

# Romeo and Juliet

## Last Minute Revision

### Ticklist

- 10 key words (**DIFF** Clashing Houses, **P**assionate **B**etrayal, **D**oomed Tragedy)
- 4 bits of context (**FOIG**)
- 3 Shakespeare's intentions
- 6 key themes (**FLICVY**)
- Key quote overview

### Key words:

Remember it as: **DIFF** Clashing Houses, **P**assionate **B**etrayal, **D**oomed Tragedy

- Dramatic irony
- Impetuousness
- Folly of youth
- Futile / futility
- Celestial bodies
- Hamartia
- Prohibition / prohibited
- Boundless
- Disillusioned
- Transcends mortal limitations

## 4 bits of context:

**FOIG = Fate Ovid's metamorphoses Italy Great chain of being**

### Fate and astrology:

Elizabethans believed in the power of **celestial bodies** (stars/ moon/ planets).  
**Queen Elizabeth had her own astrologist.**

- Prologue "star-cross'd" introduces key theme from the beginning
- Juliet is a Leo - she embodies these typical character traits

### Ovid's Metamorphoses:

The concept of lover's who are prevented from being together by **fate** seen in **Ovid's Pyramus and Thisbe**, a tale in his **Metamorphoses**, published around the 8th century AD.

- Ending is similar as both have idea of fate separating lovers and ending in tragedy
- Both show destructive nature of feuds

### Italy

Was believed to be a **romantic, wild country**, in which women were sexually promiscuous and men were violent and prone to duels.

- Juliet's lustfulness and sexual promiscuity and Tybalt's fiery, easily provoked nature demonstrates these stereotypes of Italians.
- Male violence runs throughout the entirety of the play

### Great chain of being:

God created the world with a clear **hierarchical structure**. King was at the top, and **men were higher than women on the structure**

- Romeo + Juliet violated great chain of being by trying to unite despite the prohibitions
- Juliet's disobedience with her father emphasises this - she was inferior to her father as a man

## Shakespeare's Intentions

- Shakespeare's tragic portrayal of Romeo and Juliet reinforces that even the seemingly **boundless power of love** is ultimately constrained by forces beyond human control. He reinforces Elizabethan ideas of **determinism** (everything is pre-set out) showing **celestial bodies** (stars/moon/planets) were powerful forces on human life.
- Shakespeare constructs the young characters as **impulsive** and **fervid** (passionate). Shakespeare links how her **impulsiveness and recklessness is their hamartia (fatal flaw)**—the very qualities that have led directly to their imminent demise. Shakespeare highlights the dangers of **unchecked** (uncontrolled) passion and the importance of considering consequences before acting impulsively.
- Shakespeare shows the consequences of **violating societal, religious and familial constructs**. These foundational constructs in society are **insurmountable** (can't overcome), even in the face of true love. Thus, he makes Romeo's **hamartia** (fatal flaw) his **impetuosity** (impulsiveness) - his inability to navigate social expectations reinforces the **folly (foolishness) in the youth**.

## Key themes:

Remember it as: **FLICVY**

**F**amily vs duty

**L**ove

**I**ndividuals vs society

**C**hance / fate

**V**iolence

**Y**outh

Character	Key Quotes	Key themes it links to
Romeo	<i><u>"There lie more peril in [her] eye/ Than twenty of their swords" act 2</u></i>	<b>Love, violence, youth,</b> individual vs society, family + duty
	<i><u>"But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks? It is the east, and Juliet is the sun." act 2</u></i>	<b>Love, youth, individual vs society,</b> chance/fate, family + duty
	<i><u>"with love's wings did [he] o'erperch these walls, for stony limits cannot hold love out" act 2</u></i>	<b>Individual vs society, family + duty,</b> love, youth
	<i><u>"thy beauty hath made me effeminate" act 3</u></i>	<b>Violence, love, youth,</b> individual vs family
	<i><u>"Then I defy you, stars!" . Act 5</u></i>	<b>Chance/fate, youth,</b> love, individual vs society, violence

