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Romeo and Juliet
A PLAY IN ONE ACT ADAPTED BY
Lindsay Price
FROM THE ORIGINAL BY
William Shakespeare
Romeo and Juliet
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Printed in the USA
Characters

Escalus: Prince of Verona.
Paris: A young count.
Montague: Romeo's father.
Capulet: Juliet's father.
Romeo: Montague's son.
Tybalt: Juliet's cousin.
Mercutio: Romeo's friend.
Benvolio: Romeo's cousin.
Friar Laurence: A religious man.
Friar John: A religious man.
Balthasar: Servant to Romeo.
Abram: Servant to Montague.
Sampson: Servant to Capulet.
Gregory: Servant to Capulet.
Peter: Servant to Capulet.
Apothecary: An expert in medicines.
Lady Montague: Montague's wife.
Lady Capulet: Capulet's wife.
Juliet: Capulet's daughter.
Nurse: Nurse to Juliet.
Watchmen: Two guards.
Citizens, servants, partygoers, and soldiers.

Doubling Suggestions

In Shakespeare's day, the plays were performed with approximately 10 actors.
The following roles may be doubled to create a cast of 14: Escalus/Peter, Friar Laurence/
Gregory, Mercutio/Balthasar, Tybalt/Friar John, Paris/Abraham/Second Watchman,
Sampson/Apothecary/First Watchman.
The cast size can be cut even further by having the women also play multiple roles.

Adaptor’s Note

This is an adapted version of the full-length play Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare.
It has been cut in length so that it runs approximately one hour.
There are numerous stage directions to assist in deciphering the language through action.
Every page features a side-bar with word definitions, character questions, and out-of-text
exercises — all of which I hope will enhance your time with the play.
Shakespeare's plays are meant to be spoken aloud and performed as opposed to read off
the page. I hope this adaptation inspires you to get onto your feet and into The Bard.
Scene 1 — Verona. A public place.

Enter SAMPSO and GREGORY of the house of Capulet.

SAMPSO: Gregory, I strike quickly, being moved.

GREGORY: But thou art not quickly moved to strike.

SAMPSO: 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.

Enter ABRAHAM and BALTHASAR of the house of Montague. They do not yet see GREGORY and SAMPSO. GREGORY pulls out his sword.

GREGORY: Here comes two of the house of Montagues.

SAMPSO: [pulling out his sword] My naked weapon is out. Quarrel! I will back thee.

GREGORY: How? Turn thy back and run?

SAMPSO: Fear me not.

GREGORY: No, marry. I fear thee!

SAMPSO: 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.

SAMPSO: Nay, as they dare. I will bite my thumb at them; which is disgrace to them, if they bear it.

SAMPSO walks by ABRAHAM and bites his thumb.

ABRAHAM: Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

SAMPSO: I do bite my thumb, sir.

ABRAHAM: Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

SAMPSO: [aside to GREGORY] Is the law of our side if I say ay?

GREGORY: [aside to SAMPSO] No.

SAMPSO: [to ABRAHAM] No, sir, I do not bite my thumb at you, sir; but I bite my thumb, sir.

GREGORY: Do you quarrel, sir?

ABRAHAM: Quarrel, sir? No, sir.

SAMPSO: But if you do, sir, I am for you. I serve as good a man as you.
ABRAHAM: No better.

SAMPSON: Well, sir.

TYBALT enters. He does not notice the fight.

GREGORY: [aside to SAMPSON] Say 'better.' Here comes one of my master's kinsmen.

SAMPSON: Yes, better, sir.

ABRAHAM: [with anger] You lie.


They fight. BENVOLIO rushes in.

BENVOLIO: Part, fools! [Beats down their swords.] Put up your swords. You know not what you do.

TYBALT approaches with his sword drawn.

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

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

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

They fight.

Enter CAPULET and his wife.

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

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

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

Enter MONTAGUE and LADY MONTAGUE.

MONTAGUE: Thou villain Capulet! [to LADY MONTAGUE] Hold me not, let me go.

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

Enter PRINCE ESCALUS and his SOLDIERS.

PRINCE: Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace, On pain of torture, from those bloody hands Throw your mistempered weapons to the ground And hear the sentence of your moved Prince.

Everyone stops fighting.

Three civil brawls, bred of an airy word By thee, old Capulet, and Montague, Have thrice disturb'd the quiet of our streets.
If ever you disturb our streets again,
Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.
You, Capulet, shall go along with me;
And, Montague, come you this afternoon,
To know our further pleasure in this case,
Once more, on pain of death, all men depart.

Exit all but MONTAGUE, LADY MONTAGUE, and BENVOLIO.

LADY MONTAGUE: [to BENVOLIO] O, where is Romeo? Saw you him to-day?
Right glad I am he was not at this fray.

BENVOLIO: Madam, an hour before the worshipp'd sun
Peer'd forth the golden window of the East,
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.

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;
Black and portentous must this humour prove
Unless good counsel may the cause remove.

BENVOLIO: My noble uncle, do you know the cause?
MONTAGUE: I neither know it nor can learn of him.

Enter ROMEO. He moves slowly and seems very preoccupied.

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

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

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.
Was that my father that went hence so fast?

BENVOLIO: It was. What sadness lengthens Romeo's hours?

ROMEO: Not having that which having makes them short.

BENVOLIO: In love?

ROMEO: Out.

BENVOLIO: Of love?

