Act 1 Scene 5 (when Romeo and Juliet first meet)

Sonnet

A sonnet is a type of poem with themes of love and/or death

It contains 14 lines

The rhyme scheme is abab cdcd efef gg (ends with rhyming couplets)

It’s written in iambic pentameter (10 syllables per line with 5 stresses – it sounds like a heartbeat)

Shakespeare wrote 154 of them

25/9/20

Romeo’s speech is a sonnet, like the prologue

Romeo’s language towards Juliet changes - Everything Romeo thought he knew about (idealistic) love changed when he first sees her.

Juliet is quite defensive of her honour when she first sees Romeo.

Romeo employs religious imagery is used “blessed my rude hand”.

This highlights the sanctity and purity of their love

Juliet is put on a pedestal by Romeo

Links back to the prologue – “star-cross’d lovers”

Romeo is ‘blinded by love’ has he worships Juliet. “O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright”. This hyperbolised language. Juliet is far brighter that any light on earth.

There is, obviously, an element of romance in the conversation

However, there is also some lively verbal fencing between two as they tease and flirt

Romeo is a bit of a ‘lad’ – and makes some cheeky, ‘typically male’ advances

Juliet’s ‘typically female’ replies are a little more restrained – but still encouraging.

At the end of the conversation, they kiss

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Religious imagery

Key vocabulary

Shrine – A holy or sacred place dedicated to a saint/God

Pilgrimage – A religious journey (often to a shrine)

Pilgrim – someone who goes on a pilgrimage

Romeo and Juliet speak a sonnet together. This means that they are connected and sharing the lines seamlessly. The love is mutual.

there is a semantic field of religion

This presents the love as purifying, transcendent and authentic.

They describe themselves as pilgrims that go on a religious journey to each other.

Their relationship is gravitas

Juliet is described as a saint and a shrine, picturing her as ethereal.

The audience would have been predominantly Christian, making them view their relationship as pure.

*What is the significance of the following quotations from Romeo and Juliet?*

“O dear account! My life is my foe’s debt”

This quotation is very significant because it is the first time Romeo discovers that Juliet is a Capulet. Instead of wanting to forget about her and continue in his ordinary ways, he decides that he is willing to sacrifice his life for Juliet’s love. His death would be at the ‘debt’ of the feud amid the households. These both the magnitude of the conflict between the two families and the connection between the two protagonists.