

ROMEO AND JULIET

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CHARACTERS

Romeo—The son and heir of Montague and Lady Montague. A young man of about sixteen, Romeo is handsome, intelligent, and sensitive. Though impulsive and immature, his idealism and passion make him an extremely likable character. He lives in the middle of a violent feud between his family and the Capulets, but he is not at all interested in violence. His only interest is love and he goes to extremes to prove the seriousness of his feelings. He secretly marries Juliet, the daughter of his father's worst enemy; he happily takes abuse from Tybalt; and he would rather die than live without his beloved. Romeo is also an affectionate and devoted friend to his relative Benvolio, Mercutio, and Friar Lawrence.

Juliet—The daughter of Capulet and Lady Capulet. A beautiful thirteen-year-old girl, Juliet begins the play as a naïve child who has thought little about love and marriage, but she grows up quickly upon falling in love with Romeo, the son of her family's great enemy. Because she is a girl in an aristocratic family, she has none of the freedom Romeo has to roam around the city, climb over walls in the middle of the night, or get into swordfights. Nevertheless, she shows amazing courage in trusting her entire life and future to Romeo, even refusing to believe the worst reports about him after he gets involved in a fight with her cousin. Juliet's closest friend and confidant is her Nurse, though she's willing to shut the Nurse out of her life the moment the Nurse turns against Romeo.

Friar Lawrence—A Franciscan friar, friend to both Romeo and Juliet. Kind, civic-minded, a proponent of moderation, and always ready with a plan, Friar Lawrence secretly marries the impassioned lovers in hopes that the union might eventually

bring peace to Verona. As well as being a Catholic holy man, Friar Lawrence is also an expert in the use of seemingly mystical potions and herbs.

Mercutio—A kinsman to the Prince, and Romeo's close friend. One of the most extraordinary characters in all of Shakespeare's plays, Mercutio overflows with imagination, wit, and, at times, a strange, biting satire and brooding fervor. Mercutio loves wordplay, especially sexual double entendres. He can be quite hotheaded, and hates people who are affected, pretentious, or obsessed with the latest fashions. He finds Romeo's romanticized ideas about love tiresome, and tries to convince Romeo to view love as a simple matter of sexual appetite.

The Nurse—Juliet's nurse, the woman who breast-fed Juliet when she was a baby and has cared for Juliet her entire life. A vulgar, long-winded, and sentimental character, the Nurse provides comic relief with her frequently inappropriate remarks and speeches. But, until a disagreement near the play's end, the Nurse is Juliet's faithful confidante and loyal intermediary in Juliet's affair with Romeo. She provides a contrast with Juliet, given that her view of love is earthy and sexual, whereas Juliet is idealistic and intense. The Nurse believes in love and wants Juliet to have a nice-looking husband, but the idea that Juliet would want to sacrifice herself for love is incomprehensible to her.

Tybalt—A Capulet, Juliet's cousin on her mother's side. Vain, fashionable, supremely aware of courtesy and the lack of it, he becomes aggressive, violent, and quick to draw his sword when he feels his pride has been injured. Once drawn, his sword is something to be feared. He loathes Montagues.

Capulet—The patriarch of the Capulet family, father of Juliet, husband of Lady Capulet, and enemy, for unexplained reasons, of Montague. He truly loves his daughter, though he is not well acquainted with Juliet's thoughts or feelings, and seems to think that what is best for her is a "good" match with Paris. Often prudent, he commands respect and propriety, but he is liable to fly into a rage when either is lacking.

Lady Capulet—Juliet's mother, Capulet's wife. A woman who herself married young (by her own estimation she gave birth to Juliet at close to the age of fourteen), she is eager to see her daughter marry Paris. She is an ineffectual mother, relying on the Nurse for moral and pragmatic support.

Montague—Romeo's father, the patriarch of the Montague clan and bitter enemy of Capulet. At the beginning of the play, he is chiefly concerned about Romeo's melancholy.

Lady Montague—Romeo's mother, Montague's wife. She dies of grief after Romeo is exiled from Verona.

Paris—A kinsman of the Prince, and the suitor of Juliet most preferred by Capulet. Once Capulet has promised him he can marry Juliet, he behaves very presumptuous toward, acting as if they are already married.

Benvolio—Montague's nephew, Romeo's cousin and thoughtful friend, he makes a genuine effort to defuse violent scenes in public places, though Mercutio accuses him of having a nasty temper in private. He spends most of the play trying to help Romeo get his mind off Rosaline, even after Romeo has fallen in love with Juliet.

Prince Escalus—The Prince of Verona. A kinsman of Mercutio and Paris. As the seat of political power in Verona, he is concerned about maintaining the public peace at all costs.

Friar John—A Franciscan friar charged by Friar Lawrence with taking the news of Juliet's false death to Romeo in Mantua. Friar John is held up in a quarantined house, and the message never reaches Romeo.

Balthasar—Romeo's dedicated servant, who brings Romeo the news of Juliet's death, unaware that her death is a ruse.

Sampson and Gregory—Two servants of the house of Capulet, who, like their master, hate the Montagues. At the outset of the play, they successfully provoke some Montague men into a fight.

Abraham—Montague's servant, who fights with Sampson and Gregory in the first scene of the play.

The Apothecary—An apothecary in Mantua. Had he been wealthier, he might have been able to afford to value his morals more than money, and refused to sell poison to Romeo.

Peter—A Capulet servant who invites guests to Capulet's feast and escorts the Nurse to meet with Romeo. He is illiterate, and a bad singer.

Rosaline—The woman with whom Romeo is infatuated at the beginning of the play. Rosaline never appears onstage, but it is said by other characters that she is very beautiful and has sworn to live a life of chastity.

The Chorus—The Chorus is a single character who functions as a narrator offering commentary on the play's plot and themes.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

ROMEO AND JULIET



THE PROLOGUE

Enter CHORUS

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
5 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,
10 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

THE PROLOGUE

The CHORUS enters.

CHORUS

In the beautiful city of Verona, where our story takes place, a long-standing hatred between two families erupts into new violence, and citizens stain their hands with the blood of their fellow citizens. Two unlucky children of these enemy families become lovers and commit suicide. Their unfortunate deaths put an end to their parents' feud. For the next two hours, we will watch the story of their doomed love and their parents' anger, which nothing but the children's deaths could stop. If you listen to us patiently, we'll make up for everything we've left out in this prologue onstage.

The CHORUS exits.

ACT ONE**SCENE 1**

Enter SAMPSON and GREGORY of the house of Capulet, with swords and bucklers

SAMPSON

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

GREGORY

No, for then we should be colliers.

SAMPSON

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

GREGORY

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

SAMPSON

I strike quickly, being moved.

GREGORY

But thou art not quickly moved to strike.

SAMPSON

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.

SAMPSON

A dog of that house shall move me to stand. I will take the wall of any man or maid of Montague's.

ACT ONE**SCENE 1**

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

SAMPSON

Gregory, I swear, we can't let them humiliate us. We won't take their garbage.

GREGORY

(teasing SAMPSON) No, because then we'd be garbage-men.

SAMPSON

What I mean is, if they make us angry we'll pull out our swords.

GREGORY

Maybe you should focus on pulling yourself out of trouble, Sampson.

SAMPSON

I hit hard when I'm angry.

GREGORY

Gregory continually implies that Sampson isn't as tough as he's acting.

But it's hard to make you angry.

SAMPSON

One of those dogs from the Montague house can make me angry.

GREGORY

Angry enough to run away. You won't stand and fight.

SAMPSON

A dog from that house will make me angry enough to take a stand. If I pass one of them on the street, I'll take the side closer to the wall and let him walk in the gutter.

GREGORY

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

SAMPSON

15 '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

20 '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

25 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

30 Draw thy tool! Here comes of the house of Montagues.

SAMPSON

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

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

GREGORY

That means you're the weak one, because weaklings get pushed up against the wall.

SAMPSON

You're right. That's why girls get pushed up against walls—they're weak. So what I'll do is push the Montague men into the street and the Montague women up against the wall.

GREGORY

The fight is between our masters, and we men who work for them.

SAMPSON

It's all the same. I'll be a harsh master to them. After I fight the men, I'll be nice to the women—I'll cut off their heads.

GREGORY

→ "Maidenhead" = virginity.
Cut off their heads? You mean their maidenheads?

SAMPSON

Cut off their heads, take their maidenheads—whatever. Take my remark in whichever sense you like.

GREGORY

The women you rape are the ones who'll have to "sense" it.

SAMPSON

They'll feel me as long as I can keep an erection. Everybody knows I'm a nice piece of flesh.

GREGORY

→ They're joking about Sampson's private parts.
It's a good thing you're not a piece of fish. You're dried and shriveled like salted fish.

ABRAM and another servant of the Montagues enter.

Pull out your tool now. These guys are from the house of Montague.

SAMPSON

I have my naked sword out. Fight, I'll back you up.

GREGORY

How? Turn thy back and run?

SAMPSON

Fear me not.

GREGORY

No, marry. I fear thee.

SAMPSON

35 Let us take the law of our sides. Let them begin.

GREGORY

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

40 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

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

GREGORY

Do you quarrel, sir?

ABRAM

Quarrel, sir? No, sir.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

GREGORY

How will you back me up—by turning your back and running away?

SAMPSON

Don't worry about me.

GREGORY

No, really. I *am* worried about you!

SAMPSON

Let's not break the law by starting a fight. Let them start something.

GREGORY

I'll frown at them as they pass by, and they can react however they want.

SAMPSON

*Biting the thumb
is a gesture of
disrespect.*

You mean however they dare. I'll bite my thumb at them. That's an insult, and if they let me get away with it they'll be dishonored. (*SAMPSON bites his thumb*)

ABRAM

Hey, are you biting your thumb at us?

SAMPSON

I'm biting my thumb.

ABRAM

Are you biting your thumb at us?

SAMPSON

(*aside to GREGORY*) Is the law on our side if I say yes?

GREGORY

(*aside to SAMPSON*) No.

SAMPSON

(*to ABRAM*) No, sir, I'm not biting my thumb at you, but I am biting my thumb.

GREGORY

Are you trying to start a fight?

ABRAM

Start a fight? No, sir.

SAMPSON

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

ABRAM

No better.

SAMPSON

50 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

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

They fight

BENVOLIO

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

Enter TYBALT

TYBALT

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

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

SAMPSON

If you want to fight, I'm your man. My employer is as good as yours.

ABRAM

But he's not better than mine.

SAMPSON

Well then.

BENVOLIO enters.

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.

BENVOLIO

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

TYBALT enters.

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.
65 Have at thee, coward!

They fight

Enter three or four CITIZENS, with clubs or partisans

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

70 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.

ACT 1, SCENE 1

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

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 Mon-
tagues, 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 wav-
ing 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.

Enter PRINCE ESCALUS, with his train

PRINCE

75 Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace,
 Profaners of this neighbor-stained steel!—
 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,
 80 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
 85 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,
 90 Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.
 For this time, all the rest depart away.
 You, Capulet, shall go along with me,
 And, Montague, come you this afternoon
 To know our farther pleasure in this case,
 95 To old Free-town, our common judgment-place.
 Once more, on pain of death, all men depart.

Exeunt all but MONTAGUE, LADY MONTAGUE, and BENVOLIO

MONTAGUE

Who set this ancient quarrel new abroach?
 Speak, nephew. Were you by when it began?

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

PRINCE ESCALUS enters with his escort.

PRINCE

(shouting at the rioters) You rebels! Enemies of the peace! Men who turn their weapons against their own neighbors—They won't listen to me?—You there! You men, you beasts, who satisfy your anger with fountains of each others' blood! I'll have you tortured if you don't put down your swords and listen to your angry prince. *(MONTAGUE, CAPULET, and their followers throw down their weapons)* Three times now riots have broken out in this city, all because of a casual word from you, old Capulet and Montague. Three times the peace has been disturbed in our streets, and Verona's old citizens have had to take off their dress clothes and pick up rusty old spears to part you. If you ever cause a disturbance on our streets again, you'll pay for it with your lives. 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.

*Everyone exits except MONTAGUE,
 LADY MONTAGUE, and BENVOLIO.*

MONTAGUE

Who started this old fight up again? Speak, nephew.
 Were you here when it started?

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,
 Pursued 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,

ACT 1, SCENE 1

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

BENVOLIO

Your servants were fighting your enemy's servants
 before I got here. I drew my sword to part them. Right
 then, that hothead Tybalt showed up with his sword
 ready. He taunted me and waved his sword around,
 making the air hiss. As we were trading blows, more
 and more people showed up to join the fight, until the
 Prince came and broke everyone up.

