



Romeo and Juliet

by

William Shakespeare

Abridged for the Shakespeare Schools Festival

by

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30 MINUTE VERSION

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*“We are such stuff as dreams are made on.”*

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## **LIST OF ROLES**

Prince Escalus PRINCE OF VERONA

Paris A YOUNG COUNT

Montague HEAD OF THE HOUSE OF MONTAGUE Capulet

HEAD OF THE HOUSE OF CAPULET Romeo MONTAGUE'S

SON

Mercutio KINSMAN TO THE PRINCE, FRIEND TO ROMEO Benvolio

NEPHEW TO MONTAGUE, FRIEND TO ROMEO Tybalt NEPHEW TO

LADY CAPULET

Juliet DAUGHTER TO CAPULET

Nurse to Juliet

Lady Montague WIFE TO MONTAGUE

Lady Capulet WIFE TO CAPULET

Friar Lawrence OF THE FRANCISCAN ORDER, FRIEND TO ROMEO Friar

John OF THE FRANCISCAN ORDER

Balthazar SERVANT TO ROMEO  
CAPULET

Sampson & Gregory  
SERVANTS TO

Abraham SERVANT TO MONTAGUE An Apothecary

Citizens, Revellers  
And Others

## 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.

### SCENE 1 A street

*ENTER SAMPSON and GREGORY of the house of Capulet, in conversation.*

GREGORY Here come two of the house of Montague.

*ENTER two other servingmen, ABRAHAM and BALTHAZAR*

SAMPSON I will bite my thumb at them, which is disgrace to them if they bear it.  
 [He bites his thumb<sup>1</sup>]

ABRAHAM Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

SAMPSON I do bite my thumb, sir.

ABRAHAM Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

SAMPSON [to GREGORY] Is the law of our side if I say ay? GREGORY  
 No.

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

ABRAHAM You lie.

SAMPSON Draw if you be men.

*They FIGHT. ENTER BENVOLIO<sup>2</sup>*

BENVOLIO Part, fools. Put up your swords, you know not what you do.

<sup>1</sup> An insult the equivalent of or worse than ‘the middle finger’. Done in clear view of the Montagues.<sup>2</sup> A name meaning ‘goodwill’ the opposite of Malvolio, from Twelfth Night.

3

**ENTER TYBALT**

TYBALT [*To BENVOLIO*] What, art thou drawn amongst these hartless hinds?<sup>3</sup>  
Turn thee Benvolio, look upon thy death.

BENVOLIO I do but keep the peace.

TYBALT What, drawn,<sup>4</sup> and talk of peace? I hate the word As I hate hell,  
all Montagues, and thee.

*They FIGHT*

**ENTER three or four CITIZENS who attempt to BREAK UP the men**

**ENTER old CAPULET, and LADY CAPULET**

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

**ENTER old MONTAGUE and LADY MONTAGUE opposite**

MONTAGUE [*Spying CAPULET*] Thou villain Capulet: [*to LADY MONTAGUE who holds him back*]  
Hold me not, let me go.

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

*The couples remain either side of the stage, the women holding their husbands back either by force, argument or childish with-holding of weapons. The SERVANTS, BENVOLIO and TYBALT remain in combat with the CITIZENS, centre stage*

**ENTER PRINCE ESCALUS**

PRINCE What ho, you men, you beasts  
Throw your mistempered weapons to the ground.

*The stage falls still*

Three civil brawls bred of an airy word,<sup>5</sup>  
By thee, old Capulet, and Montague,  
Have thrice disturbed the quiet of our streets.  
If ever you disturb our streets again,  
Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.

<sup>3</sup> Benvolio is interfering in a brawl between mere servants, Tybalt wishes to point this out. <sup>4</sup> Benvolio has *drawn* his weapon and yet he talks about peace. <sup>5</sup> A small and petty remark

4

On pain of death, all men depart.

**EXIT all but BENVOLIO. ENTER ROMEO**

BENVOLIO Good morrow, cousin.

ROMEO Is the day so young? Ay me, sad hours seem long.

