Prologue

CHORUS
Two households, both alike in dignity
(In fair Verona, where we lay our scene),
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.

From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
A pair of star-crossed lovers take their life,
Whose misadventured piteous overthrows
Doth with their death bury their parents' strife.
The fearful passage of their death-marked love
And the continuance of their parents' rage,
Which, but their children's end, naught could remove,
Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage—
The which, if you with patient ears attend,
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.

Exit

Act 1, Scene 1

SAMSON and GREGORY, servants of the Capulet family, enter carrying swords and small shields.

SAMSON
Gregory, on my word, we'll not carry coals.

GREGORY
No, for then we should be colliers.

SAMSON
I mean, an we be in choler, we'll draw.

GREGORY
Ay, while you live, draw your neck out of collar.

SAMSON
I strike quickly, being moved.

GREGORY
But thou art not quickly moved to strike.

SAMSON
A dog of the house of Montague moves me.

GREGORY
To move is to stir, and to be valiant is to stand. Therefore if thou art moved thou runn'st away.

SAMSON
A dog of that house shall move me to stand. I will take the wall of any man or maid of Montague's.
Act 1, Scene 1, Page 2

**GREGORY**
That shows thee a weak slave, for the weakest goes to the wall.

**SAMPSON**
'Tis true, and therefore women, being the weaker vessels, are ever thrust to the wall. Therefore I will push Montague’s men from the wall, and thrust his maids to the wall.

**GREGORY**
The quarrel is between our masters and us their men.

**SAMPSON**
'Tis all one. I will show myself a tyrant. When I have fought with the men, I will be civil with the maids. I will cut off their heads.

**GREGORY**
The heads of the maids?

**SAMPSON**
Ay, the heads of the maids, or their maidenheads. Take it in what sense thou wilt.

**GREGORY**
They must take it in sense that feel it.

**SAMPSON**
Me they shall feel while I am able to stand, and 'tis known I am a pretty piece of flesh.

**GREGORY**
'Tis well thou art not fish. If thou hadst, thou hadst been poor-john.

---

Enter ABRAM and another SERVINGMAN

**SAMPSON**
My naked weapon is out. Quarrel! I will back thee.

---

Act 1, Scene 1, Page 3

**GREGORY**
How? Turn thy back and run?

**SAMPSON**
Fear me not.

**GREGORY**
No, marry. I fear thee.

**SAMPSON**
Let us take the law of our sides. Let them begin.
GREGORY

35 I will frown as I pass by, and let them take it as they
list.

SAMPSON

Nay, as they dare. I will bite my thumb at them, which
is a disgrace to them, if they bear it. *(bites his thumb)*

ABRAM

Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

SAMPSON

I do bite my thumb, sir.

ABRAM

Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

SAMPSON *(aside to GREGORY)*

Is the law of our side if I say “ay”?

GREGORY *(aside to SAMPSON)*

No.

SAMPSON

No, sir. I do not bite my thumb at you, sir, but I bite
my thumb, sir.

GREGORY

45 Do you quarrel, sir?

ABRAM

Quarrel, sir? No, sir.

SAMPSON

But if you do, sir, I am for you. I serve as good a man
as you.

ABRAM

No better.

SAMPSON

Well, sir.

Enter BENVOLIO

GREGORY *(aside to SAMPSON)* Say “better.” Here comes one
of my master’s kinsmen.

SAMPSON *(to ABRAM)* Yes, better, sir.

ABRAM

You lie.

SAMPSON

Draw, if you be men.—Gregory, remember thy
washing blow.

Enter BENVOLIO

GREGORY *(speaking so that only SAMPSON can hear)* Say
“better.” Here comes one of my employer’s
relatives.

SAMPSON *(to ABRAM)* Yes, “better,” sir.

ABRAM

You lie.

SAMPSON

Pull out your swords, if you’re men. Gregory,
remember how to slash.

They fight

They fight.
Original Text

BENVOLIO
(draws his sword) Part, fools!
55 Put up your swords. You know not what you do.

TYBALT
What art thou drawn among these heartless hinds?
Turn thee, Benvolio. Look upon thy death.

Enter TYBALT

TYBALT
What? You've pulled out your sword to fight with these worthless servants? Turn around, Benvolio, and look at the man who’s going to kill you.

BENVOLIO
I do but keep the peace. Put up thy sword, Or manage it to part these men with me.

TYBALT
What, drawn, and talk of peace? I hate the word, As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee.
Have at thee, coward!

They fight Enter three or four CITIZENS, with clubs or partisan

CITIZENS
Clubs, bills, and partisans! Strike! Beat them down!
Down with the Capulets! Down with the Montagues!

Enter old CAPULET in his gown, and his wife, LADY CAPULET

CAPULET
What noise is this? Give me my long sword, ho!

LADY CAPULET
A crutch, a crutch! Why call you for a sword?

Enter old MONTAGUE and his wife, LADY MONTAGUE

CAPULET
My sword, I say! Old Montague is come, And flourishes his blade in spite of me.

MONTAGUE
Thou villain Capulet! Hold me not. Let me go.

LADY MONTAGUE
Thou shalt not stir one foot to seek a foe.

Modern Text

BENVOLIO
(pulling out his sword) Break it up, you fools. Put your swords away. You don’t know what you’re doing.

TYBALT
What? You’ve pulled out your sword to fight with these worthless servants? Turn around, Benvolio, and look at the man who’s going to kill you.

BENVOLIO
I’m only trying to keep the peace. Either put away your sword or use it to help me stop this fight.

TYBALT
What? You take out your sword and then talk about peace? I hate the word peace like I hate hell, all Montagues, and you. Let’s go at it, coward!

BENVOLIO and TYBALT fight. Three or four CITIZENS of the watch enter with clubs and spears.

CITIZENS
Use your clubs and spears! Hit them! Beat them down! Down with the Capulets! Down with the Montagues!

CAPULET enters in his gown, together with his wife, LADY CAPULET.

CAPULET
What’s this noise? Give me my long sword! Come on!

LADY CAPULET
A crutch, you need a crutch—why are you asking for a sword?

MONTAGUE enters with his sword drawn, together with his wife, LADY MONTAGUE.

CAPULET
I want my sword. Old Montague is here, and he’s waving his sword around just to make me mad.

MONTAGUE
Capulet, you villain! (his wife holds him back) Don’t stop me. Let me go.

LADY MONTAGUE
You’re not taking one step toward an enemy.
Will they not hear?—What, ho! You men, you beasts, 
That quench the fire of your pernicious rage
With purple fountains issuing from your veins, 
On pain of torture, from those bloody hands 
Throw your mistempered weapons to the ground, 
And hear the sentence of your movèd prince.
Three civil brawls, bred of an airy word, 
By thee, old Capulet, and Montague, 
Have thrice disturbed the quiet of our streets 
And made Verona's ancient citizens 
Cast by their grave-beseeming ornaments, 
To wield old partisans in hands as old, 
Cankered with peace, to part your cankered hate. 
If ever you disturb our streets again, 
Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace. 
Everyone else, go away for now. 
(to CAPULET) You, Capulet, come with me. 
(to MONTAGUE) Montague, this afternoon come to old Free-town, the court where I deliver judgments, and I'll tell you what else I want from you. As for the rest of you, I'll say this once more: go away or be put to death.

Exeunt all but MONTAGUE, LADY MONTAGUE, and BENVOLIO

MONTAGUE
Who set this ancient quarrel new abroach?

Speak, nephew. Were you by when it began?

BENVOLIO
Here were the servants of your adversary, And yours, close fighting ere I did approach. I drew to part them. In the instant came The fiery Tybalt, with his sword prepared, Which, as he breathed defiance to my ears, He swung about his head and cut the winds, Who, nothing hurt withal, hissed him in scorn. While we were interchanging thrusts and blows, Came more and more and fought on part and part, Till the Prince came, who parted either part.

LADY MONTAGUE
Oh, where is Romeo? Saw you him today? Right glad I am he was not at this fray.

BENVOLIO
Madam, an hour before the worshipped sun Peered forth the golden window of the east, A troubled mind drove me to walk abroad, Where, underneath the grove of sycamore That westward rooteth from this city side, So early walking did I see your son. Towards him I made, but he was ware of me And stole into the covert of the wood. I, measuring his affections by my own, Which then most sought where most might not be found,
Being one too many by my weary self,
Took my humor not pursuing his,
And gladly shunned who gladly fled from me.

MONTAGUE
Many a morning hath he there been seen,
With tears augmenting the fresh morning’s dew,
Adding to clouds more clouds with his deep sighs.
But all so soon as the all-cheering sun
Should in the farthest east begin to draw
The shady curtains from Aurora’s bed,
Away from light steals home my heavy son,

MONTAGUE
He’s been seen there many mornings, crying tears that add drops to the morning dew and making a cloudy day cloudier with his sighs. But as soon as the sun rises in the east, my sad son comes home to escape the light.

Act 1, Scene 1, Page 8
And private in his chamber pens himself,
Shuts up his windows, locks fair daylight out,
And makes himself an artificial night.
Black and portentous must this humor prove
Unless good counsel may the cause remove.

BENVOLIO
My noble uncle, do you know the cause?

MONTAGUE
I neither know it nor can learn of him.

BENVOLIO
Have you importuned him by any means?

MONTAGUE
Both by myself and many other friends.
But he, his own affections’ counselor,
Is to himself—I will not say how true,
But to himself so secret and so close,
So far from sounding and discovery,
As is the bud bit with an envious worm,
Ere he can spread his sweet leaves to the air,
Or dedicate his beauty to the same.
Could we but learn from whence his sorrows grow.

MONTAGUE
I’ve tried, and many of our friends have tried to make him talk, but he keeps his thoughts to himself. He doesn’t want any friend but himself, and though I don’t know whether he’s a good friend to himself, he certainly keeps his own secrets. He’s like a flower bud that won’t open itself up to the world because it’s been poisoned from within by parasites. If we could only find out why he’s sad, we’d be as eager to help him as we were to learn the reason for his sadness.

Enter ROMEO

BENVOLIO
See, where he comes. So please you, step aside.
I’ll know his grievance or be much denied.

MONTAGUE
I would thou wert so happy by thy stay
To hear true shrift.—Come, madam, let’s away.

Exeunt MONTAGUE and LADY MONTAGUE

Act 1, Scene 1, Page 9

BENVOLIO
Look—here he comes. If you don’t mind, please step aside. He’ll either have to tell me what’s wrong or else tell me no over and over.

MONTAGUE
I hope you’re lucky enough to hear the true story by sticking around. (to his wife) Come, madam, let’s go.

MONTAGUE and LADY MONTAGUE exit.
Good morrow, cousin.

ROMEO
Is the day so young?

BENVOLIO
But new struck nine.

ROMEO
Ay me! Sad hours seem long.
Was that my father that went hence so fast?

BENVOLIO
It was. 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 favor, where I am in love.

BENVOLIO
Alas, that love, so gentle in his view,
Should, without eyes, see pathways to his will!

Where shall we dine?—O me! What fray was here?
Yet tell me not, for I have heard it all.

ACT 1, SCENE 1, PAGE 10

BENVOLIO
No, coz, I rather weep.

ROMEO
Good heart, at what?

BENVOLIO
At thy good heart’s oppression.

ROMEO
Why, such is love’s transgression.
Griefs of mine own lie heavy in my breast,
Which thou wilt propagate, to have it pressed
With more of thine. This love that thou hast shown
Doth add more grief to too much of mine own.
Love is a smoke raised with the fume of sighs;
Being purged, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes;
Being vexed, a sea nourished with loving tears.
What is it else? A madness most discreet,
A choking gall, and a preserving sweet.
Farewell, my coz.

BENVOLIO
Soft! I will go along.
And if you leave me so, you do me wrong.

ROMEO
Tut, I have lost myself. I am not here.
This is not Romeo. He's some other where.

BENVOLIO
Tell me in sadness, who is that you love.

ROMEO
What, shall I groan and tell thee?

BENVOLIO
Groan! Why, no. But sadly, tell me who.

Act 1, Scene 1, Page 11

ROMEO
A sick man in sadness makes his will,
A word ill urged to one that is so ill.
In sadness, cousin, I do love a woman.

BENVOLIO
I aimed so near when I supposed you loved.

ROMEO
A right good markman! And she's fair I love.

BENVOLIO
A right fair mark, fair coz, is soonest hit.

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 armed
From love's weak childish bow, she lives uncharmed.
She will not stay the siege of loving terms,
Nor bide th' encounter of assailing eyes,
Nor ope her lap to saint-seducing gold.
Oh, she is rich in beauty, only poor
That when she dies, with beauty dies her store.

BENVOLIO
Then she hath sworn that she will still live chaste?

ROMEO
She hath, and in that sparing makes huge waste,
have too much sadness already, and now you're going to make me sadder by feeling sorry for you. Here's what love is: a smoke made out of lovers' sighs. When the smoke clears, love is a fire burning in your lover's eyes. If you frustrate love, you get an ocean made out of lovers' tears. What else is love? It's a wise form of madness. It's a sweet lozenge that you choke on. Goodbye, cousin.

BENVOLIO
Wait. I'll come with you. If you leave me like this, you're doing me wrong.

ROMEO
I'm not myself. I'm not here. This isn't Romeo—he's somewhere else.

BENVOLIO
Tell me seriously, who is the one you love?

ROMEO
Seriously? You mean I should groan and tell you?

BENVOLIO
Groan? No. But tell me seriously who it is.

ROMEO
You wouldn't tell a sick man he “seriously” has to make his will—it would just make him worse. Seriously, cousin, I love a woman.

BENVOLIO
I guessed that already when I guessed you were in love.

ROMEO
Then you were right on target. The woman I love is beautiful.

BENVOLIO
A beautiful target is the one that gets hit the fastest.

ROMEO
Well, you're not on target there. She refuses to be hit by Cupid's arrow. She's as clever as Diana, and shielded by the armor of chastity. She can't be touched by the weak and childish arrows of love. She won't listen to words of love, or let you look at her with loving eyes, or open her lap to receive gifts of gold. She's rich in beauty, but she's also poor, because when she dies her beauty will be destroyed with her.

BENVOLIO
So she's made a vow to be a virgin forever?

ROMEO
Yes she has, and by keeping celibate, she
For beauty, starved with her severity, 
Cuts beauty off from all posterity. 
She is too fair, too wise, wisely too fair, 
To merit bliss by making me despair. 
She hath forsworn to love, and in that vow 
Do I live dead that live to tell it now.

BENVOLIO
Be ruled by me. Forget to think of her.

ROMEO
O, teach me how I should forget to think!

BENVOLIO
By giving liberty unto thine eyes. 
Examine other beauties.

ROMEO
'Tis the way 
To call hers exquisite, in question more. 
These happy masks that kiss fair ladies' brows, 
Being black, puts us in mind they hide the fair. 
He that is strucken blind cannot forget 
The precious treasure of his eyesight lost.

Show me a mistress that is passing fair; 
What doth her beauty serve but as a note 
Where I may read who passed that passing fair? 
Farewell. Thou canst not teach me to forget.

BENVOLIO
I'll pay that doctrine or else die in debt.

---

Enter CAPULET, County PARIS, and PETER, a servant

CAPULET
But Montague is bound as well as I, 
In penalty alike. And 'tis not hard, I think, 
For men so old as we to keep the peace.

PARIS
Of honorable reckoning are you both. 
And pity 'tis you lived at odds so long. 
But now, my lord, what say you to my suit?

CAPULET
But saying o'er what I have said before. 
My child is yet a stranger in the world. 
She hath not seen the change of fourteen years. 
Let two more summers wither in their pride 
Ere we may think her ripe to be a bride.

PARIS
Younger than she are happy mothers made.

CAPULET
And too soon marred are those so early made.
Earth hath swallowed all my hopes but she.
15
She’s the hopeful lady of my earth.
But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart.
My will to her consent is but a part.
An she agreed within her scope of choice,
Lies my consent and fair according voice.
20
This night I hold an old accustomed feast,
Whereeto I have invited many a guest
Such as I love. And you among the store,
One more, most welcome, makes my number more.
At my poor house look to behold this night
25
Earth-treading stars that make dark heaven light.

Act 1, Scene 2, Page 2

Such comfort as do lusty young men feel
When well-apparelled April on the heel
Of limping winter treads. Even such delight
Among fresh fennel buds shall you this night
30
Inherit at my house. Hear all, all see,
And like her most whose merit most shall be—
Which on more view of many, mine, being one,
May stand in number, though in reckoning none,
Come, go with me.
35
(to PETER, giving him a paper)
Go, sirrah, trudge about
Through fair Verona. Find those persons out
Whose names are written there, and to them say
My house and welcome on their pleasure stay.

Exeunt CAPULET and PARIS

PETER
Find them out whose names are written here? It is
written, that the shoemaker should meddle with his
yard and the tailor with his last, the fisher with his
pencil and the painter with his nets. But I am sent to
find those persons whose names are here writ, and
can never find what names the writing person hath
here writ. I must to the learned in good time!

Enter BENVOLIO and ROMEO

BENVOLIO
45 Tut man, one fire burns out another’s burning.
One pain is lessened by another’s anguish.
Turn giddy, and be helped by backward turning.
One desperate grief cures with another’s languish.
Take thou some new infection to thy eye,
And the rank poison of the old will die.
Act 1, Scene 2, Page 3

ROMEO
Your plantain leaf is excellent for that.

BENVOLIO
For what, I pray thee?

ROMEO
For your broken shin.

BENVOLIO
Why Romeo, art thou mad?

ROMEO
Not mad, but bound more than a madman is,
Shut up in prison, kept without my food,
Whipped and tormented and—Good e'en, good fellow.

PETER
God T' good e'en. I pray, sir, can you read?

ROMEO
Ay, mine own fortune in my misery.

PETER
Perhaps you have learned it without book. But I pray,
can you read anything you see?

ROMEO
Ay, if I know the letters and the language.

PETER
Ye say honestly. Rest you merry.

ROMEO
Stay, fellow. I can read. (he reads the letter)

"Seigneur Martino and his wife and daughters;
County Anselme and his beauteous sisters;
The lady widow of Vitruvio;
Seigneur Placentio and his lovely nieces;
Mercutio and his brother Valentine;
Mine uncle Capulet, his wife and daughters;
My fair niece Rosaline and Livia;

Act 1, Scene 2, Page 4

Seigneur Valentio and his cousin Tybalt;
Lucio and the lively Helena.”
A fair assembly. Whither should they come?

PETER
Up.

ROMEO
Whither? To supper?

PETER

To our house.

ROMEO
Whose house?
PETER
My master's.

80 Indeed, I should have asked thee that before.

PETER
Now I'll tell you without asking. My master is the great rich Capulet, and if you be not of the house of Montagues, I pray come and crush a cup of wine. Rest you merry!

Exit PETER

BENVOLIO
At this same ancient feast of Capulet's
85 Sups the fair Rosaline whom thou so loves
With all the admired beauties of Verona.
Go thither, and with unattainted eye
Compare her face with some that I shall show,
And I will make thee think thy swan a crow.

ROMEO
When the devout religion of mine eye
Maintains such falsehood, then turn tears to fires,
And these, who, often drowned, 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.

100 BENVOLIO
Tut, you saw her fair, none else being by,
Herself poised with herself in either eye.
But in that crystal scales let there be weighed
Your lady's love against some other maid
That I will show you shining at the feast,
And she shall scant show well that now shows best.

ROMEO
I'll go along, no such sight to be shown,
But to rejoice in splendor of mine own.

Exeunt

Act 1, Scene 3

Enter LADY CAPULET and NURSE

LADY CAPULET
Nurse, where's my daughter? Call her forth to me.

NURSE

LADY CAPULET
Nurse, where's my daughter? Tell her to come to me.

NURSE
Original Text

Now, by my maidenhead at twelve year old
I bade her come. What, lamb! What, ladybird!
God forbid! Where’s this girl? What, Juliet!

Enter JULIET

JULIET

5 How now, who calls?

NURSE

Your mother.

JULIET

Madam, I am here. What is your will?

LADY CAPULET

This is the matter.—Nurse, give leave awhile,
We must talk in secret.—Nurse, come back again.

10 I have remembered me. Thou’s hear our counsel.
Thou know’st my daughter’s of a pretty age.

NURSE

Faith, I can tell her age unto an hour.

LADY CAPULET

She’s not fourteen.

NURSE

I’ll lay fourteen of my teeth—and yet, to my teen b e it
spoken, I have but four—she is not fourteen. How
long is it now to Lammaside?

LADY CAPULET

A fortnight and odd days.

Modern Text

I swear to you by my virginity at age twelve, I
already told her to come. Come on! Where is
she? What is she doing? What, Juliet!

Enter JULIET

JULIET enters.

JULIET

What is it? Who’s calling me?

NURSE

Your mother.

JULIET

Madam, I’m here. What do you want?

LADY CAPULET

I’ll tell you what’s the matter—Nurse, leave us
alone for a little while. We must talk privately—
Nurse, come back here. I just remembered, you
can listen to our secrets. You know how young
my daughter is.

NURSE

Yes, I know her age down to the hour.

LADY CAPULET

She’s not even fourteen.

NURSE

I’d bet fourteen of my own teeth—but, I’m sorry to
say, I only have four teeth—she’s not fourteen.
How long is it until Lammaside?

LADY CAPULET

Two weeks and a few odd days.

Act 1, Scene 3, Page 2

NURSE

Even or odd, of all days in the year,
Come Lammas Eve at night shall she be fourteen.

20 Susan and she—God rest all Christian souls!—
Were of an age. Well, Susan is with God.
She was too good for me. But, as I said,
On Lammas Eve at night shall she be fourteen.
That shall she. Marry, I remember it well.

Tis since the earthquake now eleven years,
And she was weaned—I never shall forget it—
Of all the days of the year, upon that day.
For I had then laid wormwood to my dug,
Sitting in the sun under the dovehouse wall.

30 My lord and you were then at Mantua.—
Nay, I do bear a brain.—But, as I said,
When it did taste the wormwood on the nipple
Of my dug and felt it bitter, pretty fool,
To see it tetchy and fall out with the dug!

35 “Shake!” quoth the dovehouse. ’Twas no need, I trow,
To bid me trudge.
And since that time it is eleven years,
For then she could stand alone. Nay, by the rood,
She could have run and waddled all about,

40 For even the day before, she broke her brow.

NURSE

Whether it’s even or odd, of all the days in the
year, on the night of Lammas Eve, she’ll be
fourteen. She and Susan—God rest her and all
Christian souls—were born on the same day.

Well, Susan died and is with God. She was too
good for me. But like I said, on the night of
Lammas Eve, she will be fourteen. Yes, she will.
Indeed, I remember it well. It’s been eleven years
since the earthquake. She stopped nursing from
my breast on that very day. I’ll never forget it. I
had put bitter wormwood on my breast as I was
sitting in the sun, under the wall of the
dovehouse. You and your husband were in

Mantua. Boy, do I have some memory! But like I
said, when she tasted the bitter wormwood on my
nipple, the pretty little babe got irritated and

started to quarrel with my breast. Then the
dovehouse shook with the earthquake. There was
no need to tell me to get out of there. That was
eleven years ago. By then she could stand up all
by herself. No, I swear, by that time she could run
and waddle all around. I remember because she
had cut her forehead just the day before. My
LADY CAPULET

Enough of this. Please be quiet.

JULIET

Now you stop too, Nurse, please.

NURSE

Peace. I'm done talking. May God choose you to receive his grace. You were the prettiest baby I ever nursed. If I live to see you get married someday, all my wishes will come true.