LADY MONTAGUE

Oh, where's Romeo? Have you seen him today? I'm
 glad he wasn't here for this fight.

BENVOLIO

Madam, I had a lot on my mind an hour before dawn
 this morning, so I went for a walk. Underneath the
 Sycamore grove that grows on the west side of the city,
 I saw your son taking an early-morning walk. I headed
 toward him, but he saw me coming and hid in the
 woods. I thought he must be feeling the same way I
 was—wanting to be alone and tired of his own com-
 pany. I figured he was avoiding me, and I was perfectly
 happy to leave him alone and keep to myself.

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.

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
135 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.
140 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,
145 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,
We would as willingly give cure as know.

Enter ROMEO

BENVOLIO

See, where he comes. So please you, step aside.
150 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

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

He locks himself up alone in his bedroom, shuts his windows to keep out the beautiful daylight, and makes himself an artificial night. This mood of his is going to bring bad news, unless someone smart can fix what's bothering him.

BENVOLIO

My noble uncle, do you know why he acts this way?

MONTAGUE

I don't know, and he won't tell me.

BENVOLIO

Have you done everything you could to make him tell you the reason?

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.

ROMEO enters.

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.

BENVOLIO

Good morrow, cousin.

ROMEO

Is the day so young?

BENVOLIO

But new struck nine.

ROMEO

Ay me! Sad hours seem long.

155

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

160

Of love?

ROMEO

Out of her favor, where I am in love.

BENVOLIO

Alas, that love, so gentle in his view,
Should be so tyrannous and rough in proof!

ROMEO

165

Alas, that love, whose view is muffled still,
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.
Here's much to do with hate but more with love.
Why then, O brawling love, O loving hate,
O anything of nothing first created!
O heavy lightness, serious vanity,
Misshapen chaos of well-seeming forms!
Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health,

170

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

BENVOLIO

Good morning, cousin.

ROMEO

Is it that early in the day?

BENVOLIO

It's only just now nine o'clock.

ROMEO

Oh my, time goes by slowly when you're sad. Was that
my father who left here in such a hurry?

BENVOLIO

It was. What's making you so sad and your hours so
long?

ROMEO

I don't have the thing that makes time fly.

BENVOLIO

You're in love?

ROMEO

Out.

BENVOLIO

Out of love?

ROMEO

I love someone. She doesn't love me.

BENVOLIO

It's sad. Love looks like a nice thing, but it's actually
very rough when you experience it.

ROMEO

What's sad is that love is supposed to be blind, but it
can still make you do whatever it wants. So, where
should we eat? (*seeing blood*) Oh my! What fight hap-
pened here? No, don't tell me—I know all about it.
This fight has a lot to do with hatred, but it has more
to do with love. O brawling love! O loving hate! Love
that comes from nothing! Sad happiness! Serious fool-
ishness! Beautiful things muddled together into an
ugly mess! Love is heavy and light, bright and dark,
hot and cold, sick and healthy, asleep and awake—it's

175 Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is!
This love feel I, that feel no love in this.
Dost thou not laugh?

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.

180 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;
185 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.

190 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

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

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

everything except what it is! This is the love I feel,
though no one loves me back. Are you laughing?

BENVOLIO

No, cousin, I'm crying.

ROMEO

Good man, why are you crying?

BENVOLIO

I'm crying because of how sad you are.

ROMEO

Yes, this is what love does. My sadness sits heavy in
my chest, and you want to add your own sadness to
mine so there's even more. I 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

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

200 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
205 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
210 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,
For beauty, starved with her severity,
Cuts beauty off from all posterity.
215 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

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

ACT 1, SCENE 1

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

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

→
*Cupid, the Roman
god of love,
shoots arrows at
humans that
make them fall in
love. Diana is the
Roman goddess
of virginity and
hunting.*

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 wastes her beauty. If you starve yourself of sex you can't ever have children, and so your beauty is lost to future generations. She's too beautiful and too wise to deserve heaven's blessing by making me despair. She's sworn off love, and that promise has left me alive but dead, living only to talk about it now.

BENVOLIO

Take my advice. Don't think about her.

ROMEO

Teach me to 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 stricken 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.

Exeunt

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

BENVOLIO

Do it by letting your eyes wander freely. Look at other beautiful girls.

ROMEO

That will only make me think more about how beautiful *she* is. Beautiful women like to wear black masks over their faces—those black masks only make us think about how beautiful they are underneath. A man who goes blind can't forget the precious eyesight he lost. Show me a really beautiful girl. Her beauty is like a note telling me where I can see someone even more beautiful. Goodbye. You can't teach me to forget.

BENVOLIO

I'll show you how to forget, or else I'll die owing you that lesson.

They exit.

ACT 1, SCENE 2

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.
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.
This night I hold an old accustomed feast,
Whereto 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
Earth-treading stars that make dark heaven light.

ACT 1, SCENE 2

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

ACT 1, SCENE 2

County = Count,
a title of nobility.

CAPULET enters with County PARIS, followed by PETER,
a servant.

CAPULET

(continuing a conversation) But Montague has sworn
an oath just like I have, and he's under the same pen-
alty. I don't think it will be hard for men as old as we
are to keep the peace.

PARIS

You both have honorable reputations, and it's too bad
you've been enemies for so long. But what do you say
to my request?

CAPULET

I can only repeat what I've said before. My daughter
is still very young. She's not even fourteen years old.
Let's wait two more summers before we start thinking
she's ready to get married.

PARIS

Girls younger than she often marry and become
happy mothers.

CAPULET

Girls who marry so young grow up too soon. But go
ahead and charm her, gentle Paris; make her love you.
My permission is only part of her decision. If she
agrees to marry you, my blessing and fair words will
confirm her choice. Tonight I'm having a feast that
we've celebrated for many years. I've invited many of
my closest friends, and I'd like to welcome you and
add you to the guest list. At my humble house tonight,
you can expect to see dazzling stars that walk on the
ground and light the sky from below.

Such comfort as do lusty young men feel
 When well-appareled 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.

(to PETER, giving him a paper)

Go, sirrah, trudge about
 35 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
 40 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,
 50 And the rank poison of the old will die.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

You'll be delighted by young women as fresh as spring
 flowers. Look at anyone you like, and choose whatever
 woman seems best to you. Once you see a lot of girls,
 you might not think my daughter's the best anymore.
 Come along with me.

(to PETER, handing him a paper) Go, little fellow, walk
 all around Verona. Find the people on this list and tell
 them they're welcome at my house tonight.

CAPULET and PARIS exit.

PETER

Find the people whose names are on this list? It is writ-
 ten that shoemakers and tailors should play with each
 others' tools, that fisherman should play with paints,
 and painters should play with with fishing nets. But
 I've been sent to find the people whose names are writ-
 ten on this list, and I can't read! I'll never find them on
 my own. I've got to find somebody who knows how to
 read to help me. But here come some people, right in
 the nick of time.

BENVOLIO and ROMEO enter.

BENVOLIO

(to ROMEO) Come on, man. You can put out one fire by
 starting another. A new pain will make the one you
 already have seem less. If you make yourself dizzy, you
 can cure yourself by spinning back around in the
 opposite direction. A new grief will put the old one out
 of your mind. Make yourself lovesick by gazing at
 some new girl, and your old lovesickness will be cured.

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

55 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 'i' good e'en. I pray, sir, can you read?

ROMEO

Ay, mine own fortune in my misery.

PETER

60 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

65 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;
70 Mine uncle Capulet, his wife and daughters;
My fair niece Rosaline and Livia;

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

ROMEO

The plantain leaf is excellent for that.

BENVOLIO

For what, Romeo?

ROMEO

For when you cut your shin.

BENVOLIO

What? Romeo, are you crazy?

ROMEO

I'm not crazy, but I'm tied up tighter than a mental patient in a straitjacket. I'm locked up in a prison and deprived of food. I'm whipped and tortured—*(to PETER)* Good evening, good fellow.

PETER

May God give you a good evening. Excuse me, sir, do you know how to read?

ROMEO

I can read my own fortune in my misery.

PETER

Perhaps you've learned from life and not from books. But please tell me, can you read anything you see?

ROMEO

Yes, if I know the language and the letters.

PETER

*Peter assumes
Romeo means he
doesn't know his
letters.*

I see. Well, that's an honest answer. Have a nice day.

ROMEO

Stay, fellow. I can read. *(he reads the letter)*
"Signor Martino and his wife and daughters,
Count Anselme and his beautiful sisters,
Vitruvio's widow,
Signor Placentio and his lovely nieces,
Mercutio and his brother Valentine,
My uncle Capulet and his wife and daughters,
My fair niece Rosaline and Livia,

*The plantain leaf
was thought to
have healing
powers.*

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

PETER

75

Up.

ROMEO

Whither? To supper?

PETER

To our house.

ROMEO

Whose house?

PETER

My master's.

ROMEO

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

85

At this same ancient feast of Capulet's
Supps 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

90

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
95 Ne'er saw her match since first the world begun.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

Signor Valentio and his cousin Tybalt,
Lucio and the lively Helena."
That's a nice group of people. Where are they sup-
posed to come?

PETER

Up.

ROMEO

Where? To supper?

PETER

To our house.

ROMEO

Whose house?

PETER

My master's house.

ROMEO

Indeed, I should have asked you before who he was.

PETER

Now I'll tell you so you don't have to ask. My master
is the great and rich Capulet, and if you don't belong
to the house of Montague, please come and drink a
cup of wine. Have a nice day!

PETER exits.

BENVOLIO

The beautiful Rosaline whom you love so much will
be at Capulet's traditional feast, along with every
beautiful woman in Verona. Go there and compare her
objectively to some other girls I'll show you. The
woman who you think is as beautiful as a swan is going
to look as ugly as a crow to you.

ROMEO

If my eyes ever lie to me like that, let my tears turn into
flames and burn them for being such obvious liars! A
woman more beautiful than the one I love? The sun
itself has never seen anyone as beautiful since the
world began.

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 2

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

BENVOLIO

Come on, you first decided she was beautiful when no one else was around. There was no one to compare her to except herself. But let your eyes compare her to another beautiful woman who I'll show you at this feast, and you won't think she's the best anymore.

ROMEO

I'll go with you. Not because I think you'll show me anything better, but so I can see the woman I love.

They exit.

ACT 1, SCENE 3

Enter **LADY CAPULET** and **NURSE**

LADY CAPULET

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

NURSE

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 be it
15 spoken, I have but four—she is not fourteen. How long is it
now to Lammastide?

LADY CAPULET

A fortnight and odd days.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

ACT 1, SCENE 3

LADY CAPULET and the NURSE enter.

LADY CAPULET

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

NURSE

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!

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 Lammastide?

→ *Lammastide =
August 1.*

LADY CAPULET

Two weeks and a few odd days.

NURSE

Even or odd, of all days in the year,
 Come Lammas Eve at night shall she be fourteen.
 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.
 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!
 "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,
 For even the day before, she broke her brow.
 And then my husband—God be with his soul!
 He was a merry man—took up the child.
 "Yea," quoth he, "Dost thou fall upon thy face?
 Thou wilt fall backward when thou hast more wit,
 Wilt thou not, Jule?" and, by my holy dame,
 The pretty wretch left crying and said "ay."
 To see now, how a jest shall come about!
 I warrant, an I should live a thousand years,
 I never should forget it. "Wilt thou not, Jule?" quoth he.
 And, pretty fool, it stinted and said "ay."

LADY CAPULET

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

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

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 mem-
 ory! But like I said, when she tasted the bitter worm-
 wood on my nipple, the pretty little babe got irritated
 and started to quarrel with my breast. Then the dove-
 house 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 husband—God rest his soul,
 he was a happy man—picked up the child. "Oh," he
 said, "Did you fall on your face? You'll fall backward
 when you grow smarter. Won't you, Jule." And I
 swear, the poor pretty thing stopped crying and said,
 "Yes." Oh, to watch a joke come true! I bet if I live a
 thousand years, I'll never forget it. "Won't you, Jule,"
 he said. And the pretty fool stopped crying and said,
 "Yes."

"Fall backward" =
 have sex.

LADY CAPULET

Enough of this. Please be quiet.

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
55 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

60 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

65 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,
70 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
75 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. 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 testi-
cle. 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."

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 were sculpted
from wax.