BENVOLIO What sadness lengthens Romeo's hours? ROMEO Not having that which, having, makes them short.<sup>6</sup> BENVOLIO In love?

ROMEO Out.

BENVOLIO Of love?

ROMEO Out of her favour where I am in love. BENVOLIO

Alas.

ROMEO [*seeing the destruction of the fight*]

Ay me what fray was here?  
Yet tell me not, for I have heard it all.

BEVOLIO Tell me, in sadness, who is that you love? ROMEO 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<sup>7</sup> I love. BENVOLIO A right fair mark, fair coz<sup>8</sup>, is soonest hit.

ROMEO. Well in that hit you miss;; she'll not be hit With Cupid's arrow...

BENVOLIO [*giving it up*] Then 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

-<sup>6</sup> Not having the thing which makes them seem short.

<sup>7</sup> Pretty, not necessarily blonde... <sup>8</sup> coz – term of companionship, short for cousin.

5

ROMEO Farewell, thou canst not teach me to forget. *EXIT*

***BENVOLIO and ROMEO***

**SCENE 2**

**Outside**

**The House of**

**Capulet**

***CAPULET and PARIS in conversation***

CAPULET ... 'tis not so hard I think.  
For men so old as we to keep the peace.

PARIS Of honourable reckoning are you both, And pity 'tis  
you lived at odds so long.<sup>9</sup>  
But now my lord what say you to my suit?

CAPULET My child is yet a stranger in the world, She hath not seen  
the change of fourteen years.

PARIS Younger than she are happy mothers made.

CAPULET And too soon marred are those so early made. *[taking him  
close – offering an alternative]*  
Such delight among fresh female buds shall you this night  
Inherit at my house. Come, go with me.<sup>10</sup>

***EXIT CAPULET and PARIS***  
***ENTER BENVOLIO and ROMEO in conversation***

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<sup>11</sup>, good fellow.

***ENTER SERVANT***

SERVANT Good e'en. 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.

**SERVANT** *hands BENVOLIO an invitation. EXIT SERVANT*

ROMEO I'll go along.

<sup>9</sup> Paris wishes to marry Juliet, there is a certain amount of 'sucking up' to Capulet here.  
<sup>10</sup> Capulet suggests Paris attend the party tonight and examine other beauties to see if he can't find someone he prefers to Juliet. <sup>11</sup> E'en - afternoon

6

**EXIT ROMEO and BENVOLIO**

**SCENE 3**  
**Capulet's House**

**ENTER LADY CAPULET and NURSE**

NURSE Juliet!

**ENTER JULIET**

JULIET How now, who calls?

NURSE Your mother. JULIET Madam, I am here, what is your will?

LADY CAPULET Tell me, daughter Juliet,  
How stands your disposition to be married?

JULIET It is an honour that I dream not of.

LADY CAPULET Well, think of marriage now.  
The valiant Paris seeks you for his love.  
This night you shall behold him at our feast.

NURSE Madam, the guests are come.

LADY CAPULET We follow thee.

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

*and LADY CAPULET*

**SCENE 4**  
**A street**

**ENTER ROMEO, BENVOLIO, MERCUTIO and REVELLERS**

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.

BENVOLIO Come, knock and enter.<sup>12</sup>

ROMEO But 'tis no wit to go.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> The party at Capulet's   <sup>13</sup> It is not wise to go.

7

MERCUTIO Why, may one ask?

ROMEO I dreamt a dream tonight.

MERCUTIO And so did I.

ROMEO And what was yours?

MERCUTIO That dreamers often lie

BENVOLIO [hurrying them along] 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.

*EXIT all*

**SCENE 5**  
**Capulet's House**

*The room is crowded, the people dance and drink. ROMEO and JULIET wind up dancing together before PARIS spins her away. ROMEO stands downstage awestruck and following her movements. He stops a passing servant.*

ROMEO What lady's that?

SERVANT I know not, sir.

ROMEO O she doth teach the torches to burn bright. Did my heart love till now? Forswear it, sight.  
For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.  
[He moves to follow her]

TYBALT [who has been standing behind ROMEO] This, by his voice, should be a Montague.  
Now, by the stock and honour 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.