Die. These are very drastic measures. Why is the Prince so drastic? How do Montague and Capulet react to the Prince's decision?

further pleasure: the will of the Prince. Capulet and Montague must go to hear further on what the Prince wants.

Improvise a meeting between the Prince, Capulet and Montague where the Prince tries to reason with the two men. How would the meeting go?

fray: fight

Benvolio is talking in a very poetic manner about the sunrise.

Both Montague and Lady Montague seem like concerned parents. Contrast their words and tone with the way that the Capulets act later on in the play.

ware: aware stole into the covert: ran into the shelter

hath: has augmenting: adding to. Romeo is crying and depressed.

portentous: an omen, foreshadowing. This is one of the many instances of foreshadowing in the play. Romeo's black mood foretells something bad in his future.

Based on what we have just learned about Romeo, how does he look when he enters? How does he walk to portray his sadness?

where: here

wert: are

shrift: confession. Montague hopes that Benvolio can get the truth out of Romeo.

Good morrow: Good morning

new: just

Romeo is saying that his sadness is making time go slowly.

hence: away

Romeo's sadness seems to be exaggerated, but the actor playing Romeo must take it very seriously.

How does Benvolio react to Romeo's behaviour? What tone does Benvolio use?

At this point, Romeo is not talking about Juliet. He is in
Is Benvolio joking?

I aim'd so near when I suppos'd you lov'd: I figured as much.

The references to “marksman” and “mark” and “hit” relate to archery and Cupid.

Be rul'd by me: Listen to me.

Benvolio tells Romeo to forget Rosaline by going out with other women.

Romeo responds that other women only remind him of how beautiful Rosaline is.

doth: does

Farewell: Goodbye Thou canst not: You cannot

I'll pay that doctrine, or else die in debt: I will teach you to forget or die trying.

Capulet and Paris talk about marrying Juliet to Paris.

At this time, women were married very young. Can you imagine what it would be like to be 14 years old and married?

stranger in the world: She is still young.
change of fourteen years: Juliet is not yet 14 years old

swallowed all my hopes: Capulet had other children but they have all died. Juliet is his only heir.

love with another woman called Rosaline who will not love him back. That is why he is so sad.

Is Benvolio joking?

I aim'd so near when I suppos'd you lov'd: I figured as much.

The references to “marksman” and “mark” and “hit” relate to archery and Cupid.

Cupid's arrow: She won't fall in love

Dian's wit: Diana, a goddess who remained chaste. Romeo is reiterating that the woman he is in love with will not love him.

Be rul'd by me: Listen to me.

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My will to her consent is but a part.
An she agree, within her scope of choice
Lies my consent and fair according voice.
This night I hold an old accustom’d 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.

CAPULET turns to PETER and gives him a piece of paper.

CAPULET: Go, sirrah, trudge about
Through fair Verona; find those persons out
Whose names are written there, and to them say,
My house and welcome on their pleasure stay.

CAPULET and PARIS exit.

PETER: 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. [He sees BENVOLIO and ROMEO entering] In good time!

Enter BENVOLIO and ROMEO.

PETER: God gi’go-den. I pray, sir, can you read?

ROMEO: Ay, If I know the letters and the language.

PETER: Ye say honestly. Rest you merry!

PETER turns to leave and ROMEO puts a hand on his shoulder.

ROMEO: Stay, fellow; I can read.

PETER hands the paper to ROMEO and ROMEO reads.

ROMEO: ‘Signior Martino and his wife and daughters;
County Anselmo and his beauteous sisters;
The lady widow of Vitruvio;
Signior Placentio and His lovely nieces;
Mercutio and his brother Valentine;
Mine uncle Capulet, his wife, and daughters;
My fair niece Rosaline and Livia;
A fair assembly. Whither should they come?

He gives the paper back to PETER.

PETER: To supper, to our house.

ROMEO: Whose house?

PETER: My master’s.

ROMEO: Indeed I should have ask’d you that before.

PETER: Now I’ll tell you without asking. My master is the great rich

If Juliet agrees to marry Paris then Capulet will consent to the marriage.

An: If

accustom’d: Accustomed. When words have apostrophes in them it is because Shakespeare is trying to make a two-syllable word into a one-syllable word to fit the rhythm of the line.

Capulet invites Paris to the party.

sirrah: Like the word “sir” but it is used by a member of the upper class to a member of the lower class.

Notice the change in speech between an upper class person like Capulet and a lower class person like the servant. Members of the lower class always speak in prose.

The servant is confused. He is supposed to find the people on the list but he cannot read.

God gi’go-den: Good evening

Rest you merry: Good-bye

What do Benvolio and Romeo think of this man?

Rosaline is the woman that Romeo loves. How can he say the line so that the audience knows this is the woman? How does it differ from the way he speaks when reading the rest of the list?

Whither: where

Are Romeo and Benvolio serious with the servant?

What does Peter think of Capulet? Convey this in the speech.
Capulet; and if you be not of the house of Montagues, I pray come and crush a cup of wine. Rest you merry!

PETER exits.

BENVOLIO: At this same ancient feast of Capulet's Sups the fair Rosaline whom thou so lov'st; 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: I'll go along, no such sight to be shown, But to rejoice in splendour of my own.

ROMEO and BENVOLIO exit.

Scene 3 — Capulet's house.

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: 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; I have rememb'red me, thou's hear our counsel. Thou knowest my daughter's of a pretty age.

