

ROMEO AND JULIET

A line-by-line translation

Prologue

Shakespeare

The CHORUS enters.

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.
 5 From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
 A pair of star-crossed lovers take their life,
 Whose misadventured piteous overthrows
 Doth with their death bury their parents' strife.
 The fearful passage of their death-marked love
 10 And the continuance of their parents' rage--
 Which but their children's end, naught could remove--
 Is now the two-hours' traffic of our stage;
 The which if you with patient ears attend,
 What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.
 15

The CHORUS exits.

Shakescleare Translation

The CHORUS enters.

CHORUS

In beautiful Verona, where our play takes place, there are two families, both equally noble. From their old grudge there is an outbreak of new fighting, in which they stain their refined hands with fellow citizens' blood. A pair of ill-fated lovers from the deadly bloodlines of these two feuding households commit suicide. Their sad and tragic deaths put an end to their parents' fighting. Now, for the two hours in which we are onstage, we will present the story of their love and death, which was the only thing that could stop their families' rage. If we've left anything out of this prologue, just listen with patient ears--we will work to make everything understood.

The CHORUS exits.

Act 1, Scene 1

Shakespeare

SAMPSON

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

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

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

5 I strike quickly, being moved.

GREGORY

But thou art not quickly moved to strike.

SAMPSON

A dog of the house of Montague moves me.

Shakescleare Translation


SAMPSON

Gregory, I swear we won't put up with their crap.

The Capulet family's servants--SAMPSON and GREGORY--enter carrying swords and small shields.

GREGORY

No, because then we'd be waste removers 🗑️.

 Gregory here teases Sampson by taking Sampson's use of the expression "carry coals" (meaning to withstand insults) literally, saying that to carry coals would make the pair "colliers," or coal miners.

SAMPSON

I mean, if they make us angry, we'll draw our swords.

GREGORY

Yes, you should spend your life trying to get yourself out of any trouble that might lead to the hangman's collar.

SAMPSON

I hit hard, when I'm motivated.

GREGORY

But you avoid getting "motivated," so you don't ever have to hit.

SAMPSON

One of those Montague scoundrels would motivate me.

GREGORY

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

SAMPSON

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

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

30 'Tis well thou art not fish. If thou hadst, thou hadst
been poor-john.
Draw thy tool! Here comes of the house of Montagues.

ABRAHAM and a fellow servant of the Montagues enter.

SAMPSON

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

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.

GREGORY

To be motivated is to act, while to be valiant is to face a
fight. When you're motivated, you just run away.

SAMPSON

If I saw a Montague rascl, I'd face him. I'd walk on the side of
the street closer to the wall, and so force the Montague into
the gutter.

GREGORY

Then you must be a weakling, because it's the weak one
who gets shoved up against a wall.

SAMPSON

That's true, which is why women, being the weaker sex, get
thrust up against the wall. So I'll push Montague's men into
the gutter, and thrust Montague women against the wall.

GREGORY

The feud is between our masters and us, their servants.

SAMPSON

It's all the same. I'll be the Montague's master. After fighting
with the men, I'll be nice to the maids—I'll cut off their
heads.

GREGORY

You'll cut off the heads of the maids?

SAMPSON

The heads of the maids or their maidenheads ². Interpret
my comment in whichever sense you prefer.

² Here, Sampson alludes to taking
the Montague women's virginities,
also called "maidenheads."

GREGORY

It's the maids you rape or kill or who will have to sense it.

SAMPSON

The maids will feel me as long as I can stand upright.
Everyone knows I'm a stud.

GREGORY

It's a good thing you're not a fish, or else you'd be dried and
shrivelled ³ like salted hake. Draw your sword! Here come
some Montague servants.

³ Here, Gregory is making a joke
about the appearance of Sampson's
genitalia.

*ABRAHAM and a fellow servant of the Montague family
enter.*

SAMPSON

I've drawn my sword out of its sheath. Fight them! I'll back
you up.

GREGORY

How? By turning your back and running?

SAMPSON

Don't worry about me.

GREGORY

No, indeed ⁴, I do worry about you.

⁴ The original text uses the word
"marry," an expression of surprise or
concern used in Shakespeare's time
which refers to the Virgin Mary.

SAMPSON

Let's make sure the law is on our side by getting them to
start the fight.

GREGORY

I'll frown at them as I pass by them. How they respond is up
to them.

SAMPSON

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

ABRAHAM

Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

SAMPSON

I do bite my thumb, sir.

ABRAHAM

Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

SAMPSON

[*Aside to GREGORY*]

45 Is the law of our side if I say “ay”?

GREGORY

[*Aside to SAMPSON*]

No.

SAMPSON

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

GREGORY

50 Do you quarrel, sir?

ABRAHAM

Quarrel, sir? No, sir.

SAMPSON

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

ABRAHAM

No better.

SAMPSON

55 Well, sir.

GREGORY

[*Aside to SAMPSON*] Say “better.” Here comes one of my master’s kinsmen.

BENVOLIO enters.

SAMPSON

[*To ABRAHAM*] Yes, better, sir.

ABRAHAM

You lie.

SAMPSON

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

BENVOLIO

[*Draws his sword*] Part, fools!

Put up your swords. You know not what you do.

They fight.

TYBALT


What, art thou drawn among these heartless hinds?

65 Turn thee, Benvolio. Look upon thy death.

TYBALT enters.

SAMPSON

No, I’ll bite my thumb at them. That’s an insult, and they’ll be disgraced if they don’t react. [*He bites his thumb*]

 To bite one’s thumb at another person was considered an obscene gesture in Shakespeare’s time, not unlike giving a person the middle finger today.

ABRAHAM

Are you biting your thumb at us, sir?

SAMPSON

I am biting my thumb.

ABRAHAM

But are you biting your thumb at us, sir?

SAMPSON

[*To GREGORY so that only he can hear*] Will the law be on our side if I say yes?

GREGORY

[*To SAMPSON so that only he can hear*] No.

SAMPSON

I’m not biting my thumb at you, sir. But I am biting my thumb, sir.

GREGORY

Do you want to fight us, sir?

ABRAHAM

Fight, sir? No, sir.

SAMPSON

If you do want to fight, sir, then I’m up for it. My master is as good as yours.

ABRAHAM

But not better than mine.

SAMPSON

Very well then, sir.

GREGORY

[*To SAMPSON so that only he can hear*] Say “better.” One of our master’s kinsmen has just arrived.

BENVOLIO enters.

SAMPSON

[*To ABRAHAM*] Yes, my master is better than yours, sir.

ABRAHAM

You’re a liar.

SAMPSON

Draw your swords, if you’re men. Gregory, get ready to slash them.

BENVOLIO

[*He takes out his sword*] Break it up, fools! Sheathe your swords. You don’t know what you’re doing.

They fight.

TYBALT

What, have you drawn your sword to fight with servants?

Turn around, Benvolio, and see the man who will kill you.

TYBALT enters.

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.

70 Have at thee, coward!

CITIZENS

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

BENVOLIO and TYBALT fight. Other Montagues and Capulets enter and also start fighting. Veronese CITIZENS enter, carrying clubs.

CAPULET

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

CAPULET, in a sleeping gown, enters with LADY CAPULET.

LADY CAPULET

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

CAPULET

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

MONTAGUE enters, sword drawn, with LADY MONTAGUE.

MONTAGUE

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

LADY MONTAGUE

Thou shalt not stir one foot to seek a foe.

PRINCE

80 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,
On pain of torture, from those bloody hands
85 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
90 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,
95 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,
100 To old Free-town, our common judgment-place.
Once more, on pain of death, all men depart.

PRINCE ESCALUS enters with his attendants.

Everyone exits except MONTAGUE, LADY MONTAGUE, and BENVOLIO.

MONTAGUE

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

BENVOLIO

I'm just trying to keep the peace. Put away your sword, or
else use it to help me stop this fighting.

TYBALT

You hold your sword drawn out, and say "peace?" I hate
that word, just as I hate hell, all Montagues, and you. Now
let's fight, you coward!

CITIZENS

Beat them down with your clubs, spears, and axes. Hit
them! Down with the Capulets! Down with the Montagues!

BENVOLIO and TYBALT fight. Other Montagues and Capulets enter and also start fighting. Veronese CITIZENS enter, carrying clubs.

CAPULET

What is this noise? Give me my long sword. Now!

CAPULET, in his nightgown, and LADY CAPULET enter.

LADY CAPULET

You need a crutch! Why are you calling for a sword?

CAPULET

Give me my sword, I said! Old Montague has arrived, and
he's waving his sword just to spite me.

MONTAGUE, with his sword out, and LADY MONTAGUE enter.

MONTAGUE

You are a villain, Capulet! [*LADY MONTAGUE grabs his arm*]
Let go of me. Don't stop me.

LADY MONTAGUE

You're not taking one step to try to fight an enemy.

PRINCE

You rebels and enemies of the peace, who curse your own
weapons by turning them on your neighbors.

[To himself] Can they not hear me?

[To the fighters] Silence! You men, you beasts, who can only
put out the fire of your anger by spilling fountains of blood.
I will torture you unless you drop your weapons from your
bloody hands and listen to me, your enraged Prince.
Because of nothing more than a casual word from you,
Capulet and Montague, three battles have raged in our
city's streets. These battles have forced even Verona's
elderly citizens to take off their dignified clothes and
jewelry and instead pick up old and rusty spears in order to
put an end to your fighting. If any of you Capulets or
Montagues disturb the peace in the future, you will pay for
it with your lives. Now everyone go home. Capulet, you
come with me in order to hear what else I want from you.
Montague, you come this afternoon to old Free-town ⁶,
where I deliver my judgments. Everyone else, leave this
place right now, or I will have you killed.

PRINCE ESCALUS enters with his attendants.

Everyone exits except MONTAGUE, LADY MONTAGUE, and BENVOLIO.

MONTAGUE

Who stirred this old feud up again? Tell me, nephew. Were
you around when the fight began?

⁶ Here, Shakespeare literally translates the Italian name of the Prince's court "Villa Franca," mentioned in the source material he used for this play.

BENVOLIO

Here were the servants of your adversary,
 105 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,
 110 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?
 115 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
 120 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,
 125 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,
 130 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,
 135 Away from light steals home my heavy son,
 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
 140 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.
 145 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,
 150 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.

BENVOLIO

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

ROMEO enters.

BENVOLIO

Your servants were fighting Capulet's servants when I
 arrived. I drew my sword to try to stop them. Just then, the
 reckless Tybalt showed up with his sword drawn. He
 taunted me while swinging his sword through the air, which
 made a hissing sound. As we fought, more and more
 Capulets and Montagues showed up to join the battle.
 Finally, the Prince came and stopped the fighting.


LADY MONTAGUE


Oh, where's Romeo? Have you seen him at all today? I'm
 happy he wasn't around for this fight.

BENVOLIO

Madam, my mind was troubled this morning, so an hour
 before dawn I went out for a walk. As I walked, I saw your
 son beneath the sycamore grove that grows near the
 western edge of the city. I walked toward him, but he
 noticed me and ran and hid in the woods. I assumed that he
 must be feeling the same way I was, and was looking for a
 place where he wouldn't be found. So I continued on,
 following my own inclination to not pursue Romeo and ask
 him what was on his mind. I was happy to leave Romeo
 alone as he fled from me. Besides, I was feeling so weary of
 company that even being with myself was being with one
 too many people.

MONTAGUE

He's been seen at that spot on many mornings, his tears
 adding to the morning dew and his deep sighs thickening
 the clouds in the sky. Then, as soon as the happy sun begins
 to dawn , my unhappy son comes home in order to hide
 from the light. He keeps to himself in his bedroom, shutting
 his windows to keep out the daylight so that he can sit in an
 artificial night. His bad mood is likely to have a bad result,
 unless someone can give him good advice and remove the
 cause of his sadness.

 In the original text, Shakespeare alludes to Aurora, the ancient Roman goddess of the dawn.

BENVOLIO

My noble uncle, do you know what's causing his mood?

MONTAGUE

I don't know. And he refuses to tell me.

BENVOLIO

Have you done everything possible to get him to explain?

MONTAGUE

I and many of our friends have tried to speak with him. But
 he insists on sharing his thoughts only with himself, though
 I don't know how good the advice is that he's giving himself.
 He keeps his secrets so completely that he's like a flower
 bud that can't open to the air or sun, because it's been
 poisoned from within by the bite of a worm. If we could just
 find out the cause of his sadness, we'd try to help him as
 eagerly as we have tried to figure out why he feels sad.

BENVOLIO

Here he comes. If you don't mind, please leave us alone. I'll
 make him either tell me what's wrong, or else he'll just
 decline to tell me over and over again.

ROMEO enters.

MONTAGUE

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

BENVOLIO

Good morrow, cousin.

MONTAGUE and LADY MONTAGUE exit.

ROMEO

Is the day so young?

BENVOLIO

160 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

165 In love?

ROMEO

Out.

BENVOLIO

Of love?

ROMEO

Out of her favor, where I am in love.

BENVOLIO

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

ROMEO

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.
175 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!
180 Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health,
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

185 Good heart, at what?

BENVOLIO

At thy good heart's oppression.

ROMEO

Why, such is love's transgression.
Griefs of mine own lie heavy in my breast,
Which thou wilt propagate, to have it pressed
190 With more of thine. This love that thou hast shown
Doth add more grief to too much of mine own.

MONTAGUE

I hope you're lucky enough to hear the true story. Come on,
madam, let's go.

BENVOLIO

Good morning, cousin.

MONTAGUE and LADY MONTAGUE exit.

ROMEO

Is it still that early?

BENVOLIO

The clock has just barely struck nine.

ROMEO

Oh, my! Time goes by slowly when you're sad. Was that my
father who just rushed away?

BENVOLIO

It was. What sadness is making Romeo's hours so long?

ROMEO

Lacking the thing which would make the hours short if I had
it.

BENVOLIO

Are you in love?

ROMEO

Out.

BENVOLIO

So you're not in love?

ROMEO

I am in love. But the one I love does not love me back.

BENVOLIO

Oh, it is sad how love, which in theory seems like such a
gentle thing, should in actual experience be so rough!

ROMEO

How can love, which is supposed to be blind, force you to
be able to do what it wants? Where should we eat?
[Noticing blood] Oh my goodness, what fighting happened
here? No, don't tell me. I already know: it was something
that had a lot to do with hate, but even more to do with
love. Oh, fighting love! Oh, loving hate! Oh, love that
originates from nothing! Oh heavy lightness! Serious
frivolity! Beautiful shapes smashed together to create an
ugly chaos! Love is like heavy feathers, bright smoke, cold
fire, sick health, waking sleep, the opposite of what it is!
That's the love I feel, since no one loves me in return. Are
you laughing?

BENVOLIO

No, cousin—I'm crying instead..

ROMEO

But why, my good man?

BENVOLIO

Because of the way love has oppressed your heart.

ROMEO

That's how it it goes with love. My own sadness is a heavy
weight on my chest, and now you're going to add your own
sadness to mine. The love you are showing me is only
increasing my grief. Love is like a smoke made out of the
sighs of lovers. When the smoke clears, love is a fire burning

Love is a smoke raised with the fume of sighs;
 Being purged, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes;
 Being vexed, a sea nourished with loving tears.
 195 What is it else? A madness most discreet,
 A choking gall, and a preserving sweet.
 Farewell, my coz.

BENVOLIO

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

ROMEO

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

BENVOLIO

Tell me in sadness, who is that you love.

ROMEO

What, shall I groan and tell thee?

BENVOLIO

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

ROMEO

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

BENVOLIO

I aimed so near when I supposed you loved.

ROMEO

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

BENVOLIO

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

ROMEO

Well, in that hit you miss. She'll not be hit
 With Cupid's arrow. She hath Dian's wit.
 And, in strong proof of chastity well armed
 From love's weak childish bow, she lives uncharmed.
 215 She will not stay the siege of loving terms,
 Nor bide th' encounter of assailing eyes,
 Nor ope her lap to saint-seducing gold.
 Oh, she is rich in beauty, only poor
 That when she dies, with beauty dies her store.

BENVOLIO

220 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.
 She is too fair, too wise, wisely too fair,
 225 To merit bliss by making me despair.
 She hath forsworn to love, and in that vow
 Do I live dead that live to tell it now.

BENVOLIO

Be ruled by me. Forget to think of her.

ROMEO

O, teach me how I should forget to think!

BENVOLIO

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

in the lovers' eyes. But if that love is thwarted, then it is a sea made out of lovers' tears. What else is love? A wise madness. A sweet candy that makes you choke. Goodbye, my cousin.

BENVOLIO

Wait! I'll come with you. If you leave me behind, you'll be insulting me.

ROMEO

Oh, I'm not acting like myself. It's as if I'm not even here. This is not Romeo, he's somewhere else.

BENVOLIO

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

ROMEO

What? Should I cry out the name in a groan of sadness?

BENVOLIO

Groan?! Why, of course not. Just tell me who it is.

ROMEO

You wouldn't ask a sick man to "seriously" write out his will—it would only make him feel worse. Seriously, cousin, I do love a woman.

BENVOLIO

I figured that out when I guessed you were in love.

ROMEO

Then you have good aim! And the woman I love is beautiful.

BENVOLIO

My dear cousin, a beautiful target is usually the one that is hit fastest.

ROMEO

Well, now you missed the target. She won't be hit by Cupid's ⁸ arrow. She's like Diana ⁹, protected by the armor of chastity. She is immune to the weak and childish arrows of love. She ignores words of love, refuses to even let you look at her with loving eyes, or open her lap to receive golden gifts that would even tempt a saint. Oh, she's rich in beauty. But she's also poor, because when she dies her beauty will die along with her.

⁸ Cupid is the ancient Roman god of love, often depicted as a blind child shooting love arrows.

⁹ Diana was the ancient Roman goddess of the hunt and chastity.

BENVOLIO

So she's sworn to live her life a virgin?

ROMEO

She has, and in doing so she wastes her beauty, because by living in chastity she ensures that she will never pass her beauty on to her children. She's too beautiful, and too smart, to be allowed to gain entrance to Heaven by making me despair. She's sworn never to love, and in that vow has sentenced me to a kind of living death.

BENVOLIO

Listen to me. Stop thinking about her.

ROMEO

Oh, then teach me to forget how to think!

BENVOLIO

By letting your eyes wander. Take a look at other beautiful girls.

ROMEO

'Tis the way
To call hers exquisite, in question more.
These happy masks that kiss fair ladies' brows,
235 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
240 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.

They exit.

ROMEO

Such comparisons will only make her own beauty more obvious. It will be like the masks that pretty girls wear to hide their faces. When they hide their beauty, they make us think of it more. A blind man can't forget the precious eyesight he lost. Show me any beautiful girl. What good is her beauty, other than a reminder of a girl who is even more beautiful? Goodbye. You can't teach me to forget.

BENVOLIO

I'll teach you how to forget, or else I'll die owing you the lesson.

They exit.

Act 1, Scene 2

Shakespeare

CAPULET, PARIS, and a servant, PETER, enter

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.
5 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.
10 Let two more summers wither in their pride
Ere we may think her ripe to be a bride.

PARIS

Younger than she are happy mothers made.

CAPULET

And too soon marred are those so early made.
Earth hath swallowed all my hopes but she.
15 She's the hopeful lady of my earth.
But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart.
My will to her consent is but a part.
An she agreed within her scope of choice,
Lies my consent and fair according voice.
20 This night I hold an old accustomed feast,
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
25 Earth-treading stars that make dark heaven light.
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.
35 *[To PETER, giving him a paper]*
Go, sirrah, trudge about

Shakescleare Translation

CAPULET, PARIS, and PETER--a servant--enter.

CAPULET

Montague has sworn the same oath I have, and is bound by the same penalty. I don't think it should be hard for men as old as us to remain peaceful.

PARIS

You both have honorable reputations. It's a pity you've been enemies for so long. But, now, my lord: how do you respond to my request?

CAPULET


By repeating what I've said before. My child is still extremely young. She's not even fourteen years old. Let's allow two more summers to pass before we consider her ready for marriage.


PARIS

Girls who are younger than your daughter have become happy mothers.

CAPULET

Girls who marry that young grow up too quickly. All of my other children are dead and buried in the earth, so all hopes on this earth rest in her. But you may woo her, kind Paris. Win her love. My permission for you to marry her is only part of the bargain; she must also agree to marry you. Then my blessing on the marriage will confirm her choice. This very night I'm throwing a party that I've hosted for many years. I've invited many guests, many close friends. I'd like to invite you as a most welcome guest. At my humble home tonight, you'll see see young women like stars that walk the earth and light the sky from below. Like all lusty young men, you'll be delighted by the young women who are as fresh as spring flowers. Look at them all, and choose whichever woman you like best. Amidst all these girls, you may no longer think that my daughter's the most beautiful. Come with me.

[To PETER, handing him a paper] Go, sir , walk all around Verona. Find the people whose names are on this list and tell them they're invited to my house tonight.

 In the original text, "sirrah" is used as a form of address for a person of lower social rank.

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

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

BENVOLIO and ROMEO enter

BENVOLIO

- 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.
- 50 One desperate grief cures with another's languish.
Take thou some new infection to thy eye,
And the rank poison of the old will die.

ROMEO

Your plantain leaf is excellent for that.

BENVOLIO

For what, I pray thee?

ROMEO

- 55 For your broken shin.

BENVOLIO

Why Romeo, art thou mad?

ROMEO

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

PETER

- 60 God 'i' good e'en. I pray, sir, can you read?

ROMEO

Ay, mine own fortune in my misery.

PETER

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

ROMEO

Ay, if I know the letters and the language.

PETER

- 65 Ye say honestly. Rest you merry.

