

= Rosaline =

Rosaline (/ ʔrʔzʔlʔn / or / ʔrʔzʔliʔn /) is an unseen character and niece of Capulet in William Shakespeare 's tragedy Romeo and Juliet (1597) . Although silent , her role is important . Romeo is at first deeply in love with Rosaline and expresses his dismay at her not loving him back . Romeo first spots Juliet while trying to catch a glimpse of Rosaline at a gathering hosted by the Capulet family .

Scholars generally compare Romeo 's short @-@ lived love of Rosaline with his later love of Juliet . The poetry Shakespeare writes for Rosaline is much weaker than that for Juliet . Scholars believe Romeo 's early experience with Rosaline prepares him for his relationship with Juliet . Later performances of Romeo and Juliet have painted different pictures of Romeo and Rosaline 's relationship , as filmmakers have experimented with making Rosaline a more visible character .

= = Role in the play = =

Before Romeo meets her cousin Juliet , he loves Rosaline , Capulet 's niece . He describes her as wonderfully beautiful : " The all @-@ seeing sun / ne 'er saw her match since first the world begun . " Rosaline , however , chooses to remain chaste ; Romeo says : " She hath forsworn to love , and in that vow / Do I live dead that live to tell it now . " This is the source of his depression , and he makes his friends unhappy ; Mercutio comments : " That same pale , hard @-@ hearted wench , that Rosaline , torments him so that he will sure run mad . " Benvolio urges Romeo to sneak into a Capulet gathering where , he claims , Rosaline will look like " a crow " alongside the other beautiful women . Romeo agrees , but doubts Benvolio 's assessment . After Romeo sees Juliet his feelings suddenly change : " Did my heart love till now ? Forswear it , sight / For I ne 'er saw true beauty till this night . " Because their relationship is sudden and secret , Romeo 's friends and Friar Laurence continue to speak of his affection for Rosaline throughout much of the play .

= = Analysis = =

= = = Name = = =

Rosaline is a variant of Rosalind , a name of Old French origin : (hros

= " horse " , lind =

" soft , tender ") . When it was imported into English it was thought to be from the Latin rosa linda (" lovely rose ") . Romeo sees Rosaline as the embodiment of the rose because of her name and her apparent perfections . The name Rosaline commonly appears in Petrarchan sonnets , a form of poetry Romeo uses to woo Juliet and to describe both Rosaline and Juliet . Since Rosaline is unattainable , she is a perfect subject for this style ; but Romeo 's attempt at it is forced and weak . By the time he meets Juliet his poetic ability has improved considerably .

Gender studies critics have argued that Rosaline 's name suggests that Romeo never really forgets her but rather replaces her with Juliet . Thus , when Juliet cries " What 's in a name ? A rose by any other name would smell as sweet , " she is ironically expressing Romeo 's own view of her as a substitute for Rosaline . That is to say , Rosaline , replaced in name only by Juliet , is just as sweet to Romeo . Gender critics also note that the arguments used to dissuade Romeo from pursuing Rosaline are similar to the themes of Shakespeare 's procreation sonnets . In these sonnets Shakespeare urges the man (who can be equated with Romeo) to find a woman with whom to procreate ? a duty he owes to society . Rosaline , it seems , is distant and unavailable except in the mind , similarly bringing no hope of offspring . As Benvolio argues , she is best replaced by someone who will reciprocate . Rosaline reveals similarities to the subject of the sonnets when she refuses to break her vow of chastity . Her name may be referred to in the first sonnet when the young man is described as " beauties Rose . " This line ties the young man to both Rosaline and Romeo in Juliet 's " What 's in a name ? " soliloquy . When Juliet says " ... that which we call a rose /

By any other name would smell as sweet " , she may be raising the question of whether there is any difference between the beauty of a man and the beauty of a woman .

Rosaline is used as a name for only one other Shakespearean character ? the one of the main female figures in Love 's Labours Lost (1598) . Scholars have found similarities between them : both are described as beautiful , and both have a way of avoiding men 's romantic advances . Rosaline in Love 's Labours Lost constantly rebuffs her suitor 's advances and Romeo 's Rosaline remains distant and chaste in his brief descriptions of her . These similarities have led some to wonder whether they are based on a woman Shakespeare actually knew , possibly the Dark Lady described in his sonnets , but there is no strong evidence of this connection .

