

*ESSENTIAL POINTS TO REVISE ON ACT 3 SCENE 5*

Romeo has just left Juliet, banished to Mantua, after only one night together after their wedding.

Juliet has to pretend to her mother that she is upset about Tybalt's death, as she cannot let her mother know the truth. Lots of the things she says are ironic, in that her mother interprets them to mean one thing when they actually mean the opposite.

The audience realises that Juliet does not have a close relationship with her mother and her mother is quite cold towards her, saying about her unhappiness, "That mutability of grief shows still some want of wit."

Juliet's mother genuinely believes Juliet will be pleased at the news about the marriage to Paris, referring to Paris as a "noble gentleman" and referring to Juliet as a "joyful bride".

Capulet at first seems more sympathetic to Juliet than his wife, using picturesque language to refer to Juliet's tears and the death of Tybalt.

Capulet is clearly in charge of his family, asking his wife if she has delivered the "decree" (law).

Capulet immediately changes from the sympathetic father to a cold, threatening presence. His repetition of "take me with you" shows his disbelief that Juliet could even think of refusing his demand.

Capulet repeats lots of Juliet's phrases, suggesting that he is mimicking her to show his anger. He refers to her as a prostitute and a whore and even threatens violence if she refuses to go to the church. The wedding is now not a joyful occasion but a duty to be endured.

Capulet threatens to disown Juliet if she refuses to marry Paris, putting her in an impossible situation. In those days a young woman would have been shunned by society if she had been thrown out of her family and she would not have had access to any money or shelter: Juliet probably would have starved, as her father threatens.

Lady Capulet does make some attempt to interrupt Capulet but she does not persist when unsuccessful: she obviously knows and accepts her place in the household.

The Nurse also tries to stop Capulet but she would have to be particularly careful: as a servant and a woman she would have no rights in the household.

Juliet desperately seeks help from her mother when Capulet leaves, but Lady Capulet's reply confirms the audience's view of her as cold and submissive to her husband.

Juliet is shocked at the Nurse's reaction but the audience might feel more sympathetic. The Nurse probably realises the terrible error she has made in encouraging Juliet to marry Romeo and is now trying to protect herself as well as Juliet.

Juliet threatens to kill herself if she can not find help, again suggesting her deep and hopeless love for Romeo.