ROMEO

- Stay, fellow. I can read. *[He reads the letter]*
"Seigneur Martino and his wife and daughters;
County Anselme and his beauteous sisters;
The lady widow of Vitruvio;
70 Seigneur Placentio and his lovely nieces;
Mercutio and his brother Valentine;
Mine uncle Capulet, his wife and daughters;

CAPULET and PARIS exit.

PETER


Find the people whose names are on this list? It's written that shoemakers and tailors should use each others' tools, and that fisherman should play with paints while painters should play with with fishing nets. But now I've been sent to find the people on this list, and I can't read. I'll have to ask somebody educated to help me.


BENVOLIO and ROMEO enter.

BENVOLIO

Come on, Romeo. Starting a new fire will put out the old one. An old pain is lessened by the arrival of a new one. If you make yourself dizzy, you can cure yourself by spinning in the other direction. A new grief will cure an old one. Stare obsessively at some new girl, and your former lovesickness will disappear.

ROMEO

The plantain  leaf is excellent for that.

 This low-growing plant's leaves were used for medicinal purposes in Shakespeare's time.

BENVOLIO

For what?

ROMEO

For treating your injured shin.

BENVOLIO

Why, Romeo, have you gone crazy?

ROMEO

No, though I'm bound more tightly than any mental patient is. I'm locked in a prison without food. I'm whipped, tortured.

[To PETER] Good evening, good fellow.


PETER


A blessed good evening to you. Excuse me, sir, do you know how to read?

ROMEO

Yes. I can read my fortune in my misery.

PETER

Perhaps you've memorized it . But, I beg your answer, can you read anything you see?

 Peter takes Romeo's answer literally, presuming he can only read, or recite, a work with the title "My Fortune in My Misery."

ROMEO

Yes, if I know the letters and the language.

PETER

You speak honestly. Have a nice day.

ROMEO

Stay, man. I can read. *[He reads the letter]* "Signor Martino and his wife and daughters; Count Anselme and his gorgeous 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; Signor Valentio and his cousin Tybalt; Lucio and

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

PETER

Up.

ROMEO

Whither?

PETER

To supper; to our house.

ROMEO

80 Whose house?

PETER

My master's.

ROMEO

Indeed, I should have asked thee that before.

PETER

85 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!

PETER exits.

BENVOLIO

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

ROMEO

When the devout religion of mine eye
Maintains such falsehood, then turn tears to fires,
95 And these, who, often drowned, could never die,
Transparent heretics, be burnt for liars!
One fairer than my love? The all-seeing sun
Ne'er saw her match since first the world begun.

BENVOLIO

100 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

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

They exit.

the lively Helena." That's quite a lovely group of people.
Where are they supposed to go?

PETER

Up.

ROMEO

Where?

PETER

To supper. To our house.

ROMEO

Whose house?

PETER

My master's house.

ROMEO

Indeed, I should have asked you that earlier.

PETER

I'll tell you so that you don't have to ask. My master is the
great, rich Capulet. And as long as you are not a Montague, I
invite you to come and drink a cup of wine at our house.
Have a nice day!

PETER exits.

BENVOLIO

Rosaline whom you love so much is going to attend
Capulet's traditional feast, along with all the beautiful
woman of Verona. Go there and, without bias, compare her
to some of the girls I'll point out to you. I'll show you that
the woman you think is as beautiful as a swan is in fact as
ugly as a crow.

ROMEO

If my eyes ever show me such a lie about the woman they
worship, then may my tears turn into flames. That way my
eyes, which never drowned in all my tears, may be burned
for being such clear liars! A woman more beautiful than my
love? The sun has never seen anyone as beautiful since the
world began.

BENVOLIO

Oh come on. You decided she was beautiful when no one
else was around and there was no one to compare her to
except herself. But if instead you compare her to some
other beautiful woman who I'll point out to you at this
feast, you'll see that she's far from the best.

ROMEO

I'll go along with you--not to look at other women, but to
rejoice in my love's beauty.

They exit.

Act 1, Scene 3

Shakespeare

LADY CAPULET and the NURSE enter.

Shakescleare Translation

LADY CAPULET and the NURSE enter.

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!

JULIET enters.

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'st 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.

NURSE

Even or odd, of all days in the year,
Come Lammastide at night shall she be fourteen.
20 Susan and she—God rest all Christian souls!—
Were of an age. Well, Susan is with God.
She was too good for me. But, as I said,
On Lammastide at night shall she be fourteen.
That shall she. Marry, I remember it well.
25 'Tis since the earthquake now eleven years,
And she was weaned—I never shall forget it—
Of all the days of the year, upon that day.
For I had then laid wormwood to my dug,
Sitting in the sun under the dovehouse wall.
30 My lord and you were then at Mantua.—
Nay, I do bear a brain.—But, as I said,
When it did taste the wormwood on the nipple
Of my dug and felt it bitter, pretty fool,
To see it tetchy and fall out with the dug!
35 "Shake!" quoth the dovehouse. 'Twas no need, I trow,
To bid me trudge.
And since that time it is eleven years,
For then she could stand alone. Nay, by the rood,
She could have run and waddled all about,
40 For even the day before, she broke her brow.
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,
45 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
50

LADY CAPULET

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

NURSE

I swear by my virginity at age twelve, I told her to come.
What is this?! Heaven forbid! Where is that girl? Juliet!

JULIET enters.

JULIET

What? Who's calling me?

NURSE

Your mother.

JULIET

Madam, I'm here. What do you want?

LADY CAPULET

Here's what I want—Nurse, leave us for a bit while we talk
privately—wait, no, Nurse, come back. I just remembered,
you can listen to our secrets. You know my daughter's of a
certain age.

NURSE


Yes, I know her age to the hour.

LADY CAPULET

She's not yet fourteen.

NURSE

I'd bet fourteen of my teeth—but, to be honest, I actually
only have four teeth—that she's not fourteen. How long is it
until August 1st?


 This was the date on which Lammastide, a traditional church festival for the harvest, was celebrated.


LADY CAPULET

Two weeks and a few odd days.

NURSE

Even or odd, of all the days in the year, she'll be fourteen on
the night of July 31st. She and my daughter Susan—God
rest all Christian souls—were born that same day. Well,
Susan died and is now with God. She was too good for me.
But, as I said, on the night of July 31st, Juliet will be
fourteen. Yes, she will indeed. I remember it well. It's been
eleven years since the earthquake, and it was on that very
day that she stopped nursing from my breast. I'll never
forget it. I had put some bitter wormwood on my breast as I
was sitting in the sun, under the wall of the dovehouse.
Your husband and you were in Mantua. Oh my, what a great
memory I have! As I said, when Juliet tasted the bitter
wormwood on my nipple, the pretty little thing got angry
with my breast. That's when the earthquake hit and the
dovehouse started to shake. You didn't have to tell me to
get out of there. It's been eleven years since then. She could
stand up by herself then. No, in fact, by then she could run
and waddle all over the place. I remember because just the
day before she had cut her forehead. My husband—God rest
his soul, he was a jolly man—picked Juliet up. "Oh," he said,
"Did you fall on your face? You'll fall backward when you
grow up, won't you, Jule?" And, by God, the pretty little
thing stopped crying and said, "Yes." To watch a joke come
true! Even 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."

 Literally, the evening before Lammastide was celebrated.

 Here, the Nurse quotes her husband's bawdy joke: to "fall backward" was slang for having sex.

he.
And, pretty fool, it stinted and said "ay."

LADY CAPULET

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

NURSE

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

JULIET

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

NURSE

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

LADY CAPULET

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

JULIET

It is an honor that I dream not of.

NURSE

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

LADY CAPULET

Well, think of marriage now. Younger than you
Here in Verona, ladies of esteem
Are made already mothers. By my count,
75 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

80 Verona's summer hath not such a flower.

NURSE

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

LADY CAPULET

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

LADY CAPULET

Enough of this. Please, be quiet.

NURSE

Yes, madam. But I have to laugh when I think that the baby
stopped crying and said, "Yes." What's more, I swear she
had a bump on her forehead as big as a rooster's testicle. It
was quite a knock she took, 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

Please, Nurse, I'm asking you to step, too.

NURSE

I'll be quiet. I'm done. May you receive God's grace. You
were the prettiest baby I ever nursed. If I live to see you get
married someday, my wishes will be fulfilled.

LADY CAPULET

In fact, marriage is exactly what I came here to discuss. Tell
me, Juliet, my daughter--what do you think about getting
married?

JULIET

It's an honor that I don't think about at all.

NURSE

"An honor!" If I weren't the only nurse you've had, I'd say
you'd sucked wisdom from the breast that fed you.

LADY CAPULET

Well, you should start thinking about marriage. In Verona,
girls from noble families who are younger than you have
already become mothers. By my count, I was already your
mother at around your age, while you remain a virgin. So, to
be brief: the valiant Paris wants to marry you.

NURSE

What a man, young lady! He's a man as great as any other in
the world. He's so perfect it's as if he were sculpted from
wax.

LADY CAPULET

Verona in the summertime has no flower as fine as him.

NURSE

He's a fine flower, absolutely, a flower.

LADY CAPULET

What do you say, Juliet? Can you love this gentleman?
Tonight he'll be at our feast. Look at his face and delight in
his beauty. Examine how all the lines of his features
combine to make him handsome. And what you can't see in
his beauty, find by looking in his eyes. This wonderful,
loving man lacks only a bride to make him perfect. As fish
do not hide from the sea, neither should a beauty like you
hide from a handsome man like him. Everyone thinks he's
handsome, and whoever becomes his bride would be
equally loved. You would share all that he possesses, and
lose nothing by having him.

NURSE

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

LADY CAPULET

Speak briefly. Can you like of Paris, love?

JULIET

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

PETER

105 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.

PETER enters.

LADY CAPULET


We follow thee.—Juliet, the county stays.


NURSE

Go, girl, seek happy nights to happy days.

They all exit.

NURSE

Lose nothing? No, you'd get bigger. Men make women
bigger .

 Here, the Nurse means that women get larger because men get them pregnant.

LADY CAPULET

Answer me now. Can you love Paris?

JULIET

I'll look at him with the intent to like him, if looking at him moves me to like him. But I won't let myself fall for him any more than your permission allows.

PETER

Madam, the guests are here and dinner is served. Your guests call for you and Juliet, while the servants in the pantry are cursing the Nurse. Things are getting out of control. I must rush off to serve the guests. Please, follow right after me.

PETER enters.

LADY CAPULET

We'll follow you. Juliet, Paris is waiting for you.

NURSE

Go, girl, and look for the man who will give you happy nights at the end of happy days.

They all exit.

Act 1, Scene 4

Shakespeare

ROMEO, MERCUTIO, and BENVOLIO enter wearing party masks. Five other men wearing party masks and carrying torches enter with them.

ROMEO

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

BENVOLIO

The date is out of such prolixity.
We'll have no Cupid hoodwinked with a scarf,
5 Bearing a Tartar's painted bow of lath,
Scaring the ladies like a crowkeeper,
Nor no without-book prologue, faintly spoke
After the prompter for our entrance.
But let them measure us by what they will.
10 We'll measure them a measure and be gone.

ROMEO

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

MERCUTIO

Nay, gentle Romeo, we must have you dance.

ROMEO

Not I, believe me. You have dancing shoes
15 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.

Shakescleare Translation

ROMEO, MERCUTIO, and BENVOLIO enter wearing party masks. Five other men wearing party masks and carrying torches enter with them.

ROMEO

What excuse will we make? Or should we enter without
apology?

BENVOLIO

It's no longer fashionable to talk that much. We're not going
to announce our entrance with some guy blindfolded,
dressed up as Cupid, and carrying a toy bow in order to
frighten the ladies like some scarecrow. Nor will we
introduce ourselves with a memorized speech. They can
judge us however they want. We'll dance for one dance, and
then get out of there.

ROMEO

Give me a torch. I don't feel like dancing. Since I'm sad, I
might as well carry the light.

MERCUTIO

No, sweet Romeo, you have to dance.

ROMEO

Not me, believe me. You've got on dancing shoes with
nimble soles. But my soul is made of lead so heavy that it
anchors me to the ground and I can't move.

MERCUTIO

You're a lover. Borrow Cupid's wings and use them to soar
higher than the average man.

ROMEO

I am too sore enpiercèd with his shaft
20 To soar with his light feathers, and so bound,
I cannot bound a pitch above dull woe.
Under love's heavy burden do I sink.

MERCUTIO

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

ROMEO

25 Is love a tender thing? It is too rough,
Too rude, too boisterous, and it pricks like thorn.

MERCUTIO

If love be rough with you, be rough with love.
Prick love for pricking, and you beat love down.—
Give me a case to put my visage in!
30 A visor for a visor. —What care I
What curious eye doth cote deformities?
Here are the beetle brows shall blush for me.

BENVOLIO

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

ROMEO

35 A torch for me. Let wantons light of heart
Tickle the senseless rushes with their heels.
For I am proverbèd 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

40 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

Nay, that's not so.

MERCUTIO

45 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 five wits.

ROMEO

50 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


55 That dreamers often lie.

ROMEO

I've been too strongly pierced by his arrow to soar. My wounded heart won't let me escape my dull sadness. I am sinking under love's heavy burden.

MERCUTIO

If you sink in love , then you're burdening it. You're putting too much weight on such a tender thing.

 Here, Mercutio begins a series of bawdy references that continues for the next few lines. He implies that Romeo should have sex to get over his lovesickness.

ROMEO

Is love really so tender? To me it seems too rough, too rude, too unruly, and it pricks like a thorn.

MERCUTIO

If love is rough with you, be rough with love. Prick love when it pricks you, and you'll beat love down. Give me a mask to put over my face. A mask to cover that mask I call my face. What do I care if someone sees my flaws? Let the this mask, with its dark eyebrows, blush for me.


BENVOLIO


Come on, let's knock and go inside. And once inside, let's all start dancing.

ROMEO

Give me a torch to carry. Let those with light hearts dance. There's an old proverb that fits me perfectly: I'll hold a torch and watch. The game looks like fun, but I'm done with it.

MERCUTIO

Come on, "dun " is the color of a timid mouse. You're being as timid as a patrolman on night duty. If you're a stick stuck in the mud, we'll pull you out—pardon me for being rude—out of the love in which you're stuck up to your ears. Come on, we're wasting daylight.

 Mercutio puns on Romeo's claims to be "done" with the game, using the homonym "dun," meaning a dull grayish-brown color.

ROMEO

No, that's wrong—it's night.

MERCUTIO

I mean, sir, that by delaying we're wasting our torches, which is like wasting the sunshine during the day. Show your good judgment by taking what I say the way I mean it, which is five times more important than literally trusting your five senses.

ROMEO

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

MERCUTIO

Why, may I ask?

ROMEO

I dreamed a dream last night.

MERCUTIO

So did I.

ROMEO

What was your dream?

MERCUTIO

I dreamed 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
 60 In shape no bigger than an agate stone
 On the forefinger of an alderman,
 Drawn with a team of little atoms
 Over men's noses as they lie asleep.
 Her wagon spokes made of long spinners' legs,
 65 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,
 70 Not half so big as a round little worm
 Pricked from the lazy finger of a maid.
 Her chariot is an empty hazelnut
 Made by the joiner squirrel or old grub,
 Time out o' mind the fairies' coachmakers.
 75 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,
 80 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
 85 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,
 90 Of healths five fathom deep, and then anon
 Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes,
 And being thus frighted swears a prayer or two
 And sleeps again. This is that very Mab
 That plaits the manes of horses in the night
 95 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.
 100 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,
 105 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,
 110 Turning his face to the dew-dropping south.

ROMEO

They lie in bed while dreaming about true things.

MERCUTIO

Oh, then I see [Queen Mab](#) ³ has visited you.

BENVOLIO

Queen Mab? Who's she?

MERCUTIO

She's the fairies' midwife, and is no bigger than the stone on the ring of a city councilman. She rides her carriage, which is pulled by tiny little creatures, over men's noses as they lie sleeping. The wheel spokes of her carriage are made of spiders' legs; its cover is made of grasshopper wings; and its harnesses are made of the smallest spiderwebs. The horse collars are made from moonbeams, while her whip is a single cobweb attached to a cricket bone. Her wagon driver is a tiny gnat wearing a gray coat that is not even half as large as a [little round worm](#) ⁴ that comes from the finger of a lazy young girl. Her carriage is an empty hazelnut, made by a squirrel and an old worm, which have been the fairies' carriage-builders for countless years. With this magnificent carriage she rides each night through the brains of lovers, who then dream about love. She rides across courtiers' knees, who then dream about bowing and curtsying. She rides over lawyers' fingers, who then dream about their fees. She rides over ladies' lips, and they immediately dream of kisses. But Queen Mab often puts blisters on their lips because their breath smells of candy, which angers her. Sometimes she rides over a courtier's nose, and he dreams of sniffing out a way to make some money. Sometimes she tickles a priest's nose with the tail of pig given as a tithe to the church, and he dreams of getting a high-paid church position. Sometimes she drives over a soldier's neck, and he dreams of cutting the throats of foreigners, of breaking through fortifications, of ambushes, of the finest-quality Spanish swords, and of huge mugs of alcohol before suddenly waking, frightened, by the sound of drums in his ears. Then he says a prayer or two and goes back to sleep. Mab is the one who tangles the hair of horses' manes at night and then hardens the tangles in the foul, dirty hairs; tangles which, if you undo them, bring bad luck. Mab is the hag who gives dreams of sex to virgins and teaches them how to bear the weight of a lover and to bear a child. She's the one—

ROMEO

Calm down, calm down! Mercutio, be calm. You're talking about nothing.

MERCUTIO

True. I'm talking about dreams, which are produced by a brain that's doing nothing. Dreams are born of no more than empty fantasy, which lack substance like air, and are more unpredictable than the wind, which can blow on the frozen north and then suddenly get angry and blow south.

³ Some editors suppose that Shakespeare took the idea of Queen Mab from Irish mythology's Queen Medb, while others gloss that this is a reference to prostitution--"queen" being an Elizabethan slang term for prostitute, and "Mab" a common name associated with prostitution.

⁴ In the folklore of Shakespeare's time, lazy girls were thought to have worms in their blood.

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
115 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 steerage of my course,
120 Direct my sail. On, lusty gentlemen.

BENVOLIO

Strike, drum.

March about the stage and exit.

BENVOLIO

This wind you're talking about is blowing us off course.
Dinner is already over. We're going to get there too late.

ROMEO

I fear we're going to arrive too early. I have a feeling this
party tonight is fated to set in motion some awful destiny
that will result in my own untimely death. But whoever's in
charge of my fate can steer me where they want. Let's go,
my lusty friends!

BENVOLIO

Bang the drum!

They march around the stage and exit.

Act 1, Scene 5

Shakespeare

PETER and other SERVINGMEN enter, carrying 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

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

SECOND SERVINGMAN

Ay, boy, ready.

PETER

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

FIRST SERVINGMAN

We cannot be here and there too. Cheerly, boys. Be
brisk
a while, and the longer liver take all.

*PETER and the SERVINGMEN come and go, setting forth tables and
chairs.*

CAPULET

15 Welcome, gentlemen! Ladies that have their toes
Unplagued with corns will walk a bout with you.
Ah, my mistresses! Which of you all
Will now deny to dance? She that makes dainty,
She, I'll swear, hath corns. Am I come near ye now?—
20 Welcome, gentlemen! I have seen the day
That I have worn a visor and could tell
A whispering tale in a fair lady's ear
Such as would please. 'Tis gone, 'tis gone, 'tis gone.—
You are welcome, gentlemen.—Come, musicians, play.
25 *[Music plays and they dance]*
A hall, a hall, give room!—And foot it, girls.—
More light, you knaves! And turn the tables up,
And quench the fire. The room is grown too hot.—

Shakesclare Translation

PETER and other SERVINGMEN enter, carrying napkins.

PETER

Where's Potpan, who's not helping us clear the table? Has
he even moved or scraped a plate?

FIRST SERVINGMAN

When all the good manners are owned by just one or two
men, and even those two are dirty, it's a bad thing.

PETER

Clear away the stools, sideboards, and plates. My 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

You're being called for, asked after, and looked for in the
great chamber.

FIRST SERVINGMAN

We can't be both here and there at once! Be cheerful, boys.
Be quick for a while, and may the longest lived take
everything.

*PETER and the SERVINGMEN come and go as they set up
tables and chairs.*

CAPULET

Welcome, gentlemen. All the ladies who aren't suffering
from corns on their feet will dance with you. Ha ha! My
ladies, now which of you will refuse to dance now? If any of
you acts shyly, I'll swear she has corns. Have I hit the mark?
Welcome, gentlemen. Once there was a time when I could
wear a mask and charm a girl by whispering a story in her
ear. No more, no more, no more. You are welcome
gentlemen. Come, musicians, play. *[Music plays and they
dance]* Make room in the hall! Make room! Dance, girls.

[To SERVINGMEN] More light. Move the tables out of the
way. Put out the fire—it's getting hot in here.

Ah, sirrah, this unlooked-for sport comes well.—

- 30 Nay, sit, nay, sit, good cousin Capulet,
For you and I are past our dancing days.
How long is 't now since last yourself and I
Were in a mask?

CAPULETS' COUSIN

By'r Lady, thirty years.

CAPULET enters with his cousin, TYBALT, LADY CAPULET, JULIET, The NURSE, and other Capulets. They meet ROMEO, BENVOLIO, MERCUTIO, and other guests and MASKERS

CAPULET

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

CAPULET'S COUSIN

- 'Tis more, 'tis more. His son is elder, sir.
40 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
45 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 Ethiop's ear,
50 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.
55 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
60 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

- 65 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.

[To his COUSIN] Ah, sir, these unexpected guests are
welcome. No, sit, sit, my Capulet cousin. We're too old to
dance. How long has it been since you and I last wore
masks?

