



PLAY OF SHAKESPEARE- ROMEO & JULIET

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ABSTRACT

Romeo and Juliet strikes deep chords in its portrayal of youthful exuberance. The burning love of the two teenagers is moving because either we fondly remember similar feelings, yearn to experience such emotions, or feel a deep emptiness, fearing we never will. The emotional quality of the play, however, extends beyond the romantic and encapsulates other passions as well. The young characters lack the maturity and constraint to edit or censor any of their feelings. Mercutio is an archetypical rebel who speaks his mind and acts impulsively. Tybalt is equally voluble, lashing out in word and deed against any perceived wrongs. Accordingly, many critics (invariably middleaged or older) view the play as a warning about the dangers of adolescent impetuosity: If only these kids had had some self-control, the heartbreak and bloodshed could have been avoided. Macbeth, at the beginning of the play, seems to be a very loyal and honorable person. However, his character is changed by the influences of several factors. These factors have an influence on Macbeth, but he is responsible for his own destiny. The influences of the witches' prophecies, the influence of Lady Macbeth, and Macbeth's ambitions, are they key factors that lead to his downfall.

INTRODUCTION

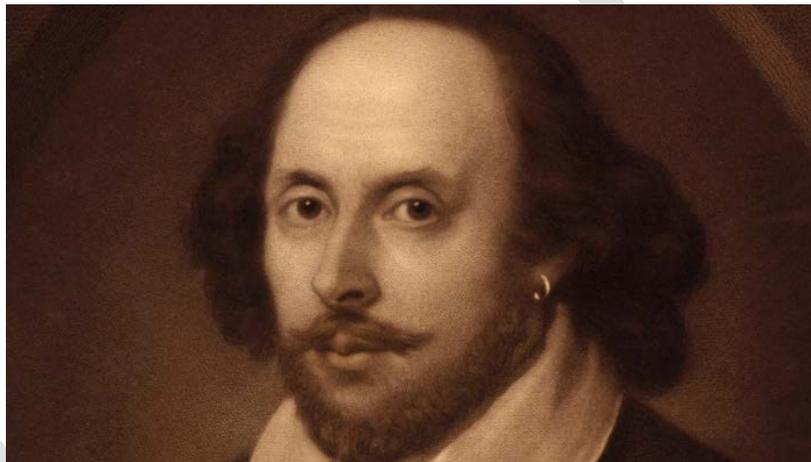
Lady Macbeth wants Macbeth to be a great and powerful man she loves him and her only ambition is to help him gain the throne. However, Macbeth has the final say in whether or not to go through with the killings, but he loves Lady Macbeth and wants to make her happy. After Macbeth killed King Duncan, he somewhat regrets the wrong doing. After the first murder, killing seems to be the only answer to continue to cover up his wrong doings or lose everything he has worked for. Lady Macbeth is shown early as an ambitious woman who can manipulate Macbeth easily. It is shown in the line "That I may pour my spirits in thine ear" . She manipulates his self-esteem by playing with his manliness and his bravery. When Macbeth is thinking of not following through on his plan to kill King Duncan, Lady Macbeth scorns him when she hears of his change of plans. She becomes successful in altering his ambition and appears to be the dominating individual in the relationship. Lady Macbeth is an influence on Macbeth that lets out his true side of evil. She has a strong influence on him and is a main cause for his increasing ambition. Macbeth is a tragedy of the

marriage relationship. The joint guilt of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth ultimately separates them, and they perish as individuals, each alone.

