

Analyse
shakespeare's
treatment of act three
scene one as a
turning point in the ...



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Romeo and Juliet was one of William Shakespeare's last plays that he wrote, no one knows exactly when it was wrote but it is thought that it was wrote in the late 16th century. The play is about a young Montague man who falls in love with a young Capulet woman and there woeful tale of marriage and death. The play starts with a prologue which explains about a feud between two families, Capulet and Montague, and how two " star crossed lovers" meet and fall in love, but little do they know that there love is doomed before it has even begun.

The play has many turning points throughout but perhaps the most significant one is in act three scene one where Mercutio is killed by Tybalt, but before then there are a few more, the first one being the Capulet servant asking Romeo and Benvolio to read him the invitation list to the Capulet ball, this is then where Romeo reads, what he thinks his one true loves name, Rosaline on the list which gives him the incentive to go to the ball, If the servant had not asked Romeo to read the list for him then he would never have know Rosaline was going to the party and would have therefore meant that he would of never have saw Juliet, his actual true love.

Another turning point in the play is when Juliet's father tells her that she has to marry Paris and she has no choice on the matter, this forces Juliet to go to drastic measures and use the sleeping drug that leads the Capulet family and Paris to believe that she is dead, which in turn also leads to Romeo's and her own death as well, in the chamber, when he does not get the news that the death is a fake and that Juliet is in fact not dead. In act three scene one, the most important scene in the play, Mercutio is killed by Tybalt in a duel which is then the catalyst for Romeo and Juliet's death.

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The way Shakespeare goes about act three scene one is very clever, when writing it he has used a number of different dramatic devices which create more drama in the play. At the start of the scene Mercutio and Benvolio are in a square in Verona relaxing, but all is not well and Benvolio realises this and tries to warn Mercutio. " I pray thee good Mercutio, let's retire: the day is hot, the Capels are abroad, and if we meet we shall not scape a brawl, for now, these hot days, is the mad blood stirring. " Here Benvolio is warning Mercutio that the mood is not right and he feels that if they meet with the Capulet's then it will be hard for them to not fight.

Shakespeare is clever in how he writes it because he uses pathetic fallacy to reflect the mood of Mercutio and Benvolio by saying that the " day is hot" and " these hot days, is the mad blood stirring" by using this technique Shakespeare is reflecting Mercutio's mood with the hot weather, as on all hot days people get moody and have short tempers. Mercutio though is in a strange mood and is picking a fight with Benvolio he says that Benvolio is just like a man who " when he enters the confines of a tavern, claps me his sword upon the table, and says " god send me no need of thee! "; and by the operation of the second cup draws him on the drawer, when indeed there is no need.

Mercutio is saying that Benvolio is picking a fight for no reason what so ever when indeed it is Mercutio who looks to be picking a fight. He even says that Benvolio is in a mood and will argue with a man for no reason at all " why, thou wilt quarrel with a man that hath a hair more or a hair less in his beard than thou hast; thou wilt quarrel with a man for cracking nuts, having no other reason but because thou hast hazel eyes. How could Mercutio say this

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to Benvolio when he is obviously the one who is picking a fight for no reason, it is ironic because what Mercutio is saying about Benvolio is actually true, but about himself! Maybe it is because of the heat that he is in such a foul mood?

From then on in there is references to Mercutio's death with Benvolio saying that if he acted like Mercutio then he would be dead within an hour and a quarter " and I were so apt to quarrel as thou art, any man should buy the fee-simple of my life for an hour and a quarter" surely here Mercutio is getting the warning signs from Benvolio. No sooner has Benvolio predicted Mercutio's death than does Tybalt arrive, this is the use of dramatic timing from Shakespeare, and by using this it will give the audience a feeling that something important and dramatic is going to happen. We know that in the Capulet ball Tybalt threatened to kill Romeo if he saw him so if they meet we know that there will be a brawl.