CAPULET'S COUSIN

By the Virgin Mary, I'd swear thirty years.

CAPULET enters with his cousin TYBALT, LADY CAPULET, JULIET, The NURSE, and other Capulets. They meet ROMEO, BENVOLIO, MERCUTIO, and other guests and MASKERS

CAPULET

What, man? It's not been that long, not that long. It was at
Lucentio's wedding. No matter how quickly the years fly by,
it's been just twenty-five years since we last wore masks.

CAPULET'S COUSIN

Longer, longer. Lucentio's son is older than that, sir. He's
thirty.

CAPULET

How can you say that? His son was still a minor two years
ago.

ROMEO

[To a SERVINGMAN] Who is that girl on the arm of that man
over there?

SERVINGMAN

I don't know, sir.

ROMEO

Oh, she teaches the torches to burn bright! She glows in the
darkness like a jewel in the ear of an African. Her beauty is
too good to be used and worn, too precious for this world.
Like a white dove in a flock of crows, she surpasses all the
other women. When this dance ends, I'll note where she
stands, and then I'll touch her hand and thereby bless my
ugly one. Did I ever love anyone before this moment?
Renounce that love, my eyes! I never saw true beauty until
this night.

TYBALT

By his voice I know that this man is a Montague.

[To his PAGE] Get my sword, boy.

[To himself] How dare this punk come here with his face
covered by a mask so he can mock and scorn our
celebration? To defend the honor of my family, I don't think
it would be a sin to kill him.

CAPULET

What's all this, nephew? Why are so furious?

TYBALT

Uncle, that is a Montague—our rival. He's a rogue who's
come here out of spite to scorn our celebration.

CAPULET

It's young Romeo, right?

TYBALT

That's him, that villain Romeo.

CAPULET

70 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
75 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

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

CAPULET

He shall be endured.
What, Goodman boy! I say, he shall. Go to.
Am I the master here, or you? Go to.
85 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.
90 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 princox, go.
Be quiet, or —More light, more light! —For shame!
95 I'll make you quiet. —What, cheerly, my hearts!

The 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
Now seeming sweet, convert to bitterest gall.

TYBALT exits.

ROMEO

100 *[Taking JULIET's hand]* If I profane with my unworthingest
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

105 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

110 Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use in prayer.

CAPULET

Calm yourself, gentle nephew . Leave him be. He holds himself like a gentleman of good manners, and, to be honest, everyone in Verona says that he is a virtuous and well-behaved youth. Not for all the wealth in this town would I insult him in my own house. Be calm. Pretend you never saw him. That is my command, and if you respect me, you'll stop with all these frowns, which is no way to behave at a party.

TYBALT

It's the way to behave when a scoundrel like him shows up. I won't stand him coming here.

CAPULET

You will stand him. What, boy? I say you will. Get out of here. Am I the master here, or you? Get out. You won't stand him? God save my soul, you'll start a riot among my guests! And you'll crow like a rooster, like you're the man!

TYBALT

But, uncle, we're being dishonored.

CAPULET

Come on, come on. You're an impertinent boy. Is that really how you think it is? This silliness is likely to come back to harm you. I know what I'm doing, but you feel the need to contradict me. Well, I'll show you a thing or two.

[To the GUESTS] Well done, my dears!

[To TYBALT] You're an insolent boy, now go. Keep your mouth shut.

[To SERVINGMEN] More light, more light!

[To TYBALT] You should be ashamed of yourself! I'll make you be quiet.

[To the GUESTS] Party on, my friends!

The music plays again, and the guests dance.

TYBALT

The blend of enforced restraint with my burning rage is making me tremble. I'll leave. But I'll make Romeo regret this prank, which at the moment seems to him like such great fun.

TYBALT exits.

ROMEO

[Taking JULIET's hand] If I offend you by touching your holy hand with my own unworthy one, then my lips stand ready, like two blushing pilgrims, to smooth my rough touch with a gentle kiss.

JULIET


Good pilgrim, you are unfair to your hand. Your hand shows proper devotion by touching mine, just as pilgrims reach out to touch the hands of saints. Holding palm to palm is like a pilgrim's kiss.

ROMEO

Don't saints have lips? And pilgrims, too?

JULIET

Yes, pilgrim—lips they're supposed to use to pray.

 *In the original text we see Capulet using the word "cousin" to address Tybalt, who is in fact his nephew. In Shakespeare's time, "cousin" was used as a catch-all term to address kinsmen, no matter the familial relationship.*

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.

He kisses her.

115 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.

JULIET

You kiss by th' book.

They kiss again

NURSE

120 Madam, your mother craves a word with you.

JULIET moves away

ROMEO

What is her mother?

NURSE

Marry, bachelor,
Her mother is the lady of the house,
And a good lady, and a wise and virtuous.

125 I nursed her daughter that you talked withal.
I tell you, he that can lay hold of her
Shall have the chinks.

ROMEO

[Aside] Is she a Capulet?
O dear account! My life is my foe's debt.

BENVOLIO

130 *[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.
We have a trifling foolish banquet towards.—
Is it e'en so? Why, then, I thank you all.

135 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.
I'll to my rest.

Everyone except JULIET and NURSE begins to exit.

JULIET

Come hither, Nurse. What is yond gentleman?

ROMEO

Oh, then, saint, let lips do what hands do: pray. Grant my
prayer or my faith will turn to despair.

JULIET

Saints don't move, though they do grant prayers.

ROMEO

Then remain still while I pray.

He kisses her.

Now your lips have cleaned the sin from mine.


JULIET

Then my lips now have the sin they took from yours.

ROMEO

Sin from my lips? Oh, how you urge me on to another crime.
Give me back my sin.

JULIET

You kiss as if you've studied how .

They kiss again.

NURSE

Madam, your mother wants to speak with you.

JULIET moves away.

ROMEO

Who is her mother?

NURSE

Well, young man, her mother is the lady of the house. A
good, wise, and virtuous lady. I nursed her daughter, who
you were talking to just now. I tell you, the man who
marries that girl will be rich.

ROMEO

[To himself] Is she a Capulet? Oh, what a price I've paid! My
life is now owned by my enemy.

BENVOLIO

[To ROMEO] Let's go, let's go, now while everything is still
perfect.

ROMEO

Yes, it is still perfect now. But I'm afraid it will never be
perfect again.

CAPULET


No, gentlemen, don't leave now. We have a bit of dessert
arriving any moment. *[They whisper something to him]* Is
that so? Then, I thank you. I thank you, honest gentlemen.
Good night. Bring more torches over here! Come on, let's all
get to bed.

[To his COUSIN] Ah, good sir, by God, it's late. I'm going
sleep.

Everyone except JULIET and the NURSE begins to exit.

JULIET

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

 Juliet is also teasing Romeo about how he used religion, the Bible or "the book," to steal two kisses.

NURSE

140 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

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

NURSE

I know not.

JULIET

145 Go ask his name.

The NURSE goes.

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

NURSE

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

JULIET

150 *[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

What's this? What's this?

JULIET

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

Somebody calls "Juliet!" offstage.

NURSE

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

They exit.

NURSE

The son and heir of old Tiberio.

JULIET

Who's the one going out the door?

NURSE

That, I think, is young Petruchio.

JULIET

What about the one over there, who wouldn't dance?

NURSE

I don't know him.

JULIET

Go ask.

The NURSE exits.

[To herself] If he's married, I'd rather die than marry
someone else.

NURSE

[Returning] His name is Romeo. He's a Montague. He's the
only son of your greatest enemy.

JULIET

[To herself] The one man I love is the son of the one man I
hate! I saw him before I knew who he was, and learned who
he was too late! What a monster love is to make me love my
worst enemy.

NURSE

What's this? What's this?

JULIET

A rhyme I learned just now from somebody I danced with.

Somebody calls "Juliet!" offstage.

NURSE

On our way, on our way! Come along, let's go. The strangers
have all left.

They exit.

Act 2, Prologue

Shakespeare

The CHORUS enters.

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 bewitchèd by the charm of looks;
But to his foe supposed he must complain,
And she steal love's sweet bait from fearful hooks.
Being held a foe, he may not have access
10 To breathe such vows as lovers use to swear,
And she as much in love, her means much less
To meet her new belovèd anywhere.
But passion lends them power, time means, to meet,

Shakescleare Translation

The CHORUS enters.

CHORUS

Now Romeo's old desire for Rosaline lies in its deathbed,
and a new love is ready to be its heir. Romeo used to groan
and swear he would die for Rosaline's love, but now he
finds Rosaline's beauty nothing in comparison to tender
Juliet's. Now someone loves Romeo and Romeo loves
someone, and they are both charmed by each other's looks.
But Romeo must declare his love to someone who is
supposed to be his enemy, and Juliet is love-struck, adoring
someone she is supposed to fear. Because he is considered
an enemy, Romeo is not allowed to see Juliet, and make the
sorts of oaths that lovers usually swear to each other. And
Juliet--just as much in love with Romeo as he is with her--
she has even fewer means of meeting her beloved Romeo.

Temp'ring extremities with extreme sweet.

The CHORUS exits.

But passion gives them the power, and time gives them the opportunity, to meet each other, tempering their extreme adversity with extreme sweetness.

The CHORUS exits.

Act 2, Scene 1

Shakespeare

ROMEO enters alone.

ROMEO

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

ROMEO moves away. BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO enter.

BENVOLIO

Romeo, my cousin Romeo! Romeo!

MERCUTIO

He is wise,
5 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!
10 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,
15 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,
20 By her high forehead and her scarlet lip,
By her fine foot, straight leg, and quivering thigh,
And the demesnes that there adjacent lie,
That in thy likeness thou appear to us.

BENVOLIO

An if he hear thee, thou wilt anger him.

MERCUTIO

25 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
30 Is fair and honest. In his mistress' name
I conjure only but to raise up him.

BENVOLIO

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.
35 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.—

Shakescleare Translation

ROMEO enters alone.

ROMEO

Can I continue on while my heart stays here? I'll be nothing but an empty body unless I go back to find my heart.

ROMEO moves away. BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO enter.

BENVOLIO

Romeo! Cousin Romeo! Romeo!


MERCUTIO


He's smart. I'd bet on my life that he's snuck off towards home to go to bed.

BENVOLIO

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

MERCUTIO

No, I'll summon him as I would a spirit. Romeo! Humors! Madman! Passion! Lover! Appear to me in the form of a sigh. Speak just a single rhyme, and I'll be satisfied. Cry out, "Ah me!" Say "love" and "dove." Say one pretty word to my good gossiping friend Venus . Say the nickname of her blind son and heir, Cupid, who shot arrows so accurately and made King Cophetua fall in love with a beggar maid.—Romeo doesn't hear me, stir, or move. The little monkey is dead, so I must conjure him to appear.— By Rosaline's bright eyes, by her high forehead and her red lips, by her fine feet, straight legs, and trembling thighs, and by parts of her that lie next to her thighs, I summon you to appear before us in your actual form.

 Venus was the ancient Roman goddess of love.

BENVOLIO

You'll make him angry if he hears you.


MERCUTIO


This won't make him angry. It would anger him if I conjured a strange spirit into Rosaline's room for her to have sex with. That would really anger him. But what I'm saying is fair and honest. I'm just saying the name of his love in order to call him out from the darkness.

BENVOLIO

Come on. He's hidden within these trees to be alone with the night. His love is blind, so it's fitting he share it with the dark.

MERCUTIO

If love is blind, it can't hit the target. He'll sit under a medlar  tree and wish his love were one of its fruits, which women, when they're alone, joke look like female genitals. Oh, Romeo, I wish she were one such fruit! I wish she was

 Mercutio refers to a medlar tree to make a series of obscene jokes. The tree's fruit was thought to resemble genitalia, earning it the nickname "open-arse" and "popperin."

O Romeo, that she were! Oh, that she were
An open arse, and thou a poperin pear.
40 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.

an open-arse, and that you were a “pop her in” pear. Good
night, Romeo. I'm off to my little trundle bed. It's too cold in
this field for me to sleep here. Come on, Benvolio, shall we
leave?

BENVOLIO

Yes, let's go, then. We'd be looking for Romeo in vain
because he doesn't want to be found.

BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO exit.

Act 2, Scene 2

Shakespeare

ROMEO returns.

ROMEO

He jests at scars that never felt a wound.
But soft! What light through yonder window breaks?
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
5 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!
10 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.
15 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
20 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
25 That I might touch that cheek!

JULIET enters on the balcony.

JULIET

Ay me!

ROMEO

[Aside] She speaks.
O, speak again, bright angel! For thou art
As glorious to this night, being o'er my head,
30 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

35 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?

Shakescleare Translation

ROMEO returns.

ROMEO

He jokes about scars from wounds he's never felt.
But wait! What light is that in the window over there? It is
the east, and Juliet is the sun. Rise, beautiful sun, and kill
the jealous moon , which is already sick and pale with
grief because Juliet, her maid, is more beautiful than she is.
Don't be her maid, since she's jealous. The moon's virginity
makes her look sick and green , and only fools hold on to
their virginity. Throw it off. It is my lady. Oh, it is my love.
Oh, I wish she knew I loved her. She's talking, but isn't
saying anything. Why is that? Her eyes are speaking. I'll
respond—no, I am too bold. It's not to me she speaks. Two
of the most beautiful stars in the sky had to go off on some
business, and begged her eyes to twinkle in their place until
they return. If her eyes were in the sky and the stars were in
her head the brightness of her cheeks would overwhelm
the stars, just as daylight outshines a lamp. And her eyes in
the night sky would shine so brightly that birds would start
singing, thinking it was day. Look how she leans her cheek
against her hand. I wish I were a glove on that hand, so I
could touch her cheek.

JULIET enters on the balcony.

JULIET

Oh, my!

ROMEO


[To himself] She speaks. Speak again, bright angel. For
tonight you are as glorious as an angel, shining above my
head like a winged messenger from heaven; one who
makes mortals fall onto their backs to gaze up in awe as the
angel strides across the clouds and sails through the air.


JULIET

Oh, Romeo, Romeo, why must you be Romeo? Deny your
father and give up your name. Or, if you won't change your
name, just swear your love to me and I'll give up being a
Capulet.

ROMEO

[To himself] Should I listen longer, or respond now to these
words?

 Here, Romeo refers to Diana, the ancient Roman goddess of the moon and virginity. Romeo explains that as long as Juliet remains a virgin, she will be one of Diana's handmaidens.

 In the early modern era, virgins were sometimes thought to have a condition called "green sickness," which required the cure of sex within the context of marriage.

JULIET

40 '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!
 45 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,
 50 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

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

ROMEO

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

JULIET

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

ROMEO

65 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,
 If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

ROMEO

70 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

If they do see thee they will murder thee.

ROMEO

75 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

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

JULIET

By whose direction found'st thou out this place?

JULIET

Only your name is my enemy. You'd be yourself even if you ceased to be a Montague. What's a Montague, after all? It's not a hand, foot, arm, face, or any other body part. Oh, change your name! What's the significance of a name? The thing we call a rose would smell as sweet even if we called it by some other name. So even if Romeo had some other name, he would still be perfect. Romeo, take off your name—which really has no connection to who you are—and take all of me instead.

ROMEO

[To JULIET] I take you at your word. If you call me your love, I'll take a new name. From now on I'll never again be Romeo.

JULIET

Who are you, hiding in the darkness and eavesdropping on my private thoughts?

ROMEO

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

JULIET

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

ROMEO

Beautiful girl, I'll be neither of those things, if you dislike them.

JULIET

How and why did you come here? The orchard walls are high and difficult to climb. And it will mean your death, because of who you are, if any of my family members find you here.

ROMEO

I flew over these walls on the wings of love. No stone wall can keep love out. Whatever a man in love can do, love will make him attempt to do it. Therefore your relatives can't stop me.

JULIET

If they see you they'll murder you.

ROMEO

Alas, there would be more danger for me in one angry look from you than there would be from twenty of your relatives with swords. If you just look at me with love, their hatred would not be able to touch me.

JULIET

I'd give the world to make sure they do not see you here.

ROMEO

The darkness of night will hide me from their eyes. And if you don't love me, then let them find me. I'd rather they killed me in hatred than experience the prolonged death of life without your love.

JULIET

Who told you how to find my bedroom?

ROMEO

By love, that first did prompt me to inquire.
85 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

Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face,
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek
90 For that which thou hast heard me speak tonight.
Fain would I dwell on form. Fain, fain deny
What I have spoke. But farewell compliment!
Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say "ay,"
95 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.
Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,
100 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.
But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true
105 Than those that have more coying to be strange.
I should have been more strange, I must confess,
But that thou overheard'st, ere I was 'ware,
My true love's passion. Therefore pardon me,
And not impute this yielding to light love,
110 Which the dark night hath so discovered.

ROMEO

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

JULIET

O, swear not by the moon, th' inconstant moon,
That monthly changes in her circle orb,
115 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,
120 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,
125 Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be
Ere one can say "It lightens." Sweet, good night.
This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.
Good night, good night! As sweet repose and rest
130 Come to thy heart as that within my breast.

ROMEO

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.

ROMEO

Love, which spurred me to come and find you. Love advised me, while I lent love my eyes. I'm not a sailor. Still, even if you were on the shore across the farthest sea, I would set out to find you.

JULIET

The darkness of night masks my face, or else you'd see me blushing about the things you heard me say tonight. I would gladly stick to the proper manners of courtship and deny everything I said. But, instead: I'll say goodbye to good manners! Do you love me? I know you will answer "yes," and I will trust you. But your swears may turn out to be false. They say that Jove  laughs when lovers lie. Oh, noble Romeo, if you really love me, say it in truth. Or if you think I'm letting myself be won too easily, then I'll frown and act superior and unapproachable so that you'll woo me. But if that's not necessary, then I would never act that way. In truth, beautiful Montague, I like you too much, which might make it seem as if I am overly silly and flirtatious. But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove to be more faithful than girls who act coy and standoffish. I probably should have acted more standoffish, I confess, but you overheard me talking about my passion for you before I knew you were there. So please forgive me, and don't condemn me for so quickly falling in love when it was only revealed to you because the dark night let you discover it.

 Jove was the king of the ancient Roman gods.

ROMEO

Lady, I swear by the sacred moon, which outlines in silver the tops of these fruit trees—

JULIET

Please don't swear by the moon, the unreliable moon, which changes its position in the sky each month. I do not want your love to end up being similarly variable.

ROMEO

What should I swear by?

JULIET

Don't swear at all. Or, if you must swear, swear by your magnificent self, which is the god I worship like an idol, and 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 wild, thoughtless, sudden. It's too much like lightning, which disappears before you can even say, "it's lightning." My love, good night. Our love, which now is like a flower bud, may blossom in the summer air into a beautiful flower by the next time we meet. Good night! I hope you feel in your heart the same sweet calm and rest that I feel in mine.

ROMEO

Are you going to leave me so unsatisfied?

JULIET

What satisfaction could you have tonight?

ROMEO

If we exchanged vows of love.

JULIET

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

ROMEO

Wouldst thou withdraw it? For what purpose, 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,
140 My love as deep. The more I give to thee,
The more I have, for both are infinite.

The NURSE calls from offstage.

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

JULIET exits.

ROMEO

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

JULIET enters.

JULIET

Three words, dear Romeo, and good night indeed.
If that thy bent of love be honorable,
150 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

155 *[From within]* Madam!

JULIET

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

NURSE

[From within] Madam!

JULIET

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

ROMEO

So thrive my soul—

JULIET

A thousand times good night!

ROMEO

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

JULIET exits.

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

JULIET

I pledged my love before you even requested it. But now I wish I could take that promise back to give it again.

ROMEO

You'd take back your vow? Why, my love?

JULIET

In order to generously give it to you again. But I'm wishing for something I have already. My generosity to you is as endless as the sea, my love as deep as the sea. The more love I give you, the more I have. Both are infinite.

The NURSE calls from offstage.

I hear a noise from inside. Dear love, goodbye—Just a second, Nurse!—Sweet Montague, be true. Stay for a moment. I'll come right back.

JULIET exits.

ROMEO

Oh, blessed, blessed night! Because it's night, I'm scared that all this is a dream. It is too wonderful to be real.

JULIET enters.

JULIET

Three words, dear Romeo, and then good night. If your love is honorable and you want to marry me, send me word tomorrow. I'll find a messenger who will come to you, and you can tell that messenger when and where we will be married. All my fortunes I'll lay at your feet and follow you, my lord, all over the world.

NURSE

[Offstage] Madam!

JULIET

I'll be right there!

[To ROMEO] But if your intentions are not honorable, I beg you—

NURSE

[Offstage] Madam!

JULIET

In a second, I'm coming!

[To ROMEO] to give up your efforts to win me and leave me to grieve. I'll send the messenger tomorrow.

ROMEO

My soul depends on it—

JULIET

A thousand times good night.

ROMEO

It is a thousand times worse to leave you. A lover goes toward his beloved as joyfully as a schoolboy leaving his books. But when a lover leaves his beloved, he is as unhappy as a schoolboy on his way to school.

JULIET exits.

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

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,
170 Else would I tear the cave where Echo lies,
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,
175 Like softest music to attending ears!

JULIET

Romeo!

ROMEO

My nyas?

JULIET

What o'clock tomorrow
Shall I send to thee?

ROMEO

180 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

185 I shall forget, to have thee still stand there,
Remembering how I love thy company.

ROMEO

And I'll still stay, to have thee still forget,
Forgetting any other home but this.

JULIET

'Tis almost morning. I would have thee gone.
And yet no further than a wanton's bird,
190 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

I would I were thy bird.

JULIET

195 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.

ROMEO

Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast.

Juliet exits.