LADY CAPULET

Verona's summer hath not such a flower.

NURSE

80 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.
85 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,
90 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.
95 So shall you share all that he doth possess
By having him, making yourself no less.

NURSE

No less? Nay, bigger. Women grow by men.

LADY CAPULET

Speak briefly. Can you like of Paris, love?

JULIET

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

Enter PETER

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

LADY CAPULET

Summertime in Verona has no flower as fine as him.

NURSE

No, he's a fine flower, truly, a flower.

LADY CAPULET

(to JULIET) What do you say? Can you love this gentleman? Tonight you'll see him at our feast. Study Paris's face and find pleasure in his beauty. Examine every line of his features and see how they work together to make him handsome. If you are confused, just look into his eyes. This man is single, and he lacks only a bride to make him perfect and complete. As is right, fish live in the sea, and it's wrong for a beauty like you to hide from a handsome man like him. Many people think he's handsome, and whoever becomes his bride will be just as admired. You would share all that he possesses, and by having him, you would lose nothing.

NURSE

Lose nothing? In fact, you'd get bigger. Men make women bigger by getting them pregnant.

LADY CAPULET

(to JULIET) Give us a quick answer. Can you accept Paris's love?

JULIET

I'll look at him and try to like him, at least if what I see is likable. But I won't let myself fall for him any more than your permission allows.

PETER enters.

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.

105

LADY CAPULET

We follow thee.—Juliet, the county stays.

NURSE

Go, girl, seek happy nights to happy days.

Exeunt

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

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.

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.

5 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.
10 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

15 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

20 I am too sore enpierced 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.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

ACT 1, SCENE 4

ROMEO, MERCUTIO, and BENVOLIO enter dressed as maskers, along with five or six other MASKERS, carrying a drum and torches.

→ Maskers are masked party-goers who perform a dance they've invented at a party.

ROMEO

What will we say is our excuse for being here? Or should we enter without apologizing?

BENVOLIO

It's out of fashion to give lengthy explanations like that. We're not going to introduce our dance by having someone dress up as Cupid, blindfolded and carrying a toy bow to frighten the ladies like a scarecrow. Nor are we going to recite a memorized speech to introduce ourselves. Let them judge us however they please. We'll give them a dance and then hit the road.

ROMEO

Give me a torch. I don't want to dance. I feel sad, so let me be the one who carries the light.

MERCUTIO

No, noble Romeo, you've got to dance.

ROMEO

Not me, believe me. You're wearing dancing shoes with nimble soles. My soul is made out of lead, and it's so heavy it keeps me stuck on the ground so I can't move.

MERCUTIO

You're a lover. Take Cupid's wings and fly higher than the average man.

ROMEO

His arrow has pierced me too deeply, so I can't fly high with his cheerful feathers. Because this wound keeps me down, I can't leap any higher than my dull sadness. I sink under the heavy weight of love.

MERCUTIO

25 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

30 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.

BENVOLIO

35 Come, knock and enter. And no sooner in
But every man betake him to his legs.

ROMEO

40 A torch for me. Let wantons light of heart
Tickle the senseless rushes with their heels.
For I am proverbied with a grandsire phrase,
I'll be a candle holder, and look on.
The game was ne'er so fair, and I am done.

MERCUTIO

Tut, dun's the mouse, the constable's own word.
If thou art dun, we'll draw thee from the mire,
Or—save your reverence—love, wherein thou stick'st
Up to the ears. Come, we burn daylight, ho!

ROMEO

45 Nay, that's not so.

MERCUTIO

I mean, sir, in delay.
We waste our lights in vain, like lights by day.
Take our good meaning, for our judgment sits
Five times in that ere once in our fine wits.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

MERCUTIO

If you sink, you're dragging love down. It's not right
to drag down something as tender as love.

ROMEO

Is love really tender? I think it's too rough, too rude,
too rowdy, and it pricks like a thorn.

MERCUTIO

→
Mercutio
suggests that
Romeo cure him-
self of love by
having sex.

If love plays rough with you, play rough with love. If
you prick love when it pricks you, you'll beat love
down. Give me a mask to put my face in. A mask to
put over my other mask. What do I care if some curi-
ous person sees my flaws? Let this mask, with its black
eyebrows, blush for me. *(they put on masks)*

BENVOLIO

Come on, let's knock and go in. The minute we get in
let's all start dancing.

ROMEO

I'll take a torch. Let playful people with light hearts
dance. There's an old saying that applies to me: you
can't lose if you don't play the game. I'll just hold a
torch and watch you guys. It looks like a lot of fun, but
I'll sit this one out.

MERCUTIO

Hey, you're being a stick in the mud, as cautious as a
policemen on night patrol. If you're a stick in the mud,
we'll pull you out of the mud—I mean out of love, if
you'll excuse me for being so rude—where you're
stuck up to your ears. Come on, we're wasting pre-
cious daylight. Let's go!

ROMEO

No we're not—it's night.

MERCUTIO

I mean, we're wasting the light of our torches by
delaying, which is like wasting the sunshine during
the day. Use your common sense to figure out what I
mean, instead of trying to be clever or trusting your
five senses.

ROMEO

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

MERCUTIO

Why, may one ask?

ROMEO

I dreamt a dream tonight.

MERCUTIO

And so did I.

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.
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.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

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.

*"Queen" is slang
for whore, and
Mab is a stereo-
typical prosti-
tute's name.*

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' legs. The cover of her
wagon is made of grasshoppers' wings. The harnesses
are made of the smallest spiderwebs. The collars are
made out of moonbeams. Her whip is a thread
attached to a cricket's bone. Her wagon driver is a tiny
bug in a gray coat; he's not half the size of a little round
worm that comes from the finger of a lazy young girl.

*It was believed
that worms
sprung from the
fingers of young
girls who sat
about doing
nothing.*

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

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 of making money off of someone. Sometimes she tickles a priest's nose with a tithe-pigs 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—

A tithe-pig was a pig given to the church to support a priest.

ROMEO

Enough, enough! Mercutio, be quiet. You're talking nonsense.

MERCUTIO

True. I'm talking about dreams, which are the products of a brain that's doing nothing. Dreams are nothing but silly imagination, as thin as air, and less

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.
And sometime comes she with a tithe-pig's tail
Tickling a parson's nose as he lies asleep,
Then he dreams of another benefice.
Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,
And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,
Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,
Of healths five fathom deep, and then anon
Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes,
And being thus frightened swears a prayer or two
And sleeps again. This is that very Mab
That plaits the manes of horses in the night
And bakes the elflocks in foul sluttish hairs,
Which once untangled, much misfortune bodes.
This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs,
That presses them and learns them first to bear,
Making them women of good carriage.
This is she—

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.

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 despised life closed in my breast
By some vile forfeit of untimely death.
But he that hath the steering of my course,
Direct my sail. On, lusty gentlemen.

BENVOLIO

Strike, drum.

March about the stage and exeunt

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

predictable than the wind, which sometimes blows on
the frozen north and then gets angry and blows south.

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 who-
ever'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.

ACT 1, SCENE 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.

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

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 awhile, 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

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

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

ACT 1, SCENE 5

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.

PETER and the SERVINGMEN exit.

CAPULET enters with his COUSIN, TYBALT, LADY CAPULET, JULIET, and other members of the house. They meet ROMEO, BENVOLIO, MERCUTIO, and other guests and MASKERS.

CAPULET

Welcome, gentlemen. The ladies who don't have corns on their toes will dance with you. Ha, my ladies, which of you will refuse to dance now? Whichever of you acts shy, I'll swear she has corns. Does that hit close to home? Welcome, gentlemen. There was a time when I could wear a mask over my eyes and charm a

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

20 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*)

25 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.
30 How long is 't now since last yourself and I
Were in a mask?

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,
35 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
40 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,

lady by whispering a story in her ear. That time is gone, gone, gone. You are welcome gentlemen. Come on, musicians, play music. (*music plays and they dance, ROMEO stands apart*) Make room in the hall. Make room in the hall. Shake a leg, girls. (*to SERVING-MEN*) More light, you rascals. Flip over the tables and get them out of the way. And put the fire out—it's getting too hot in here. (*to his cousin*) Ah, my man, this unexpected fun feels good. No, sit down, sit down, my good Capulet cousin. You and I are too old to dance. (*CAPULET and his cousin sit down*) How long is it now since you and I last wore masks at a party like this?

CAPULET'S COUSIN

I swear, it must be thirty years.

CAPULET

What, man? It's not that long, it's not that long. It's been since Lucentio's wedding. Let the years fly by as fast as they like, it's only been twenty-five years since we wore masks.

CAPULET'S COUSIN

It's been longer, it's been longer. Lucentio's son is older than that, sir. He's thirty years old.

CAPULET

Are you really going to tell me that? His son was a minor only two years ago.

ROMEO

(*to a SERVINGMAN*) Who is the girl on the arm of that lucky knight over there?

SERVINGMAN

I don't know, sir.

ROMEO

Oh, she shows the torches how to burn bright! She stands out against the darkness like a jeweled earring hanging against the cheek of an African. Her beauty is too good for this world; she's too beautiful to die and

Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear.
 So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows
 As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows.
 The measure done, I'll watch her place of stand,
 And, touching hers, make blessed my rude hand.
 Did my heart love till now? Forswear it, sight!
 For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.

TYBALT

This, by his voice, should be a Montague.—
 (to his PAGE) Fetch me my rapier, boy.—
 What, dares the slave
 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.
 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.
 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.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

be buried. She outshines the other women like a white
 dove in the middle of a flock of crows. When this
 dance is over, I'll see where she stands, and then I'll
 touch her hand with my rough and ugly one. Did my
 heart ever love anyone before this moment? My eyes
 were liars, then, because I never saw true beauty
 before tonight.

TYBALT

I can tell by his voice that this man is a Montague. (to
 his PAGE) Get me my sword, boy.—What, does this
 peasant dare to come here with his face covered by a
 mask to sneer at and scorn our celebration? Now, by
 the honor of our family, I do not consider it a crime to
 kill him.

CAPULET

Why, what's going on here, nephew? Why are you acting so angry?

TYBALT

Uncle, this man is a Montague—our enemy. He's a
 scoundrel who's come here out of spite to mock our
 party.

CAPULET

Is it young Romeo?

TYBALT

That's him, that villain Romeo.

CAPULET

Calm down, gentle cousin. Leave him alone. He carries
 himself like a dignified gentleman, and, to tell you
 the truth, he has a reputation throughout Verona as a
 virtuous and well-behaved young man. I wouldn't
 insult him in my own house for all the wealth in this
 town. So calm down. Just ignore him. That's what I
 want, and if you respect my wishes, you'll look nice
 and stop frowning because that's not the way you
 should behave at a feast.

TYBALT

It fits when such a villain is a guest.
I'll not endure him.

CAPULET

He shall be endured.

75 What, goodman boy! I say, he shall. Go to.
Am I the master here, or you? Go to.
You'll not endure him! God shall mend my soul,
You'll make a mutiny among my guests.
You will set cock-a-hoop. You'll be the man!

TYBALT

80 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 contrary me. Marry, 'tis time.—
Well said, my hearts!—You are a princex, go.
85 Be quiet, or—More light, more light!—For shame!
I'll make you quiet.—What, cheerly, my hearts!

Music plays again, and the guests dance

TYBALT

Patience perforce with willful choler meeting
Makes my flesh tremble in their different greeting.
I will withdraw, but this intrusion shall
90 Now seeming sweet, convert to bitterest gall.

Exit TYBALT

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

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!

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. I'll shut you up. *(to the guests)* Keep having fun, my dear friends!

The music plays again, and the guests dance.

TYBALT

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) If I profane with my unworhiest 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

95 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

100 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

105 Thus from my lips, by thine, my sin is purged.

JULIET

Then have my lips the sin that they have took.

ROMEO

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

They kiss again

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

ROMEO

*The first fourteen
lines Romeo and
Juliet speak
together form a
sonnet.*

(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 pray-
ing 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 yours.

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.

JULIET

You kiss by th' book.

NURSE

Madam, your mother craves a word with you.

JULIET moves away

ROMEO

110 What is her mother?

NURSE

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

Ay, so I fear. The more is my unrest.

CAPULET

Nay, gentlemen, prepare not to be gone.
120 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.—
More torches here!—Come on then, let's to bed.
Ah, sirrah, by my fay, it waxes late.
125 I'll to my rest.

All but JULIET and NURSE move to exit

JULIET

You kiss like you've studied how.