Mercutio is still in a fowl mood when Tybalt arrives as we see when Benvolio warns him that the Capulets are coming, " By my head, here come the Capulets" " by my heel, I care not" Mercutio does not want to be in this type of mood with the Capulets and especially Tybalt as there will defiantly be drama if he is. Then Mercutio actually asks Tybalt for a fight " and but one word with one of us? Couple it with something; make it a word and a blow" On another day though Tybalt would perhaps not think twice about duelling with Mercutio but not today, Tybalt lets it be known that he does not want a duel with him at that moment but on another occasion he will dully oblige, " you shall find me apt enough to that, sir, and you will give me occasion" he

is clearly not interested at all with Mercutio and so therefore must be looking for someone else, Romeo?

Still though Mercutio will not leave it be, he uses what Tybalt says to him next to provoke him into a fight, Tybalt asks Mercutio if he "consortest with Romeo" to which Mercutio replies "consort? What, dost thou make us minstrels? And thou make minstrels of us, look to hear nothing but discords here's my fiddlestick, here's that shall make you dance. 'Zounds, consort!" Tybalt asks Mercutio if he consorts with Romeo, does he acquaint himself with Romeo, but Mercutio deliberately mistakes Tybalt's meaning of consort for another in the hope it will provoke him.

Mercutio gets his back up and starts to become more and more frustrated with Tybalt, he says "consort? hat, dost thou make us minstrels" Mercutio is using the word consort out of context Tybalt meant it in the form of does he keep company with Romeo but Mercutio uses it as an insult by deliberately taking it as Tybalt calling Mercutio and his associates a group of musicians as an insult. Mercutio then says "and thou make minstrels of us, look to hear nothing but discords" he is saying that Tybalt is looking to hear the worst from him, to maybe provoke him by saying that they are bad minstrels, bad musicians, as an insult to Mercutio and his company. Mercutio then is so outraged and angered that he threatens Tybalt "here's my fiddlestick, here's that shall make you dance.

'Zounds consort. Mercutio now has his sword and is threatening Tybalt with it, he says that he will make him dance by using it, insulting Tybalt; by making Tybalt dance it would embarrass him, especially in front of the other

Capulets. Benvolio then realises the realistic chance of Mercutio and Tybalt coming to blows and warns them inside away from everyone, especially after the princes warning that anyone who causes trouble in Verona will be banished, " We talk here in the public haunt of men: either withdraw unto some private place, Or reason coldly of your grievances, Or else depart; here all eyes gaze on us. " Benvolio is warning both men that unless they resolve there problem then they better go somewhere more suitable for a fight not in a public square.

Mercutio then states that he " will not budge for no man's pleasure" just to get the message clearly over to Tybalt that if he is ready to fight then Mercutio will not think twice about matching him, he will not back down. The entry of Romeo is crucial, just as Mercutio and Tybalt are about to come to blows Tybalt spots his man and leaves Mercutio, doing this would surely anger Mercutio because he is all ready for a fight and then the hole situation defuses, this is a bad thing because of the mood he was already in it will surely only get worse from now on. Tybalt then is clearly not best pleased with Romeo in his first words to him he calls him a villain, but Romeo ignores it completely as he is clearly not interested in arguing with Tybalt.

Tybalt though will not let it go, it is clear that he will not rest until he comes to blows with Romeo, he again insults Romeo by calling him " boy" and then speaks of how Romeo has caused him injuries and how he cannot excuse them, but what injuries has he caused Tybalt, maybe him seeing Romeo with Juliet at the Capulet ball, does he know about there relationship? He then asks Romeo to " turn and draw" the tension is really building now and the audience know that something big is going to happen very soon.

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Romeo then pronounces his love for Tybalt, after all they are family after the wedding, " but love thee better than thou canst devise, till thou shalt know the reason of my love; and so, good Capulet, which name I tender as dearly as mine own, be satisfied. " By saying this it will cause confusion and also anger with the others, no body but the friar Lawrence and Juliet's nurse know about the wedding, if they did it would cause absolute outrage within both the Capulet and Montague families.

Mercutio is so outraged that Romeo is backing down from Tybalt's request to draw that he steps in on them both and once again starts with tybalt and offers to duel with him, he insults Tybalt badly, " O calm, dishonourable, vile submission! ' Alla stoccata' carries it away. Tybalt you rat catcher, will you walk? " Mercutio uses Alla stoccata as a name for Tybalt, he means that Tybalt has won in his quest to fight, but not with the man who he intended to do so with, but with in fact his closest friend Mercutio. Mercutio calls Tybalt a rat catcher meaning that Tybalt prays on the weaker foe like Romeo, he is not scared of him and is in a real raging temper now.

