

Romeo and juliet essay



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Romeo and Juliet is one of Shakespeare's plays about tragedy. It is about two lovers who commit suicide when their feuding families prevent them from being together. The play has many characters, each with its own role in keeping the plot line. Some characters have very little to do with the plot but some have the plot revolving around them. Friar Lawrence does not have very much time on stage but the time he does have is crucial to the plot line. Through his words Friar Lawrence demonstrates that he is a good intentioned, yet sometimes short-sighted, man who is not afraid to take risks to help others. One of Friar Lawrence's most favourable traits is how good intentioned he is. He may do something out of the ordinary if he thinks the outcome will help someone he cares for. For example, when he says "In one respect I'll thy assistant be; for this alliance may so happy prove, to turn your households rancour to pure love." (Act 2, Scene 3), he is saying that the only reason he will marry Romeo and Juliet is because he hopes that the marriage will end the hostilities between the two houses. When he says "Shall Romeo by my letters know our drift, and hither shall he come; and he and I shall watch thy waking, and that very night shall Romeo bear thee to Mantua." (Act 4, Scene 1), he tells Juliet how everything will be all right. Unfortunately, for all his good intentions the play still ends in tragedy.

Friar Lawrence is a man who is not afraid to take risks when he feels it is necessary to help someone. For example in Act 2, Scene 6, when he marries Romeo and Juliet, he is risking his reputation as a Friar so he can help the two lovers. Also, when he says "Take thou this vial, being then in bed, and this distilled liquor drink thou off;" (Act 4, Scene 1), he is suggesting that Juliet drink a potion so that she might feign her own death and avoid

marrying Paris. This is an extremely risky thing to do because anything might happen to Juliet while she is unconscious.

Even after all Friar Lawrence did to help Romeo and Juliet the play still ended in tragedy because of Friar Lawrence's short-sightedness.

When the Friar married Romeo and Juliet in secrecy, he did not think of all the complications that would arise but instead went on with the marriage because at that time he thought it was the right thing to do. In Act 4, Scene 1, he gave Juliet a sleeping potion without thinking of the possible outcomes of such an outrageous plan. He admits that much of the fault of the tragedy lies in his hands when he says "And here I stand both to impeach and purge myself condemned and myself excused", and when he says "Her nurse is privy; and, if aught in this miscarried by myself..." (Act 5, Scene 3).

Although Friar Lawrence does not have an especially large role, his role is none the less important. It is because of his good intentions that he was willing to help his friends that Romeo and Juliet were married – a key event in the play. It is because of his willingness to take risks for his friends that Juliet acquired the sleeping potion – another key event in the play. Finally, it was the shortsightedness of his actions that in part led to the deaths of the two lead characters. This demonstrates that Friar Lawrence was a man who was a man with good intentions who was willing to take risks to help his friends. If he had been any other way, the play might not have turned out the way it did.