NURSE

Madam, your mother wants to talk to you.

JULIET moves away.

ROMEO

Who is her mother?

NURSE

Indeed, young man, her mother is the lady of the house. She is a good, wise, and virtuous lady. I nursed her daughter, whom you were just talking to. Let me tell you, the man who marries her will become very wealthy.

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

No gentlemen, don't get ready to go now. We have a little dessert coming up. *(they whisper in his ear)* Is that really true? Well, then, I thank you both. I thank you, honest gentlemen. Good night. Bring more torches over here! Come on, let's all get to bed. *(to his cousin)* Ah, my man, I swear, it's getting late. I'm going to get some rest.

Everyone except JULIET and NURSE begins to exit.

JULIET

Come hither, Nurse. What is yond gentleman?

NURSE

The son and heir of old Tiberio.

JULIET

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

NURSE

Marry, that, I think, be young Petruchio.

JULIET

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

NURSE

I know not.

JULIET

Go ask his name.—If he be married.
My grave is like to be my wedding bed.

NURSE

135 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!
Prodigious birth of love it is to me,
That I must love a loathèd enemy.

NURSE

140 What's this? What's this?

JULIET

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

One calls within "Juliet!"

NURSE

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

Exeunt

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

JULIET

Come over here, nurse. Who is that gentleman?

NURSE

He is the son and heir of old Tiberio.

JULIET

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.

Somebody calls, "Juliet!" from offstage.

NURSE

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

They exit.

ACT TWO

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.
10 Being held a foe, he may not have access
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.

Exit

ACT TWO

PROLOGUE

The CHORUS enters.

CHORUS

Now Romeo's old feelings of desire are dying, and a new desire is eager to take their place. Romeo groaned for the beautiful Rosaline and said he would die for her, but compared with tender Juliet, Rosaline doesn't seem beautiful now. Now someone loves Romeo, and he's in love again—both of them falling for each others' good looks. But he has to make his speeches of love to a woman who's supposed to be his enemy. And she's been hooked by someone she should fear. Because he's an enemy, Romeo has no chance to see Juliet and say the things a lover normally says. And Juliet's just as much in love as he, but she has even less opportunity to meet her lover. But love gives them power, and time gives them the chance to meet, sweetening the extreme danger with intense pleasure.

The CHORUS exits.

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.

BENVOLIO

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.

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.—

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.

ACT 2, SCENE 1

ROMEO enters alone.

ROMEO

Can I go away while my heart stays here? I have to go
back to where my heart is.

ROMEO moves away. BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO enter.

BENVOLIO

(calling) Romeo, my cousin, Romeo, Romeo!

MERCUTIO

He's a smart boy. I bet he slipped away and went home
to bed.

BENVOLIO

He ran this way and jumped over this orchard wall.
Call to him, Mercutio.

MERCUTIO

I'll conjure him as if I were summoning a spirit.
Romeo! Madman! Passion! Lover! Show yourself in
the form of a sigh. Speak one rhyme, and I'll be satis-
fied. Just cry out, "Ah me!" Just say "love" and
"dove." Say just one lovely word to my good friend
Venus. Just say the nickname of her blind son Cupid,
the one who shot arrows so well in the old story.—

Venus is the
Roman goddess
of love.

Romeo doesn't hear me. He doesn't stir. He doesn't
move. The silly ape is dead, but I must make him
appear.—I summon you by Rosaline's bright eyes, by
her high forehead and her red lips, by her fine feet, by
her straight legs, by her trembling thighs, and by the
regions right next to her thighs. In the name of all of
these things, I command you to appear before us in
your true form.

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.
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.—
Come, shall we go?

BENVOLIO

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

Exeunt

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 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. (to BENVOLIO) Come on, should we go?

The medlar is a tree whose fruit was considered to look like a vulva or an anus. The fruits were often called "open-arses." Popperins are Belgian pears; Mercutio uses the name in an obscene double entendre.

BENVOLIO

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

BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO exit.

ACT 2, SCENE 2

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 stream 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!

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

ACT 2, SCENE 2

ROMEO returns.

ROMEO

It's easy for someone to joke about scars if they've never been cut.

JULIET enters on the balcony.

But wait, what's that light in the window over there? It is the east, and Juliet is the sun. Rise up, beautiful sun, and kill the jealous moon. The moon is already sick and pale with grief because you, Juliet, her maid, are more beautiful than she. Don't be her maid, because she is jealous. Virginity makes her look sick and green. Only fools hold on to their virginity. Let it go. Oh, there's my lady! Oh, it is my love. Oh, I wish she knew how much I love her. She's talking, but she's not saying anything. So what? Her eyes are saying something. I will answer them. I am too bold. She's not talking to me. Two of the brightest stars in the whole sky had to go away on business, and they're asking her eyes to twinkle in their places until they return. What if her eyes were in the sky and the stars were in her head?—The brightness of her cheeks would outshine the stars the way the sun outshines a lamp. If her eyes were in the night sky, they would shine so brightly through space that birds would start singing, thinking her light was the light of day. Look how she leans her hand on her cheek. Oh, I wish I was the glove on that hand so that I could touch that cheek.

Diana is the goddess of the moon and of virginity. Romeo implies that Juliet is a servant of the moon as long as she's a virgin.

JULIET

Oh, my!

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

(to himself) She speaks. Oh, speak again, bright angel. You are as glorious as an angel tonight. You shine above me, like a winged messenger from heaven who makes mortal men fall on their backs to look up at the sky, watching the angel walking on the clouds and sailing on the air.

JULIET

(not knowing ROMEO hears her) Oh, Romeo, Romeo, why do you have to be Romeo? Forget about your father and change your name. Or else, if you won't change your name, just swear you love me and I'll stop being a Capulet.

ROMEO

(to himself) Should I listen for more, or should I speak now?

JULIET

(still not knowing ROMEO hears her) It's only your name that's my enemy. You'd still be yourself even if you stopped being a Montague. What's a Montague anyway? It isn't a hand, a foot, an arm, a face, or any other part of a man. Oh, be some other name! What does a name mean? The thing we call a rose would smell just as sweet if we called it by any other name. Romeo would be just as perfect even if he wasn't called Romeo. Romeo, lose your name. Trade in your name—which really has nothing to do with you—and take all of me in exchange.

ROMEO

(to JULIET) I trust your words. Just call me your love, and I will take a new name. From now on I will never be Romeo again.

JULIET

Who are you? Why do you hide in the darkness and listen to my private thoughts?

ROMEO

By a name

I know not how to tell thee who I am.
55 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.
60 Art thou not Romeo, and a Montague?

ROMEO

Neither, fair maid, if either thee dislike.

JULIET

How camest thou hither, tell me, and wherefore?
The orchard walls are high and hard to climb,
And the place death, considering who thou art,
65 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

70 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

75 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.

ROMEO

I don't know how to tell you who I am by telling you
a name. I hate my name, dear saint, because my name
is your enemy. If I had it written down, I would tear up
the paper.

JULIET

I haven't heard you say a hundred words yet, but I recognize
the sound of your voice. Aren't you Romeo?
And aren't you a Montague?

ROMEO

I am neither of those things if you dislike them.

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 see you, they'll murder you.

ROMEO

Alas, one angry look from you would be worse than
twenty of your relatives with swords. Just look at me
kindly, and I'm invincible against their hatred.

JULIET

I'd give anything to keep them from seeing you here.

ROMEO

The darkness will hide me from them. And if you
don't love me, let them find me here. I'd rather they
killed me than have to live without your love.

JULIET

Who told you how to get here below my bedroom?

JULIET

By whose direction found'st thou out this place?

ROMEO

80 By love, that first did prompt me to inquire.
He lent me counsel and I lent him eyes.
I am no pilot. Yet, wert thou as far
As that vast shore washed with the farthest sea,
I would adventure for such merchandise.

JULIET

85 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!
90 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.
95 Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,
I'll frown and be perverse and say thee nay,
So thou wilt woo. But else, not for the world.
In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond,
And therefore thou mayst think my 'havior light.
100 But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true
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,
105 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—

ACT 2, SCENE 2

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

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 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.

*Jove, also called
Jupiter, was the
king of the
Roman gods.*

ROMEO

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

JULIET

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

ROMEO

What shall I swear by?

JULIET

Do not swear at all.

Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,
Which is the god of my idolatry,
115 And I'll believe thee.

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
120 Ere one can say "It lightens." Sweet, good night.
This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.
Good night, good night! As sweet repose and rest
Come to thy heart as that within my breast.

ROMEO

125 O, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

JULIET

What satisfaction canst thou have tonight?

ROMEO

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

JULIET

I gave thee mine before thou didst request it,
And yet I would it were to give again.

ROMEO

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

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

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 should I swear by?

JULIET

Don't swear at all. 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—

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.

ROMEO

Oh, are you going to leave me so unsatisfied?

JULIET

What satisfaction could you possibly have tonight?

ROMEO

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.

ROMEO

You would take it back? Why would you do that, my love?

JULIET

But to be frank, and give it thee again.
And yet I wish but for the thing I have.
My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep. The more I give to thee,
The more I have, for both 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.

Exit JULIET, above

ROMEO

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

Enter JULIET, above

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.

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

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

JULIET

Only to be generous and give it to you once more. But
I'm wishing for something I already have. My gener-
osity 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.

The NURSE calls from offstage.

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.

JULIET exits.

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 enters on her balcony.

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

(offstage) Madam!

JULIET

(to the NURSE) I'll be right there! *(to ROMEO)* But if you
don't have honorable intentions, I beg you—

NURSE

(offstage) Madam!

JULIET

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

ROMEO

So thrive my soul—

JULIET

A thousand times good night!

Exit JULIET. above

ROMEO

A thousand times the worse to want thy light.
Love goes toward love as schoolboys from their books,
160 But love from love, toward school with heavy looks.

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,
165 And make her airy tongue more hoarse than mine,
With repetition of "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!

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

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

My soul depends on it—

JULIET

A thousand times good night.

JULIET exits.

ROMEO

Leaving you is a thousand times worse than being
near you. A lover goes toward his beloved as enthusi-
astically as a schoolboy leaving his books, but when he
leaves his girlfriend, he feels as miserable as the
schoolboy on his way to school.

ROMEO starts to leave. JULIET returns, on her balcony.

JULIET

*Juliet is trying to
call to Romeo as
if he was a falcon.*

Hist, Romeo! Hist! Oh, I wish I could make a fal-
coner'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!"

*Echo, a mythical
woman who was
scorned by Nar-
cissus, withered
with sadness re-
peating his name,
and after her
death, her voice
still reverberated
in caves, which is
why we have the
word "echo."*

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.

JULIET

170 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

175 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

180 'Tis almost morning. I would have thee gone.
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,
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

JULIET

Romeo!

ROMEO

My baby hawk?

JULIET

What time tomorrow should I send a messenger to
you?

ROMEO

By nine o'clock.

JULIET

I won't fail. From now until then seems like twenty
years. I have forgotten why I called you back.

ROMEO

Let me stand here until you remember your reason.

JULIET

I'll forget it, and you'll have to stand there forever. I'll
only remember how much I love your company.

ROMEO

I'll keep standing here, even if you keep forgetting. I'll
forget that I have any home besides this spot right
here.

JULIET

It's almost morning. I want to make you go, but I'd
only let you go as far as a spoiled child lets his pet bird
go. He lets the bird hop a little from his hand and then
yanks him back by a string.

ROMEO

I wish I was your bird.

JULIET

My sweet, so do I. But I would kill you by petting you
too much. Good night, good night. Parting is such
sweet sorrow that I'll say good night until tonight
becomes tomorrow.

JULIET exits.

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

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

ROMEO

I hope you sleep peacefully. I wish I were Sleep and Peace, so I could spend the night with you. Now I'll go see my priest, to ask for his help and tell him about my good luck.

He exits.

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 fleckled darkness like a drunkard reels
 From forth day's path and Titan's fiery wheels.
 5 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.
 10 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.
 15 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
 20 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.
 25 For this, being smelt, with that part cheers each part;
 Being tasted, stays all senses with the heart.
 Two such opposèd kings encamp them still,
 In man as well as herbs—grace and rude will.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

ACT 2, SCENE 3

FRIAR LAWRENCE *enters by himself, carrying a basket.*

FRIAR LAWRENCE

The smiling morning is replacing the frowning night. Darkness is stumbling out of the sun's path like a drunk man. Now, before the sun comes up and burns away the dew, I have to fill this basket of mine with poisonous weeds and medicinal flowers. The Earth is nature's mother and also nature's tomb. Plants are born out of the Earth, and they are buried in the Earth when they die. From the Earth's womb, many different sorts of plants and animals come forth, and the Earth provides her children with many excellent forms of nourishment. Everything nature creates has some special property, and each one is different. Herbs, plants, and stones possess great power. There is nothing on Earth that is so evil that it does not provide the earth with some special quality. And there is nothing that does not turn bad if it's put to the wrong use and abused. Virtue turns to vice if it's misused. Vice sometimes becomes virtue through the right activity.

