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Intro Before Juliet Juliet Post mortem Conclusion Romeo and Juliet - as characters, as symbols of love, and as symbols of innocence torn apart by a hardheaded society - are cultural icons so ingrained in society that they are often synonymous with the very concepts they represent. After centuries of study and countless productions around the globe, Romeo and Juliet remains, line by line, exactly as it was recorded in the quartos and folios of Shakespeare's players themselves. Although the text itself is unchanging, different visions of the work offer a wealth of interpretations of this single, 3006-line play. This study will focus on two cinematic representations of the play: Franco Zeffirelli's 1968 work, and Baz Luhrmann's 1996 production. In each of these films, the final scene of the play serves as the ultimate expression of each filmmaker's intended message. Zeffirelli, holding true to the text, reveals that despite their attempts to ignore it, the lovers in their final scene remain a part of the suffocating society that rules the rest of their lives, as revealed by the omnipresence of the outside world and the standards it enforces (Haggood 84). Post mortem Rather than unnecessarily unveiling the details behind their deaths, Zeffirelli closes the scene immediately after Juliet's death in the same manner as all other scenes in the film: with a fade into the next scene. The lovers are carried out of the tombs together on platforms, with their families following behind. The Prince stands before the congregation in the open plaza, proclaiming, "all are punished" for the pettiness that led to the loss of the youths (Shakespeare V.III.290). The funeral march proceeds, focusing at first on the faces of the deceased lovers, and then on those attending the funeral. Their families come together in their sorrow and mourning as the narrator speaks of "a glooming peace this morning with it brings; the sun, for sorrow, will not show his head: For never was a story of more woe than this of Juliet and her Romeo" (Shakespeare V.III.301-302, 305-306). Lady Capulet and Lady Montague embrace as they walk together in grief, a scenario impossible in the context of Shakespeare's version. Conclusion The final scene of Zeffirelli's rendition of Romeo and Juliet suggests that the lovers are deeply entwined with the other members of society. With the continual interference and involvement of the outside world, Romeo and Juliet are constantly pulled back into the world that society dictates for them regardless of their attempts to escape it. Keep in mind: This is only a sample. Get a custom paper now from our expert writers. Franco Zeffirelli said of Luhrmann's adaptation: "The film didn't update the play, it just made a big joke out of it. 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Jonathan Bate, King Alfred Professor of Literature at the University of Liverpool, endorsed Luhrmann's work, writing, "The best Shakespeare is always Shakespeare made contemporary, which is why one of the greatest achievements of our time is Baz Luhrmann's Romeo and Juliet film" (Anderegg 70). Verona Beach is a gritty, run-down city bisected by two major organized crime families, the Capulets and the Montagues, who also happen to be bitter, deadly rivals. The hate between the two families runs far and deep, so much so that even the current clan patriarchs no longer know why they hate each other so much. Though the origin of the feud is lost, the enmity is strong and it profoundly affects the younger members of the clan. While refueling their car, a group of Montague boys, led by Benvolio, Romeo's cousin, are chased upon by a group of Capulet boys, led by Juliet's cousin, Tybalt, and are goaded into a drawn-out gunfight. The ensuing battle results in massive property damage, given that they were shooting at each other in a gasoline station. The Chief of Police breaks up the fight, culminating in the arrest of both parties; during their arraignment Capt. Prince warns each of the clan patriarchs that he will not tolerate any further disturbances, with the barely veiled threat that their lives "shall pay the forfeit of the peace" in the event of another skirmish. Benvolio heads to the beach to meet up with Romeo whom he finds brooding over Rosaline, a woman he is smitten with. Together, they decide to pass the time playing pool. While engaging in a bit of banter they learn of a huge costume party to be held at the Capulet mansion that evening. They all decide that it would be great fun to crash the party. Initially, Romeo declines to join them, but when he discovers that Rosaline is attending he decides to tag along. En route to the Capulet beach they meet up with their common friend, the peerless party animal, Mercutio, who has scored their tickets to the party of the year—along with some