

Reflection essay on romeo and juliet

[Literature](#), [British Literature](#)



William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (Ed. Rex Gibson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) is a tragic tale of two star-crossed lovers. Throughout the play, the two lovers show a major transformation and growth. I believe that Juliet becomes the more mature, stronger and braver character of the two. By "stronger," I mean more emotionally stable and able to deal with stressful situations. By "mature," I mean more conscious of the decisions and the resulting consequences. And by "braver," I mean able to face and overcome fears.

In this essay I will prove that Juliet is the more mature, stronger and braver character at the end of the play by exploring the following topics: Juliet grows up and disobeys her parents to make her own choices; Juliet's consideration on the suddenness of her love with Romeo; Romeo and Juliet's reaction to tragic and stressful situations and Juliet's willingness to risk death to be with Romeo. The mention of marriage is the trigger of Juliet's first signs of obedience; and disobedience to make her own decisions.

When the audience first meets Juliet Capulet, Shakespeare portrays her as a very quiet and obedient thirteen year old. During the Elizabethan period, daughters were viewed as property of the father. Therefore it was highly unlikely for daughters to rebel against their parents. Upon Lady Capulet's proposal for Juliet to marry count Paris, young Juliet respectfully responds with her view on marriage, "It is an honour that I dream not of" (Rom. 1. 1. 67). For her age, Juliet's answer was unchildish and polite. She then shows maturity for her age by making no promises of marriage, but attempts to please her parents by giving Paris a chance:

I'll look to like, if looking liking move;
But no more deep will I endart mine eye
Than your consent gives strength to make it fly
(Rom. 1. 1. 98-100).

Later on in the play, Lady Capulet tells Juliet that Lord Capulet has already arranged for her to marry Paris. Juliet transforms from an obedient young teen to a young lady whom stands up for herself, regardless of her parents directions, "... tell my lord and father, madam, / I will not marry yet,..." (Rom. 3. 5. 120-1). Lord Capulet was shocked and appalled by his daughter's refusal, leading to physically hurting Juliet. However, Juliet knew that she had made the proper choice because her love belongs to Romeo, not Paris and also she may not marry twice. Romeo did not need to disobey his parents because as a male he had much more freedom to do as he pleased.

The lack of love, interaction and unstable environment of the Capulet household may have been a contributing factor to cause Juliet to mature beyond girls her age. Her growth as a character demonstrates her to be a more mature and courageous character than Romeo.

During the balcony scene, Juliet displays maturity by considering the consequences of the suddenness of her love for Romeo. Lacking experience, Juliet realizes her love may seem false and too easily won:

...In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond,
And therefore thou mayst think my behaviour light:
But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true

Than those that have more coying to be strange...
(Rom. 2. 2. 98-101).

Juliet's thoughts appear to be well thought out and carefully reviewed to ensure that their love is true. Romeo does not show the same cautiousness, instead he believes that his love is undoubtingly true and swears by the moon, " Lady, by yonder blessed moon I vow, / That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops-" (Rom. 2. 2. 108-9). The moon changes phases every month and is therefore inconsistent and variable, pointed out by Juliet. Only days ago, Romeo could think of nothing but Rosaline Capulet.

Friar Lawrence also shares his doubts about how true Romeo's love for Juliet may be, "... Young men's love then lies / Not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes..." (Rom. 2. 3. 67-8). On the topic of love, Romeo would much rather listen to his heart and make impulsive decisions and listen to his brain. Juliet also shows to be more mature than Romeo by proposing marriage to prove her the seriousness of her love.

In the tale of the star-crossed lovers, both Romeo and Juliet were stricken with numerous tragic events. Of the two characters, Romeo failed to prove himself as the stronger character time and time by being unable to cope with certain stressful situations. Romeo had initially spiraled into a deep depression due to the unreturned love of Rosaline Capulet. This had caused him to hide from friends and family by locking himself in his bedroom for days to reflect on his meaningless existence without Rosaline's love.

The only reason for Romeo to halt his moping was when he first laid eyes on Juliet and instantly fell in love. Unfortunately, Romeo was stricken with grief

again after being banished from Verona for killing Tybalt, Juliet's cousin. Realizing what he had done, Romeo quickly went to his mentor, Friar Lawrence, to seek comfort and ramble on about his banishment. Many tears were shed and to the Friar's dismay, Romeo refused to be comforted. Friar Lawrence was forced to plead with Romeo to stop weeping on the floor, "... Romeo, arise,/ Thou wilt be taken. – Stay a while! – Stand up;... " (Rom. 3. 3. 74-5).

The presence of the Nurse did not change Romeo's state because he was not strong enough to pull himself together emotionally. Friar Lawrence describes how Romeo responds to grief in the following line, " There on the ground, with his own tears made drunk." (Rom. 3. 3. 83). Unable to deal with the situation Romeo attempts to kill himself with a dagger, but is intervened by Juliet's nurse. Such actions prove that Romeo is weak when pertaining to handling stressful situations. Meanwhile, Juliet demonstrates to be the stronger character when she is told her newly wed husband had been banished for killing her cousin. Only a brief moment of doubt had occurred before Juliet was able to calm down and consciously evaluate the situation.

Although deeply distraught about Romeo's banishment, Juliet did not hold him accountable for the death of Tybalt or plan any type of revenge/punishment. Even after the death of her beloved cousin, loyal Juliet wishes not to speak negatively of her husband, " Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband? / Ah, poor my lord, what tongue shall smooth thy name,..." (Rom. 3. 2. 96-7). This supports my thesis statement because Juliet was put in a more stressful and tragic position than Romeo, but was still able to make a clear judgment and avoid rash decisions.

Juliet willingly risks death and madness for love, which the majority of people her age would not even consider. Although she shows some hesitation, her courage and bravery outweighs that of her husband. Romeo does not appear to make any significant efforts to solve the dilemma of being separated from Juliet due to his banishment, besides impulsively attempting to commit suicide. There are no plans to sneak Juliet away with him, bargains with the Prince or any other intentions of resolving the issue he had caused from his haste decisions. Age does not arise as a disadvantage to Juliet in regards to her amounts of courage and bravery. "...I'll call them back again to comfort me. / Nurse!..." (Rom. 4. 3. 17-8) is the voice of Juliet as terror fills her veins in preparation of consuming the Friar's potion.

Suffocation, insanity from waking up around corpses in an enclosed space, instantly dying from poisoning, or seeing Tybalt's ghost are among the possible outcomes of faking her death with the potion. Juliet shows immense courage by conquering her fears and drinking the potion, "...My dismal scene I needs must act alone..." (Rom. 4. 3. 19). At the end of the play, Juliet also willingly suffered a painful death by stabbing herself in the heart with a dagger. Romeo chose the quicker and less painful death by consuming a potion. Throughout the play, Juliet has supported my thesis statement as the braver character of the two lovers.

One of William Shakespeare's most famous plays, Romeo and Juliet, features two teenage lovers in the midst of their family rivalries. Despite the age difference, Juliet has established herself as more mature, stronger and braver than Romeo. My thesis statement was supported by the following situations: Juliet disobeying her parents to gain maturity; Juliet showing

maturity by loving cautiously in the balcony scene; Romeo's inability to handle and cope with stressful news and Juliet's willingness to face her fears to be with Romeo. Juliet is forever remembered as the beloved heroine in the tale of the two star-crossed lovers.