

Choice

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Have you ever heard the saying, “ you’re caught between a rock and a hard place”? That’s exactly what happened to Juliet in *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare, a play about a suicidal, drama-obsessed boy secretly getting married to a girl from a rival gang, eventually ending both of their lives. Juliet faked her death because she didn’t want to marry Paris, her parents threatened her, Romeo got banished, she thought it was her only choice, and Friar Lawrence told her to. To begin, Juliet pretended to die because she didn’t want to marry Paris. She didn’t love Paris and she wanted to be faithful to Romeo, since she was already married to him. In act four Paris said to Juliet, “ Do not deny.

.. that you love me” and she replied, “ I will confess to you that I love him” (4. 1. 24-25).

She avoided saying that she does or does not love Paris because she can’t tell him that she loves someone else. Also, Juliet said to the nurse, “...how shall this be prevented? / My husband is on earth, my faith in heaven” (3.

5. 206-207). She was seeking the nurse’s advice for how to stop the marriage to Paris because she already has a husband. So, Juliet faked her death because she doesn’t want to marry Paris. Next, Juliet created a phony suicide because her parents threatened to kick her out to the streets if she didn’t marry Paris.

Juliet couldn’t imagine being homeless, but she also didn’t want to marry another man. In an argument Juliet’s father, Lord Capulet, says, “ But, and you will not wed, I’ll pardon you! / Graze where you will, you shall not house

with me” (3. 5. 189-190). In a nutshell he’s saying, if you don’t get married, you can’t live with me.

Juliet thought that the only way to fix this was to fake her death and run away with Romeo. Then she wouldn’t need to live with her parents. Juliet’s parents’ threat resulted in her forging her demise. Another reason Juliet counterfeited her death was because Romeo got banished. Faking her death was the first step to live happily ever after with her husband.

To Juliet living without Romeo was worse than dying. So, she took the potion to escape that dreadful fate until Romeo came to rescue her. Right before Juliet drinks the vial of sleeping potion she says, “ Romeo, Romeo, Romeo, I drink to thee” (4. 4. 58).

This shows that she’s faking her death in order to be reunited with Romeo soon. Juliet faked her death because Romeo got banished. Also, Juliet pretended to take her life because she thought that it was the only option. She thought that she loved Romeo more than her own life, therefore she was willing to give it up for him when she found out that the prince had banished him. But, the Friar offered a way out that meant Romeo and her could be together forever. Her love-drug infested mind couldn’t think of any other rational option so she responded by faking her death.

Juliet is obviously not thinking straight when she says, “ O, bid me leap, rather than marry Paris... bid me go into a new-made grave” (4. 1.

77, 84). Before the Friar gave her a third option, Juliet thought she either had to marry Paris or die. She didn’t really want to do either so she was forced to

turn to option number three. Juliet artificially killed herself because she thought it was her only option. Finally, Juliet faked her death because the Friar told her to. Friar Lawrence was practically a father to Romeo so Juliet respected him and took his advice.

When he told her, " Take thou this vial, being then in bed" (4. 1. 93) and the rest of the plan she responded, " Give me, give me" (4. 1. 121).

She was eager to do what the Friar wanted her to do because she usually did what he said. Juliet fabricated a fake suicide because Friar Lawrence told her to. To conclude, many different events in Juliet's life caused her to fake her death. First, she wanted to escape her duty to marry Paris. Her parent's threat to disown her if she didn't get married also drove her to fake her death.

Next, she pretended to take her own life because Romeo got banished and she thought she didn't have another choice. Finally, Friar Lawrence told her to. The next time you're " stuck between a rock and a hard place" and have to make a tough choice think rationally, consider all of your options, and get good advice. Works Cited Shakespeare, William. The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet.

Elements of Literature: Third Course. Ed. Kathleen Daniel. Austin: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 2003