200 Would I were sleep and peace, so sweet to rest,
Hence will I to my ghostly sire's close cell,
His help to crave, and my deap hap to tell.

ROMEO exits.

JULIET

Psst! Romeo! Psst! Oh, I wish I could cry out like a falconer,
so I could call my little falcon to return to me. Stuck as I am
in my family's house, I have to be quiet. Otherwise I would
tear open the cave where Echo ⁴ sleeps and make her call
out my love's name until her voice grew more hoarse than
mine by repeating, "My Romeo!"

⁴ In Greek mythology, Echo was a nymph doomed by Hera to only repeat what others said.

ROMEO

It is my soul that calls out my name. Lovers' voices at night
sound silver-sweet, the most lovely music to lovers' ears.

JULIET

Romeo!

ROMEO

My little hawk?

JULIET

At what time tomorrow should I send the messenger to
you?

ROMEO

Nine o'clock.

JULIET

I won't fail. It will feel like twenty years until then. I've
forgotten why I called you back.

ROMEO

I'll stand here until you remember.

JULIET

I'll forget it, so you'll have to stand there forever, because of
how much I love your company.

ROMEO

And I'll remain here, even if you keep forgetting. I'll forget
that I have any other home but here.

JULIET

It's almost morning. I want to force you to go. Yet I would
not let you move any further than a spoiled child would let
his pet bird go. The child so loves the bird that he will not
let the bird hop any more than a small distance from his
hand before pulling it back by a silk thread.

ROMEO

I wish I were your bird.

JULIET

Sweetheart, so do I. But I would pet you so much it would
kill you. Good night. Good night! Parting is such sweet
sorrow that I will say good night until it becomes tomorrow.

ROMEO

May sleep shut your eyes, and may you feel peace in your
heart.

Juliet exits.

I wish I were sleep and peace, so I could sweetly rest with
you tonight. But now I'll go to my priest's cell ⁵, to ask for
his help and tell him about my good luck.

⁵ A cell is a small room in a monastery in which a nun or monk works and sleeps.

ROMEO exits.

Act 2, Scene 3

Shakespeare

FRIAR LAWRENCE enters by himself, carrying 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 natu re'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.

Romeo enters.

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

ROMEO

Good morrow, Father.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Benedicite.
 What early tongue so sweet saluteth me?
 Young son, it argues a distempered head
 35 So soon to bid good morrow to thy bed.
 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.
 40 Therefore thy earliness doth me assure
 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

45 God pardon sin! Wast thou with Rosaline?

ROMEO

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

FRIAR LAWRENCE

That's my good son. But where hast thou been, then?

Shakescleare Translation

FRIAR LAWRENCE enters by himself, carrying a basket.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

The morning smiles as it replaces frowning night, and streaks light across the clouds in the east. Darkness staggers away from the sun's path like a drunkard. Now, before the sun rises, bringing on the day and drying the dew, I must fill my basket with poisonous weeds and the precious nectar of flowers. The earth is both nature's mother and its tomb. Plants arise from the earth as from a womb, and when they die, they are buried in the earth. Many different plants and animals come from the earth's womb. All of these children find nourishment from the earth, and all have some special, unique virtue. There is a power that resides in herbs, plants, and stones. For there's nothing on earth that's so evil that it does not also provide the earth with some kind of good. Nor is there anything so good that it can't be turned bad if it's abused and used incorrectly. Virtue, when misused, turns to vice, while vice can sometimes become virtue through proper action.

Romeo enters.

Within the small rind of this little flower there is both poison and medicine. If you smell it, you feel good. If you taste it, it stops your heart. Two opposing elements, good and evil, reside in both men and herbs. In the cases where evil predominates, death will soon kill the plant or body like a cancer.

ROMEO

Good morning, father.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

God bless you. Whose voice greets me so sweetly this early in the morning? My son, jumping so quickly out of bed this early indicates some trouble in your thoughts. All old men have concerns, and these worries never let them sleep. Young men, though, should be carefree and without worry, and their sleep should be restful and long. Therefore, the fact that you're awake so early makes it clear that some anxiety has you in its grip. Or, if that's not true, then I'd guess that you actually never went to sleep at all tonight.

ROMEO

That last is right. The rest I had was sweeter than sleep.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

God forgive all sin!—Did you sleep with Rosaline?

ROMEO

With Rosaline, my holy father? No, I have forgotten her and the sadness she gave me.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

That's good, my son. But where were you, then?

ROMEO

I'll tell thee ere thou ask it me again.

- 50 I have been feasting with mine enemy,
Where on a sudden one hath wounded me,
That's by me wounded. Both our remedies
Within thy help and holy physic lies.
I bear no hatred, blessed man, for, lo,
55 My intercession likewise steads my foe.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

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.

- 60 As mine on hers, so hers is set on mine,
And all combined, save what thou must combine
By holy marriage. When and where and how
We met, we wooed and made exchange of vow,
I'll tell thee as we pass, but this I pray:
65 That thou consent to marry us today.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

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.

- 70 Jesu Maria, what a deal of brine
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,
75 Thy old groans ring yet in my ancient ears.
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.
80 And art thou changed? Pronounce this sentence then:
Women may fall when there's no strength in men.

ROMEO

Thou chid'st me oft for loving Rosaline.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

For doting, not for loving, pupil mine.

ROMEO

And badest me bury love.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

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

ROMEO

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

FRIAR LAWRENCE

- 90 Oh, she knew well
Thy love did read by rote, that could not spell.
But come, young waverer, come, go with me,
In one respect I'll thy assistant be,
For this alliance may so happy prove
95 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.

ROMEO

I'll tell you before you ask me again. I've been at a party
with my enemy, where suddenly someone wounded me
and was in turn wounded by me. But both of us can be
cured by your holy power. I hold no hatred, blessed father,
because my request will also help my enemy.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Speak plainly, my son. Be clear. A confusing confession will
result only in confused absolution.

ROMEO

Here it is set plain: I love the beautiful daughter of rich
Capulet. I love her, and she loves me. We're bound together,
and need only for you to combine us completely by
marrying us. In good time I'll tell you about when and
where and how we met, how we wooed each other and
vowed our love. But now I pray that you will agree to marry
us today.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Holy Saint Francis, what an incredible change! Have you so
quickly abandoned Rosaline, whom you loved so much? If
so, then young men love not with their hearts but with their
eyes. Jesus and Mary, you cried so many tears for Rosaline!
So many salty tear-drops wasted, seasoning a love you
never even tasted! The sun has not yet burned away the fog
from all your sighs. My old ears are still ringing from your
groans. And look, here on your cheek there's a stain from an
old tear that has not yet been washed off. If you were ever
yourself and this sorrow yours, you and your sorrow were
all for Rosaline. And are you now changed? Then say the
following: women will never be faithful when men are so
unreliable.

ROMEO

You often scolded me for loving Rosaline.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

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

ROMEO

And you urged me to bury my love.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

But not to bury it in a grave in order to start a new love.

ROMEO

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

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Oh, Rosaline knew that you were play-acting at love but did
not actually understand what love means. But come with
me, my young unreliable friend. I'll help you, because it's
possible that this marriage may transform your two
families' hatred into pure love.

ROMEO

Let's go, then! Let's do this quickly.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Go wisely, and go slowly. Those who rush into things
stumble.

*They exit.**They exit.*

Act 2, Scene 4

Shakespeare

*BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO enter.***MERCUTIO**

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

BENVOLIO

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

MERCUTIO

Why, that same pale hard-hearted wench, that Rosaline,
5 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

10 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
15 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
20 captain of compliments. He fights as you sing
prick-song, keeps time, distance, and proportion. He
rests his minim rests—one, two, and the third in your
bosom. The very butcher of a silk button, a duelist, a
duelist, a gentleman of the very first house of the
25 first and second cause. Ah, the immortal passado, the
punto reverso, the hai!

BENVOLIO

The what?

MERCUTIO

The pox on such antic, lispings, affecting fantasmies,
these new tuners of accents! "By Jesu, a very good
30 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

Shakescleare Translation

*BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO enter.***MERCUTIO**

Where the devil is Romeo? Did he come home last night?

BENVOLIO

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

MERCUTIO

Rosaline--that pale-skinned, hard-hearted wench--
torments him so much that he's going to go insane.

BENVOLIO

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

MERCUTIO

I bet it's a challenge to fight.

BENVOLIO

Romeo will answer it.

MERCUTIO

Any man who can write is able to answer a letter.

BENVOLIO

No, Romeo will respond to the letter writer and accept the
challenge.

MERCUTIO

Poor Romeo! He is already dead: stabbed by the black eye
of a fair-skinned girl, cut through the ear by a love song. The
very core of his heart has been split by blind Cupid's arrow.
Is he really man enough to fight Tybalt?

BENVOLIO

Why, what's up with Tybalt?

MERCUTIO

He's more than just the [Prince of Cats](#) 🐈. Oh, he does
everything according to convention. He fights like you sing
printed music, carefully keeping the correct time, distance,
and rhythm. He rests when it is proper to rest: one, two, and
the third in your heart. He's a master duelist who can hit
any of his opponent's buttons that he chooses. He's a
gentleman who learned at the finest fencing school, and
he's skilled at identifying insults and slights to his honor so
that he's "forced" to fight. He knows the *passado*—the
forward thrust—the *punto reverso*—the backhand
thrust—and the *hai*—the thrust for the heart.

BENVOLIO

He knows what?

MERCUTIO

A curse on these wild, pompous fellows who are always
spouting exotic foreign phrases. These fellows, who say
things like: "By Jesus, this is a very good blade! A very brave
man! A very good whore." Isn't it a sad thing, good man,
that we are forced to interact with these foreign flies, these

📖 In the medieval folktales about a
fox named Reynard, the character of
the Prince of Cats was named Tybalt.

35 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!

ROMEO enters.

BENVOLIO

Here comes Romeo, here comes Romeo.

MERCUTIO

Without his roe, like a dried herring. O flesh, flesh, how art thou fishified! Now is he for the numbers that Petrarch flowed in. Laura to his lady was but a
40 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. — Signior Romeo, bonjour! There’s a
45 French salutation to your French sloop. 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

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

MERCUTIO

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

ROMEO

Meaning “to curtsy”?

MERCUTIO

Thou hast most kindly hit it.

ROMEO

55 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 flowered.

MERCUTIO

60 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.

fashionmongers, these fellows who say “pardon me” and care so deeply about good manners that they can’t relax on a bench without groaning, “Oh, my aching bones!”

ROMEO enters.

BENVOLIO

Here comes Romeo, here comes Romeo.

MERCUTIO

He looks skinny as a dried herring without its eggs. O flesh, flesh, you’ve turned pale as a fish. Now he’s just like Petrarch’s hopeless love poetry. In Romeo’s opinion, compared to his own lady love: [Petrarch’s Laura](#) ² was like a kitchen slave—though Laura clearly had a lover who was better at making rhymes; Dido was drab and dull; Cleopatra was a gypsy girl; Helen and Hero were good-for-nothing harlots; Thisbe might have had beautiful eyes, but that doesn’t matter.

[To ROMEO] Signor Romeo, bonjour. There’s a French greeting to match the loose high-fashion French pants you’re wearing. You tricked us pretty well last night.

ROMEO

Good morning to you both. What do you mean I tricked you?

MERCUTIO

You gave us the slip, sir, the slip. Do you understand me now?

ROMEO

I’m sorry, good Mercutio. My business was so important that I must be forgiven for stretching good manners and courtesy.

MERCUTIO

So what you’re saying is that your “business” forced you to [flex your legs](#) ³.

ROMEO

Meaning make a curtsy?

MERCUTIO

Now you’ve “hit it.”

ROMEO

What a courteous explanation.

MERCUTIO

Indeed, I am the very “pink” of courtesy.

ROMEO

As in the [pink flower](#) ⁴.

MERCUTIO

Right.

ROMEO

Well, then my [pump](#) ⁵ is covered in flowers.

MERCUTIO

Ah, witty Romeo, now you’ve taken this joke so far that it’s worn out your pump. With the sole of your pump now worn away, the joke is all that remains.

² Laura figured prominently as the beloved in the poetry of the fourteenth-century Italian writer Petrarch.

³ Once again, Mercutio begins to tease Romeo by employing a string of puns associated with sex.

⁴ Romeo’s phrasing is suggestive of female genitalia.

⁵ Romeo joins in with Mercutio’s bawdry, punning on “pump” as both a term for a shoe, and a penis.

ROMEO

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

MERCUTIO

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

ROMEO

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

MERCUTIO

70 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

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

75 Nay, good goose, bite not.

MERCUTIO

Thy wit is a very bitter sweetening. It is a most sharp sauce.

ROMEO

And is it not well served into a sweet goose?

MERCUTIO

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

ROMEO

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

MERCUTIO

85 Why, is not this better now than groaning for love? Now art thou sociable. Now art thou Romeo. Now art thou what thou art—by art as well as by nature, for this driveling love is like a great natural that runs lolling up and down to hide his bauble in a hole.

BENVOLIO

Stop there, stop there.

MERCUTIO

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

BENVOLIO

90 Thou wouldst else have made thy tale large.

MERCUTIO

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

The NURSE enters with her servant, PETER.

ROMEO

Here's goodly gear.

ROMEO

This jest has such a thin sole, and is unique only because of its lameness.

MERCUTIO

Please break up this war of words, Benvolio. My wits can't keep up.

ROMEO

Continue, continue, or I'll proclaim victory.

MERCUTIO

No, if our witticisms go on a wild-goose chase, I'm done for. You have more wild goose in one of your jokes than I have in five of mine. Was I even close to you in our goose chase?

ROMEO

You would not have been 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 wit is a bitter apple. It is a very spicy sauce.

ROMEO

Isn't that the perfect sauce for a sweet goose?

MERCUTIO

Oh, that joke is made of leather so thin it has been stretched from an inch wide to a full fat yard.

ROMEO

I stretched it for that word "fat." Add that to the goose, and it makes you a fat goose.

MERCUTIO

Now, isn't this jesting better than groaning about love? Now you're being sociable. Now you're Romeo. Now you are what you truly are, both naturally and through education. In contrast, this love of yours made you like some fool who runs all over the place looking for a hole in which to hide his precious trinket. ⁶

BENVOLIO

Stop there, stop there.

MERCUTIO

You're asking me to stop my tale before it's finished.

BENVOLIO

Continuing on would have made your tale too long.

MERCUTIO

You're wrong there. I would have made it short. I had come to the full depth of my tale, and intended to say nothing more about it.

The NURSE enters with her servant, PETER.

ROMEO

Now here's something.

⁶ Romeo and Mercutio continue to make puns on male genitalia by using the words "bauble" and "tale" in the original text.

BENVOLIO

95 A sail, a sail!

MERCUTIO

Two, two—a shirt and a smock.

NURSE

Peter!

PETER

Anon!

NURSE

My fan, Peter.

MERCUTIO

100 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

Is it good e'en?

MERCUTIO

105 '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

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

ROMEO

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

NURSE

115 You say well.

MERCUTIO

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

NURSE

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

BENVOLIO

She will indite him to some supper.

MERCUTIO

120 A bawd, a bawd, a bawd! So ho!

ROMEO

What hast thou found?

BENVOLIO

A sail, a sail!

MERCUTIO

No, two sails—a man in a shirt and a woman in a dress.

NURSE

Peter!

PETER

In a moment.

NURSE

Give me my fan, Peter.

MERCUTIO

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

NURSE

Good morning, gentlemen.

MERCUTIO

Good afternoon, beautiful lady.

NURSE


Is it afternoon?

MERCUTIO

It's not any earlier, I tell you. The lusty hand of the clock is now upon the prick of noon.

NURSE

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

 The Nurse here scolds Mercutio for his bawdy description of the clock.

MERCUTIO

A man, good lady, whom God has made for himself to ruin.

NURSE

I swear, that seems 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 have found him than he was when you began to look for him. I am the youngest man by that name, because there is none younger or worse.

NURSE

You speak well.

MERCUTIO

Is the worst well? Very well taken, in truth, very wise.

NURSE

If you're Romeo, sir, I would like to have a private conversation with you.

BENVOLIO

She will invite him to dinner.

MERCUTIO

A pimp! A pimp! A pimp! That's it!

ROMEO

What have you discovered?

MERCUTIO

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

[Sings]

125 *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
130 When it hoars ere it be spent.*

[He speaks] 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.

BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO exit.

NURSE

135 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 in a month.

NURSE

140 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,
145 and suffer every knave to use me at his pleasure?

PETER

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

NURSE

150 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

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

NURSE

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

ROMEO

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

MERCUTIO

Well, she can't be a prostitute unless she's so stale and old that she's only tasted when nothing else is available.

[He sings]

*Old rabbit meat
Old rabbit meat
Is good meat if you can't get anything else,*

*But old moldy rabbit,
Is a waste of your coin
If it goes moldy before you can eat it
[He speaks] Romeo, are you going to your father's? We're having lunch there. Let's go.*

ROMEO

I'll follow after you.

MERCUTIO

Farewell, old lady. Farewell, lady, lady, lady.

BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO exit.

NURSE

Please tell me, sir, who was that foulmouthed fellow with all his dirty jokes?

ROMEO

Nurse, he's a gentleman who loves to hear himself talk. He says more in one minute than he will stand behind in a month.

NURSE

If he says anything against me, I'll teach him a lesson, even if he were tougher than he is—and twenty wise-asses like him. And if I couldn't take him down myself, I'll find someone who can. That rotten scoundrel! I'm not one of his flirty girls. I'm not one of his low-life scheming friends.

[To PETER] And you just stand aside, letting every fool make fun of me for pleasure?

PETER

I didn't see anybody use you for pleasure. If I had, I'd have quickly pulled out my weapon, I assure you. I draw my sword as quickly as any other man if I see a good fight brewing and the law is on my side.

NURSE

Now, by God, I'm so upset that I'm shaking. That rotten scoundrel!

[To ROMEO] Now, good sir, may I speak with you? My young mistress sent me to find you. What she told me to say, I will keep to myself. But first let me say: if you lead her into a fool's paradise, as they say, it would be extremely indecent behavior, as they say. For the girl is young. So if you should deceive her, it would be an awful thing to do to any woman, and very poor manners.

ROMEO

Nurse, speak well of me to your mistress. I pledge to you—

NURSE

Your heart is good, and I promise, I will tell her that. Lord, Lord, she will be a joyful woman.

ROMEO

What are you going to tell her, Nurse? You're not understanding me.

NURSE

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

ROMEO

Bid her devise
Some means to come to shrift this afternoon.
And there she shall at Friar Lawrence' cell

170 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

175 [*Takes the money*] This afternoon, sir? Well, she shall
be there.

ROMEO

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
180 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?

NURSE

185 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
190 nobleman in town, one Paris, that would fain lay knife
aboard, but she, good soul, had as lief see a toad, a
very toad, as see him. I anger her sometimes and tell
her that Paris is the properer man. But, I'll warrant
you, when I say so, she looks as pale as any clout in
195 the versal world. Doth not rosemary and Romeo begin both
with a letter?

ROMEO

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

NURSE

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

ROMEO

Commend me to thy lady.

NURSE

Ay, a thousand times —Peter!

NURSE

I will tell her, sir, that you protest ⁹ to her, which I think is a
gentlemanly offer.

⁹ The Nurse here is mistaking the
word "protest" for the word
"propose."

ROMEO

Tell her to devise a way to come to confession this
afternoon. And there, at Friar Lawrence's cell, she can make
confession and we will be married. [*Holding out some
money to the NURSE*] Here is a reward for your efforts.

NURSE

No, truly, sir. I won't take your money.

ROMEO

Go on, I insist.

NURSE

[*Taking the money*] This afternoon, sir? She will be there.

ROMEO

Just a moment, good Nurse. In an hour, behind the abbey
wall, one of my servants will meet you and give you a rope
ladder. I'll then use the ladder to secretly climb up to
Juliet's room tonight. Farewell. Be worthy of my trust, and
I'll repay you for your help. Farewell. Speak well of me to
your mistress.

NURSE

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

ROMEO

What, my dear Nurse?

NURSE

Can your servant be trusted? Have you ever heard the
saying, "Two men may keep a secret, but only if one is far
away?"

ROMEO

I guarantee you that my man is as trustworthy as steel.

NURSE

Well, sir, my mistress is the sweetest lady. Lord, Lord, when
she was a little baby—Oh, there is one nobleman in the city,
Paris, who would gladly lay claim to her. But Juliet, good
soul that she is, would rather be with a toad, a toad, than
him. Sometimes I make her angry by telling her that Paris is
better looking than you. I swear to you, when I say that she
turns as white as any sheet in the entire world. Don't
"rosemary" ⁹ and "Romeo" begin with the same letter?

⁹ In keeping with this play's
mingling of the themes of love and
death, rosemary was used as a symbol
for lovers, and to commemorate the
dead.

ROMEO

Yes, Nurse, what about that? Both begin with an "R."

NURSE

Ah, you joker—that's the dog's name. "R" is for the—no, I
know that word begins with another letter. ¹⁰ She says
such pretty things about you and rosemary that it would do
you good to hear them.

¹⁰ The Nurse is free-associating
words that start with an "r" sound,
including a dog's growl, and a bad
word (possibly "arse").

ROMEO

Speak well of me to your lady.

NURSE

Yes, a thousand times. Peter!

PETER

Anon!

NURSE

205 [Giving PETER her fan] Before, and apace.

*They all exit.***PETER**

I'm ready.

NURSE

[Giving her fan to PETER] Go ahead of me, and go quickly.

They all exit.

Act 2, Scene 5

Shakespeare

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

*The NURSE and PETER enter.***NURSE**

20 Peter, stay at the gate.

*PETER exits.***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.

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?