8

CAPULET Young Romeo is it?

Content thee, gentle coz, let him alone.

TYBALT I'll not endure him.

CAPULET He shall be endured. Am I the master here or you? Go to. TYBALT

Why, uncle, 'tis a shame.

***EXIT TYBALT***

ROMEO [*Taking JULIET by the hand*]

If I profane with my unworthiest hand  
This shrine, the gentle fine<sup>14</sup> is this:  
To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.

JULIET Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much, Which  
mannerly devotion shows in this;  
For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,  
And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss.

ROMEO Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too? JULIET Ay,

lips that they must use in prayer.

ROMEO O then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do! They pray.<sup>15</sup>

***THEY KISS***

JULIET You kiss by the book.

NURSE Madam, your mother craves a word with you. ***EXIT JULIET***

ROMEO What is her mother?

NURSE Her mother is the lady of the house.

***EXIT NURSE***

ROMEO [*Staring after her*] Is she a Capulet?

BENVOLIO [Catching *ROMEO* by the arm] Away, be gone; the sport is at the best.

-<sup>14</sup> The punishment for touching Juliet's hand is to kiss it. <sup>15</sup> Romeo compares hands held together in prayer and lips held together when kissing. It would be illustrative to the audience if the couple held hands palm to palm.

9

ROMEO Ay, so I fear; the more is my unrest.

CAPULET [Addressing the entire room]

I thank you all; I thank you honest gentlemen, goodnight.  
By my fay, it waxes late.

*The REVELLERS begin to disperse. ENTER JULIET and NURSE*

JULIET Come hither, Nurse. What is yond gentleman?

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

JULIET My only love sprung from my only hate. Too early seen  
unknown, and known too late.

*EXIT all*

**SCENE 6**  
**Outside the walls of**  
**the House of Capulet**

*ROMEO hides. ENTER BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO*

BENVOLIO Romeo! My cousin, Romeo! Romeo! He ran this way and leapt this orchard wall.

*[giving up]*  
Come,  
Blind is his love, and best befits the dark.

MERCUTIO If love be blind, love cannot hit the mark.

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

*EXIT MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO*

**SCENE 7**  
**Capulet's Orchard**

*ROMEO hides*

ROMEO He jests at scars that never felt a wound. But soft, what light

through yonder window breaks?  
It is the east and Juliet is the sun!  
It is my lady, O, it is my love!  
O, that she knew she were!

*JULIET appears at her balcony*

10

JULIET Ay me!

ROMEO She speaks.

O, speak again bright angel!

JULIET O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?<sup>16</sup> 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 Shall I hear more, or speak at this?

JULIET 'Tis but thy name that is my enemy;  
Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.  
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.  
Romeo, doff thy name,  
And for that name, which is no part of thee,  
Take all myself.

ROMEO [*emerging from his hiding place*]

I take thee at thy word.  
Call me but love, and henceforth I never will be Romeo.

JULIET [**shocked**] Art thou not a Montague?

How cam'st thou hither, tell me, and wherefore?

ROMEO With love's light wings did I o'er perch these walls. JULIET If any of  
my kinsmen find thee here they will murder thee.

ROMEO I have night's cloak to hide me from their eyes, And but  
thou love me, let them find me here.<sup>17</sup>  
My life were better ended by their hate  
Than death prorogued, wanting of thy love.

JULIET Dost thou love me? O gentle Romeo,  
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully.

ROMEO Lady by yonder blessed moon I vow.

JULIET O swear not by the moon,

ROMEO What shall I swear by?

<sup>16</sup> ‘Wherfore’ in this context means ‘why’. She is asking why the man she loves must be Romeo, the Montague.

<sup>17</sup> Unless you love me, let them find me, I’d rather die than live without your love.

11

JULIET Do not swear at all. Or if thou wilt

NURSE (*calling from within*) Madam!

JULIET Anon good nurse!

