**Romeo and Juliet Language of Love: Quotes**

**The following quotes have been extracted from the play. Some have been analysed for you (purple text). The remaining quotes have the beginnings of some analysis (maroon text). You are to complete the analysis where the maroon text has been used.**

|  |
| --- |
| **Quote #1**  BENVOLIO  […] What sadness lengthens Romeo's hours? ROMEO  Not having that, which, having, makes them short. BENVOLIO  In love? ROMEO  Out–  BENVOLIO  Of love? ROMEO  Out of her favour, where I am in love. (1.1.10) |

At the beginning of the play, Romeo is completely infatuated with Rosaline. We learn from his friends and family that, when he's not daydreaming about Rosaline in his room, Romeo mopes around in a grove of "sycamore" trees, where those who are *sick amour* tend to hang out (1.1.4). The thing is, Rosaline has absolutely no interest in Romeo, but he pursues her anyway. This suggests that Romeo isn't so much in love with Rosaline as he is obsessed with the idea of being in love.

|  |
| --- |
| **Quote #2**  ROMEO Love is a smoke raised with the fume of sighs; Being purged, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes; Being vex'd a sea nourish'd with lovers' tears: What is it else? a madness most discreet, A choking gall and a preserving sweet. (1.1.7) |

At the beginning of the play, Romeo describes love in abstract extremes.

|  |
| --- |
| **Quote #3**  ROMEO Well, in that hit you miss: she'll not be hit With Cupid's arrow; she hath Dian's wit; And, in strong proof of chastity well arm'd, From love's weak childish bow she lives unharm'd. She will not stay the siege of loving terms, Nor bide the encounter of assailing eyes, Nor ope her lap to saint-seducing gold: […] BENVOLIO  Then she hath sworn that she will still live chaste? (1.1.13) |

Romeo admits that Rosaline has vowed to remain "chaste" like "Diana," the goddess of virginity and hunting. In other words, Rosaline has sworn off boys and sex, which means that Romeo has no chance of winning her heart. What's interesting about this passage is that Romeo sounds a whole lot like a typical "Petrarchan lover." Petrarch, by the way, was a fourteenth-century Italian poet whose sonnets were all the rage in Renaissance England. In fact, Shakespeare's own collection of *Sonnets* are, in part, inspired by Petrarch's love poetry, which was written about "Laura," a figure who was as unavailable and unattainable as Romeo's current crush (Rosaline). Petrarchan poetry happens to contain a lot of metaphors that equate the pursuit of love with hunting and/or battle. In this passage, Romeo says that Rosaline is well "arm'd" against the "siege" of his love and "Cupid's arrow," which is an elaborate way to say that Rosaline is physically and emotionally impenetrable.

|  |
| --- |
| **Quote #4**  ROMEO [talking about Rosaline]  When the devout religion of mine eye Maintains such falsehood, then turn tears to fires; And these, who often drown'd could never die, Transparent heretics, be burnt for liars! One fairer than my love! the all-seeing sun Ne'er saw her match since first the world begun. (1.2.10) |

Romeo uses religious language to talk about Rosaline

|  |
| --- |
| **Quote #5**  MERCUTIO  You are a lover; borrow Cupid's wings, And soar with them above a common bound. ROMEO  I am too sore enpierced with his shaft To soar with his light feathers, and so bound, I cannot bound a pitch above dull woe: Under love's heavy burden do I sink. MERCUTIO  And, to sink in it, should you burden love; Too great oppression for a tender thing. ROMEO  Is love a tender thing? it is too rough, Too rude, too boisterous, and it pricks like thorn. MERCUTIO  If love be rough with you, be rough with love; Prick love for pricking, and you beat love down. (1.4.2) |

Romeo and Mercutio describe love in violent and painful terms.