Shakescleare Translation

*JULIET enters.***JULIET**

It was nine o'clock when I sent the Nurse. She promised to be back in half an hour. Maybe she can't find him. No, that makes no sense. Oh, she's so slow! Love's messengers should be thoughts, which fly ten times faster than sunbeams and drive the shadows back over the dark and scowling hills. That's how fast swift-winged doves carry the goddess of love in her chariot, and why Cupid has wings that propel him as quickly as the wind. Now the sun is at its highest point in the sky—it's noon. Three hours have passed since nine o'clock, and yet she hasn't returned. If she were young and in love, she'd move as fast as a struck tennis ball. My words would bounce her to my sweet love, and his words would bounce her back to me. But old people act as though they're already dead—awkward, slow, heavy, and pale as lead. Oh God, she's here! Sweet Nurse, what's your news? Did you meet with him? Send your servant away.

*The NURSE and PETER enter.***NURSE**

Peter, go back and wait at the gate.

*PETER exits.***JULIET**

Now, good sweet Nurse—Oh Lord, why do you look so sad? If your news is sad, tell it to me as if it's happy. If it's good, you're messing it up by telling it to me with such a sour face like that.

NURSE

I'm weary. Give me some time alone. Oh, my bones are aching! What a journey this has been today.

JULIET

I wish you had my bones, and I had your news. I beg you, speak. Good, good Nurse, tell me!

NURSE

Jesus, what a rush you're in! Can't you wait for awhile? Don't you see that I'm out of breath?

JULIET

How are you out of breath when you have the breath to tell me that you're out of breath? The excuse you're making while delaying telling me the news is taking longer than it would to tell me your tale. Is your news good or bad? Answer that. Tell me that, and I'll wait for the details. Tell me at least that. Is it good or bad?

NURSE

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

JULIET

No, no. But all this did I know before. What says he of our marriage? What of that?

NURSE

Lord, how my head aches! What a head have I! It beats as it would fall in twenty pieces.
50 My back a' t' other side. Ah, my back, my back! Beshrew your heart for sending me about, To catch my death with jaunting up and down!

JULIET

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

NURSE

55 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!
60 "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?
65 Henceforward do your messages yourself.

JULIET

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

NURSE

Have you got leave to go to shrift today?

JULIET

I have.

NURSE

Then hie you hence to Friar Lawrence's cell. There stays a husband to make you a wife. Now comes the wanton blood up in your cheeks. They'll be in scarlet straight at any news. Hie you to church. I must another way To fetch a ladder, by the which your love
75 Must climb a bird's nest soon when it is dark. I am the drudge and toil in your delight, But you shall bear the burden soon at night. Go. I'll to dinner. Hie you to the cell.

JULIET

Hie to high fortune! Honest Nurse, farewell.

They exit.

NURSE

Well, you have made a foolish choice. You don't know how to choose a man. Romeo? No, not him, even though his face is more handsome than any other man's, his legs are prettier. His hands and feet and body aren't much to speak of, and yet they're beyond compare. He isn't the most courteous man, but, I'd swear that he's as gentle as a lamb. So do what you want, girl. Be good. Hey, have you already eaten lunch?

JULIET

No, no. I already knew everything you just said. What did he say about our marriage? What about that?

NURSE

Lord, I have such a headache! It's pounding as if it's about to break into twenty pieces. And on my other side my back is aching—ah, my back! Curse your heart for sending me out and about. I could get sick and die from all this journeying around!

JULIET

Indeed, I'm sorry you're in pain. Sweet, sweet, sweet Nurse, tell me, what does my love say?

NURSE

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

JULIET

Where's my mother? Why, she's inside. Where else would she be? What a strange answer! "Your love says, like an honorable gentleman, 'Where is your mother?'"

NURSE

Mary, mother of God! Are you in such a hurry? Indeed, you need to calm down. Is this the way to soothe my aching bones? From here on out, carry your own messages.

JULIET

What a fuss you're making. Come on, what did Romeo say?

NURSE

Do you have permission to go to confession today?

JULIET

I do.

NURSE

Then hurry up and go to Friar Lawrence's cell. There waits a husband to make you his wife. Now the lustful blood is rushing up to your cheeks. You blush scarlet whenever you get excited at some news. Get to church. I must go elsewhere to get a rope ladder that your love will use to climb up to your window when it's dark. I do the drudge work for your pleasure. But soon enough, you'll be doing your "wifely work" tonight with Romeo. Go. I'll go to lunch. You go to Friar Lawrence's cell.

JULIET

I'll hurry off to my good fortune! Goodbye, trustworthy Nurse.

They exit.

Act 2, Scene 6

Shakespeare

FRIAR LAWRENCE and ROMEO enter.

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
5 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
10 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.
15 Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow.

JULIET rushes in and embraces 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,
20 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.

JULIET

As much to him, else is his thanks too much.

ROMEO

Ah, Juliet, if the measure of thy joy
25 Be heaped like mine, and that thy skill be more
To blazon it, then sweeten with thy breath
This neighbor air, and let rich music's tongue
Unfold the imagined happiness that both
Receive in either by this dear encounter.

JULIET

30 Conceit, more rich in matter than in words,
Braggs 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.

They exit.

Shakescleare Translation

FRIAR LAWRENCE and ROMEO enter.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

May the heavens smile upon this holy act of marriage, so
that afterwards nothing happens to make us feel sorrowful
about it.

ROMEO

Amen, amen. But whatever sorrow comes, it couldn't
overwhelm the joy I feel from a single look at her. If you join
our hands with holy words, then love-devouring death can
do whatever it wants. It's enough for me if I can just call her
mine.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Such passionate joys have violent endings. They die in their
moment of triumph, just like a spark and gunpowder
destroy themselves in an explosion once they touch. Even
the most delicious honey is loathsome when you've had too
much, and takes away your appetite. Loving in moderation
is therefore the key to long-lasting love. Going too fast is as
bad as going too slow.

JULIET rushes in 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 that
they can walk upon a spiderweb floating on a summer
breeze, and still 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

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 on, come along with me, and we will do the
ceremony quickly. Because, with your permission, I won't
leave you two alone until you are united in holy matrimony.

They exit.

Act 3, Scene 1

Shakespeare

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

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
20 because thou hast hazel eyes. What eye but such an eye would spy out such a quarrel? Thy head is as full of quarrels as an egg is full of meat, and yet thy head hath been beaten as addle as an egg for quarreling. Thou hast quarreled with a man for coughing in the street
25 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!

TYBALT, PETRUCHIO, and some other CAPULETS enter.

BENVOLIO

By my head, here comes the Capulets.

MERCUTIO

- 35 By my heel, I care not.

TYBALT

Follow me close, for I will speak to them.
Gentlemen, good e'en. A word with one of you.

Shakescleare Translation

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

BENVOLIO

I'm begging you, good Mercutio, let's go home. It's hot, and the Capulets are all over the place. If we should meet up with them, we'll end up fighting them. Hot days like today get people all worked up and angry.

MERCUTIO

You're the kind of guy who walks into a bar, slaps his sword down on the table and says, "I hope I don't have to use you." By the time he's having his second drink, he draws his sword on the bartender for no reason.

BENVOLIO

You think I'm like that?

MERCUTIO

Come now. You can be as hot-blooded as any man in Italy. You get angry at the smallest thing, and when you're in the mood to get angry you always find something to get angry about.

BENVOLIO

So what?

MERCUTIO

So, if there were two men such as you, it wouldn't take long for there to be none, because each of you would kill the other. Why, you would fight with a man if he had one more or one less hair in his beard than you have in yours. You'll fight a man who's cracking nuts simply because your own eyes are the color of hazelnuts. Only someone like you would look for that kind of fight. Your head is as full of fights as an egg is full of food, but your head has gotten scrambled like an egg from all your fighting. You once fought with a man who coughed in the street because he woke up your dog that was sleeping in the sun. And can you deny that you had a falling out with a tailor because he was wearing a new jacket before Easter? And with another for tying his new shoes with old laces? And yet you're trying to tell me how to avoid fighting?

BENVOLIO

If I were as quick to get into fights as you are, my life insurance rates would be immense.

MERCUTIO

Your life insurance? You're a fool!

TYBALT, PETRUCHIO, and some other CAPULETS enter.

BENVOLIO

By God, Here come the Capulets.

MERCUTIO

By my foot, I couldn't care less.

TYBALT

[To his men] Follow me closely. I'll speak to them.

[To BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO] Good afternoon, gentlemen. I'd like to have 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

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

MERCUTIO

Could you not take some occasion without giving?

TYBALT

Mercutio, thou consort'st with Romeo.

MERCUTIO

45 Consort? What, dost thou make us minstrels? An thou make minstrels of us, look to hear nothing but discords. Here's my fiddlestick. Here's that shall make you dance. Zounds, "consort!"

BENVOLIO

50 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

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

TYBALT

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

ROMEO enters.

MERCUTIO

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

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

TYBALT

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

ROMEO

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

MERCUTIO

O calm dishonourable, vile submission! 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

MERCUTIO

You want a single word with one of us? Combine it with something else. Make it a word and a punch.

TYBALT

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

MERCUTIO


You can't find a reason without my giving you one?

TYBALT

Mercutio, you hang out with Romeo.

MERCUTIO

"Hang out?" What, are we musicians in a band? If we look like musicians to you, you can expect to hear nothing but noise. *[Touching his sword]* This is my fiddlestick. It will make you dance. My God—"hang out!"

 In the original text, Mercutio puns on Tybalt's use of the word "consort," which can mean either to spend time with someone as a verb, or a small musical group as a noun.

BENVOLIO

We're talking here in public. Either let's go somewhere private and calmly discuss your complaints, or else just go our separates ways. Here, everybody can see us.

MERCUTIO

Men's eyes were made to see. Let them watch. I won't move for anyone.

TYBALT

Well, may peace be with you. Here comes the man I'm after.

ROMEO enters.

MERCUTIO

Sir, I'll be hanged if he's your man, in your servant's uniform. Walk out into a field and he'll chase you. That's the only sense in which you can call him your "man."

TYBALT

Romeo, I have just one thing to say to you: you're a villain.

ROMEO

Tybalt, I love you for a reason that allows me to ignore the rage I would normally feel in response to such a greeting. I'm not a villain. Therefore, goodbye. I can see that you don't know me at all.

TYBALT

Boy, these words don't excuse the injuries you've done to me. Turn and draw your sword.

ROMEO

I've never done you harm. In fact, I love you more than you'll be able to understand until you know the reason behind my love. And so, good Capulet—which is a name I love as dearly as my own—be satisfied.

MERCUTIO

Such a calm submission is both dishonorable and vile! The thrust of a sword will sweep it away. *[Draws his sword]* Tybalt, you rat-catcher, will you duel with me?

TYBALT

What do you want from me?

MERCUTIO

Good King of Cats, I want nothing more than one of your nine lives. I'll boldly take that one, and, depending on how

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

80 I am for you. *[He draws his sword]*

ROMEO

Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up.

MERCUTIO

Come, sir, your passado.

ROMEO

[Draws his sword] Draw, Benvolio. Beat down their weapons.

85 Gentlemen, for shame! Forbear this outrage. Tybalt, Mercutio! The Prince expressly hath forbidden bandying in Verona streets. Hold, Tybalt! Good Mercutio!

MERCUTIO and TYBALT fight.

ROMEO tries to break up the fight. TYBALT stabs Mercutio under ROMEO's outstretched arm.

PETRUCHIO

Away, Tybalt.

MERCUTIO

90 I am hurt.
A plague o' both your houses! I am sped.
Is he gone and hath nothing?

TYBALT, PETRUCHIO, and the other CAPULETS exit.

BENVOLIO

What, art thou hurt?

MERCUTIO

95 Ay, ay, a scratch, a scratch. Marry, 'tis enough.
Where is my page?—Go, villain, fetch a surgeon.

ROMEO

Courage, man. The hurt cannot be much.

MERCUTIO'S PAGE exits.

MERCUTIO

100 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

105 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. I have it,
And soundly too. Your houses!

MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO exit.

you behave after that, I just may also beat the rest of the eight out of you too. Will you draw your sword from its sheath? Hurry, or mine will be at your ears before you have yours out.

TYBALT

I'll duel with you. *[He draws his sword]*

ROMEO

Noble Mercutio, put your sword away.

MERCUTIO

[To TYBALT] Get on with it, sir. Attack.

ROMEO

[Drawing his sword] Draw your sword, Benvolio, and help me beat down their weapons. Gentlemen, this is shameful. Tybalt! Mercutio! The Prince has explicitly forbidden fighting in the streets of Verona. Stop! Tybalt! Good Mercutio!

MERCUTIO and TYBALT fight.

ROMEO tries to break up the fight. TYBALT stabs Mercutio under ROMEO's outstretched arm.

PETRUCHIO

Let's get out of here, Tybalt.

MERCUTIO

I'm hurt. May a plague strike both your families. I'm done. Did he get away without injury?

TYBALT, PETRUCHIO, and the other CAPULETS exit.

BENVOLIO

What, are you hurt?

MERCUTIO

Yes, yes. A scratch, just a scratch. Yet it's enough. Where is my page? Go, villain. Get a doctor.

ROMEO

Have courage, man. The injury can't be so bad.

MERCUTIO'S PAGE exits.

MERCUTIO

It's not as deep as a well or as wide as a church door, but it's enough. Ask for me tomorrow, and you'll find me a grave man. My time in this world is done, I believe. May a plague strike both your families. God! That dog, that rat, that mouse, that cat has scratched me to death! That braggart, that scoundrel, that villain who fights as if he learned it all from some manual!

[To ROMEO] Why the devil did you step between us? He wounded me by reaching under your arm.

ROMEO

I was trying to do what was right.

MERCUTIO

Carry me inside some house, Benvolio, or else I will faint. May a plague strike both your families! They've made me into food for worms. I'm finished. Curse your families!

MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO exit.

ROMEO

- 110 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,
115 Thy beauty hath made me effeminate
And in my temper softened valor's steel!

BENVOLIO enters.

BENVOLIO

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

ROMEO

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

TYBALT enters.

BENVOLIO

Here comes the furious Tybalt back again.

ROMEO

- Alive in triumph—and Mercutio slain!
Away to heaven, respective lenity,
125 And fire-eyed fury be my conduct now.
Now, Tybalt, take the "villain" back again
That late thou gavest me, for Mercutio's soul
Is but a little way above our heads,
Staying for thine to keep him company.
130 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 and dies.

BENVOLIO

- Romeo, away, be gone!
135 The citizens are up, and Tybalt slain.
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?

CITIZEN OF THE WATCH

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

ROMEO exits.

The CITIZENS OF THE WATCH enter.

BENVOLIO

There lies that Tybalt.

CITIZEN OF THE WATCH

[*To TYBALT*] Up, sir, go with me.
I charge thee in the Prince's name, obey.

ROMEO

This gentleman, a kinsman of the Prince and my friend, was
killed while fighting on my behalf, to defend me against
Tybalt's insults. Tybalt, who has been my own kinsman for
an hour! Oh, sweet Juliet, your beauty has made me
effeminate and softened the steel of my valor.

BENVOLIO enters.

BENVOLIO

Oh Romeo, Romeo, brave Mercutio is dead! His noble spirit
has gone to heaven, but it was too early for him to leave this
life.

ROMEO

Today's dark fate will determine the future. These events
only begin the sorrow that is to come.

TYBALT enters.

BENVOLIO

The furious Tybalt has returned.

ROMEO

Alive and triumphant, while Mercutio is dead? Begone,
respect and compassion. Rage and fury will be my guide.
Now, Tybalt, take back the "villain" that you called me
earlier. Mercutio's soul is waiting just a bit above our heads
for you to join him. Either you, I, or both of us must go with
him.

TYBALT

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

ROMEO

Our fight will decide who goes to heaven.

They fight. TYBALT falls and dies.

BENVOLIO

Romeo, get away from here. The citizens are coming, and
Tybalt is dead. Don't just stand there staring. If you're
caught, the Prince will execute you. Get out of here!

ROMEO

Oh, fate has played me for a fool!

BENVOLIO

Why are you still here?

CITIZEN OF THE WATCH

Where did the man who killed Mercutio run? Tybalt, that
murderer, which way did he go?

ROMEO exits.

The CITIZENS OF THE WATCH enter.

BENVOLIO

Tybalt is lying right there.

CITIZEN OF THE WATCH

[*To TYBALT*] Get up, sir, and come with me. By the name of
the Prince, I command you to obey.

PRINCE

145 Where are the vile beginners of this fray?

The PRINCE enters with MONTAGUE, CAPULET, LADY MONTAGUE, LADY CAPULET, and OTHERS.

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

150 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

155 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
160 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,
165 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
170 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.
175 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.
180 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.
185 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

190 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 offense
Immediately we do exile him hence.
I have an interest in your hate's proceeding;
195 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.

PRINCE

Where are the evil instigators of this fight?

The PRINCE enters with MONTAGUE, CAPULET, LADY MONTAGUE, LADY CAPULET, and OTHERS.

BENVOLIO

Oh, noble prince, I can explain everything about the
unfortunate events that led to this deadly fight. There lies
Tybalt, the man who killed your relative, brave Mercutio.
Tybalt was then killed by young Romeo.

LADY CAPULET

Tybalt, my nephew! My brother's son! Oh Prince, oh
nephew, oh husband! Oh, my dear kinsman is dead! Prince,
you are a man of honor, and therefore must respond to this
murder by killing a Montague. Oh nephew, nephew!

PRINCE

Benvolio, who began this deadly fight?

BENVOLIO

Tybalt did, who then was killed by Romeo. Romeo spoke
politely to Tybalt and begged him to see how ridiculous the
disagreement was and to remember how displeased you
would be if there was a fight. All this he said gently, calmly,
kneeling down with humility. But he could not make peace.
Tybalt's anger was irrational, and he was deaf to any talk of
peace. Soon Tybalt attacked Mercutio, who just as angry,
fought back. They thrust their swords and attacked each
other. Romeo cried out, "Stop, my friends. Step apart." Then
he jumped in between them, and forced down their swords.
Tybalt, though, thrust his sword under Romeo's arm, and
hit brave Mercutio's heart. Then Tybalt ran. But, soon after,
Tybalt returned to fight Romeo, who by now wanted
revenge for Mercutio's death. They began to fight as quick
as lightning. Before I could separate them, Tybalt was
killed. As Tybalt fell, Romeo turned and ran. This is the
truth, I swear on my life.

LADY CAPULET

Benvolio is a Montague. His loyalty compels him to lie. He's
lying. There must have been twenty Montagues fighting,
and together all twenty of them could only kill one man. I
beg for justice that only you, Prince, can give. Romeo killed
Tybalt. Romeo must die.

PRINCE

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

MONTAGUE

Not Romeo, Prince. He was Mercutio's friend. His "crime"
was justice, because it took the life of Tybalt.

PRINCE

And for that offense I immediately exile him from this place.
I have a part in your rivalry; my blood relative, Mercutio, lies
bleeding because of your rude fights. But I will punish you
so harshly that you will regret causing me this loss. I will be
deaf to your pleas and your excuses. Neither tears nor
prayers can buy you forgiveness for what you've done
wrong. So don't use any. Let Romeo get out of here quickly.

Nor tears nor prayers shall purchase out abuses.
 200 Therefore use none. Let Romeo hence in haste,
 Else, when he is found, that hour is his last.
 Bear hence this body, and attend our will.
 Mercy but murders, pardoning those that kill.

They all exit.

Otherwise, when he is found, he will be swiftly killed. Take this body away, and obey my commands. Showing mercy and pardoning murderers only causes more killings.

They all exit.

Act 3, Scene 2

Shakespeare

JULIET

Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,
 Toward Phoebus' lodging. Such a wagoner
 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.

The NURSE enters carrying the rope ladder.

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

JULIET enters alone.

NURSE

Ay, ay, the cords.

JULIET

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

NURSE


Ah, weraday! He's dead, he's dead, he's dead!
 40 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?

Shakescleare Translation

JULIET

Move faster you fiery-footed horses, bearing the sun toward its nighttime resting place. Phaeton  would whip you so hard that you would already have brought the sun west and night would come immediately. Come, night, with your darkness, so that Romeo can come to me without anyone knowing and leap into my arms. In the dark, lovers can still see enough, by the light of their own beauty, to make love. Or, if love is blind, then it is best suited to the night. Come, night, you widow dressed in black, and teach me how to win my love so that we both can lose our virginities. Hide the blood rushing to my cheeks in your darkness, until my shy love grows bold enough to think of love-making as simple and true. Come, night. Come, Romeo. You're like a day during the night, lying on the wings of night even whiter than snow on the wings of a raven. Come, gentle night. Come, loving, dark night. Give me my Romeo. And when I die, take him and cut him into stars that will make the night sky so beautiful that the entire world will fall in love with the night and forget about the tasteless sun. Oh, I have bought the mansion of love, but not yet possessed it. I belong to Romeo, but have not yet been enjoyed by him. This day is so long and dull, just as the night before some festival is to an impatient child forced to wait to put on her fancy new clothes.

 In ancient Greek mythology, Phaeton was the sun god Helios' son, allowed to drive the sun chariot.

The NURSE enters carrying the rope ladder.

Oh, here comes my Nurse, bringing news. Every voice that speaks Romeo's name speaks with heavenly beauty. Now, Nurse, what's your news? What is that you have there? The rope ladder Romeo told you to get?

JULIET enters alone.

NURSE

Yes, yes, the ladder.

JULIET

Oh no, what's your news? Why are you wringing your hands?

NURSE

Alas! He's dead. He's dead. He's dead! We're done for, lady, done for! Curse the day! He's gone. He's killed. He's dead!

JULIET

Can God be so cruel?