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.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

30 And where the worser is predominant,
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
40 Thou art uproused by some distemperature.
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

45 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,
50 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.

When evil is dominant, death soon kills the body like cancer.

ROMEO

Good morning, father.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

God bless you. Who greets me so early in the morning? Young man, something's wrong if you're getting out of bed this early. Every old man has worries, and worried men never get any sleep, but young men shouldn't have a care in the world. They should get to bed early and get plenty of sleep. Therefore, the fact that you're awake this early tells me you've been upset with some anxiety. If that's not the case, then this must be the answer: You, Romeo, have not been to bed tonight.

ROMEO

Your last guess is right. I enjoyed a sweeter rest than sleep.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

May God forgive you if you've sinned!—Were you with Rosaline?

ROMEO

With Rosaline, father? No, I have forgotten that girl and all the sadness she brought me.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

That's good, my boy. But where have you been?

ROMEO

I'll tell you before you have to ask me again. I have been feasting with my enemy. Suddenly someone wounded me with love and was wounded with love by me. You have the sacred power to cure both of us. I carry no hatred, holy man, because my request will benefit my enemy.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

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

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,
60 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:
80 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.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

FRIAR LAWRENCE

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

ROMEO

I love rich Capulet's daughter. I love her, and she loves me. We're bound to each other in every possible way, except we need you to marry us. I'll tell you more later about when and where we met, how we fell in love, and how we exchanged promises, but now I'm begging you: please, agree to marry us today.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Holy Saint Francis, this is a drastic change! Have you given up so quickly on Rosaline, whom you loved so much? Then young men love with their eyes, not with their hearts. Jesus and Mary, how many tears did you cry for Rosaline? How many salty tear-drops did you waste salting a love you never tasted? The sun hasn't yet melted away the fog you made with all your sighs. The groans you used to make are still ringing in my old ears. There's still a stain on your cheek from an old tear that hasn't been washed off yet. If you were ever yourself, and this sadness was yours, you and your sadness were all for Rosaline. And now you've changed? Then repeat this after me: you can't expect women to be faithful when men are so unreliable.

ROMEO

You scolded me often for loving Rosaline.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

I scolded you for obsessing about her, not for loving her, my student.

ROMEO

And you told me to bury my love.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

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

ROMEO

85 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,
90 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.

*Exeunt***NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE**

FRIAR LAWRENCE

I didn't tell you to get rid of one love and replace her
with another.

ROMEO

Please, I beg you, don't scold me. The girl I love now
returns my love. The other girl did not love me.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Oh, she knew very well that you were acting like you
were in love without really knowing what love means.
But come on, inconsistent young man, come with me.
I'll help you with your secret wedding. This marriage
may be lucky enough to turn the hatred between your
families into pure love.

ROMEO

Let's get out of here. I'm in a rush.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Go wisely and slowly. Those who rush stumble and
fall.

They exit.

ACT 2, SCENE 4

Enter BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO

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—

ACT 2, SCENE 4

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

ACT 2, SCENE 4

BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO enter.

MERCUTIO

Where the devil can Romeo be? Didn't he come home
last night?

BENVOLIO

Not to his father's house. I asked a servant.

MERCUTIO

That fair-skinned, hard-hearted hussy, Rosaline is
going to torment him until he goes insane.

BENVOLIO

Tybalt, old Capulet's nephew, has sent a letter to
Romeo's father's house.

MERCUTIO

I bet it's a challenge.

BENVOLIO

Romeo will answer the challenge.

MERCUTIO

Any man who knows how to write can answer a letter.

BENVOLIO

No, Romeo will respond to the letter's writer, telling
him whether he accepts the challenge.

MERCUTIO

Oh, poor Romeo! He's already dead. He's been
stabbed by a white girl's black eye. He's been cut
through the ear with a love song. The center of his
heart has been split by blind Cupid's arrow. Is he man
enough at this point to face off with Tybalt?

BENVOLIO

Why, what's Tybalt's story?

MERCUTIO

He's tougher than the Prince of Cats. He does every-
thing by the book. He fights like you sing at a recital,
paying attention to time, distance, and proportion. He

*The Prince of Cats
is a figure from
Medieval lore
whose first name
was also Tybalt.*

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

25 The what?

MERCUTIO

30 The pox of such antic, lispings, affecting fantasmies, 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 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!

Enter ROMEO

BENVOLIO

Here comes Romeo, here comes Romeo.

MERCUTIO

35 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 hildings and harlots, Thisbe a grey eye or so, but not to the purpose.—
40 Signior Romeo, *bonjour*! There's a French salutation to your French slop. You gave us the counterfeit fairly last night.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

takes the proper breaks: one, two, and the third in your heart. He's the butcher who can hit any silk button. A master of duels. He's a gentleman from the finest school of fencing. He knows how to turn any argument into a swordfight. He knows *passado*—the forward thrust—the *punto reverso*—the backhand thrust—and the *hai*—the thrust that goes straight through.

Mercutio lists Italian terms for fencing moves.

BENVOLIO

He knows what?

MERCUTIO

I hate these crazy, affected guys who use foreign phrases and newfangled expressions. I hate their strange manners and their weird accents! I hate it when they say, "By Jesus, this is a very good 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!"

ROMEO enters.

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.

Mercutio teases Romeo by alluding to the poet Petrarch and six mythical and historical women who inspired love poetry.

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
45 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.
50

MERCUTIO

Nay, I am the very pink of courtesy.

ROMEO

Pink for flower.

MERCUTIO

Right.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

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 under-
stand 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

*Mercutio implies
Romeo's business
was sexual.*
In other words "important business" made you flex
your buttocks.

ROMEO

You mean do a curtsy?

MERCUTIO

*This is sexual
double entendre.*
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

*"Pink flower"
suggests the
female genitalia.*
The pink flower.

MERCUTIO

Right.

ROMEO

Why, then is my pump well flowered.

MERCUTIO

55 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

60 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

65 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

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

MERCUTIO

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

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

ROMEO

Romeo plays along: pump= shoe and penis.
Well, then my pump is well decorated with flowers.

MERCUTIO

Alright my witty friend, this joke has worn out your pump. Its thin skin is all worn out. The joke is all you have left.

ROMEO

This is a bad joke. It's all silliness.

MERCUTIO

Come break this up, Benvolio. I'm losing this duel of wits.

ROMEO

Keep going, keep going, or I'll declare myself the winner.

MERCUTIO

Now, if our jokes go on a wild-goose chase, I'm finished. You have more wild goose in one of your jokes than I have in five of mine. Was I even close to you in the chase for the goose?

ROMEO

Romeo implies that Mercutio is only good for jokes.
You were never with me for anything if you weren't there for the goose.

MERCUTIO

I'll bite you on the ear for that joke.

ROMEO

No, good goose, don't bite me.

MERCUTIO

Your joke is a very bitter apple. Your humor is a spicy sauce.

ROMEO

Then isn't it just the right dish for a sweet goose?

MERCUTIO

Oh, that's a joke made out of leather that spreads itself thin, from the width of an inch to as fat as a yard.

ROMEO

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

MERCUTIO

75 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

80 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

85 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

Peter!

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

ROMEO

I stretch my joke for that word "fat." If you add that word to the word "goose," it shows that you are a fat goose.

MERCUTIO

Why, isn't all this joking better than groaning about love? Now you're sociable. Now you're Romeo. Now you are what you've learned to be and what you are naturally. This love of yours was like a blithering idiot who runs up and down looking for a hole to hide his toy in.

Toy = a double entendre for penis

BENVOLIO

Stop there, stop there.

MERCUTIO

Tale = a double entendre for penis

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

Benvolio makes the cry of a sailor who spots another ship on the horizon because the nurse is fat and silly-looking.

A sail, a sail!

MERCUTIO

There's two—a man and a woman.

NURSE

Peter!

PETER

90 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

God ye good e'en, fair gentlewoman.

NURSE

95 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

100 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

105 I can tell you, but young Romeo will be older when 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.

MERCUTIO

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

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

PETER

I'm at your service.

NURSE

Give me my fan, Peter.

MERCUTIO

Good Peter, give her her fan to hide her face. Her fan is prettier than her face.

NURSE

Good morning, gentlemen.

MERCUTIO

Good afternoon, fair lady.

NURSE

Is it now afternoon?

MERCUTIO

Again, Mercutio's language is full of offensive sexual innuendo.

It's not earlier than that, I tell you. The lusty hand of the clock is now pricking noon.

NURSE

Get out of here! What kind of man are you?

MERCUTIO

I'm a man, my lady, that God has made for himself to ruin.

NURSE

I swear, you speak the truth. "For himself to ruin," he says. Gentlemen, can any of you tell me where I can find young Romeo?

ROMEO

I can tell you, but young Romeo will be older when you find him than he was when you started looking for him. I am the youngest man by that name, because there is no one younger, or worse.

NURSE

You speak well.

MERCUTIO

Is the worst well? Very well taken, I believe, very wise.

NURSE

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

BENVOLIO

She will indite him to some supper.

MERCUTIO

110 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)

115

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)

120

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

ROMEO

I will follow you.

MERCUTIO

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

Exeunt MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

NURSE

The nurse means "conference," not confidence. This is a joke called a malapropism, where the right word is replaced by a similar-sounding word with a completely different meaning.

(to ROMEO) If you're the Romeo I'm looking for, sir, I would like to have a confidence with you.

BENVOLIO

Benvolio makes fun of the Nurse by saying "indite" instead of "invite."

She will indite him to some dinner party.

MERCUTIO

A pimp! A pimp! A pimp! I've found it out.

ROMEO

What have you found out?

MERCUTIO

She's not a prostitute unless she's using her ugliness to hide her promiscuity.

(he walks by them and sings)

Old rabbit meat is good to eat,
If you can't get anything else.
But if it's so old,
That it goes bad before you eat it,
Then it was a waste of money.

(speaking)

Romeo, are you going to your father's for lunch? Let's go there.

ROMEO

I'll follow after you.

MERCUTIO

Mercutio mockingly sings a romantic song to the Nurse.

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

BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO exit.

NURSE

125 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

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

135 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

140 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

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

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

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 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

150 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

155 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

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

ROMEO

165 And stay, good Nurse. Behind the abbey wall
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.

NURSE

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

ROMEO

What sayst thou, my dear Nurse?

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

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 pay-
ing attention to me.

NURSE

*Here the Nurse
makes another
malapropism,
saying "protest"
when she means
"propose."*

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 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.

NURSE

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

ROMEO

What do you have to say, my dear Nurse?

NURSE

170 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
175 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
180 *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
185 good to hear it.

ROMEO

Commend me to thy lady.

NURSE

Ay, a thousand times.—Peter!

PETER

Anon!

NURSE

Before and apace.

Exeunt

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

NURSE

Can your man keep a secret? Haven't you ever heard
the saying, "Two can conspire to put one away"?

ROMEO

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

NURSE

*Rosemary was a
token of
remembrance
between lovers and
for the dead.*

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

(giving *PETER* her fan) Go ahead. Go quickly.

They all exit.

ACT 2, SCENE 5

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,
 5 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
 10 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,
 15 And his to me.
 But old folks, many feign as they were dead,
 Unwieldy, slow, heavy, and pale as lead.

Enter NURSE and PETER

O God, she comes.—O honey Nurse, what news?
 Hast thou met with him? Send thy man away.

NURSE

20 Peter, stay at the gate.

Exit PETER

JULIET

Now, good sweet Nurse—O Lord, why look'st thou sad?
 Though news be sad, yet tell them merrily.
 If good, thou shamest the music of sweet news
 By playing it to me with so sour a face.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

ACT 2, SCENE 5

JULIET enters.