|  |
| --- |
| **Quote #6**  ROMEO  O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright! It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night Like a rich jewel in an Ethiope's ear; Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear! So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows, As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows. The measure done, I'll watch her place of stand, And, touching hers, make blessed my rude hand. Did my heart love till now? forswear it, sight! For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night. (1.5.1) |

Now this is interesting. Romeo forgets all about his "love" for Rosaline the VERY moment he sees Juliet, which seems to suggest that Romeo was never really in love with Rosaline to begin with. The question is, does this also mean that Romeo's desire for Juliet is nothing more than meaningless infatuation?

|  |
| --- |
| **Quote #7**  ROMEO  If I profane with my unworthiest hand This holy shrine, the gentle fine is this: My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss. JULIET  Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much, Which mannerly devotion shows in this; For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch, And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss. ROMEO  Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too? JULIET  Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use in prayer. ROMEO  O, then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do; They pray, grant thou, lest faith turn to despair. JULIET  Saints do not move, though grant for prayers' sake. ROMEO  Then move not, while my prayer's effect I take. [He kisses her.] Thus from my lips, by yours, my sin is purged. JULIET  Then have my lips the sin that they have took. ROMEO  Sin from thy lips? O trespass sweetly urged! Give me my sin again. JULIET  You kiss by the book. (1.5.2) |

This is one of the most famous passages in the entire play, so let's take a close look, shall we? When Romeo and Juliet talk for the first time at the Capulet ball, Romeo uses his best pickup line: touching Juliet's hands and lips, he says, would be a kind of religious experience. (We've heard that before, haven't we? He used to say this kind of stuff about Rosaline.) Angling for a kiss, Romeo refers to his lips as a two "pilgrims" that would worship at a holy "shrine" (that would be Juliet's lips). A pilgrim, by the way, is a person on a religious *pilgrim*age to a holy place. Pilgrims were also called "palmers" because they often carried palm leaves on their journeys.  
  
In response, Juliet teasingly puns on the word "palmer" to suggest that touching hands, "palm to palm," is like kissing (so Romeo, presumably, should be content with touching her hands instead of making out). But Romeo refuses to be shot down. Instead of walking away with his tail between his legs, he uses Juliet's hands=lips logic to argue that kissing the lips of Juliet (who has reached "saint" status by this point) would be just like praying, which involves placing ones palms together. Juliet seems playfully willing to go along with all this and allows Romeo to kiss her.  
  
What's interesting is that, before Romeo can lock lips for a second time, Juliet says "you kiss by the book," which suggests that all of Romeo's moves (his pickup lines and even the way he kisses) are a bit scripted and cliché. So, Juliet's clearly smitten with Romeo but she also recognizes that Romeo isn't exactly original.  
  
At the same time, however, the dialogue between Romeo and Juliet takes the form of a sonnet (up to the point where they kiss), which is incredibly romantic. So, while Romeo's moves are a bit predictable, we can also recognize that Romeo and Juliet's romance has the potential to be anything but conventional.

|  |
| --- |
| **Quote #8**  ROMEO But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks? It is the east, and Juliet is the sun. Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon, Who is already sick and pale with grief, That thou her maid art far more fair than she: Be not her maid, since she is envious; Her vestal livery is but sick and green And none but fools do wear it; cast it off. It is my lady, O, it is my love! O, that she knew she were! She speaks yet she says nothing: what of that? Her eye discourses; I will answer it. I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks: Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven, Having some business, do entreat her eyes To twinkle in their spheres till they return. What if her eyes were there, they in her head? The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars, As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven Would through the airy region stream so bright That birds would sing and think it were not night. See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand! O, that I were a glove upon that hand, That I might touch that cheek! (2.2.1) |

In this monologue, Romeo elevates Juliet to heavenly status by aligning her with the "sun" and the "stars."

|  |
| --- |
| **Quote #9**  ROMEO  She speaks: O, speak again, bright angel! for thou art As glorious to this night, being o'er my head As is a winged messenger of heaven Unto the white-upturned wondering eyes Of mortals that fall back to gaze on him When he bestrides the lazy-pacing clouds And sails upon the bosom of the air. (2.2.2) |

