

# Love and conflict in romeo and juliet essay sample

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Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* shows how love between the Capulet Romeo and Montague Juliet resolves an "ancient" conflict between the two families. The play was first performed in 1595, the play was Shakespeare's first tragedy genre. Shakespeare believes the two lovers are bound by fate, "star-crossed". We know that the hatred shown between both families is an "ancient grudge", and that the rivalry is passed down the family tree. The prologue summarises the whole play in advance, this gives an overview of *Romeo and Juliet's* actions.

Shakespeare uses different styles of speech to represent social classes in the play. The upper class speak in a more knowledgeable blank verse, while the lower classes speak in prose. A clear example of this is the way the servants at the beginning insult each while speaking in prose, however as soon as soon as more aristocratic people come in, they speak in blank verse. From the start of the play we see the servants of both houses show their dislike to each other. This is one of the major conflicts in the play. Sampson and Gregory are servants of the house of Capulet.

The fact that the family rivalry and hatred is present in the low status of a servant, shows how "The quarrel is between our masters and us their men." The two Capulet servants show they are low in power as they speak in prose. They use puns as insults, "I mean, an we'll be in choler we'll draw", as "choler" also means "anger". They argue about their hatred for their enemy, insulting and mocking them in the process. They use sexual innuendo; Sampson says how he will rape the women of Montague, after he has dealt with the men, he will "be cruel to the maids- I will cut off their heads."

Gregory replies " The heads of the maids? " Sampson then answers his question with " Ay, the heads of the maids, or their maidenheads. " " maidenheads" meaning virginity. The servants try to denote the Montague servants by referring to them as animals, " A dog of the house of Montague moves me. " Shakespeare inserts dramatic action to the play; he applies it to the fight between the servants that is bound to occur. He achieves this by causing excitement over the argument of the servants, and the intimidation shown to start a fight.

The Capulet servants show they have pride and look down on Montague men, but they do not want to start a fight and get the blame for it, " I will frown as I pass by, and let them take it as they list. " The Capulet servants provoke the other house into fighting, by saying that they are leering them towards a fight, and if they reject they are cowards, " I will bite my thumb at them, which is a disgrace to bear it. "

Shakespeare intensifies the dramatic action by showing verbal duelling between the two houses. Montague " Do you bite your thumb at us sir? " Capulet " I do bite my thumb sir" Montague " Do you bite your thumb at us sir? Capulet " No sir, I do not bite my thumb at you sir, but I do bite my thumb sir. " This verbal duelling creates suspense to the physical fight, by both houses verbally fighting. Following the servants' conflict, another conflict occurs between Benvolio and Montague Tybalt. The peacemaker Benvolio comes to the scene to try and resolve the conflict in a non-violent method, while " the fiery" Tybalt comes only to stir more trouble and fight.

Benvolio is seen as a negotiator, he tries to talk to Tybalt to make him stop the fight, " I do but keep the peace. Put up thy sword or manage it to part these men with me. Benvolio appears mature and sensible, we get the impression that he wishes to avoid any means of conflict and see the household grudge resolved. The " fiery" Tybalt on the other hand is violent and resents the house of Capulet with intensity.

Unlike Benvolio he puts violence over peace, as he compares his hatred to that of hell, " What, drawn and talk of peace? I hate the word, as I hate hell, all Montagues and thee. " Because of his desire for violence, we see Tybalt as less mature and intelligent as Benvolio. The conflict between Benvolio and Tybalt sees uses of imagery and blank verse language; this shows their high status.

Benvolio speaks calmly and peacefully, while he is commanding in his speech. His desperation to try and resolve could be because he likes to be in control, or he feels it is the right thing to do, or he is in fear of his life. His desperation is shown by his imperative tone. " I do but keep peace. " There is an opposite antithesis as Benvolio is calm in his speech, while Tybalt is argumentative and shows his inner ferocity and anger. " Have at thee coward! " Both men use their imagery based on fire. Benvolio describes Tybalt as " fiery".

