

KEY WORDS

Submissive, Discerned, Elizabethan society, Conventional, Compliant, Alliterative, Dramatic irony, Iambic pentameter, Passive, Rhyming couplets, Foreshadowing, Dialogue, Witty, Extended metaphor

Juliet Act 1

JULIET AS THE EXEMPLARY ARISTOCRATIC DAUGHTER (ACT 1 SCENE 3)

COMPARISON

Juliet, compared to Romeo is far more **passive** in her **disposition** this emphasises **gender expectations** of society at the time, women were expected to be far more submissive compared to men who had the freedom to be a little less **restrained** (controlled).

COMPARISON

Though Juliet is expected to follow her mother and father's wills, it is her father's that takes **precedence** (priority). Her mother's desires would simply be an extension of her father's as the man of the house typically had control over the women.

COMPARISON

How Juliet behaves around her parents in comparison to how confident and witty she is around Romeo is **demonstrative of parental relationships** of the time being primarily based on **respect and obedience**. It shows Juliet to **lack emotional support** from her parents which is a factor that contributes to her **downfall** later in the play.

COMPARISON

Juliet is born under the sign **Leo**, and we know this because her nurse says she was born on **"Lammas Eve"** which is July 31st. The Elizabethans had a particular interesting astrology and Leo's are traditionally **fiery and headstrong** and we can see these traits in Juliet particularly in this scene.

- Juliet's first lines in the play **establish** her to be **submissive** (obedient) to the will of her parents, this can be **discerned** from line: **"Madam I am here. What is your will?"**. She addresses her mother using a formally using the pronoun **"madam"** and she poses a question, both of which demonstrating the immense respect she shows to her mother in that she is willing to do as she asks.
- In answer to her mother's question of whether she thinks of marriage, she responds that it **"an honour [she] dream[s] not of"** using the noun honour to distract from the idea that she is not keen to marry.
- In **Elizabethan society**, it was **conventional** (normal) for women to marry whoever their father might **deem** (decide) a suitable partner, without complaint and for them to deny such an instruction was almost unheard of.
- Juliet's **compliant** (submissive) nature indicates her to be aware of the expectations placed upon her, however her line claiming that she will **"look to like if looking liking move"** are the earliest signs of her later rebellion that is to come (which we know of due to the prologue (dramatic irony)).
- The **alliterative** **"l"** sound that she uses makes her sound almost playful and combined with the **iambic pentameter** that Shakespeare **implements** (adds) she sounds as though she has control over her language. This illustrates that she still desires some form of control and **foreshadows** her later rebellion.
- Her final line of the scene, however, asserting that she will not **"endart mine eye, than [her father's] consent gives strength to make it fly"**. The **rhyming couplets** **"eye"** and **"fly"** puts emphasis on the final phrase, which later turns out to be untrue.
- Juliet appears from the opening to be a **typically passive and obedient aristocratic daughter**, doing as her father pleases, but the **flourishes** (ornaments) in her language and subtle disagreements with her parents **foreshadow** her later **betrayal of their will**.



JULIET APPEARS TO BE CORRUPTED BY ROMEO BUT IS DEFIANT WITHOUT HIS INFLUENCE (ACT 1 SCENE 5)

- Though Romeo is the initiator of the **dialogue** he has with Juliet at the Capulet party, with his metaphor about pilgrims, however it is Juliet who **extends his metaphor**, responding with the **witty** "Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much".
- The moment of the lover's first interaction marks the end of the play's **exposition** (opening) and the beginning of the **rising action**. Juliet certainly shows the action to be rising in her interactions with Romeo, as her response demonstrates their chemistry.
- She tells him that saints have "lips that they must use in prayer", **discouraging** his attempts to kiss her. Her mention of "saints" not only shows her to be knowledgeable and able to dispense that knowledge in a **witty fashion**, but also able to take control of a situation. She is not the **passive** girl we saw in Act 1 Scene 3.
- She retorts, after they kiss that he should "have [he] lips the sin that they have took", referencing the kiss with confidence and wit. Though Romeo is the one who initiates the kiss, it seem Juliet is just as open to it.
- Her "you kiss by the book", while some might interoperate it as demonstrative of her innocence, could also seem like a humorous exclamation.
- It certainly might be easy to assume that given the **passive disposition** (nature) she showed in her first scene of the play, that is Juliet who is corrupted by Romeo and his sexual **advances**, but her **witty** comments and **extending of his metaphors portrays her as intelligent and confident**.

TOPIC SENTENCES

- Juliet appears to **exemplify** the **exemplary aristocratic daughter** but is rather subtly rebellious and has **authority over her language**.
- With Romeo's bold advances towards her, Juliet might seem like a **passive damsel** who is corrupted by a **sexually confident man**, but her **headstrong, confident nature** show her to be less a corrupted damsel and more a willing participant.