= = = Rosaline as plot device = = =

Analysts note that Rosaline acts as a plot device , by motivating Romeo to sneak into the Capulet party where he will meet Juliet . Without her , their meeting would be unlikely . Rosaline thus acts as the impetus to bring the " star @-@ cross 'd lovers " to their deaths ? she is crucial in shaping their fate (a common theme of the play) . Ironically , she remains oblivious of her role .

= = = Rosaline and Juliet = = =

Literary critics often compare Romeo 's love for Rosaline with his feelings for Juliet . Some see Romeo 's love for Rosaline as childish as compared with his true love for Juliet . Others argue that the apparent difference in Romeo 's feelings shows Shakespeare 's improving skill . Since Shakespeare is thought to have written early drafts of the play in 1591 , and then picked them up again in 1597 to create the final copy , the change in Romeo 's language for Rosaline and Juliet may mirror Shakespeare 's increased skill as a playwright : the younger Shakespeare describing Rosaline , and the more experienced describing Juliet . In this view , a careful look at the play reveals that Romeo 's love for Rosaline is not as petty as usually imagined .

Critics also note the ways in which Romeo 's relationship with Rosaline prepares him for meeting Juliet . Before meeting Rosaline , Romeo despises all Capulets , but afterwards looks upon them more favorably . He experiences the dual feelings of hate and love in the one relationship . This prepares him for the more mature relationship with Juliet ? one fraught by the feud between Montagues and Capulets . Romeo expresses the conflict of love and hate in Act 1 , Scene 1 , comparing his love for Rosaline with the feud between the two houses :

Here 's much to do with hate , but more with love .

Why , then , O brawling love ! O loving hate !

O any thing , of nothing first create !

O heavy lightness ! serious vanity !

Mis @-@ shapen chaos of well @-@ seeming forms !

Feather of lead , bright smoke , cold fire , sick health !

Still @-@ waking sleep , that is not what it is !

This love feel I , that feel no love in this .

Dost thou not laugh ?

Psychoanalytic critics see signs of repressed childhood trauma in Romeo 's love for Rosaline . She is of a rival house and is sworn to chastity . Thus he is in an impossible situation , one which will continue his trauma if he remains in it . Although he acknowledges its ridiculous nature , he refuses to stop loving her . Psychoanalysts view this as a re @-@ enactment of his failed relationship with his mother . Rosaline 's absence is symbolic of his mother 's absence and lack of affection for him . Romeo 's love for Juliet is similarly hopeless , for she is a Capulet and Romeo pursues his relationship with her ; the difference being that Juliet reciprocates . This does not seem likely seeing as his mother died of grief after his banishment , indicating that she probably loved him deeply .

= = Performances = =

Rosaline has been portrayed in various ways over the centuries . Theophilus Cibber 's 1748 version of Romeo and Juliet replaced references to Rosaline with references to Juliet . This , according to critics , took out the " love at first sight " moment at the Capulet feast . In the 1750s , actor and theatre director David Garrick also eliminated references to Rosaline from his performances , as many saw Romeo 's quick replacement of her as immoral . However , in Franco Zeffirelli 's 1968 film version of Romeo and Juliet , Romeo sees Rosaline (played by Paola Tedesco) first at the Capulet feast and then Juliet , of whom he becomes immediately enamored . This scene suggests that love is short and superficial . Rosaline also appears in Renato Castellani 's 1954 film version . In a brief non @-@ Shakespearean scene , Rosaline (Dagmar Josipovitch) gives Romeo a mask at Capulet 's celebration , and urges him to leave disguised before harm comes to him . Other filmmakers keep Rosaline off @-@ camera in stricter accordance with Shakespeare 's script . Robert Nathan 's 1966 romantic comedy , Juliet in Mantua , presents Rosaline as a fully developed character . In this sequel , in which Romeo and Juliet did not die , the pair live ten years later in exile in Mantua . When Rosaline shows up in Mantua with her husband County Paris , both couples must confront their disillusionment with their marriages . Another play , After Juliet , written by Scottish playwright Sharman Macdonald , tells the story of Rosaline after Romeo dies . A main character in this play , she struggles with her loss and turns away the advances of Benvolio , who has fallen in love with her . Macdonald 's daughter , Keira Knightley , played Rosaline in the play 's 1999 premiere . The 2012 young adult novel " When You Were Mine " by Rebecca Serle sets Rosaline 's story in a contemporary high school . Rosaline and Romeo (renamed Rob) have been best friends since childhood and are just beginning to fall in love when Rosaline 's cousin , Juliet , moves back into town and sets her sights on Rob . Rosaline also appears in the 2013 film adaptation of Romeo & Juliet .