Tybalt uses his infernal imagery as he shows his Montague hatred, equal to his hatred of hell, hell being a fiery place of evil. " As I hate hell, all Montagues. " Shakespeare again creates dramatic action in the conflict between Benvolio and Tybalt. The opposite interests of both men create this

effect, as one is desperate to fight, while the other is desperate to stop the fight. Benvolio is demanding and desperate to keep peace, " I do but keep the peace. Put up thy sword, or manage it to part these men with me. "

Dramatic action for Benvolio is created by his goal to resolve the conflict and search for peace.

Tybalt wants to fight with his enemy and has no interest in peace, his violent conscious creates his dramatic action. I will now look into the triple way conflict between the Prince and the two houses. The Prince shows signs of resent to both houses, as they do not keep peace; he calls them " rebellious subjects," and " enemies to peace". The Prince, like Benvolio wants peace over brawling, he dislikes the way peace has been broken in Verona, where it is his job in his high state of Authority to keep peace and deal with disruptions against laws of Verona. " Three civil brawls bred of an airy word.

By thee, old Capulet, and Montague. Have thrice disturbed the quiet of our streets. " As the Prince is the highest in authority, he rightly feels he should be respected by the houses, and the fact that they have again broke his laws and not listened to his warnings makes him believe they do not respect him as they should. This leads to the Prince becoming angry, and causes him to make a final deadly warning, that if any further violent outbreaks occur, lives shall be taken. " If you ever disturb our streets again, your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.

As a further punishment, the Prince tells the citizens to be angered of the wrong doing which has taken place, this leads to extra guilt on the houses, " And made Verona's ancient citizens Cast by their grave beseeming

ornaments. " Looking back at where the families went wrong, they did not show signs of keeping peace, possibly because if a family gives in and backs away from the other, they will look the weaker and more cowardly family, and with the strong pride that is present in both households, it is not a desired option. Capulet " What is this?

Give me my long sword! " Montague " Thou villain Capulet! Hold me not! Let me go! " The Lords of both family have the same desire to fight as the servants, however this is not the way high class Lords should be acting. The Prince wants to be in control, and proves this by speaking in a commanding and powerful manner. He threatens lives of people that go against his orders, as he requires high amounts of respect because he is so high in authority.

The Prince uses rhetorical language to display his anger at the families disobeying his laws and orders, " Will they not hear? The Prince uses imagery of fiery blood, to show the houses' violent rage, " That quench the fire of your pernicious rage, with purple fountains issuing from your veins. " The families speak angrily as they want to fight, " Give me my long sword! " Lady Capulet adds comedy to the play as she mocks her husband's old age, " A crutch, a crutch! " Lady Montague shows her control over her husband, as she orders him not to get involved in the fight, " Thou shall not stir one foot to seek a foe. " Both families speak in blank verse to show their high status.

The lords' violent conscious adds dramatic action to the scene, as they immediately want to fight each other, " My sword I say! Old Montague is

come! " Lady Montague adds comedy; this decreases the build up of tension, " A crutch, a crutch! " Romeo has an internal conflict, as he loves Juliet, but he feels he should hate her, as she is Capulet. The conflict is between his love for her and the traditional rivalry of the houses. " O dear account, my life is in my foes debt. " Romeo wants to still be loyal to his house, but he wants to love Juliet.

He feels guilt when he marries her because he keeps it secret against his family and friends. " I pray, that thou consent to marry us today! " Romeo is also in fear as he is going against his family and house, " Ay, so I fear the more is my unrest. " Romeo's love is so strong, he finally comes to the conclusion that he is ready to give up his name, so he can love Juliet without the guilt of being a Montague, " Call me but ' love' and I'll be new baptised. Henceforth I never will be Romeo. " This is a big step for Romeo, he is ready to give up his pride and dignity of being a Montague.