## “There lie more peril in [her] eye/ Than twenty of their swords” act 2

- **Violent image:** Romeo's **subconscious recognition** of the violence intertwined with his love for Juliet. Their **defiance of societal and familial** boundaries positions their love as a violating act, filled with “*peril*”.
- The young **eponymous** (names are the title of the play) characters are blinded by passion and are ignorant to the perils (dangers) of this **prohibited love**.
- **Other violent allusions:** death+ violence with their love is emphasised by Tybalt's demand for Romeo to “*draw his sword*.” This marks the moment Romeo falls in love with Juliet – their love from its very **inception**, is tarnished by the shadow of death and violence, hinting at the “*star-cross-d*” nature of their romance.

## To think about when remembering the analysis

- **Violent image:** subconscious recognition love + violence intertwined
- **Eponymous:** blind to perils of their love
- **Violent allusions:** from moment of inception, love stained with violence

## “Then I defy you, stars!”. Act 5

- **Apostrophe (address something that is absent/dead/ abstract concept):** Romeo directly addresses the stars, personifies them as **tangible** (can touch) forces capable of replying to him – emphasises **deteriorating mental state**, and also illuminates the immense power he gives to these **celestial bodies** (stars/moon/planets).
- **Exclamative sentence:** The **exclamative sentence** emphasises Romeo's **descent into despair** and his recognition of the **tragic fate that awaits him**.
- Despite his youthful defiance against **societal, religious, and familial boundaries**, his defiance proves **futile** (pointless). The stars, once symbols of destiny, now feel like a **malevolent** (evil) force actively working against him.

## To think about when remembering the analysis

- **Apostrophe:** makes stars seem tangible – deteriorating mental state + power of celestial bodies
- **exclamative :** emphasis despair of tragic fate awaiting him
- **Defiance:** it is futile – can't go against societal, religious, familial boundaries

Character	Key Quotes	Key themes it links to
Juliet	<p><i><u>"If he be married, / My grave is like to be my wedding bed."</u></i> (Act 1)</p> <p><i><u>"Deny thy father and refuse thy name"</u></i> Act 2 scene 2</p> <p><i><u>"O serpent heart, hid with a flowering face!"</u></i>. Act 3</p> <p><i><u>"Then I'll be brief. O happy dagger!"</u></i> Act 5</p>	<p><b>Violence, love, chance/fate</b>, individual vs society, family vs duty, youth</p> <p><b>Family vs duty, individual vs society</b>, love, violence, youth</p> <p><b>Violence, love, youth</b>, individual vs society, family vs duty</p> <p><b>Violence, chance/fate</b>, love, individual vs society, youth</p>

## “Deny thy father and refuse thy name” Act 2 scene 2

- **“Deny” and “refuse” semantic field:** Defiance, illustrating her rebellion and defiance against the constraints of her family feud and commitment to true love blindly.
- She is **impulsive** and **fervid** (passionate) in the way that she loves which is a characteristic of the sign that she is born under, **Leo**. Reinforces Elizabethan belief in **celestial bodies** (stars, moon etc) to have an enormous influence over a person’s **disposition** (nature).
- **Patriarchal society (male-dominated):** Juliet’s statement to “*deny thy father*” goes against the norms of a **patriarchal society** where daughters were considered their father’s property, used to enhance his **political and social standing** through arranged marriages.