Again, Romeo uses religious hyperbole to describe the experience of looking at Juliet but we get the sense that he's sincere and deeply in love.

|  |
| --- |
| **Quote #10**  JULIET  How camest thou hither, tell me, and wherefore? The orchard walls are high and hard to climb, And the place death, considering who thou art, If any of my kinsmen find thee here. ROMEO  With love's light wings did I o'er-perch these walls; For stony limits cannot hold love out, And what love can do that dares love attempt; Therefore thy kinsmen are no let to me. JULIET  If they do see thee, they will murder thee. ROMEO  Alack, there lies more peril in thine eye Than twenty of their swords: look thou but sweet, And I am proof against their enmity. JULIET  I would not for the world they saw thee here. ROMEO  I have night's cloak to hide me from their sight; And but thou love me, let them find me here: My life were better ended by their hate, Than death prorogued, wanting of thy love. JULIET  By whose direction found'st thou out this place? ROMEO  By love, who first did prompt me to inquire; He lent me counsel and I lent him eyes. I am no pilot; yet, wert thou as far As that vast shore wash'd with the farthest sea, I would adventure for such merchandise. (2.2.6) |

Romeo is eager to prove to Juliet that he loves her, while Juliet – despite the confession that Romeo overhears – is hesitant to reveal that she likes him right away.

|  |
| --- |
| **Quote #11**  Well, do not swear: although I joy in thee, I have no joy of this contract to-night: It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden; Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be Ere one can say 'It lightens.' Sweet, good night! This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath, May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet. Good night, good night! as sweet repose and rest Come to thy heart as that within my breast! (2.2.13) |

Juliet is certain that she loves Romeo but she's also a bit cautious because her love seems "too rash, too unadvised, too sudden." So, while Juliet is clearly a very passionate girl, she's also pretty smart and realises that ‘head-over-heels’ passion can be dangerous.

|  |
| --- |
| **Quote #12**  JULIET I have forgot why I did call thee back. ROMEO  Let me stand here till thou remember it. JULIET  I shall forget, to have thee still stand there, Remembering how I love thy company. ROMEO  And I'll still stay, to have thee still forget, Forgetting any other home but this. (2.2.24) |

Reluctant to part company, Romeo and Juliet have kind of a "You hang up," "No you hang up" kind of moment. They have also abandoned the flowery language of love and are content simply to stare at each other and say whatever comes into their heads.

|  |
| --- |
| **Quote #13**  ROMEO  Ah, Juliet, if the measure of thy joy Be heap'd like mine and that thy skill be more To blazon it, then sweeten with thy breath This neighbour air, and let rich music's tongue Unfold the imagined happiness that both Receive in either by this dear encounter. JULIET  Conceit, more rich in matter than in words, Brags of his substance, not of ornament: They are but beggars that can count their worth; But my true love is grown to such excess I cannot sum up sum of half my wealth. (2.6.2) |

Romeo asks Juliet to use language to express the love that they feel for each other, but Juliet tells him that's the wrong approach. The love they share has grown so great that they can no longer express it. (A similar idea occurs in King Lear, when Cordelia refuses to quantify her love for her father and says that language is not capable of expressing her devotion.)