designer drugs. Mercutio gives Romeo a tablet of ecstasy, and he is soon overcome by the drug, retreating to the bathroom to try to revive his senses. While trying to shake off the effects of the drug he sees Juliet through an aquarium he is admiring. Their gazes meet and they instantly fall deeply in love. Tybalt, however, spots Romeo, and recognizes him as a member of the Montague clan and vows to kill him for invading their family's home. The Capulet clan head, Fulgencio, stops Tybalt, warning him not to make a scandal in the sight of his guests. Romeo and Juliet sneak into an elevator amidst the crowds and passionately kiss. Juliet's nurse finds the lovers and tears Juliet away, divulging the bitter truth: Romeo is a Montague—scion of her clan's most hated enemy. Mercutio in turn drags Romeo away, stating that the fun is over and it's time to seek mischief elsewhere. But Romeo is fully taken by Juliet, and he sneaks back into the mansion and hides beneath her balcony. Juliet comes out to meet Romeo and confesses her love for him, warning him that he is in grave danger; but he assures her that he doesn't care if he is caught. Juliet conspires with Romeo, telling him that if he wants they can be married the very next day. Elated, Romeo visits his old friend, Father Laurence, an accomplished herbologist and humble priest, telling him of his plans to marry Juliet. Father Laurence consents to wed the two, hoping that their union might bring peace to the feuding clans. Romeo informs Juliet's nurse that all the necessary arrangements have been made and the star-crossed lovers are wed. Tybalt has been searching for Romeo, spooling for a fight, but instead comes upon Mercutio and the rest of the Montague boys as Romeo arrives. Tybalt, who is wanted to avenge his clan for the invasion of their party, requests to have a "talk" with Romeo. Romeo, having just married Juliet, wishes to make peace but Tybalt continues to harass him. This proves too much for Mercutio to take and a fight breaks out between the two with Mercutio gaining the upper hand. Mercutio is about to deal a fatal blow with a log when Romeo stops him, allowing Tybalt an opportunity to fatally wound Mercutio with piece of broken glass. Initially, Mercutio bravely shrugs of the injury as "a scratch" but quickly realizes that he will not survive his injuries. He pronounces a curse over both clans with the last of his strength, finally dying in Romeo's arms. A grief-stricken and rage-consuming Romeo pursues Tybalt with his race car, colliding with Tybalt's vehicle and first stunning him. He then proceeds to gun him down. Capt. Prince then banishes Romeo from the city of Verona Beach for violating the ban on brawling in the city and Romeo hides out with Father Laurence while waiting for the heat to die down. Father Laurence nurses Romeo's wounds and assures him that he will help Romeo and Juliet return to Verona and make peace with their respective family members. Juliet's Nurse arrives and informs Romeo that his wife is waiting for him. Romeo and Juliet are reunited, and they consummate their marriage. Still reeling from the emotional high of having consummated their secret marriage, Juliet's happiness soon plummets as her parents breaks the news to her that they have made arrangements for her to be wed to the governor's son and Verona's most eligible bachelor, Dave Paris. Juliet passionately refuses the plan, which causes her father to threaten to renounce her. Gloria Capulet and the Nurse intervene, trying their best to appease Juliet and her lovers. Romeo tells her to go home and marry Dave. She runs away to seek help and advice from Father Laurence. Extremely distraught, Juliet contemplates suicide as a solution, and this sparks an idea in the wily priest. Together they devise a plot that involves Juliet faking her own death through the use of an herbal tonic he has created that will simulate death but will wear off after 24 hours. Once "dead," Juliet will be entombed in the Capulet crypt where she and Romeo will be reunited. Together, the two can travel to Mantua where they can live out the rest of their days as simple folks. Juliet drinks the formula and promptly falls into a deathlike coma, as declared dead, and is placed in the Capulet family crypt. But things do not all go as planned, as Balthasar, one of Romeo's kinsmen, learns of Juliet's death and reports it immediately to him. Driven nearly insane by the grief, Romeo rushes back to Verona, missing the messenger sent by Father Laurence to report that Juliet is not dead, but merely in a coma. Upon reaching Verona, Romeo purchases poison from an apothecary in the seedier part of the city. Capt. Prince is alerted that Romeo is back and tries, unsuccessfully, to capture him. Father Laurence discovers that Romeo is unaware of their plans but he is too late to stop the impulsive young lover. Romeo enters the church where Juliet's wake is being held. He bids her farewell and downs the fast acting poison only to see Juliet awakening from her chemically induced coma, tragically seeing each other for the last time. A distraught Juliet then picks up Romeo's gun and shoots herself in the temples, ensuring her immediate death. The pair is found dead in each other's arms. The city coroners immediately place their remains inside body bags, but before closing them completely Capt. 