LADY CAPULET

Well, marriage is exactly what we have to discuss. Tell me, my daughter Juliet, what is your attitude about getting married?

JULIET

It is an honor that I do not dream of.

NURSE

“An honor?” If I weren’t your only nurse, I’d say you had sucked wisdom from the breast that fed you.

LADY CAPULET

Well, start thinking about marriage now. Here in Verona there are girls younger than you—girls from noble families—who have already become mothers. By my count, I was already your mother at just about your age, while you remain a virgin. Well then, I’ll say this quickly: the valiant Paris wants you as his bride.

NURSE

What a man, young lady. He’s as great a man as any in the whole world. He’s as perfect as if he

NURSE

Yes, madam. But I can’t help laughing to think that the baby stopped crying and said, “Yes.” I swear, she had a bump on her forehead as big as a rooster’s testicle. It was a painful bruise, and she was crying bitterly. “Yes,” said my husband, “Did you fall on your face? You’ll fall backward when you grow up, won’t you, Jule?” And she stopped crying and said, “Yes.”

LADY CAPULET

Enough of this. Please be quiet.

JULIET

It is an honor that I do not dream of.

NURSE

Peace. I have done. God mark thee to his grace! Thou wast the prettiest babe that e’er I nursed. An I might live to see thee married once, I have my wish.

LADY CAPULET

Marry, that “marry” is the very theme I came to talk of. Tell me, daughter Juliet, How stands your disposition to be married?

JULIET

It is an honor that I dream not of.

NURSE

An honor! Were not I thine only nurse, I would say thou hadst sucked wisdom from thy teat.

LADY CAPULET

Well, think of marriage now. Younger than you Here in Verona, ladies of esteem Are made already mothers. By my count, I was your mother much upon these years That you are now a maid. Thus then in brief: The valiant Paris seeks you for his love.

NURSE

A man, young lady! Lady, such a man As all the world. Why, he’s a man of wax.

NURSE

Yes, madam. Yet I cannot choose but laugh To think it should leave crying and say “ay.” And yet, I warrant, it had upon its brow A bump as big as a young cockerel’s stone, A perilous knock, and it cried bitterly. “Yea,” quoth my husband, “Fall’st upon thy face? Thou wilt fall backward when thou comest to age. Wilt thou not, Jule?” It stinted and said “ay.”

JULIET

And stint thou too, I pray thee, Nurse, say I.

NURSE

Peace, I have done. God mark thee to his grace! Thou wast the prettiest babe that e’er I nursed. An I might live to see thee married once, I have my wish.

LADY CAPULET

Enough of this. I pray thee, hold thy peace.

NURSE

Yes, madam. Yet I cannot choose but laugh To think it should leave crying and say “ay.” And yet, I warrant, it had upon its brow A bump as big as a young cockerel’s stone, A perilous knock, and it cried bitterly. “Yea,” quoth my husband, “Fall’st upon thy face? Thou wilt fall backward when thou comest to age. Wilt thou not, Jule?” It stinted and said “ay.”

JULIET

And, pretty fool, it stinted and said “ay.”

LADY CAPULET

Enough of this. I pray thee, hold thy peace.

NURSE

Peace, I have done. God mark thee to his grace! Thou wast the prettiest babe that e’er I nursed. An I might live to see thee married once, I have my wish.

LADY CAPULET

Enough of this. Please be quiet.

JULIET

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LADY CAPULET

Enough of this. Please be quiet.

JULIET

And stint thou too, I pray thee, Nurse, say I.

NURSE

Peace, I have done. God mark thee to his grace! Thou wast the prettiest babe that e’er I nursed. An I might live to see thee married once, I have my wish.
Act 1, Scene 3, Page 4

**LADY CAPULET**
Verona's summer hath not such a flower.

**NURSE**
Nay, he's a flower. In faith, a very flower.

**LADY CAPULET**
What say you? Can you love the gentleman? This night you shall behold him at our feast. Read o'er the volume of young Paris' face And find delight writ there with beauty's pen. Examine every married lineament And see how one another lends content, And what obscured in this fair volume lies Find written in the margin of his eyes. This precious book of love, this unbound lover, To beautify him only lacks a cover. The fish lives in the sea, and 'tis much pride For fair without the fair within to hide. That book in many's eyes doth share the glory That in gold clasps locks in the golden story. So shall you share all that he doth possess By having him, making yourself no less.

**NURSE**

**LADY CAPULET**
Speak briefly. Can you like of Paris, love?

**JULIET**
I'll look to like if looking liking move. But no more deep will I endart mine eye Than your consent gives strength to make it fly.

**PETER**
Madam, the guests are come, supper served up, you called, my young lady asked for, the Nurse cursed in the pantry, and every thing in extremity. I must hence to wait. I beseech you, follow straight.

**LADY CAPULET**
We follow thee.—Juliet, the county stays.

**NURSE**
Go, girl, seek happy nights to happy days.

Act 1, Scene 3, Page 5

**PETER**
Madam, the guests are here, dinner is served, people are calling for you, people have asked for Juliet, and in the pantry, people are cursing the Nurse. Everything's out of control. I must go and serve the guests. Please, follow straight after me.

**LADY CAPULET**
We'll follow you. Juliet, the count is waiting for you.

**NURSE**
Go, girl, look for a man who'll give you happy nights at the end of happy days.

Exeunt They all exit.
Act 1, Scene 4

Enter **ROMEO, MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO, with five or six other MASKERS and TORCHBEARERS**

**ROMEO**

What shall this speech be spoke for our excuse? Or shall we on without apology?

**BENVOLIO**

The date is out of such prolixity.

We'll have no Cupid hoodwinked with a scarf, bearing a Tartar's painted bow of lath, scaring the ladies like a crowkeeper, nor no without-book prologue, faintly spoke after the prompter for our entrance. But let them measure us by what they will.

We'll measure them a measure and be gone.

**ROMEO**

Give me a torch. I am not for this ambling. Being but heavy, I will bear the light.

**MERCUTIO**

Nay, gentle Romeo, we must have you dance.

**ROMEO**

Not I, believe me. You have dancing shoes with nimble soles. I have a soul of lead so stakes me to the ground I cannot move.

**MERCUTIO**

You are a lover. Borrow Cupid's wings and soar with them above a common bound.

**ROMEO**

I am too sore enpiercèd 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 burthen 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.—Give me a case to put my visage in! A visor for a visor.—What care I what curious eye doth cote deformities? Here are the beetle brows shall blush for me.
Act 1, Scene 4, Page 3

ROMEO
And we mean well in going to this mask,
But 'tis no wit to go.

MERCUTIO
Why, may one ask?

ROMEO
Well, what was yours?

MERCUTIO
That dreamers often lie.

ROMEO
In bed asleep while they do dream things true.

MERCUTIO
Oh, then, I see Queen Mab hath been with you.

BENVOLIO
Queen Mab, what's she

MERCUTIO
She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes
In shape no bigger than an agate stone
On the forefinger of an alderman,
Drawn with a team of little atomi
Over men's noses as they lie asleep.

ROMEO
We mean well by going to this masquerade ball,
but it's not smart of us to go.

MERCUTIO
Why, may I ask?

ROMEO
I had a dream last night.

MERCUTIO
So did I.

ROMEO
Well, what was your dream?

MERCUTIO
My dream told me that dreamers often lie.

ROMEO
They lie in bed while they dream about the truth.

MERCUTIO
Oh, then I see you've been with Queen Mab.

BENVOLIO
Who's Queen Mab?

MERCUTIO
She's the fairies' midwife. She's no bigger than the stone on a city councilman's ring. She rides around in a wagon drawn by tiny little atoms, and she rides over men's noses as they lie sleeping. The spokes of her wagon are made of spiders'
Her wagon spokes made of long spinners’ legs,
The cover of the wings of grasshoppers,
Her traces of the smallest spider’s web,
Her collars of the moonshine’s watery beams,
Her whip of cricket’s bone, the lash of film,
Her wagoner a small gray-coated gnat,
Not half so big as a round little worm
Pricked from the lazy finger of a maid.

Her chariot is an empty hazelnut
Made by the joiner squirrel or old grub,
Time out o’ mind the fairies’ coachmakers.
And in this state she gallops night by night
Through lovers’ brains, and then they dream of love;
On courtiers’ knees, that dream on curtsies straight;
O’er lawyers’ fingers, who straight dream on fees;
O’er ladies’ lips, who straight on kisses dream,
Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,
Because their breaths with sweetmeats tainted are.
Sometime she gallops o’er a courtier’s nose,
And then dreams he of smelling out a suit.

Her chariot is a hazelnut shell. It was made by a
carpenter squirrel or an old grubworm; they’ve
made wagons for the fairies as long as anyone
can remember. In this royal wagon, she rides
every night through the brains of lovers and
makes them dream about love. She rides over
courtiers’ knees, and they dream about curtsying.
She rides over lawyers’ fingers, and right away,
they dream about their fees. She rides over
ladies’ lips, and they immediately dream of
kisses. Queen Mab often puts blisters on their
lips because their breath smells like candy,
which makes her mad. Sometimes she rides
over a courtier’s lips, and he dreams about making
money off of someone. Sometimes she tickles a
priest’s nose with a tithe-pig’s tail, and he dreams
of a large donation. Sometimes she rides over a
soldier’s neck, and he dreams of cutting the
throats of foreign enemies, of breaking down
walls, of ambushes, of Spanish swords, and of
enormous cups of liquor. And then, drums beat
in his ear and he wakes up. He’s frightened, so
he says a couple of prayers and goes back to
sleep. She is the same Mab who tangles the hair
in horses’ manes at night and makes the tangles
hard in the dirty hairs, which bring bad luck if
they’re untangled. Mab is the old hag who gives
false sex dreams to virgins and teaches them
how to hold a lover and bear a child. She’s the
one—

ROMEO
Peace, peace, Mercutio, peace!
Thou talk’st of nothing.

MERCUTIO
True, I talk of dreams,
Which are the children of an idle brain,
Begot of nothing but vain fantasy,
Which is as thin of substance as the air
And more inconstant than the wind, who woos
Even now the frozen bosom of the north,
And, being angered, puffs away from thence,
Turning his face to the dew-dropping south.
Original Text

Act 1, Scene 4, Page 5

105 BENVOLIO
This wind you talk of, blows us from ourselves.
Supper is done, and we shall come too late.

ROMEO
I fear too early, for my mind misgives
Some consequence yet hanging in the stars
Shall bitterly begin his fearful date
With this night’s revels, and expire the term
Of a despicèd life closed in my breast
By some vile forfeit of untimely death.
But he that hath the steerage of my course,
Direct my sail. On, lusty gentlemen.

115 BENVOLIO
Strike, drum.

March about the stage and exect

Act 1, Scene 5

5 PETER and other SERVINGMEN come forth with napkins

PETER
Where’s Potpan, that he helps not to take away? He shift a trencher? He scrape a trencher!

FIRST SERVINGMAN
When good manners shall lie all in one or two men’s hands, and they unwashed too, ’tis a foul thing.

5 PETER
Away with the joint-stools, remove the court-cupboard, look to the plate. Good thou, save me a piece of marchpane, and, as thou loves me, let the porter let in Susan Grindstone and Nell.—Antony and Potpan!

SECOND SERVINGMAN
Ay, boy, ready.

PETER
10 You are looked for and called for, asked for and sought for, in the great chamber.

FIRST SERVINGMAN
We cannot be here and there too. Cheerly, boys. Be brisk awhale, and the longer liver take all.

Exeunt PETER and SERVINGMEN

Enter CAPULET with CAPULET’S COUSIN, TYBALT, LADY CAPULET, JULIET, and others of the house, meeting ROMEO, BENVOLIO, MERCUTIO, and other GUESTS and MASKERS

Modern Text

BENVOLIO
The wind you’re talking about is blowing us off our course. Dinner is over, and we’re going to get there too late.

ROMEO
I’m worried we’ll get there too early. I have a feeling this party tonight will be the start of something bad, something that will end with my own death. But whoever’s in charge of where my life’s going can steer me wherever they want. Onward, lover boys!

BENVOLIO
Beat the drum.

They march about the stage and exit.

PETER and other SERVINGMEN come forward with napkins.

PETER
Where’s Potpan? Why isn’t he helping us clear the table? He should be moving and scraping plates!

FIRST SERVINGMAN
When only one or two men have all the good manners, and even they are dirty, things are bad.

PETER
Take away the stools, the sideboards, and the plates. You, good friend, save me a piece of marzipan, and if you love me, have the porter let in Susan Grindstone and Nell. Antony and Potpan!

SECOND SERVINGMAN
Yes, boy, I’m ready.

PETER
They’re looking for you in the great chamber.

FIRST SERVINGMAN
We can’t be in two places at once, both here and there! Cheers, boys. Be quick for a while and let the one who lives the longest take everything.

CAPULET enters with his COUSIN, TYBALT, LADY CAPULET, JULIET, and other members of the house. They meet ROMEO, BENVOLIO, MERCUTIO.
CAPULET
Welcome, gentlemen! Ladies that have their toes
Ah, my mistresses! Which of you all
Unplagued with corns will walk a bout with you.—
Will now deny to dance? She that makes dainty,
She, I'll swear, hath corns. Am I come near ye now?—
Welcome, gentlemen! I have seen the day
That I have worn a visor and could tell
A whispering tale in a fair lady's ear
Such as would please. 'Tis gone, 'tis gone, 'tis gone.—
You are welcome, gentlemen.—Come, musicians, play.
(music plays and they dance)
A hall, a hall, give room!—And foot it, girls.—
More light, you knaves! And turn the tables up,
And quench the fire. The room is grown too hot.—
Ah, sirrah, this unlooked-for sport comes well.—
Nay, sit, nay, sit, good cousin Capulet,
For you and I are past our dancing days.
How long is 't now since last yourself and I
Were in a mask?

Act 1, Scene 5, Page 2

CAPULETS' COUSIN
By'r Lady, thirty years.

CAPULET
What, man, 'tis not so much, 'tis not so much.
'Tis since the nuptials of Lucentio,
Come Pentecost as quickly as it will,
Some five and twenty years, and then we masked.

CAPULET'S COUSIN
'Tis more, 'tis more. His son is elder, sir.
His son is thirty.

CAPULET
Will you tell me that?
His son was but a ward two years ago.

ROMEO
(to a SERVINGMAN) What lady is that which doth
enrich the hand
Of yonder knight?

SERVINGMAN
I know not, sir.

ROMEO
Oh, 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.
**Act 1, Scene 5, Page 3**

**TYBALT**
This, by his voice, should be a Montague.—
(to his PAGE) Fetch me my rapier, boy.—
What, dares the slave
55 Come hither, covered with an antic face,
To fleer and scorn at our solemnity?
Now, by the stock and honor of my kin,
To strike him dead I hold it not a sin.

**CAPULET**
Why, how now, kinsman? Wherefore storm you so?

**TYBALT**
Uncle, this is a Montague, our foe,
A villain that is hither come in spite
To scorn at our solemnity this night.

**CAPULET**
Young Romeo is it?

**TYBALT**
'Tis he, that villain Romeo.

**CAPULET**
Content thee, gentle coz. Let him alone.

**TYBALT**
He bears him like a portly gentleman,
And, to say truth, Verona brags of him
To be a virtuous and well-governed youth.
I would not for the wealth of all the town
Here in my house do him disparagement.

**CAPULET**
Therefore be patient. Take no note of him.
It is my will, the which if thou respect,
Show a fair presence and put off these frowns,
An ill-beseeming semblance for a feast.

**Act 1, Scene 5, Page 4**

**TYBALT**
It fits when such a villain is a guest.

**CAPULET**
He shall be endured.

**TYBALT**
It’s the right way to act when a villain like him shows up. I won’t tolerate him.

**CAPULET**
You will tolerate him. What, little man? I say you will. What the—Am I the boss here or you? What the—You won’t tolerate him! God help me! You’ll start a riot among my guests! There will be chaos! It will be your fault, you’ll be the rabble-rouser!
### Original Text

**TYBALT**

Why, uncle, 'tis a shame.

**CAPULET**

Go to, go to.
You are a saucy boy. Is 't so, indeed?
This trick may chance to scathe you, I know what.
You must contravene me. Marry, 'tis time.—

Well said, my hearts!—You are a princox, go.
Be quiet, or—More light, more light!—For shame!
I'll make you quiet.—What, cheerly, my hearts!

---

**TYBALT**

Patience perforce with willful choler meeting
Makes my flesh tremble in their different greeting.

I will withdraw, but this intrusion shall
Now seeming sweet, convert to bitterest gall.

---

**ROMEO**

(taking JULIET’s hand) If I profane with my unworthiest hand
This holy shrine, the gentle sin 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 palmer’s 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.

Kisses her
Thus from my lips, by thine, my sin is purged.

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### Modern Text

**TYBALT**

But, uncle, we’re being disrespected.

**CAPULET**

Go on, go on. You’re an insolent little boy. Is that how it is, really? This stupidity will come back to bite you. I know what I’ll do. You have to contradict me, do you? I’ll teach you a lesson. (to the GUESTS) Well done, my dear guests! (to TYBALT) You’re a punk, get away. Keep your mouth shut, or else—(to SERVINGMEN) more light, more light! (to TYBALT) You should be ashamed. ’ll shut you up. (to the guests) Keep having fun, my dear friends!

---

The combination of forced patience and pure rage is making my body tremble. I’ll leave here now, but Romeo’s prank, which seems so sweet to him now, will turn bitter to him later. **TYBALT** exits.

---

**ROMEO**

(taking JULIET’s hand) Your hand is like a holy place that my hand is unworthy to visit. If you’re offended by the touch of my hand, my two lips are standing here like blushing pilgrims, ready to make things better with a kiss.

**JULIET**

Good pilgrim, you don’t give your hand enough credit. By holding my hand you show polite devotion. After all, pilgrims touch the hands of statues of saints. Holding one palm against another is like a kiss.

**ROMEO**

Don’t saints and pilgrims have lips too?

**JULIET**

Yes, pilgrim—they have lips that they’re supposed to pray with.

**ROMEO**

Well then, saint, let lips do what hands do. I’m praying for you to kiss me. Please grant my prayer so my faith doesn’t turn to despair.

**JULIET**

Saints don’t move, even when they grant prayers.

**ROMEO**

Then don’t move while I act out my prayer. 

He kisses her.

Now my sin has been taken from my lips by
JULIET
Then have my lips the sin that they have took.

ROMEO
Sin from thy lips? O trespass sweetly urged!
110 Give me my sin again.

The kiss again

JULIET
Then do my lips now have the sin they took from yours?

ROMEO
Sin from my lips? You encourage crime with your sweetness. Give me my sin back.

They kiss again

Act 1, Scene 5, Page 6

JULIET
You kiss by th’ book.

NURSE
Madam, your mother craves a word with you.

JULIET moves away

ROMEO
What is her mother?

NURSE
Marry, bachelor,
Her mother is the lady of the house,
And a good lady, and a wise and virtuous.
115 I nursed her daughter that you talked withal.
I tell you, he that can lay hold of her
Shall have the chinks.

ROMEO
(aside) Is she a Capulet?
O dear account! My life is my foe’s debt.

BENVOLIO
(to ROMEO) Away, begone. The sport is at the best.

ROMEO
(to himself) Is she a Capulet? Oh, this is a heavy price to pay! My life is in the hands of my enemy.

BENVOLIO
(to ROMEO) Come on, let’s go. Right when things are the most fun is the best time to leave.

ROMEO
Yes, but I’m afraid I’m in more trouble than ever.

CAPULET
Nay, gentlemen, prepare not to be gone.
We have a trifling foolish banquet towards.—
Is it e’en so? Why, then, I thank you all.
I thank you, honest gentlemen. Good night.—
125 More torches here!—Come on then, let’s to bed.
Ah, sirrah, by my lay, it waxes late.
I’ll to my rest.

All but JULIET and NURSE move to exit

Everyone except JULIET and NURSE begins to exit.

Act 1, Scene 5, Page 7

JULIET
Come hither, Nurse. What is yond gentleman?

NURSE
The son and heir of old Tiberio.

JULIET
Come over here, nurse. Who is that gentleman?

NURSE
He is the son and heir of old Tiberio.

JULIET
Original Text

130 What's he that now is going out of door?

NURSE
Marry, that, I think, be young Petruchio.

JULIET
What's he that follows here, that would not dance?

NURSE
I know not.

JULIET
My grave is like to be my wedding bed.

NURSE
His name is Romeo, and a Montague,
The only son of your great enemy.

JULIET
(aside) My only love sprung from my only hate!
Too early seen unknown, and known too late!

140 Prodigious birth of love it is to me,
That I must love a loathed enemy.

NURSE
What's this? What's this?

JULIET
A rhyme I learned even now
Of one I danced withal.

NURSE
Anon, anon!
Come, let's away. The strangers all are gone.

Exeunt

Act 2, Prologue

Enter CHORUS

CHORUS
Now old desire doth in his deathbed lie,
And young affection gapes to be his heir.
That fair for which love groaned for and would die
With tender Juliet matched, is now not fair.

5 Now Romeo is beloved and loves again,
Alike bewitched by the charm of looks,
But to his foe supposed he must complain,
And she steal love’s sweet bait from fearful hooks.
Being held a foe, he may not have access

10 To breathe such vows as lovers use to swear.
And she as much in love, her means much less
To meet her new beloved anywhere.
But passion lends them power, time means, to meet,
Tempering extremities with extreme sweet.

Modern Text

Who's the one who's going out the door right now?

NURSE
Well, that one, I think, is young Petruchio.

JULIET
Who's the one following over there, the one who wouldn't dance?

NURSE
I don’t know his name.

JULIET
Go ask. (the nurse leaves) If he's married, I think I'll die rather than marry anyone else.

NURSE
( returning) His name is Romeo. He's a Montague. He's the only son of your worst enemy.

JULIET
(to herself) The only man I love is the son of the only man I hate! I saw him too early without knowing who he was, and I found out who he was too late! Love is a monster for making me fall in love with my worst enemy.

NURSE
What's this? What's this?

JULIET
Just a rhyme I learned from somebody I danced with at the party.

NURSE
Right away, right away. Come, let's go. The strangers are all gone.

They exit.
Act 2, Scene 1

Enter ROMEO alone

ROMEO
Can I go forward when my heart is here?
Turn back, dull earth, and find thy center out.

Moves away Enter BENVOLIO with MERCUTIO

BENVOLIO
Romeo, my cousin Romeo! Romeo!

MERCUTIO
He is wise,
And, on my life, hath stol'n him home to bed.

5 He ran this way and leapt this orchard wall.
Call, good Mercutio.

MERCUTIO
Nay, I'll conjure too!
Romeo! Humours, madman, passion, lover!
Appear thou in the likeness of a sigh!
Speak but one rhyme, and I am satisfied.

10 Cry but "Ay me!" Pronounce but "love" and "dove."
Speak to my gossip Venus one fair word,
One nickname for her purblind son and heir,
Young Abraham Cupid, he that shot so true
When King Cophetua loved the beggar maid.—

15 He heareth not, he stirreth not, he moveth not.
The ape is dead, and I must conjure him.—
I conjure thee by Rosaline's bright eyes,
By her high forehead and her scarlet lip,
By her fine foot, straight leg, and quivering thigh,
And the demesnes that there adjacent lie,
That in thy likeness thou appear to us.

BENVOLIO
An if he hear thee, thou wilt anger him.

MERCUTIO
This cannot anger him. 'Twould anger him
To raise a spirit in his mistress' circle
Of some strange nature, letting it there stand
Till she had laid it and conjured it down.
That were some spite. My invocation
Is fair and honest. In his mistress' name
I conjure only but to raise up him.