NURSE

Romeo can,
Though heaven cannot. O Romeo, Romeo!
45 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
50 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

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

JULIET

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

NURSE

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

JULIET

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

NURSE

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

JULIET

O God, did Romeo's hand shed Tybalt's blood?

NURSE

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

JULIET

O serpent heart hid with a flowering face!
Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave?
Beautiful tyrant! Fiend angelical!
Dove-feathered raven, wolfish-ravens lamb!
80 Despisèd substance of divinest show,
Just opposite to what thou justly seem'st.
A damnèd saint, an honorable villain!
O nature, what hadst thou to do in hell
When thou didst bower the spirit of a fiend
85 In moral paradise of such sweet flesh?
Was ever book containing such vile matter
So fairly bound? Oh, that deceit should dwell
In such a gorgeous palace!


NURSE


There's no trust,
90 No faith, no honesty in men. All perjured,
All forsworn, all naught, all dissemblers.
Ah, where's my man?—Give me some aqua vitae.—
These griefs, these woes, these sorrows make me old.

NURSE

Romeo can be, though God is not. Oh, Romeo, Romeo! Who
ever would have guessed? Romeo!

JULIET

What kind of a devil are you to torment me in this way? This
sort of torture is fit only for hell. Has Romeo killed himself?
Say "yes" and that single word will poison me more terribly
than could even the deadly gaze of the cockatrice . I will
cease to be myself if you say that Romeo killed himself. If
he's dead, say "yes." If not, say "no." Those little words will
determine my joy or pain.

 "Cockatrice" was another name
for the mythical "basilisk," a snake
whose stare could kill.

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 and covered in blood.
Gory with blood. I fainted at the sight of it.

JULIET

Oh, my poor, bankrupt heart is breaking. Go to prison, eyes,
so you will never again be free to look at the world. I'll bury
my body in the earth, where it will lie motionless and share
a single coffin with Romeo.

NURSE

Oh Tybalt, Tybalt, the best friend I ever had! Oh, well-
mannered, honorable Tybalt! If only I had not lived long
enough to see him die.

JULIET

What storm is this to cause so many different disasters? Has
Romeo been killed, and Tybalt too? Tybalt, my dearest
cousin, and Romeo who as my husband was even more
dear to me? May the last trumpet play to signal the onset of
doomsday, because who could remain alive if those two are
gone?

NURSE

Tybalt is dead. Romeo has been banished. It was Romeo
who killed Tybalt, which is why he was banished.

JULIET

Oh God, did Romeo's hand shed Tybalt's blood?

NURSE

It did, it did. Unfortunately, it did.

JULIET

Oh, he has a traitor's heart hidden behind a pretty face! Did
any dragon ever nest in such a pretty cave? He's a beautiful
tyrant! A fiendish angel! A raven hiding under the feathers
of a dove! A lamb that kills like a wolf! A hateful reality
hidden by a beautiful appearance. The exact opposite of
what he seemed. He seemed like a saint, but should be
damned! He's a villain who seemed honorable! Oh nature,
what were you doing in hell when you placed the soul of a
devil in the paradise of such a perfect man? Has any book
with such awful contents ever had a more beautiful cover?
Oh, how could such betrayal hide in such a gorgeous body?

NURSE

There is no trust, faith, or honesty in men. They all break
their oaths. They're all wicked. They all lie. Where's my
servant?—Get me some brandy—These griefs, these
miseries, these sorrows make me old. Shame on Romeo!

Shame come to Romeo!

JULIET

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

NURSE

Will you speak well of him that killed your cousin?

JULIET

Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband?
Ah, poor my lord, what tongue shall smooth thy name,
When I, thy three hours' wife, have mangled it?
105 But wherefore, villain, didst thou kill my cousin?
That villain cousin would have killed my husband.
Back, foolish tears, back to your native spring.
Your tributary drops belong to woe,
Which you, mistaking, offer up to joy.
110 My husband lives, that Tybalt would have slain,
And Tybalt's dead, that would have slain my husband.
All this is comfort. Wherefore weep I then?
Some word there was, worse than Tybalt's death,
That murdered me. I would forget it fain,
115 But oh, it presses to my memory,
Like damnèd guilty deeds to sinners' minds.
"Tybalt is dead, and Romeo banishèd."
That "banishèd," that one word "banishèd"
Hath slain ten thousand Tybalts. Tybalt's death
120 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,"
"Thy father" or "thy mother," nay, or both,
125 Which modern lamentations might have moved?
But with a rearward following Tybalt's death,
"Romeo is banishèd." To speak that word,
Is father, mother, Tybalt, Romeo, Juliet,
All slain, all dead. "Romeo is banishèd."
130 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.
Will you go to them? I will bring you thither.

JULIET

135 Wash they his wounds with tears? Mine shall be spent
When theirs are dry, for Romeo's banishment.
Take up those cords.—Poor ropes, you are beguiled,
Both you and I, for Romeo is exiled.
He made you for a highway to my bed,
140 But I, a maid, die maiden-widowèd.
Come, cords.—Come, Nurse. I'll to my wedding bed.
And death, not Romeo, take my maidenhead!

NURSE

Hie to your chamber. I'll find Romeo
To comfort you. I wot well where he is.
145 Hark ye, your Romeo will be here at night.
I'll to him. He is hid at Lawrence' cell.

JULIET

[Giving her a ring] O, find him! Give this ring to my
true knight,
And bid him come to take his last farewell.
150

JULIET

May blisters cover your tongue for making a wish like that!
Romeo was not born to have anything to do with shame.
Shame could never be connected to him, because he is
destined only to experience great and total honor. Oh, I was
such a beast to condemn him.

NURSE

You're going to speak well of the man who killed your
cousin?

JULIET

Should I speak badly of my own husband? Ah, my poor
husband, who will speak well of you when I, your wife of
three hours, have been calling you such dreadful names?
But why, you villain, did you kill my cousin? Because my
villain of a cousin would have killed you, my husband. I
refuse to cry. These tears which seem like sadness for
Tybalt's death are actually tears of joy that Romeo is still
alive. My husband, whom Tybalt would have killed, is alive.
And Tybalt, who wanted to kill my husband, is dead. This is
good news. So why am I crying? Because there was news
that's even worse than that of Tybalt's death. Worse news
that kills me inside. I wish I could forget it, but it forces its
way into my memory the way sins obsess guilty minds.
"Tybalt is dead, and Romeo has been banished." That word
"banished," that single word "banished," is worse than the
death of ten thousand Tybalts. Tybalt's death would have
been misery enough even if nothing else had happened. Or,
if misery loves company, and one grief must necessarily
follow another, then it would have been better had the
Nurse, after telling me that Tybalt was dead, then told me
that my mother or my father, or even both, were gone. That
would have pushed me into normal feelings of grief. But to
tell me that Tybalt's is dead and then say, "Romeo has been
banished." To say that is the same as saying that my father,
my mother, Tybalt, Romeo, and Juliet have all been killed,
are all dead. "Romeo has been banished." The death
contained in those four words is infinite, unmeasurable. No
words can express that misery. Where are my father and
mother, Nurse?

NURSE

Crying over Tybalt's corpse. Will you join them? I'll bring
you there.

JULIET

Do they wash Tybalt's wounds with their tears? My tears will
still be flowing because of Romeo's banishment when their
tears for Tybalt have gone dry. Take this rope ladder, this
poor rope ladder made useless because Romeo has been
exiled. He made this ladder to be his passageway to my
bed, but I am a virgin and now will die a virgin and a widow.
Come with me, rope ladder. Come with me, Nurse. I'm
going to my wedding bed. Death, not Romeo, will take my
virginity!

NURSE

Go to your bedroom. I'll go bring Romeo to comfort you. I
know where he is. Pay attention: your Romeo will be here
tonight. I'll get him. He's hiding in Friar Lawrence's cell.

JULIET

[Giving The NURSE a ring] Oh, go and find him! Give this
ring to my true knight. And tell him to come see me to say a
final goodbye.

*They exit.**They exit.*

Act 3, Scene 3

Shakespeare

*FRIAR LAWRENCE enters.***FRIAR LAWRENCE**

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

*ROMEO enters.***ROMEO**

Father, what news? What is the Prince's doom?
5 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

10 What less than doomsday is the Prince's doom?

FRIAR LAWRENCE

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,
15 Much more than death. Do not say "banishment."

FRIAR LAWRENCE

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

ROMEO

There is no world without Verona walls
But purgatory, torture, hell itself.
20 Hence "banishèd" is banished from the world,
And world's exile is death. Then "banishèd,"
Is death mistermed. Calling death "banishment,"
Thou cutt'st my head off with a golden ax
And smilest upon the stroke that murders me.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

25 O deadly sin! O rude unthankfulness!
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

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

Shakescleare Translation

*FRIAR LAWRENCE enters.***FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Romeo, come here. Come here, you frightened man.
Trouble follows you, and you're married to catastrophe.

*ROMEO enters.***ROMEO**

Father, what's the news? Did the Prince state how I am to be
punished? What unknown suffering is coming for me?

FRIAR LAWRENCE

My dear son, you're too familiar with suffering. I do have
news for you about the Prince's punishment for you.

ROMEO

Is it anything less than my death?

FRIAR LAWRENCE

His judgment was gentler than that. You won't be executed,
but will be banished from Verona.

ROMEO

Banishment! Be merciful: say "death." Exile is much worse
to me than death. Don't say "banishment."

FRIAR LAWRENCE

You are banished from Verona. Be patient, the world is big
and anything can happen.

ROMEO

The world outside Verona's walls is like purgatory, torture,
hell itself. Being banished from Verona is the same as being
banished from the world, and being banished from the
world is the same as death. Banishment is just a different
name for death. So telling me that I'm banished is like
cutting off my head with a golden ax and smiling while
murdering me.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Oh, deadly sin! Oh, you rude, unthankful child! Your crime is
punishable by death, but the Prince in his kindness
defended you, and bypassed the law by replacing death
with banishment. This is mercy, but you can't see it.

ROMEO

It's torture, not mercy. Heaven is in Verona because this is
where Juliet lives. Every cat and dog and little mouse, every
unworthy creature, that lives in Verona lives in heaven
because it can see her. But I won't be able to. Carrion-eating
flies will have more vitality, a more blessed existence, and
more romance than I will. They can touch Juliet's white
hand and can steal kisses from her sweet lips, which--
though she is a pure virgin--blush when they touch each
other because they think it's a sin. But Romeo can't touch
her hand or kiss her. Flies can kiss her, but I must fly from
the city. Flies are free, but I've been banished. Do you still

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?
45 Hadst thou no poison mixed, no sharp-ground knife,
No sudden mean of death, though ne'er so mean,
But "banishèd" to kill me?"—"Banishèd!"
O Friar, the damnèd use that word in hell.
Howling attends it. How hast thou the heart,
50 Being a divine, a ghostly confessor,
A sin-absolver, and my friend professed,
To mangle me with that word "banishèd"?

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Thou fond mad man, hear me a little speak.

ROMEO

Oh, thou wilt speak again of banishment.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

55 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,
60 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

65 Thou canst not speak of that thou dost not feel.
Wert thou as young as I, Juliet thy love,
An hour but married, Tybalt murderèd,
Doting like me, and like me banishèd,
Then mightst thou speak, then mightst thou tear thy
70 hair
And fall upon the ground, as I do now,
Taking the measure of an unmade grave.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Arise. One knocks. Good Romeo, hide thyself.

Knocking sounds from offstage.

ROMEO

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

Knocking

FRIAR LAWRENCE

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

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

argue that exile isn't death? You didn't have some poison, a sharpened knife, or some other weapon that you could have used to kill me quickly, nothing so disgraceful, other than banishment? Oh Friar, damned souls use the word "banishment" to describe hell. They howl the word. How, as a priest, confessor, and my friend, can you have the heart to say to me the word "banished?"

FRIAR LAWRENCE

You silly madman, listen to me for a second.

ROMEO

Now you're just going to talk again about banishment.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

I'll protect you from that word by using the cure for adversity—philosophy—which will comfort you even though you've been banished.

ROMEO

In the face of banishment, let philosophy be hanged! Unless philosophy can create a Juliet, move an entire town to a new place, or reverse a prince's punishment, it can't help me. Stop talking.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Ah, I've discovered that madmen are deaf.

ROMEO

Why should madmen hear, when wise men can't see?

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Let me discuss your situation with you.

ROMEO

You can't talk about something you don't feel. If you were as young as I am, in love with Juliet, married to her for just an hour, and had murdered Tybalt...If you loved her as I do and were banished as I am, then you could talk about it. Though instead you might tear out your hair and fall to the ground the way I do right now [*He falls on the ground*] in order to measure out your grave.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Get up. Someone's knocking. Hide, good Romeo.

The sound of knocking comes from offstage.

ROMEO

The only way I'll hide is if my heartsick groans produce a mist that covers me from people's searching eyes.

The sound of knocking comes from offstage.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

They knock again!—Who's there?—Romeo, stand up. They'll catch you.— Hold on a moment.—Romeo, stand up.

The sound of knocking comes from offstage.

Hide in my study.—Just a minute—For the love of God, don't be so stupid! I'm coming. I'm coming.

The sound of knocking comes from offstage.

Who is it that is knocking so hard? Where do you come from? What do you want?

NURSE

[From within] Let me come in, and you shall know my errand.
I come from Lady Juliet.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

[Opens the door] Welcome then.

NURSE

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

The NURSE enters.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

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

NURSE

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

ROMEO

95 Nurse!

NURSE

Ah sir, ah sir. Death's the end of all.

ROMEO

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

NURSE

Oh, she says nothing, sir, but weeps and weeps,
And now falls on her bed, and then starts up,
105 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
110 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. *[He draws his dagger]*

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Hold thy desperate hand.
115 Art thou a man? Thy form cries out thou art.
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!
120 Thou hast amazed me. By my holy order,
I thought thy disposition better tempered.
Hast thou slain Tybalt? Wilt thou slay thyself,
And slay thy lady that in thy life lives
By doing damnèd hate upon thyself?
125 Why rail'st thou on thy birth, the heaven, and earth?
Since birth and heaven and earth, all three do meet
In thee at once, which thou at once wouldst lose?
Fie, fie, thou shamest thy shape, thy love, thy wit,
Which, like a usurer, abound'st in all
130 And usest none in that true use indeed

NURSE

[From offstage] Let me in, and I'll tell you why I'm here. I come from Lady Juliet.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

[Opening the door] Welcome, then.

NURSE

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

The NURSE enters.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

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

NURSE

He's acting like Juliet, exactly like her. Oh awful sympathy! What a dreadful predicament! She's lying on the ground just like him, blubbering and weeping, weeping and blubbering. Stand up. Stand up. Stand up if you're a man. For Juliet's sake, for her sake, rise and stand. Why do you moan so terribly?

ROMEO

Nurse!

NURSE

Well, sir, well. Death comes for everybody.

ROMEO

What of Juliet? How is she? Does she think that I'm a cold-blooded murderer because I corrupted our newfound love by killing her relative? Where is she? How is she? What does my wife say about our love?

NURSE


Oh, she says nothing, sir. Instead she weeps and weeps. She falls on her bed, then starts to get up, then calls out Tybalt's name and then your name, and then she falls back down on the bed.

ROMEO

She calls out my name as if it were a bullet that had been shot from a gun and murdered her, just as I murdered her cousin. Tell me, Friar, in what vile part of my body does my name rest? Tell me, so I can cut it out of myself. *[He draws his dagger]*

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Stop! Don't do anything out of desperation. Are you a man? You look like a man. But your tears are womanly. Your wildness is like the irrational fury of a beast. You're like an inappropriate woman hiding within a man, or, even worse, a shameful beast hiding within a half-man, half-woman! You amaze me. By my holy order, I swear I thought you were stronger and more stable than this. Have you killed Tybalt? Will you kill yourself, and in performing such a sin also kill your wife, who shares your life? Why are you ranting about your birth, the heavens, and the earth? You are made of the joining of all three, and now want nothing to do with them? You bring shame to your body, your love, and your mind. You are blessed with all three, but like a moneylender you do not use your body, love, or mind for their true purpose. Without honor or nobility, your body is just a wax figure. The love that you swore is just a hollow lie, since you now threaten to kill the love that you vowed to cherish. Your

 In Shakespeare's time, prevailing gender stereotypes attributed strong emotions to women and stoicism to men.

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,
 135 Killing that love which thou hast vowed to cherish;
 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;
 140 And thou dismembered with thine own defence.
 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.
 145 The law that threatened death becomes thy friend
 And turns it to exile—there art thou happy.
 A pack of blessings light upon thy back,
 Happiness courts thee in her best array,
 But, like a misbehaved and sullen wench,
 150 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,
 155 For then thou canst not pass to Mantua,
 Where thou shalt live, till we can find a time
 To blaze your marriage, reconcile your friends,
 Beg pardon of the Prince, and call thee back
 With twenty hundred thousand times more joy
 160 Than thou went'st forth in lamentation.—
 Go before, Nurse. Commend me to thy lady,
 And bid her hasten all the house to bed,
 Which heavy sorrow makes them apt unto.
 Romeo is coming.

NURSE

165 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.
 170 [Gives ROMEO JULIET's ring]
 Hie you, make haste, for it grows very late.

Exit NURSE

ROMEO

How well my comfort is revived by this!

FRIAR LAWRENCE

175 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
 180 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.
 185

They all exit.

mind, that key to both your body and your love, has failed to handle both of them. You're like an unskilled soldier who accidentally explodes his own gunpowder because he does not know how to use it: you end up killing yourself with the very thing meant to protect you. Now get a hold of yourself, man! Your Juliet is alive (for whose sake you were just threatening to kill yourself). That is something to be happy about. Tybalt tried to kill you, but you killed Tybalt. That is something to be happy about. The law that promised death for you was mercifully changed into exile—another thing to be happy about. You have been blessed multiple times, and are surrounded by brightest happiness. But like a misbehaved and sullen girl, you're pouting about your bad luck and thwarted love. Now listen to me: those who act the way you are acting now die miserable. Go, be with your love, as we planned. Climb up to her bedroom and comfort her. But make sure to leave before the watchmen take their positions, because they will stop you before you can escape to Mantua. You'll live in Mantua until we can announce your marriage publicly, make peace between your families, and beg the Prince to pardon you. Then we'll welcome you back with twenty thousand times more joy than you'll feel when leaving. Nurse, go to Juliet before Romeo follows. Give my regards to your lady, and tell her to hurry everybody in her house to bed. It's likely that their sorrow will make them want to go to sleep, anyway. Romeo is coming.

NURSE

Oh Lord, I could stay here all night listening to good advice like yours. Education is amazing!

[To ROMEO] My lord, I'll tell my lady you will come.

ROMEO

Do that, and tell my beloved to be ready to scold me.

NURSE

Here, sir, take this ring she asked me to give you. [She gives ROMEO JULIET's ring] Hurry, it's getting late.

The NURSE exits.

ROMEO

This ring lifts my spirits!

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Now go. Good night. And remember that everything depends on you being out of Verona before the night watch takes its position, or that you disguise yourself and leave after daybreak. Stay a while in Mantua. I'll find your servant, and every once in a while I'll send you news through him about every good thing that occurs for you here. Give me your hand. It's late. Farewell. Good night.

ROMEO

Even if I didn't have the greatest joy I'll ever experience calling out to me, it would still be sad to leave you in such a hurry. Goodbye.

They all exit.

Act 3, Scene 4

Shakespeare

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

Enter CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, and PARIS.

PARIS

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

LADY CAPULET

10 I will, and know her mind early tomorrow.
Tonight she is mew'd 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.—
15 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

20 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.
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.
[To his wife] 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.

They all exit.

Shakescleare Translation

CAPULET

Sir, everything has gone so badly that we haven't had any time to speak with Juliet about marrying you. She loved her cousin Tybalt dearly, as did I. Well, we were all born to die. It's very late. She won't be coming downstairs tonight. In fact, if I wasn't meeting with you, I'd have gone to bed an hour ago.

CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, and PARIS enter.

PARIS

Painful times provide no chance for love. Lady Capulet, good night. Speak well of me to your daughter.

LADY CAPULET

I will. And I'll find out how she feels about marrying you early tomorrow. Tonight she is locked in her room with her sadness.

CAPULET

Sir Paris, I'll make a desperate present of my child's love. I think she'll do whatever I tell her to do. No, I'm sure she will. Wife, go to see her before you go to bed. Explain to her how my son Paris loves her. And tell her, listen to me, on Wednesday—Wait—What day is today?

PARIS

Monday, my lord.

CAPULET

Monday! Ha, ha! Well, Wednesday is too soon. Make it Thursday. Tell her that on Thursday she'll be married to this noble earl. Will you be ready, Paris? Are you opposed to rushing in this way? We won't have a big party, and just invite a friend or two. Because Tybalt was just killed, people might think that we didn't care enough about our cousin if celebrate too much. Therefore we'll invite just a half dozen friends to the wedding, and no more. So, what do you say to Thursday?

PARIS

My lord, I wish Thursday were tomorrow.

CAPULET

Well, go home. Thursday it is.

[To LADY CAPULET] Go to Juliet before you go to bed. Wife, get her ready for this wedding day.

[To PARIS] Goodbye, my lord. I'm off to bed. My goodness, it is so late that we can call it morning before too long. Good night.

They all exit.

Act 3, Scene 5

Shakespeare

Shakescleare Translation

ROMEO and JULIET enter above the stage.

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.
5 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.
Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
10 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,
15 And light thee on thy way to Mantua.
Therefore stay yet. Thou need'st not to be gone.

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.
20 '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.—
25 How is 't, my soul? Let's talk. It is not day.

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 loathed 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!

The NURSE enters.

NURSE

Madam.

JULIET

Nurse?

NURSE

Your lady mother is coming to your chamber.
40 The day is broke. Be wary, look about.

