

Romeo and Juliet Text-Film Comparison

In the movie *Romeo + Juliet*, Baz Luhrmann has Romeo talk to Tybalt respectfully, even though the text makes Romeo seem curt when he says, “Farewell. I see thou knowest me not” (119, line 66). Luhrmann does this in order to emphasize how much Romeo didn’t want the two families to get into a fight again, because he just married Juliet. This change makes Romeo seem a little bit weaker and more vulnerable than he was in the play. Making Romeo seem more vulnerable was effective in the film version of *Romeo and Juliet*, because Baz Luhrmann was able to justify Mercutio’s anger at Romeo (for being weak) and at Tybalt, for putting Romeo in this situation and not backing down even when Romeo tells him that he regards Capulet’s name “as dearly as mine own,” and to “be satisfied” (119, line 73).

In the movie, Luhrmann has Romeo chase after Tybalt (even though in the text it says that Tybalt comes back) in order to show that Tybalt is a bit cowardly, as well as to show Romeo’s loyalty to his friends. In the text, Benvolio says “Here comes the furious Tybalt back again” (123, line 126), while in the film, Romeo goes after Tybalt and crashes into his car and Tybalt ran away because he just came to terms with what he did. This scene also shows that Romeo was a little bit hot-headed, for being prepared to throw away everything he had just to get Mercutio’s revenge on Tybalt. In the text, Tybalt still seems to want to fight Romeo, and says “Thou wretched boy that didst consort him here shall with him hence”, basically telling Romeo he’s ready to fight, whereas in the movie, since Romeo crashed his car into Tybalt’s, Tybalt was in no condition to fight, and you kind of had to feel sorry for him. Overall, by changing the scene

where Tybalt dies, Luhrmann strengthened the scene and his changes were very effective, even though some aspects of the scene were weakened by the changes.