Three words good Romeo, and goodnight indeed.  
If that thy bent of love be honourable,  
Thy purpose marriage, send me word tomorrow,  
And all my fortunes at thy foot I’ll lay,  
And follow thee my lord throughout the world.

NURSE Madam!

JULIET By and by, I come!

Tomorrow will I send.

ROMEO So thrive my soul

JULIET A thousand times good night.

***EXIT JULIET***

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

#### **SCENE 8**

**Friar Lawrence’s  
Cell**

***FRIAR LAWRENCE in his cell***

***ENTER ROMEO***

ROMEO Good morrow father!

FRIAR LAWRENCE [*startled*] Benedicite!  
Our Romeo hath not been in bed tonight.  
God pardon sin, wast thou with Rosaline?

ROMEO With Rosaline, my ghostly<sup>18</sup> father? No. I have forgot that

name, and that name's woe.

FRIAR LAWRENCE That's my good son;; but be plain, where hast thou been then?

ROMEO Then plainly know my heart's dear love is set On the fair daughter of rich Capulet.

We met, we wooed, we made exchange of vow,  
I'll tell thee as we pass;; but this I pray,

-<sup>18</sup> Spiritual rather than supernatural

12

That thou consent to marry us today.

FRIAR LAWRENCE Holy Saint Francis!

ROMEO I pray thee chide me not.

FRIAR LAWRENCE Come,

In one respect I'll thy assistant be;;  
For this alliance may so happy prove  
To turn your households' rancour to pure love.<sup>19</sup>

***EXIT both***

## SCENE 9

A street

***ENTER MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO***

MERCUTIO Where the devil should this Romeo be? Came he not home tonight?

BENVOLIO Not to his father's. I spoke with his man. ***ENTER ROMEO. The two turn their backs on him***

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

The slip, sir, the slip.

ROMEO Pardon, good Mercutio; my business was great.

MERCUTIO [*Noting Romeo's good mood*]

Why, is not this better now than groaning for love?

***[ENTER NURSE]***

God ye good den<sup>20</sup>, fair gentlewoman.

NURSE Gentlemen, can any of you tell me where I may find the young Romeo?

ROMEO I can tell you; I am the youngest of that name. NURSE If you be he, sir, I desire some confidence with you. ROMEO [*to MERCUTIO*] I will follow you.

MERCUTIO Farewell ancient lady.

- <sup>19</sup> I will help you for one reason; your marriage may reconcile your feuding families. <sup>20</sup> Good afternoon.

13

***EXIT MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO***

NURSE First let me tell ye, if ye should lead her in a fool's paradise, as they say, it were a very gross kind of behaviour, truly it were an ill thing

ROMEO I protest unto thee –

Bid her to come to shrift this afternoon,  
And there she shall at Friar Lawrence's cell  
Be shrived <sup>21</sup>and married.

NURSE She shall be there.

***EXIT both***

**SCENE 10**

**Capulet's house.**

***JULIET awaits her nurse***

***ENTER NURSE***

JULIET O honey nurse, what news?

NURSE I am a-weary, give me leave a while.

JULIET Come, I pray thee, speak.

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

JULIET How art thou out of breath when thou hast breath To say to me  
that thou art out of breath?  
Is thy news good, or bad? Answer to that.

NURSE [*Giving in*] Your love says like an honest gentleman – Where is your mother?

JULIET Where is my mother? How oddly thou repliest! Come, what says Romeo?

NURSE Hie you hence to Friar Lawrence' cell.  
There stays a husband to make you a wife!

*EXIT JULIET and NURSE separately*

**SCENE 11**  
**Friar Lawrence' Cell**

-<sup>21</sup> Shrift was confession. Shrived meant the act of confession which was required before receiving the sacrament of marriage.

14

*ROMEO waits with FRIAR LAWRENCE in a single spotlight. JULIET ENTERS with NURSE by her side. JULIET joins ROMEO, they join hands and gaze into each other's eyes.*

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

*They kiss.*

*EXIT all*

**SCENE 12**  
**A street**

*ENTER BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO*

BENVOLIO I pray you, good Mercutio, lets retire;  
The day is hot, the Capels<sup>22</sup> are abroad,  
And if we meet we shall not 'scape a brawl,  
By my head, here come the Capulets.