He then tells Tybalt that he is going to take one of his 9 lives away " Good king of cats, nothing but one of your nine lives that I mean to make bold withal, and as you shall use me hereafter, dry-beat the rest of eight. Will you pluck your sword out of his pilcher by the ears? Make haste, lest mine be about you ears ere it be out. " Mercutio calling Tybalt the good king of cats is intended to mean that he has nine lives like it was thought cats had back in the Elizabethan era, he asks Tybalt to draw his sword or else he will draw his own and it will be about Tybalt's face as he is now ready to duel. As they both draw Romeo suddenly becomes interested in the duel, but if he was so <https://assignbuster.com/analyse-shakespeares-treatment-of-act-three-scene-one-as-a-turning-point-in-the-play-essay-sample/>

interested himself then why would he not have taken up Tybalt's offer to take up his sword with him?

He is tipping of Mercutio when he himself has just refused to fight, should Mercutio be so silly as to listen to Romeo who himself was not up to fight, but is more than willing to point out what to do for Mercutio, he goes from one extreme to another, as they fight he points out that the " prince expressively hath forbid this bandying in Verona streets" this is a complete contrast to what he has just said, he has gone from telling Mercutio to put his rapier up and fight to warning him and also Tybalt about the princes warning that they will be banished for any trouble caused in the Verona streets. After this warning, perhaps the most significant thing in the play happens, as Romeo steps in between Tybalt and Mercutio he actually allows Tybalt to wound Mercutio right underneath his own arm, this is ironic because Romeo's not wanting to fight with Tybalt caused so much disbelief and rage in Mercutio that he stepped in and actually fought Tybalt himself.

Tybalt flees the scene as soon as he realises that Mercutio is wounded, Mercutio though still has enough strength to speak out to Benvolio and Romeo " I am hurt. A plague a'both houses! I am sped. Is he gone and hath nothing? " Mercutio knows that he is finished and that he will not recover he is asking if he hurt tybalt though as a compensation. He tells Benvolio to go fetch a surgeon as he will need his wounds addressed to if he is to survive. Romeo does not no the full extent of the wound as he tells Mercutio to be strong and have courage, how Romeo can be saying things like this to Mercutio in his hour of need I do not know because it is his fault in the first place that he is in fact going to die.

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Mercutio though still has breathe left to answer Romeo's questions as to how bad he is hurt " No, tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church door, but 'tis enough, 'twill serve. Ask for me tomorrow and I will be a grave man. I am peppered, I warrant for this world. A plague a'both your houses! ' Zounds, a dog, a rat, a mouse, a cat, to scratch a man to death! A braggart, a rouge, a villain, that fights by the book of arithmetic. Why the dev'l came you between us! I was hurt under your arm. " Mercutio has told Romeo that his wound may not be as big as the church door or as deep as a well but it is enough to finish him off, he then jokes about him dying by saying " ask for me tomorrow and you shall find me a grave man.

This is another joke from Mercutio, as we know he is already funny but to crack jokes as you are about to die is astonishing. Mercutio then goes onto curse both of the house Capulet and Montague, he questions why Romeo would come between him and Tybalt, he has got him killed know and all for what? Mercutio then goes on to tell Benvolio to get him inside or he shall faint, again this is another one of Shakespeare's jokes as he says that he will faint but in reality he will not just faint but will never awake again. He then accuses Romeo for his death he says " I have it, and soundly too. Your houses! " he has said that he has been fatally wounded and all because of Romeo.