BENVOLIO
Come, he hath hid himself among these trees,
To be consorted with the humorous night.

BENVOLIO
If he hears you, you'll make him angry.

MERCUTIO
What I'm saying can't anger him. He would be
angry if I summoned a strange spirit for her to
have sex with—that's what would make him
angry. The things I'm saying are fair and honest.
All I'm doing is saying the name of the woman he
loves to lure him out of the darkness.

BENVOLIO
Come on. He's hidden behind these trees to keep
the night company. His love is blind, so it belongs
Original Text

Blind is his love and best befits the dark.

MERCUTIO
If love be blind, love cannot hit the mark.
Now will he sit under a medlar tree.

And wish his mistress were that kind of fruit
As maids call medlars when they laugh alone.—
O Romeo, that she were! Oh, that she were
An open arse, and thou a poperin pear.
Romeo, good night. I'll to my truckle bed.

This field-bed is too cold for me to sleep.—

BENVOLIO
Go, then, for 'tis in vain
To seek him here that means not to be found.

Exeunt

BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO exit.

Modern Text

in the dark.

MERCUTIO
If love is blind, it can't hit the target. Now he'll sit
under a medlar tree and wish his mistress were
one of those fruits that look like female genitalia.
Oh Romeo, I wish she were an open-arse, and
you a Popperin pear to 'pop her in.' Good night,
Romeo. I'll go to my little trundle bed. This open
field is too cold a place for me to sleep. (toBENVOLIO) Come on, should we go?

BENVOLIO
Let's go. There's no point in looking for him if he
doesn't want to be found.

Act 2, Scene 2

ROMEO returns

ROMEO returns.

ROMEO
He jests at scars that never felt a wound.

JULIET appears in a window above

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. Oh, it is my love.
Oh, 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 eye in heaven
Would through the airy region so bright
That birds would sing and think it were not night.
See how she leans her cheek upon her hand.
Oh, that I were a glove upon that hand

That I might touch that cheek!

JULIET
Ay me!

Act 2, Scene 2, Page 2
ROMEO
(aside) She speaks.
O, speak again, bright angel! For thou art
As glorious to this night, being o'er my head,
As is a wingèd messenger of heaven
Unto the white, upturnèd, wondering eyes
Of mortals that fall back to gaze on him
When he bestrides the lazy-puffing clouds
And sails upon the bosom of the air.

JULIET
O Romeo, Romeo! Wherefore art thou Romeo?
Deny thy father and refuse thy name.
Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

ROMEO
(aside) Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?

JULIET
'Tis but thy name that is my enemy.
Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.
What's Montague? It is nor hand, nor foot,
Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!
What's in a name? That which we call a rose
By any other word would smell as sweet.
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo called,
Retain that dear perfection which he owes
Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name,
And for that name, which is no part of thee
Take all myself.

ROMEO
I take thee at thy word.
Call me but love, and I'll be new baptized.
Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

JULIET
What man art thou that, thus bescreened in night,
So stumblest on my counsel?

ROMEO
By a name
I know not how to tell thee who I am.
My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself
Because it is an enemy to thee.
Had I it written, I would tear the word.

JULIET
My ears have not yet drunk a hundred words
Of that tongue's uttering, yet I know the sound.
Art thou not Romeo, and a Montague?

ROMEO
Neither, fair maid, if either thee dislike.
JULIET
How camest thou hither, tell me, and wherfore?
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'erperch these walls,
For stony limits cannot hold love out,
And what love can do, that dares love attempt.
Therefore thy kinsmen are no stop to me.

JULIET
Tell me, how did you get in here? And why did you come? The orchard walls are high, and it's hard to climb over them. If any of my relatives find you here they'll kill you because of who you are.

ROMEO
I flew over these walls with the light wings of love. Stone walls can't keep love out. Whatever a man in love can possibly do, his love will make him try to do it. Therefore your relatives are no obstacle.

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 eyes,
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
Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face,
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek
For that which thou hast heard me speak tonight.
Fain would I dwell on form. Fain, fain deny
What I have spoke. But farewell compliment!
Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say "ay,"
And I will take thy word. Yet if thou swear'st
Thou mayst prove false. At lovers' perjuries,
They say, Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo,
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully.

JULIET
Who told you how to get here below my bedroom?

ROMEO
Love showed me the way—the same thing that made me look for you in the first place. Love told me what to do, and I let love borrow my eyes. I'm not a sailor, but if you were across the farthest sea, I would risk everything to gain you.

JULIET
You can't see my face because it's dark out. Otherwise, you'd see me blushing about the things you've heard me say tonight. I would be happy to keep up good manners and deny the things I said. But forget about good manners. Do you love me? I know you'll say "yes," and I'll believe you. But if you swear you love me, you might turn out to be lying. They say Jove laughs when lovers lie to each other. Oh Romeo, if you really love me, say it truly. Or if you think it's too easy and quick to win my heart, I'll frown and play hard-to-get, as long as that will make you try to win me, but otherwise I wouldn't act that way for anything. In truth, handsome Montague, I like you too much, so you may think my behavior is loose. But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove myself...
Than those that have more coying to be strange.
I should have been more strange, I must confess,
But that thou overheard'st, ere I was 'ware,
My true love's passion. Therefore pardon me,

And not impute this yielding to light love,
Which the dark night hath so discovered.

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

more faithful than girls who act coy and play hard-to-get. I should have been more standoffish, I confess, but you overheard me talking about the love in my heart when I didn’t know you were there. So excuse me, and do not assume that because you made me love you so easily my love isn’t serious.

ROMEO
Lady, I swear by the sacred moon above, the moon that paints the tops of fruit trees with silver—

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

JULIET
don’t swear by the moon. The moon is always changing. Every month its position in the sky shifts. I don’t want you to turn out to be that inconsistent too.

ROMEO
What shall I swear by?

ROMEO
What should I swear by?

JULIET
Do not swear at all.

JULIET
But if you have to swear, swear by your wonderful self, which is the god I worship like an idol, and then I’ll believe you.

ROMEO
If my heart’s dear love—

ROMEO
If my heart’s dear love—

JULIET
Well, do not swear. Although I joy in thee,
I have no joy of this contract tonight.
It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden,
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be

JULIET
Well, don’t swear. Although you bring me joy, I can’t take joy in this exchange of promises tonight. It’s too crazy. We haven’t done enough thinking. It’s too sudden. It’s too much like lightning, which flashes and then disappears before you can say, “it’s lightning.” My sweet, good night. Our love, which right now is like a flower bud in the summer air, may turn out to be a beautiful flower by the next time we meet. I hope you enjoy the same sweet peace and rest I feel in my heart.

JULIET
Oh, are you going to leave me so unsatisfied?

JULIET
What satisfaction could you possibly have tonight?

JULIET
I would be satisfied if we made each other true promises of love.

JULIET
I pledged my love to you before you asked me to. Yet I wish I could take that promise back, so I had it to give again.

JULIET
Original Text

130 Wouldst thou withdraw it? For what purpose, love?

135 The more I have, for both are infinite.

Act 2, Scene 2, Page 6

JULIET
But to be frank, and give it thee again. My bounty is as boundless as the sea, My love as deep. The more I give to thee,

JULIET
Only to be generous and give it to you once more. But I'm wishing for something I already have. My generosity to you is as limitless as the sea, and my love is as deep. The more love I give you, the more I have. Both loves are infinite.

NURSE calls from within
I hear some noise within. Dear love, adieu.— Anon, good Nurse!—Sweet Montague, be true. Stay but a little. I will come again.

NURSE (from within)
I hear a noise inside. Dear love, goodbye—Just a minute, good Nurse. Sweet Montague, be true. Stay here for a moment. I'll come back.

ROMEO
O blessèd, blessèd night! I am afeard, Being in night, all this is but a dream, Too flattering sweet to be substantial.

ROMEO
Oh, blessed, blessed night! Because it's dark out, I'm afraid all this is just a dream, too sweet to be real.

JULIET
Three words, dear Romeo, and good night indeed. If that thy bent of love be honorable, Thy purpose marriage, send me word tomorrow By one that I'll procure to come to thee Where and what time thou wilt perform the rite, And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay And follow thee my lord throughout the world.

JULIET
Three words, dear Romeo, and then it's good night for real. If your intentions as a lover are truly honorable and you want to marry me, send me word tomorrow. I'll send a messenger to you, and you can pass on a message telling me where and when we'll be married. I'll lay all my fortunes at your feet and follow you, my lord, all over the world.

NURSE (from within) Madam!

JULIET
I come, anon.—But if thou mean'st not well, I do beseech thee—

NURSE (from within) Madam!

Act 2, Scene 2, Page 7

JULIET
By and by, I come.— To cease thy strife and leave me to my grief. Tomorrow will I send.

JULIET
Alright, I'm coming!—I beg you to stop trying for me and leave me to my sadness. Tomorrow I'll send the messenger.

ROMEO
So thrive my soul—

ROMEO
My soul depends on it—

JULIET
A thousand times good night!

JULIET
A thousand times good night.

ROMEO
A thousand times the worse to want thy light.

JULIET exits.
Love goes toward love as schoolboys from their books, But love from love, toward school with heavy looks.

being near you. A lover goes toward his beloved as enthusiastically as a schoolboy leaving his books, but when he leaves his girlfriend, he feels as miserable as the schoolboy on his way to school.

Moves to exit Reenter JULIET, above

JULIET
Hist! Romeo, hist!—Oh, for a falconer’s voice, To lure this tassel-gentle back again! Bondage is hoarse, and may not speak aloud, Else would I tear the cave where Echo lies, And make her airy tongue more hoarse than mine, With repetition of “My Romeo!”

JULIET
Hist, Romeo! Hist! Oh, I wish I could make a falconer’s call, so I could bring my little falcon back again. I’m trapped in my family’s house, so I must be quiet. Otherwise I would rip open the cave where Echo sleeps. I would make her repeat his name until her voice grew more hoarse than mine by repeating, “My Romeo!”

ROMEO
It is my soul that calls upon my name. How silver-sweet sound lovers’ tongues by night, Like softest music to attending ears!

ROMEO
My soul is calling out my name. The sound of lovers calling each others names through the night is silver-sweet. It’s the sweetest sound a lover ever hears.

Act 2, Scene 2, Page 8

JULIET
Romeo!

ROMEO
My nyas?

JULIET
What o’clock tomorrow Shall I send to thee?

ROMEO
By the hour of nine.

JULIET
I will not fail. ’Tis twenty year till then. 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.

JULIET
’Tis almost morning. I would have thee gone.

ROMEO
And yet no further than a wanton’s bird, That lets it hop a little from his hand Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves, And with a silken thread plucks it back again,
Original Text | Modern Text
---|---
So loving-jealous of his liberty.

ROMEO 185 I would I were thy bird.

JULIET
   Sweet, so would I.
   Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.
   Good night, good night! Parting is such sweet sorrow
   That I shall say good night till it be morrow.

   Exit JULIET, above

Act 2, Scene 2, Page 9

ROMEO 190 Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast.
   Would I were sleep and peace, so sweet to rest.
   Hence will I to my ghostly friar's close cell,
   His help to crave and my dear hap to tell.

   Exit

Act 2, Scene 3

Enter FRIAR LAWRENCE, with a basket

FRIAR LAWRENCE
   The gray-eyed morn smiles on the frowning night,
   Checkering the eastern clouds with streaks of light,
   And flecked darkness like a drunkard reels
   From forth day's path and Titan's fiery wheels.
   Now, ere the sun advance his burning eye,
   The day to cheer and night's dank dew to dry,
   I must upfill this osier cage of ours
   With baleful weeds and precious-juicèd flowers.
   The earth, that's nature's mother, is her tomb.
   What is her burying, grave that is her womb.
   And from her womb children of divers kind
   We sucking on her natural bosom find,
   Many for many virtues excellent,
   None but for some and yet all different.
   Oh, mickle is the powerful grace that lies
   In herbs, plants, stones, and their true qualities.
   For naught so vile that on the earth doth live
   But to the earth some special good doth give.
   Nor aught so good but, strained from that fair use
   Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse.
   Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied,
   And vice sometime by action dignified.

   Enter ROMEO

   Within the infant rind of this small flower
   Poison hath residence and medicine power.
   For this, being smelt, with that part cheers each part;
   Being tasted, stays all senses with the heart.
   Two such opposed kings encamp them still,
   In man as well as herbs—grace and rude will.

   ROMEO enters.

   Inside the little rind of this weak flower, there is
   both poison and powerful medicine. If you smell it,
   you feel good all over your body. But if you taste it, you die.
   There are two opposite elements in everything, in men as well as in herbs—good
   and evil.
Act 2, Scene 3, Page 2

And where the worser is predominant,
30 Full soon the canker death eats up that plant.

ROMEO
Good morrow, Father.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
Benedicite.
What early tongue so sweet saluteth me?
Young son, it argues a distempered head
So soon to bid good morrow to thy bed.

35 Care keeps his watch in every old man’s eye,
And where care lodges, sleep will never lie.
But where unbruised youth with unstuffed brain
Doth couch his limbs, there golden sleep doth reign.
Therefore thy earliness doth me assure

Thou art uproused by some distemperate
Or if not so, then here I hit it right:
Our Romeo hath not been in bed tonight.

ROMEO
That last is true. The sweeter rest was mine.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
God pardon sin! Wast thou with Rosaline?

ROMEO
With Rosaline, my ghostly Father? No.
I have forgot that name and that name’s woe.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
That’s my good son. But where hast thou been, then?

ROMEO
I’ll tell thee ere thou ask it me again.
I have been feasting with mine enemy,
Where on a sudden one hath wounded me,
That’s by me wounded. Both our remedies
Within thy help and holy physic lies.
I bear no hatred, blessed man, for, lo,
My intercession likewise steads my foe.

Act 2, Scene 3, Page 3

Be plain, good son, and homely in thy drift.
Riddling confession finds but riddling shrift.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
Speak plainly, make your meaning clear, my son. A jumbled confession can only receive a jumbled absolution.

ROMEO
Then plainly know my heart’s dear love is set
On the fair daughter of rich Capulet.
As mine on hers, so hers is set on mine,
And all combined, save what thou must combine
By holy marriage. When and where and how
We met, we wooed and made exchange of vow,
I’ll tell thee as we pass, but this I pray:
That thou consent to marry us today.
FRIAR LAWRENCE

65 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

70 Hath washed 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.

75 Lo, here upon thy cheek the stain doth sit
Of an old tear that is not washed 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.

ROMEO

Thou chid’st me oft for loving Rosaline.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

For doting, not for loving, pupil mine.

ROMEO

And badest me bury love.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Not in a grave,
To lay one in, another out to have.

ROMEO

I pray thee, chide not. Her I love now
Doth grace for grace and love for love allow.
The other did not so.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Oh, she knew well
Thy love did read by rote, that could not spell.
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’ rancor to pure love.

ROMEO

Oh, let us hence. I stand on sudden haste.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Wisely and slow. They stumble that run fast.

Act 2, Scene 4

Enter BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO

BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO enter.
MERCUTIO
Where the devil should this Romeo be?  
Came he not home tonight?

BENVOLIO
Not to his father's. I spoke with his man.

MERCUTIO
Why, that same pale hard-hearted wench, that 
Rosaline,  
Torments him so, that he will sure run mad.

BENVOLIO
Tybalt, the kinsman to old Capulet,  
Hath sent a letter to his father's house.

MERCUTIO
A challenge, on my life.

BENVOLIO
Romeo will answer it.

MERCUTIO
Any man that can write may answer a letter.

BENVOLIO
Nay, he will answer the letter's master, how he dares, 
being dared.

MERCUTIO
Alas, poor Romeo! He is already dead, stabbed with 
a white wench's black eye, shot through the ear with 
a love song, the very pin of his heart cleft with the 
blind bow-boy's butt shaft. And is he a man to 
encounter Tybalt?

BENVOLIO
Why, what is Tybalt?

MERCUTIO
More than Prince of Cats. Oh, he's the courageous 
captain of compliments. He fights as you sing prick-
song, keeps time, distance, and proportion. He rests 
his minim rests—one, two, and the third in your 
bosom. The very butcher of a silk button, a duelist, a 
duelist, a gentleman of the very first house of the first and 
second cause. Ah, the immortal passado, 
the punto reverso, the hai!

BENVOLIO
Why, what is Tybalt?

MERCUTIO
The pox of such antic, lisping, affecting fantasmines, 
these new tuners of accents! "By Jesu, a very good 
blade! A very tall man! A very good whore!" Why, is 
not this a lamentable thing, grandsire, that we should
Original Text

be thus afflicted with these strange flies, these fashion-mongers, these "pardon me's," who stand so much on the new form, that they cannot sit at ease on the old bench? Oh, their bones, their bones!

BENVOLIO
Here comes Romeo, here comes Romeo.

MERCUTIO
Without his roe, like a dried herring. O flesh, flesh, how art thou fishified! Now is he for the numbers that Petrarch flowed in. Laura to his lady was but a kitchen-wench— marry, she had a better love to berhyme her—Dido a dowdy, Cleopatra a gypsy, Helen and Hero holdings and harlots, Thisbe a grey eye or so, but not to the purpose.— Signior Romeo, bonjour! There's a French salutation to your French slop. You gave us the counterfeit fairly last night.

Enter ROMEO

ROMEO
Good morrow to you both. What counterfeit did I give you?

MERCUTIO
The slip, sir, the slip. Can you not conceive?

ROMEO
Pardon, good Mercutio, my business was great, and in such a case as mine a man may strain courtesy.

MERCUTIO
That's as much as to say, such a case as yours constrains a man to bow in the hams.

ROMEO
Meaning "to curtsy"?

MERCUTIO
Thou hast most kindly hit it.

ROMEO
A most courteous exposition.

MERCUTIO
Nay, I am the very pink of courtesy.

ROMEO
Pink for flower.

MERCUTIO
Modern Text

blade, a very brave man, a very good whore."

Isn't this a sad thing, my good man? Why should we put up with these foreign buzzards, these fashionmongers, these guys who say "pardon me," these guys who care so much about manners that they can't kick back on a bench without whining? “Oh, my aching bones!”

BENVOLIO
Here comes Romeo, here comes Romeo!

MERCUTIO
He looks skinny, like a dried herring without its eggs, and he hasn't got his girl. O flesh, flesh, you've turned pale and weak like a fish. Now he's ready for Petrarch's poetry. Compared to Romeo's girl, Laura was a kitchen slave. Surely she has a better love to make rhymes for her. Dido was shabbily dressed. Cleopatra was a gypsy girl. Helen and Hero were sluts and harlots. Thisbe might have had a blue eye or two, but that doesn't matter. Signor Romeo, bonjour. There's a French greeting that matches your drooping French-style pants. You faked us out pretty good last night.

ROMEO
Good morning to you both. What do you mean I faked you out?

MERCUTIO
You gave us the slip, sir, the slip. Can't you understand what I'm saying?

ROMEO
Excuse me, good Mercutio. I had very important business to take care of. It was so important that I had to forget about courtesy and good manners.

MERCUTIO
In other words "important business" made you flex your buttocks.

ROMEO
You mean do a curtsy?

MERCUTIO
You've hit the target, sir.

ROMEO
That's a very polite and courteous explanation.

MERCUTIO
Yes, I am the pink flower—the master, of courtesy and manners.

ROMEO
The pink flower.
Act 2, Scene 4, Page 4

ROMEO
Why, then is my pump well flowered.

MERCUTIO
30 Sure wit, follow me this jest now till thou hast worn out thy pump, that when the single sole of it is worn, the jest may remain, after the wearing solely singular.

ROMEO
O single-soled jest, solely singular for the singleness.

MERCUTIO
Come between us, good Benvolio. My wits faints.

ROMEO
Switch and spurs, switch and spurs, or I'll cry a match.

MERCUTIO
Nay, if our wits run the wild-goose chase, I am done, for thou hast more of the wild-goose in one of thy wits than, I am sure, I have in my whole five. Was I with you there for the goose?

ROMEO
35 Thou wast never with me for anything when thou wast not there for the goose.

MERCUTIO
I will bite thee by the ear for that jest.

ROMEO
Nay, good goose, bite not.

MERCUTIO
Thy wit is a very bitter sweeting. It is a most sharp sauce.

ROMEO
And is it not well served into a sweet goose?

MERCUTIO
40 Oh, here's a wit of cheveril, that stretches from an inch narrow to an ell broad!

Act 2, Scene 4, Page 5

ROMEO
I stretch it out for that word "broad," which, added to the goose, proves thee far and wide a broad goose.

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 driveling love is like a great natural that runs...
lolling up and down to hide his bauble in a hole.

BENVOLIO
Stop there, stop there.

MERCUTIO
Thou desirest me to stop in my tale against the hair.

BENVOLIO
Thou wouldst else have made thy tale large.

MERCUTIO
Oh, thou art deceived. I would have made it short, for I was come to the whole depth of my tale, and meant, indeed, to occupy the argument no longer.

Enter NURSE and her man PETER

ROMEO
Here’s goodly gear.

BENVOLIO
A sail, a sail!

MERCUTIO
Two, two—a shirt and a smock.

NURSE
50 Peter!

Act 2, Scene 4, Page 6

PETER
Anon!

NURSE
My fan, Peter.

MERCUTIO
Good, Peter, to hide her face, for her fan’s the fairer face.

NURSE
God ye good morrow, gentlemen.

MERCUTIO
55 God ye good e’en, fair gentlewoman.

NURSE
Is it good e’en?

MERCUTIO
’Tis no less, I tell you, for the bawdy hand of the dial is now upon the prick of noon.

NURSE
Out upon you! What a man are you?

MERCUTIO
One, gentlewoman, that God hath made, himself to mar.

NURSE
By my troth, it is well said. “For himself to mar,” quoth he? Gentlemen, can any of you tell me where I may find the young Romeo?

ROMEO
I can tell you, but young Romeo will be older when was like a blithering idiot who runs up and down looking for a hole to hide his toy in.

BENVOLIO
Stop there, stop there.

MERCUTIO
You want me to stop my tale before I’m done.

BENVOLIO
Otherwise your tale would have gotten too long.

MERCUTIO
Oh, you’re wrong. I would have made it short. I had come to the deepest part of my tale, and I planned to say nothing more on the topic.

The NURSE enters with her servant, PETER.

ROMEO
Here’s something good.

BENVOLIO
A sail, a sail!

MERCUTIO
There’s two—a man and a woman.

NURSE
Peter!
you have found him than he was when you sought him. I am the youngest of that name, for fault of a worse.

NURSE
You say well.

**Act 2, Scene 4, Page 7**

MERCUTIO
Yea, is the worst well? Very well took, i' faith, wisely, wisely.

NURSE
If you be he, sir, I desire some confidence with you.

BENVOLIO
She will indite him to some supper.

MERCUTIO
A bawd, a bawd, a bawd! So ho!

ROMEO
What hast thou found?

MERCUTIO
No hare, sir, unless a hare, sir, in a Lenten pie—that is, something stale and hoar ere it be spent.

(sings)
An old hare hoar,
And an old hare hoar,
Is very good meat in Lent.

But a hare that is hoar
Is too much for a score
When it hoars ere it be spent.

(speaks)
Romeo, will you come to your father's? We'll to dinner, thither.

ROMEO
I will follow you.

**Act 2, Scene 4, Page 8**

MERCUTIO
Farewell, ancient lady. Farewell, lady, lady, lady.

Exeunt MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO

NURSE
I pray you, sir, what saucy merchant was this that was so full of his ropery?

ROMEO
A gentleman, Nurse, that loves to hear himself talk, and will speak more in a minute than he will stand to in a month.