MERCUTIO By my heel, I care not.

*ENTER TYBALT and others*

TYBALT 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. Mercutio,  
thou consortest with Romeo.

MERCUTIO Consort?<sup>23</sup> What, dost that make us minstrels?

*ENTER ROMEO now secretly married and therefore related to the Capulets.*

TYBALT Well, peace be with you, sir, here comes my man. 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 such a greeting: villain am I none.

TYBALT Boy, this shall not excuse the injuries thou hast done me.

ROMEO I do protest I never injured thee.

-<sup>22</sup> Capulets <sup>23</sup> To consort is to associate with. A consort is a group of musicians – Mercutio puns on the word to argue with Tybalt.

15

And so, good Capulet, which name I tender  
As dearly as mine own, be satisfied.

MERCUTIO O calm, dishonourable, vile submission! [*He draws*]  
Tybalt, you rat catcher<sup>24</sup>, will you walk?

TYBALT What wouldst thou have with me?

MERCUTIO Good King of Cats, nothing but one of your nine lives. TYBALT  
I am for you. [*He draws*]

ROMEO Gentle Mercutio -

*They fight. MERCUTIO is the better swordsman,  
TYBALT is struggling to keep up.*

ROMEO Tybalt! Mercutio! The Prince expressly hath Forbid this.  
Hold, Tybalt! Good Mercutio!

*TYBALT under ROMEO's arm wounds MERCUTIO*

BENVOLIO Art thou hurt?

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

ROMEO Courage man, the hurt cannot be much.

MERCUTIO 'Twill serve. Ask for me tomorrow and you shall find me a grave man.  
A plague o' both your houses.  
A plague o' both your houses.

*MERCUTIO dies*

BENVOLIO Here comes Tybalt.

ROMEO Alive, in triumph, and Mercutio slain.

Tybalt, 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.<sup>25</sup>

TYBALT Thou, wretched boy, shalt with him hence.

*They FIGHT. ROMEO kills TYBALT*

<sup>24</sup> Tybalt is known as 'the Prince of Cats'. Mercutio reduces this name to a catcher of vermin and nothing else.

<sup>25</sup> Mercutio's soul has not yet left the earth, he waits for yours to keep him company. Either yours or mine, or both must go with him – i.e. either you, I or both of us die.

16

BENVOLIO Romeo, away, be gone. The prince will doom thee to death. Hence, be gone, away!

ROMEO O, I am fortune's fool.

*EXIT ROMEO. ENTER PRINCE, MONTAGUE,  
CAPULET, their wives and others.*

PRINCE Where are the vile beginners of this fray?

BENVOLIO There lies the man, slain by young Romeo, That slew thy kinsman, brave Mercutio.

LADY CAPULET Tybalt, my cousin, O my brother's child!  
O, the blood is spilled  
Of my dear kinsman. Prince, as thou art true,  
For blood of ours, shed blood of Montague.

BENVOLIO Romeo spoke him fair.

Tybalt, deaf to peace, tilts at bold Mercutio's breast.  
Romeo, he cries aloud  
And 'twixt them rushes; underneath whose arm  
Tybalt hit the life of stout Mercutio.

LADY CAPULET He is a kinsman to the Montague.

Affection makes him false. He speaks not true.  
I beg for Justice, which thou, Prince, must give.  
Romeo slew Tybalt, Romeo must not live.

PRINCE For that offence

Immediately we do exile him hence.  
Let Romeo hence in haste,  
Else, when he is found, that hour will be his last.

***EXIT all***

**SCENE 13**

**Juliet's bedroom**

***JULIET awaits news from her nurse***

JULIET Come, gentle night, give me my Romeo. O, I have  
bought the mansion of a love  
But not yet possessed it, and though I am sold,  
Not yet enjoyed. So tedious is this day!

***ENTER NURSE***

Now, Nurse, what news?

17

NURSE We are undone, lady, we are undone. Alack the day, he's  
gone, he's killed, he's dead.