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In the final scene of their renditions of William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, both Zeffirelli and Luhrmann take artistic liberties in adapting the scene: Zeffirelli in his somewhat selective modification of the script, and Luhrmann in his striking alteration of the original sequence. Intro Although Zeffirelli has openly admitted to altering Romeo and Juliet in an effort to make it more palatable to younger generations, thus allowing "the plays to be enjoyed by ordinary people," he does so in a manner that has not "succumbed to the too-easy updating that can come with modern dress" and the "latest teenage fad" (Haggood 80, 84). Throughout the film, Zeffirelli remains remarkably loyal to the Shakespearean text, making "necessary sacrifices and compromises" only where perceived "non-essentials are concerned" (Haggood 82). Before Juliet Initially, the most striking aspect of the film is its setting. Throughout the film, the city of Verona is depicted using a somewhat subdued, prevalently brown, color scheme. There is an "emphasis on a realistic atmosphere," with "restrained colors" and a "dusty" feel (Haggood 86). Balthasar and Romeo's journey from Mantua to Verona maintains this air; there is no notable difference in the environment as they travel from the region of exile, to Verona itself, and even to the interior of the tomb. Upon arriving at the tomb, Romeo leaves Balthasar outside of the building, hurriedly bidding him farewell (Shakespeare V.III.42). Despite this dismissal, Balthasar awaits Romeo's return outside the Capulet tomb, thus revealing that the outside world continues to exist of its own accord and without regard to Romeo's desires. According to the sequential entrances in the play, Paris would be the next character to enter the Capulet tomb - in fact, Shakespeare emphasizes this fact by giving the young bachelor over 30 lines of praise for his lifeless fiancé before Romeo cuts his lament short by slaying the prince. The Zeffirelli version, however, finds Paris to be a "necessary sacrifice" at the altar of the director's vision. Although this fight sequence was initially shot, it was "finally cut because if Romeo was a murderer," the "wave of emotion that makes Romeo's suicide acceptable...wouldn't have worked" (Haggood 82). In essence, the director made the decision to purge this aspect of Romeo's actions in order to make his death more digestible to audiences, rather than leaving them with the bitter aftertaste of Paris' violent death. In Zeffirelli's film, Romeo wanders without conflict into the Capulet family tomb. As he enters the dusty and unwelcoming tomb, he passes Juliet's deceased family members, each at different stages of decomposition. These grim and foreboding images of death confront Romeo with the imminent future of his beloved - she too, in flesh and memory, will decay into nonexistence. Furthermore, by displaying the other deceased Capulets, Zeffirelli suggests that Romeo and Juliet are never fully freed from the society that ultimately leads to their demise - all are destined to die. Juliet After having made his way past the corpses, Romeo comes upon Juliet, lying on a cold stone altar and covered in a thin cloth similar to those adorning the dead bodies he has just passed. After dedicating a mere 6 lines of his soliloquy to his "love" and "wife," Romeo too quickly shifts focus to Juliet's slain cousin Tybalt (Romeo and Juliet V.III.92). Although Zeffirelli's screenplay holds true to Shakespeare's text in this instance, this action detracts from the final special moments that the lovers share, and again suggests the intrusion of outside influences. As Romeo drinks his vial of poison, he thrashes about in obvious agony and kisses Juliet's hand. In death, Romeo lies not alongside Juliet, but rather alone on the stone floor of the mausoleum. Upon encountering Balthasar outside the tomb, Friar Laurence rushes inside, only to find Romeo dead and Juliet awakening. Although this is again true to Shakespeare's text, Zeffirelli reveals that society intrudes on the lovers even during this intensely private moment - his is the first face Juliet sees as she awakens. After Laurence's hurried abandonment of Juliet in the tomb, the sound of voices outside indicates that the night watch will also interrupt the scene momentarily. The