NURSE
An he speak any thing against me, I'll take him down, an he were lustier than he is, and twenty such Jacks.

MERCUTIO
Goodbye, old lady. Goodbye, lady, lady, lady.

BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO exit.

NURSE
Please tell me, sir, who was that foulmouthed punk who was so full of crude jokes?

ROMEO
Nurse, he's a man who likes to hear the sound of his own voice. He says more in one minute than he does in a whole month.

NURSE
If he says anything against me, I'll humble him, even if he were stronger than he is—and twenty
And if I cannot, I'll find those that shall. Scurvy knave! I am none of his flirt-gills. I am none of his skains-mates. (to PETER) And thou must stand by, too, and suffer every knave to use me at his pleasure?

PETER
I saw no man use you at his pleasure. If I had, my weapon should quickly have been out, I warrant you. I dare draw as soon as another man if I see occasion in a good quarrel and the law on my side.

NURSE
Now, afore God, I am so vexed that every part about me quivers. Scurvy knave! (to ROMEO) Pray you, sir, a word. And as I told you, my young lady bid me inquire you out. What she bade me say, I will keep to myself. But first let me tell ye, if ye should lead her into a fool’s paradise, as they say, it were a very gross kind of behavior, as they say. For the gentlewoman is young, and therefore, if you should deal double with her, truly it were an ill thing to be offered to any gentlewoman, and very weak dealing.

ROMEO
Nurse, commend me to thy lady and mistress. I protest unto thee—

NURSE
Good heart, and i’ faith, I will tell her as much. Lord, Lord, she will be a joyful woman.

ROMEO
What wilt thou tell her, Nurse? Thou dost not mark me.

NURSE
I will tell her, sir, that you do protest, which, as I take it, is a gentlemanlike offer.

ROMEO
Bid her devise

Some means to come to shrift this afternoon. And there she shall at Friar Lawrence’ cell Be shrived and married. (gives her coins) Here is for thy pains.

NURSE
No, truly, sir. Not a penny.

ROMEO
Go to. I say you shall.

NURSE
(takes the money) This afternoon, sir? Well, she shall be there.

ROMEO
And stay, good Nurse. Behind the abbey wall punks like him. If I can’t do it myself, I’ll find someone who can. That dirty rat! I’m not one of his sluts. I’m not one of his punk friends who carries a knife. (to PETER) And you just stand there letting every jerk make fun of me for kicks.

PETER
I didn’t see anybody use you for kicks. If I had seen something like that, I would have quickly pulled out my weapon. Believe me, I’ll draw my sword as quick as any other man if I see a fight starting and the law is on my side.

NURSE
Now, I swear, I’m so angry that I’m shaking all over. That rotten scoundrel! (to ROMEO) Now, please, may I have a word with you, sir? My young mistress asked me to find you. What she asked me to say I’ll keep to myself. But let me tell you this first. If you lead her into a fool’s paradise, as the saying goes, it would be an outrageous crime because the girl is so young. And if you try to trick her, it would be an evil thing to do to any woman and very poor behavior.

ROMEO
Nurse, give my regards to to your lady. I swear to you—

NURSE
You have a good heart, and believe me, I’ll tell her that. Lord, Lord, she’ll be a happy woman.

ROMEO
What are you going to tell her, Nurse? You’re not paying attention to me.

NURSE
Sir, I’ll tell her that you protest to her, which I think is the gentlemanly thing to do..

ROMEO
Tell her to devise a plan to get out of her house and come to confession at the abbey this afternoon. At Friar Lawrence’s cell she can make confession and be married. (giving her coins) Here is a reward for your efforts.

NURSE
No, really, I won’t take a penny.

ROMEO
Go on, I insist you take it.

NURSE
(taking the money) This afternoon, sir? She’ll be there.

ROMEO
Wait good Nurse. Within an hour, one of my men
Within this hour my man shall be with thee
And bring thee cords made like a tackled stair,
Which to the high top-gallant of my joy
Must be my convoy in the secret night.
Farewell. Be trusty, and I’ll quit thy pains.
Farewell. Commend me to thy mistress.

will come to you behind the abbey wall and give you a rope ladder. I’ll use the rope ladder to climb over the walls at night. Then I’ll meet Juliet joyfully and in secret. Goodbye. Be honest and helpful, and I’ll repay you for your efforts. Goodbye. Sing my praises to your mistress.

Act 2, Scene 4, Page 10

**NURSE**
Now God in heaven bless thee! Hark you, sir.

**ROMEO**
What sayst thou, my dear Nurse?

**NURSE**
Is your man secret? Did you ne’er hear say, “Two may keep counsel, putting one away”?

**ROMEO**
Warrant thee, my man’s as true as steel.

**NURSE**
Well, sir, my mistress is the sweetest lady.—Lord, Lord! when ‘twas a little prating thing.—Oh, there is a nobleman in town, one Paris, that would fain lay knife aboard, but she, good soul, had as lief see a toad, a very toad, as see him. I anger her sometimes and tell her that Paris is the properer man. But, I’ll warrant you, when I say so, she looks as pale as any clout in the versal world. Doth not rosemary and Romeo begin both with a letter?

**ROMEO**
Ay, Nurse, what of that? Both with an R.

**NURSE**
Ah, mocker, that’s the dog’s name. R is for the—No, I know it begins with some other letter, and she hath the prettiest sententious of it, of you and rosemary, that it would do you good to hear it.

**ROMEO**
Commend me to thy lady.

**NURSE**
Ay, a thousand times.—Peter!

**PETER**
Anon!

**NURSE**
Before and apace.

**NURSE**
May God in heaven bless you. Now please listen, sir.

**ROMEO**
What do you have to say, my dear Nurse?

**NURSE**
Can your man keep a secret? Haven’t you ever heard the saying, “Two can conspir to put one away”?

**ROMEO**
I assure you, my man is as true as steel.

**NURSE**
Well, sir, my mistress is the sweetest lady. Lord, Lord, when she was a little baby—Oh, there is one nobleman in the city, a guy named Paris, who would be happy to claim her as his own. Juliet would rather look at a toad than at him. I make her angry sometimes by saying that Paris is more handsome than you are. But when I say so, I swear she turns white as a sheet. Don’t “rosemary” and “Romeo” begin with the same letter?

**ROMEO**
Yes, Nurse, what about that? They both begin with the letter “R.”

**NURSE**
Ah, you jokester—that’s the dog’s name. “R” is for the—no, I know it begins with another letter. She says the most beautiful things about you and rosemary. It would be good for you to hear the things she says.

**ROMEO**
Give my compliments to your lady.

**NURSE**
Yes, a thousand times. Peter!

**PETER**
I’m ready.

**NURSE**
(going PETER her fan) Go ahead. Go quickly.

Exeunt

They all exit.
Enter JULIET

JULIET
The clock struck nine when I did send the Nurse.
In half an hour she promised to return.
Perchance she cannot meet him. That’s not so.
Oh, she is lame! Love’s heralds should be thoughts,
Which ten times faster glide than the sun’s beams,
Driving back shadows over louring hills.
Therefore do nimble-pinioned doves draw love
And therefore hath the wind-swift Cupid wings.
Now is the sun upon the highmost hill
Of this day’s journey, and from nine till twelve
Is three long hours, yet she is not come.
Had she affections and warm youthful blood,
She would be as swift in motion as a ball.
My words would bandy her to my sweet love,
And his to me.
But old folks, many feign as they were dead,
Unwieldy, slow, heavy, and pale as lead.

Enter NURSE and PETER

NURSE
I am aweary. Give me leave awhile.
Fie, how my bones ache! What a jaunt have I!

JULIET
I would thou hadst my bones and I thy news.
Nay, come, I pray thee, speak. Good, good Nurse, speak.

NURSE
Jesu, what haste! Can you not stay awhile?

JULIET
How art thou out of breath when thou hast breath
To say to me that thou art out of breath?
The excuse that thou dost make in this delay
Is longer than the tale thou dost excuse.

NURSE
Do you not see that I am out of breath?

JULIET
How can you be out of breath when you have
enough breath to tell me that you’re out of
breath? The excuse you make to delay the news
is longer than the news itself. Is the news good or
bad? Answer that question. Tell me if it’s good or
Original Text

Say either, and I'll stay the circumstance. Let me be satisfied. Is 't good or bad?

NURSE
Well, you have made a simple choice. You know not how to choose a man. Romeo! No, not he, though his face be better than any man's, yet his leg excels all men's, and for a hand and a foot and a body, though they be not to be talked on, yet they are past compare. He is not the flower of courtesy, but, I'll warrant him, as gentle as a lamb. Go thy ways, wench. Serve God. What, have you dined at home?

JULIET
No, no. But all this did I know before.

What says he of our marriage? What of that?

NURSE
Lord, how my head aches! What a head have I! It beats as it would fall in twenty pieces. My back a' t' other side. Ah, my back, my back! Beshrew your heart for sending me about,

To catch my death with jaunting up and down!

Act 2, Scene 5, Page 3

JULIET
I' faith, I am sorry that thou art not well. Sweet, sweet, sweet Nurse, tell me, what says my love?

NURSE
Your love says, like an honest gentleman, and a courteous, and a kind, and a handsome, and, I warrant, a virtuous— Where is your mother?

JULIET
Where is my mother? Why, she is within. Where should she be? How oddly thou repliest! "Your love says, like an honest gentleman, 'Where is your mother?'"

NURSE
O God's lady dear,

Are you so hot? Marry, come up, I trow. Is this the poultice for my aching bones? Henceforward do your messages yourself.

JULIET
Here's such a coil. Come, what says Romeo?

NURSE
Have you got leave to go to shrift today?

JULIET
I have.

NURSE
Modern Text

bad, and I'll wait for the details. Tell me so I can be satisfied. Is it good or bad?

NURSE
Well, you have made a foolish choice. You don’t know how to pick a man. Romeo? No, not him, though his face is more handsome than any man’s, and his legs are prettier, and as for his hands and feet and body, they’re not much to speak of, and yet they’re beyond compare. He’s not the most polite man in the world, but, believe me, he’s gentle as a lamb. Well, do what you want. Be good. Have you had lunch yet?

JULIET
No, I haven’t had lunch. Everything you told me I already knew. What does he say about our marriage? What about that?

NURSE
Lord, what a headache I’ve got! My head is pounding. It feels like it’ll break into twenty pieces. My back aches too—(JULIET rubs her back) Ooh, on the other side—ah, my poor aching back! Curse your heart for sending me running all over town. I could get sick and die.

JULIET
Believe me, I’m sorry you’re in pain. Sweet, sweet, sweet Nurse, tell me, what did my love Romeo say?

NURSE
Your love says, like an honorable gentleman, who is courteous, kind, handsome, and, I believe, virtuous— where is your mother?

JULIET
Where is my mother? Why, she’s inside. Where else would she be? Your answer is so strange! "Your love says, like an honorable gentleman, ‘Where is your mother?’”

NURSE
Oh holy Mary, mother of God! Are you this impatient? Come on, you’re being ridiculous! Is this the cure for my aching bones? From now on, take care of your messages yourself.

JULIET
You’re making such a fuss. Come on, what did Romeo say?

NURSE
Do you have permission to go out and take confession today?

JULIET
I do.

NURSE
Original Text

Then hie you hence to Friar Lawrence’s cell.
There stays a husband to make you a wife.
Now comes the wanton blood up in your cheeks.
They’ll be in scarlet straight at any news.

Hie you to church. I must another way
To fetch a ladder, by the which your love
Must climb a bird’s nest soon when it is dark.
I am the drudge and toil in your delight,
But you shall bear the burden soon at night.

Go. I’ll to dinner. Hie you to the cell.

Modern Text

Then hurry up and rush over to Friar Lawrence’s cell. There’s a husband there who’s waiting to make you his wife. Now I see the blood rushing to your cheeks. You blush bright red as soon as you hear any news. Go to the church. I must go by a different path to get a rope ladder. Your love will use it to climb up to your window while it’s dark. I do the drudge work for your pleasure. But soon you’ll be doing a wife’s work all night long. Go. I’ll go to lunch. You go to Friar Lawrence’s cell.

Act 2, Scene 5, Page 4

JULIET
Hie to high fortune! Honest Nurse, farewell.

Exeunt

They exit.

Act 2, Scene 6

Enter FRIAR LAWRENCE and ROMEO

FRIAR LAWRENCE
So smile the heavens upon this holy act
That after-hours with sorrow chide us not.

ROMEO
Amen, amen. But come what sorrow can,
It cannot countervail the exchange of joy

That one short minute gives me in her sight.
Do thou but close our hands with holy words,
Then love-devouring death do what he dare;
It is enough I may but call her mine.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
These violent delights have violent ends
And in their triumph die, like fire and powder,
Which, as they kiss, consume. The sweetest honey
Is loathsome in his own deliciousness
And in the taste confounds the appetite.
Therefore love moderately. Long love doth so.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
May the heavens be happy with this holy act of marriage, so nothing unfortunate happens later to make us regret it.

ROMEO
Amen, amen. But whatever misfortunes occur, they can’t ruin the joy I feel with one look at her. All you have to do is join our hands with holy words, then love-destroying death can do whatever it pleases. It’s enough for me if I can call her mine.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
These sudden joys have sudden endings. They burn up in victory like fire and gunpowder. When they meet, as in a kiss, they explode. Too much honey is delicious, but it makes you sick to your stomach. Therefore, love each other in moderation. That is the key to long-lasting love. Too fast is as bad as too slow.

JULIET enters in a rush and embraces ROMEO.

Here comes the lady. Oh, so light a foot
Will ne’er wear out the everlasting flint.
A lover may bestride the gossamers
That idles in the wanton summer air,
And yet not fall. So light is vanity.

JULIET
Good even to my ghostly confessor.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
Romeo shall thank thee, daughter, for us both.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
Here comes the lady. Oh,a footstep as light as hers will never endure the rocky road of life. Lovers are so light they can walk on a spiderweb floating on a summer breeze, and yet not fall. That’s how flimsy and unreal pleasure is.

JULIET
Good evening, my spiritual confessor.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
Romeo will thank you, my girl, for both of us.
JULIET
As much to him, else is his thanks too much.

ROMEO
Ah, Juliet, if the measure of thy joy

25 Be heaped like mine, and that thy skill be more
To blazon it, then sweeten with thy breath
This neighbor 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,
Brag 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.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
Come, come with me, and we will make short work.
For, by your leaves, you shall not stay alone
Till holy church incorporate two in one.

Exeunt

Act 3, Scene 1

Enter MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO, Mercutio's PAGE, and others

BENVOLIO
I pray thee, good Mercutio, let's retire.
The day is hot; the Capulets, abroad;
And if we meet we shall not 'scape a brawl,
For now, these hot days, is the mad blood stirring.

MERCUTIO
Thou art like one of those fellows that, when he enters
the confines of a tavern, claps me his sword upon the
table and says “God send me no need of thee!” and,
by the operation of the second cup, draws it on the
drawer when indeed there is no need.

BENVOLIO
Am I like such a fellow?

MERCUTIO
Come, come, thou art as hot a Jack in thy mood as
any in Italy, and as soon moved to be moody, and as
soon moody to be moved.

BENVOLIO
And what to?

MERCUTIO
Nay, an there were two such, we should have none
shortly, for one would kill the other. Thou, why, thou
wilt quarrel with a man that hath a hair more or a hair
less in his beard than thou hast. Thou wilt quarrel with
a man for cracking nuts, having no other reason but

MERCUTIO, his page, and BENVOLIO enter with
other men.

BENVOLIO
I'm begging you, good Mercutio, let's call it a day.
It's hot outside, and the Capulets are wandering
around. If we bump into them, we'll certainly get
into a fight. When it's hot outside, people become
angry and hot-blooded.

MERCUTIO
You're like one of those guys who walks into a
bar, slams his sword on the table, and then says,
“I pray I never have to use you.” By the time he
orders his second drink, he pulls his sword on the
bartender for no reason at all.

BENVOLIO
Am I really like one of those guys?

MERCUTIO
Come on, you can be as angry as any guy in Italy
when you're in the mood. When someone does
the smallest thing to make you angry, you get
angry. And when you're in the mood to get angry,
you find something to get angry about.

BENVOLIO
And what about that?

MERCUTIO
If there were two men like you, pretty soon there'd
be none because the two of you would kill each
other. You would fight with a man if he had one
more whisker or one less whisker in his beard
than you have in your beard. You'll fight with a
Original Text

because thou hast hazel eyes. What eye but such an eye would spy out such a quarrel? Thy head is as full of quarrels as an egg is full of meat, and yet thy head hath been beaten as addle as an egg for quarreling. Thou hast quarreled with a man for coughing in the street because he hath wakened thy dog that hath lain asleep in the sun. Didst thou not fall out with a tailor for wearing his new doublet before Easter? With another, for tying his new shoes with old ribbon? And yet thou wilt tutor me from quarreling!

man who’s cracking nuts just because you have hazelnut-colored eyes. Only you would look for a fight like that. Your head is as full of fights as an egg is full of yolk, but your head has been beaten like scrambled eggs from so much fighting. You started a fight with a man who coughed in the street because he woke up a dog that was sleeping in the sun. Didn’t you argue it out with your tailor for wearing one of his new suits before the right season? And with another for tying the new shoes he made with old laces? And yet you’re the one who wants to teach me about restraint!

Modern Text

BENVOLIO

An I were so apt to quarrel as thou art, any man should buy the fee simple of my life for an hour and a quarter.

MERCUTIO

The fee simple? O simple!

Enter TYBALT, PETRUCHIO, and other CAPULETS

BENVOLIO

By my head, here comes the Capulets.

MERCUTIO

By my heel, I care not.

TYBALT

Follow me close, for I will speak to them.

Gentlemen, good e’en. A word with one of you.

MERCUTIO

And but one word with one of us? Couple it with something. Make it a word and a blow.

TYBALT

You shall find me apt enough to that, sir, an you will give me occasion.

MERCUTIO

Could you not take some occasion without giving?

TYBALT

Mercutio, thou consort’st with Romeo.

MERCUTIO

Consort? What, dost thou make us minstrels? An thou make minstrels of us, look to hear nothing but discords. Here’s my fiddlestick. Here’s that shall make you dance. Zounds, “conspire”!

Act 3, Scene 1, Page 3

MERCUTIO

“Hang out?” Who do you think we are, musicians in a band? If we look like musicians to you, you can expect to hear nothing but noise. (touching the blade of his sword) This is my fiddlestick. I’ll use it to make you dance. Goddammit—“Hang
**Original Text**

**BENVOLIO**
We talk here in the public haunt of men.
Either withdraw unto some private place,
And reason coldly of your grievances,
Or else depart. Here all eyes gaze on us.

**MERCUTIO**

25 Men's eyes were made to look and let them gaze.
I will not budge for no man's pleasure, I.

**Enter ROMEO**

**TYBALT**
Well, peace be with you, sir. Here comes my man.

**MERCUTIO**
But I'll be hanged, sir, if he wear your livery.
Marry, go before to field, he'll be your follower.

**TYBALT**
Romeo, the love I bear thee can afford
No better term than this: thou art a villain.

**ROMEO**
Tybalt, the reason that I have to love thee
Doth much excuse the appertaining rage
To such a greeting. Villain am I none.
Therefore, farewell. I see thou know'st me not.

**TYBALT**
Boy, this shall not excuse the injuries
That thou hast done me. Therefore turn and draw.

**Act 3, Scene 1, Page 4**

**ROMEO**
I do protest I never injured thee,
But love thee better than thou canst devise,
Till thou shalt know the reason of my love.
And so, good Capulet—which name I tender
As dearly as my own—be satisfied.

**MERCUTIO**
O calm dishonourable, vile submission!

45 *Alia stoccata carries it away.* (draws his sword)
Tybalt, you ratcatcher, will you walk?

**TYBALT**
What wouldst thou have with me?

**MERCUTIO**
Good King of Cats, nothing but one of your nine lives,
that I mean to make bold withal, and, as you shall
use me hereafter, dry-beat the rest of the eight. Will
you pluck your sword out of his pilcher by the ears?
Make haste, lest mine be about your ears ere it be
out.

**TYBALT**

**Modern Text**

**BENVOLIO**
We’re talking here in a public place. Either go
someplace private, or talk it over rationally, or
else just go away. Out here everybody can see us.

**MERCUTIO**
Men’s eyes were made to see things, so let them
watch. I won’t move to please anybody.

**ROMEO enters.**

**TYBALT**
Well, may peace be with you. Here comes my
man, the man I’m looking for.

**MERCUTIO**
He’s not your man. Alright, walk out into a field,
and he’ll chase you. In that sense you can call
him your “man.”

**TYBALT**
Romeo, there’s only one thing I can call you.
You’re a villain.

**ROMEO**
Tybalt, I have a reason to love you that lets me
put aside the rage I should feel and excuse that
insult. I am no villain. So, goodbye. I can tell that
you don’t know who I am.

**TYBALT**
Boy, your words can’t excuse the harm you’ve
done to me. So now turn and draw your sword.

**ROMEO**
I disagree. I’ve never done you harm. I love you
more than you can understand until you know the
reason why I love you. And so, good Capulet—
which is a name I love like my own name—you
should be satisfied with what I say.

**MERCUTIO**
This calm submission is dishonorable and vile.
The thrust of a sword will end this
surrender.(draws his sword)Tybalt, you rat-
catcher, will you go fight me?

**TYBALT**
What do you want from me?

**MERCUTIO**
Good King of Cats, I want to take one of your
nine lives. I’ll take one, and, depending on how
you treat me after that, I might beat the other
eight out of you too. Will you pull your sword out
of its sheath? Hurry up, or I’ll smack you on the
ears with my sword before you have yours drawn.

**TYBALT**
Original Text

I am for you. (draws his sword)

ROMEO

50 Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up.

MERCUTIO

Come, sir, your passado.

MERCUTIO and TYBALT fight

ROMEO (draws his sword) Draw, Benvolio. Beat down their weapons.

Gentlemen, for shame! Forbear this outrage.

Tybalt, Mercutio! The Prince expressly hath Forbidden bandying in Verona streets.

Hold, Tybalt! Good Mercutio!

Act 3, Scene 1, Page 5

ROMEO tries to break up the fight

TYBALT stabs MERCUTIO under ROMEO's arm

PETRUCHIO

Away, Tybalt.

Exeunt TYBALT, PETRUCHIO, and the other CAPULETS

MERCUTIO

I am hurt.

A plague o' both your houses! I am sped.

Is he gone and hath nothing?

BENVOLIO

What, art thou hurt?

MERCUTIO

Ay, ay, a scratch, a scratch. Marry, 'tis enough.

Where is my page?—Go, villain, fetch a surgeon.

Exit MERCUTIO'S PAGE

ROMEO

Courage, man. The hurt cannot be much.

MERCUTIO

No, 'tis not so deep as a well nor so wide as a church-door, but 'tis enough, 'twill serve. Ask for me tomorrow, and you shall find me a grave man. I am peppered, I warrant, for this world. A plague o' both your houses! Zounds, a dog, a rat, a mouse, a cat to scratch a man to death! A braggart, a rogue, a villain that fights by the book of arithmetic! Why the devil came you between us? I was hurt under your arm.

ROMEO

I thought all for the best.

Modern Text

I'll fight you. (he draws his sword)

ROMEO

Noble Mercutio, put your sword away.

MERCUTIO (to TYBALT) Come on, sir, perform your forward thrust, your passado.

