

Twisted Endings and Altered Realities in Shakespeare's Plays

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Abstract: *William Shakespeare's plays continue to engage readers and audiences through their complex characters, poetic language, and, most importantly, their strikingly unconventional climaxes. This paper presents an analytical study of three significant Shakespearean plays Macbeth, The Merchant of Venice, and Romeo and Juliet with particular emphasis on how their endings move away from ordinary reality and challenge audience expectations. Rather than offering predictable resolutions, Shakespeare constructs twisted climactic moments that intensify dramatic tension and leave a lasting emotional impact. In Macbeth, the prophecy that the protagonist cannot be defeated by a man "of woman born" initially appears to guarantee his invincibility. However, the revelation that Macduff was delivered through a Caesarean birth subverts natural assumptions and transforms fate into a powerful dramatic device. In The Merchant of Venice, the courtroom scene involving the demand for a "pound of flesh" presents a conflict between rigid justice and compassionate mercy. Although the bond seems legally binding, Portia's ingenious interpretation of the law leads to an unexpected reversal that surprises both the characters and the audience. Likewise, Romeo and Juliet reach its tragic climax through miscommunication and dramatic irony. The lovers' suicides, caused by mistaken belief rather than deliberate intent, highlight the destructive consequences of fate and human error. This paper argues that Shakespeare deliberately distances his climaxes from realistic outcomes to enhance dramatic power and thematic depth. These unpredictable endings not only resist audience anticipation but also reveal Shakespeare's exceptional creativity in redefining the nature of tragedy.*

Keywords: Dramatic Irony, Reality versus Fiction, Shakespearean Drama, Tragic Endings, Twisted Climaxes

