

Romeo and juliet contrast



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Act II Scene 2 is one of the most famous scenes of the play. It is commonly known as the "Balcony Scene" because Juliet appears on a small balcony outside her bedroom window, and exchanges words, expresses true love with Romeo who is standing below in her father's orchard. The scene is famous for its moving and vivid images, used to express love between two people of contrasting nature. In my study I will compare the language of Romeo and Juliet in this famous scene.

This scene is packed with little metaphors, similes/comparisons, etc. which shouldn't be too hard to find. I'll put some of my observations down, though. As you suggest, the wall Romeo leaps represents the hatred between the two families. Moreover, the act of leaping represents Romeo's transgression of standards. The orchard itself could represent a number of things. I vote for The Garden of Eden & forbidden fruit. Romeo describes Juliet at the rising sun; "it is the east, and Juliet is the sun. Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon." (sc. 2 l. 4) remember the scene takes place at night/early morning, like most of the most important scenes in the play. Effectually, Romeo is saying that Juliet is the force that transforms night into day. Also, perhaps not intended, there is a sexual metaphor; one rises (wakes up) by the sun. Since Juliet is Romeo's sun, he rises to her (i. e. gets an erection). In any case, for Romeo, the power of language transforms the world.

This is then juxtaposed in the same scene when Juliet says: "Tis but thy name that is my enemy. / Thou art thyself, though not a Montague. / What's Montague? It is nor hand, nor foot, / Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part / Belonging to a man. O, be some other name! / What's in a name? That which we call a rose / By any other word would smell as sweet." Suggesting that

without men language means nothing. This also tells us that Juliet is far more conscious of reality than Romeo is. Where Romeo is quick to use poetry, Juliet is more hesitant.

Another example: when Romeo swears his love to Juliet by the moon, she protests " O swear not by the moon, th'inconstant moon, / That monthly changes in her circled orb, / Lest that thy love prove likewise variable. " But we are invited to question how accurate Romeo's metaphors and similes really are.

When he compares Juliet to the sun, does he inadvertently admit that his love would be cyclic? So what might the " envious moon" represent? Whatever it does, it's certainly ironic that he later says: " Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear" (sc. I. 107) in response to Juliet's questioning of Romeo's faith. He swears on the moon that he proclaims Juliet has killed in scene 2 line 4, which, from this reader's perspective, seems to suggest that the love is a self-defeating type. So perhaps Romeo is now implicitly belying his claim that he would be faithful by exhibiting a duplicitous nature. But, since Juliet is not in the audience as we are, she has no way of seeing that. Once again, Romeo does not live long enough to resolve this inconsistency.

Romeo compares Juliet's eyes to stars, then her cheek to the sun, then Juliet herself to an angel, as you have noted, among dark clouds (of hate, presumably). It is strange how they must leave ere morning comes. Romeo and Juliet's love is light, as it were, in the midst of the darkness of the hate around them. All of their activity together is done in night and darkness, while all the fighting is done in the daytime. So the light of love occurs at

night; the dark of hate occurs in day? quite the paradox. Perhaps representing man's capacity to screw with the natural order, as it were?

However, at the end of the play this paradox is reconciled when the families concede their follies. Again, note the change in Juliet's behavior. Whereas she used to obey the authority of her nurse, she now disappears twice, and twice defies authority and reappears. This is a sure sign of her emerging independence, and is a crucial factor in understanding her decision to marry Romeo and defy her parents. Romeo sees Juliet for the first time and as soon as he lays eyes on her he says that he hasn't seen "true beauty til this night".

We can see from what he says that he can see Juliet's inner beauty and is in love with her as a person and not just for love. Although in modern day we would think this is very fast to fall in love with someone and would still question whether or not it was still lust.

But Shakespeare is trying to show us the difference between his lust for Rosaline and love for Juliet. Juliet has married Romeo we see how forward she is and that she craves sex with Romeo.

She feels that although she is married she is "not yet enjoyed". This shows us that she trusts Romeo and is in love with him as she is so willing to have sex with him. She has gone from having no interest in men to being married and waiting to have sex. But this also leaves the people watching the play wondering if she is really in love with Romeo or if its just lust as she is wanting to have sex with him. Romeo is a passionate, extreme, excitable,

intelligent, and moody young man, well-liked and admired throughout Verona.

He is loyal to his friends, but his behavior is somewhat unpredictable. At the beginning of the play, he mopes over his hopeless unrequited love for Rosaline. In Juliet, Romeo finds a legitimate object for the extraordinary passion that he is capable of feeling, and his unyielding love for her takes control of him. Juliet, on the other hand, is an innocent girl, a child at the beginning of the play, and is startled by the sudden power of her love for Romeo.

Guided by her feelings for him, she develops very quickly into a determined, capable, mature, and loyal woman who tempers her extreme feelings of love with sober-mindedness. The attraction between Romeo and Juliet is immediate and overwhelming, and neither of the young lovers comments on or pretends to understand its cause. Each mentions the other's beauty, but it seems that destiny, rather than any particular character trait, has drawn them together. Their love for one another is so undeniable that neither they nor the audience feels the need to question or explain it.