MERCUTIO and TYBALT fight (drawing his sword) Draw your sword, Benvolio. Let's beat down their weapons. Gentlemen, stop this disgraceful fight. Tybalt, Mercutio, the Prince has banned fighting in the streets of Verona. Stop, Tybalt. Stop, good Mercutio.

ROMEO tries to break up the fight. TYBALT stabs MERCUTIO.

PETRUCHIO

Let's get away, Tybalt.

TYBALT, PETRUCHIO, and the other CAPULETS exit.

MERCUTIO

I've been hurt. May a plague curse both your families. I'm finished. Did he get away clean?

BENVOLIO

What are you hurt?

MERCUTIO

Yes, yes. It's a scratch, just a scratch. But it's enough. Where is my page? Go, boy. Get me a doctor.

MERCUTIO'S PAGE exits.

ROMEO

Have courage, man. The wound can't be that bad.

MERCUTIO

No, it's not as deep as a well, or as wide as a church door, but it's enough. It'll do the job. Ask for me tomorrow, and you'll find me in a grave. I'm done for in this world, I believe. May a plague strike both your houses. Goddammit! I can't believe that dog, that rat, that mouse, that cat could scratch me to death! That braggart, punk villain who fights like he learned swordsmanship from a manual! Why the hell did you come in between us? He struck me from under your arm.

ROMEO

I thought it was the right thing to do.
Act 3, Scene 1, Page 6

MERCUTIO
Help me into some house, Benvolio,
Or I shall faint. A plague o’ both your houses!
They have made worms’ meat of me. I have it,
And soundly too. Your houses!

MERCUITIO
Take me inside some house, Benvolio, or I'll pass out. May a plague strike both your families! They've turned me into food for worms. I'm done for. Curse your families!

Exeunt MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO

ROMEO
This gentleman, the Prince’s near ally,
My very friend, hath got his mortal hurt
In my behalf. My reputation stained
With Tybalt’s slander.—Tybalt, that an hour
Hath been my kinsman! O sweet Juliet,
Thy beauty hath made me effeminate
And in my temper softened valor’s steel!

MERCUITIO
This gentleman Mercutio, a close relative of the Prince and my dear friend, was killed while defending me from Tybalt’s slander—Tybalt, who had been my cousin for a whole hour! Oh, sweet Juliet, your beauty has made me weak like a woman, and you have softened my bravery, which before was as hard as steel.

Enter BENVOLIO

BENVOLIO
O Romeo, Romeo, brave Mercutio is dead!
That gallant spirit hath aspired the clouds,
Which too untimely here did scorn the earth.

MERCUITIO
Oh Romeo, Romeo, brave Mercutio is dead! His brave spirit has floated up to heaven, but it was too early for him to leave life on earth.

ROMEO
This day's black fate on more days doth depend.
This but begins the woe others must end.

MERCUITIO
The future will be affected by today's terrible events. Today is the start of a terror that will end in the days ahead.

Enter TYBALT

BENVOLIO
Here comes the furious Tybalt back again.

ROMEO
Alive in triumph—and Mercutio slain!
Away to heaven, respective lenity,
And fire-eyed fury be my conduct now.
Now, Tybalt, take the “villain” back again
That late thou gavest me, for Mercutio’s soul
Is but a little way above our heads,
Staying for thine to keep him company.
Either thou or I, or both, must go with him.

TYBALT
Wretched boy, you hung out with him here, and you're going to go to heaven with him.

ROMEO
This fight will decide who dies.

They fight. TYBALT falls

BENVOLIO
Romeo, away, be gone!

ROMEO
Oh, I am fortune’s fool!

TYBALT
They fight. TYBALT falls and dies

BENVOLIO
Romeo, get out of here. The citizens are around, and Tybalt is dead. Don't stand there shocked. The Prince will give you the death penalty if you get caught. So get out of here!

ROMEO
Oh, I have awful luck.
BENVOLIO
Why dost thou stay?

Exit ROMEO

The CITIZENS OF THE WATCH enter.

CITIZEN OF THE WATCH
Which way ran he that killed Mercutio?

CITIZEN OF THE WATCH
The man who killed Mercutio, which way did he go? Tybalt, that murderer, which way did he run?

BENVOLIO
Tybalt is lying over there.

CITIZEN OF THE WATCH
(to TYBALT) Up, sir, and come with me. I command you, by the authority of the Prince, to obey me.

Enter PRINCE, MONTAGUE, CAPULET, LADY MONTAGUE, LADY CAPULET, and OTHERS.

PRINCE
Where are the vile beginners of this fray?

BENVOLIO
O noble prince, I can discover all
The unlucky manage of this fatal brawl.
There lies the man, slain by young Romeo,
That slew thy kinsman, brave Mercutio.

LADY CAPULET
Tybalt, my cousin! O my brother's child!

PRINCE
Benvolio, who began this bloody fray?

BENVOLIO
Tybalt here slain, whom Romeo's hand did slay.

PRINCE
Benvolio, why did you begin this fight?

BENVOLIO
Tybalt started the fight before he was killed by Romeo. Romeo spoke to Tybalt politely and told him how silly this argument was. He mentioned that you would not approve of the fight. He said all of this gently and calmly, kneeling down out of respect. But he could not make peace with Tybalt, who was in an angry mood and wouldn't listen to talk about peace. Tybalt and Mercutio began to fight each other fiercely, lunging at one another and dodging each other's blows. Romeo cried out, "Stop, my friends. Break it up." Then he jumped in between them and forced them to put their swords down. But Tybalt reached under Romeo's arm and thrust his sword into brave Mercutio. Then Tybalt fled the scene.
And ‘twixt them rushes—underneath whose arm
An envious thrust from Tybalt hit the life
Of stout Mercutio, and then Tybalt fled.

But by and by comes back to Romeo,
Who had but newly entertained revenge,
And to ’t they go like lightning, for ere I
Could draw to part them was stout Tybalt slain.
And, as he fell, did Romeo turn and fly.
This is the truth, or let Benvolio die.

But pretty soon he came back to meet Romeo,
who was overcome with the desire for revenge.
As quick as lightning, they started fighting.
Before I could break up the fight, Tybalt was killed. Romeo ran away when Tybalt fell dead.
I’m telling you the truth, I swear on my life.

LADY CAPULET
He is a kinsman to the Montague.
Affection makes him false. He speaks not true.

Some twenty of them fought in this black strife,
And all those twenty could but kill one life.
I beg for justice, which thou, Prince, must give.
Romeo slew Tybalt. Romeo must not live.

PRINCE
Romeo slew him; he slew Mercutio.
Who now the price of his dear blood doth owe?

MONTAGUE
Not Romeo, Prince, he was Mercutio’s friend.
His fault concludes but what the law should end,
The life of Tybalt.

PRINCE
And for that offence
Immediately we do exile him hence.
I have an interest in your hearts’ proceeding.
My blood for your rude brawls doth lie a-bleeding.
But I’ll amerce you with so strong a fine
That you shall all repent the loss of mine.
I will be deaf to pleading and excuses.
Nor tears nor prayers shall purchase out abuses,
Therefore use none. Let Romeo hence in haste,
Else, when he’s found, that hour is his last.
Bear hence this body and attend our will.
Mercy but murders, pardoning those that kill.

Exeunt

JULIET enters alone.

I wish the sun would hurry up and set and night
would come immediately. When the night comes
and everyone goes to sleep, Romeo will leap into
my arms, and no one will know. Beauty makes it
possible for lovers to see how to make love in the
dark. Or else love is blind, and its best time is the
night. I wish night would come, like a widow
dressed in black, so I can learn how to submit to
Original Text

Lovers can see to do their amorous rites
By their own beauties, or, if love be blind,
10 It best agrees with night. Come, civil night,
Thou sober-suited matron, all in black,
And learn me how to lose a winning match
Played for a pair of stainless maidenhoods.

Hood my unmanned blood bating in my cheeks,
15 With thy black mantle, till strange love, grow 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 upon a raven's back.

Come, gentle night, come, loving, black-browed night,
Give me my Romeo. And when I shall die,
30 Not yet enjoyed. 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.

Act 3, Scene 2, Page 2

Enter NURSE with cords

Oh, here comes my Nurse, and she brings news. Every voice that mentions Romeo's name sounds beautiful. Now, Nurse, what's the news? Is that the rope ladder Romeo told you to pick up?

NURSE
Yes, yes, this is the rope ladder.

JULIET
Oh my, what's the news? Why do you look so upset?

NURSE
Oh, it's a sad day! He's dead. He's dead. We're ruined, lady, we're ruined! What an awful day! He's gone. He's been killed. He's dead!

JULIET
Can God be so jealous and hateful?

NURSE
Romeo is hateful, even though God isn't. Oh, Romeo, Romeo, who ever would have thought it would be Romeo?

JULIET
What devil art thou that dost torment me thus?
This torture should be roared in dismal hell.
Hath Romeo slain himself? Say thou but "ay,"
And that bare vowel / shall poison more
Than the death-darting eye of cockatrice.
I am not I if there be such an I,
Or those eyes shut that makes thee answer "ay."
If he be slain, say "ay," or if not, "no."
Brief sounds determine of my weal or woe.

NURSE
I saw the wound, I saw it with mine eyes—
God save the mark!—here on his manly breast.
A piteous corse, a bloody piteous corse.
Pale, pale as ashes, all bedaubed in blood,
All in gore blood. I swoonèd at the sight.

JULIET
O, break, my hear, poor bankrupt, break at once!
To prison, eyes, ne'er look on liberty.
Vile earth, to earth resign. End motion here,
And thou and Romeo press one heavy bier.

NURSE
O Tybalt, Tybalt, the best friend I had!
O courteous Tybalt! Honest gentleman!
That ever I should live to see thee dead.

JULIET
What storm is this that blows so contrary?
Is Romeo slaughtered, and is Tybalt dead?
My dearest cousin and my dearer lord?
Then, dreadful trumpet, sound the general doom!
For who is living if those two are gone?

NURSE
Tybalt is gone, and Romeo banishèd.
Romeo that killed him—he is banishèd.

JULIET
O God, did Romeo’s hand shed Tybalt’s blood?

NURSE
It did, it did. Alas the day, it did.

JULIET
O serpent heart hid with a flowering face!
Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave?
Beautiful tyrant! Fiend angelical!
Dove-feathered raven, wolvish-ravening lamb!
Despisèd substance of divinest show,
Just opposite to what thou justly seem’st.
A damnèd saint, an honorable villain!
O nature, what hadst thou to do in hell

What kind of devil are you to torture me like this?
This is as bad as the tortures of hell. Has Romeo killed himself? Just say “Yes” and I will turn more poisonous than the snake with the evil eye. I will no longer be myself if you tell me Romeo killed himself. If he’s been killed, say “Yes.” If not, say “No.” These short words will determine my joy or my pain.

NURSE
I saw the wound. I saw it with my own eyes. God bless that wound, here on his manly chest. A pitiful corpse, a bloody, pitiful corpse. Pale as ashes and drenched in blood. All the dried blood was so gory. I fainted when I saw it.

ACT 3, SCENE 2, PAGE 3

JULIET
Oh, my heart is breaking. Oh, my bankrupt heart is breaking. I’ll send my eyes to prison, and they’ll never be free to look at anything again. I’ll give my vile body back to the earth. I’ll never move again. My body and Romeo’s will lie together in one sad coffin.

NURSE
Oh, Tybalt, Tybalt, he was the best friend I had. Oh, polite Tybalt, he was an honorable gentleman. I wish I had not lived long enough to see him die.

JULIET
What disaster is this? Has Romeo been killed, and is Tybalt dead too? Tybalt was my dearest cousin. Romeo was even dearer to me as my husband. Let the trumpets play the song of doom, because who can be alive if those two are gone?

NURSE
Tybalt is dead, and Romeo has been banished. Romeo killed Tybalt, and his punishment was banishment.

JULIET
Oh God, did Romeo’s hand shed Tybalt’s blood?

NURSE
It did, it did. Curse the day this happened, but it did.

JULIET
Oh, he’s like a snake disguised as a flower. Did a dragon ever hide in such a beautiful cave? He’s a beautiful tyrant and a fiendish angel! He’s a raven with the feathers of the dove. He’s a lamb who hunts like a wolf! I hate him, yet he seemed the most wonderful man. He’s turned out to be the exact opposite of what he seemed. He’s a saint who should be damned. He’s a villain who
When thou didst bower the spirit of a fiend
In moral paradise of such sweet flesh?
Was ever book containing such vile matter
So fairly bound? Oh, that deceit should dwell
In such a gorgeous palace!

seemed honorable. Oh nature, what were you
doing in hell? Why did you put the soul of a
criminal in the perfect body of a man? Was there
ever such an evil book with such a beautiful
cover? Oh, I can’t believe the deepest evil lurked
inside something so beautiful!

NURSE
There’s no trust,
No faith, no honesty in men. All perjured,
All forsworn, all naught, all dissemblers.
Ah, where’s my man?—Give me some aqua vitae.—
These griefs, these woes, these sorrows make me
grown.
Shame come to Romeo!

JULIET
Blistered be thy tongue
For such a wish! He was not born to shame.
Upon his brow shame is ashamed to sit,
For ’tis a throne where honor may be crowned.
Sole monarch of the universal earth,
Oh, what a beast was I to chide at him!

NURSE
Will you speak well of him that killed your cousin?

JULIET
Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband?
Ah, poor my lord, what tongue shall smooth thy
name,
When I, thy three hours’ wife, have mangled it?
But wherefore, villain, didst thou kill my cousin?
That villain cousin would have killed my husband.
Back, foolish tears, back to your native spring.
Your tributary drops belong to woe,
Which you, mistaking, offer up to joy.
My husband lives, that Tybalt would have slain,
And Tybalt’s dead, that would have slain my
husband.

All this is comfort. Wherefore weep I then?
Some word there was, worse than Tybalt’s death,
That murdered me. I would forget it fain,
But oh, it presses to my memory,
Like damned guilty deeds to sinners’ minds.
“Tybalt is dead, and Romeo banishèd.”

That “banishèd,” that one word “banishèd”
Hath slain ten thousand Tybalts. Tybalt’s death
Was woe enough, if it had ended there.
Or, if sour woe delights in fellowship
And needly will be ranked with other griefs,
That banishment is worse than the murder of ten
thousand Tybalts. Tybalt’s death would be bad
enough if that was all. Maybe pain likes to have
company and can’t come without bringing more
pain. It would have been better if, after she said,
Why followed not, when she said “Tybalt’s dead,”
Thy father” or “thy mother,” nay, or both,
Which modern lamentations might have moved?
But with a rearward following Tybalt’s death,
“Romeo is banishèd.” To speak that word,
Is father, mother, Tybalt, Romeo, Juliet,
All slain, all dead. “Romeo is banishèd.”
There is no end, no limit, measure, bound,
In that word’s death. No words can that woe sound.
Where is my father and my mother, Nurse?
NURSE
Weeping and wailing over Tybalt’s corse.
Will you go to them? I will bring you thither.
JULIET
Wash they his wounds with tears? Mine shall be spent
When theirs are dry, for Romeo’s banishment.
Take up those cords.—Poor ropes, you are beguiled,
Both you and I, for Romeo is exiled.
He made you for a highway to my bed,
But I, a maid, die maiden-widowèd.
Come, cords.—Come, Nurse. I’ll to my wedding bed.
And death, not Romeo, take my maidenhead!
NURSE
Hie to your chamber. I’ll find Romeo
To comfort you. I wot well where he is.
Hark ye, your Romeo will be here at night.
I’ll to him. He is hid at Lawrence’ cell.
JULIET
(gives the NURSE a ring)
O, find him! Give this ring to my true knight,
And bid him come to take his last farewell.
Exeunt

Act 3, Scene 2, Page 6

Enter FRIAR LAWRENCE
FRIAR LAWRENCE enters.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
Romeo, come forth. Come forth, thou fearful man. Affliction is enamoured of thy parts, And thou art wedded to calamity.

Enter ROMEO

ROMEO
Father, what news? What is the Prince’s doom? What sorrow craves acquaintance at my hand That I yet know not?
FRIAR LAWRENCE
Too familiar

FRIAR LAWRENCE
Romeo, come out. Come out, you frightened man. Trouble likes you, and you’re married to disaster.

Enter ROMEO

ROMEO
Father, what’s the news? What punishment did the Prince announce? What suffering lies in store for me that I don’t know about yet?
FRIAR LAWRENCE
You know too much about suffering. I have news
Is my dear son with such sour company.
I bring thee tidings of the Prince’s doom.

ROMEO
What less than doomsday is the Prince’s doom?

FRIAR LAWRENCE
10 A gentler judgment vanished from his lips:
Not body’s death, but body’s banishment.

ROMEO
Ha, banishment! Be merciful, say “death,”
For exile hath more terror in his look,
Much more than death. Do not say “banishment.”

FRIAR LAWRENCE
15 Hence from Verona art thou banishèd.
Be patient, for the world is broad and wide.

ROMEO
There is no world without Verona walls
But purgatory, torture, hell itself.
Hence “banishèd” is banished from the world,
And world’s exile is death. Then “banishèd,”

Is death mistermed. Calling death “banishment,”
Thou cutt’st my head off with a golden ax
And smilest upon the stroke that murders me.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
O deadly sin! O rude unthankfulness!
25 Thy fault our law calls death, but the kind Prince,
Taking thy part, hath rushed aside the law,
And turned that black word “death” to “banishment.”
This is dear mercy, and thou seest it not.

ROMEO
’Tis torture and not mercy. Heaven is here,
Where Juliet lives, and every cat and dog
And little mouse, every unworthy thing,
Live here in heaven and may look on her,
But Romeo may not. More validity,
More honorable state, more courtship lives
In carrion flies than Romeo. They may seize
On the white wonder of dear Juliet’s hand
And steal immortal blessing from her lips,
Who even in pure and vestal modesty,
Still blush, as thinking their own kisses sin.

But Romeo may not. He is banishèd.
Flies may do this, but I from this must fly.
They are free men, but I am banishèd.
And sayst thou yet that exile is not death?
Hadst thou no poison mixed, no sharp-ground knife,
No sudden mean of death, though ne’er so mean,
But “banishèd” to kill me?—“Banishèd”!
O Friar, the damnèd use that word in hell.
Howling attends it. How hast thou the heart,
Being a divine, a ghostly confessor,
A sin-absolver, and my friend professed,
To mangle me with that word “banishèd”?

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**
Thou fond mad man, hear me a little speak.

**Act 3, Scene 3, Page 3**

**ROMEO**
Oh, thou wilt speak again of banishment.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**
I'll give thee armor to keep off that word—
Adversity’s sweet milk, philosophy—
To comfort thee though thou art banishèd.

**ROMEO**
Yet “banishèd”? Hang up philosophy!
Unless philosophy can make a Juliet,
Displant a town, reverse a prince’s doom,
It helps not, it prevails not. Talk no more.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**
Oh, then I see that madmen have no ears.
How should they, when that wise men have no eyes?
Let me dispute with thee of thy estate.
Thou canst not speak of that thou dost not feel.
An hour but married, Tybalt murderèd,
Doting like me, and like me banishèd,
Then mightst thou speak, then mightst thou tear thy hair
And fall upon the ground, as I do now,
Taking the measure of an unmade grave.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**
Arise. One knocks. Good Romeo, hide thyself.

**ROMEO**
Not I, unless the breath of heartsick groans,
Mistlike, infold me from the search of eyes.

**Modern Text**
word banishment to describe hell. They howl about banishment. If you’re a member of a divine spiritual order of men who forgive sins, and you say you’re my friend, how do you have the heart to mangle me with the word banishment?

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**
You foolish madman, listen to me for a moment.

**Act 3, Scene 3, Page 4**

**ROMEO**
You’re just going to talk about banishment again.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**
I'll give you protection from that word. I'll give you the antidote for trouble: philosophy. Philosophy will comfort you even though you’ve been banished.

**ROMEO**
You’re still talking about “banished?” Forget about philosophy! Unless philosophy can create a Juliet, or pick up a town and put it somewhere else, or reverse a prince’s punishment, it doesn’t do me any good. Don’t say anything else.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**
Oh, so madmen like you are also deaf.
How should madmen hear, if wise men can’t even see?

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**
Let me talk to you about your situation.

**ROMEO**
You can’t talk about something that you don’t feel. If you were as young as I am, if you were in love with Juliet, if you had just married her an hour ago, if then you murdered Tybalt, if you were lovesick like me, and if you were banished, then you might talk about it. You might also tear your hair out of your head and collapse to the ground the way I do right now. (ROMEO falls on the ground) You might kneel down and measure the grave that hasn’t yet been dug.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**
Get up. Somebody’s knocking. Hide yourself, good Romeo.
Knocking

FRIAR LAWRENCE
Hark, how they knock!—Who’s there?—Romeo, arise.
Thou wilt be taken.—Stay awhile.—Stand up.

Knocking

FRIAR LAWRENCE
Listen, they’re still knocking!—(to the person at the door) Who’s there?—(to ROMEO) Romeo, get up. They’ll arrest you.—(to the person at the door) Hold on a moment.—(to ROMEO) Get up.

Knocking

Run to my study.—By and by!—God’s will, What simpleness is this!—I come, I come.

Who knocks so hard? Whence come you? What’s your will?

NURSE
(from within) Let me come in, and you shall know my errand.
I come from Lady Juliet.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
(opening the door) Welcome then.

Enter NURSE

NURSE
O holy Friar, O, tell me, holy Friar, Where is my lady’s lord? Where’s Romeo?

Oh, he is even in my mistress’ case,
Just in her case. O woeful sympathy, Piteous predicament! Even so lies she, Blubbering and weeping, weeping and blubbering. Stand up, stand up. Stand, an you be a man. For Juliet’s sake, for her sake, rise and stand.

Why should you fall into so deep an O?

ROMEO
Nurse!

NURSE
Ah sir, ah sir. Death’s the end of all.

ROMEO
Spakest thou of Juliet? How is it with her? Doth she not think me an old murderer,
Now I have stained the childhood of our joy With blood removed but little from her own? Where is she? And how doth she? And what says My concealed lady to our canceled love?

NURSE
Oh, she says nothing, sir, but weeps and weeps,

from people’s searching eyes.
100 And now falls on her bed, and then starts up,  
And “Tybalt” calls, and then on Romeo cries,  
And then down falls again.  

ROMEO  
As if that name,  
Shot from the deadly level of a gun,  
Did murder her, as that name’s cursed hand  
Murdered her kinsman. O, tell me, Friar, tell me,  
In what vile part of this anatomy  
Doth my name lodge? Tell me, that I may sack  
The hateful mansion. (draws his dagger)  

110 Thy tears are womanish. Thy wild acts denote  
The unreasonable fury of a beast.  
Unseemly woman in a seeming man,  
And ill-beseeming beast in seeming both!  
Thou hast amazed me. By my holy order,  
I thought thy disposition better tempered.  
Hast thou slain Tybalt? Wilt thou slay thyself,  
And slay thy lady that in thy life lives  
By doing damnèd hate upon thyself?  
Why rail’st thou on thy birth, the heaven, and earth?  
Since birth and heaven and earth, all three do meet  
In thee at once, which thou at once wouldst lose?  
Fie, fie, thou shamest thy shape, thy love, thy wit,  
Which, like a usurer, abound’st in all  
And usest none in that true use indeed  
Thy noble shape is but a form of wax,  
Digressing from the valor of a man;  
Thy dear love sworn but hollow perjury,  
Killing that love which thou hast vowed to cherish;  
Thy wit, that ornament to shape and love,  
Misshapsen in the conduct of both them,  
Like powder in a skill-less soldier’s flask,  
Is set afire by thine own ignorance;  
And thou dismembered with thine own defence.  