NURSE: Faith, I can tell her age unto an hour. She is not fourteen. How long is it now To Lammastide?

LADY CAPULET: A fortnight and odd days.

NURSE: I'll lay fourteen of my teeth. And yet, to my teen be it spoken, I have but four. She is not fourteen. How long is it now To Lammastide?

LADY CAPULET: She's not fourteen.

NURSE: I'll lay fourteen of my teeth. And yet, to my teen be it spoken, I have but four. She is not fourteen. How long is it now To Lammastide?

NURSE: Even or odd, of all days in the year, Come Lamas 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 Lamas Eve at night shall she be fourteen;
LADY CAPULET: Enough of this. I pray thee hold thy peace.

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

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

JULIET: It is an honour that I dream not of.

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

NURSE: A man, young lady! Lady, such a man As all the world- why he's a man of wax.

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; Speak briefly, can you like of Paris' love?

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

Enter PETER on the run.

PETER: Madam, the guests are come, supper serv'd up, you call'd, my young lady ask'd for, the nurse curs'd in the pantry, and everything in extremity. I must hence to wait. I beseech you follow straight. [He runs out without waiting.]

LADY CAPULET: We follow thee.

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

MERCUTIO: Nay, gentle Romeo, we must have you dance.

ROMEO: Not I, believe me. You have dancing shoes.
With nimble soles; I have a soul of lead
So stakes me to the ground I cannot move.

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

ROMEO: I am too sore 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 burthen do I sink.

MERCUTIO: And, to sink in it, should you burthen love-
Too great oppression for a tender thing.

ROMEO: Is love a tender thing? It is too rough,
Too rude, too boist'rous, and it pricks like thorn.

MERCUTIO: If love be rough with you, be rough with love.
Come, we burn daylight, ho!

ROMEO: [Puzzled] Nay, that's not so.

MERCUTIO: [Moving his torch towards ROMEO] We waste our lights in vain, like lamps by day.
Take our good meaning, for our judgment sits
Five times in that ere once in our five wits.

ROMEO: And we mean well, in going to this masque;
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: O, then I see Queen Mab hath been with you.
She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes
In shape no bigger than an agate stone
On the forefinger of an alderman.
Her whip of cricket's bone,
Her wagoner's a small grey-coated gnat,
Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut...

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 that wind
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, clos’d in my breast, But he that hath the steerage of my course Direct my sail! On, lusty gentlemen!

BENVOLIO: Strike, drum!

They exit with much laughter and revelry.

Scene 5 — Capulet’s house.

Everyone at the Capulet party enters, including CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, JULIET, TYBALT, PARIS, and the NURSE.

There is music, dancing, talking, laughing and mingling going on. CAPULET stands centre stage and addresses the crowd.

CAPULET: Welcome, gentlemen! Ladies that have their toes Unplagu’d with corns will have a bout with you. A hall, a hall! Give room! and foot it, girls.

Music plays, there is a dance. JULIET dances with PARIS. During this, ROMEO and his friends enter in mask. The first person that ROMEO sees is JULIET. He is immediately attracted to her and watches her dance. He stares at her and begins to speak to himself.

ROMEO: What lady’s that, which doth enrich the Hand of yonder knight? O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright! It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night Like a rich jewel in an Ethioip’s ear— Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear! Did my heart love till now? Forswear it, sight! For I ne’er saw true beauty till this night.

During this speech TYBALT overhears ROMEO and realizes who ROMEO is.

TYBALT: This, by his voice, should be a Montague. Now, by the stock and honour of my kin, To strike him dead I hold it not a sin.

TYBAL’T moves to draw his sword. CAPULET sees this and puts hand on TYBALT’s arm.

Tybalt wants to kill Romeo.
ROMEO AND JULIET

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.

TYBALT moves again to go after ROMEO. CAPULET grabs TYBALT and moves him to a corner of the room.

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-govern'd youth. I would not for the wealth of all this 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.

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

TYBALT tries again to go after ROMEO. CAPULET, now extremely angry, stops him again.

CAPULET: He shall be endur'd. 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: Why, uncle, 'tis a shame.

CAPULET: Go to, go to! You must contrary me! Marry, 'tis time.

CAPULET walks away from TYBALT to rejoin the party.

TYBALT: I will withdraw; but this intrusion shall, Now seeming sweet, convert to bitt'rest gall.

TYBALT exits. On the opposite side of the stage, ROMEO and JULIET meet face to face. ROMEO takes JULIET's hand.

ROMEO: If I profane with my unworthiest hand This holy shrine, the gentle fine is this: My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.
He goes to kiss her hand, but JULIET pulls back a bit.

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

ROMEO: Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too?

JULIET: Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use in **pray’r**.

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.
Thus from my lips, by thine my sin is purg’d. [Kisses her.]

JULIET: Then have my lips the sin that they have took.

ROMEO: Sin from my lips? O trespass sweetly urg’d!
Give me my sin again. [Kisses her.]


The NURSE enters, calling out for JULIET. ROMEO and JULIET break apart.

NURSE: Madam, your mother craves a word with you.

With a backwards glance at ROMEO, JULIET exits.

Before the NURSE can leave, ROMEO places a hand on her arm.

ROMEO: What is her mother?

NURSE: Marry, bachelor,
Her mother is the lady of the house.
And a good lady, and a wise and virtuous.
I nurs’d her daughter that you talk’d withal.
I tell you, he that can lay hold of her
Shall have the **chinks**.