JULIET

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

The NURSE exits.

ROMEO

Farewell, farewell. One kiss, and I'll descend.

They kiss. ROMEO goes down.

ROMEO and JULIET enter on the balcony above the stage.

JULIET

You're leaving? It's not yet close to daytime. The sound you
just heard was a nightingale, not a lark. Each night the
nightingale sings on that pomegranate tree. Believe me, my
love, it was the nightingale.

ROMEO

It was the lark, who sings to greet the dawn, not the
nightingale. My love, look at the streaks illuminating the
clouds parting in the east. Night is over. Day is creeping
over the mountain tops. I must leave in order to live. If I
stay, I'll die.

JULIET

That light isn't daylight, I know it. It's some meteor sent
from the sun to be a torchbearer, in order to light your way
to Mantua. So stay for a bit longer. You don't have to leave.

ROMEO

Let me be caught. Let me be put to death. I'll be happy, if
that's how you want it. I'll say the grayness over there is not
the coming morning. Rather, it's a pale reflection of the
moon. And that isn't the lark singing in the sky above our
heads. I'd rather stay than go. Come on, death! You'd be
welcome here! Juliet wills it. How are you, my love? Let's
talk. It is not day.

JULIET

It's day. It is. Get going, be gone, go away! It's the lark that's
singing so harshly and out of tune. Some say the lark's
singing makes a sweet transition between day and night.
That's not true, because the song divides the two of us.
Some say the lark and the disgusting toad traded eyes. Now
I wish they had also traded voices because the lark's voice
pulls us from each other's arms, and sets men hunting after
you. Oh, get going. It's getting more and more light.

ROMEO

The lighter it gets, the darker is our misery.

The NURSE enters.

NURSE

Madam.

JULIET

Nurse?

NURSE

Your mother is on her way to your bedroom. Day has
arrived. Be careful. Watch out.

JULIET

The window lets day in, and now my life goes out the
window.

The NURSE exits.

ROMEO

Farewell, farewell! One more kiss, and I'll go down the
ladder.

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
50 That may convey my greetings, love, to thee.

JULIET

Oh, think'st thou we shall ever meet again?

ROMEO

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

JULIET

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

ROMEO

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

ROMEO exits.

JULIET

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

LADY CAPULET

65 *[From within]* Ho, daughter, are you up?

JULIET

Who is 't that calls? Is it my lady mother?
Is she not down so late or up so early?
What unaccustomed cause procures her hither?

LADY CAPULET enters.

LADY CAPULET

Why, how now, Juliet?

JULIET

70 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,
75 But much of grief shows still some want of wit.

JULIET

Yet let me weep for such a feeling loss.

LADY CAPULET

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

JULIET

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

JULIET

Are you gone just like that, my love, my lord? Ah, husband,
lover, I must hear from you every day. There are many days
in each minute. Oh, by this count I'll be so much older
before I see you again, my Romeo.

ROMEO

Farewell! I'll take every opportunity to send my love to you.

JULIET

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

ROMEO

I don't doubt it. When we're older these difficulties will just
be stories that we tell each other.

JULIET

Oh God, my soul senses some evil coming! It seems to me
that, standing down there as you are, you look as if you are
lying dead in the bottom of a tomb. Either my eyesight is
failing me, or you look pale.

ROMEO

Trust me, my love, in my eyes you look pale as well.
Sadness drains the color out of our faces. Goodbye,
goodbye!

ROMEO exits.

JULIET

Oh, Fortune. People say that you are fickle, always
changing your mind. If you are so fickle, what will you do to
Romeo, who is so renowned for being faithful? Be fickle,
Fortune, and do not keep him away long. Instead send him
back to Verona soon.

LADY CAPULET

[Offstage] Hello, my daughter! Are you up?

JULIET

Who's calling? My mother? Why is she up so late, or so early?
What could possibly be her reason for coming to see me?

LADY CAPULET enters.

LADY CAPULET

What's the matter, Juliet?

JULIET

Madam, I'm not feeling well.

LADY CAPULET

Are you going to weep forever about your cousin's death?
Do you think you can wash him out of his grave with tears?
Even if you could, you couldn't bring him back to life. So
stop crying. Some grief shows a lot of love. But too much
grief makes you look silly.

JULIET

Let me weep for such a terrible loss.

LADY CAPULET

Weeping like this will make you feel the loss, but won't help
you feel the friend you've lost.

JULIET

Feeling the loss so strongly, I can't help but weep for him
forever.

LADY CAPULET

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

JULIET

What villain, madam?

LADY CAPULET

That same villain, Romeo.

JULIET

85 *[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

90 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,
95 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—
100 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
105 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

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

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
115 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,
120 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
125 Ere he, that should be husband, comes to woo.

LADY CAPULET

Well, girl, you're weeping not for his death, but rather
because the villain who murdered him still lives.

JULIET

What villain, madam?

LADY CAPULET

That same villain, Romeo.

JULIET

[To herself] He's far from a villain.

[To LADY CAPULET] May God pardon him! I do, with all my
heart. And yet he makes my heart grieve more than any
other man.

LADY CAPULET

That's because the traitorous murderer still lives.

JULIET

Yes, madam, because he lives outside the reach of my
hands. I wish that I was the only one who could avenge my
cousin's death!

LADY CAPULET

We'll get revenge for it, don't you worry. Stop your weeping.
I'll send a note to a certain man we know in Mantua, which
is where that banished renegade Romeo is living. The man
will poison Romeo so that Romeo will soon be keeping
Tybalt company in death. And then, I hope, you'll be
satisfied.

JULIET

In fact, I'll never be satisfied with Romeo until I see
him...dead is the way my poor heart feels when I think of
my poor cousin. Madam, if you could only find a man with
poison, I'd mix it myself so that Romeo would, once dosed
with it, sleep quietly. Oh, I hate to hear his name and not be
able to go after him! How I'd like to take my love for my
cousin and take it out on the body of the man who killed
him!

LADY CAPULET

Find a way to do it, and I'll find the man we need to help
you. But now I'll tell you some joyful news, girl.

JULIET

It's good when there is joy during such sad times. What's
the news, please?

LADY CAPULET

Well, you have a father who cares for you, child. To help you
escape your sadness, he has arranged a soon-to-come day
of joy that you didn't expect and that I had not considered.

JULIET

Madam, quickly, what day is that?

LADY CAPULET

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

JULIET

Right now I swear by Saint Peter's Church and Peter too
that he will not make me a joyful bride. I'm confused by this
sudden hurry. Why would I marry this would-be husband
before he's even come to court me? I beg you, tell my father,

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!

CAPULET and the NURSE enter.

LADY CAPULET

130 Here comes your father. Tell him so yourself,
And see how he will take it at your hands.

CAPULET

When the sun sets the air doth drizzle dew,
But for the sunset of my brother's son
It rains downright.
135 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,
140 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

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

CAPULET

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

JULIET

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

CAPULET

How, how, how, how? Chopped logic! What is this?
155 "Proud," and "I thank you," and "I thank you not,"
And yet "not proud"? Mistress minion you,
Thank me no thankings, nor proud me no prouds,
But fettle your fine joints 'gainst Thursday next
160 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

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

CAPULET

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

madam, I won't marry yet. And when I do marry, I swear, I'd
marry Romeo, whom you know I hate, before I'd marry
Paris. Now that would be some news!

CAPULET and the NURSE enter.

LADY CAPULET

Here comes your father. Tell him so yourself, and see how
he takes it from you.

CAPULET

When the sun sets the air drizzles dew. But when the son of
my brother died, the rain came in a downpour.

[To JULIET] What's with you? Are you a fountain? Still
crying? Will you cry forever? You're like a ship, the sea, and
the winds. Like the sea, your eyes ebb and flow with tears.
Your body is like the ship, sailing in the salt water of your
tears. The winds are your sighs, which rage with tears and,
unless you immediately calm down, will toss your body as if
it's in a storm and sink you. So what's the story, wife? Have
you told her about our announcement?

LADY CAPULET

Yes. And in reply she says thanks, but no thanks. I wish this
fool were married to her grave!

CAPULET

What? Explain this to me again, wife. She refuses? She
doesn't just say thank you? Is she not proud of the match?
Is she not counting her blessings that we have found for her,
unworthy as she is, such a noble gentleman to be her
bridegroom?

JULIET

I'm not proud of what you found, but thankful for your
efforts. I can't be proud of what I hate. But I can be thankful
for what I hate, if it was meant with love.

CAPULET

What, what, what, what? Insane logic! What is this? How
can you say "proud" and "I thank you" and "no thank you"
and "not proud"? You spoiled brat, don't give me these
"thank you no thank yous" and "proud not prouds." Just
get yourself together for Thursday when you'll be going
with Paris to Saint Peter's Church. And if you refuse to go,
I'll drag you there. My god, you sick corpse! You worthless
bit of baggage! You pale face!

LADY CAPULET

[To CAPULET] Shame on you! What, are you crazy?

JULIET

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

CAPULET

You disobedient wretch of a worthless girl! I'll tell you what:
get yourself to church on Thursday or never again look me
in the face. Don't speak. Don't reply. Don't answer me.
[JULIET rises] My fingers itch to slap you. Wife, we never
thought we had been blessed that God gave us just this one
child, but now I see that this one is one too many. We were
cursed when we had her. She sickens me, the good-for-
nothing.

NURSE

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

CAPULET

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

NURSE

I speak no treason.

CAPULET

180 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,
For here we need it not.

LADY CAPULET

185 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
190 A gentleman of noble parentage,
Of fair demesnes, youthful, and nobly trained,
Stuffed, as they say, with honorable parts,
Proportioned as one's thought would wish a man—
And then to have a wretched puling fool,
195 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.
200 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,
205 Nor what is mine shall never do thee good.
Trust to 't, bethink you. I'll not be forsworn.

CAPULET exits.

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!
210 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.

LADY CAPULET exits.

JULIET

215 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.—
220 Alack, alack, that heaven should practice stratagems
Upon so soft a subject as myself.—
What sayst thou? Hast thou not a word of joy?

NURSE

God in heaven bless her! You're wrong, my lord, to shout at
her that way.

CAPULET

And why is that, my lady of such wisdom? Shut up. Go
chatter with your gossiping cronies.

NURSE

I haven't said anything wrong.

CAPULET

Oh, for God's sake!

NURSE

Can't I speak?

CAPULET

Quiet, you mumbling fool! Save your wisdom for your
gossiping buddies. We don't need it here.

LADY CAPULET

You're too angry.

CAPULET

By God! It makes me angry! Day and night, hour after hour,
through tide and time, working or playing, alone or with
company, I've worked to get her a fine match. Now, I've
gotten her a noble gentleman, who's good-looking, young,
well-educated, and honorable, who's the man of any girl's
dreams. And this wretched, crying fool, like a whining
puppet, responds to this good fortune by answering, "I
won't marry. I can't love. I'm too young. Forgive me." Well, if
you won't get married, here's how I'll forgive you. Eat
wherever you want, except in my house. Think about that.
I'm not joking. Thursday is soon. Cover your heart with your
hand and listen to my advice. Act like my daughter, and I'll
marry you to my friend. Don't, and you can beg, starve, and
die in the streets. By my soul, I'll never again acknowledge
you or help you. Count on it. Think about it. I won't break
this oath.

CAPULET exits.

JULIET

Is there no God above that pities my grief? Oh, sweet
mother, don't throw me out! Delay this marriage for a
month, or just a week. Or else make my wedding bed in the
family crypt where Tybalt lies.

LADY CAPULET

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

LADY CAPULET exits.

JULIET

Oh God!—Oh, Nurse, how can we stop this? My husband is
alive on earth, our vows are up in heaven. How can those
vows come back down to earth, unless my husband dies
and goes to heaven and sends them back down by doing
so? Comfort me. Tell me what to do. Oh, oh, why does God
play like this with someone as small as me? What do you
say? Don't you have even one happy word? Comfort me,
Nurse.

Some comfort, Nurse.

NURSE

Faith, here it is.

225 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.
230 Oh, he's a lovely gentleman.
Romeo's a dishclout to him. An eagle, madam,
Hath not so green, so quick, so fair an eye
As Paris hath. Beshrew my very heart,
I think you are happy in this second match,
235 For it excels your first. Or if it did not,
Your first is dead, or 'twere as good he were,
As living here and you no use of him.

JULIET

Speakest thou from thy heart?

NURSE

And from my soul too, else beshrew them both.

JULIET

240 Amen!

NURSE

What?

JULIET

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

NURSE

Marry, I will, and this is wisely done.

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
250 Which she hath praised him with above compare
So many thousand times? Go, counselor!
Thou and my bosom henceforth shall be twain.
I'll to the friar, to know his remedy.
If all else fail, myself have power to die.
255

JULIET exits.

NURSE

Here's what I think. Romeo's banished. There's no chance that he would ever come back to challenge you if you get married. And if he does come back, he can only do so by sneaking in. Since that's the way things are, I think the best thing for you to do is to marry the count. He's a lovely gentleman! Romeo's a dishcloth compared to him. An eagle does not have eyes as green, quick, or beautiful as Paris does. Curse my heart, but I think you're lucky to have this second husband, because he surpasses your first. And even if he didn't, your first husband is dead, or as good as dead, since Romeo doesn't live here and you don't get to enjoy him.

JULIET

Are you speaking from your heart?

NURSE

From my heart and my soul too. If not, curse them both.

JULIET

Amen!

NURSE

What?

JULIET

Well, you have comforted me greatly. Go inside and tell my mother that, because I made my father angry, I've gone to Friar Lawrence's cell to confess and be absolved.

NURSE

Indeed, I will. This is the wisest course.

The NURSE exits.

JULIET

Damned old lady! Oh, she is the most wicked foe! Is it more of a sin to wish me to go back on my vows, or to say terrible things about my husband when she had praised him as a man without compare so many thousand times before? Go away then, Nurse, and take your advice with you! Your heart and mine will be separated from now on. I'll go to the friar and ask for his help. And if all else fails, I have the power to take my own life.

JULIET exits.

Act 4, Scene 1

Shakespeare

FRIAR LAWRENCE and PARIS enter.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

On Thursday, sir? The time is very short.

PARIS

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

FRIAR LAWRENCE

You say you do not know the lady's mind.
5 Uneven is the course. I like it not.

Shakescleare Translation

FRIAR LAWRENCE and PARIS enter.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

On Thursday, sir? That's extremely soon.

PARIS

My father-in-law Capulet wants it that way, and I'm not at all interested in slowing him down.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

You say you don't know what Juliet wants. That's a treacherous road. I don't like it.

PARIS

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

FRIAR LAWRENCE

[Aside] I would I knew not why it should be slowed.—
 Look, sir, here comes the lady toward my cell.

PARIS

Happily met, my lady and my wife.

JULIET enters.

JULIET

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

PARIS

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

JULIET

What must be shall be.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

That's a certain text.

PARIS

Come you to make confession to this Father?

JULIET

To answer that, I should confess to you.

PARIS

25 Do not deny to him that you love me.

JULIET

I will confess to you that I love him.

PARIS

So will ye, I am sure, that you love me.

JULIET

If I do so, it will be of more price
 Being spoke behind your back than to your face.

PARIS

30 Poor soul, thy face is much abused with tears.

JULIET

The tears have got small victory by that,
 For it was bad enough before their spite.

PARIS

Thou wrong'st it more than tears with that report.

JULIET

35 That is no slander, sir, which is a truth,
 And what I spake, I spake it to my face.

PARIS

Thy face is mine, and thou hast slandered it.

PARIS

She's grieving too much over Tybalt's death, so I haven't talked to her about love. Romantic love can't flourish during times of mourning. Now, sir, her father thinks it's dangerous that she has given herself so fully to sorrow. In his wisdom, he's rushing our marriage in order to stop her tears. She is alone all the time and thinking too much about her grief. Some company might help her to stop crying. Now you know the reason for this hurry to the wedding.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

[To himself] I wish I didn't know the reason why it should be slowed down.

[To PARIS] Look, sir, here comes the lady toward my cell.

PARIS

I'm happy to see you, my lady and my wife.

JULIET enters.

JULIET

That might be, sir, when I'm married.

PARIS

That “may be” will be, on Thursday, my love.

JULIET

What must be will be.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

That's a certain truth.

PARIS

Have you come to make confession to Father Lawrence?

JULIET

If I answered that, I'd be confessing to you.

PARIS

Don't deny to him that you love me.

JULIET

I'll confess to you that I love him.

PARIS

I'm sure you will also confess that you love me.

JULIET

If I do so, it will be worth more if I say it behind your back than if I say it to your face.

PARIS

Poor dear, your face has been abused by so many tears.

JULIET

The tears haven't won much, since my face wasn't all that nice before I started to cry.

PARIS

Now you're abusing your face to say something untrue about it like that.

JULIET

It is no lie, sir. It's the truth. And what I said, I said to my face.

PARIS

Your face is mine, and you have slandered it.

JULIET

It may be so, for it is not mine own.—
Are you at leisure, holy Father, now,
Or shall I come to you at evening mass?

FRIAR LAWRENCE

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

PARIS

God shield I should disturb devotion!—
Juliet, on Thursday early will I rouse ye.
[Kisses her] Till then, adieu, and keep this holy kiss.

PARIS exits.

JULIET

45 O, shut the door! And when thou hast done so,
Come weep with me, past hope, past cure, past help.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

O Juliet, I already know thy grief.
It strains me past the compass of my wits.
I hear thou must, and nothing may prorogue it,
50 On Thursday next be married to this county.

JULIET

Tell me not, Friar, that thou hear'st of this,
Unless thou tell me how I may prevent it.
If in thy wisdom thou canst give no help,
Do thou but call my resolution wise,
55 And with this knife I'll help it presently.
[Shows him a knife]
God joined my heart and Romeo's, thou our hands.
And ere this hand, by thee to Romeo sealed,
Shall be the label to another deed,
60 Or my true heart with treacherous revolt
Turn to another, this shall slay them both.
Therefore out of thy long-experienced time,
Give me some present counsel, or, behold,
'Twixt my extremes and me this bloody knife
65 Shall play the umpire, arbitrating that
Which the commission of thy years and art
Could to no issue of true honor bring.
Be not so long to speak. I long to die
If what thou speak'st speak not of remedy.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

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

JULIET

O, bid me leap, rather than marry Paris,
80 From off the battlements of yonder tower;
Or walk in thievish ways; or bid me lurk
Where serpents are; chain me with roaring bears;
Or shut me nightly in a charnel house,
O'ercovered quite with dead men's rattling bones,
85 With reeky shanks and yellow chapless skulls;
Or bid me go into a new-made grave
And hide me with a dead man in his shroud—
Things that, to hear them told, have made me tremble—
And I will do it without fear or doubt,
90 To live an unstained wife to my sweet love.

JULIET

That may be true, since my face is not my own.

[To FRIAR LAWRENCE] Are you free, Father, or should I come
to you at evening mass?

FRIAR LAWRENCE

I have time now, my sad daughter.

[To PARIS] My lord, we must ask you for some time alone.

PARIS

God forbid that I should intrude on confession! Juliet, I will
wake you early on Thursday. *[Kissing her]* Until then,
goodbye, and keep this holy kiss.

PARIS exits.

JULIET

Oh, shut the door! And when you've done that, come weep
with me. My situation is beyond hope, beyond cure, beyond
help!

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Oh, Juliet, I already know why you're so sad. It's too difficult
a problem for me to know how to solve. I've heard that on
the coming Thursday you must marry this count, and
nothing can delay it.

JULIET

Friar, don't tell me that you've heard all this unless you can
tell me how I can prevent it. If with all your wisdom even
you can't help, then you must agree that my resolution to
die is wise. And this knife will help me do it. *[Revealing a
knife]* God joined my heart to Romeo's, and you joined our
hands. Before my hand or heart—which are bound to
Romeo—are given to another man, I'll use this knife to kill
myself. So either use your long experience and education to
give me some advice about what to do, or watch as I use
this knife like a judge to honorably resolve the extreme
situation in which I'm caught. Don't wait long to speak. I
want to die if what you say isn't a solution.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Wait, daughter. I see a ray of hope. But it will require an act
as desperate as the situation we want to avoid. If you have
the willpower to kill yourself rather than marry Count Paris,
then you'll likely agree to experience something like death
to escape this problem. You can wrestle with death itself in
order to escape from death. If you dare to do it, I'll give you
the solution.

JULIET

To avoid marrying Paris I'd jump from the top of a tower; or
walk down thief-infested alleys; or sit among a nest of
serpents; or be chained up with wild bears; or be shut up
every night in a crypt full of rattling bones, stinking flesh,
and skulls without jawbones; or climb into a freshly dug
grave and hide beneath the shroud of a dead man. All those
things make me tremble when I hear them said, but I'll do
them without fear or dread in order to be a pure wife to my
sweet love.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

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

95 *[Shows her a vial]*

Take thou this vial, being then in bed,
And this distilled liquor drink thou off,
When presently through all thy veins shall run
A cold and drowsy humor, for no pulse
100 Shall keep his native progress, but surcease.
No warmth, no breath shall testify thou livest.
The roses in thy lips and cheeks shall fade
To wanny ashes, thy eyes' windows fall
Like death when he shuts up the day of life.