130 Thy rouse thee, man! Thy Juliet is alive,  
For whose dear sake thou wast but lately dead—  
There art thou happy. Tybalt would kill thee,  
But thou slew’st Tybalt—there art thou happy.  
The law that threatened death becomes thy friend  
And turns it to exile—there art thou happy.  
A pack of blessings light upon thy back,  
Happiness courts thee in her best array,  

Act 3, Scene 3, Page 7  
But, like a misbehaved and sullen wench,  
But like a misbehaved, sullen girl, you’re whining
Thou pout'st upon thy fortune and thy love.
Take heed, take heed, for such die miserable.
Go, get thee to thy love, as was decreed.
Ascend her chamber, hence, and comfort her.
But look thou stay not till the watch be set,
For then thou canst not pass to Mantua,
Where thou shalt live, till we can find a time
to blaze your marriage, reconcile your friends,
Beg pardon of the Prince, and call thee back
With twenty thousand times more joy
Than thou went'st forth in lamentation.—
Go before, Nurse. Commend me to thy lady,
And bid her hasten all the house to bed,
Which heavy sorrow makes them apt unto.
Romeo is coming.

NURSE
O Lord, I could have stayed here all the night
To hear good counsel. Oh, what learning is!
My lord, I'll tell my lady you will come.

ROMEO
Do so, and bid my sweet prepare to chide.

NURSE
Here, sir, a ring she bid me give you, sir.
Hie you, make haste, for it grows very late.

Exit NURSE

ROMEO
How well my comfort is revived by this!

FRIAR LAWRENCE
Go hence. Good night. And here stands all your state:
Either be gone before the watch be set,
Or by the break of day disguised from hence.
Sojourn in Mantua. I'll find out your man,
And he shall signify from time to time
Every good hap to you that chances here.
Give me thy hand. 'Tis late. Farewell, good night.

ROMEO
But that a joy past joy calls out on me,
It were a grief so brief to part with thee.
Farewell.

Exeunt

Act 3, Scene 4

Enter CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, and PARIS
CAPULET
Things have fall'n out, sir, so unluckily,

Enter CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, and PARIS
CAPULET
Things have turned out so unluckily, sir, that we
That we have had no time to move our daughter. Look you, she loved her kinsman Tybalt dearly, And so did I. Well, we were born to die. 

'Tis very late. She'll not come down tonight. I promise you, but for your company, I would have been abed an hour ago.

PARIS
These times of woe afford no time to woo. Madam, good night. Commend me to your daughter.

LADY CAPULET
I will, and know her mind early tomorrow. Tonight she is mewed up to her heaviness.

CAPULET
Sir Paris, I will make a desperate tender Of my child's love. I think she will be ruled In all respects by me. Nay, more, I doubt it not.— Wife, go you to her ere you go to bed. Acquaint her here of my son Paris' love, And bid her, mark you me, on Wednesday next— But, soft! What day is this?

PARIS
My lord, I would that Thursday were tomorrow.

CAPULET
Well get you gone. O' Thursday be it, then.— Go you to Juliet ere you go to bed. Prepare her, wife, against this wedding day.— Farewell, my lord.—Light to my chamber, ho!

Act 3, Scene 4, Page 2

PARIS
My lord, I wish Thursday were tomorrow.

CAPULET
Well go on home. Thursday it is, then. (to LADY CAPULET) Visit Juliet before you go to bed. Get her ready, my wife, for this wedding day. (to PARIS) Farewell, my lord. Now I'm off to bed. Oh my! It's so late that we might as well call it early. Good night.

Act 3, Scene 5

Exeunt

They all exit.
Enter ROMEO and JULIET aloft

ROMEO and JULIET enter above the stage.

ROMEO
It was the lark, the bird that sings at dawn, not the nightingale. Look, my love, what are those streaks of light in the clouds parting in the east? Night is over, and day is coming. If I want to live, I must go. If I stay, I'll die.

JULIET
Are you going? It's still a long time until daybreak. Don't be afraid. That sound you heard was the nightingale, not the lark. Every night the nightingale chirps on that pomegranate-tree. Believe me, my love, it was the nightingale.

ROMEO
Let me be captured. Let me be put to death. I am content, if that's the way you want it. I'll say it's the reflection of the moon. I'll say that sound isn't the lark ringing in the sky. I want to stay more than I want to go. Come, death, and welcome! Juliet wants it this way. How are you, my love? Let's talk. It's not daylight.

JULIET
Yon light is not daylight, I know it. It's some meteor coming out of the sun to light your way to Mantua. So stay for a while. You don't have to go yet.

ROMEO
Let me be taken. Let me be put to death. I am content, so thou wilt have it so.

JULIET
It is, it is. Hie hence! Be gone, away! It is the lark that sings so out of tune, making such harsh noise. Some say the lark makes a sweet division between day and night. It's not true because she separates us. Some say the lark traded its eyes with the toad. Oh, now I wish they had traded voices too! Because the lark's voice tears us out of each other's arms, and now there will be men hunting for you. Oh, go away now. I see more and more light.

ROMEO
More and more light. More and more pain for us.

NURSE
Madam.

JULIET
Nurse?

NURSE
Your lady mother is coming to your chamber.

Act 3, Scene 5, Page 2

JULIET
It is, it is. Hie hence! Be gone, away! It is the lark that sings so out of tune, Straining harsh discords and unpleasing sharps. Some say the lark makes sweet division.

ROMEO
More light and light, more dark and dark our woes!

JULIET
It is, it is. Get out of here, be gone, go away! It's the lark that sings so out of tune, making such harsh noise. Some say the lark makes a sweet division between day and night. It's not true because she separates us. Some say the lark traded its eyes with the toad. Oh, now I wish they had traded voices too! Because the lark's voice tears us out of each other's arms, and now there will be men hunting for you. Oh, go away now. I see more and more light.

ROMEO
More and more light. More and more pain for us.

NURSE
Madam.

JULIET
Nurse?

NURSE
Your mother is coming to your bedroom. Day has
Original Text

40 The day is broke. Be wary, look about.  

Exit NURSE

JULIET  
Then, window, let day in and let life out.

ROMEO  
Farewell, farewell. One kiss, and I’ll descend.

Kiss. ROMEO goes down

Act 3, Scene 5, Page 3

JULIET  
Art thou gone so, love, lord? Ay, husband, friend,  
I must hear from thee every day in the hour,  
For in a minute there are many days.  
Oh, by this count I shall be much in years  
Ere I again behold my Romeo.

ROMEO  
Farewell! I will omit no opportunity  
That may convey my greetings, love, to thee.

JULIET  
Oh, think’st thou we shall ever meet again?

ROMEO  
I doubt it not, and all these woes shall serve  
For sweet discourses in our time to come.

JULIET  
O God, I have an ill-divining soul.  
Methinks I see thee now, thou art so low  
As one dead in the bottom of a tomb.  
Either my eyesight fails, or thou look’st pale.

ROMEO  
And trust me, love, in my eye so do you.  
Dry sorrow drinks our blood. Adieu, adieu!

Exit ROMEO

JULIET  
O fortune, fortune! All men call thee fickle.  
If thou art fickle, what dost thou with him  
That is renowned for faith? Be fickle, fortune,  
For then, I hope, thou wilt not keep him long,  
But send him back.

LADY CAPULET  
(from within) Ho, daughter, are you up?

Act 3, Scene 5, Page 4

JULIET  
Who is ’t that calls? Is it my lady mother?  
Is she not down so late or up so early?
What unaccustomed cause procures her hither? reason could she have for coming here?

Enter LADY CAPULET

LADY CAPULET
Why, how now, Juliet?

JULIET
Madam, I am not well.

LADY CAPULET
Evermore weeping for your cousin’s death? Will you cry about your cousin’s death forever?

What, wilt thou wash him from his grave with tears? Are you trying to wash him out of his grave with tears? If you could, you couldn’t bring him back to life. So stop crying. A little bit of grief shows a lot of love. But too much grief makes you look stupid.

JULIET
Let me keep weeping for such a great loss.

LADY CAPULET
You will feel the loss, but the man you weep for will feel nothing.

Feeling the loss like this, I can’t help but weep for him forever.

LADY CAPULET
Well, girl, you’re weeping not for his death as much as for the fact that the villain who killed him is still alive.

JULIET
What villain, madam?

LADY CAPULET
That same villain, Romeo.

That villain, Romeo.

JULIET
(aside) Villain and he be many miles asunder.

Villain and he be many miles asunder.

JULIET
God pardon him! I do, with all my heart, And yet no man like he doth grieve my heart.

JULIET
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!

JULIET
We will have vengeance for it, fear thou not. Then weep no more. I’ll send to one in Mantua, Where that same banished runagate doth live, Shall give him such an unaccustomed dram That he shall soon keep Tybalt company. And then, I hope, thou wilt be satisfied.

LADY CAPULET
That villain, Romeo.
**Act 3, Scene 5, Page 6**

**LADY CAPULET**

Well, well, thou hast a careful father, child. One who, to put thee from thy heaviness, Hath sorted out a sudden day of joy.

**JULIET**

And joy comes well in such a needy time. What are they, beseech your ladyship?

**LADY CAPULET**

That thou expect'st not, nor I looked not for.

**JULIET**

Madam, in happy time, what day is that?

**LADY CAPULET**

Marry, my child, early next Thursday morn, The gallant, young, and noble gentleman, The County Paris, at Saint Peter's Church, Shall happily make thee there a joyful bride.

**JULIET**

Now, by Saint Peter's Church and Peter too, He shall not make me there a joyful bride. I wonder at this haste, that I must wed Ere he, that should be husband, comes to woo. I pray you, tell my lord and father, madam, I will not marry yet. And when I do, I swear It shall be Romeo, whom you know I hate, Rather than Paris. These are news indeed!

**LADY CAPULET**

Here comes your father. Tell him so yourself, And see how he will take it at your hands. Enter CAPULET and NURSE

**CAPULET**

When the sun sets the air doth drizzle dew, But for the sunset of my brother's son It rains downright. How now? A conduit, girl? What, still in tears, Evermore showering? In one little body Thou counterfeit'st a bark, a sea, a wind, For still thy eyes, which I may call the sea, Do ebb and flow with tears. The bark thy body is,
Original Text

Sailing in this salt flood. The winds thy sighs, Who, raging with thy tears, and they with them, Without a sudden calm will overset Thy tempest-tossed body.—How now, wife? Have you delivered to her our decree?

Modern Text

The winds are your sighs. Your sighs and your tears are raging. Unless you calm down, tears and sighs will overwhelm your body and sink your ship. So where do things stand, wife? Have you told her our decision?

Act 3, Scene 5, Page 7

LADY CAPULET
Ay, sir, but she will none, she gives you thanks.

CAPULET
Soft, take me with you, take me with you, wife. How, will she none? Doth she not give us thanks? Is she not proud? Doth she not count her blessed, Unworthy as she is, that we have wrought So worthy a gentleman to be her bride?

JULIET
Not proud you have, but thankful that you have. Proud can I never be of what I hate, But thankful even for hate that is meant love.

CAPULET
How, how, how, how? Chopped logic! What is this? “Proud,” and “I thank you,” and “I thank you not,” And yet “not proud”? Mistress minion you, Thank me no thankings, nor proud me no prouds, But fettle your fine joints ’gainst Thursday next To go with Paris to Saint Peter’s Church, Or I will drag thee on a hurdle thither. Out, you green sickness, carrion! Out, you baggage! You tallow face!

LADY CAPULET
Fie, fie! What, are you mad?

JULIET
Good Father, I beseech you on my knees, Hear me with patience but to speak a word.

Act 3, Scene 5, Page 8

CAPULET
Hang thee, young baggage! Disobedient wretch! I tell thee what: get thee to church o’ Thursday, Or never after look me in the face. Speak not. Reply not. Do not answer me. My fingers itch.—Wife, we scarce thought us blest That God had lent us but this only child, But now I see this one is one too much And that we have a curse in having her. Out on her, hilding!

CAPULET
Forget about you, you worthless girl! You disobedient wretch! I’ll tell you what. Go to church on Thursday or never look me in the face again. Don’t say anything. Don’t reply. Don’t talk back to me. (JULIET rises) I feel like slapping you. Wife, we never thought ourselves blessed that God only gave us this one child. But now I see that this one is one too many. We were cursed when we had her.
Original Text

NURSE
God in heaven bless her!
You are to blame, my lord, to rate her so.

CAPULET
And why, my Lady Wisdom? Hold your tongue,
Good prudence. Smatter with your gossips, go.

NURSE
I speak no treason.

CAPULET
Oh, God 'i' good e'en.
Utter your gravity o'er a gossip's bowl,
For here we need it not.

LADY CAPULET
You are too hot.

CAPULET
God's bread! It makes me mad.
Day, night, hour, tide, time, work, play,
Alone, in company, still my care hath been
To have her matched. And having now provided
A gentleman of noble parentage,
Of fair demesnes, youthful, and nobly trained,
Stuffed, as they say, with honorable parts,
Proportioned as one's thought would wish a man—
And then to have a wretched puling fool,
A whining mammet, in her fortune's tender,
To answer "I'll not wed," "I cannot love;"
"I am too young," "I pray you, pardon me."—
But, an you will not wed, I'll pardon you.
Graze where you will, you shall not house with me.

JULIET
Is there no pity in the sky that can see my
sadness? Oh, my sweet mother, don't throw me
out! Delay this marriage for a month, or a week.
Or, if you do not, make the bridal bed

JULIET
Is there no pity in the sky that can see my
sadness? Oh, my sweet mother, don't throw me
out! Delay this marriage for a month, or a week.
Or, if you do not, make the bridal bed

Modern Text

disgusts me, the little hussy!

NURSE
God in heaven bless her! My lord, you're wrong
to berate her like that.

CAPULET
And why, wise lady? You shut up, old woman.
Go blabber with your gossiping friends.

NURSE
I've said nothing wrong.

CAPULET
Oh, for God's sake.

JULIET
Can't I say something?

CAPULET
Be quiet, you mumbling fool! Say your serious
things at lunch with your gossiping friends. We
don't need to hear it.

LADY CAPULET
You're getting too angry.

CAPULET
Goddammit! It makes me mad. Day and night,
hour after hour, all the time, at work, at play,
alone, in company, my top priority has always
been to find her a husband. Now I've provided a
husband from a noble family, who is good-
looking, young, well-educated. He's full of good
qualities.
He's the man of any girl's dreams. But this
wretched, whimpering fool, like a whining puppet,
she looks at this good fortune and answers, "I
won't get married. I can't fall in love. I'm too
young. Please, excuse me." Well, if you won't get
married, I'll excuse you. Eat wherever you want,
but you can no longer live under my roof.
Consider that. Think about it. I'm not in the habit
of joking. Thursday is coming. Put your hand on
your heart and listen to my advice. If you act like
my daughter, I'll marry you to my friend. If you
don't act like my daughter, you can beg, starve,
and die in the streets. I swear on my soul, I will
never take you back or do anything for you.
Believe me. Think about it. I won't break this
promise.

Act 3, Scene 5, Page 9

Exit CAPULET

CAPULET exits.

JULIET
Delay this marriage for a month, a week.
Or, if you do not, make the bridal bed
In that dim monument where Tybalt lies.

**LADY CAPULET**

Talk not to me, for I'll not speak a word.
Do as thou wilt, for I have done with thee.

**Exit LADY CAPULET**

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**JULIET**

O God!—O Nurse, how shall this be prevented?
My husband is on earth, my faith in heaven.
How shall that faith return again to earth,
Unless that husband send it me from heaven
By leaving earth? Comfort me. Counsel me.—

Alack, alack, that heaven should practice stratagems
Upon so soft a subject as myself.—

What sayst thou? Hast thou not a word of joy?
Some comfort, Nurse.

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**NURSE**

Faith, here it is.

Romeo is banishèd, and all the world to nothing
That he dares ne'er come back to challenge you.
Or, if he do, it needs must be by stealth.
Then, since the case so stands as now it doth,
I think it best you married with the county.
Oh, he's a lovely gentleman.

Romeo's a dishclout to him. An eagle, madam,
Hath not so green, so quick, so fair an eye
As Paris hath. Beshrew my very heart,
I think you are happy in this second match,
For it excels your first. Or if it did not,
Your first is dead, or 'twere as good he were,
As living here and you no use of him.

**JULIET**

Speakest thou from thy heart?

**NURSE**

And from my soul too, else beshrew them both.

**JULIET**

Amen!

**NURSE**

What?

**JULIET**

Well, thou hast comforted me marvelous much.
Go in, and tell my lady I am gone,
Having displeased my father, to Lawrence’s cell
To make confession and to be absolved.

**NURSE**

Marry, I will, and this is wisely done.

**Exit NURSE**

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**NURSE**

This is what I have to say: Romeo has been banished. And it's a sure thing that he will never come back to challenge you. If he does come back, he'll have to sneak back undercover. Then, since things are the way they are, I think the best thing to do is to marry the count. Oh, he's a lovely gentleman! Romeo's a dishcloth compared to him. Madam, an eagle does not have eyes as green, as quick, and as fair as the eyes of Paris. Curse my very heart, but I think you should be happy in this second marriage, because it's better than your first. Even if it's not better, your first marriage is over. Or if Romeo is as good as Paris, Romeo doesn't live here, so you don't get to enjoy him.

**JULIET**

Are you speaking from your heart?

**NURSE**

I speak from my heart and from my soul too. If not, curse them both.

**JULIET**

Amen!

**NURSE**

What?

**JULIET**

Well, you have given me great comfort. Go inside and tell my mother that I'm gone. I made my father angry, so I went to Friar Lawrence's cell to confess and be forgiven.

**NURSE**

Alright, I will. This is a good idea.

**Exit NURSE**
Act 3, Scene 5, Page 11

**JULIET**
Ancient damnation! O most wicked fiend!
Is it more sin to wish me thus forsworn,
Or to dispraise my lord with that same tongue
Which she hath praised him with above compare
So many thousand times? Go, counselor.
Thou and my bosom henceforth shall be twain.
I'll to the friar to know his remedy.
If all else fail, myself have power to die.

**Modern Text**
That damned old lady! Oh, that most wicked fiend! Is it a worse sin for her to want me to break my vows or for her to say bad things about my husband after she praised him so many times before? Away with you and your advice, Nurse. From now on, I will never tell you what I feel in my heart. I’m going to the Friar to find out his solution. If everything else fails, at least I have the power to take my own life.

**Exit JULIET exits.**

Act 4, Scene 1

**Enter FRIAR LAWRENCE and PARIS**

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**
On Thursday, sir? The time is very short.

**PARIS**
My father Capulet will have it so,
And I am nothing slow to slack his haste.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**
You say you do not know the lady’s mind.
Uneven is the course. I like it not.

**PARIS**
Immoderately she weeps for Tybalt’s death,
And therefore have I little talked of love,
For Venus smiles not in a house of tears.
Now, sir, her father counts it dangerous
That she do give her sorrow so much sway,
And in his wisdom hastes our marriage
To stop the inundation of her tears—
Which, too much minded by herself alone,
May be put from her by society.
Now do you know the reason of this haste.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**
(aside) I would I knew not why it should be slowed.—Look, sir, here comes the lady toward my cell.

**PARIS**
Happily met, my lady and my wife.

**JULIET**
That may be, sir, when I may be a wife.

**Enter JULIET**

**PARIS**
I’m happy to meet you, my lady and my wife.

**JULIET**
That might be the case sir, after I’m married.

Act 4, Scene 1, Page 2

**PARIS**
That “may be” must be, love, on Thursday next.

**JULIET**
What must be shall be.
FRIAR LAWRENCE
That's a certain text.
PARIS
Come you to make confession to this Father?
JULIET
To answer that, I should confess to you.

PARIS
Do not deny to him that you love me.
JULIET
I will confess to you that I love him.
PARIS
So will ye, I am sure, that you love me.
JULIET
If I do so, it will be of more price
Being spoke behind your back than to your face.
PARIS
Poor soul, thy face is much abused with tears.
JULIET
The tears have got small victory by that,
For it was bad enough before their spite.
PARIS
Thou wrong'st it more than tears with that report.
JULIET
That is no slander, sir, which is a truth,
And what I spake, I spake it to my face.
PARIS
Thy face is mine, and thou hast slandered it.
JULIET
It may be so, for it is not mine own.—
Are you at leisure, holy Father, now,
Or shall I come to you at evening mass?

FRIAR LAWRENCE
My leisure serves me, pensive daughter, now.—
My lord, we must entreat the time alone.
PARIS
God shield I should disturb devotion!—
Juliet, on Thursday early will I rouse ye.
(kisses her) Till then, adieu, and keep this holy kiss.
Exit PARIS
JULIET
O, shut the door! And when thou hast done so,
Come weep with me, past hope, past cure, past help.
Act 4, Scene 1, Page 4

FRIAR LAWRENCE

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Oh, Juliet, I already know about your sad situation. It's a problem too hard for me to solve. I hear that you must marry this count on Thursday, and that nothing can delay it.

JULIET

Don’t tell me that you’ve heard about this marriage, Friar, unless you can tell me how to prevent it. If you who are so wise can’t help, please be kind enough to call my solution wise. (she shows him a knife) And I’ll solve the problem now with this knife. God joined my heart to Romeo’s. You joined our hands. And before I—who was married to Romeo by you—am married to another man, I’ll kill myself. You are wise and you have so much experience. Give me some advice about the current situation. Or watch. Caught between these two difficulties, I’ll act like a judge with my bloody knife. I will truly and honorably resolve the situation that you can’t fix, despite your experience and education. Don’t wait long to speak. I want to die if what you say isn’t another solution.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Hold, daughter, I do spy a kind of hope, Which craves as desperate an execution As that is desperate which we would prevent. If, rather than to marry County Paris, Thou hast the strength of will to slay thyself, Then is it likely thou wilt undertake A thing like death to chide away this shame, That copest with death himself to ‘scape from it. An if thou darest, I’ll give thee remedy.

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’ercovered 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 unstained wife to my sweet love.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Hold, then. Go home, be merry. Give consent To marry Paris. Wednesday is tomorrow.
Tomorrow night look that thou lie alone.
Let not the Nurse lie with thee in thy chamber.

95
Take thou this vial, being then in bed,
And this distilled liquor drink thou off,
When presently through all thy veins shall run
A cold and drowsy humor, for no pulse

100
Shall keep his native progress, but surcease.
No warmth, no breath shall testify thou livest.
The roses in thy lips and cheeks shall fade
To paly ashes, thy eyes' windows fall
Like death when he shuts up the day of life.

105
Each part, deprived of supple government,
Shall, stiff and stark and cold, appear like death.
And in this borrowed likeness of shrunk death
Thou shalt continue two and forty hours,
And then awake as from a pleasant sleep.

110
Now, when the bridegroom in the morning comes
To rouse thee from thy bed, there art thou dead.
Then, as the manner of our country is,
In thy best robes uncovered on the bier
Thou shalt be borne to that same ancient vault

115
Where all the kindred of the Capulets lie.
In the meantime, against thou shalt awake,
Shall Romeo by my letters know our drift,
And hither shall he come, and he and I
Will watch thy waking, and that very night

120
Shall Romeo bear thee hence to Mantua.
And this shall free thee from this present shame,
If no inconstant toy, nor womanish fear,
Abate thy valor in the acting it.