## To think about when remembering the analysis

- **Semantic field of defiance:** defies constraints for love blindly
- **Impulsive + fervid:** characteristic of a Leo
- **Patriarchal:** goes against societal construct and role as a daughter

## “Then I’ll be brief. O happy dagger! Act 5

- **Oxymoron (two contrasting words placed side by side):** joyous connotation of “*happy*” starkly contrasts with the deadly imagery of “*dagger*.” This act of **self-sacrifice** characterises her as a **tragic heroine** (starts off noble and has a fall). Her strength and self-discovery is clear at the start, yet her **passionate nature** ultimately leads to her tragic end.
- **Diction on “brief”:** Juliet’s urgent **desire to escape from a world where their forbidden love challenges societal norms enforced by law, family, and religion.**
- Her urgency emphasises her **impulsiveness and recklessness is her hamartia (fatal flaw)**

## To think about when remembering the analysis

- **Oxymoron:** show self-sacrifice + that she is a tragic heroine
- **Diction:** urgency to escape forbidden love challenged by constructs like family
- **Hamartia:** impulsiveness + recklessness

Character	Key Quotes	Key themes it links to
Lord Capulet	<p><i><u>"hang, beg, starve, die"</u></i>, Act 3</p> <p><i><u>"Death lies on her like an untimely frost / Upon the sweetest flower of all the field."</u></i> Act 4</p>	<p><b>Individual vs society</b>, family vs duty, violence, love</p> <p><b>Family vs duty, individual vs society</b>, love, violence, chance/fate</p>

### "hang, beg, starve, die", Act 3

- **Asyndetic listing (using commas in a list instead of and)**: The **asyndeton** intensifies his fury + venomous anger as he is so enraged, he can only think to utter violent insults at Juliet for her disobedience – juxtaposes tenderness in act 1.
- **Patriarchy (male-dominated society)**: symbolises the **patriarchal and hierarchical structure of Elizabethan society**, where fathers held authority over their daughters and used their marriages to enhance their own social and financial standing.
- Juliet's refusal was an **assault on the patriarchy and a gross revolt** (action against) **against the natural order of society**.

### To think about when remembering the analysis

- **Asyndetic listing**: intensifies his venomous anger to his disobedience
- **Patriarchy**: father holds authority over daughter
- **Revolt on patriarchy**: goes against natural order with her love



Character	Key Quotes	Key themes it links to
Lady Capulet	<p><i><u>"Nurse, come back again"</u></i> Act 1</p> <p><i><u>"the sight of death is a bell, / That warns my old age to a sepulcher"</u></i> Act 5</p>	<p><b>Family vs duty, youth,</b> individual vs society, love</p> <p><b>Violence, family vs duty,</b> individual vs society, love, chance/fate</p>

**"the sight of death is a bell, / That warns my old age to a sepulcher" Act 5**

- **Simile:** likens her daughter's death to a warning bell, highlights the **immense guilt she experiences**. Contrasts her **overbearing encouragement** of Juliet's marriage in act 1 – she is now **consumed** by the consequences of her actions and the role she played in Juliet's demise.
- **Image of time:** The idea of a *"bell"* **conjures imagery of time**, serving as a reminder of life's fleeting nature and the importance of cherishing love over **oppressive societal norms and bitter feuds**.
- Through Lady Capulet, Shakespeare illustrates the tragic outcomes of **blindly adhering to social conventions** and nurturing hatred.

**To think about when remembering the analysis**

- **Simile:** death = warning bell, now consumed with guilt
- **Image of time:** life's fleeting nature – cherishing social norms + feuds/ love
- **Shakespeare:** consequences of blindly adhering to social conventions

Character	Key Quotes	Key themes it links to
Friar Lawrence	<p><u>"the earth, that's nature's mother, as her tomb. / what is her burying, grave that is her womb"</u> Act 2</p> <p><u>"Good morning father"</u> (Act 2 said by Romeo)</p> <p><u>"so tortured by my art"</u> Act 5</p>	<p>chance/fate, youth, violence/death, love</p> <p>Family vs duty, individual vs society, love</p> <p>Family vs duty, individual vs society, love, violence/death</p>

**"the earth, that's nature's mother, as her tomb. / what is her burying, grave that is her womb" Act 2**

- **Rhyming couplets:** "tomb" with "womb," emphasise the **interconnectedness** between life and death. He suggests that the earth, often viewed as a tomb for the deceased, is **paradoxically** (conflictingly) **also the source of new life**.
- emphasising the potential for **renewal and regeneration** – even in the face of the destruction of Romeo and Juliet lays hope for a **renewal of their love in another realm**
- **Personification:** Through his use of **personification**, he portrays the earth and its **celestial bodies** (sun, moon, planets) as powerful and wise entities. The **cycle of death and rebirth**, symbolised by the earth's actions, demonstrates **humanity's inevitable partaking in this relentless cycle**.