ROMEO: Is she a Capulet?
O dear account! **My life is my foe’s debt.**

BENVOLIO, MERCUTIO and the rest of the masked MONTAGUES surround ROMEO. They begin to pull him away.

BENVOLIO: Away, be gone; the sport is at the best.

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

They begin to exit. On the opposite side of the stage, JULIET enters and watches them go. She grabs the NURSE.

These two have fallen head over heels in love even though they have just met and don’t know each other’s names. Do you believe in love at first sight?

There is wordplay going on here. When Romeo talks of shrines and pilgrims, he’s talking about kissing Juliet’s hand. Picking up on this, Juliet says that as a pilgrim he should be praying (**palm to palm**) instead of kissing.

pray’r: speaking prayers

What is happening with everyone else at the party? They can’t notice Romeo and Juliet kissing, as this would cause a scene. How will you stage this?

After all the talk of saints, prayer and palmers, what **book** do you think Juliet refers to?

The Nurse bursts in to interrupt Romeo and Juliet. Has she seen what they have been doing? The Nurse doesn’t seem to notice things around her. How will Romeo and Juliet act when she enters?

What: who

bachelor: young man

nurs’d: nursed talk’d withal: talked with

chinks: money.

Romeo has just learned that he loves the daughter of his family’s enemy. How does he react?

**My life is my foe’s debt:** I owe my life to my enemy.

Away, be gone; the sport is at the best: Let’s go, our fun is done here.
ROMEO AND JULIET

JULIET: Come hither, nurse. What is yond gentleman?

NURSE: I know not.

JULIET: Go ask his name. [the NURSE goes after ROMEO]

If he be married, My grave is like to be my wedding bed.

The NURSE enters. She is sombre.

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

JULIET: My only love, sprung from my only hate! Too early seen unknown, and known too late! Prodigious birth of love it is to me That I must love a loathed enemy.

LADY CAPULET: [offstage] Juliet!

NURSE: Anon, anon! Come, let's away; the strangers all are gone.

They exit.

Scene 6 — A lane by the wall of Capulet's orchard.

Enter ROMEO alone.

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

He exits.

Enter BENVOLIO with MERCUTIO. They are calling out for ROMEO.

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. [he calls out]. 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'... 

BENVOLIO: [cutting him off] 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: [calling out] 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.

BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO exit laughing.

SCENE 7 — Capulet's orchard.

Enter ROMEO.

ROMEO: He jests at scars that never felt a wound.

JULIET enters from above at a window.

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; O, it is my love!
O that she knew she were!

JULIET leans out the window and sighs.

She speaks, yet she says nothing. What of that?
See how she leans her cheek upon her hand!
O that I were a glove upon that hand,
That I might touch that cheek!

JULIET: Ay me!

ROMEO: She speaks.

O, speak again, bright angel! For thou art
As glorious to this night, being o'er my head,
As is a winged messenger of heaven.

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 name would smell as sweet.
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,
Retain that dear perfection which he owes
Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name;

Romeo’s first line suggests that he has overheard Mercutio and Benvolio. Does he think what they said is funny?

But soft: But wait
Romeo compares the sunrise to Juliet appearing at the window.

her maid: this is a reference to Diana, the goddess who remained chaste. Remember that is why Rosaline would not love Romeo.

vestal livery: virginal uniform. A livery is a uniform that a group of people would wear, like the servants of a household.

How is Juliet feeling at this moment? What would her sigh sound like?

There are very few stage directions in Shakespeare, and most appear in the dialogue, like this direct reference to Juliet putting a hand on her cheek.

thou art: you are
o'er: over

These lines refer to an angel gazing down on the earth.

Wherefore art thou: Why are you
Wherefore is often misinterpreted as the word where.

thou wilt: you will

This is significant point. Juliet is saying that loving Romeo is more important than loving her family. How does Romeo react when he hears this?

Juliet realizes that it is the name Montague that is her enemy. What would it be like to have an enemy you’ve never met?

Juliet is saying that if there was another name for a rose, it wouldn’t affect the way that it smells. If Romeo was not a Montague, she would still be in love with him.

doff: get rid of
And for that name, which is no part of thee, 
Take all myself.

ROMEO leaps out of the shadows.

ROMEO: [shouting out] I take thee at thy word.
Call me but love, and I’ll be new baptiz’d;
Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

JULIET draws back from the window. She cannot clearly see that it is ROMEO.

JULIET: What man art thou that, thus bescreen’d
So stumblest on my counsel?

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

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

ROMEO: Neither, fair saint, if either thee dislike.

JULIET: How cam’st thou hither, tell me, and wherefore?
The orchard walls are high and hard to climb,
And the place death, considering who thou art,
If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

ROMEO: With love’s light wings did I o’erperch these walls;
For stony limits cannot hold love out.
Therefore thy kinsmen are no let to me.

JULIET: If they do see thee, they will murder thee.

ROMEO: Alack, there lies more peril in thine eye
Than twenty of their swords! Look thou but sweet,
And I am proof against their enmity.

JULIET: Dost thou love me, I know thou wilt say ’Ay’;
And I will take thy word.

ROMEO: By yonder moon I swear.

JULIET: O, swear not by the moon, th’ inconstant moon,
That monthly changes in her circled 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,
And I’ll believe thee.
From offstage, the NURSE calls for JULIET.
Anon, good nurse! [To ROMEO] Sweet Montague, be true.
Stay but a little, I will come again.