JULIET What devil art thou, that dost torment me thus? Hath Romeo  
slain himself?

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

JULIET O God! Did Romeo's hand shed Tybalt's blood? O serpent  
heart, hid with a flowering face!  
Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave?  
O that deceit should dwell in such a gorgeous palace!

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

JULIET Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband? Tybalt is dead  
and Romeo – banished.

That 'banished', that one word 'banished'  
Hath slain ten thousand Tybals.

O find him, give this ring to my true knight  
And bid him come to take his last farewell.

***EXIT NURSE***

***EXIT JULIET***

**SCENE 14**

**Friar Lawrence' Cell**

***FRIAR LAWRENCE and ROMEO***

FRIAR LAWRENCE Affliction is enamoured of thy parts  
And thou art wedded to calamity.

ROMEO [*Grief stricken*]

Banishment! Be merciful, say ‘death’.  
For exile hath more terror in his look,  
Much more than death. Do not say ‘banishment’.

FRIAR LAWRENCE This is dear mercy and thou seest it not.

ROMEO ’Tis torture and not mercy. Heaven is here Where Juliet lives,  
and every unworthy thing,  
Live here in heaven and may look on her,  
But Romeo may not.

### ***KNOCKING***

FRIAR LAWRENCE Good Romeo, hide thyself.

18

### ***More knocking***

Who knocks so hard? Whence came you, what’s your will?

NURSE I come from Lady Juliet.

FRIAR LAWRENCE Welcome then.

### ***ENTER NURSE***

ROMEO Where is she? And how doth she? And what says My concealed  
lady to our cancelled love?

NURSE O, she says nothing, sir, but weeps and weeps. But here, sir, a  
ring she bid me give you.  
Hie you, make haste, for it grows very late.

### ***EXIT NURSE***

ROMEO How well my comfort is revived by this.

FRIAR LAWRENCE 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 Farewell.

***EXIT ROMEO***  
***EXIT FRIAR LAWRENCE***

**SCENE 15**  
**Capulet's House**

***PARIS and CAPULET in discussion***

PARIS These times of woe afford no time to woo.<sup>26</sup> Madam goodnight.  
Commend me to your daughter.

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, bid her, on Thursday, tell her,  
She shall be married to this noble earl.

***EXIT both***

**SCENE 16**  
**Juliet's Bedroom**

<sup>26</sup> This time of grief has no place for trying to win Juliet.

19

***ROMEO and JULIET together***

***Sfx. BIRDSONG***

JULIET Wilt thou be gone? It is not yet near day. It was the  
nightingale and not the lark.

ROMEO It was the lark, the herald of the morn. I must be gone  
and live, or stay and die.

JULIET Yond light is not daylight, I know it, I. Thou need'st  
not be gone.

ROMEO Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death. I have  
more care to stay than will to go.  
Come death, and welcome. Juliet wills it so.  
How is't, my soul? Let's talk. It is not day.

JULIET It is, it is. Hie hence, begone, away.  
O, now be gone, more light and light it grows.

***ENTER NURSE hurriedly***

NURSE Madam! Your Lady mother is coming to your chamber. JULIET Then,  
window, let day in and let life out.<sup>27</sup> ROMEO Farewell, farewell. One kiss and

I'll descend.

JULIET Art thou gone so? Love, lord, ay husband, friend. O, think'st thou we shall ever meet again?

ROMEO I doubt it not.

***ROMEO moves to leave and does not hear the following***

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.

ROMEO [Turning] Adieu, adieu.

***ENTER LADY CAPULET***

LADY CAPULET Why, how now, Juliet?

JULIET Madam, I am not well.

-<sup>27</sup> Romeo leaves through the window; there is no life without Romeo.

20

LADY CAPULET Evermore weeping for your cousin's death?  
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 Madam, in happy time. What day is that?

LADY CAPULET Marry, my child, early next Thursday morn The gallant Paris  
shall happily make thee a joyful bride.

JULIET He shall not make me a joyful bride! 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.