discovery of Romeo's body evokes a shrill cry from Zeffirelli's young Juliet, and she rashly chooses to kill herself rather than be seized by the trespassers. The lovers' death ultimately breeds a "sense of ir retrievable loss" caused by the outside world and the standards it enforces (Haggood 84). Post mortem Rather than unnecessarily unveiling the details behind their deaths, Zeffirelli closes the scene immediately after Juliet's death in the same manner as all other scenes in the film: with a fade into the next scene. The lovers are carried out of the tombs together on platforms, with their families following behind. The Prince stands before the congregation in the open plaza, proclaiming, "all are punished" for the pettiness that led to the loss of the youths (Shakespeare V.III.290). The funeral march proceeds, focusing at first on the faces of the deceased lovers, and then on those attending the funeral. 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The ensuing battle results in massive property damage, given that they were shooting at each other in a gasoline station. The Chief of Police breaks up the fight, culminating in the arrest of both parties; during their arraignment Capt. Prince warns each of the clan patriarchs that he will not tolerate any further disturbances, with the barely veiled threat that their lives "shall pay the forfeit of the peace" in the event of another skirmish. Benvolio heads to the beach to meet up with Romeo whom he finds brooding over Rosaline, a woman he is smitten with. Together, they decide to pass the time playing pool. While engaging in a bit of banter they learn of a huge costume party to be held at the Capulet mansion that evening. They all decide that it would be great fun to crash the party. Initially, Romeo declines to join them, but when he discovers that Rosaline is attending he decides to tag along. En route to the Capulet beach they meet up with their common friend, the peerless party animal, Mercutio, who has scored their tickets to the party of the year—along with some designer drugs. Mercutio gives Romeo a tablet of ecstasy, and he is soon overcome by the drug, retreating to the bathroom to try to revive his senses. While trying to shake off the effects of the drug he sees Juliet through an aquarium he is admiring. Their gazes meet and they instantly fall deeply in love. Tybalt, however, spots Romeo, and recognizes him as a member of the Montague clan and vows to kill him for invading their family's home. The Capulet clan head, Fulgencio, stops Tybalt, warning him not to make a scandal in the sight of his guests. Romeo and Juliet sneak into an elevator amidst the crowds and passionately kiss. Juliet's nurse finds the lovers and tears Juliet away, divulging the bitter truth: Romeo is a Montague—scion of her clan's most hated enemy. Mercutio in turn drags Romeo away, stating that the fun is over and it's time to seek mischief elsewhere. But Romeo is fully taken by Juliet, and he sneaks back into the mansion and hides beneath her balcony. Juliet comes out to meet Romeo and confesses her love for him, warning him that he is in grave danger; but he assures her that he doesn't care if he is caught. Juliet conspires with Romeo, telling him that if he wants they can be married the very next day. Elated, Romeo visits his old friend, Father Laurence, an accomplished herbologist and humble priest, telling him of his plans to marry Juliet. Father Laurence consents to wed the two, hoping that their union might bring peace to the feuding clans. Romeo informs Juliet's nurse that all the necessary arrangements have been made and the star-crossed lovers are wed. Tybalt has been searching for Romeo, spooling for a fight, but instead comes upon Mercutio and the rest of the Montague boys as Romeo arrives. Tybalt, who is wanted to avenge his clan for the invasion of their party, requests to have a "talk" with Romeo. Romeo, having just married Juliet, wishes to make peace but Tybalt continues to harass him. This proves too much for Mercutio to take and a fight breaks out between the two with Mercutio gaining the upper hand. Mercutio is about to deal a fatal blow with a log when Romeo stops him, allowing Tybalt an opportunity to fatally wound Mercutio with piece of broken glass. Initially, Mercutio bravely shrugs of the injury as "a scratch" but quickly realizes that he will not survive his injuries. He pronounces a curse over both clans with the last of his strength, finally dying in Romeo's arms. A grief-stricken and rage-consuming Romeo pursues Tybalt with his race car, colliding with Tybalt's vehicle and first stunning him. He then proceeds to gun him down. Capt. Prince then banishes Romeo from the city of Verona Beach for violating the ban on brawling in the city and Romeo hides out with Father Laurence while waiting for the heat to die down. Father Laurence nurses