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**The Problems of Two Women**

All over the world there are families where children have problems communicating with their parents. This is a major theme in *Romeo and Juliet*. *Romeo and Juliet* is a play written by William Shakespeare during the late 1590’s. it is about two teen lovers whose families are in political warfare, but Romeo and Juliet defy all boundaries to be together. *Dear Zoe* is a book written by Philip Beard about, Tess, a 15-year-old girl, who feels responsible for her three year old sister’s death. In both of these pieces of literature, one of the main themes is that even in today’s society, parents do not listen to their children’s opinions about topics that concern them and their futures. This is a recurrent theme in both *Romeo and Juliet* and *Dear Zoe*. Tess and Juliet are both isolated and ignored by their parents, but they are not forgotten.

In both of these pieces of literature, there are many similarities in how Tess and Juliet have trouble communicating with their parents. This is apparent when Juliet says “O sweet mother, cast me not away. Delay this marriage for a month, a week, if you do not make the bridal bed in that dim monument where Tybalt lies” (Shakespeare 171). In this quote Juliet is trying to express her sadness about being forced to get married to Paris. But, Juliet’s mother does not care about what Juliet is saying or feeling. In this quote and many others throughout the play, it is apparent how Juliet’s parents do not care about Juliet’s opinion. Juliet’s mother does not listen to her, nor does she care about what her daughter thinks. Tess also has trouble communicating with her parents. “She looked at me hard and I could tell she was going to say something for the first time in her life that was meant to hurt me. She said ‘Tess you can’t always get comfort from

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people who have the same pain you have’” (Beard 49). In this quote Tess is asking her mother about what happened between her and Justin a young man at the store. But, Tess’ mother is telling her daughter that she cannot help her. Tess is trying to communicate with her mother, but her mother is not willing to talk. This shows that Tess as well as Juliet are both excellent examples of teens who are isolated and ignored by their parents.

As much as Tess and Juliet have problems with their relationships with their parents, Tess and her mother find a way through it, while Juliet and her parents cannot settle their differences. An example of this is when Juliet says, “O, happy dagger, this is thy sheath. There rust, and let me die” (Shakespeare 231). This quote is a wonderful example of how the Capulets force Juliet to execute the risky plan that she has created. Juliet’s parents would not listen to Juliet when she repeatedly tells them she does not want to marry Paris. Because Juliet’s parents do not listen to her, Juliet goes to the priest and comes up with a clever plan to fake her death which ultimately leads to her demise. Tess on the other hand, has a very different situation with her mother. This is the quote where Tess make amends, “Then she hugged me and this time we both held on for a long time. ‘I love you so much, Tess. You know that.’ ‘Yes.’ ‘And I want you to come home. You know that too.’ ‘Yes, I do.’”(Beard 160). This quote shows how Tess and her mother begin to repair their relationship. Tess’ mother comes to Tess’ father’s house on her birthday and tells Tess she wants her to come home. This is the beginning of Tess and her mother’s new relationship, after Zoe’s death. Tess’ relationship is much stronger that Juliet’s relationship with her parents because Tess and her mother forgive themselves, and they learn to listen to each other. Tess and Juliet both have similar problems, but have different ways of dealing with them.

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Both Tess and Juliet have similarities and differences in their relationships with their parents, but they both try to find a way to fix them. Juliet is ignored by her parents and is not taken seriously, so she thinks the only way out is to commit suicide. Tess is being pushed away by her grief-stricken mother, but instead of giving up, she finds a way to repair their relationship. The problems that these characters are dealing with are problems that many children all over the world are burdened by, but through reading about Tess and Juliet’s experiences, teens must learn to love, to listen and to try to heal their relationships with their families.

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**Works Cited**

Beard, Philip. *Dear Zoe*. New York: Penguin Books, 2006.

Shakespeare, William. *Romeo and Juliet*.New York: Washington Square press, 1992.