

Romeo and Juliet

Act 2 Close Read

Act 2: Scene 2:

ROMEO

Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear
That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops--

*My lady, by the moon that lights these trees
with silver, I swear my love to you.*

JULIET

O, swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon,
That monthly changes in her circled orb,
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

ROMEO

What shall I swear by?

107

JULIET

Do not swear at all;
Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,
Which is the god of my idolatry¹,
And I'll believe thee.

110

ROMEO

If my heart's dear love--

JULIET

Well, do not swear: although I joy in thee,
I have no joy of this contract² 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 repose³ and rest
Come to thy heart as that within my breast!

115

120

ROMEO

O, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

JULIET

What satisfaction canst thou have tonight?

ROMEO

The exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.

123

1. Romeo swears his love to Juliet by the moon. Why would he swear by the moon?
2. Why does Juliet object to him swearing their love by the moon?
3. In line 112, Romeo is about to swear his love when Juliet interrupts him. Why is she backing off here? What is she fearing?
4. Explain the simile in lines 115 & 116. What two things are being compared? Why would she choose this comparison?

¹ *The god of my idolatry*: I worship you

² *contract*: exchange of promises

³ *repose*: tranquil rest