

A Critical Analysis Of Selected Soliloquies In Shakespeare's Romeo And Juliet

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Abstract:

Soliloquy especially, in drama plays a very vital role to identify and to analyze the innermost feelings of an individual character, his real plight, agony and his or her real personality. In other words, it is a kind of act of speaking which denotes self-thoughts and feeling in absence of others. This paper is to analyze some selected soliloquies in Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet (written about 1594–96 and first published in an unauthorized quarto in 1597. An authorized quarto appeared in 1599). Selected Soliloquies are as following: O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright (spoken by Romeo, Act 1 scene 1), What light through yonder window breaks?

(Spoken by Romeo, Act 2 scene 2) , The clock it struck nine when I did send the nurse (spoken by Juliet, Act 2 Scene 5), Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds (Spoken by Juliet act 3 Scene 2), How oft when men are at the point of death (Spoken by Romeo Act 5 Scene 3), It is the east and Juliet is the sun (spoken by Romeo, Act 2 scene 2), What's in a name (Spoken by Juliet, Act 2 Scene 2).

Key Words: innermost feelings, real personality, Plight,

Soliloquy especially, in drama, plays a very vital role to identify and to analyze the innermost feelings of an individual character. It discloses the plight, agony and real personality of a character. In other words, it is a kind of act of speaking which denotes self-thoughts and feeling in absence of others or to self. This paper is to analyze some selected soliloquies in

Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet* (written about 1594–96). First published in an unauthorized quarto in 1597 and an authorized quarto appeared in 1599. In this paper, soliloquies of *Romeo & Juliet* are being explained according to Modern English Translation:

*O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright
..... true beauty till this night.
(Spoken by Romeo, Romeo & Juliet, Act 1 scene 5),*

At the outset of this soliloquy Romeo tries to explain the beauty of Juliet. Romeo stares and says that she is so beautiful that she makes the torches around the hall appear to grow dim. She is just a dazzling jewel who is illuminating the dark night sky. She stands out from the other girls like a snowy dove in a field of crows. She.... Oh. He never finds the words to describe her. She can't be real. Such beauty is not possible. Further he says that I don't believe what I'm seeing.' He says aloud and pushes his mask right up to the top of his head to see well. Here Romeo is surprised to see such a beauty and denies believing that she is really present in this universe or I am in a dream.

*But, Soft! What light through yonder window breaks?
.....That I might touch that Cheek!
(Spoken by Romeo, Act 2 scene 2)*

In this soliloquy Romeo compares Juliet with the morning sun. Romeo says that Perhaps it is Juliet who is lighting the world like the morning Sun. She is the sun, and she is very pretty comparatively from the Goddess of the night, the moon. Although in answer to his wishes a door opens and she comes out on the balcony. Romeo says it is her! He whispers. 'Oh, it's my love.' He wishes that she can know that he is there, sitting on the wall, watching her. Her lips are moving but he cannot hear what she is saying. Anyway, she cannot talk to him. As he stares at her he tries to understand how anyone can be so beautiful. It is as though the two most radiant stars in the sky has busy business somewhere else and has begged her eyes to take their place while they are away. It is as though they had changed places and the stars are in her head, her

eyes in the heavens. But even then, the beauty of her cheek would dim those eyes in the same way as delight overwhelms a lamp. Her eyes would shine so brightly in the heavens that birds would start singing thinking it is daytime as he watches she leans her cheek on her hand! Oh how he wished he could be a glove on that hand so that he could touch that cheek! Oh how. She sighs loudly, He has to get closer, He jumps at any other time he may hurt himself but now he don't even feel the ground as he lands. All he is thinking is that he wants her to speak again. She is an angel wherever she is! The night would be lit up.

The clock struck nine when I did send the nurse;

.....Unwieldy, slow, heavy and pale as lead.

(Spoken by Juliet, Romeo & Juliet, Act 2 Scene 5)

In this soliloquy Juliet seems very curious in waiting of her Nurse. Juliet thinks that the sun hangs over the distant hill that it is twelve o'clock. Her Nurse has been gone from three hours before by saying to return in half an hour. Juliet realizes that perhaps she has not found Romeo but later she thinks that it can't be true. Now she explains that the messengers of love should be very fast as light as thoughts, He/she should travel ten times faster than sunbeams, pushing all doubts and fears away, as light does to threatening shadows. Hence love's coach should always be drawn by swiftly flying doves. That's why Cupid has wings! If her Nurse has any feelings - any passion whatever- her message would travel as fast as a tennis ball. The Nurse would be the ball. Juliet expressed that she would serve and Romeo would return it with very fast response. But the Nurse is clumsy, slow, heavy and dull, like lead like all old people. Juliet curiously waits and sticks her head out of the window every few seconds, searching the alleyway alone which the Nurse will come.

Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,

Towards Phoebus' lodging: such a wagoner... ..

But Romeo's name speaks heavenly eloquence.

(Spoken by Juliet Romeo & Juliet, Act 3 Scene 2),

In this soliloquy Juliet is waiting for the night to meet her love. Juliet is impatient for the night to come. It seems that the day would go on forever. She wishes the god of the sun to whip his horses so that they would carry him faster to the Distant West and allows night to fall like a thick curtain. Then her husband can come to her in secret. Who needs daylight? Lovers don't: their own beauty is light enough to see by. Juliet expresses that if love is blind so night is the best time for it. She sits in her room, and thinks that how long a day can be! She thought about what would happen when the night finally fell and Romeo will be with her: how she will give herself to him and by so doing, win him forever. The darkness will hide her blushes when they make love. She goes to the window and gazes out over the orchard where Romeo has stood. It is so frustrating: She has bought a horse of love but not yet taken possession of it- She is like some brand new item that hasn't yet been used. Oh what tedium: she feels like a child on the night before an important day that has all her new clothes lined up but isn't allowed to wear them until morning.

How oft when men are at the point of death

.....Here's to my love!

(Spoken by Romeo Romeo& Juliet, Act 5 Scene 3)

In this soliloquy, Romeo expresses that there is no effect of death on his love. He tries to emphasize the mortality of the love. When Romeo looks at her he realizes the sudden feeling of happiness. He expresses that death cannot destroy her beauty. Death hasn't defeated her- her lips and cheeks are still rosy. He looks around the fearful place Tybalt lays on bier a few feet away. Romeo further said that if death has taken her then I will accompany with her and I will never leave her. He requests to kill him to Tybalt. He explains that she still so beautiful. Is it because death is in love with her and is keeping her in that dark place as his mistress? If this is right then he will stay there with her and never leave. He will join the worms that are her chamber- maids. This is where he will live forever. But it is time. 'Eyes look your last,' he says. 'Arms take your last embrace.' He takes her in his arms and raises her up. He kisses her. He lowers her again and takes out the poison. It is time. Here's to my love.'

It is the east, and Juliet is the sun"...

(Spoken by Romeo, Romeo & Juliet, Act 2 Scene 2)

In this soliloquy, Romeo tries to explain the rising sun with the beauty of Juliet. Romeo is looking up at Juliet's window and the light comes on. He is saying that he is looking eastwards and seeing Juliet would be seeing the sun coming up in the east. He is referring to her beauty and all those things associated with the sun. This line is part of the longer "What light from yonder window breaks" (Spoken by Juliet, *Romeo & Juliet*, Act 2, and Scene 2).

What's in a name? That which we call a rose.....
By any other name would smell as sweet."

(Spoken by Juliet, Act 2, Scene 2)

In this soliloquy, Juliet emphasizes on the names that there is nothing in the names but in the nature of the thing is important. Juliet is not allowed to associate with Romeo because he is a Montague. If he had any other name it would be fine. She is complaining that his name is meaningless. If the rose had any other name it would still be the same. So with Romeo; he would still be the same beautiful young man even if he had a different name. Again she says that "What is in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet" Juliet knows that the blood feud prevents her from loving a Montague. She ponders it. It is only your name that is the enemy. You are what you are, even though you may be a Montague. What is 'Montague'? It is not hand or foot or arm or face or any other part belonging to a man. Oh I wish you had a different name. What is so special about a name? A rose, even if it were called something else, would smell just as sweet. So Romeo would still have all the perfection that he has, even if he were not called Romeo. Romeo, take off your name and in exchange for that whole name, which is not really a part of what you are, you can have all of me. There it is right to say that soliloquies are the medium in dramas to disclose the true identity of a character and to explore the character's inner feelings properly. In this way, it can be said that Shakespeare was the great master to use these tools in his works.

Reference:

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