Romeo and Juliet may be regarded as the most popular and perhaps, one of the greatest tragedies, Shakespeare wrote, wherein he portrays “the highly maladjusted personalities, in love at first-sight relationships”. Juliet is a child growing up; immature, obviously, but in a very different way from Romeo. For her, love is the meaning of existence. She lives in and for love and she dies for love, whereas Romeo, evidently older, is continually revealed as immature - in the sense of being less grown-up than he seems. Initially, he is a sincere and passionate lover, one who turned sleepless for his love, and fled society to be above, thinking of Rosaline. But as soon as he is suddenly confronted with the exceeding beauty of Juliet, in a moment they have exchanged glances and fallen in love. It is this love at first sight, the most perfect form of affection, tragically leading them towards a suicidal death. The larger element in their love is carnal desire with its devastating action. Love is patient at bottom; lust urgent on surface. The death principle became operative in them, because “Romeo and Juliet entered into the relationship through rude will, and not through divine grace”. Abram and Balthasar (Montague servants) appear and the four start quarreling. Benvolio (Lord Montague's nephew) appears and tries to break up the quarrel, but Tybalt (Lady Capulet's nephew) appears and picks a fight with Benvolio. At length, officers try to break up the fight, even while Lord Capulet and Lord Montague begin to fight one another. The Prince of Verona (Escalus) appears and stops the fighting, proclaiming sentences of death to any that renew the fighting. Capulet responds that she is too young (nearly 14 years old) and must wait two years to marry, and then only to the man whom she chooses. Still, Capulet invites Paris to a party in the evening. Capulet's servant is sent to invite guests, but he can't read the list so he entreats Romeo to do so. Upon hearing of the party, Benvolio convinces Romeo to attend and compare his unattainable love Rosaline to more beautiful women to get his mind off Rosaline. At Capulet's house, Lady Capulet speaks to Juliet about her feelings for marrying Paris while Juliet's Nurse listens on, telling stories of Juliet's childhood. Juliet, although hesitant, promises to be courteous. Masked, Romeo, Mercutio, and Benvolio head to the Capulet party. Romeo is still depressed, saying he dreamt a fearful dream of an untimely death that will result because of the evening's events, but Benvolio just makes fun of him.



Shakespeare wrote *Romeo and Juliet* in 1595 during the early phase of his career. The play, one of his first forays into the tragic form, has a jejune quality and fails to adhere to the tenets of classical tragedy. Ironically, however, these “failings” make the play more compelling and moving than some of his later, more polished tragic works. In fact, except for the rarely performed *Timon of Athens*, it is the only Shakespearean tragedy that is not about the fall of a great man or woman. The two young heroes are neither kings nor queens; they are merely the offspring of well-to-do parents. In death they fail to gain either self-awareness or transcendence—learning nothing and feeling no regret. But it is the familiarity of these characters that immediately connects them with an audience. While none of us can ever imagine being a Lear, Macbeth, Cleopatra or Caesar, we all understand the pangs of overwhelming love. Even more horrifying, we all can imagine and empathize with the pain of losing a child. For this is the crux of the drama—the death of adolescent children cut off before their lives have barely begun.



CONCLUSION

Lawrence enters the tomb and finds Romeo and Paris dead. Juliet then awakes and spots Romeo. The Friar, upon hearing noises outside flees, leaving Juliet with Romeo. Juliet tries to kill herself with Romeo's poison, but can find none, either in the vial or on Romeo's lips. In desperation, she stabs herself with Romeo's dagger. The watch arrives, having found Balthasar and the Friar. In Mantua, Romeo's servant Balthasar arrives and tells Romeo that Juliet is dead. Romeo vows to see Juliet in her tomb and poison himself there, buying the poison from a poor Apothecary who illegally sells it to Romeo only because he (the Apothecary) needs the money. At Lawrence's cell, Friar John reports he could not deliver the letter to Romeo since he (John) got stuck in a quarantined house while searching for Romeo. Friar Lawrence heads to the cemetery with a crowbar. At the tomb, Paris and his page arrive and Paris mourns Juliet's death. Paris hides when he hears Romeo and Balthasar approach. Romeo orders Balthasar to leave him alone, no matter what he hears. The Foothills Theatre production celebrates and embraces the visceral qualities of the play. This is not a postmodern deconstruction striving to impose a deeper or political meaning upon the work, to modernize it, or to pass judgment. Rather, we seek to let the play speak for itself. *Romeo and Juliet* contains some of the most beautiful poetic language ever written. We hope you will listen, and allow the verse to permeate your being, as it works upon your hearts and souls. Don't search for a simplistic moral or an easy answer: Passionate love and impulsive violence defy logic and rationality. The genius of Shakespeare was his ability to put into words what the rest of us merely feel.

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