LADY CAPULET [shocked]  
Tell him so yourself,  
And see how he will take it at your hands.

***ENTER CAPULET***

Sir, she will none, she gives you thanks.  
I would the fool were married to her grave.

CAPULET How? Will she none?

Is she not proud? Doth she not count her blest,  
Unworthy as she is, that we have wrought  
So worthy a gentleman to be her bridegroom?  
Go with Paris to Saint Peter's Church,  
Or I will drag thee on a hurdle thither.  
Out, you baggage!

JULIET Hear me with patience but to speak a word.

CAPULET Hang thee, young baggage, disobedient wretch! Speak not,  
reply not, do not answer me.

***EXIT CAPULET***

JULIET O, sweet my mother, cast me not away! Delay this  
marriage for a month, a week,  
Or, if you do not, make the bridal bed  
In that dim monument where Tybalt lies.

***EXIT LADY CAPULET without looking at JULIET***

JULIET Alack, alack, that heaven should practise stratagems Upon so soft a  
subject as myself.  
What sayst thou?

21

NURSE Romeo is banished, and all the world to nothing. 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.

JULIET [*Pause*]

Go in, and tell my lady I am gone,  
Having displeased my father, to Lawrence' cell,  
To make confession and to be absolved.

NURSE Marry, I will, and 'tis wisely done.

***EXIT NURSE***

JULIET Ancient damnation! O most wicked fiend, I'll to the  
Friar, to know his remedy.  
If all else fail, myself have the power to die.

***EXIT JULIET***

**SCENE 17**

**Friar Lawrence' Cell**

***PARIS and FRIAR LAWRENCE in conversation***

PARIS ...Now do you know the reason of this haste

FRIAR LAWRENCE [to himself] I would I knew not why it should be slowed.<sup>28</sup>  
Look sir, here comes the lady towards my cell.

**ENTER JULIET**

PARIS Happily met, my lady and my wife.

JULIET That may be, sir, when I may be a wife. 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. [to FRIAR LAWRENCE] Are  
you at leisure, holy father  
now?

<sup>28</sup> I wish I didn't know why the marriage has to be delayed!

22

FRIAR LAWRENCE My leisure serves me, pensive daughter now.  
My lord, we must entreat the time alone.

PARIS Juliet, on Thursday early will I rouse ye. Till then, adieu,  
and keep this holy kiss.

*They kiss. EXIT PARIS*

JULIET O shut the door,  
God joined my heart and Romeo's, thou our hands;;  
Give me some present counsel, I long to die  
If what thou speak'st speak not of remedy.

FRIAR LAWRENCE I do spy a kind of hope.  
If, rather than to marry County Paris,  
Thou hast the strength of will to slay thyself,  
Then it is likely thou wilt undertake  
A thing like death to chide away this shame.

JULIET 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.  
Let not thy nurse lie with thee in thy chamber.

Take thou this vial, being then in bed,  
And this distilling liquor drink thou off;  
When presently through all thy veins shall run  
No pulse, no warmth.  
The roses in thy lips and cheeks shall fade  
And in this borrowed likeness of shrunk death  
Thou shall continue two and forty hours,  
And then awake as from pleasant sleep.  
Thou shall be borne to that same ancient vault  
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.

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

***EXIT JULIET***  
***EXIT FRIAR LAWRENCE***

**SCENE 18**  
**Juliet's Bedroom**

23

***LADY CAPULET and NURSE preparing JULIET for her wedding day***

JULIET Gentle Nurse,  
I pray thee, leave me to myself tonight.

LADY CAPULET Good night.  
Get thee to bed, and rest, for thou hast need.

***EXIT LADY CAPULET and NURSE***

JULIET Farewell. God knows when we shall meet again. What if this mixture do not work at all?  
Shall I be married then tomorrow morning?  
No, no, this shall forbid it. [*she lays down a knife*]  
Romeo, I come! This I do drink to thee.