JULIET

I sent the Nurse at nine o'clock. Maybe she can't find him. That can't be. Oh, she's slow! Love's messengers should be thoughts, which fly ten times faster than sunbeams. They should be strong enough to push shadows over the dark hills. That's the way doves carry Venus so fast, and that's why Cupid has wings that let him fly as fast as the wind. Now it's noon. That's three hours since nine o'clock, but she hasn't come back. If she was young and passionate, she'd move as fast as a ball. My words would bounce her to my sweet love, and his words would bounce her back to me. But a lot of old people act like they're already dead—sluggish, slow, fat, and colorless, like lead.

The NURSE and PETER enter.

Oh my God, here she comes! Oh sweet Nurse, what news do you bring? Have you spoken to him? Send your man away.

NURSE

Peter, wait for me at the gate.

PETER exits.

JULIET

Now, good sweet Nurse—Oh Lord, why do you look so sad? Even if the news is sad, tell me with a smile on your face. If the news is good, you're ruining the sweet news by playing a trick with a sour face like that.

NURSE

25 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

30 Jesu, what haste! Can you not stay awhile?
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?
The excuse that thou dost make in this delay
Is longer than the tale thou dost excuse.
35 Is thy news good, or bad? Answer to that.
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
40 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

45 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!

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

NURSE

I am tired. Leave me alone for a minute. Oh my, my
bones ache so much. I've been running all over the
place.

JULIET

I wish you had my bones, and I had your news. Come
on now, I beg you, speak, good Nurse, speak.

NURSE

Sweet Jesus, you're in such a hurry! Can't you wait for
a moment? Don't you see that I'm 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 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

50 Beshrew your heart for sending me about,
To catch my death with jaunting up and down!

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
55 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,
60 '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
65 Have you got leave to go to shrift today?

JULIET
I have.

NURSE
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.
70 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.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

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
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

75

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.

JULIET

Hie to high fortune! Honest Nurse, farewell.

Exeunt

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

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.

JULIET

Wish me luck. Thank you, dear Nurse.

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.
Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow.

Enter JULIET, somewhat fast, and embraceth ROMEO

Here comes the lady. Oh, so light a foot
Will ne'er wear out the everlasting flint.
A lover may bstride 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.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

ACT 2, SCENE 6

FRIAR LAWRENCE and ROMEO enter.

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, 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

25

Ah, Juliet, if the measure of thy joy
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

30

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

35

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***NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE**

JULIET

I'll give him equal thanks, so we're even.

ROMEO

Ah, Juliet if you're as happy as I am, and you're better
with words, tell me about the happiness you imagine
we'll have in our marriage.

JULIET

I can imagine more than I can say—I have more on my
mind than words. Anyone who can count how much
he has is poor. My true love has made me so rich that
I can't count even half of my wealth.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Come, come with me, and we'll do the job quickly.
Because if you don't mind, I'm not leaving you two
alone until you're united in marriage.

They exit.

ACT THREE

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

5 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

10 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

15 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 because thou hast hazel
20 eyes. What eye but such an eye would spy out such a

ACT THREE

SCENE 1

*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 sec-
ond 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 man who's cracking nuts just
because you have hazelnut-colored eyes. Only you

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

25

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!

BENVOLIO

30

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

35

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

40

Could you not take some occasion without giving?

TYBALT

Mercutio, thou consort'st with Romeo.

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!

BENVOLIO

If I were in the habit of fighting the way you are, my life insurance rates would be sky high.

MERCUTIO

Your life insurance? That's foolish.

TYBALT, PETRUCHIO, and CAPULETS enter.

BENVOLIO

Oh great, here come the Capulets.

MERCUTIO

Well, well, I don't care.

TYBALT

(to PETRUCHIO and others) Follow me closely, I'll talk to them. *(to the MONTAGUES)* Good afternoon, gentlemen. I'd like to have a word with one of you.

MERCUTIO

You just want one word with one of us? Put it together with something else. Make it a word and a blow.

TYBALT

You'll find me ready enough to do that, sir, if you give me a reason.

MERCUTIO

Can't you find a reason without my giving you one?

TYBALT

Mercutio, you hang out 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.
45 Zounds, "consort"!

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

50 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.
55 Your worship in that sense may call him "man."

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
60 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.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

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 out!"

BENVOLIO

We're talking here in a public place. Either go some-
place 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

65 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

70 O calm dishonourable, vile submission!
Alla stoccata carries it away. (*draws his sword*)
Tybalt, you ratcatcher, will you walk?

TYBALT

What wouldst thou have with me?

MERCUTIO

75 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

I am for you. (*draws his sword*)

ROMEO

Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up.

MERCUTIO

80 Come, sir, your *passado*.

MERCUTIO and TYBALT fight

ROMEO

85 (*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

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

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 satis-
fied 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

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.

ROMEO

(*drawing his sword*) Draw your sword, Benvolio. Let's
beat down their weapons. Gentlemen, stop this dis-
graceful 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 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

90 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

95 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

100 I thought all for the best.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

ROMEO tries to break up the fight. TYBALT reaches under
 ROMEO'S arm and 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.

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!

Exeunt MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO

ROMEO

105 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,
110 Thy beauty hath made me effeminate
And in my temper softened valor's 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.

ROMEO

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

Enter TYBALT

BENVOLIO

Here comes the furious Tybalt back again.

ROMEO

120 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

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

MERCUTIO

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!

MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO exit.

ROMEO

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 soft-
ened my bravery, which before was as hard as steel.

BENVOLIO enters.

BENVOLIO

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

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

TYBALT enters.

BENVOLIO

Here comes the furious Tybalt back again.

ROMEO

He's alive and victorious, and Mercutio's dead?
Enough with mercy and consideration. It's time for
rage to guide my actions. Now, Tybalt, you can call me
"villain" the way you did before. Mercutio's soul is

That late thou gavest me, for Mercutio's soul
Is but a little way above our heads,
Staying for thine to keep him company.
125 Either thou or I, or both, must go with him.

TYBALT

Thou, wretched boy, that didst consort him here
Shalt with him hence.

ROMEO

This shall determine that.

They fight. TYBALT falls

BENVOLIO

Romeo, away, be gone!
The citizens are up, and Tybalt slain.
130 Stand not amazed. The Prince will doom thee death
If thou art taken. Hence, be gone, away!

ROMEO

Oh, I am fortune's fool!

BENVOLIO

Why dost thou stay?

Exit ROMEO

Enter CITIZENS OF THE WATCH

CITIZEN OF THE WATCH

Which way ran he that killed Mercutio?
Tybalt, that murderer, which way ran he?

BENVOLIO

135 There lies that Tybalt.

CITIZEN OF THE WATCH

(to TYBALT) Up, sir, go with me.
I charge thee in the Prince's name, obey.

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

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

floating right above our heads. He's waiting for you to
keep him company on the way up to heaven. Either
you, or I, or both of us have to 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 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 are you waiting?

ROMEO exits.

The CITIZENS OF THE WATCH enter.

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) Get up, sir, and come with me. I command
you, by the authority of the Prince, to obey me.

*The PRINCE enters with 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!
O Prince! O cousin! Husband! Oh, the blood is spilled
Of my dear kinsman! Prince, as thou art true,
For blood of ours shed blood of Montague.
O cousin, cousin!

PRINCE

Benvolio, who began this bloody fray?

BENVOLIO

Tybalt here slain, whom Romeo's hand did slay.
Romeo, that spoke him fair, bade him bethink
How nice the quarrel was and urged withal
Your high displeasure. All this uttered
With gentle breath, calm look, knees humbly bowed,
Could not take truce with the unruly spleen
Of Tybalt deaf to peace, but that he tilts
With piercing steel at bold Mercutio's breast,
Who, all as hot, turns deadly point to point,
And, with a martial scorn, with one hand beats
Cold death aside and with the other sends
It back to Tybalt, whose dexterity,
Retorts it. Romeo, he cries aloud,
"Hold, friends! Friends, part!" and, swifter than his
tongue,
His agile arm beats down their fatal points,
And 'twixt them rushes—underneath whose arm
An envious thrust from Tybalt hit the life
Of stout Mercutio, and then Tybalt fled.

PRINCE

Where are the evil men who started this fight?

BENVOLIO

Oh, noble prince, I can tell you everything about the unfortunate circumstances of this deadly fight. Over there Tybalt is lying dead. He killed your relative, brave Mercutio, and then young Romeo killed him.

LADY CAPULET

Tybalt was my nephew! He was my brother's son! Oh Prince, oh nephew, oh husband! Oh, my nephew is dead! Oh Prince, as you are a man of honor, take revenge for this murder by killing someone from the Montague family. Oh cousin, cousin!

PRINCE

Benvolio, who started 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.

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.

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***NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE**

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

Benvolio is part of the Montague family. His loyalties to the Montagues make him tell lies. He's not telling the truth. There were twenty Montagues fighting in this awful riot, and together those twenty could only kill one man. I demand justice. You, Prince, are the man who can give me justice. Romeo killed Tybalt. Romeo must die.

PRINCE

Romeo killed Tybalt. Tybalt killed Mercutio. Who should now pay the price for Mercutio's life?

MONTAGUE

Not Romeo, Prince. He was Mercutio's friend. His crime did justice's job by taking Tybalt's life.

PRINCE

And for that crime, Romeo is hereby exiled from Verona. I'm involved in your rivalry. Mercutio was my relative, and he lies dead because of your bloody feud. I'll punish you so harshly that you'll regret causing me this loss. I won't listen to your pleas or excuses. You can't get out of trouble by praying or crying, so don't bother. Tell Romeo to leave the city immediately, or else, if he is found, he will be killed. Take away this body, and do what I say. Showing mercy by pardoning killers only causes more murders.

They exit.

ACT 3, SCENE 2

Enter JULIET alone

JULIET

Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,
 Toward Phoebus' lodging. Such a waggoner
 As Phaeton would whip you to the west
 And bring in cloudy night immediately.
 5 Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night,
 That runaways' eyes may wink, and Romeo
 Leap to these arms, untalked of and unseen.
 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.
 20 Come, gentle night, come, loving, black-browed night,
 Give me my Romeo. And when I shall die,
 Take him and cut him out in little stars,
 And he will make the face of heaven so fine
 That all the world will be in love with night
 25 And pay no worship to the garish sun.
 Oh, I have bought the mansion of a love,
 But not possessed it, and though I am sold,
 Not yet enjoyed. So tedious is this day
 As is the night before some festival
 30 To an impatient child that hath new robes
 And may not wear them.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

ACT 3, SCENE 2

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 my husband and lose my virginity. Let the blood rushing to my cheeks be calmed. In the darkness, let me, a shy virgin, learn the strange act of sex so that it seems innocent, modest, and true. Come, night. Come, Romeo. You're like a day that comes during the night. You're whiter than snow on the black wings of a raven. Come, gentle night. Come, loving, dark night. Give me my Romeo. And when I die, turn him into stars and form a constellation in his image. His face will make the heavens so beautiful that the world will fall in love with the night and forget about the garish sun. Oh, I have bought love's mansion, but I haven't moved in yet. I belong to Romeo now, but he hasn't taken possession of me yet. This day is so boring that I feel like a child on the night before a holiday, waiting to put on my fancy new clothes.

Enter NURSE with cords

Oh, here comes my Nurse,
And she brings news, and every tongue that speaks
But Romeo's name speaks heavenly eloquence. —
Now, Nurse, what news? What hast thou there? The cords
That Romeo bid thee fetch?

NURSE

Ay, ay, the cords.

JULIET

Ay me, what news? Why dost thou wring thy hands?

NURSE

Ah, welladay! He's dead, he's dead, he's dead!
We are undone, lady, we are undone!
Alack the day! He's gone, he's killed, he's dead!

JULIET

Can heaven be so envious?

NURSE

Romeo can,
Though heaven cannot. O Romeo, Romeo!
Who ever would have thought it? 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 *I* 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.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

The NURSE enters with the rope ladder in her pouch.

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. 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 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, 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.
60 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

65 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

70 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

75 O serpent heart hid with a flowering face!
Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave?
Beautiful tyrant! Fiend angelical!
Dove-feathered raven, wolvis-ravens lamb!
Despisèd substance of divinest show,
Just opposite to what thou justly seem'st.
80 A damnèd saint, an honorable villain!
O nature, what hadst thou to do in hell
When thou didst bower the spirit of a fiend
In moral paradise of such sweet flesh?

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

Pale as ashes and drenched in blood. All the dried
blood was so gory. I fainted when I saw it.

