

Alec Carlyle

ERWC

Paquin

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Romeo and Juliet Final Essay

Shakespeare's famous play, Romeo and Juliet, is a tragedy that tells the story of how two children, madly in love, met their deaths. The party most guilty is a matter of debate, but I thrust forth the idea that, other than the couple themselves, the parties most responsible for their deaths are Friar Laurence, Lord Capulet, and the Nurse. Out of those three, the Friar has the bloodiest hands, as he was the plan's architect, as well as the procurer of the drug and the one who sent the messenger. Out of those three things, only the drug functioned as it was supposed to. Partial blame is inescapable for our well meaning Friar. As for Lord Capulet, he is credited for pushing Juliet to desperation. The Nurse was the one that violated Juliet's trust the most, and gave the first domino a light shove. Despite all this, none of the perpetrators had malignant intent, but rather they were woefully misguided in their attempts to help. The most notable of these would have to be when Lord Capulet tried to marry off Juliet to lessen her sorrows over Tybalt's demise, regardless of the fact that she was morose over Romeo's banishment.

Beginning with the most responsible, we have the Friar. The Friar is perhaps the saddest story, as he put in a massive amount of effort to ensure the

lover's happiness. He fills the role of the mentor for the young couple, consistently offering guidance and advice to the both of them, though it is worth bringing up that he is closer with Romeo than Juliet, as he had a prior friendship with the boy beforehand. When Juliet is on the verge of ending her own life, he provides her with the draught to prevent her death, stating that if "thou hast the strength of will to slay thyself, then is it likely thou wilt undertake a thing like death to chide away the shame. (Iv, i) He then proceeds to concoct a plan that allows the two lovers to be together, far away from the warring of their families. His next blunder was leaving Juliet alone in the tomb with Romeo's corpse, which there was no valid reason for doing so. Juliet was emotionally shaky at best, and leaving her with the cadaver of her lover was a mistake. The Friar mentions at one point that maybe fate itself is against the couple, and the play seems to lend itself to the idea, as even with all the Friar's strides to save them, he failed utterly.

Lord Capulet follows close behind in the race to metaphorically murder two children. His reactions to events border on ludicrous, and always seems to be the countering force to any sense of reason within the story. Consider his response to the deaths of Tybalt and Mercutio, and the banishment of Romeo. He sees his daughter wallowing in sadness and somehow arrives at the conclusion that a second marriage is the adequate solution to her woes. In what is perhaps the most sane thing Juliet does in the entire play, she rejects her father's offer, which in true tragic fashion, causes him to fly into a rage. Lady

Capulet offers no assistance in the matter either, and leaves Juliet to fend for herself. With her parents against her, she turns to the one she trusts the most: the Nurse. The Nurse happens to side with Lord Capulet in the argument, betraying the faith placed in her by the young Juliet. As if this amount of pressure weren't enough already, Lord Capulet adds an additional source of stress by setting a deadline for Juliet's coming engagement, pushing her ability to reason to beyond the realm of logic.

Though nearly every character in the play bears guilt that they could have prevented the end of the couple's lives if they had just done one thing differently, and who better to exemplify this than the Nurse? Juliet's most trusted confidant, she abandoned Juliet's faith in a single poorly thought out move. When Juliet needed her the most, the Nurse turned her back on her. Perhaps siding with Juliet would have been futile in staving off Lord Capulet's insistence, but having another person to rely on just might have saved her life. Perhaps Romeo and Juliet were doomed from the get-go, and the others were merely an unfortunate catalyst of this.

Regardless, every single character, barring the minor character Peter and the nameless musicians, play some part in advancing the the untimely deaths of the titular newlyweds. The three characters previously mentioned all were relatively close to at least one of the duo, bordering on family, and had full potential to stop what came next, but failed miserably.