

Lady Capulet

Key Themes

- Chance/fate
- Youth
- Individuals vs society
- Family vs duty
- Violence
- Love

Key Words/Phrases

- Epitomises the traditional Elizabethan woman
- Blindly obeys social conventions
- Adheres to social conventions and fulfilling of one's duties
- Sacrifices Juliet's well-being
- Indifferent (no interest) with Juliet
- Distant
- Laments (feels grief)
- Remorseful (guilt)
- Futility (pointlessness) of familial feuds

Shakespeare's intentions

- Shakespeare constructs Lady Capulet to prioritise a **socially advantageous** marriage over her own daughter's personal happiness. He presents her as a **marionette (puppet) of social conventions**, influenced by her own experiences of marrying young. Through Lady Capulet, Shakespeare prompts his audience to reflect on the entrenched conventions of society and consider whether they truly serve individuals' best interests.
- Through Lady Capulet, Shakespeare illustrates the tragic outcomes of **blindly adhering to social conventions** and nurturing hatred.

“Nurse ,come back again” Act 1

Link to main key themes:

- Youth
- Family vs duty
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Analysis

- **Epitomises (perfect example) of traditional Elizabethan woman:** Lady Capulet's distant and **indifferent** (no interest) connection with Juliet reflects the **conventional** parent-child dynamics of the Elizabethan period. In **aristocratic** (highest class in society) circles, nurses often took on the **maternal role** in raising children.
- Lady Capulet's focus on arranging a **socially advantageous** marriage for Juliet highlights her **prioritisation of status** and societal expectations over her daughter's personal happiness. This suggests her complicity and conformity to social conventions, as she seeks to secure Juliet's future through a purely advantageous marriage.

“The sight of death is a bell, / That warns my old age to a sepulcher” Act 5

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Analysis

- **Simile:** Lady Capulet's use of a **simile**, likening her daughter's death to a warning bell, highlights the **immense guilt she experiences**. This shows a shift in her perspective from the **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.
- This reinforces the conflict between **familial duty and individual desires**, as Lady Capulet comes to prioritise her love for Juliet over societal expectations of marriage and status.
- **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.