JULIET exits.

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

JULIET enters again.

JULIET: Three words, dear Romeo, and good night indeed.
If that thy bent of love be honourable,
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: [offstage] Madam!

JULIET: I come, anon. [To ROMEO] But if thou meanest not well,
I do beseech thee.

NURSE: [offstage] Madam!

JULIET: By-and-by I come.
[to ROMEO] To cease thy suit and leave me to my grief. Tomorrow will I send.

ROMEO: So thrive my soul.

JULIET: A thousand times good night! [She exits]

ROMEO: A thousand times the worse, to want thy light!

JULIET enters again.

JULIET: Romeo!

ROMEO: My dear?

JULIET: At what o'clock tomorrow
Shall I send to thee?

ROMEO: By the hour of nine.

JULIET: I will not fail. 'Tis twenty years till then.
Good night, good night! Parting is such sweet sorrow,
That I shall say good night till it be morrow.

JULIET exits.

ROMEO: 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 father's cell,
His help to crave and my dear hap to tell.

ROMEO exits.
Scene 8 — Friar Laurence’s cell.

FRIAR LAURENCE enters alone, with a basket.

FRIAR LAURENCE: O, mickle is the powerful grace that lies
In plants, herbs, stones, and their true qualities;
Holds up a flower from his basket.
Within the infant rind of this small flower
Poison hath residence, and medicine power;
For this, being smelt, with that part cheers each part;
Being tasted, slays all senses with the heart.

Enter ROMEO. He sneaks up behind FRIAR LAURENCE.

ROMEO: Good morrow, father.

FRIAR LAURENCE: [surprised] Benedicite!
What early tongue so sweet saluteth me?
Young son, thy earliness doth me assure
Thou art uprous’d with some distemp’rature;
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 LAURENCE: God pardon sin! Wast thou with Rosaline?

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

FRIAR LAURENCE: That’s my good son! But where hast thou been then?

ROMEO: I'll tell thee ere thou ask it me again.
I have been feasting with mine enemy,
Where on a sudden one hath wounded me.

FRIAR LAURENCE: 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;
By holy marriage. When, and where, and how
We met, we woo’d, and made exchange of vow,
I'll tell thee as we pass; but this I pray,
That thou consent to marry us to-day.

FRIAR LAURENCE: Holy Saint Francis! What a change is here!
Is Rosaline, that thou didst love so dear,
So soon forsaken? Young men’s love then lies
Not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes.

ROMEO: Thou chid’st me oft for loving Rosaline.

FRIAR LAURENCE: For doting, not for loving, pupil mine.

ROMEO: I pray thee chide not. She whom I love now
Doth grace for grace and love for love allow. 
The other did not so.

FRIAR LAURENCE: O, she knew well 
Thy love did read by rote, that could not spell. 
But come, young waverer, come go with me. 
In one respect I'll thy assistant be; 
For this alliance may so happy prove 
To turn your households' rancour to pure love.

ROMEO: O, let us hence! I stand on sudden haste.

FRIAR LAURENCE: Wisely, and slow. They stumble that run fast. 

ROMEO exits on the run. The FRIAR follows more slowly.

Scene 9 — A street.

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.

ROMEO enters.

BENVOLIO: Here comes Romeo! Here comes Romeo!

MERCUTIO: Romeo bonjour! Here's a french salutation to your French slop. 
You gave us the counterfeit fairly last night.

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

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

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

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

ROMEO: Meaning, to curtsey.

MERCUTIO: Thou hast most kindly hit it.

ROMEO: A most courteous exposition.

MERCUTIO: Nay, I am the very pink of courtesy.

ROMEO: Pink for flower.

MERCUTIO: Right.

ROMEO: Why, then is my pump well-flower'd.

MERCUTIO: Come between us, good Benvolio! My wits faint.

Friar Laurence says that Rosaline knew Romeo's love was not true and that is why she would not love him back.

alliance: marriage 
rancour: hate

Friar Laurence is willing to help Romeo because the marriage may help to end the fighting between the two families.

It is the day after the party. Benvolio and Mercutio know Romeo did not go home last night. Are they puzzled by this? Do they think it's funny?

Benvolio is referring to Romeo's servant.

Benvolio and Mercutio still believe that Romeo is pining over Rosaline.

How does Romeo's behaviour differ in this scene? He seems ready and able to have fun with his friends. Are Benvolio and Mercutio surprised by the change?

counterfeit: Imitation. Mercutio's real meaning is in his next line.

Counterfeit coins were called slips.

Can you not conceive?: Can't you figure it out?

Romeo seems to have trouble keeping up with Mercutio's humour. Is Romeo a smart character?

constrains: forces. 

bow in the hams: squat

This is toilet humour. What would force a man to squat?

very pink of courtesy: very polite

Romeo is finally getting into the wordplay. Mercutio should be amazed and pleased that Romeo is up to speed with the verbal puns.
ROMEO: Swits and spurs, swits and spurs! or I'll cry a match.

MERCUTIO: Why, is not this better now than groaning for love? Now art thou sociable, now art thou Romeo; now art thou what thou art, by art as well as by nature.

The NURSE enters. ROMEO sees her coming.

ROMEO: Here's goodly gear!

NURSE: God ye good morrow, gentlemen.