Romeo's wounds and assures him that he will help Romeo and Juliet return to Verona and make peace with their respective family members. Juliet's Nurse arrives and informs Romeo that his wife is waiting for him. Romeo and Juliet are reunited, and they consummate their marriage. Still reeling from the emotional high of having consummated their secret marriage, Juliet's happiness soon plummets as her parents breaks the news to her that they have made arrangements for her to be wed to the governor's son and Verona's most eligible bachelor, Dave Paris. Juliet passionately refuses the plan, which causes her father to threaten to renounce her. Gloria Capulet and the Nurse intervene, trying their best to appease Juliet and her lovers. Romeo tells her to go home and marry Dave. She runs away to seek help and advice from Father Laurence. Extremely distraught, Juliet contemplates suicide as a solution, and this sparks an idea in the wily priest. Together they devise a plot that involves Juliet faking her own death through the use of an herbal tonic he has created that will simulate death but will wear off after 24 hours. Once "dead," Juliet will be entombed in the Capulet crypt where she and Romeo will be reunited. Together, the two can travel to Mantua where they can live out the rest of their days as simple folks. Juliet drinks the formula and promptly falls into a deathlike coma, as declared dead, and is placed in the Capulet family crypt. But things do not all go as planned, as Balthasar, one of Romeo's kinsmen, learns of Juliet's death and reports it immediately to him. Driven nearly insane by the grief, Romeo rushes back to Verona, missing the messenger sent by Father Laurence to report that Juliet is not dead, but merely in a coma. Upon reaching Verona, Romeo purchases poison from an apothecary in the seedier part of the city. Capt. Prince is alerted that Romeo is back and tries, unsuccessfully, to capture him. Father Laurence discovers that Romeo is unaware of their plans but he is too late to stop the impulsive young lover. Romeo enters the church where Juliet's wake is being held. He bids her farewell and downs the fast acting poison only to see Juliet awakening from her chemically induced coma, tragically seeing each other for the last time. A distraught Juliet then picks up Romeo's gun and shoots herself in the temples, ensuring her immediate death. The pair is found dead in each other's arms. The city coroners immediately place their remains inside body bags, but before closing them completely Capt. Prince displays both Romeo and Juliet's death-pale faces to news crews and the grieving families, condemning both the Montagues and the Capulets for perpetuating their feud, stating "all are punished" for participating, even the good Captain, as he has lost good men in the process of trying to keep the peace. The coroners zip up the body bags completely, and the film ends with the TV reporter's report of the tragedy of Romeo and Juliet. Intro Before Juliet Juliet Post mortem Conclusion Romeo and Juliet as characters, as symbols of love, and as symbols of innocence torn apart by a hardheaded society - are cultural icons so ingrained in society that they are often synonymous with the very concepts they represent. After centuries of study and countless productions around the globe, Romeo and Juliet remains, line by line, exactly as it was recorded in the quartos and folios of Shakespeare's players themselves. Although the text itself is unchanging, different visions of the work offer a wealth of interpretations of this single, 3006-line play. This study will focus on two cinematic representations of the play: Franco Zeffirelli's 1968 work, and Baz Luhrmann's 1996 production. In each of these films, the final scene of the play serves as the ultimate expression of each filmmaker's intended message. Zeffirelli, holding true to the text, reveals that despite their attempts to ignore it, the lovers in their final scene remain a part of the suffocating society that rules the rest of their lives, as revealed by the omnipresence of the outside world in their most intimate moments. Luhrmann's adaptation of the final scene, however, suggests that Romeo and Juliet have created an idealized world inhabited by themselves alone. By studying both directors' presentations of the events prior to, during, and after the lovers' encounter in Act Five, scene three, their respective visions come to light. In the final scene of their renditions of William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, both Zeffirelli and Luhrmann take artistic liberties in adapting the scene: Zeffirelli in his somewhat selective modification of the script, and Luhrmann in his striking alteration of the original sequence. Intro Although Zeffirelli has openly admitted to altering Romeo and Juliet in an effort to make it more palatable to younger