Romeo speaks in blank verse; this shows he is of a high social status. Romeo is desperate and eccentric in his speech as he is so infatuated with Juliet; he proves this by immediately wanting to kiss Juliet. " My lips, two blushing pilgrims ready to stand. To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss. " He compares Juliet with the shining dominant beauty of the sun, " what light yonder window breaks? It is the east, and Juliet is the sun. " He speaks rhetorically about his love, " Did my heart love till now? "

When Romeo first lays eyes on Juliet, he speaks in praise of her as if she is an angel, and is too beautiful for this earth, " Beauty too rich for use, for Earth too dear. " Romeo then goes on to kiss Juliet, and then comes out with

a rather fast decision that he is in love. Dramatic action is then created when his perfect love is spoilt when he discovers she is a Capulet, " Is she a Capulet? O dear account, my life is in my foes debt. " Dramatic action is then intensified when he decides he will give up his name for Juliet, " Call me but ' love' and I'll be new baptised.

Henceforth I never will be Romeo. " Romeo firstly is in sexually attraction to fellow Montague Roseline, his love is unrequited. " out of her favour where I am in love. " Romeo is depressed and in despair for he is " out of her favour" as his love is not being returned. The love is one way. Romeo is so mixed up with his love he is lost in thought, this causes Romeo to lose track of time, as he believes the day is dragging on, " Ay me sad hours seem long. "

Romeo wrongly thinks he is in true love, however his attraction to her is only based on her beauty, " Love is a smoke made with the fume of sights. This is courtly love. When Romeo speaks about his false love for Roseline, he shows his state of depression and despair, " Not having that, that makes them short. " Romeo uses imagery of Cupid to say that Roseline will not fall for his love. " She'll not be hit with Cupid's arrow. " He says she has " Diane's whit" as Roseline will not show love back for his unrequited love, and she will not love anyone. Romeo uses oxymoron in his words to show his despair and confusion in his love. " O heavy lightness. Serious Vanity. "

Shakespeare again creates dramatic action in Romeo's love for Roseline, Romeo's point of desperation and depression causes this. Romeo is in an illusion by thinking he is in true love while it is truly courtly love, this shows his inexperience in love, this also creates slight humour. " Why such is love's



transgression. Grieves heavy on my breast. " Romeo passes on his depression in his conversation with Benvolio. Romeo " Dost thou laugh? " Benvolio " No coz, I rather weep. " Romeo " Good heart, at what? " Benvolio " At thy good heart's oppression. " The main love in the play is that of Romeo and Juliet.

They fall in love at first sight, as they're both attracted to each other's beauty. Romeo shows Juliet's beauty by saying she outshines the brightest torches in the room, " O she doth teach the torches to burn bright. " Again we see Romeo falling easily to sexual attraction, as he did with Roseline. " And touching her makes my hand rude. " He considers Juliet a holy object and therefore untouchable. Unlike Roseline, Juliet answers back to Romeo's love, " My only love sprung from my only hate. "

Romeo uses imagery to compare Juliet to the beauty of angels, " Beauty too rich for use, for Earth too dear. He again refers to Juliet as holy, as he says his lips are pilgrims that have travelled to her to kiss her holiness, " My lips, two blushing pilgrims ready to stand. " Romeo uses hyperbole terms to express Juliet's beauty, " O she doth teach the torches to burn bright. " Romeo and Juliet's language is both really for the moment, as they wish for the moment never to end. They are both very lustful, as they both have the same desire to kiss each other. Romeo " My lips two blushing pilgrims ready stand to smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss. " Juliet " Then have my lips the sin that they have took. "

Both lovers speak in blank verse showing their high role in their houses.

Dramatic action is created in the way that both Romeo and Juliet both fall in

love at first sight. A big shock for both is when find out they are from rival families. Romeo says, " My life is in my foes debt. " Juliet shows the same reaction, " My only love sprung from my only hate. " Romeo's praise of Juliet helps strengthen dramatic action. I believe Shakespeare wrote the play to show the power of love. He shows the dangers and advantages in the play. Because there love was so strong, Romeo and Juliet died and many people were killed.