MERCUTIO: God ye good-den, fair gentlewoman.

NURSE: Is it good-den?

MERCUTIO: 'Tis no less, I tell ye; for the bawdy hand of the dial is now upon the prick of noon.

NURSE: Out upon you! What a man are you!

ROMEO: One, gentlewoman, that God hath made for himself to mar.

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

ROMEO: I can tell you; but young Romeo will be older when you have found him than he was when you sought him. I am the youngest of that name, for fault of a worse.

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

BENVOLIO: She will endite him to some supper.

MERCUTIO: A bawd, a bawd, a bawd! So ho! Romeo, will you come to your father's? We'll to dinner thither.

ROMEO: I will follow you.


MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO exit, singing.

NURSE: Now, afore God, I am so vexed that every part about me quivers. Scurvy knave!

ROMEO: Nurse, commend me to thy lady and mistress.

NURSE: This afternoon, sir? Well, she shall be there.

ROMEO exits in one direction, The NURSE in the other.
Scene 10 — Capulet’s orchard.

JULIET is pacing back and forth, waiting for the NURSE.

JULIET: The clock struck nine when I did send the nurse; In half an hour she promis’d to return. Had she affections and warm youthful blood, She would be as swift in motion as a ball; My words would bandy her to my sweet love, And his to me, But old folks, many feign as they were dead- Unwieldy, slow, heavy and pale as lead.

NURSE enters. She is out of breath.

O God, she comes! O honey nurse, what news? Hast thou met with him?

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


NURSE: Lord, how my head aches! What a head have I! It beats as it would fall in twenty pieces.

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

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

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

NURSE: O God’s Lady dear! Are you so hot? Marry come up, I trow. Is this the poultice for my aching bones? Henceforward do your messages yourself.

JULIET: Here’s such a coil! Come, what says Romeo?

NURSE: Have you got leave to go to shrift to-day?

JULIET: I have.

NURSE: Then hie you hence to Friar Laurence’ cell; There stays a husband to make you a wife Go; I’ll to dinner; hie you to the cell.

JULIET: Honest nurse, farewell. They exit.

What is life like for Juliet? While Romeo seems free to do pretty much what he wants, Juliet seems almost locked in the Capulet house.

Juliet seems much different at the prospect of marrying Romeo than she did at marrying Paris.

bandy: toss

many feign: carry themselves

Is the Nurse really tired here, or is she just making Juliet wait?

aweary: tired

Fie: expression of disgust. jaunt: journey

Juliet should experiment with tone. She is very excited and very anxious at this moment. Notice that her words are very patient and she seems to be sweet-talking the Nurse. She knows that if she bullies the Nurse too much, the Nurse won’t tell her anything.

I’faith: In faith.

within: inside

This should be the point that Juliet finally breaks and yells at the Nurse. There are a number of reasons for this. She is desperate for the news, but she also knows that what she is doing goes directly against her mother.

Marry come up, I trow: You’re getting too big for your britches.

poultice: A mixture that was used to put on sores. Henceforward: From now on.

Here’s such a coil: What a fuss. shrift: confession

Is the Nurse happy to tell this to Juliet?

hie you to the cell: go to your room

What is Juliet’s reaction when the Nurse tells her that she is to be married this afternoon?
Scene 11 — Friar Laurence’s cell.
Music plays. FRIAR LAURENCE and ROMEO enter. ROMEO paces back and forth nervously. JULIET enters. ROMEO and JULIET stare at each other a moment and then run to each other’s arms.

FRIAR LAURENCE: 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.

ROMEO and JULIET follow FRIAR LAURENCE off.

Scene 12 — A public place.
Enter MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO from one side of the stage. Enter TYBALT, SAMPSON, and ABRAHAM on the other.

BENVOLIO: By my head, here come the Capulets.

MERCUTIO: By my heel, I care not.

TYBALT: [to his men] Follow me close, for I will speak to them. Gentlemen, good den. 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.

MERCUTIO comes to stand face to face with TYBALT.

TYBALT: You shall find me apt enough to that, sir, an’ you will give me occasion

TYBALT pushes past MERCUTIO to confront ROMEO.

ROMEO: Tybalt, the reason that I bear thee can afford No better term than this: thou art a villain.

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

TYBALT pushes past MERCUTIO to confront ROMEO.

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

ROMEO tries to pass TYBALT, but TYBALT will not let him.
TYBALT: Boy, this shall not excuse the injuries
That thou hast done me; therefore turn and draw.

TYBALT pulls out his sword but ROMEO will not draw.
MERCUPIO jumps in front of ROMEO.

MERCUTIO: [takes out his sword]
Tybalt, you ratcatcher, will you walk?

TYBALT: I am for you.

TYBALT and MERCUTIO fight.

ROMEO: Draw, Benvolio; beat down their weapons.
Gentlemen, for shame! Forbear this outrage!
Tybalt, Mercutio, the Prince expressly hath
Forbid this bandying in Verona streets.
Hold, Tybalt! Good Mercutio!

ROMEO gets between TYBALT and MERCUTIO.
TYBALT’s sword stabs MERCUTIO under ROMEO’s arm. MERCUTIO falls. TYBALT and his men flee the scene.

BENVOLIO: What, art thou hurt?

MERCUTIO: Ay, ay, a scratch, a scratch. Marry, ’tis enough.

ROMEO: Courage, man. The hurt cannot be much.

