

Juliette and the fabric of the play is essentially the same. It may seem unusual and improbable but it is not impossible. Anyhow for this Shakespeare deserves no credit. The plot may be an admirable one but that is due to the author of the romance and concerns us little; it is sufficient to say, the romance would soon have been lost in oblivion had it not been taken up, stripped to a skeleton, covered over again, adorned and embellished and very life put into a once cold and artificial statue. The frame might have been a good one but to the sculptor is due the statue.

If Romeo and Juliet did not live, then they live today: grosser ones, indeed, ones that do not carry out the manners and customs of Verona but ones that are just as ardent and faithful, that think such thoughts that have such actions. Go with me, reader, and see Romeo, a gallant, handsome young fellow of perhaps twenty one. He loves one of those creatures, proud and beautiful, either cold and passionless or one of those that delight in tormenting man by shunning his attentions. Man without woman or woman's love is but half a man. Nature seems to put in man the instinct of selecting, by which he is practically enabled at sight to select his love, and happy nature mutually endows the other sex. Can unhappy Romeo live on without pronouncing a curse on her that quenches the fire of affection with the cold water of indifference. He pines and like a natural man, wretchedly falls again and again at her feet and begs. Here is the wise soliloquy:

"Love is a smoke made with the fume of sighs;
Being purged, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes;
Being vexed a sea nourished with lovers' tears;
What is it else? A madness most discreet.
A choking gall and a preserving sweet."

Nothing is more beautiful than this poetic figurative definition of love.

Romeo no doubt thought that he could never love another, but again Shakespeare makes him follow the course of human nature and with the help of good Mercutio finds another that

"So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows."