Jackson Lytle

Mrs. Yoshihara-Ha

Period 2/ English 1 H

June 2, 2011

Romeo and Juliet

 In the play, “Romeo and Juliet”, by William Shakespeare, many characters exhibit bad traits, that ultimately contribute to the protagonist’s untimely deaths. The characters in the play exhibit melodrama, and make rash and deplorable decisions which lead to their lamentable downfall. In the play, the two main protagonists, Romeo and Juliet, fall in love with each other just hours after meeting. Being from rival families, they had to keep their forbidden love a secret, and at the end of the play, the two lovers give their lives to be with each other, when both of their lives could have been spared. Melodrama and rash decisions led to the demise of Romeo and Juliet.

 In the play, Friar Lawrence and the Nurse play parent roles to Romeo and Juliet. They also contribute to the avoidable tragedy at the end of the play by displaying their tendency to make rash decisions. One example of a bad decision made by Friar Lawrence is when he willingly marries Romeo and Juliet a day after they first meet. The Friar says,” These violent delights have violent ends/ And, in their triumph die, like fire and powder/ Which, as they kiss, consume. The sweetest honey/ is loathsome in his own deliciousness/ And in the taste confounds thy appetite/ Therefore love moderately; long love doth so;/ Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow.”(2.6 9-15) The Friar tries to presage their tragedy, and he warns them to not let their love burn out soon, yet he marries the two anyway. These actions support how the plotline is influenced by bad decisions. Another example of a character making a bad decision is when the Nurse tries to help Juliet marry Romeo. The Nurse knows that Romeo is from a rival family and helping the two lovers be together will only cause trouble, yet she does it anyway. This action supports the idea that bad decisions made by characters will lead to tragedy. One example of a rash decision is when the Nurse tries to quickly convince Juliet to marry Count Paris, even though the Nurse knows that Juliet is in love with Romeo. Juliet then feels isolated and runs to see Friar Lawrence where a plan, that would ultimately be the death of the two lovers, was devised. Both Friar Lawrence’s and the Nurse’s bad decisions influence the tragic outcome of the play.

 However, Friar Lawrence and the Nurse are not the only characters with harmful traits, Romeo and Juliet, too, exhibited melodrama and the habit of making poor decisions. One example of this is when only hours after they meet, Romeo and Juliet realize that they are in love with each other, even when it is obviously too soon for them to know for sure. This action emphasizes how melodramatic and immature Romeo and Juliet are. Juliet admits that ,” It is too rash, too unadvis’d, too sudden,” (2.2 118) yet they still plan on getting married. Also, they marry the day after they meet, even though their families hate each other and they have only known each other for a day. Rash actions such as the one previously stated emphasize how bad decisions can lead to one’s demise. Furthermore, after Juliet takes the potion made by the Friar, Romeo finds her and believes her to be dead, enveloped in his melodrama, he takes his own life to be with her in heaven, when Juliet wakes up to find Romeo dead she takes her own life too. The death of these two lovers supports the fact that melodrama and bad decisions can result in death.

 The Nurse, Friar Lawrence, Juliet, and Romeo all share the habit of making irrational decisions and the trait of melodrama. Another example is when, the Friar needs to send a message about Juliet to Romeo, but the messenger that the Friar chose was unreliable and failed to deliver the message, and in the end, the lovers took their lives because of this fatal mistake. The forbidden love between Romeo and Juliet and the bad habits and traits of the characters, caused **the innocent to perish, the truthful to lie, and the lovers to die.** (isocolon)