

The relationship between juliet and the nurse



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The relationship between Juliet and the nurse is a better example of the mother-daughter relationship than that of Juliet and Lady Capulet. Discuss with close reference to act 2 scene 5 and act 3 scene 5 in particular.

How would you direct an actress playing Juliet during her confrontation of Capulet in the latter stage of act 3 scene 5?

William Shakespeare was baptised on April the 26th 1564, he was the eldest son of John and Mary. 52 years after Shakespeare was born he died.

Although Shakespeare was only 52 when he died he wrote 38 different plays, this took him about 25 years. Shakespeare's education ended prematurely as he did not go to university, although we can see that he was a well-educated man, as we know that he went to his local grammar school.

The Shakespearean play that I am studying is Romeo and Juliet. The prologue at the beginning explains that Romeo and Juliet are "star crossed lovers" this shows that superstition and fate are key themes in the play.

Romeo and Juliet is a play that involves many themes the main ones being; love, marriage, parental conflict and fate.

The play starts with Romeo loving a girl called Rosaline unfortunately his love is unrequited. Romeo is a Montague and Juliet is a Capulet. The Montague's and the Capulet's are old enemies and their feud has lasted for many years. When Romeo and Juliet fall in love they keep this and their marriage a secret from their parents. This story is a romantic tragedy.

The first scene that I will be looking at will be act 2 scene 5. At the beginning of act 2 scene 5 the nurse is tormenting Juliet. The scene starts with a

soliloquy and Juliet is expressing her feelings of anxiousness because she sent the Nurse away to find Romeo hours ago and she is wondering when she will return. There are signs of distress in the way that Juliet speaks although she does not appear to be angry because she uses a set of rhyming couplets in her speech.

“ But old folks-many feign as they were dead,

Unwieldy slow, heavy and pale as lead.”

Although the Nurse is teasing Juliet you can see an obvious love between them, filial from Juliet and motherly from the Nurse. The themes used in this scene are; marriage, romantic love and motherly love. The theme of marriage starts with the romantic love between Romeo and Juliet. From the soliloquy at the beginning of the scene you can see that Juliet has a definite fixation with Romeo. A way that we can see this is by the celestial imagery that she uses;

“ Which ten times faster glides than the sun's beams”. Juliet is imagining Romeo as a heavenly figure.

We can see the theme of fate in this scene when she uses words like “ Doves” and “ Cupid” these are symbolic and symbolise love peace and kindness.

As the scene goes on the Nurse continues to tease Juliet in a loving sort of way and makes excuses for not telling her Romeo's reply about her proposal. When Juliet is talking to the nurse there is a definite sign that the Nurse and Juliet are from different classes and that Juliet is more educated than the

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Nurse, we can tell this because Juliet speaks in verse whilst the Nurse speaks in prose. Although the Nurse normally speaks in prose there is an occasion when she is with Juliet and she speaks in rhyming couplets;

“ I am the drudge, and toil in you delight,

But you shall bear the burden soon at night”.

There is a lack of dramatic devices in this scene although there are many present in the latter part of the play especially dramatic irony.

As we enter act 3 scene 5 Juliet is awoken by her mother this is a shock as her mother would not normally call on her at this time of the morning. This makes Juliet feel very strange as Juliet is unsure of what time her mother even gets up on a normal day. From this we can see that Juliet and L. Capulet have a distant relationship. Because of the way that Juliet addresses her mother later on in the scene we can see that she does not see her mother as a figure of authority or some-one that she should respect like she does with the Nurse. Juliet speaks to her mother very formally and makes no extra effort to be polite. From act 3 scene 5 line 6 we can see that L. Capulet does not understand the way that Juliet feels as she makes no real effort to comfort her and she makes jokes about Tybalt's death.

“ Evermore weeping for your cousins death?

What, wilt thou wash him from his grave with tears?”

There is dramatic irony in this part of the scene as L. Capulet is talking about Tybalt's death because she doesn't know that Juliet is really crying for her husband Romeo.

This scene especially addresses parental conflict as Juliet argues with her mother about how she should grieve. The way that L. Capulet speaks to Juliet shows that she is cold hearted and unsympathetic. All through the scene L. Capulet expresses her hatred of Romeo and because she does not understand Juliet she believes that Juliet agrees with her hatred, we can see that this is untrue because of the aside from Juliet line 23 act 3 scene 5.

“ Villain and be many miles asunder-god pardon him; I do withal my heart;
And yet no man like he doth grieve my heart.”

Another way that we can tell that L. Capulet does not understand Juliet is that Juliet explains that if she could get to Romeo first and poison him she would temper the poison so that he would not die. L. Capulet does not understand Juliet she thinks that if Juliet could get to Romeo first she would temper the poison to make it stronger so that he would die more quickly. The theme of parental conflict is also present near to the end of the scene as L. Capulet tells Juliet that she will marry the county Paris a week on Thursday, as Juliet is more strong willed than her mother she is angry that she has been told about the wedding and not asked. The scene then goes on to see that her mother really does not understand her and that she has a problem understanding Juliet decision, we can tell this because L. Capulet tells Juliet that her father can deal with it.

There is a lot of dramatic irony in this scene and the use of asides gives a very good feel of drama and tension between L. Capulet and Juliet.

Overall from the 2 scenes that I have studied I can see that the relationship between Juliet and the nurse is far better than the relationship between Juliet and her mother as L. Capulet portrays an image of being not a very nice person. The Nurse understands Juliet far better and is more like a motherly figure to her.

Part 2

If I was going to direct Juliet in act 3 scene 5 I would have to consider certain things to set the scene I would also consider lighting effects and stage directions.

The way I would set the scene is to portray Juliet is as a strong willed young girl who's innocence has now melted away. The way I would do this is to use red velvet for drapes curtains and also for around the bed, I four-poster bed made from dark wood to express romance within the room and also glittering candles. I would also try to indicate that she is well educated with a lot of money by using bookshelves and wardrobes to show clothes etc. In the room I would also include a doll in the corner to show signs that she is still a child.

The people in this scene are L. Capulet, Capulet, Juliet and the Nurse, as Capulet is in a bad mood with Juliet I would have him standing tall above everybody else to show that he is a figure of authority. Capulet will enter from the main door but will not be angry when he first walks in, as he has not yet heard the news of Juliet's decision that she will not marry Paris. As

Juliet is telling her father her decision she will stand her ground and move slowly around the stage. When Juliet's father Capulet starts calling her names Juliet will cower behind the Nurse but will have a penetrating stare on her father. Capulet's movements will be slow and steady and moving towards Juliet. During the scene I would use the lights to express feelings. Whilst Capulet was standing over Juliet I would have a red light on him, this would show anger and make sure that people were focussing on him.