
William Shakespeare's Romeo And Juliet Versus F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby

William Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet' and F. Scott Fitzgerald's 'The Great Gatsby' are two comparable movies and books that work well together and have many similarities. Each having two unique stories, based on the universal theme of love, that in both is portrayed or forbidden. Yet the theme of forbidden love is more relevant in 'Romeo and Juliet', it could be argued that 'The Great Gatsby' has just as much in it. Evidence of this are the equivalent presented by the two texts, which are all related to the theme of forbidden love. The forbidden love of Romeo and Juliet just as the forbidden love of Gatsby and Daisy is represented by many similar oppositions that thrive in these two stories.

'Romeo and Juliet' and 'The Great Gatsby' are staged with images of light and darkness. Throughout the play, Romeo, upon his first sight of Juliet, compares her to the light. He claims that she teaches 'the torches to burn bright', that she "hangs upon the cheek of night". Then later in the play he refers to her as "the sun" who can 'kill the envious moon'. Then until his last sight of her, he sees her beauty illuminating in the darkness of the tomb.

As all these quotes show that the two star-crossed lovers are primarily associated to a light that shines most brightly in the dark. Romeo and Juliet's brightness shows best against the darker world of night. While the sunlight of the "hot days" which is "the mad blood stirring", represents the conflict between the two families, the Capulets and the Montagues and their desire to fight, the darkness of night-time. It holds the secret love and significant moments for Romeo and Juliet. They meet, they pledge their love, in the evening hours when nobody can see them, and in the mystery of the night, they commit suicide.

Life and death is one of the really important oppositions that is part of both the stories. In 'The Great Gatsby' there are two deaths that happen in the novel; the death of Myrtle and the death of Gatsby. Like in 'Romeo and Juliet', in 'The Great Gatsby' the death of a character is crucial for how the story is going to end. Mercutio's death which is then followed by Romeo's revenge on Tybalt that will lead to the death of the two lovers at the end of the play is key in Shakespeare's play. In 'The Great Gatsby', the death of Myrtle plays the same role as Mercutio's death, as it is then followed by the revenge of Wilson, that will lead to the death of Gatsby. Two texts are both trying to go against their fate of not being together with the person they care about, the protagonists of each give their lives for their love.

The contrast between public scenes and the private love scenes is a significant representation of forbidden love in both the texts. In 'The Great Gatsby', Nick finds himself twice that summer 1922 guarding others people secrets. He sees himself as the casual watcher in the streets, who is "within and without". This quote shows how the story of 'The Great Gatsby' shifts from outdoor to indoor, from public to private parties at Gatsby's and the public bars, to the private, intimate scenes of the secret love of Myrtle and Tom, Daisy and Gatsby. Even at Gatsby's large parties there is this shift between public and private.

In 'The Great Gatsby' as well there is the opposition of language and reality. However, while in Shakespeare's play 'Romeo and Juliet' do not consider language important, in Fitzgerald's

work, Gatsby gives much importance to words and what they are associated with. For example Gatsby had changed his name from James Gatz to Jay Gatsby as he never accepted his poor parents as his real family members. Gatsby also wanted Daisy to tell Tom that she never loved him as he did not want

to accept the reality that Daisy did love Tom once. The opposition of language against reality, and of truth against lies are also present within the novel as all main characters are dishonest to others or to themselves. Throughout the novel we get to know the character of Gatsby by many rumours. Gatsby hides his real identity and poor origins in order to be able to get close to Daisy, this proves the importance of the contrast between language and reality in showing the significance of the theme of forbidden love novel in "The Great Gatsby".

Gatsby' to the same large extent it is in 'Romeo and Juliet'. In fact Gatsby's actions are taken because of his love for Daisy as it well shown in the theme of fate against free will, which is explored by both texts. Like Gatsby's actions are dependent on his love for Daisy, like the house across the bay he bought to be close to her, Romeo and Juliet's actions are influenced by their love for each other as well, from Juliet's actions of drinking the potion to their action of committing suicide. Gatsby dies as well, killed by Wilson after getting the blame for the death of Myrtle. The sad destiny of the main characters is due to forbidden love, the evolving of the two stories is in fact determined by it as both texts are love stories. Romeo and Juliet and Gatsby challenge their fate by trying to be together with the person they are affectionate to when their love is forbidden due to the circumstances and the context they live in. The theme of forbidden love is a hugely significant theme in Fitzgerald's novel and Shakespeare's play as it shows the promises of life against a corrupted society full of hate, in 'Romeo and Juliet' founded on conflicts and in "The Great Gatsby".