Comedy And Tragedy: Masks Of Conclusion Essay, Research Paper

The masks of comedy and tragedy are only distinguishable by a smile or frown, happiness or sadness, life or death. The same is true of Shakespearean plays. The comedies are known for their happy conclusions, reconciliation of the characters, a justification of events, and life at the end. On the other hand, the tragedies are known for their miserable conclusions, destruction of the characters, a question of why this had to happen, and death at the end. Comedies make us laugh, triumph in the human nature of people, and smile. Unlike tragedies that make us weep, doubt the human nature of people, and frown.

A Midsummer Night?s Dream is a whimsical, well-written comedy matching what I have described. Though the lovers, Hermia and Lysander, have troubles throughout the play from an interfering ?knavish sprite? called Puck. They are reunited at the end, accepted by her father, and alive. Also, the other pair of lovers, Helena and Demetrius, who were not in love to begin with are united at the end to form a parallel pairing of the four main characters.

?Here comes the lovers, full of joy and mirth. Joy, gentle friends, joy and fresh days of love.

On the other side of the coin is The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet. A tale of doomed young lovers. The prologue to the play describes it all is a Shakespearean sonnet:

In fair Verona where we lay our scene,

\*From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,

Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.

\*From the fatal loins of these two foes,

A pair of star-cross?d lovers take their life;

Whose misadventur’d pious overthrows

Doth with their death bury their parents? strife.

The fearful passage of their death-mark?d love,

And the continuance of their parents? rage,

Which, but by their children?s end, naught could

remove,

Is now the two hours? traffic of our stage;

The which if you with patient ears attend,

What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to

mend.

\*From the onset of the play, we know what the ending is going to be ? death. We are lead through a series of tragic circumstance and left at the end with a horrible conclusion, the death of two young lovers, and no faith in Love conquers all. Our belief in human existence be worth something is shattered, and we are left with ?all are punished?. There is no reason for the deaths in Romeo and Juliet, besides an unjustified ?fate.?

The conclusion of A Midsummer Night?s Dream, is a hysterical, creative justification (not to mention the covering of some asses) of the events that had taken place:

If we shadows have offended,

Think but this, and all is mended.

That you have but slumbered here

While these visions did appear.

And this weak and idle theme

No more yielding but a dream,

Gentles do not reprehend.

If you pardon, we will mend.

And, as I am an honest Puck,

If we have unearned luck

Now to scape the serpents tongue,

We will make amends ere long;

Else the Puck a liar called.

So, good night unto you all.

Give me your hands, if we be friends,

And Robin shall restore amends.

It was all a dream, or so puck says. However, if it were not a dream, and the events did take place in reality, then the fairy world will make amends for all the trouble they had caused. From the beginning to the end of the play, we are humored by Shakespeare?s wit, and cunning way to trap us into the story. At the end, our hope and dreams are refreshed with an optimism that everything will turn out for the best. Everything is solved; there are no questions to ask. A happy conclusion verifying that love, in fact, does conquer all.

As seen by the two plays: A midsummer Night?s Dream and The tragedy of Romeo and Juliet the mask that covers the face of the play is all in the conclusion and justification.