*She drinks and lies down as if sleeping. Lighting suggests the passage of night and the break of morning. ENTER NURSE who tries to rouse JULIET. Thinking her dead she runs from the room. EXIT NURSE.*

**Friar Lawrence' Cell**

*[this can be played in a single downstage*

**SCENE 19**

*spot to quicken the pace]*

**ENTER FRIAR JOHN holding a letter**

**FRIAR LAWRENCE in his cell**

FRIAR JOHN I could not send it, nor get a messenger to bring it thee. Here it is again -

FRIAR LAWRENCE O unhappy fortune.

The letter was of dear import and the neglecting of it  
May do much danger.  
Now must I to the monument alone.

**EXIT both separately**

**SCENE 20**

**Mantua**

**ROMEO awaits news from Verona**

**ENTER BALTHAZAR**

ROMEO News from Verona! How now Balthazar, Dost thou not bring  
me letters from the Friar?  
How doth my lady?  
For nothing can be ill if she be well.

24

BALTHAZAR Then she is well and nothing can be ill. Her  
body sleeps in Capel's monument.

ROMEO [**PAUSE**]

Is it e'en so? Then I defy you, stars!  
I will hence tonight.

BALTHAZAR I do beseech you sir, have patience.

ROMEO Thou art deceived.

Hast thou no letters to me from the Friar?

BALTHAZAR No my good lord.

ROMEO Get thee gone. I'll be with thee straight. **EXIT**

**BALTHAZAR**

Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee tonight.

**Crossing the stage and banging on a door**

What ho! Apothecary!

Come hither man. I see that thou art poor.  
Hold, there is forty ducats. Let me have  
A dram of poison.

APOTHECARY Such mortal drugs I have, but Mantua's law Is  
death to any he that utters them.  
My poverty, but not my will, consents.

ROMEO I pay thy poverty and not thy will.

*EXIT both*

**SCENE 21**  
**Capel's Monument**

*The tomb is eerie and dark, a place of death and ghosts. It is terrifying. JULIET lies as though dead. ENTER ROMEO*

ROMEO O my love, my wife,  
Death that hath sucked the honey of thy breath  
Hath 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 advanced there.  
Dear Juliet, why art thou yet so fair?  
O here will I set up my everlasting rest.

25

Eyes, look your last!  
Arms, take your last embrace! And lips,  
Seal with a righteous kiss  
A dateless bargain to engrossing Death!  
[he kisses her]  
Here's to my love [he drinks] O true apothecary,  
Thy drugs are quick. Thus with a kiss I die.

*ROMEO falls. JULIET rises.*

JULIET [seeing Romeo] Romeo!  
What's here 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.  
[she kisses him]

*Movement is heard outside the tomb*

Yea noise? O happy dagger.

This is thy sheath. There rust, and let me die.

*She stabs herself and falls*  
**ENTER FRIAR LAWRENCE**

FRIAR LAWRENCE Juliet!

*He regards the scene with horror and stumbles out. EXIT FRIAR LAWRENCE. Lighting suggests the passage of time. ENTER FRIAR LAWRENCE and PRINCE*

PRINCE What misadventure is so early up,  
That calls our person from our morning rest?

**ENTER CAPULET and LADY CAPULET**

CAPULET What should it be, that is so shrieked abroad?

LADY CAPULET O the people in the street cry 'Romeo'  
And some 'Juliet'...

*They stare at the scene. ENTER MONTAGUE. FRIAR LAWRENCE kneels and prays beside the bodies.*

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?  
[he sees ROMEO and JULIET and falls silent]

26

PRINCE Where be these enemies? Capulet, Montague, See, what a  
scourge is laid upon your hate,  
That heaven finds means to kill your joys with love;  
And I, for winking at your discords too,  
Have lost a brace of kinsmen. All are punished.

CAPULET O brother Montague, give me thy hand.

MONTAGUE There shall no figure at such rate be set As that of  
true and faithful Juliet.<sup>29</sup>

CAPULET As rich shall Romeo's by his lady's lie, Poor  
sacrifices of our enmity.

PRINCE For never was a story of more woe Than this of  
Juliet and her Romeo.

**THE END**

<sup>29</sup> Montague will build a statue in Juliet's honour that will not be rivalled.