Wednesday. Tomorrow night make sure that you
are alone. Don’t let the Nurse stay with you in
your bedroom. (showing her a vial) When you’re
in bed, take this vial, mix its contents with liquor,
and drink. Then a cold, sleep-inducing drug will
run through your veins, and your pulse will stop.
Your flesh will be cold, and you’ll stop breathing.
The red in your lips and your cheeks will turn
dark, and your eyes will shut. It will seem like
you’re dead. You won’t be able to move, and
your body will be stiff like a corpse. You’ll remain
in this deathlike state for forty-two hours, and
then you’ll wake up as if from a pleasant sleep.
Now, when the bridegroom comes to get you out
of bed on Thursday morning, you’ll seem dead.
Then, as tradition demands, you’ll be dressed up
in your best clothes, put in an open coffin, and
carried to the Capulet family tomb. Meanwhile, I’ll
send Romeo word of our plan. He’ll come here,
and we’ll keep a watch for when you wake up.
That night, Romeo will take you away to Mantua.
This plan will free you from the shameful
situation that troubles you now as long as you
don’t change your mind, or become scared like a
silly woman and ruin your brave effort.

JULIET
Give me, give me! O, tell not me of fear!

FRIAR LAWRENCE
Hold. Get you gone. Be strong and prosperous
In this resolve. I’ll send a friar with speed
To Mantua with my letters to thy lord.

JULIET
Love give me strength, and strength shall help
afford.
Farewell, dear Father.

Exeunt, separately

They exit separately.

Enter CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, NURSE, and
two or three SERVINGMEN

CAPULET
(gives paper to FIRST SERVINGMAN) So many

CAPULET enters with LADY CAPULET,
the NURSE, and two or three SERVINGMEN.

CAPULET
(giving the FIRST SERVINGMAN a piece of
Original Text

guests invite as here are writ.

Exit FIRST SERVINGMAN

(to SECOND SERVINGMAN) Sirrah, go hire me twenty cunning cooks.

SECOND SERVINGMAN

You shall have none ill, sir, for I’ll try if they can lick their fingers.

CAPULET

How canst thou try them so?

SECOND SERVINGMAN

Marry, sir, ‘tis an ill cook that cannot lick his own fingers. Therefore he that cannot lick his fingers goes not with me.

CAPULET

Go, be gone.

We shall be much unfurnished for this time.

Exit SECOND SERVINGMAN

What, is my daughter gone to Friar Lawrence? We’re unprepared for this wedding celebration.

NURSE

Ay, forsooth.

CAPULET

Well, he may chance to do some good on her. A peevish self-willed harlotry it is.

Enter JULIET

JULIET

Where I have learned me to repent the sin Of disobedient opposition
To you and your behests, and am enjoined By holy Lawrence to fall prostrate here To beg your pardon. (falls to her knees) Pardon, I beseech you!

Henceforward I am ever ruled by you.

CAPULET

Send for the county. Go tell him of this.

I’ll have this knot knit up tomorrow morning.

JULIET

I met the youthful lord at Lawrence’ cell, And gave him what become’d love I might,

Modern Text

paper) Invite all the guests on this list.

The FIRST SERVINGMAN exits.

(to SECOND SERVINGMAN) Boy, go hire twenty skilled cooks.

SECOND SERVINGMAN

You won’t get any bad cooks from me. I’ll test them by making them lick their fingers.

CAPULET

How can you test them like that?

SECOND SERVINGMAN

Easy, sir. It’s a bad cook who can’t lick his own fingers. So the cooks who can’t lick their fingers aren’t hired.

CAPULET

Go, get out of here.

The SECOND SERVINGMAN exits.

We’re unprepared for this wedding celebration. (to the NURSE) What, has my daughter gone to see Friar Lawrence?

NURSE

Yes, that’s true.

CAPULET

Well, there’s a chance he may do her some good. She’s a stubborn little brat.

JULIET enters.

NURSE

Look, she’s come home from confession with a happy look on her face.

CAPULET

So, my headstrong daughter, where have you been?

JULIET

I went somewhere where I learned that being disobedient to my father is a sin. Holy Father Lawrence instructed me to fall on my knees and beg your forgiveness. (she kneels down) Forgive me, I beg you. From now on I’ll do whatever you say.

CAPULET

Send for the Count. Go tell him about this. I’ll make this wedding happen tomorrow morning.

JULIET

I met the young man at Lawrence’s cell. I treated him with the proper love, as well as I could, while still being modest.
Original Text

Why, I am glad on ’t. This is well. Stand up.

JULIET stands up

This is as ’t should be.—Let me see the county.
Ay, marry, go, I say, and fetch him hither.—
Now, afore God, this reverend holy friar!

Our whole city is much bound to him.

JULIET
Nurse, will you go with me into my closet
To help me sort such needful ornaments
As you think fit to furnish me tomorrow?

30

This is as ’t should be.—Let me see the county.
Ay, marry, go, I say, and fetch him hither.—
Now, before God, our whole city owes this friar a great debt.

JULIET
Nurse, will you come with me to my closet and help me pick out the clothes and the jewelry I’ll need to wear tomorrow?

Act 4, Scene 2, Page 3

LADY CAPULET
No, not till Thursday. There is time enough.

CAPULET
Go, Nurse. Go with her. We’ll to church tomorrow.

Exeunt JULIET and NURSE

LADY CAPULET
We shall be short in our provision.
’Tis now near night.

CAPULET
Tush, I will stir about,
And all things shall be well, I warrant thee, wife.
Go thou to Juliet, help to deck up her.

I’ll not to bed tonight. Let me alone.
I’ll play the housewife for this once.

LADY CAPULET exits.

—What, ho?
They are all forth?—Well, I will walk myself
To County Paris, to prepare him up
Against tomorrow. My heart is wondrous light
Since this same wayward girl is so reclaimed.

Exit

Act 4, Scene 3

Enter JULIET and NURSE

JULIET
Ay, those attires are best. But, gentle Nurse,
I pray thee, leave me to myself tonight,
For I have need of many orisons
To move the heavens to smile upon my state,
Which, well thou know’st, is cross and full of sin.

Enter LADY CAPULET

LADY CAPULET
What, are you busy, ho? Need you my help?

JULIET
No, madam. We have culled such necessaries
As are behooveful for our state tomorrow.
So please you, let me now be left alone,

LADY CAPULET
What, are you busy? Do you need my help?

JULIET
No, madam, we’ve figured out the best things for me to wear tomorrow at the ceremony. So if it’s okay with you, I’d like to be left alone now. Let the
Original Text

10 And let the Nurse this night sit up with you.
   For, I am sure, you have your hands full all
   In this so sudden business.

   NURSE sit up with you tonight. I'm sure you have
   your hands full preparing for the sudden
   festivities.

   LADY CAPULET
   Good night.
   Get thee to bed and rest, for thou hast need.

   Nurse—What should she do here?

   LADY CAPULET and NURSE

   Exeunt LADY CAPULET and NURSE

   JULIET
   Farewell!—God knows when we shall meet again.
   I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins
   That almost freezes up the heat of life.
   I'll call them back again to comfort me.—
   Nurse!—What should she do here?

   JULIET
   Good-bye. Only God knows when we'll meet
   again. There is a slight cold fear cutting through
   my veins. It almost freezes the heat of life. I'll call
   them back here to comfort me. Nurse!—Oh, what
   good would she do here?

   LADY CAPULET
   Good night. Go to bed and get some rest. I'm
   sure you need it.

   LADY CAPULET and the NURSE exit.

Act 4, Scene 3, Page 2

   Alright, here's the vial. What if this mixture
   doesn't work at all? Will I be married tomorrow
   morning? No, no, this knife will stop it. Lie down
   right there.

   (she lays down the knife) What if the Friar mixed
   the potion to kill me? Is he worried that he will be
   disgraced if I marry Paris after he married me to
   Romeo? I'm afraid that it's poison. And yet, it
   shouldn't be poison because he is a trustworthy
   holy man. What if, when I am put in the tomb, I
   wake up before Romeo comes to save me?
   That's a frightening idea. Won't I suffocate in the
   tomb? There's no healthy air to breathe in there.
   Will I die of suffocation before Romeo comes? Or
   if I live, I'll be surrounded by death and darkness.
   It will be terrible. There will be bones hundreds of
   years old in that tomb, my ancestors' bones.
   Tybalt's body will be in there, freshly entombed,
   and his corpse will be rotting. They say that
   during the night the spirits are in tombs. Oh no,
   oh no. I'll wake up and smell awful odors. I'll hear
   screams that would drive people crazy.

   My dismal scene I needs must act alone.

   20 Come, vial. (holds out the vial)
   What if this mixture do not work at all?
   Shall I be married then tomorrow morning?
   No, no. This shall forbid it. Lie thou there.
   (lays her knife down)

   25 What if it be a poison, which the friar
   Subtly hath ministered to have me dead,
   Lest in this marriage he should be dishonored
   Because he married me before to Romeo?
   I fear it is. And yet, methinks, it should not,
   For he hath still been tried a holy man.

   30 For he hath still been tried a holy man.
   How if, when I am laid into the tomb,
   I wake before the time that Romeo
   Come to redeem me? There's a fearful point.
   Shall I not, then, be stifled in the vault
   To whose foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in,
   And there die strangled ere my Romeo comes?
   Or, if I live, is it not very like
   The horrible conceit of death and night,
   Together with the terror of the place—

   35 To whose foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in,
   And there die strangled ere my Romeo comes?
   Or, if I live, is it not very like
   The horrible conceit of death and night,
   Together with the terror of the place—

   40 As in a vault, an ancient receptacle,
   Where these many hundred years the bones
   Of all my buried ancestors are packed;
   Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth,
   Lies festering in his shroud; where, as they say,

   45 At some hours in the night spirits resort—?
   Alack, alack, is it not like that I,
   So early waking, what with loathsome smells,
   And shrieks like mandrakes torn out of the earth,
   That living mortals, hearing them, run mad—?

Act 4, Scene 3, Page 3

   Oh, if I wake, shall I not be distraught,
   Environed with all these hideous fears,
   And madly play with my forefather's joints,

   If I wake up too early, won't I go insane with all
   these horrible, frightening things around me, start
   playing with my ancestors' bones, and pull
Original Text

And pluck the mangled Tybalt from his shroud,
And, in this rage, with some great kinsman's bone,
As with a club, dash out my desperate brains?
Oh, look! Methinks I see my cousin's ghost
Seeking out Romeo, that did spit his body
Upon a rapier's point. Stay, Tybalt, stay!
Romeo, Romeo, Romeo! Here's drink. I drink to thee.

She drinks and falls down on the bed, hidden by the bed curtains

Modern Text

Tybalt’s corpse out of his death shroud? Will I grab one of my dead ancestor’s bones and bash in my own skull? Oh, look! I think I see my cousin Tybalt’s ghost. He’s looking for Romeo because Romeo killed him with his sword. Wait, Tybalt, wait! Romeo, Romeo, Romeo! Here’s a drink. I drink to you.

She drinks from the vial and falls on her bed, hidden by her bed curtains.

Act 4, Scene 4

Enter LADY CAPULET and NURSE

LADY CAPULET
Hold, take these keys, and fetch more spices, Nurse.

NURSE
They call for dates and quinces in the pastry.

Enter CAPULET

CAPULET
Come, stir, stir, stir! The second cock hath crowed.
The curfew bell hath rung. 'Tis three o'clock.—
Look to the baked meats, good Angelica.
Spare not for the cost.

NURSE
Go, you cot-quean, go.
Get you to bed, faith. You'll be sick tomorrow For this night's watching.

CAPULET
No, not a whit, what. I have watched ere now
All night for lesser cause, and ne'er been sick.

LADY CAPULET
Ay, you have been a mouse-hunt in your time,
But I will watch you from such watching now.

Exeunt LADY CAPULET and NURSE

CAPULET
A jealous hood, a jealous hood!
Enter three or four SERVINGMEN with spits and logs and baskets

Now, fellow,
What is there?

Act 4, Scene 4, Page 2

FIRST SERVINGMAN
Things for the cook, sir, but I know not what.

CAPULET
Make haste, make haste, sirrah.

Exit FIRST SERVINGMAN

FIRST SERVINGMAN
Things for the cook, sir. But I don't know what they are.

CAPULET
Hurry up, hurry up.

The FIRST SERVINGMAN exits.
Original Text

(to SECOND SERVINGMAN) Fetch drier logs.
Call Peter. He will show thee where they are.

SECOND SERVINGMAN
I have a head, sir, that will find out logs,
And never trouble Peter for the matter.

Exit SECOND SERVINGMAN

CAPULET
Mass, and well said. A merry whoreson, ha!
Thou shalt be loggerhead.—Good faith, ’tis day.
The county will be here with music straight,
For so he said he would. I hear him near.—

Music plays within

Enter NURSE

Go waken Juliet. Go and trim her up.
I’ll go and chat with Paris. Hie, make haste,
Make haste. The bridegroom he is come already.
Make haste, I say.

Exeunt

Act 4, Scene 5

Enter NURSE

NURSE
Mistress! What, mistress! Juliet!—Fast, I warrant her,
she.—
Why, lamb! Why, lady! Fie, you slug-a-bed.
Why, love, I say. Madam! Sweet-heart! Why, bride!

What, not a word? You take your pennyworths now.
Sleep for a week, for the next night, I warrant,
The county Paris hath set up his rest
That you shall rest but little.—God forgive me,
Marry, and amen. How sound is she asleep!

I must needs wake her.—Madam, madam, madam!
Ay, let the county take you in your bed.
He’ll fright you up, I’ faith. Will it not be?
(opens the bed curtains)

What, dressed and in your clothes, and down again?

I must needs wake you. Lady, lady, lady!—
Alas, alas! Help, help! My lady’s dead!—
Oh, welladay, that ever I was born!—
Some aqua vitae, ho!—My lord! My lady!

Enter LADY CAPULET

LADY CAPULET
What noise is here?

NURSE
O lamentable day!

LADY CAPULET
What is the matter?

NURSE
Look, look. O heavy day!

Enter LADY CAPULET

LADY CAPULET
What’s all the noise in here?

NURSE
Oh, sad day!

LADY CAPULET
What is the matter?

NURSE
Look, look! Oh, what a sad day!
Act 4, Scene 5, Page 2

**LADY CAPULET**
20 O me, O me! My child, my only life, 
Revive, look up, or I will die with thee!— 
Help, help! Call help.

**Enter CAPULET**

**CAPULET**
For shame, bring Juliet forth. Her lord is come.

**NURSE**
She’s dead, deceased, she’s dead. Alack the day!

**LADY CAPULET**
25 Alack the day. She’s dead, she’s dead, she’s dead!

**CAPULET**
Ha? Let me see her. Out, alas! She’s cold. 
Her blood is settled, and her joints are stiff. 
Life and these lips have long been separated. 
Death lies on her like an untimely frost

**NURSE**
She’s dead, deceased, she’s dead. Curse the day!

**LADY CAPULET**
Alack the day. She’s dead, she’s dead, she’s dead!

**CAPULET**
Ha? Let me see her. Out, alas! She’s cold. She’s been dead for some time. 
She’s dead, like a beautiful flower, killed by an unseasonable frost.

**NURSE**
Oh, sad day!

**LADY CAPULET**
O woeful time!

**CAPULET**
Death, which has taken her away to make me cry, 
now ties up my tongue and won’t let me speak.

**Enter FRIAR LAWRENCE, County PARIS, and MUSICIANS**

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**
Come, is the bride ready to go to church?

**CAPULET**
35 Ready to go, but never to return. 
O son! The night before thy wedding day 
Hath death lain with thy wife. There she lies, 
Flower as she was, deflowered by him.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE and PARIS enter with MUSICIANS.**

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**
Come, is the bride ready to go to church?

**CAPULET**
She’s ready to go, but she’ll never return. (to PARIS) Oh son! On the night before your wedding day, death has taken your wife. 
There she lies. She was a flower, but death deflowered her.

Act 4, Scene 5, Page 3

Death is my son-in-law. Death is my heir.
40 My daughter he hath wedded. I will die, 
And leave him all. Life, living, all is Death’s.

**PARIS**
Have I thought long to see this morning’s face, 
And doth it give me such a sight as this?

**LADY CAPULET**
Accursed, unhappy, wretched, hateful day!

Death is my son-in-law. Death is my heir. My daughter married death. I will die and leave Death everything. Life, wealth, everything belongs to Death.

**PARIS**
Have I waited so long to see this morning, only to see this?

**LADY CAPULET**
Accursed, unhappy, wretched, hateful day! This is
### Act 4, Scene 5, Page 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Text</th>
<th>Modern Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>45</strong> Most miserable hour that e'er time saw</td>
<td>the most miserable hour of all time! I had only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In lasting labor of his pilgrimage.</td>
<td>one child, one poor child, one poor and loving child, the one thing I had</td>
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<tr>
<td>But one, poor one, one poor and loving child,</td>
<td>to rejoice and comfort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But one thing to rejoice and solace in,</td>
<td>myself, and cruel Death has stolen it from me!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And cruel death hath catched it from my sight!</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NURSE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>50</strong> O woef! O woeful, woeful, woeful day!</td>
<td><strong>NURSE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most lamentable day, most woeful day</td>
<td>Oh pain! Oh painful, painful, painful day! The</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That ever, ever, I did yet behold!</td>
<td>saddest day, most painful day that I ever, ever did</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O day, O day, O day, O hateful day!</td>
<td>behold! Oh day! Oh day! Oh hateful day!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never was seen so black a day as this.</td>
<td>There has never been so black a day as today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PARIS</strong></td>
<td>Oh painful day, Oh painful day!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beguiled, divorcèd, wrongèd, spited, slain!</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Most detestable Death, by thee beguiled,</td>
<td></td>
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<td>By cruel, cruel thee quite overthrown!</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>O love! O life! Not life, but love in death.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CAPULET</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>60</strong> Despised, distressèd, hated, martyred, killed!</td>
<td><strong>CAPULET</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncomfortable time, why camest thou now</td>
<td>Despised, distressed, hated, martyred, killed!</td>
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<tr>
<td>To murder, murder our solemnity?</td>
<td>Why did this have to happen now? Why did</td>
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<tr>
<td>O child, O child! My soul, and not my child!</td>
<td>Death have to ruin our wedding? Oh child! Oh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dead art thou! Alack, my child is dead,</td>
<td>child! My soul and not my child! You are dead! Oh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And with my child my joys are buried.</td>
<td>no! My child is dead. My child will be buried, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FRIAR LAWRENCE</strong></td>
<td>so will my joys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace, ho, for shame! Confusion’s cure lives not</td>
<td><strong>FRIAR LAWRENCE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In these confusions. Heaven and yourself</td>
<td>Be quiet, for shame! The cure for confusion is not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had part in this fair maid. Now heaven hath all,</td>
<td>yelling and screaming. You had this child with the</td>
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<tr>
<td>And all the better is it for the maid.</td>
<td>help of heaven. Now heaven has her.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Your part in her you could not keep from death,</td>
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<td>The most you sought was her promotion,</td>
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<td>For 'twas your heaven she should be advanced.</td>
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<tr>
<td>And weep ye now, seeing she is advanced</td>
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<tr>
<td>Above the clouds, as high as heaven itself?</td>
<td>She is in a better place. You could not prevent her from dying someday,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oh, in this love, you love your child so ill</td>
<td>but heaven will give her eternal life. The most you hope for was for her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you run mad, seeing that she is well.</td>
<td>to marry wealthy and rise up the social ladder—that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She’s not well married that lives married long,</td>
<td>was your idea of heaven. And now you cry, even</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But she’s best married that dies married young.</td>
<td>though she has risen up above the clouds, as</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry up your tears and stick your rosemary</td>
<td>high as heaven itself? Oh, in this love, you love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On this fair corse, and, as the custom is</td>
<td>your child so badly, that you go mad, even though</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And in her best array, bear her to church.</td>
<td>she is in heaven. It is best to marry well and die</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For though some nature bids us all lament,</td>
<td>young, better than to be married for a long time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yet nature’s tears are reason’s merriment.</td>
<td>Dry up your tears, and put your rosemary on this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CAPULET</strong></td>
<td>beautiful corpse. And, in accordance with custom,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All things that we ordained festival</td>
<td>carry her to the church in her best clothes. It’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turn from their office to black funeral.</td>
<td>natural for us to shed tears for her, but the truth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our instruments to melancholy bells,</td>
<td>is, we should be happy for her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our wedding cheer to a sad burial feast.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change,</td>
<td><strong>CAPULET</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our bridal flowers serve for a buried corse,</td>
<td>All the things that we prepared for the wedding</td>
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<td></td>
<td>party will now be used for the funeral. Our happy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>music will now be sad. Our wedding banquet will</td>
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<td></td>
<td>become a sad burial feast. Our celebratory</td>
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<td></td>
<td>hymns will change to sad funeral marches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Our bridal flowers will cover a buried corpse. And</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
And all things change them to the contrary.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**
Sir, go you in, and, madam, go with him;
And go, Sir Paris. Every one prepare
To follow this fair corse unto her grave.

95 The heavens do lour upon you for some ill.
Move them no more by crossing their high will.

*Exeunt CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, PARIS, and FRIAR LAWRENCE*

**FIRST MUSICIAN**
Faith, we may put up our pipes and be gone.

---

**NURSE**
Honest good fellows, ah, put up, put up,
For, well you know, this is a pitiful case.

**FIRST MUSICIAN**
Why “Heart’s ease?”

**PETER**
Musicians, O musicians, “Heart’s Ease,” “Heart’s Ease.” O, an you will have me live, play “Heart’s Ease.”

**FIRST MUSICIAN**
Why “Heart’s ease?”

**PETER**
O musicians, because my heart itself plays “My Heart is Full.” O, play me some merry dump to comfort me.

**FIRST MUSICIAN**
Not a dump, we. ‘Tis no time to play now.

100 **PETER**
You will not then?

**FIRST MUSICIAN**
No.

**PETER**
I will then give it you soundly.

**FIRST MUSICIAN**
What will you give us?

**PETER**
No money, on my faith, but the gleek. I will give you the minstrel.

**FIRST MUSICIAN**
Then I will give you the serving creature.
**Act 4, Scene 5, Page 7**

**PETER**
Oh, I cry you mercy, you are the singer. I will say for you. It is “music with her silver sound” because musicians have no gold for sounding.

**(sings)**
Then music with her silver sound
With speedy help doth lend redress.

**FIRST MUSICIAN**
What a pestilent knave is this same!

**SECOND MUSICIAN**
Hang him, Jack! Come, we’ll in here, tarry for the mourners and stay dinner.

---

**PETER**
Oh, I beg your pardon. You’re the singer. I’ll answer for you. It is “music with her silver sound,” because musicians have no gold to use to make sounds.

**(sings)**
Then music with her silver sound
makes you feel just fine.

**FIRST MUSICIAN**
What an annoying man, this guy is!

**SECOND MUSICIAN**
Forget about him, Jack! Come, we’ll in there. We’ll wait for the mourners and stay for dinner.

---

**exit PETER**

**FIRST MUSICIAN**

**SECOND MUSICIAN**

---

**exit The MUSICIANS**
Act 5, Scene 1

ROMEO
Enter ROMEO

If I may trust the flattering truth of sleep,
My dreams presage some joyful news at hand.
My bosom’s lord sits lightly in his throne,
And all this day an unaccustomed spirit
Lifts me above the ground with cheerful thoughts.
I dreamt my lady came and found me dead—
Strange dream, that gives a dead man leave to think—
And breathed such life with kisses in my lips
That I revived and was an emperor.
Ah me! How sweet is love itself possessed
When but love’s shadows are so rich in joy!