MERCUTIO: No, ’tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church door;
but ’tis enough, ’twill serve. Ask for me tomorrow, and you
shall find me a grave man. [To ROMEO] Why the devil came
you between us? I was hurt under your arm.

ROMEO: I thought all for the best.

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

MERCUPIO exits, supported by BENVOLIO.

ROMEO: This gentleman, the Prince’s near ally,
My very friend, hath got this mortal hurt
In my behalf. My reputation stain’d
With Tybalt’s slander. Tybalt, that an hour
Hath been my kinsman. O sweet Juliet!

BENVOLIO re-enters.

BENVOLIO: O Romeo, Romeo, brave Mercutio’s dead!

ROMEO: This day’s black fate on more days doth depend;
This but begins the woe others must end.
Why does Tybalt come back? Is he tougher in words than in action? Did he mean to kill Mercutio?

**take the 'villain' back again:** take back what you said about me.

**Why doesn't Benvolio try and stop the fight?**

Romeo kills Tybalt. Has Romeo ever killed a man before? Why does he stand about instead of running? Why did Romeo need to kill Tybalt instead of letting the Prince do it?

**amaz'd:** amazed  Romeo is standing in a daze.

**doom thee death:** sentence you to death

This moment should have an element of chaos to it. Remember that there are dead bodies on the ground, the Prince has expressly said there is to be no fighting, and there are probably rumours flying around as to who is dead and who is responsible.

**fray:** fight

**envious:** malicious, spiteful

**hit the life:** took the life

**stout:** brave

**ere:** before

How does Benvolio deliver this speech? Is he proud? Is he ashamed? Does he fear for his own life? Reflect his tone of voice in his posture as well.

The Prince is asking “Who pays the price for Mercutio’s life?”

Montague says that Romeo’s fault in the fight ends because of Tybalt’s death.

The Prince banishes Romeo from Verona instead of sentencing him to death.

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**TYBALT enters.**

**BENVOLIO:** Here comes the furious Tybalt back again.

**ROMEO:** Alive in triumph, and Mercutio slain? Now, Tybalt, **take the 'villain' back again** That late thou gavest me; for Mercutio’s soul Is but a little way above our heads, Staying for thine to keep him company. Either thou or I, or both, must go with him.

**ROMEO and TYBALT** fight. **ROMEO** slays **TYBALT.** **TYBALT** falls. **ROMEO** stands, almost in a daze.

**BENVOLIO:** Romeo, away, be gone! The citizens are up, and Tybalt slain. Stand not amaz’d. The Prince will doom thee death If thou art taken. Hence, be gone, away!

**ROMEO** stumbles away. Enter **CITIZENS, the PRINCE, CAPULET and LADY CAPULET, MONTAGUE and LADY MONTAGUE.**

**LADY CAPULET:** [throwing herself onto **TYBALT’s body]** Tybalt, my cousin! O my brother’s child! O Prince! O husband! O, the blood is spill’d 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 stay. An envious thrust from Tybalt hit the life Of stout Mercutio, and then Tybalt fled; But by-and-by comes back to Romeo, 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:** [standing] 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.

Both the MONTAGUES and CAPULETS give an outcry at this decision.

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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 is found, that hour is his last.

The PRINCE turns and leaves. CAPULET and MONTAGUE follow slowly.

Some pick up TYBALT’s body. They all exit.

Scene 13 — Capulet’s orchard.

JULIET enters.

JULIET: Come, night; come, Romeo; come, thou day in night;  
For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night  
Whiter than new snow upon a raven’s back.  
Come, gentle night; come, loving, black-brow’d night;  
Give me my Romeo; and, when he 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  
And pay no worship to the garish sun.

The NURSE enters, wailing.

JULIET: Ay me! what news? Why dost thou wring thy hands?

NURSE: We are undone, lady, we are undone!  
Alack the day! he’s gone, he’s kill’d, 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: Oh break my heart! Poor bankrupt break at once!

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

JULIET: What storm is this that blows so contrary?  
Is Romeo slaught’red, and is Tybalt dead?

NURSE: Tybalt is gone, and Romeo banished;  
Romeo that kill’d him, he is banished.

JULIET: O God! Did Romeo’s hand shed Tybalt’s blood?

NURSE: It did, it did! Alas the day, it did!  
Shame come to Romeo!

JULIET slaps the NURSE.

JULIET: Blister’d be thy tongue  
For such a wish! He was not born to shame.
Upon his brow shame is asham’d to sit;
For ’tis a throne where honour may be crown’d
Sole monarch of the universal earth.

NURSE: Will you speak well of him that kill’d your cousin?

JULIET: Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband?
My husband lives, that Tybalt would have slain;
And Tybalt’s dead, that would have slain my husband.
‘Tybalt is dead, and Romeo- banished.’
That ‘banished,’ that one word ‘banished,’
There is no end, no limit, measure, bound,
In that word’s death; no words can that woe sound.

JULIET sinks to the ground. The NURSE hovers over her for a moment.

NURSE: Hie to your chamber. I’ll find Romeo to comfort you. I wot well where he is.

JULIET: O, find him! [removes her ring]
Give this ring to my true knight And bid him come to take his last farewell.

NURSE and JULIET exit.

Scene 14 — Friar Laurence’s cell.

ROMEO is pacing. FRIAR LAURENCE enters.

ROMEO: Father, what news? What is the Prince’s doom?