After Mercutio is took away by Benvolio to die Romeo talks about his death " This gentlemen, the princes near ally, my very friend, hath got his mortal hurt in my behalf; my reputation stain'd with Tybalt's slander - tybalt, that an hour hath been my cousin. O sweet Juliet, thy beauty hath made me effeminate, and in my temper soften'd valour's steel! " Romeo is really upset
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that his very close friends had died he blames his death upon Tybalt who but just one hour ago was made his cousin when he wed Juliet, he also blames Juliet for his death as it was her beauty that in turn has caused all of this, after all if he had not been with Juliet at the party then Tybalt would not have been looking for Romeo to kill him and perhaps then Mercutio would not have been killed stepping in to fight Romeo's battles. He says that Juliet's love has made him lose his manly qualities and become weak.

After the death of Mercutio Tybalt enters again, this is again dramatic timing as we know now that Romeo will be furious with Tybalt for killing Mercutio. Benvolio warns of Tybalt's presence but Romeo is not bothered he is outraged at him for slaying Mercutio " Again, in triumph, and Mercutio slain? Away to heaven, respective lenity, and fire-ey'd fury be my conduct now! Now, Tybalt, take the ' villain' back again that late thou gavest me, for Mercutio's soul is but little way above our heads, staying for thine to keep him company: either thou or I, or both, must go with him. " Romeo says that Tybalt is back after his recent triumph of killing Mercutio, perhaps he wants more?

Romeo though is outraged and tells Tybalt that either himself, or him, or indeed both of them must join Mercutio in heaven. They both fight, and Romeo catches Tybalt and he falls to the ground. Benvolio is quick to warn Romeo of what will happen to him if he does not flee straight away " Romeo, away be gone! " he and Romeo know that what he has done is stupid because everybody in the square has seen him slay Tybalt and now the Prince will be sure to banish him from Verona. After reading through act three scene one, we can see how Romeo's mood dramatically changes. <https://assignbuster.com/analyse-shakespeares-treatment-of-act-three-scene-one-as-a-turning-point-in-the-play-essay-sample/>

Before the dramatic events of act three scene one Romeo's comments put the ideas of light, happiness and love into our minds.

When he is on the balcony with Juliet he talks about how his love for her and how nothing can stop him, "with love's light wings did I o'erreach these walls" this is saying he is so light that he actually flew over the walls to get to her, implying that his love is so strong for her that he can not be stopped by anything, "and what love can do, that dares love attempt: therefore thy kinsmen have to stop me" this backs up that his love is so strong that no man can get in his way to get to Juliet. He also talks about Juliet's beauty and how he sees her "two of the fairest stars in all the heaven... to twinkle in their spheres till they return" and "that birds would sing and think it were not night" these quotes show how Romeo's love for Juliet is the strongest love possible and she is the light of the earth, the most important thing in his life. After the events of act three scene one Romeo's mood is completely different, from talking of love, brightness and happiness we go to talk of death, hate and doom.

When Romeo receives news that Juliet is dead he heads off to the Capulet's tomb where he meets with Balthazar and goes into the Capulet tomb, he is talking of himself dying "as I descend to this bed of death" and his disturbed soul "my betossed soul" these phrases lead us to believe that since Mercutio's death Romeo has not been the same man, he is no longer talking of happiness and bright images but of his death and the wrong doing that has occurred over the past few days. He is talking about dying "the doors of breath seal with a righteous kiss." He now is a total different character to the one we knew earlier on in the play. Before act three scene one, we see <https://assignbuster.com/analyse-shakespeares-treatment-of-act-three-scene-one-as-a-turning-point-in-the-play-essay-sample/>

on numerous occasions Romeo's feelings towards Juliet and the contrast of light and dark love between her and Rosaline. When Romeo is with Rosaline he always talks of their love between each other as heavy and he always seems to be down but when he meets Juliet he seems to have a more free love towards her and describes their love as light and bright.

He also seems to regard Juliet in much higher esteem than Rosaline. Romeo constantly describes Juliet as bright and powerful, quotes like "it is in the east and Juliet is the sun" and "arise fair sun, and kill the envious moon" show just how highly regarded Juliet is by Romeo, he is saying that Juliet is the light of his world and that others are envious of her. Another example of how beautiful and highly regarded Juliet is to Romeo is when he says that Juliet is a "bright angel" and that she is a "winged messenger of heaven" this shows that Romeo is in awe of Juliet because he has described her as one of the most beautiful and precious creatures in the universe.