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 beau-
tiful 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 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

85 Was ever book containing such vile matter
So fairly bound? Oh, that deceit should dwell
In such a gorgeous palace!

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.—
90 These griefs, these woes, these sorrows make me old.
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.
95 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,
100 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,
105 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, worser than Tybalt's death,
110 That murdered me. I would forget it fain,
But oh, it presses to my memory,
Like damnèd guilty deeds to sinners' minds.
"Tybalt is dead, and Romeo banishèd."

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

such an evil book with such a beautiful cover? Oh, I can't believe the deepest evil lurked inside something so beautiful!

NURSE

There is no trust, no faith, no honesty in men. All of them lie. All of them cheat. They're all wicked. Ah, where's my servant?—Give me some brandy.—These griefs, these pains, these sorrows make me old. Shame on Romeo!

JULIET

I hope sores cover your tongue for a wish like that! He was not born to be shameful. Shame does not belong with Romeo. He deserves only honor, complete honor. Oh, I was such a beast to be angry at him.

NURSE

Are you going to say good things about the man who killed your cousin?

JULIET

Am I supposed to say bad things about my own husband? Ah, my poor husband, who will sing your praises when I, your wife of three hours, have been saying awful things about you? But why, you villain, did you kill my cousin? Probably because my cousin the villain would have killed my husband. I'm not going to cry any tears. I would cry with joy that Romeo is alive, but I should cry tears of grief because Tybalt is dead. My husband, whom Tybalt wanted to kill, is alive. Tybalt, who wanted to kill my husband, is dead. All this is comforting news. Why, then, should I cry? There is news worse than the news that Tybalt is dead, news that makes me want to die. I would be glad to forget about it, but it weighs on my memory like sins linger in guilty minds. "Tybalt is dead, and Romeo has been banished."

115 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,
 Why followed not, when she said "Tybalt's dead,"
 120 "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,
 125 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 corpse.
 130 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.
 135 He made you for a highway to my bed,
 But I, a maid, die maiden-widowed.
 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
 140 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's cell.

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, "Tybalt's dead," she told me my mother or my father, or both, were gone. That would have made me make the normal cries of sadness. But to say that Tybalt's dead and then say, "Romeo has been banished." To say that is like saying that my father, my mother, Tybalt, Romeo, and Juliet have all been killed, they're all dead. "Romeo has been banished." That news brings infinite death. No words can express the pain. Where are my father and my mother, Nurse?

NURSE

They are crying and moaning over Tybalt's corpse. Are you going to join them? I'll bring you there.

JULIET

Are they washing out his wounds with their tears? I'll cry my tears for Romeo's banishment when their tears are dry. Pick up this rope ladder. This poor rope ladder, it's useless now, just like me, because Romeo has been exiled. He made this rope ladder to be a highway to my bed, but I am a virgin, and I will die a virgin and a widow. Let's go, rope ladder. Nurse, I'm going to lie in my wedding bed. And death, not Romeo, can take my virginity!

NURSE

Go to your bedroom. I'll find Romeo to comfort you. I know where he is. Listen, your Romeo will be here tonight. I'll go to him. He's hiding out in Friar Lawrence's 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

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

JULIET

(giving her a ring) Oh, find him! Give this ring to my
true knight! And tell him to come here to say his last
goodbye.

They exit.

ACT 3, SCENE 3

Enter FRIAR LAWRENCE

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

5 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
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

20 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,"

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

ACT 3, SCENE 3

FRIAR LAWRENCE *enters*.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

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

ROMEO *enters*.

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 for
you about the Prince's punishment.

ROMEO

Is the Prince's punishment any less awful than
doomsday?

FRIAR LAWRENCE

He made a gentler decision. You won't die, but you'll
be banished from the city.

ROMEO

Ha, banishment? Be merciful and say "death." Exile
is much worse than death. Don't say "banishment."

FRIAR LAWRENCE

From now on, you are banished from Verona. You
should be able to endure this because the world is
broad and wide.

ROMEO

There is no world for me outside the walls of Verona,
except purgatory, torture, and hell itself. So to be ban-
ished from Verona is like being banished from the
world, and being banished from the world is death.

Is death misterm'd. 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,
30 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
35 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.
40 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,
45 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,
50 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.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

Banishment is death by the wrong name. Calling death banishment is like cutting off my head with a golden ax and smiling while I'm being murdered.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Oh, deadly sin! Oh, rude and unthankful boy! You committed a crime that is punishable by death, but our kind Prince took sympathy on you and ignored the law when he substituted banishment for death. This is kind mercy, and you don't realize it.

ROMEO

It's torture, not mercy. Heaven is here because Juliet lives here. Every cat and dog and little mouse, every unworthy animal that lives here can see her, but Romeo can't. Flies are healthier and more honorable and better suited for romance than Romeo. They can take hold of Juliet's wonderful white hand and they can kiss her sweet lips. Even while she remains a pure virgin, she blushes when her lips touch each other because she thinks it's a sin. But Romeo can't kiss her or hold her hand because he's been banished. Flies can kiss her, but I must flee the city. Flies are like free men, but I have been banished. And yet you say that exile is not death? Did you have no poison, no sharp knife, no weapon you could use to kill me quickly, nothing so disgraceful, except banishment? Oh Friar, damned souls use the 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.

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.

ROMEO

How should they, when that wise men have no eyes?

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Let me dispute with thee of thy estate.

ROMEO

Thou canst not speak of that thou dost not feel.
Wert thou as young as I, Juliet thy love,
An hour but married, Tybalt murdered,
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.

Knocking from within

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Arise. One knocks. Good Romeo, hide thyself.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

ROMEO

Oh, 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.

ROMEO

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.

Knocking from offstage.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Get up. Somebody's knocking. Hide yourself, good Romeo.

ROMEO

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

Knocking

FRIAR LAWRENCE

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

Knocking

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

Knocking

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

NURSE

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

FRIAR LAWRENCE

(opens the door) Welcome then.

Enter NURSE

NURSE

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

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

ROMEO

I won't hide unless all the mist from my heartsick
groans envelopes me like fog and conceals me from
people's searching eyes.

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 and hide in my study.—Just a minute—For the
love of God, why are you being so stupid? I'm coming.
I'm coming.

Knocking.

Why are you knocking so hard? Where do you come
from? What do you want?

NURSE

(from offstage) Let me come in, and I'll tell you why I
came. I come from Lady Juliet.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

(opening the door) Welcome, then.

The NURSE enters.

NURSE

Oh, holy Friar, Oh, tell me, holy Friar, where is my
lady's husband? Where's Romeo?

FRIAR LAWRENCE

There on the ground, with his own tears made drunk.

NURSE

85 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.
90 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,
95 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

100 Oh, she says nothing, sir, but weeps and weeps,
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
105 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*)

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

FRIAR LAWRENCE

He's there on the ground. He's been getting drunk on his own tears.

NURSE

Oh, he's acting just like Juliet, just like her. Oh painful sympathy! What a pitiful problem! She's lying on the ground just like him, blubbering and weeping, weeping and blubbering. Stand up. Stand up. Stand up if you're really a man. For Juliet's sake, for her sake, rise and stand up. Why should you fall into so deep a moan?

ROMEO

Nurse!

NURSE

Ah sir, ah sir. Well, death is the end for everybody.

ROMEO

Were you talking about Juliet? How is she? Does she think that I'm a practiced murderer because I tainted our newfound joy by killing one of her close relatives? Where is she? How is she doing? What does my hidden wife say about our ruined love?

NURSE

Oh, she doesn't say anything, sir. She just weeps and weeps. She falls on her bed and then starts to get up. Then she calls out Tybalt's name and cries "Romeo," and then she falls down again.

ROMEO

She's calling out my name as if I were a bullet murdering her, just like I murdered her relative. Tell me, Friar, in what part of my body is my name embedded? Tell me, so I can cut it out of myself. (*he draws his dagger*)

PRIAR LAWRENCE

Hold thy desperate hand.
 Art thou a man? Thy form cries out thou art.
 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,
 115 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?
 120 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
 125 Which should bedeck thy shape, thy love, thy wit.
 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;
 130 Thy wit, that ornament to shape and love,
 Misshapen in the conduct of them both,
 Like powder in a skill-less soldier's flask,
 Is set afire by thine own ignorance;
 And thou dismembered with thine own defence.
 135 What, 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
 140 And turns it to exile—there art thou happy.
 A pack of blessings light upon thy back,
 Happiness courts thee in her best array,

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

PRIAR LAWRENCE

Hold on, and don't act out of desperation. Are you a man? You look like a man, but your tears make you look like a woman. Your wild actions resemble the irrational fury of a beast. You're a shameful woman who looks like a man or else an ugly creature who's half-man, half-beast. You have amazed me. I swear by my holy order, I thought you were smarter and more rational than this. Have you killed Tybalt? Will you kill yourself? And would you also kill your wife, who shares your life, by committing the sin of killing yourself? Why do you complain about your birth, the heavens, and the earth? Life is the union of soul in body through the miracle of birth, but you would throw all that away. You bring shame to your body, your love, and your mind. You have so much natural talent, but like someone who hoards money, you use none of your talent for the right purpose—not your body, not your love, not your mind. Your body is just a wax figure, without the honor of a man. The love that you promised was a hollow lie. You're killing the love that you vowed to cherish. Your mind, which aids both your body and your love, has mishandled both of them. You're like a stupid soldier whose gunpowder explodes because he's careless. The things you were supposed to use to defend yourself end up killing you. Get up, man! Your Juliet is alive. It was for her that you were almost killed earlier. Be happy that she's alive. Tybalt wanted to kill you, but you killed Tybalt. Be happy that you're alive. The law that threatened your life was softened into exile. Be happy about that. Your life is full of blessings. You have the best sorts of happiness to enjoy.

145 But, like a misbehaved and sullen wench,
 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,
 150 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 hundred thousand times more joy
 Than thou went'st forth in lamentation.—
 155 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

160 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.
 (*gives ROMEO JULIET'S ring*)
 Hie you, make haste, for it grows very late.

Exit NURSE

ROMEO

165 How well my comfort is revived by this!

But like a misbehaved, sullen girl, you're whining about your bad luck and your love. Listen, listen, people who act like that die miserable. Go be with your love, as it was decided at your wedding. Climb up to her bedroom and comfort her. But get out of there before the night watchmen take their positions. Then you will escape to the city of Mantua, where you'll live until we can make your marriage public and make peace between your families. We'll ask the Prince to pardon you. Then we'll welcome you back with twenty thousand times more joy than you'll have when you leave this town crying. Go ahead, Nurse. Give my regards to your lady, and tell her to hurry everybody in the house to bed. I'm sure they're all so sad that they'll be ready to sleep. Romeo is coming.

NURSE

O Lord, I could stay here all night listening to such good advice. Educated men are so impressive! (*speaking to ROMEO*) My lord, I'll tell my lady you will come.

ROMEO

Do so, and tell my sweet to be ready to scold me.

NURSE

Here, sir, this is a ring she asked me to give you. Hurry up, it's getting late. (*she gives ROMEO JULIET'S ring*)
The NURSE exits.

ROMEO

This makes me feel so much better!

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***NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE**

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Now get out of here. Good night. Everything depends on this: either be out of here before the night watchmen take their positions, or leave in disguise after daybreak. Take a little vacation in Mantua. I'll find your servant, and he'll update you now and then on your case as it stands here. Give me your hand. It's late. Farewell. Good night.

ROMEO

I'm off to experience the greatest joy of all, but still it's sad to leave you in such a rush. Farewell.

They exit.

ACT 3, SCENE 4

Enter CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, and PARIS

CAPULET

Things have fall'n out, sir, so unluckily,
 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

Monday, my lord.

CAPULET

Monday! Ha, ha. Well, Wednesday is too soon,
 O' Thursday let it be.—O' Thursday, tell her,
 She shall be married to this noble earl.—
 Will you be ready? Do you like this haste?
 We'll keep no great ado, a friend or two.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

ACT 3, SCENE 4

Enter CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, and PARIS.

CAPULET

Things have turned out so unluckily, sir, that we
 haven't had time to convince our daughter to marry
 you. Listen, she loved her cousin Tybalt dearly, and so
 did I. Well, we were all born to die. It's very late, she
 won't be coming downstairs tonight. Believe me, if
 you weren't here visiting me, I myself would have
 gone to bed an hour ago.

PARIS

These times of pain are bad times for romance.
 Madam, good night. Give my regards to your
 daughter.

LADY CAPULET

I will. And I'll find out what she thinks about marriage
 early tomorrow. Tonight she is shut up in her room,
 alone with her sadness.