**To think about when remembering the analysis**

- **Rhyming couplets:** interconnectedness between life + death
- **Renewal + regeneration:** hopeful love will renew in another realm
- **Personification:** cycle of death + rebirth is inevitable and relentless

Character	Key Quotes	Key themes it links to
Mercutio	<p><i>“<u>prick love for pricking</u>” Act 1</i></p> <p><i>“<u>A plague o’ both/ your houses</u>” Act 3</i></p>	<p>Love, individual vs society, violence, youth</p> <p>Family vs duty, violence, individual vs society, youth, love</p>

### “A plague o’ both/ your houses” Act 3

- **Deathly image:** shows how this familial feud is tarnished with death and destruction – everyone who is **entangled** in this conflict is destined from grim fate.
- He has become **disillusioned** (discovered the truth) with violence and feuds, yet this ironically catalyses violence and propels the tragedy forward.
- **Foil to Romeo:** Mercutio's **cynical view of love**, contrasting with Romeo's **idealised notions** creates him as a **foil** (character accentuates main characters traits) to Romeo. His death solidifies his scepticism, highlighting the **inseparability of love and violence**.

### To think about when remembering the analysis

- **Deathly image:** everyone who is entangled with family conflict = grim fate
- **Disillusioned:** ironic as his death is a catalyst for more tragedy + violence
- **Foil:** he is sceptical. Scepticism finalised in his death

Character	Key Quotes	Key themes it links to
Tybalt	<p><i><b><u>“have at thee coward!”</u></b> Act 1</i></p> <p><i><b><u>“Wretched boy”</u></b> Act 3</i></p>	<p><b>Violence</b>, Individual vs society, youth</p> <p><b>Violence</b>, youth, individual vs society</p>

### “have at thee coward!” Act 1

- **Provocative language:** His quick temper is immediately apparent, the audience can see he **craves conflict and is fuelled by animosity** (hatred).
- His simplistic and straightforward language suggests **a lack of the wit and intelligence displayed by characters like Mercutio**; Tybalt's character is defined by his **propensity** (natural want) **for violence**.
- **Context:** Honour was a concept that was highly valued and well-guarded and honour that was **jeopardised** – A large amount of male violence **stemmed** from the patriarchy which reinforced this notion.

### To think about when remembering the analysis

- **Provocative language:** craves conflict + fuelled by animosity
- **Simplistic language:** lacks wit + defined by violence
- **Context:** honour jeopardised led to much violence

Character	Key Quotes	Key themes it links to
Nurse	<p><i><u>“wast the prettiest babe that e’er ...nursed”</u></i> Act 1</p> <p><i><u>“What lamb! What ladybird!”</u></i> Act 1</p>	Family, Love

### “wast the prettiest babe that e’er ...nursed” Act 1

- **Superlative “prettiest”:** emphasises an almost **excessive adoration**, suggesting a **bond that goes beyond duty** for the nurse and her pure adoration for Juliet.
- This **maternal and emotional bond is starkly contrasted** with the emotional separation between Juliet and Lady Capulet.
- **Context: Aristocratic** (people highest in society) **Elizabethans** would have their children raised by **wet nurses**, who would breastfeed them in place of their mothers and nanny them. This is the relationship the Nurse has with Juliet; it is extremely **maternal** (mother-like), more so that the relationship Juliet has with her own mother.

### To think about when remembering the analysis

- **Superlative:** excessive adoration as if she was her own daughter
- **Contrast with Lady C:** emotional bond unlike Juliet + Lady C
- **Context:** Nurse is a wet nurse so would have been like her actual mother