|  |
| --- |
| **Quote #14**  ROMEO How oft when men are at the point of death Have they been merry! which their keepers call A lightning before death: O, how may I Call this a lightning? O my love! my wife! Death, that hath suck'd the honey of thy breath, Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty: Thou art not conquer'd; beauty's ensign yet Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks, And death's pale flag is not advanced there. Tybalt, liest thou there in thy bloody sheet? O, what more favour can I do to thee, Than with that hand that cut thy youth in twain To sunder his that was thine enemy? Forgive me, cousin! Ah, dear Juliet, Why art thou yet so fair? shall I believe That unsubstantial death is amorous, And that the lean abhorred monster keeps Thee here in dark to be his paramour? For fear of that, I still will stay with thee; And never from this palace of dim night Depart again: here, here will I remain With worms that are thy chamber-maids; O, here Will I set up my everlasting rest, And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars From this world-wearied flesh. Eyes, look your last! Arms, take your last embrace! and, lips, O you The doors of breath, seal with a righteous kiss A dateless bargain to engrossing death! Come, bitter conduct, come, unsavoury guide! Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on The dashing rocks thy sea-sick weary bark! Here's to my love! O true apothecary! Thy drugs are quick. Thus with a kiss I die. (5.3.88-120) |

Death becomes an act of love for Romeo, because he thinks that suicide will enable him to be with Juliet (he thinks she's dead).

|  |
| --- |
| **Quote #15**  JULIET  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. (1.5.10) |

Juliet never considers *not* loving Romeo because he is a Montague. She loves him, and even the fact that he is her enemy cannot change her feelings.

|  |
| --- |
| **Quote #16**  JULIET  Do not swear at all; Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self, Which is the god of my idolatry, And I'll believe thee. (2.2.12) |

Here, Juliet uses the language of religion to describe her love for Romeo.

|  |
| --- |
| **Quote #17**  JULIET  Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds, Towards Phoebus' lodging: such a wagoner As Phaethon would whip you to the west, And bring in cloudy night immediately. Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night, That runaway's eyes may wink and Romeo Leap to these arms, untalk'd of and unseen. Lovers can see to do their amorous rites By their own beauties; or, if love be blind, It best agrees with night. Come, civil night, Thou sober-suited matron, all in black, And learn me how to lose a winning match, Play'd for a pair of stainless maidenhoods: Hood my unmann'd blood, bating in my cheeks, With thy black mantle; till strange love, grown bold, Think true love acted simple modesty. Come, night; come, Romeo; come, thou day in night; For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night Whiter than new snow on a raven's back. Come, gentle night, come, loving, black-brow'd night, Give me my Romeo; and, when he shall die, Take him and cut him out in little stars, And he will make the face of heaven so fine That all the world will be in love with night And pay no worship to the garish sun. O, I have bought the mansion of a love, But not possess'd it, and, though I am sold, Not yet enjoy'd: so tedious is this day As is the night before some festival To an impatient child that hath new robes And may not wear them.  (3.2.1) |

Juliet is both excited and nervous. She feels that her love for Romeo is so strong that it could overpower the sun.

|  |
| --- |
| **Quote #18**  LADY CAPULET  Well, girl, thou weep'st not so much for his death, As that the villain lives which slaughter'd him. JULIET  What villain madam? LADY CAPULET  That same villain, Romeo. JULIET  [Aside] Villain and he be many miles asunder.-- God Pardon him! I do, with all my heart; And yet no man like he doth grieve my heart. LADY CAPULET  That is, because the traitor murderer lives. JULIET  Ay, madam, from the reach of these my hands: Would none but I might venge my cousin's death! LADY CAPULET  We will have vengeance for it, fear thou not: Then weep no more. I'll send to one in Mantua, Where that same banish'd runagate doth live, Shall give him such an unaccustom'd dram, That he shall soon keep Tybalt company: And then, I hope, thou wilt be satisfied. JULIET  Indeed, I never shall be satisfied With Romeo, till I behold him--dead-- Is my poor heart for a kinsman vex'd. Madam, if you could find out but a man To bear a poison, I would temper it; That Romeo should, upon receipt thereof, Soon sleep in quiet. O, how my heart abhors To hear him named, and cannot come to him. To wreak the love I bore my cousin Upon his body that slaughter'd him! (3.5.4) |

Juliet cannot tell her mother about her true feelings for Romeo, so she expresses her feelings in veiled language that makes her mother believe she hates him.