FRIAR LAURENCE: A gentler judgment vanish’d from his lips;
Not body’s death, but body’s banishment.

ROMEO is stunned. He sinks to the floor.

ROMEO: Ha, banishment? Be merciful, say ‘death’;
For exile hath more terror in his look,
Much more than death. Do not say ‘banishment.’

FRIAR LAURENCE: Hence from Verona art thou banished.
Be patient, for the world is broad and wide.

ROMEO: There is no world without Verona walls,
But purgatory, torture, hell itself.

FRIAR LAURENCE: Thy fault our laws calls death;
By law, your actions should be punished with death.

The Friar and Romeo should have opposite reactions to the knocking. The Friar frantically tries to get Romeo off the floor and into hiding. Romeo doesn’t want to move.

FRIAR LAURENCE: Good Romeo, hide thyself.
ROMEO: Not I; unless the breath of heartsick groans,
Mist-like infold me from the search of eyes.

The knock is heard again.


The knock is heard again.

[calling out] Who knocks so hard? Whence come you? What’s your will?

NURSE: [offstage] Let me come in, and you shall know my errand. I come from Lady Juliet.

ROMEO lifts his head.

FRIAR LAURENCE: [relieved] Welcome then.

The FRIAR lets the NURSE in.

ROMEO: Spakest thou of Juliet? How is it with her?

NURSE: O, 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
Murder’d 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.]

FRIAR LAURENCE: [Grabbing the dagger away] Hold thy desperate hand.

Thou hast amaz’d me. By my holy order,
I thought thy disposition better temper’d.

He pauses a moment to think.

Go get thee to thy love, as was decreed,
Ascend her chamber, hence and comfort her.

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.

The NURSE gives ROMEO the ring.

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

The NURSE exits.

ROMEO: How well my comfort is reviv’d by this!
Capulet seems to think much of Paris. Does he like Paris or does he merely want to marry his daughter off to him? Is Paris wealthy?

**abed:** in bed

**These times of woe afford no tune to woo:** These times of sadness are no time for declaring love.

**mew’d up to her:** shut up in - Juliet is too sad to do anything.

**a desperate tender:** A bold offer

**rul’d:** ruled

**go you to her:** Go to her (Juliet)

**Acquaint her here:** let her know

All of a sudden it seems that Capulet wants to make the marriage more solid. Note that Capulet calls Paris my son.

Why is it so important now that Juliet be married? Earlier Capulet was very concerned about what Juliet thought of the match, but now he seems quite definite on the marriage whether Juliet wants it or not.

**a’: on**

**get you gone:** goodbye

**against:** in anticipation of

Notice that Capulet mentions twice to Lady Capulet that she is to go to Juliet before she goes to bed. But as you will see in the next scene, Lady Capulet does not go to Juliet till the next morning. What does this say about Lady Capulet’s character?

Romeo and Juliet have just spent the night together. Romeo is preparing to sneak away to Mantua.

**pierc’d:** pierced Juliet is trying to convince Romeo that he heard a nightingale (a night bird) and not the lark (a morning bird).

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FRIAR LAURENCE: Give me thy hand. 'Tis late. Farewell; good night.

**ROMEo and the FRIAR exit.**

**Scene 15 — Capulet’s house**

**CAPULET, LADY CAPULET and PARIS enter.**

**CAPULET:** '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 tune to woo.
Madam, good night. Commend me to your daughter.

**LADY CAPULET:** I will, and know her mind early tomorrow;
Tonight she’s mew’d up to her heaviness.

PARIS turns away and CAPULET calls him back.

**CAPULET:** Sir Paris, I will make a desperate tender
Of my child’s love. I think she will be rul’d
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 on Wednesday next.
But, soft! what day is this?

**PARIS:** Monday, my lord.

**CAPULET:** Monday! ha, ha! Well, Wednesday is too soon.
Thursday. Let it be- a’ Thursday. Tell her
She shall be married to this noble earl.
Will you be ready? Do you like this haste?

**PARIS:** My lord, I would that Thursday were tomorrow.

**CAPULET:** Well, get you gone. A’ Thursday be it then.
[to LADY CAPULET] Go you to Juliet ere you go to bed;
Prepare her, wife, against this wedding day.
Farewell, My lord. [Calling out as he exits.] Light to my chamber, ho!

They exit.

**Scene 16 — Juliet’s chamber**

**ROMEO prepares to leave.**

**JULIET:** Wilt thou be gone? It is not yet near day.
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
That pierc’d the fearful hollow of thine ear.
Nightly she sings on yond pomegranate tree.
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

**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.
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

JULIET: It is, it is! Hie hence, be gone, away!
0, now be gone! More light and light it grows.

ROMEO: More light and light; more dark and dark our woes!

The NURSE enters.

NURSE: Madam!

JULIET: Nurse?

NURSE: Your lady mother is coming to your chamber.
The day is broke; be wary, look about.

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

The NURSE exits. ROMEO prepares to leave.

ROMEO: Farewell, farewell! One kiss, and I'll descend.

They kiss and ROMEO leaves.

LADY CAPULET: [offstage] Ho, daughter! are you up?

Enter LADY CAPULET.

LADY CAPULET: Why, how now, Juliet?

JULIET: Madam, I am not well.

LADY CAPULET: Evermore weeping for your cousin's death?
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.
For now I'll tell thee joyful tidings, girl.

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

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,
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