

Student Essay on Fortune's Fool

Fortune's Fool by William Shakespeare

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Essay

Romeo and Juliet Essay

Romeo accurately describes himself as 'Fortune's fool'. There are numerous incidents within the play where we see the truth in this statement. From the very start of the play when Romeo falls in love with Juliet to just hours before he dies, his life is fraught with misfortune.

The first piece of misfortune to befall Romeo was his new found love of Juliet, a daughter of the house he was raised to despise. Just hours before he said to Benvolio "... I am in love" (1, 1, 163) but had not yet met Juliet, the woman he spoke of was the fair Rosaline. Rosaline would have the perfect wife for Romeo as she was a Montague but by sheer misfortune he went the Capulet party, met his so called true love Juliet and begun their ill-fated relationship.

Above all other incident arguably the worst was the witnessing of the sham funeral of Juliet's by Balthazar the manservant. He thought her truly dead and rushed back to Mantua to announce the news to Romeo. In his haste he passed the messenger with the letter from Friar Lawrence explaining everything. So instead of marital bliss Romeo thought his wife dead and took his own life "A dateless bargain to engrossing Death" (5, 3, 115).

Other related incidents of mischance which Romeo had to suffer were the deaths of Mercutio and Tybalt which resulted in his banishment to Mantua. Tybalt was a hot blooded young man and a cousin of Juliet's. He hated each and every Montague and was not afraid to say so "...I hate hell, all Montagues and thee" (1, 1, 65). He killed Mercutio and brought on the wrath of the vengeful Romeo. Sadly for Romeo's cause Tybalt died at his hand and made the prince exile him to Mantua, not to come back on pain of death.

As the school yard retort proclaims 'it takes one to know one' for Juliet, the Montagues, the Capulets and Friar Lawrence were also affected by the gross bad luck but it is evident that Romeo's description of himself as 'fortunes fool' was indeed a very apt one that captured in a phrase the terrible hand that fate had hand dealt him.