

Cyrano de bergerac english essay

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What does someone expect out of a man these days? Should he be good with words? Does he need to be good looking? These both were expectations of men in Cyrano's time period.

In this tragic love story about two men who struggle to win over one woman's heart, deciding to work together seemed like the only option. Using each other to form to society's view, will they succeed? In the play *Cyrano de Bergerac* by Edmond Rostand, looking through the gender lens the reader can see that in Cyrano's time period men were expected to be both good with words and handsome. In act one, Cyrano and Le Bret are outside on a stroll talking. Le Bret asks Cyrano whom it is that he loves. Cyrano tells him that it is his cousin, Roxane.

Le Bret says that Cyrano should go talk to her because he showed his bravery before her very eyes today. Cyrano replies, "...I think of how much I, too, would like to be arm in arm with a woman, under the moon. I let myself be carried away I forgot myself- and then I suddenly see the shadow of my profile on the garden wall" (367). This explains how Cyrano feels like he cannot be with a woman because of the way he looks. Even though, he very much longs the company of a woman.

He struggles with society's opinion that men need to have the qualities of being good looking and impeccable speech in order to be with a woman. During act two a plan is formed. A plan that Cyrano and Christian both join in on, in order to win Roxane's heart. While Cyrano is telling his story of the 100 men, Christian makes insults of his nose. Christian is trying to gain respect from the troops to be accepted since he isn't from Gascony.

What Christian doesn't know is Cyrano has been ordered by Roxane to protect him. Cyrano finds out that it is Christian and orders everyone out. Cyrano and Christian have a talk about how Christian is not good with words. Something inside Cyrano falls into place and he says to Christian, "...We'll walk together: you in the light, I in the shadows. I'll make you eloquent, you'll make me handsome" (383). This brilliant plan makes the two men acceptable for Roxane, but only when their talents are placed in each other's hands.

This way Cyrano can express his love for Roxane in words, while Christian gets to physically be with her. Together they created one man that mends to society's view. When it comes to the beginning of act three, Roxane visits Cyrano to tell him about the letters Christian had sent. She exclaims how the letters were superbly written. What she doesn't know is that the letters she had received were not written by Christian, but by his secret eloquence Cyrano.

Roxane exclaims to Cyrano, " Oh, he's so handsome! And such a brilliant mind! I can't tell you how much I love him!" (385). Roxane is captivated by the impeccable writing and Christian's beaming appearance. She has not even spoken to him in person, yet she already feels love for him. This gives the reader a taste of the strong compassion and expectation the women had for a man in the time period that could be both handsome and use words to whisper into their souls. Later in act three, Cyrano and Christian have been sending letters and making appearances lightly. Christian gets tired of not being able to talk to her on his own.

He decides to tell Cyrano to go away, that he wants to try himself. Christian ends up wanting to chicken out last minute, but Cyrano walks away. Try as he might, Christian fails to come to words around Roxane. This upsets her. Agitated, Roxane says to him, “ And it displeases me! As it would if you became ugly” (390).

Roxane is clearly telling Christian that being only handsome is not good enough for her expectations. Making Christian feel that not only is he not good enough for her, but not good enough for anyone else as well. Act four brings much drama to the newly weds as Christian and Cyrano are sent off to battle. Christian finds out Cyrano has been writing much more than he led on. He was writing twice a day, going out and risking his life crossing enemy lines.

He draws to the conclusion that Cyrano is also, in love with Roxane. The amount of letters drives Roxane to show up at the battle site. Risking her life to tell Christian how she has changed her feelings for him. She has come to pronounce her true love to him. Roxane says to Christian, “ Your true self has prevailed over your outer appearance.

I now love you for your soul alone” (411). This causes an inner conflict for Christian. Roxane no longer cares for his good looks any longer. This was his only part of the deal, and she no longer needed it. It was Cyrano’s soul she longed for and fell in love with.

Showing that in the end no one person can live up to the expectations people have enforced on one another. In the end trying to hard has ended in failure for this young man. Cyrano does one last good deed for his friend, as <https://assignbuster.com/cyrano-de-bergerac-english-essay/>

he lie on the ground dying. Cyrano tells him he told Roxane everything, and that she still loved him. He dies happily.

In the story, the reader can see looking through the gender lens that men were expected to be both sharp and expressive in order to be accepted in to society's view of men. If you were below the expectations, you did not have a spot with a woman or others. In this time period things have changed. Women no longer expect both out of a man, but would settle for one over the other. Looking past the face and onto one's personality like Roxane should have done in the beginning. Your true self lies in your soul, not your clothing or your face.