughout Act 1, scene 1,(Beatrice). What my dear Lady disdain! Are you yet living?”(Benedick). As the conversation goes on the repartee is harsher than that of the final scene. “God keep your Ladyship still in that mind! So some gentlemen or other shall ’scape a predestinate scratched face.” (Benedick). Scratching could not make it worse, as ‘twere a face as yours”. (Beatrice). From Act1, scene 1 we also learn that Beatrice and Benedick have a past “You always end with a Jade’s trick; I know you of old”, (Beatrice). This suggests that Benedick and Beatrice have been lovers before and have never really got over and so carry on insulting each other using repartee.

On the other hand, the final scene of “Much Ado About Nothing” doesn’t provide a satisfactory comic resolution as relationships between men and women suggest that women weren’t to be trusted or to have the freedom to do and say as they please. At the end of the final scene the mistrust of women from men is symbolised by Don John being captured at the end of the scene and brought to the wedding ceremony. This wrecks the
plays happy ending as Don John is the illegitimate bastard son of the king. This suggests that women were known to have children to other men and get their husbands to raise the child up as their own. Another way in which the play shows mistrust of women is in Act 1, Scene 1 where there is a lot of fuss about female fertility (Don Pedro) “I think this is your daughter.”, suggests that even the Prince wouldn’t trust a woman. (Leonardo) “Her mother hath many times told me so”, Leonardo is suggesting that even he is certain whether or not Hero is his daughter. (Benedick) Were you in doubt, sir that you asked her?” This suggests that men were always in doubt whether a child was theirs that they were bringing up and giving their status. This emphasises the freedom that women weren’t suppose to. Don John the illegitimate bastard, Don John is unhappy about his circumstances and so makes it his job to make everybody else miserable; he also causes the problems between Claudio and Hero. This is why Don John symbolises the mistrust of men towards women. In the final scene there is much mention of cuckoldry by the male characters. (Claudio to Benedick) “he thinks upon the savage bull”, “we’ll tip thy horns with gold”, “play the beast in love”. This implies that Claudio now married still doesn’t trust women. Benedick then replies to Claudio’s comments. “Some such bull leaped your father’s cow”, “got a calf in that noble fleat, for you have just heard it bleat”. This suggests that Benedick doesn’t trust women as he insults Claudio’s mother in saying Claudio might be a bastard son. This conversation emphasises the mistrust of women in a patriarchal society. Finally, it is unusual for a comedy to end like this as it is traditional for a comedy to have a happy ending, this adds to Shakespeare not keeping to a traditional comedy.

Overall, I believe that Shakespeare’s play “Much Ado About Nothing” provides a satisfactory comic resolution in the final scene as Shakespeare has included two pairs of lovers and
ended with a happy ending by including a marriage ceremony which is traditional. However even though there are two wedding ceremonies and two pairs of lovers, the happy ending is still slightly unresolved. Shakespeare has emphasised the ending by having two wedding ceremonies. He has also included the facts of women in a patriarchal society about the rights and places of women.

Not quite as weak as fain't in the standardisation material.

Simple attempt at structuring an answer/argument. Clearly tried to focus some awareness.

Words: 1,452

Bibliography

Book- “Much Ado About Nothing” by William Shekspeare