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## Romeo And Juliet: Who Is to Blame?

Citizens of Verona, I am standing here today to mourn of the loss of Romeo of house Montague and Juliet of house Capulet. Their untimely deaths were brought about by their families long standing feud. Our young residents of this city have "thrice disturbed the quiet of our streets" and were both just youths and for no reason should have passed at such a young age. As the person responsible for banishing Romeo from this city, I do take some responsibility for his death. I turned my back and allowed the family feud to continue. However there are others that are more to blame and as the Prince of Verona it is my duty to inform the public of the many people to blame for this tragedy.

There are a number of people that could be to blame for the deaths of our star crossed-lovers however, "some shall be pardoned and some punished". Many of you have blamed Juliet, as she did end her own life by stabbing herself, after seeing Romeo's lifeless body. She is also responsible as she took a sleeping potion so that it would make her appear dead in a desperate effort not to have to marry Paris. However, this did not go to plan as when Romeo saw her looking as if she was dead, he took a poison himself. He did this as he felt that he could not live on without her. This is significant as when they first met he had told her that "I have night's cloak to hide me from their eyes, and but thou love me, let them find me here. My life were better ended by their hate than death prorogued, wanting of thy love." When she woke up and saw Romeo dead, she cried to herself "What's here? A cup, closed in my true love's hand? Poison, I see, hath been his timeless end.—O churl, drunk all, and left no friendly drop to help me after? I will kiss thy lips. Haply some poison yet doth hang on them, to make me die with a restorative." After there was no poison left she then grabbed a dagger, stabbed herself and said "There rust and let me die." Young Juliet also disobeyed her father and married Romeo in secret, I do believe that if that had not happened then the two may have still been alive. Although I understand while some would blame Juliet, I do not feel that she is ultimately to blame. Friar Lawrence is also to blame as he was more concerned about protecting himself which led to the destruction of two young lovers.

Then there are those amongst you who blame Friar Lawrence for this tragedy. While he may have had good intentions, some suspect he was more concerned about getting punished himself. Many people believe that he should take responsibility, as it was he that married them in secret. He agreed "I'll thy assistant be, for this alliance may so happy prove to turn your households' rancor to pure love." Another reason he is to blame is because he came up with the idea that Juliet should take the sleeping potion to avoid marrying Paris. It is known that he said "take thou this vial, being then in bed, and this distillèd liquor drink thou off, when presently through all thy veins shall run a cold and drowsy humor, for no pulse shall keep his native progress, but surcease. No warmth, no breath shall testify thou livest." This essentially led to Romeo's death as he believed that Juliet had truly died. Even though Friar Lawrence had made poor choices he is not ultimately to blame.

Therefore, it is Lord Capulet, and the feuding families that are ultimately to blame for this tragedy. Initially, Capulet tried to force Juliet into an arranged marriage with Paris and threatened her when she objected. He yelled, "Thursday is near, lay hand on heart, advice and you be mine, I'll give you to my friend. An you be not, hang, beg, starve, die in the streets."

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Lord Capulet and Montague as heads of the households should have done more to stop the feud. The reason that Romeo and Juliet had to marry in secret was because they knew the parents would not allow it. If there was never a feud in the first place, then they could have gotten married and Juliet would not have been forced to marry Paris. Romeo's father, Lord Montague, could have stopped the fight at any time, but didn't. A fact he admitted when he said they were, "Poor sacrifices of our enmity." I feel that this tragedy really shows that all of us are responsible for our actions and that the feuds between these families should not be forgotten about, instead be learned from for the future.

The city of Verona has been terribly affected by the tragic death, of young Romeo and Juliet. The blame for their deaths rests upon the shoulders of Lord Montague and Capulet, the leaders of the feuding families. It was the long-standing hatred which made it impossible for Romeo and Juliet to express their love openly. I believe that the two fathers do not need further punishment, as their children's death is enough. We have witnessed how a feud can lead to the disruption of a whole city and even worse, death. This is a very delicate situation as "For never was a story of more woe than this of Juliet and her Romeo."

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