

KEY WORDS

Passive aggressive, Marred, Despondent, Subservient, Parodying, Pleading, Juxtaposition, Religious imagery, Pretence, Ridiculing, Ornamental, Obsequious, Impetuous, Delirious, Soliloquy, Eerie, Grim

Juliet Act 4

COMPARISON

Juliet showing passive aggression to Paris demonstrates how men and women, **comparatively**, were treated very differently in terms of how they were allowed to express their emotions. Juliet's rudeness makes her seem slightly **masculine** showing how men were free to be **dominant and expressive**, while women were expected to be **passive and subservient** (willing to serve).

COMPARISON

The friar is calm, in comparison to Juliet who is **desperate and emotional**. This is demonstrative of the age difference between the two and how it might affect a person's disposition. Older people are shown to be more **mature and collected**, while the youth of the play are **hasty** (quick) and **impulsive**.

COMPARISON

The play very much lacks **complex female characters**, but from what we can see of Juliet's mother, she is **subservient** to her husband and Juliet pretending to also be, ridicules her own mother.

COMPARISON

Juliet exists in **parallel** to Romeo in terms of her emotions. Both their emotions **rise and fall** at the same points in the play and at this point they are both experiencing melancholy, Juliet because she must fake her death and Romeo because he is exiled.

COMPARISON

Juliet's father was very harsh to her in the previous scene, but in this one he is far happier. This shows that his happiness is **dependent on** his daughter ability to follow his **will**, explaining why Juliet opens up to her nurse and not her parents about Romeo. Juliet doesn't feel like her parents **prioritise her desires** and that is why she is not close with them.

COMPARISON

Juliet, like Romeo uses **soliloquys** which allow us to hear her introspective ramblings. **Soliloquy** form is also effective, however, as it makes the audience feel as though the characters are confiding in them, which **maintains the fourth wall**, sucking them in to the world of the play.

LOVE VS HATE (ACT 3 SCENE 2)

- When Paris greets Juliet calling her his wife, she responds that she **"may be"** making her seem **uncertain in her commitment to him**. Her tone is mildly **passive aggressive, contrary** (dissimilar) to how polite she has been to him before.
- Paris calls her face beautiful, saying that her tears have **marred** (ruined) it, and she retorts by saying that her face was **"bad enough before their spite"**. She is **self-deprecating** but in a way that suggests that she is tired of **Paris' constant flattery**.
- Paris **responds in turn** with a little passive aggression regarding her **ruining property** (her face) which is about to be his and she responds almost despondently, replying that **"for [her] face is not [her] own"**. Juliet has a depressed tone, so very different to the girl we saw at the start of the play.
- In **Elizabethan society**, women were expected to be **subservient** (submissive) to the men in their lives and Juliet is almost **parodying** (making fun of) this in her **sarcastic, passive aggressive** comments. As an audience we are able to see how little freedom women of this time possessed.
- In her **pleading** (begging) to Friar Lawrence, we are able to see how much the influence of love has **irrevocably** (forever) changed her. **"I long to die / If [...you...] speak not of remedy"** she declares. The word **"remedy"** has **medical connotations** which characterises love as a physical illness from which she is suffering.
- She says that she would rather **"leap, than marry Paris"**, she is no longer **passive** but **direct** with her emotions. The **juxtaposition** of leaping to her death to marriage communicates her disdain for it.
- This is a moment in the story that is **reminiscent** (similar to) of its origin **Ovid's Pyramus and Thisbe** and with knowledge of that story it makes the moment quite tragic as we know what is about to happen (dramatic irony).
- Through her direct and aggressive language, love is shown to be a **corruptive yet freeing force**. Love has made her **selfish** in that she no longer cares about her family's desires, only her own.



JULIET IS A PARODY OF HER EARLIER SELF (ACT 4 SCENE 2)

- She claims, to her father, that she has **"learned [...] to repent"** when she returns from confession. **"Repent"** evokes religious imagery and in the context of her **pretence** (act) it almost seems like she is **ridiculing religion**, as she is **ridiculing** the passive woman by pretending to be her. Ridiculing her at least in the eyes of the audience.
- **"Henceforward I am ever ruled by you"** she says, pretending to **renounce** (give up) her freedom to carry out her father's wishes. The noun **"ruled"** seems a **superfluous** addition to her lines to her father. It emphasises that she has no freewill, but it seems unnecessary to say this **if not to** she is **ridiculing** how ridiculous her position is.
- As mentioned above, women were expected to be **subservient** (submissive) to their husbands and their fathers and Juliet, in her **pretence**, provides a **humorous** (funny) example of the ridiculous extent of this.
- She asks her nurse to help her **"sort needful such ornaments"**. The noun **"ornament"** emphasises the **ornamental nature of women** in this society, in the way that they were expected to be simply **ornaments**, or **trophies** which their husbands might **possess**.
- She speaks of outfits that will **"furnish"** her, again, emphasising that she is purely an **ornament** (object) which to be **"furnish[ed]"**. Her comments sound almost **obsequious** (overly polite), which adds to her ridicule. She uses her **obsequiousness** (disapproving) to make fun of the way in which women of her era were expected to behave.

JULIET'S IMPETUOSITY (ABRUPT IMPULSE) (ACT 4 SCENE 3)

- She looks at the vial the friar has given her and worries that **"it be poison"**. This is the first sign of her **delirium** as she is doubting the sincerity of the man whom she has **confided** (told her secrets to) in and trusted to help her. A man who has shown no sign of being **deceitful** (traitorous), a religious man at that. Love has made her **delirious and untrusting**.
- She thinks of her **"buried ancestors packed"** in the vault she will be placed in. **"Packed"** is an **eerie** (scary) choice of words on her part, as it **evokes** images of bones being squashed together in a small space, evoking **claustrophobia** (fear of small spaces) in the minds of the audience.
- She imagines herself **"madly play[ing] with [her] forefathers joints"**, a **horrifying** image. Shakespeare's use of **soliloquy form** is here is significant as it allows us **private access into her innermost thoughts** which we would not otherwise have. Thus, we are able to **bear witness** to (watch) her **descent** (spiral) into delirium.
- And yet after all these horrifying images she decides to still go forward with her plan. She ends her soliloquy with **"Romeo [...] I drink to thee"**. She puts a **grim spin** on the **convention** of drinking to celebrate and drinks the potion.
- Love is shown to have made her **impetuous** and **rash** in her decision making. She has become **desperate** and is willing to risk anything to be with her love, even death.

TOPIC SENTENCES

- Juliet being impolite towards Paris marks the death of the **passive, subservient girl she once was**. Shows love to be a **forceful corruptive influence** that makes a person selfish.
- Juliet, when speaking to her father before her plan to fake her death, is willing and submissive, which is simply a **pretence** (an act) and acts a parody of her earlier self. In doing this she **ridicules** (makes fun of) the way in which women of this period were expected to act towards their fathers.
- Juliet's soliloquy in Act 4 Scene 3 of the play demonstrates her impetuosity (rashness). She is **delirious** in her **soliloquy** and has resorted to faking her own death to be with the one she loves. This, as **mentioned**, links to the **folly of youth**, in that they are often too **hasty** (quick) in their decision making.



Writing about how a character has changed shows a thorough understanding of the play as a whole and also counts as a structural point (AO4).

Impetuous is an example of the sort of high-level language you will be expected to use to achieve a high-level mark. It would be useful to collate (collect) a list of high-level words like impetuous that you can use in your essays to elevate them (AO4).