CAPULET

Sir Paris, I'll make a desperate argument for my
 child's love. I think she'll do whatever I say. No, I
 think she'll do all that and more. I have no doubt about
 it. Wife, visit her in her room before you go to bed. Tell
 her about my son Paris's love for her. And tell her, lis-
 ten to me, on Wednesday—Wait—What day is
 today?

PARIS

Monday, my lord.

CAPULET

Monday! Ha, ha! Well, Wednesday is too soon. Let it
 be on Thursday. On Thursday, tell her, she'll be mar-
 ried to this noble earl. Will you be ready? Do you
 think it's a good idea to rush? We shouldn't have too
 big a celebration—we can invite a friend or two.

25 For, hark you, Tybalt being slain so late,
It may be thought we held him carelessly,
Being our kinsman, if we revel much.
Therefore we'll have some half a dozen friends,
And there an end. But what say you to Thursday?

PARIS

30 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!
35 Afore me! It is so very late,
That we may call it early by and by.—
Good night.

Exeunt

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

Listen, because Tybalt was just killed, people might think that we don't care about his memory as our relative if we have too grand a party. Therefore we'll have about half a dozen friends to the wedding, and that's it. What do you think about Thursday?

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.

They all exit.

ACT 3, SCENE 5

Enter ROMEO and JULIET aloft

JULIET

Wilt thou be gone? It is not yet near day.
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
That pierced the fearful hollow of thine ear.
Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate tree.
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

5 ROMEO

It was the lark, the herald of the morn,
No nightingale. Look, love, what envious streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east.
Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops.
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

JULIET

Yon light is not daylight, I know it, I.
It is some meteor that the sun exhales
To be to thee this night a torchbearer,
And light thee on thy way to Mantua.
Therefore stay yet. Thou need'st not to be gone.

15 ROMEO

Let me be ta'en. Let me be put to death.
I am content, so thou wilt have it so.
I'll say yon grey is not the morning's eye.
'Tis but the pale reflex of Cynthia's brow.
Nor that is not the lark, whose notes do beat
The vaulty heaven so high above our heads.
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.

25

ACT 3, SCENE 5
NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

ACT 3, SCENE 5

ROMEO and JULIET enter above the stage.

JULIET

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

→
*The lark sings in
the morning, the
nightingale sings at
night.*

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

That 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 captured. Let me be put to death. I am con-
tent, if that's the way you want it. I'll say the light over
there isn't morning. 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

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.
30 This doth not so, for she divideth us.
Some say the lark and loathèd toad change eyes.
Oh, now I would they had changed voices too,
Since arm from arm that voice doth us affray,
Hunting thee hence with hunt's-up to the day.
35 O, now be gone. More light and light it grows.

ROMEO

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

Enter NURSE

NURSE

Madam.

JULIET

Nurse?

NURSE

Your lady mother is coming to your chamber.
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

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

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.

A folktale said that the lark had gotten its ugly eyes from the toad, who had taken its pretty eyes from the lark.

ROMEO

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

The NURSE enters.

NURSE

Madam.

JULIET

Nurse?

NURSE

Your mother is coming to your bedroom. Day has broken. Be careful. Watch out.

The NURSE exits.

JULIET

Then the window lets day in, and life goes out the window.

ROMEO

Farewell, farewell! Give me one kiss, and I'll go down.

They kiss. ROMEO drops the ladder and goes down.

JULIET

Art thou gone so, love, lord? Ay, husband, friend,
I must hear from thee every day in the hour,
45 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

50 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
55 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.
60 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?

JULIET

Are you gone like that, my love, my lord? Yes, my husband, my friend! I must hear from you every day in the hour. In a minute there are many days. Oh, by this count I'll be many years older before I see my Romeo again.

ROMEO

Farewell! I won't miss any chance to send my love to you.

JULIET

Oh, do you think we'll ever meet again?

ROMEO

I have no doubts. All these troubles will give us stories to tell each other later in life.

JULIET

Oh God, I have a soul that predicts evil things! Now that you are down there, you look like someone dead in the bottom of a tomb. Either my eyesight is failing me, or you look pale.

ROMEO

And trust me, love, you look pale to me too. Sadness takes away our color. Goodbye, Goodbye!

ROMEO exits.

JULIET

Oh luck, luck. Everyone says you can't make up your mind. If you change your mind so much, what are you going to do to Romeo, who's so faithful? Change your mind, luck. I hope maybe then you'll send him back home soon.

LADY CAPULET

(offstage) Hey, daughter! Are you awake?

JULIET

65 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?

Enter LADY CAPULET

LADY CAPULET

Why, how now, Juliet?

JULIET

Madam, I am not well.

LADY CAPULET

Evermore weeping for your cousin's death?
70 What, wilt thou wash him from his grave with tears?
An if thou couldst, thou couldst not make him live.
Therefore, have done. Some grief shows much of love,
But much of grief shows still some want of wit.

JULIET

Yet let me weep for such a feeling loss.

LADY CAPULET

75 So shall you feel the loss, but not the friend
Which you weep for.

JULIET

Feeling so the loss,
Cannot choose but ever weep the friend.

LADY CAPULET

Well, girl, thou weep'st not so much for his death,
As that the villain lives which slaughtered him.

JULIET

80 What villain, madam?

LADY CAPULET

That same villain, Romeo.

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

JULIET

Who's that calling? Is it my mother? Isn't she up very late? Or is she up very early? What strange reason could she have for coming here?

LADY CAPULET enters.

LADY CAPULET

What's going on, Juliet?

JULIET

Madam, I am not well.

LADY CAPULET

Will you cry about your cousin's death forever? 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.

JULIET

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 villain, Romeo.

JULIET

(*aside*) Villain and he be many miles asunder.
 (to LADY CAPULET) God pardon him! I do, with all my heart,
 And yet no man like he doth grieve my heart.

LADY CAPULET

That is because the traitor murderer lives.

JULIET

85 Ay, madam, from the reach of these my hands.
 Would none but I might venge my cousin's death!

LADY CAPULET

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,
 90 Shall give him such an unaccustomed dram
 That he shall soon keep Tybalt company.
 And then, I hope, thou wilt be satisfied.

JULIET

Indeed, I never shall be satisfied
 With Romeo, till I behold him—dead—
 95 Is my poor heart for a kinsman vexed.
 Madam, if you could find out but a man
 To bear a poison, I would temper it,
 That Romeo should, upon receipt thereof,
 Soon sleep in quiet. Oh, how my heart abhors
 100 To hear him named, and cannot come to him.
 To wreak the love I bore my cousin
 Upon his body that slaughtered him!

LADY CAPULET

Find thou the means, and I'll find such a man.
 But now I'll tell thee joyful tidings, girl.

JULIET

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

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

JULIET

(*speaking so that LADY CAPULET can't hear*) He's far
 from being a villain. (to LADY CAPULET) May God par-
 don him! I do, with all my heart. And yet no man could
 make my heart grieve like he does.

LADY CAPULET

That's because the murderer is alive.

JULIET

Yes, madam, he lies beyond my reach. I wish that no
 one could avenge my cousin's death except me!

LADY CAPULET

We'll have revenge for it. Don't worry about that.
 Stop crying. I'll send a man to Mantua, where that
 exiled rogue is living. Our man will poison Romeo's
 drink, and Romeo will join Tybalt in death. And then,
 I hope, you'll be satisfied.

JULIET

I'll never be satisfied with Romeo until I see him . . .
 dead—dead is how my poor heart feels when I think
 about my poor cousin. Madam, if you can find a man
 to deliver the poison, I'll mix it myself so that Romeo
 will sleep quietly soon after he drinks it. Oh, how I
 hate to hear people say his name and not be able to go
 after him. I want to take the love I had for my cousin
 and take it out on the body of the man who killed him.

LADY CAPULET

Find out the way, and I'll find the right man. But now
 I have joyful news for you, girl.

JULIET

And it's good to have joy in such a joyless time. What's
 the news? Please tell me.

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
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,

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

LADY CAPULET

Well, well, you have a careful father, child. He has arranged a sudden day of joy to end your sadness. A day that you did not expect and that I did not seek out.

JULIET

Madam, tell me quickly, what day is that?

LADY CAPULET

Indeed, my child, at Saint Peter's Church early Thursday morning, the gallant, young, and noble gentleman Count Paris will happily make you a joyful bride.

JULIET

Now, I swear by Saint Peter's Church and Peter too, he will not make me a joyful bride there. This is a strange rush. How can I marry him, this husband, before he comes to court me? Please, tell my father, madam, I won't marry yet. And, when I do marry, I swear, it will be Romeo, whom you know I hate, rather than Paris. That's really news!

LADY CAPULET

Here comes your father. Tell him so yourself, and see how he takes the news.

CAPULET and the NURSE enter.

CAPULET

When the sun sets, the air drizzles dew. But at the death of my brother's son, it rains a downpour. What are you, girl? Some kind of fountain? Why are you still crying? Will you cry forever? In one little body you seem like a ship, the sea, and the winds. Your eyes, which I call the sea, flow with tears. The ship is your body which is sailing on the salt flood of your tears.

135 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?

LADY CAPULET

140 Ay, sir, but she will none, she gives you thanks.
I would the fool were married to her grave!

CAPULET

145 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

150 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 pouds,
But fettle your fine joints 'gainst Thursday next
155 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.

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?

LADY CAPULET

Yes, sir, I told her. But she won't agree. She says thank you but refuses. I wish the fool were dead and married to her grave!

CAPULET

Wait! Hold on, wife. I don't understand. How can this be? She refuses? Isn't she grateful? Isn't she proud of such a match? Doesn't she realize what a blessing this is? Doesn't she realize how unworthy she is of the gentleman we have found to be her bridegroom?

JULIET

I am not proud of what you have found for me. But I am thankful that you have found it. I can never be proud of what I hate. But I can be thankful for something I hate, if it was meant with love.

CAPULET

What is this? What is this fuzzy logic? What is this? I hear you say "proud" and "I thank you," and then "no thank you" and "not proud," you spoiled little girl. You're not really giving me any thanks or showing me any pride. But get yourself ready for Thursday. You're going to Saint Peter's Church to marry Paris. And if you don't go on your own, I'll drag you there. You disgust me, you little bug! You worthless girl! You pale face!

LADY CAPULET

Shame on you! What, are you crazy?

JULIET

Good father, I'm begging you on my knees, be patient and listen to me say just one thing.

CAPULET

160 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
 165 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!

NURSE

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

CAPULET

170 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.

NURSE

May not one speak?

CAPULET

Peace, you mumbling fool!
 Utter your gravity o'er a gossip's bowl,
 175 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
 180 A gentleman of noble parentage,
 Of fair demesnes, youthful, and nobly trained,
 Stuffed, as they say, with honorable parts,

ACT 3, SCENE 5

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

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. She 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.

NURSE

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.

Proportioned as one's thought would wish a man—
 And then to have a wretched puling fool,
 185 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.
 190 Look to 't, think on 't, I do not use to jest.
 Thursday is near. Lay hand on heart, advise.
 An you be mine, I'll give you to my friend.
 An you be not, hang, beg, starve, die in the streets,
 For, by my soul, I'll ne'er acknowledge thee,
 195 Nor what is mine shall never do thee good.
 Trust to 't, bethink you. I'll not be forsworn.

Exit CAPULET

JULIET

Is there no pity sitting in the clouds
 That sees into the bottom of my grief?—
 O sweet my mother, cast me not away!
 200 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

JULIET

205 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.—
 210 Alack, alack, that heaven should practice stratagems
 Upon so soft a subject as myself.—

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

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.

CAPULET exits.

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 don't delay, make my wedding bed in the tomb where Tybalt lies.

LADY CAPULET

Don't talk to me, because I won't say a word. Do as you please, because I'm done worrying about you.

LADY CAPULET exits.

JULIET

Oh God!—Oh Nurse, how can this be stopped? My husband is alive on earth, my vows of marriage are in heaven. How can I bring those promises back down to earth, unless my husband sends them back down to me by dying and going to heaven? Give me comfort. Give me advice. Oh no! Oh no! Why does heaven play tricks on someone as weak as me? What do you say?

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

NURSE

Faith, here it is.

215 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.
220 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,
225 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

230 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

235 Marry, I will, and this is wisely done.

Exit NURSE

NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE

Don't you have one word of joy? Give me some comfort, Nurse.

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.

The NURSE exits.

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
 240 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.

*Exit***NO FEAR SHAKESPEARE**

JULIET

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.

JULIET exits.