Problem Of Impulsive Behaviour And Conflict In Romeo And Juliet

Romeo and Juliet (1599), a play written by William Shakespeare has been able to stay significant and applicable throughout the centuries due to Shakespeare capturing human emotions and experiences. Even though the setting of the modern world compared to the Elizabethan society, when conflict, for example, was often solved through violence, is completely different, humans are still humans with their flaws and imperfections. As Irene Peter, an author, said, “Just because everything is different doesn’t mean anything has changed.” Romeo and Juliet is still greatly loved, the main reason being the fact that even nowadays people can relate to it. Love, conflict and impulsive behaviour are things that we experience every day.

Love has an important role in today’s world and has always had an important role; although during the Elizabethan era marrying for love was considered foolish, it is impossible to exclude an emotion so strong. People are dependent on each other and on love. Whether it is parental love, romantic love or friend love, it is important for one to be loved. To this day, many young people have to hide their relationships, too, fearing their parents’ reactions. Romeo and Juliet fall madly in love, but are forced to hide their feelings for each other. The girl expresses her concerns as she says “My only love sprung from my only hate,”. The paradox is used as Juliet loves a Montague, whom her family hates; she is therefore forced to keep her love for Romeo a secret. The use of paradox creates a new perspective on the situation of the family feud. When Juliet says “Love’s heralds should be thoughts, which ten times faster glide than the sun’s beams.” The simile she uses highlights how impatient she is because the news were taking too long to be delivered. This is certainly something young people these days can relate to; sometimes love takes a little bit, or even a lot, of patience and we, sadly, do not always have that, as patience is a really important skill to learn. Even though Romeo falls completely in love with Juliet as the play goes on, we still cannot forget his recent love for Rosaline. In Act One, Scene Two he tells us that “The all-seeing sun ne’er saw her match since first the world begun.” He compares Rosaline to a god-like figure making her seem far more important than she actually is. He implies that no one is as beautiful as Rosaline but he quickly changes his mind when he sees Juliet. This might be true love, but we can not forget that teenagers are inexperienced in love and often make bad and impulsive choices, not thinking everything over as thoroughly as they should have. In our modern society many teenagers face that problem, especially when thinking that their first love is the one and only true one.

Conflict is a part of human nature and to this day it is something many struggle with. It might not be a ‘family feud’ type of situation, like in Elizabethan era, when they used to often settle their conflict through violence; but to this day most of the conflict that we face is meaningless and is just a waste of energy. Many young people get involved in the conflicts within their families. Juliet’s famous words “O Romeo, Romeo! Wherefore art thou Romeo?/ Deny thy father and refuse thy name,/ Or if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,/ And I’ll no longer be a Capulet” tell us that she is desperate and demanding, using high modality to emphasise the conflict that occurs between the families and how the conflict heavily impacts their love. She is willing to give up her name just to be with the one she loves. During Shakespearean age, a “name” was incredibly significant as it could tell one almost anything about a specific person. Juliet’s

willingness to give up her name can not only be referred to as a romantic gesture, but also an example of impulsive behaviour. The line also suggests that Juliet is tired of the family feud; it makes no sense to her and it limits her freedom. The family feud is not the only example of conflict we find in the play. A conflict also arises between Tybalt and Mercutio, as a result of which Mercutio ends up dead. In the scene where they fight, Act Three, Scene One, Mercutio foreshadows Tybalt's death by saying that Tybalt is a skilled swordsman. Tybalt's death is also a result of impulsive behaviour as they could have solved the problem without violence. Mercutio drops lines like "Could you not take some occasion without giving?", implying that the Capulets in general or Tybalt in particular are not very bright, making Tybalt even more annoyed. The line "Good King of Cats, nothing but one og your nine lives, that I mean to make both withal…" uses animal imagery to compare Tybalt to a cat, a graceful, but sneaky animal, therefore disrespecting Tybalt for no reason except for the 'life long feud'. Many people, even nowadays would agree that most of the time the impulsive, not thought-over decisions will have negative consequences; most of the time it won't be as serious as Mercutio's fate, but they could still greatly impact the lives of people.

In conclusion, Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet is a play that has stayed relevant throughout the centuries. It was achieved by William Shakespeare almost predicting the future as well as reading the human nature. He had taken notice that human behaviour does not change throughout the ages and that's why the themes of love, impulsive behaviour and conflict are still so close to us, so easy to understand. Romeo and Juliet is timeless and will be able to teach a lesson to many generations that are yet to come.