

*The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet* is a play about fate and chance. It would seem that coincidental occurrences may have been the only role in their demise, but this is not entirely true. In the play *Romeo and Juliet*, the events leading up to their deaths were also instruments of fate, and not just of mere "bad luck".

Of course, chance had a big role to play in the tragedy. For example, the Montagues and Capulets were not always enemies, as there used to be peace in the streets of Verona, before several brawls occurred. This shows that the bitter strife that turned the families against each other was most likely due to a chance misunderstanding, which evolved into a blood feud through the streets. This also shows that chance events can be the cause of bitter, senseless hatred. In addition, if Mercutio's untimely death had been prevented, Romeo's banishment would not have happened. This shows that the events afterwards could most likely have been avoided, including the deaths of Romeo and Juliet themselves. This also shows that any random event is capable of starting a domino effect of events, that can tilt the scales of people's futures in one way or another. Chance events can change people's lives forever. Sometimes they can be prevented, and other times it is impossible to stop them.

The most intriguing and colorful character in *Cannery Row* is Doc. Doc appears to be a lonesome scientist with little company, and a drunk at the worst, but Doc is more than what he seems. For example, when the flu epidemic hit Cannery Row, Doc took in "patients" for help, even though he was not a certified doctor. This shows that Doc will go out of his way to help the people of Cannery Row at any cost. This also shows that Doc cares enough for the people of the town to exhaust himself helping their needs. Also, Doc's presence is so cherished by the people of Cannery Row that they decided to throw him two (slightly chaotic) parties. This shows that even though he may seem like a drunken scientist at points, Doc is highly respected and loved by the people of Cannery Row. This also shows that Doc's actions eventually pay off for him, and he receives immense gratitude from the town. Doc is not someone who blends easily into Cannery Row, but his nature and personality is that of a Christ-like figure.

The deaths of Romeo and Juliet are not totally decided by chance though. It is fate that decides their lives. For example, Juliet senses that her forbidden love with Romeo may end up in some tragic manner. This shows that Juliet is subconsciously aware that her love is bound by fate, and that despite her happiness, it may end in a terrible way. This also shows that Romeo and Juliet's fate is decided from the moment they met. In addition,

when the two families discover the bodies of their dead children, their hatred for each other is lifted, as they realize what horror it has brought upon them. This shows that the fate of the two lovers was used for a greater purpose in uniting their families. It also shows that fate works in mysterious ways, using death to bring forth a new sort of life. Romeo and Juliet were destined to die, in order for the shroud of bitterness to be lifted from their two families.

Death is the ultimate fate of all people. It is the only sure constant. However, there are events in life that are set beforehand. The paths people choose, whether they are by chance or done deliberately decide how they get to these events. When Romeo and Juliet met, their fates were bound together because of this choice. Though it was through love that they sacrificed themselves, they were also fulfilling a greater purpose, and sealing their destinies together.