generations, thus allowing "the plays to be enjoyed by ordinary people," he does so in a manner that has not "succumbed to the too-easy updating that can come with modern dress" and the "latest teenage fad" (Haggood 80, 84). Throughout the film, Zeffirelli remains remarkably loyal to the Shakespearean text, making "necessary sacrifices and compromises" only where perceived "non-essentials are concerned" (Haggood 82). Before Juliet Initially, the most striking aspect of the film is its setting. Throughout the film, the city of Verona is depicted using a somewhat subdued, prevalently brown, color scheme. There is an "emphasis on a realistic atmosphere," with "restrained colors" and a "dusty" feel (Haggood 86). Balthasar and Romeo's journey from Mantua to Verona maintains this air; there is no notable difference in the environment as they travel from the region of exile, to Verona itself, and even to the interior of the tomb. Upon arriving at the tomb, Romeo leaves Balthasar outside of the building, hurriedly bidding him farewell (Shakespeare V.III.42). Despite this dismissal, Balthasar awaits Romeo's return outside the Capulet tomb, thus revealing that the outside world continues to exist of its own accord and without regard to Romeo's desires. According to the sequential entrances in the play, Paris would be the next character to enter the Capulet tomb - in fact, Shakespeare emphasizes this fact by giving the young bachelor over 30 lines of praise for his lifeless fiancé before Romeo cuts his lament short by slaying the prince. The Zeffirelli version, however, finds Paris to be a "necessary sacrifice" at the altar of the director's vision. Although this fight sequence was initially shot, it was "finally cut because if Romeo was a murderer," the "wave of emotion that makes Romeo's suicide acceptable...wouldn't have worked" (Haggood 82). In essence, the director made the decision to purge this aspect of Romeo's actions in order to make his death more digestible to audiences, rather than leaving them with the bitter aftertaste of Paris' violent death. In Zeffirelli's film, Romeo wanders without conflict into the Capulet family tomb. As he enters the dusty and unwelcoming tomb, he passes Juliet's deceased family members, each at different stages of decomposition. These grim and foreboding images of death confront Romeo with the imminent future of his beloved - she too, in flesh and memory, will decay into nonexistence. Furthermore, by displaying the other deceased Capulets, Zeffirelli suggests that Romeo and Juliet are never fully freed from the society that ultimately leads to their demise - all are destined to die. Juliet After having made his way past the corpses, Romeo comes upon Juliet, lying on a cold stone altar and covered in a thin cloth similar to those adorning the dead bodies he has just passed. After dedicating a mere 6 lines of his soliloquy to his "love" and "wife," Romeo too quickly shifts focus to Juliet's slain cousin Tybalt (Romeo and Juliet V.III.92). Although Zeffirelli's screenplay holds true to Shakespeare's text in this instance, this action detracts from the final special moments that the lovers share, and again suggests the intrusion of outside influences. As Romeo drinks his vial of poison, he thrashes about in obvious agony and kisses Juliet's hand. In death, Romeo lies not alongside Juliet, but rather alone on the stone floor of the mausoleum. Upon encountering Balthasar outside the tomb, Friar Laurence rushes inside, only to find Romeo dead and Juliet awakening. Although this is again true to Shakespeare's text, Zeffirelli reveals that society intrudes on the lovers even during this intensely private moment - his is the first face Juliet sees as she awakens. After Laurence's hurried abandonment of Juliet in the tomb, the sound of voices outside indicates that the night watch will also interrupt the scene momentarily. The discovery of Romeo's body evokes a shrill cry from Zeffirelli's young Juliet, and she rashly chooses to kill herself rather than be seized by the trespassers. The lovers' death ultimately breeds a "sense of ir retrievable loss" caused by the outside world and the standards it enforces (Haggood 84). Post mortem Rather than unnecessarily unveiling the details behind their deaths, Zeffirelli closes the scene immediately after Juliet's death in the same manner as all other scenes in the film: with a fade into the next scene. The lovers are carried out of the tombs together on platforms, with their families following behind. The Prince stands before the congregation in the open plaza, proclaiming, "all are punished" for the pettiness that led to the loss of the youths (Shakespeare V.III.290). The funeral march proceeds, focusing at first on the faces of the deceased lovers, and then on those attending the funeral. 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