
How Are The Different Forms Of Love In Romeo & Juliet Reflected In The Pivotal Moments Of The Play?

Love is a recurring theme in Romeo and Juliet. It is shown in many different aspects, and is shown in many types, from familial love to love at first sight. The first time love was mentioned was in the prologue. It was mentioned that someone will be falling in love with another person, as said in “A pair of star-crossed lovers” and “death-marked love”. The death also foreshadows the upcoming events that happen in the story.

In Act 1 scene 1, Romeo talks about his unrequited love with Rosaline. In line 194, Romeo says to Benvolio “In sadness, cousin, I do love a woman”. He also said “With Cupid’s arrow, she hath Dian’s wit;”. Cupid’s arrow is a way of saying he got struck by love, and with this speech, Romeo is saying that he fell in love with Rosaline, and as if he got hit by Cupid’s arrow. However, Romeo says that she does not love him back through the lines “She will not stay the siege of loving terms”, making Romeo unhappy.

In scene 2, Romeo discovers that Rosaline is going to the Capulet’s party, after their servant asks Romeo to read a postcard. Benvolio then urges Romeo to go to the party as well, as he may be able to see Rosaline and many other beautiful women. “I’ll go along no such sight to be shown, / But to rejoice in splendour of mine own”. Romeo decides to go to the party to see the woman he loves.

Also in scene 2, Count Paris tells Capulet, Juliet’s father, that he wants to marry Juliet. This presents to the reader that Paris is also showing unrequited love to Juliet, and Juliet is being forced into an arranged marriage. This leads to Juliet not being able to marry Paris afterwards as she gets married to Romeo, and needs to leave.

In scene 4, Queen Mab was talked about by Mercutio. Queen Mab is a fairy that teaches people about love. As Mercutio was about to get into the party, this talk about Queen Mab shows that he is also very into love, and he is also making fun of Romeo.

Scene 5 is one of the most pivotal scenes. In this scene, Romeo meets Juliet. He uses oxymorons such as “a rich jewel in an Ethiop’s ear”. An Ethiop cannot afford a jewel, so this oxymoron shows that she is very special and pops out in the crowd. This is an example of love at first sight, where Romeo falls in love with Juliet after seeing her.

Romeo also uses religious imagery like “If I profane with my unwortheiest hand / This holy shrine, the gentle sin is this”. The play on words with religion then allows for Romeo and Juliet to kiss twice. They also talk in the form of a shared sonnet, showing again that they even after seeing once, they like each other a lot.

Tybalt then says “It fits when such a villain is a guest: / I’ll not endure him”. This is another type of oxymoron used by Shakespeare. In contrast with the love at first sight, Tybalt shows hatred towards Romeo being in the party. This sharp contrast is to bring out the love that Romeo has with Juliet, and the hate that is brought out from the parents, which would lead to bigger problems and deaths that happen afterwards in the story.

Romeo then found out that Juliet is a Capulet and said “O dear account! My life is my foe’s debt”. This shows that Romeo feels that his life is stolen by his enemy, but because his love is so strong, he still falls in love with her. This is the same for Juliet, where she says “My only love sprung from my only hate! / Too early seen unknown, and known too late! / Prodigious birth of love it is to me, / That I must love a loathed enemy.” These four lines shows that just like Romeo, even though their families are huge enemies that hate each other, because of their strong bond at first sight, they already fell in love and could not stop. This leads to them being married, and ultimately leads to their deaths.

In Act 2 scene 2, Romeo heads to Juliet’s bedroom after the party. Juliet communicates in the form of monologues. She says “My bounty is as boundless as the sea / my love as deep; the more I give to thee;” Juliet expresses the fact she loves Romeo as if there is no boundaries, like an ocean. Romeo is also risking his life to meet Juliet, as said in “And the place death, considering who thou art / If any of my kinsmen find thee here.” This tells the reader that Romeo’s love for Juliet is so strong, that he would forgive his life just to see her one more time.

In scene 5 and 6, Romeo prepares to get married to Juliet. In scene 5, Juliet rushes the Nurse to tell her the news, through the lines “I would thou hadst my bones and I thy news”. This again explains the urge Juliet has to marry Romeo. Marrying Romeo would mean that Juliet could not marry Paris anymore, meaning this love at first sight will affect things that happen in the future. She is now in the hands of her husband, and her parents do not have much power over what she can do. She may also be in trouble for marrying without consent.

This type of love is pivotal because it would lead to complications with family members and other deaths in the future.

In Act three, familial love and friendship is an important theme. In Scene one, Tybalt appears and throws insults towards Romeo through the words “Romeo, the love I bear thee can afford / No better term than this: thou art a villain.” He wants to have a fight with Romeo. Romeo, who just got married to Juliet, refuses to fight. Mercutio, Romeo’s friend, proceeds to fight with Tybalt, and gets killed. Romeo, having such a deep connection to Mercutio, kills Tybalt to seek revenge. Since Romeo is now married to Juliet, Tybalt would be one of his family members, but because his friendship was more important than his family, he believed that killing Tybalt was the appropriate thing to do.

When the nurse delivers the news to Juliet, she seems to be conflicted. On the one hand she is not happy that Tybalt was killed, but on the other hand, she could not be mad at Romeo. The nurse shamed Romeo, but Juliet said “Blistered by thy tongue / For such a wish! He was not born to shame”, showing her love towards Romeo. Juliet is also broken-hearted to learn the fact that Romeo will be banished soon.

During the time of the play, the husband is probably the most important thing in your life. Respecting your husband was seen as something compulsory. Your life is now in the hands of your husband, and your life revolves around him. That is why Juliet felt more unhappy towards Romeo’s banishment, than the death of her cousin. It also shows that her love towards Romeo has now overtaken the familial love between her and her family. This scene is pivotal as it shows who’s allegiance Juliet has pledged to, her parent’s, or Romeo.

Physical love between Romeo and Juliet was shown at the end of Act 3. Before banishment,

Romeo goes to Juliet's bedroom to see her one last time before marriage. Romeo says "I must be gone and live, or stay and die". Romeo's choice was very hard, as he really wants to stay with his wife, but also wants to live. This night further deepens the love between Romeo and Juliet.

In Act 4, Paris proposes to marry Juliet as soon as possible, as it believed that it will ease her sorrow for the death of Tybalt. Juliet promises to marry him a day later. Juliet then meets the Friar for advice, as she could not marry Paris due to her marriage to Romeo. The Friar tells her to fake her own death, by drinking a potion, and Romeo would take her back to Mantua after she wakes up. Juliet would only go through such a big risk because of her love with Romeo. She would only do this because of her deep relationship with her husband. We learnt that this led to her death and Romeo's death in the future, making this type of love pivotal.

Act 5 shows the extent of their love. As the message was mis-sent, Romeo actually thought Juliet was dead. Before he died, he made a speech. He said "Here's to my love! O true apothecary! / Thy drugs are quick. Thus with a kiss I die". He believes that their love is so deep and so important that he should die right next to Juliet. Juliet then wakes up, and kills herself as well. This is how much they value the relationship, and how much the both of them like each other. The love in this scene also leads to the two families finally not being enemies. At the end of the play, the two families finally get along together, and the prince closes the play. Their love and death has led to the peaceful end of the story.