|  |
| --- |
| **Quote #19**  JULIET  O, bid me leap, rather than marry Paris, From off the battlements of yonder tower; Or walk in thievish ways; or bid me lurk Where serpents are; chain me with roaring bears; Or shut me nightly in a charnel-house, O'er-cover'd quite with dead men's rattling bones, With reeky shanks and yellow chapless skulls; Or bid me go into a new-made grave And hide me with a dead man in his shroud; Things that, to hear them told, have made me tremble; And I will do it without fear or doubt, To live an unstain'd wife to my sweet love. (4.1.11) |

All the things that used to frighten Juliet are now unimportant compared to the horror of betraying Romeo and marrying another man.

|  |
| --- |
| **Quote #20**  MERCUTIO  Why, is not this better now than groaning for love? now art thou sociable, now art thou Romeo; now art thou what thou art, by art as well as by nature: for this drivelling love is like a great natural, that runs lolling up and down to hide his bauble in a hole. (2.4.20) |

To Mercutio, love is ridiculous and gets in the way of real life. Not only that, but Romeo's passion for Rosaline has alienated him from his friends.

|  |
| --- |
| **Quote #21**  PARIS These times of woe afford no time to woo.  (3.4.2) |

In the face of Tybalt's death, Paris can mourn only his lost opportunity to court Juliet, rather than mourning the dead man.

|  |
| --- |
| **Quote #22**  Holy Saint Francis, what a change is here! Is Rosaline, whom thou didst love so dear, So soon forsaken? young men's love then lies Not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes. Jesu Maria, what a deal of brine Hath wash'd thy sallow cheeks for Rosaline! How much salt water thrown away in waste, To season love, that of it doth not taste! The sun not yet thy sighs from heaven clears, Thy old groans ring yet in my ancient ears; Lo, here upon thy cheek the stain doth sit Of an old tear that is not wash'd off yet: If e'er thou wast thyself and these woes thine, Thou and these woes were all for Rosaline: And art thou changed? pronounce this sentence then, Women may fall, when there's no strength in men. (2.2.6) |

Friar Laurence makes a convincing argument that Romeo's love for Juliet could be mere infatuation, don't you think? Mere days ago Romeo was crying his eyes out over another woman, the unattainable Rosaline. What's more, the "salt water" tears Romeo shed for Rosaline haven't even dried yet and he's now talking about a new love interest, Juliet.  
  
OK, Friar Laurence has good reason to be skeptical of Romeo's newfound "love." But, if he's so skeptical of the relationship, why the heck does he agree to secretly marry the young couple? For that answer, we'll have to turn to Friar Laurence, who has this to say a few lines later:  
  
But come, young waverer, come go with me.   
In one respect I'll thy assistant be;   
For this alliance may so happy prove   
To turn your households' rancour to pure love. (2.2.9)  
  
In other words, Friar Laurence is hoping that a union between Romeo and Juliet will force the feuding families to reconcile. It seems like the Friar has good intentions but, as we know, his meddling has disastrous consequences for the couple. There's also some irony at work here – Romeo and Juliet's love *will* eventually bring the two families together (as the Friar predicts) but only *after* the two misguided lovers commit suicide in Act 5, Scene 3.

|  |
| --- |
| **Quote #23**  CAPULET  O brother Montague, give me thy hand: This is my daughter's jointure, for no more Can I demand. MONTAGUE  But I can give thee more: For I will raise her statue in pure gold; That while Verona by that name is known, There shall no figure at such rate be set As that of true and faithful Juliet.  CAPULET  As rich shall Romeo's by his lady's lie; Poor sacrifices of our enmity! (5.3.3) |

After Romeo and Juliet are found dead, Montague offers to erect a "statue" of "pure gold" in Juliet's honor and Capulet promise to do the same for his dead son-in-law, Romeo. Although the young lovers' deaths unite the warring families and put an end to the feud (just as the Chorus promised back in the first Prologue), the efforts of the Capulets and the Montagues are a day late and a dollar short.