ROMEO
If I can trust my dreams, then some joyful news is coming soon. Love rules my heart, and all day long a strange feeling has been making me cheerful. I had a dream that my lady came and found me dead. It’s a strange dream that lets a dead man think! She came and brought me back to life by kissing my lips. I rose from the dead and was an emperor. Oh my! How sweet it would be to actually have the woman I love, when merely thinking about love makes me so happy.

BALTHASAR
Enter ROMEO’s man BALTHASAR

News from Verona!—How now, Balthasar?
Dost thou not bring me letters from the friar?
How doth my lady? Is my father well?

BALTHASAR
Then she is well, and nothing can be ill.
Her body sleeps in Capel’s monument,
And her immortal part with angels lives.
I saw her laid low in her kindred’s vault
And presently took post to tell it you.
O, pardon me for bringing these ill news,
Since you did leave it for my office, sir.

BALTHASAR
Then she is well, and nothing is wrong. Her body sleeps in the Capulet tomb, and her immortal soul lives with the angels in heaven. I saw her buried in her family’s tomb, and then I came here to tell you the news. Oh, pardon me for bringing this bad news, but you told me it was my job, sir.

Act 5, Scene 1, Page 2

ROMEO
Is it e’en so? Then I defy you, stars!
Thou know’st my lodging. Get me ink and paper,
And hire post horses. I will hence tonight.

BALTHASAR
I do beseech you, sir, have patience.
Your looks are pale and wild, and do import
Some misadventure.

ROMEO
Tush, thou art deceived.
Leave me and do the thing I bid thee do.
Hast thou no letters to me from the friar?

BALTHASAR
No, my good lord.

ROMEO
No matter. Get thee gone,
And hire those horses. I’ll be with thee straight.

BALTHASAR exits.

Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee tonight.

BALTHASAR
Exit BALTHASAR

Well, Juliet, I’ll lie with you tonight. Let’s see how.
Original Text

Let's see for means. O mischief, thou art swift
To enter in the thoughts of desperate men!
I do remember an apothecary—
And hereabouts he dwells—which late I noted
In tattered weeds, with overwhelming brows,
Culling of simples. Meager were his looks,
Sharp misery had worn him to the bones,
And in his needy shop a tortoise hung,
An alligator stuffed, and other skins
Of ill-shaped fishes; and about his shelves
A beggarly account of empty boxes,
Green earthen pots, bladders and musty seeds,
Remnants of packthread and old cakes of roses,
Were thinly scattered to make up a show.

Act 5, Scene 1, Page 3

Noting this penury, to myself I said,
"An if a man did need a poison now"—
Whose sale is present death in Mantua—
"Here lives a caitiff wretch would sell it him."

Oh, this same thought did but forerun my need,
And this same needy man must sell it me.
As I remember, this should be the house.
Being holiday, the beggar's shop is shut.

Enter APOTHECARY

Who calls so loud?

ROMEO

Come hither, man. I see that thou art poor.
Hold, there is forty ducats. Let me have
A dram of poison, such soon-speeding gear
As will disperse itself through all the veins
That the life-weary taker may fall dead,
And that the trunk may be discharged of breath
As violently as hasty powder fired
Doth hurry from the fatal cannon’s womb.

APOTHECARY

Such mortal drugs I have, but Mantua’s law
Is death to any he that utters them.

ROMEO

Art thou so bare and full of wretchedness,
And fear’st to die? Famine is in thy cheeks.
Need and oppression starveth in thine eyes.
Contempt and beggary hangs upon thy back.
The world is not thy friend nor the world’s law.

APOTHECARY

I have lethal poisons like that. But it’s against the law to sell them in Mantua, and the penalty is death.

ROMEO

You’re this poor and wretched and still afraid to die? Your cheeks are thin because of hunger. I can see in your eyes that you’re starving. Anyone can see that you’re a beggar. The world is not your friend, and neither is the law. The world doesn’t make laws to make you rich. So don’t be poor. Break the law, and take this money. (he holds out money)
Act 5, Scene 2

Enter FRIAR JOHN

FRIAR JOHN
Holy Franciscan Friar! Brother, ho!

FRIAR LAWRENCE
This same should be the voice of Friar John. Welcome from Mantua. What says Romeo? Or, if his mind be writ, give me his letter.

FRIAR JOHN
Going to find a barefoot brother out, One of our order, to associate me, Here in this city visiting the sick, And finding him, the searchers of the town, Suspecting that we both were in a house Where the infectious pestilence did reign, Sealed up the doors and would not let us forth. So that my speed to Mantua there was stayed.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
Who bare my letter, then, to Romeo?

FRIAR JOHN
I could not send it—here it is again— Nor get a messenger to bring it thee, So fearful were they of infection.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
Unhappy fortune! By my brotherhood, The letter was not nice but full of charge, Of dear import, and the neglecting it

FRIAR JOHN enters.

FRIAR JOHN
Holy Franciscan Friar! Brother, hey!

FRIAR LAWRENCE
That sounds like the voice of Friar John. Welcome back from Mantua. What does Romeo say? Or, if he wrote down his thoughts, give me his letter.

FRIAR JOHN
I went to find another poor friar from our order to accompany me. He was here in this city visiting the sick. When I found him, the town health officials suspected that we were both in a house that had been hit with the plague. They quarantined the house, sealed up the doors, and refused to let us out. I couldn’t go to Mantua because I was stuck there.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
Then who took my letter to Romeo?

FRIAR JOHN
I couldn’t send it. Here it is. (he gives FRIAR LAWRENCE a letter) I couldn’t get a messenger to bring it to you either because they were scared of spreading the infection.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
Unhappy fortune! By my brotherhood, the letter was not just a nice greeting. It was full of very important information. It’s very dangerous that it
May do much danger. Friar John, go hence.
Get me an iron crow and bring it straight
Unto my cell.

Friar John, go and get me an iron crowbar. Bring it straight back to my cell.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Now must I to the monument alone.
Within this three hours will fair Juliet wake.
She will beshrew me much that Romeo
Hath had no notice of these accidents.
But I will write again to Mantua,
And keep her at my cell till Romeo come.
Poor living corpse, closed in a dead man’s tomb!

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Now I must go to the tomb alone. Within three hours Juliet will wake up. She’ll be very angry with me that Romeo doesn’t know what happened. But I’ll write again to Mantua, and I’ll keep her in my cell until Romeo comes. That poor living corpse. She’s shut inside a dead man’s tomb!

FRIAR JOHN exits.

Act 5, Scene 3

PARIS

Give me thy torch, boy. Hence, and stand aloof.
Yet put it out, for I would not be seen.
Under yon yew trees lay thee all along,
Holding thine ear close to the hollow ground—
So shall no foot upon the churchyard tread,
Being loose, unfirm, with digging up of graves,
But thou shalt hear it. Whistle then to me,
As signal that thou hear’st something approach.
Give me those flowers. Do as I bid thee, go.

PARIS

Give me your torch, boy. Go away and stay apart from me. Put the torch out, so I can’t be seen. Hide under the yew-trees over there. Listen to make sure no one is coming through the graveyard. If you hear any one, whistle to me to signal that someone is approaching. Give me those flowers. Do as I tell you. Go.

PARIS exits.}

PARIS enters with his PAGE.

PAGE

(aside) I am almost afraid to stand alone
Here in the churchyard. Yet I will adventure.

PAGE moves aside

PARIS

(scatters flowers at JULIET’S closed tomb)
Sweet flower, with flowers thy bridal bed I strew—
O woe! Thy canopy is dust and stones—
Which with sweet water nightly I will dew.
Or, wanting that, with tears distilled by moans,
The obsequies that I for thee will keep
Nightly shall be to strey thy grave and weep.

PARIS

(he scatters flowers at JULIET’s closed tomb)Sweet flower, I’m spreading flowers over your bridal bed. Oh, pain! Your canopy is dust and stones. I’ll water these flowers every night with sweet water. Or, if I don’t do that, my nightly rituals to remember you will be to put flowers on your grave and weep.

PAGE whistles

The PAGE whistles

PAGE

(to himself) I am almost afraid to stand alone here in the graveyard, but I’ll take the risk.

PAGE moves aside

PARIS

The boy is warning me that someone approaches. Who could be walking around here tonight? Who’s ruining my rituals of true love? It’s someone with a torch! I must hide in the darkness for awhile.

PAGE extinguishes torch, gives PARIS flowers

The PAGE puts out the torch and gives PARIS the flowers.
Act 5, Scene 3, Page 2

**PARIS moves away from the tomb**

*Enter ROMEO and BALTHASAR*

**ROMEO**

Give me that mattock and the wrenching iron. *(takes them from BALTHASAR)*

Hold, take this letter. Early in the morning
See thou deliver it to my lord and father. *(gives letter to BALTHASAR)*

Give me the light. *(takes torch from BALTHASAR)*

Upon thy life I charge thee,
30 Whate'er thou hear'st or seest, stand all aloof,
And do not interrupt me in my course.
Why I descend into this bed of death
Is partly to behold my lady's face,
But chiefly to take thence from her dead finger
A precious ring, a ring that I must use
In dear employment. Therefore hence, be gone.

**BALTHASAR**

I will be gone, sir, and not trouble you.

**ROMEO**

So shalt thou show me friendship. Take thou that. *(gives BALTHASAR money)*

Live and be prosperous, and farewell, good fellow.

---

Act 5, Scene 3, Page 3

**BALTHASAR** *(aside)* For all this same, I'll hide me hereabout.

His looks I fear, and his intents I doubt.

**BALTHASAR** moves aside, falls asleep

**ROMEO**

Thou detestable maw, thou womb of death,
Gorged with the dearest morsel of the earth,
Thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to open,
And in despite I'll cram thee with more food!

*(begins to open the tomb with his tools)*

**PARIS** *(aside)* This is that banished haughty Montague,
That murdered my love's cousin, with which grief,
It is supposed the fair creature died.

---

**BALTHASAR** *(speaking so that only PARIS can hear)* Despite what I said, I'll hide nearby. I'm frightened by the look on his face, and I have doubts about his intentions.

**BALTHASAR** moves aside and falls asleep.

**ROMEO** *(speaking to the tomb)* You horrible mouth of death! You've eaten up the dearest creature on Earth. Now I'm going to force open your rotten jaws and make you eat another body. *(ROMEO begins to open the tomb with his tools)*

**PARIS** *(speaking so that ROMEO can't hear)* It's that arrogant Montague, the one who's been banished. He's the one who murdered my love's
And here is come to do some villainous shame
to the dead bodies. I will apprehend him.
(to ROMEO) Stop thy unhallowed toil, vile Montague!
Can vengeance be pursued further than death?
Condemned villain, I do apprehend thee.
Obey and go with me, for thou must die.

ROMEO
I must indeed, and therefore came I hither.
Good gentle youth, tempt not a desperate man.
Fly hence and leave me. Think upon these gone.
Let them affright thee. I beseech thee, youth,
Put not another sin upon my head
By urging me to fury. O, be gone!
By heaven, I love thee better than myself,
For I come hither armed against myself.
Stay not, be gone. Live, and hereafter say
A madman’s mercy bid thee run away.

PARIS
I do defy thy commination
And apprehend thee for a felon here.

ROMEO
Wilt thou provoke me? Then have at thee, boy!

PAGE
O Lord, they fight! I will go call the watch.

Exit PAGE

PARIS
(falls) Oh, I am slain! If thou be merciful,
Open the tomb. Lay me with Juliet.

PARIS dies

ROMEO
In faith, I will.—Let me peruse this face.
Mercutio’s kinsman, noble County Paris.
What said my man, when my betossed soul
Did not attend him as we rode? I think
He told me Paris should have married Juliet.
Said he not so? Or did I dream it so?
Or am I mad, hearing him talk of Juliet,
To think it was so?—O, give me thy hand,
One writ with me in sour misfortune’s book.
I’ll bury thee in a triumphant grave.

ROMEO opens the tomb to reveal JULIET inside
A grave? Oh, no. A lantern, slaughtered youth,
For here lies Juliet, and her beauty makes 
This vault a feasting presence full of light. 
Death, lie thou there, by a dead man interred. 

(he lays PARIS in the tomb)

How oft when men are at the point of death 
Have they been merry, which their keepers call 
A lightning before death! Oh, how may I 
Call this a lightning?—O my love, my wife! 
Death, that hath sucked the honey of thy breath, 
Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty. 
Thou art not conquered. Beauty's ensign yet
Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks, 
And death's pale flag is not advancèd there.—

Tybalt, liest thou there in thy bloody sheet? 
O, what more favor can I do to thee, 
Than with that hand that cut thy youth in twain 
To sunder his that was thine enemy? 

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. Oh, here 
Will I set up my everlasting rest, 
And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars 
From this world-wearied flesh. Eyes, look out for the last time! 
Arms, make your last embrace! And lips, you are the doors of 
breath. Seal with a righteous kiss the deal I have made with death 
forever. (ROMEO kisses JULIET and takes out the poison) Come, bitter poison, come, unsavoury guide! You desperate pilot, let’s crash this sea- 
weary ship into the rocks! Here’s to my love! 
ROMEO drinks the poison. 
Oh, that pharmacist was honest! His drugs work 
quickly. So I die with a kiss.

Enter FRIAR LAWRENCE with lantern, crow, and 
spade

FRIAR LAWRENCE
Saint Francis be my speed! How oft tonight 
Have my old feet stumbled at graves!—Who’s there?

BALTHASAR
Here’s one, a friend, and one that knows you well.
FRIAR LAWRENCE
Bliss be upon you! Tell me, good my friend,
What torch is yond that vainly lends his light
To grubs and eyeless skulls? As I discern,
It burneth in the Capels’ monument.

BALTHASAR
It doth so, holy sir, and there’s my master,
One that you love.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
Who is it?

BALTHASAR
Romeo.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
How long hath he been there?

BALTHASAR
Full half an hour.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
Go with me to the vault.

BALTHASAR
I dare not, sir.
My master knows not but I am gone hence,
And fearfully did menace me with death
If I did stay to look on his intents.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
Stay, then. I’ll go alone. Fear comes upon me.
Oh, much I fear some ill unthrifty thing.

BALTHASAR
As I did sleep under this yew tree here,
I dreamt my master and another fought,
And that my master slew him.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
(approaches the tomb)
Romeo!—
Alack, alack, what blood is this, which stains
The stony entrance of the sepulcher?
What mean these masterless and gory swords
To lie discolored by this place of peace?

(looks inside the tomb)
Romeo! O, pale!—Who else? What, Paris too?
And steeped in blood?—Ah, what an unkind hour
Is guilty of this lamentable chance!
The lady stirs.

JULIET
wakes

JULIET
O comfortable Friar! Where is my lord?
I do remember well where I should be,
And there I am. Where is my Romeo?

A noise sounds from outside the tomb

A noise sounds from outside the tomb.

Act 5, Scene 3, Page 7

BALTHASAR
As I slept under this yew-tree here, I had a
dream that my master and someone else were
fighting and that my master killed him.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
(approaching the tomb) Romeo!
Oh no! What is this blood that stains the stony
entrance of this tomb? Why are these bloody
swords lying here, abandoned by their masters?
Next to this place of peace?

(he looks inside the tomb) Romeo! Oh, he’s pale!
Who else? What, Paris too? And he’s covered in
blood? Ah, when did these horrible things
happen? The lady’s moving.

JULIET
wakes up

JULIET
Oh friendly friar! Where is my husband? I
remember very well where I should be, and here
I am. Where is my Romeo?
**Original Text**

FRIAR LAWRENCE

I hear some noise. Lady, come from that nest Of death, contagion, and unnatural sleep. A greater power than we can contradict Hath thwarted our intents. Come, come away. Thy husband in thy bosom there lies dead, And Paris too. Come, I’ll dispose of thee Among a sisterhood of holy nuns. Stay not to question, for the watch is coming. Come, go, good Juliet. I dare no longer stay.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

I hear some noise. Lady, come out of the tomb. A greater power than we can fight has ruined our plan. Come, come away. Your husband lies dead there, and Paris too. Come, I’ll place you among the sisterhood of holy nuns. Don’t wait to ask questions. The watch is coming. Come, let’s go, good Juliet, I don’t dare stay any longer.

**Modern Text**

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Go, get thee hence, for I will not away.—

Enter WATCHMEN and PARIS’s PAGE

JULIET

Go, get out of here. I’m not going anywhere.

FRIAR LAWRENCE exits.

What’s here? A cup, closed in my true love’s hand? Poison, I see, hath been his timeless end.—

O churl, drunk all, and left no friendly drop To help me after? I will kiss thy lips. Haply some poison yet doth hang on them, To make me die with a restorative. (kisses ROMEO)

(he kisses ROMEO) Your lips are warm.

The ground is bloody.—Search about the churchyard. Go, some of you. Whoe’er you find, attach. 

Some WATCHMEN exit.

Pitiful sight! Here lies the county slain, And Juliet bleeding, warm and newly dead, Who here hath lain these two days buried.— Go, tell the Prince. Run to the Capulets. Raise up the Montagues. Some others search.

Exeunt more WATCHMEN

**Act 5, Scene 3, Page 8**

**Act 5, Scene 3, Page 9**

We see the ground whereon these woes do lie, We see the cause of all this pain. But we’ll have
Original Text

195 But the true ground of all these piteous woes
   We cannot without circumstance descry.

   Reenter SECOND WATCHMAN with ROMEO's
   man BALTHASAR

SECOND WATCHMAN
Here's Romeo's man. We found him in the
churchyard.

CHIEF WATCHMAN
Hold him in safety till the Prince come hither.

   Reenter THIRD WATCHMAN with FRIAR
   LAWRENCE

THIRD WATCHMAN
Here is a friar that trembles, sighs and weeps.

200 We took this mattock and this spade from him
   As he was coming from this churchyard's side.

CHIEF WATCHMAN
A great suspicion. Stay the friar too.

   Enter the PRINCE with ATTENDANTS

PRINCE
What misadventure is so early up
That calls our person from our morning rest?

   Enter CAPULET and LADY CAPULET

CAPULET
205 What should it be that is so shrieked abroad?

   LADY CAPULET
   Oh, the people in the street cry "Romeo,"
   Some "Juliet," and some "Paris," and all run
   With open outcry toward our monument.

Act 5, Scene 3, Page 10

   PRINCE
   What fear is this which startles in our ears?

   CHIEF WATCHMAN
210 Sovereign, here lies the County Paris slain,
   And Romeo dead, and Juliet, dead before,
   Warm and new killed.

   PRINCE
   Search, seek, and know how this foul murder comes.

   CHIEF WATCHMAN
   Here is a friar, and slaughtered Romeo’s man,

215 With instruments upon them fit to open
   These dead men’s tombs.

   CAPULET
   O heavens! O wife, look how our daughter bleeds!
   This dagger hath mista’en—for, lo, his house
   Is empty on the back of Montague,

220 And it mis-sheathed in my daughter’s bosom.
LADY CAPULET
O me! This sight of death is as a bell,
That warns my old age to a sepulcher.

**Enter MONTAGUE**

PRINCE
Come, Montague, for thou art early up
To see thy son and heir now early down.

MONTAGUE
Alas, my liege, my wife is dead tonight.
Grief of my son's exile hath stopped her breath.
What further woe conspires against mine age?

PRINCE
Look, and thou shalt see.

MONTAGUE
(to ROMEO) O thou untaught! What manners is in
this,
To press before thy father to a grave?

FRIAR LAWRENCE
I am the greatest, able to do least,
Yet most suspected, as the time and place
Doth make against me, of this direful murder.
And here I stand, both to impeach and purge,
Myself condemnèd and myself excused.

PRINCE
Seal up the mouth of outrage for a while,
Till we can clear these ambiguities
And know their spring, their head, their true descent,
And then will I be general of your woes,
And lead you even to death. Meantime forbear,
And let mischance be slave to patience.—
Bring forth the parties of suspicion.

FRIAR LAWRENCE
I will be brief, for my short date of breath
Is not so long as is a tedious tale.
Romeo, there dead, was husband to that Juliet,
And she, there dead, that Romeo's faithful wife.
I married them, and their stol'n marriage day
Was Tybalt's doomsday, whose untimely death
Banished the new-made bridegroom from the city—
For whom, and not for Tybalt, Juliet pined.
You, to remove that siege of grief from her,
Betrothed and would have married her perforce
To County Paris. Then comes she to me,
And with wild looks bid me devise some mean
To rid her from this second marriage,
Or in my cell there would she kill herself.
Then gave I her, so tutored by my art,
A sleeping potion, which so took effect
As I intended, for it wrought on her
The form of death.

special skills. It worked as planned. She seemed
to everyone to be dead.

Act 5, Scene 3, Page 12

Meantime I writ to Romeo,
That he should hither come as this dire night,
To help to take her from her borrowed grave,
Being the time the potion's force should cease.

But he which bore my letter, Friar John,
Was stayed by accident, and yesternight
Returned my letter back. Then all alone
At the prefixed hour of her wakening
Came I to take her from her kindred's vault,
Meaning to keep her closely at my cell
Till I conveniently could send to Romeo,
But when I came, some minute ere the time
Of her awakening, here untimely lay
The noble Paris and true Romeo dead.

She wakes, and I entreated her come forth,
And bear this work of heaven with patience.
But then a noise did scare me from the tomb,
And she, too desperate, would not go with me,
But, as it seems, did violence on herself.

All this I know, and to the marriage
Her Nurse is privy. And if aught in this
Miscarried by my fault, let my old life
Be sacrificed some hour before his time
Unto the rigor of severest law.

PRINCE
We still have known thee for a holy man.—
Where's Romeo's man? What can he say in this?

BALTHASAR
I brought my master news of Juliet's death,
And then in post he came from Mantua
To this same place, to this same monument.
(shows a letter) This letter he early bid me give his
father,
And threatened me with death, going in the vault,
If I departed not and left him there.

PRINCE
Give me the letter. I will look on it.
(takes letter from BALTHASAR)
Where is the county's page, that raised the watch?—
Sirrah, what made your master in this place?

PAGE
He came with flowers to strew his lady's grave,
And bid me stand aloof, and so I did.
Anon comes one with light to ope the tomb,
PRINCE
(skims the letter) This letter doth make good the friar’s words, Their course of love, the tidings of her death.
PRINCE (skimming the letter) This letter confirms the friar’s account. It describes the course of their love and mentions the news of her death. Here he writes that he bought poison from a poor pharmacist. He brought that poison with him to this vault to die and lie with Juliet. Where are these enemies?—Capulet! Montague! Do you see what a great evil results from your hate? Heaven has figured out how to kill your joys with love. Because I looked the other way when your feud flared up, I’ve lost several members of my family as well. Everyone is punished.
CAPULET
O brother Montague, give me thy hand. This is my daughter’s jointure, for no more Can I demand.
CAPULET
Oh, brother Montague, give me your hand. This is my daughter’s dowry. I can ask you for nothing more.
MONTAGUE
But I can give thee more,
MONTAGUE
But I can give you more. I’ll raise her statue in pure gold. As long as this city is called Verona, there will be no figure praised more than that of true and faithful Juliet.
CAPULET
As rich shall Romeo’s by his lady’s lie,
CAPULET
The statue I will make of Romeo to lie beside his Juliet will be just as rich. They were poor sacrifices of our rivalry!
ACT 5, SCENE 3, PAGE 14
PRINCE
A glooming peace this morning with it brings. The sun, for sorrow, will not show his head. Go hence, to have more talk of these sad things. Some shall be pardoned, and some punishèd.
PRINCE
We settle a dark peace this morning. The sun is too sad to show itself. Let’s go, to talk about these sad things some more. Some will be pardoned, and some will be punished. There was never a story more full of pain than the story of Romeo and Juliet.
Exeunt
They all exit.