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

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

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

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

JULIET

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

FRIAR LAWRENCE

125 *[Gives her the vial]*

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

JULIET

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

They exit separately.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Be strong, then. Go home, be cheerful, and agree to marry
Paris. Tomorrow is Wednesday. Tomorrow night make sure
that you go to sleep alone. Don't let the Nurse sleep in your
bedroom. *[Showing her a vial]* Drink this liquor when you're
in bed. A cold, sleepy feeling will then run through your
veins, and your pulse will cease. Your body will go cold, and
you'll stop breathing. The red of your lips and cheeks will
fade to a pale ashen color, and your eyelids will close just as
if you were dead. Your body will lose control over its own
movement, and will become stiff as that of a corpse. You'll
remain in this simulation of death for forty-two hours, and
then you'll wake as if from a pleasant sleep. So when the
bridegroom comes to wake you from your bed in the
morning, he will think that you are dead. Then, as is the
tradition of our city, you'll be dressed in your best clothes
and placed on an uncovered funeral bier, and carried to the
Capulet tomb that holds all of your dead relatives.
Meanwhile, before you wake up, I'll send word to Romeo of
our plan. He'll come here, and we'll keep a watch over you
as you wake. That night, Romeo will take you with him to
Mantua. So, as long as you don't change your mind or let
your womanly fear interfere with your courage, you'll be
free from the current situation which threatens to force you
into sin.

JULIET

Give it to me! Don't talk to me about fear.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

[Giving her the vial] Now go. Be strong and good luck. I'll
send a friar speeding to Mantua with my letter to Romeo.

JULIET

Love, give me strength, and that strength will help me.
Goodbye, dear father.

They exit in opposite directions.

Act 4, Scene 2

Shakespeare

*CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, and the NURSE enter, along with two or
three SERVINGMEN*

CAPULET

[Gives paper to FIRST SERVINGMAN] So many guests invite
as here are writ.

The FIRST SERVINGMAN exits.

[To SECOND SERVINGMAN] Sirrah, go hire me twenty
cunning cooks.

SECOND SERVINGMAN

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

Shakescleare Translation

*CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, and the NURSE enter, along with
two or three SERVINGMEN*

CAPULET

[Giving a paper to the FIRST SERVINGMAN] Invite all the
guests written on this list.

The FIRST SERVINGMAN exits.

[To SECOND SERVINGMAN] Go hire twenty skilled cooks.

SECOND SERVINGMAN

I won't hire any bad cooks. I'll test them by making them
lick their fingers.

CAPULET

How canst thou try them so?

SECOND SERVINGMAN

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

CAPULET

Go, be gone.

The SECOND SERVINGMAN exits.

We shall be much unfurnished for this time.
What, is my daughter gone to Friar Lawrence?

NURSE

Ay, forsooth.

CAPULET

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

JULIET enters.

NURSE

See where she comes from shrift with merry look.

CAPULET

How now, my headstrong? Where have you been gadding?

JULIET

20 Where I have learned me to repent the sin
Of disobedient opposition
To you and your behests, and am enjoined
By holy Lawrence to fall prostrate here
To beg your pardon. *[Falls to her knees]*
Pardon, I beseech you!
25 Henceforward I am ever ruled by you.

CAPULET

Send for the county. Go tell him of this.
I'll have this knot knit up tomorrow morning.

JULIET

30 I met the youthful lord at Lawrence's cell,
And gave him what becomèd love I might,
Not stepping o'er the bounds of modesty.

CAPULET

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

JULIET rises.

This is as 't should be.—Let me see the county.
Ay, marry, go, I say, and fetch him hither.—
Now, afore God, this reverend holy friar!
35 Our whole city is much bound to him.

JULIET

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

LADY CAPULET

No, not till Thursday. There is time enough.

CAPULET

How does that work?

SECOND SERVINGMAN

Well, sir, it's a bad cook who refuses to lick his own fingers.
So I won't hire any cooks who won't lick their own fingers.

CAPULET

Get going.

The SECOND SERVINGMAN exits.

We are not going to be prepared for this wedding celebration.

[To the NURSE] Has my daughter gone to see Friar Lawrence?

NURSE

Yes, that's the truth.

CAPULET

Well, there's a chance he may do her some good. She's a stubborn good-for-nothing little whore.

JULIET enters.

NURSE

Look, she's back from confession looking happier.

CAPULET

How are you, my headstrong daughter? Where have you been?

JULIET

I have been to a place where I learned to repent for the sin of being disobedient to my father and his commands. I am instructed by holy Friar Lawrence to kneel down and beg your forgiveness. *[She kneels]* Forgive me, I beg you. From now on I'll do what you tell me to.

CAPULET

Send for the Count. Tell him about this. We'll move the wedding to tomorrow morning.

JULIET

I met the youthful lord at Lawrence's cell. I treated him with all the love I could give without breaking the proper rules of modesty.

CAPULET

I'm glad! This is good. Stand up.

JULIET stands up.

This is how it should be. I want to see the count. Yes, all right, go, I say, and bring him here. Now, I swear before God, our whole city owes a great deal to this friar.

JULIET

Nurse, will you come with me to my room and help me pick out the clothes and jewelry that I should wear tomorrow?

LADY CAPULET

No, not until Thursday. There's enough time.

CAPULET

40 Go, Nurse. Go with her. We'll to church tomorrow.

LADY CAPULET

We shall be short in our provision.
'Tis now near night.

JULIET and the NURSE exit.

CAPULET exits.

CAPULET

Tush, I will stir about,
And all things shall be well, I warrant thee, wife.
45 Go thou to Juliet, help to deck up her.
I'll not to bed tonight. Let me alone.
I'll play the housewife for this once.

LADY CAPULET exits

What, ho!
They are all forth. Well, I will walk myself
50 To County Paris to prepare up him
Against tomorrow. My heart is wondrous light,
Since this same wayward girl is so reclaimed.

CAPULET

Go, Nurse. Go with her. We'll go to the church and have the wedding tomorrow.

LADY CAPULET

We won't have enough food or drink for the party. It's almost night already.

JULIET and the NURSE exit.

CAPULET exits.

CAPULET

Oh hush. I'll make sure that the preparations are underway, and everything will be all right. I promise you that, wife. Go to Juliet, to help get her all dolled up. I won't go to bed tonight. Leave me alone. I'll pretend to be the housewife just this once.

LADY CAPULET exits.

What is it? Hey! They're all gone? Well, I myself will walk to Count Paris to get him ready for tomorrow. My heart feels wonderfully light, now that this formerly disobedient girl has been taken back.

Act 4, Scene 3

Shakespeare

JULIET

Ay, those attires are best. But, gentle Nurse,
I pray thee, leave me to myself tonight,
For I have need of many orisons
To move the heavens to smile upon my state,
5 Which, well thou know'st, is cross and full of sin.

JULIET and the NURSE enter.

LADY CAPULET enters.

LADY CAPULET

What, are you busy, ho? Need you my help?

JULIET

No, madam. We have culled such necessities
As are behooveful for our state tomorrow.
So please you, let me now be left alone,
10 And let the Nurse this night sit up with you.
For, I am sure, you have your hands full all
In this so sudden business.

LADY CAPULET

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

LADY CAPULET and the NURSE exit.

Shakescleare Translation

JULIET

Yes, those clothes are the best. But, gentle Nurse, I beg you, please let me be by myself tonight. I need to say many prayers in order to convince the heavens to bless me despite my situation. You know very well that my life is difficult and full of sin.

JULIET and the NURSE enter.

LADY CAPULET enters.

LADY CAPULET

Are you busy? Do you need my help?

JULIET

No, madam. We've selected the things that would be best for me to wear at the ceremony tomorrow. So, if it's all right with you, please leave me alone now. Let the Nurse stay up tonight with you. I'm sure your hands are full getting ready for this sudden marriage celebration.

LADY CAPULET

Good night. Go to bed and get your rest. You'll need it.

LADY CAPULET and the NURSE exit.

JULIET

15 Farewell. God knows when we shall meet again.
I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins
That almost freezes up the heat of life.
I'll call them back again to comfort me.
Nurse!--What should she do here?

20 My dismal scene I needs must act alone.
Come, vial. [*Holds out the vial*] What if this mixture
do not work at all?
Shall I be married then tomorrow morning?
No, no, this shall forbid it. Lie thou there.

25 [*Lays down a knife*]
What if it be a poison which the friar
Subtly hath ministered to have me dead,
Lest in this marriage he should be dishonored
Because he married me before to Romeo?

30 I fear it is--and yet methinks it should not,
For he hath still been tried a holy man.
How if, when I am laid into the tomb,
I wake before the time that Romeo
Come to redeem me? There's a fearful point.

35 Shall I not then be stifled in the vault,
To whose foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in,
And there die strangled ere my Romeo comes?
Or, if I live, is it not very like
The horrible conceit of death and night,
Together with the terror of the place--
As in a vault, an ancient receptacle
Where for this many hundred years the bones
Of all my buried ancestors are packed;
Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth,
45 Lies fest'ring in his shroud; where, as they say,
At some hours in the night spirits resort--
Alack, alack, is it not like that I,
So early waking--what with loathsome smells,
And shrieks like mandrakes torn out of the earth,
50 That living mortals, hearing them, run mad--
O, if I wake, shall I not be distraught,
Environèd with all these hideous fears,
And madly play with my forefathers' joints,
And pluck the mangled Tybalt from his shroud,
55 And, in this rage, with some great kinsman's bone
As with a club dash out my desp'rate brains?
O, look! Methinks I see my cousin's ghost
Seeking out Romeo that did spit his body
Upon a rapier's point. Stay, Tybalt, stay!


60 Romeo, Romeo, Romeo! Here's drink. I drink to thee.

JULIET drinks from the vial and falls down on her bed, hidden by her bed curtains.

JULIET

Goodybe. God only knows when we will meet again. I feel a bit of cold fear tingling through my veins; it's almost freezing the heat of life. I'll call them back into the room again to comfort me. Nurse!--Oh, what good could she do here? I must carry out this dismal performance by myself. Come to me, vial. [*She holds out the vial*] What if this mixture doesn't work at all? In that case, will I have to get married tomorrow morning? No, no, this knife will forbid that from happening. I'll put you down there. [*She lays down the knife*] What if the friar has slyly given me a potion to kill me? Is he afraid that he would be disgraced by marrying me to Paris, because he married me to Romeo first? That's what I'm afraid of--and yet, I think it's probably not the case, because he has always proved to be an honest, holy man. But what if, when I'm laid in the tomb, I wake up before the time Romeo is supposed to come and get me? That frightens me. Will I not feel stifled in that foul vault--where no healthy air gets in--and die of strangulation before Romeo arrives? Or, if I live, isn't it likely that the horrible thought of death and night, together with the terror of the place, will make me go crazy? There's no place as terrifying as a vault, an ancient container where for over a hundred years my ancestors' bones have been packed in for burial. There bloody Tybalt, so recently alive on the earth, now lies festering in his burial shroud. They say that at some hours of night, spirits visit the tomb. Alas, alas! Is it not likely that I, waking up so early--what with the awful smells and the cries like mandrakes ripped out from the earth, making living mortals go crazy after hearing them--will likewise go insane? Oh, if I do wake up in there, will I not be distraught, surrounded with all these terrible fears? Will I go crazy, and play with my forefathers' bones, and take Tybalt's injured corpse out of his shroud? And, in this madness, will I use some noble relative's bone as a club to dash out my hopeless brains? Oh, look there! I think I see my cousin's ghost searching for Romeo, who killed him with a sword, staking him like a piece of meat upon the dagger's point. Wait, Tybalt, wait! Romeo, Romeo, Romeo! Here's a drink. I'll drink to you.

JULIET drinks from the vial and falls down on her bed, hidden by her bed curtains.

 The roots of the mandrake were thought to resemble the human form, and in Shakespeare's time, the plant was thought to scream when ripped from the earth.

Act 4, Scene 4

Shakespeare

LADY CAPULET

Hold, take these keys, and fetch more spices, Nurse.

.LADY CAPULET and the NURSE enter.

NURSE

They call for dates and quinces in the pastry.

CAPULET

Come, stir, stir, stir! The second cock hath crowed.
The curfew bell hath rung. 'Tis three o'clock.--

5 Look to the baked meats, good Angelica.
Spare not for the cost.

CAPULET enters.

Shakescleare Translation

LADY CAPULET

Wait. Take these keys and go get more spices, Nurse.

LADY CAPULET and the NURSE enter.

NURSE

They're calling for dates and quinces in the kitchen.

CAPULET

Come on, get moving, get moving, get moving! The second rooster has crowed. The curfew-bell has rung. It's three o'clock. Go get the baked meats, good Angelica. Don't worry about the cost.

CAPULET enters.

NURSE

Go, you cot-quean, go.
Get you to bed, faith. You'll be sick tomorrow
For this night's watching.

CAPULET

10 No, not a whit, what. I have watched ere now
All night for lesser cause, and ne'er been sick.

LADY CAPULET

Ay, you have been a mouse-hunt in your time,
But I will watch you from such watching now.

LADY CAPULET and the NURSE exit.

CAPULET

A jealous hood, a jealous hood!

Enter three or four SERVINGMEN with spits and logs and baskets.

15 Now, fellow,
What is there?

FIRST SERVINGMAN

Things for the cook, sir, but I know not what.

CAPULET

Make haste, make haste, sirrah.

Exit the FIRST SERVINGMAN.

Fetch drier logs.

20 Call Peter. He will show thee where they are.

SECOND SERVINGMAN

I have a head, sir, that will find out logs,
And never trouble Peter for the matter.

The SECOND SERVINGMAN exits.

CAPULET

Mass, and well said! A merry whoreson, ha!
Thou shalt be loggerhead. Good faith, 'tis day.

25 The County will be here with music straight,
For so he said he would.

They exit.

Music plays within.

I hear him near.

Nurse! Wife! What ho, what, Nurse, I say!

Enter the NURSE.

Go waken Juliet. Go and trim her up.

30 I'll go and chat with Paris. Hie, make haste,
Make haste, the bridegroom he is come already.
Make haste, I say.

NURSE

Oh, you cottage housewife, you. Go to bed, my God. You'll
be sick tomorrow from staying up all night.

CAPULET

No, no, not at all. I've stayed up all night before for less
important reasons, and never gotten sick from it.

LADY CAPULET

Yes, you were a woman-chaser in your time. But I'll keep an
eye on you to make sure you don't stay up for those reasons
anymore.

LADY CAPULET and the NURSE exit.

CAPULET

She has become a jealous woman, a jealous woman!

*Three or four SERVINGMEN enter carrying spits, logs, and
baskets.*

Now, fellow, what are you carrying?

FIRST SERVINGMAN

Things for the cook, sir. But I don't know what exactly.

CAPULET

Hurry up, hurry up.

The FIRST SERVINGMAN exits.

[To SECOND SERVINGMAN] Fetch logs that are drier. Call
Peter. He'll show you where they are.

SECOND SERVINGMAN

I can find the logs without bothering Peter.

The SECOND SERVINGMAN exits.

CAPULET

Good God. And well said! A joking bastard, ha! You are a
blockhead. In good faith, it's day already. The Count will be
here soon with musicians, for he said he would. I hear him
coming--

They exit.

Music plays offstage.

I hear him coming near.

Nurse! Wife! Hey! What? Nurse, I say!

THE NURSE enters.

Go wake up Juliet. Go and get her dressed. I'll go and chat
with Paris. Hurry, make haste, make haste! The bridegroom
is already here. Make haste, I say!

Act 4, Scene 5

Shakespeare

The NURSE enters.

Shakescleare Translation

The NURSE enters.

NURSE

Mistress! What, mistress! Juliet!—Fast, I warrant her, she.—

Why, lamb! Why, lady! Fie, you slug-a-bed.

Why, love, I say. Madam! Sweet-heart! Why, bride!

5 What, not a word? You take your pennyworths now.

Sleep for a week, for the next night, I warrant,
The County Paris hath set up his rest

That you shall rest but little.—God forgive me,
Marry, and amen. How sound is she asleep!

10 I must needs wake her.—Madam, madam, madam!

Ay, let the county take you in your bed.

He'll fright you up, i' faith. Will it not be?

[Opens the bed curtains]

What, dressed and in your clothes, and down again?

15 I must needs wake you. Lady, lady, lady!—

Alas, alas! Help, help! My lady's dead!—

Oh, welladay, that ever I was born!—

Some aqua vitae, ho!—My lord! My lady!

LADY CAPULET enters.

LADY CAPULET

What noise is here?

NURSE

20 O lamentable day!

LADY CAPULET

What is the matter?

NURSE

Look, look. O heavy day!

LADY CAPULET

O me, O me! My child, my only life,

Revive, look up, or I will die with thee!—

25 Help, help! Call help.

CAPULET enters.

CAPULET

For shame, bring Juliet forth. Her lord is come.

NURSE

She's dead, deceased, she's dead. Alack the day!

LADY CAPULET

Alack the day. She's dead, she's dead, she's dead!

CAPULET

Ha? Let me see her. Out, alas! She's cold.

30 Her blood is settled, and her joints are stiff.

Life and these lips have long been separated.

Death lies on her like an untimely frost

Upon the sweetest flower of all the field.

NURSE

O lamentable day!

LADY CAPULET

35 O woeful time.

CAPULET

Death, that hath ta'en her hence to make me wail,

Ties up my tongue and will not let me speak.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Come, is the bride ready to go to church?

FRIAR LAWRENCE and PARIS enter with MUSICIANS.

NURSE

Mistress! Hey, mistress! Juliet! Fast asleep, I bet. Hey, lamb!

Hey, lady! Hey, you sleepyhead! Hey, love, I say! Madam!

Sweetheart! Hey, bride! What, not a single word to say?

Enjoy this last bit of sleep now. Get a week's worth of sleep,

because tonight, I bet, Count Paris will make sure that you

don't get much rest. God forgive me. Indeed, and amen.

How sound asleep she is! I have to wake her. Madam,

madam, madam! Yes, let the count take you in your bed.

He'll wake you up, no doubt. Won't he? *[Opens the bed*

curtains] What? Still dressed in your clothes but asleep. I

must wake you. Lady, lady, lady! No, no! Help, help! My

lady's dead! Oh curse the day I was born! Hey! Get me some

brandy! My lord! My lady!

LADY CAPULET enters.

LADY CAPULET

What's with all the noise?

NURSE

Oh, terrible day!

LADY CAPULET

What's the matter?

NURSE

Look, look! Oh, what an awful day!

LADY CAPULET

Oh no, oh no! My child, my reason for being, come back!

Look up, or I'll die with you! Help, help! Call for help.

CAPULET enters.

CAPULET

For shame, get Juliet out here. Her bridegroom has arrived.

NURSE

She's dead, deceased, dead. Curse the day!

LADY CAPULET

Curse the day. She's dead, she's dead, she's dead!

CAPULET

What? Let me see her. No! She's cold. Her blood has

stopped, and her joints are stiff. Life left her body a long

while ago. Death rests on her like an unexpected frost that

killed the most beautiful flower.

NURSE

Oh terrible day!

LADY CAPULET

Oh awful time!

CAPULET

Death, which has taken her away to make me cry, ties up

my tongue and will not let me speak.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Come, is the bride ready to go to church?

FRIAR LAWRENCE and PARIS enter with MUSICIANS.

CAPULET

Ready to go, but never to return.

- 40 O son! The night before thy wedding day
Hath death lain with thy wife. There she lies,
Flower as she was, deflowered by him.
Death is my son-in-law. Death is my heir.
My daughter he hath wedded. I will die,
45 And leave him all. Life, living, all is Death's.

PARIS

Have I thought long to see this morning's face,
And doth it give me such a sight as this?

LADY CAPULET

- Accursed, unhappy, wretched, hateful day!
Most miserable hour that e'er time saw
50 In lasting labor of his pilgrimage.
But one, poor one, one poor and loving child,
But one thing to rejoice and solace in,
And cruel death hath caught it from my sight!

NURSE

- O woe! O woeful, woeful, woeful day!
55 Most lamentable day, most woeful day
That ever, ever, I did yet behold!
O day, O day, O day, O hateful day!
Never was seen so black a day as this.
O woeful day, O woeful day!

PARIS

- 60 Beguiled, divorcèd, wrongèd, spited, slain!
Most detestable Death, by thee beguiled,
By cruel, cruel thee quite overthrown!
O love! O life! Not life, but love in death.

CAPULET

- Despised, distressed, hated, martyred, killed!
65 Uncomfortable time, why camest thou now
To murder, murder our solemnity?
O child, O child! My soul, and not my child!
Dead art thou! Alack, my child is dead,
And with my child my joys are buried.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

- 70 Peace, ho, for shame! Confusion's cure lives not
In these confusions. Heaven and yourself
Had part in this fair maid. Now heaven hath all,
And all the better is it for the maid.
Your part in her you could not keep from death,
75 But heaven keeps his part in eternal life.
The most you sought was her promotion,
For 'twas your heaven she should be advanced.
And weep ye now, seeing she is advanced
Above the clouds, as high as heaven itself?
80 Oh, in this love, you love your child so ill
That you run mad, seeing that she is well.
She's not well married that lives married long,
But she's best married that dies married young.
Dry up your tears and stick your rosemary
85 On this fair corpse, and, as the custom is,
And in her best array, bear her to church.
For though some nature bids us all lament,
Yet nature's tears are reason's merriment.

CAPULET

- All things that we ordained festival
90 Turn from their office to black funeral.
Our instruments to melancholy bells,
Our wedding cheer to a sad burial feast.
Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change,
Our bridal flowers serve for a buried corpse,
95 And all things change them to the contrary.

CAPULET

She's ready to go, but not to return.

[To PARIS] Oh son! On the night before your wedding day,
death has slept with your wife. There she lies, a flower who
was deflowered by death. Death is my son-in-law. Death is
my heir. Death has married my daughter. I will die and leave
everything to Death. Life, living--it all is Death's now.

PARIS

Have I waited to see this morning for so long, only for it to
look like this?

LADY CAPULET

Cursed, unhappy, wretched, hateful day! The most
miserable hour that ever existed in all of time. I had just one
child living--one poor child, one poor and loving child. Just
one thing to rejoice and find comfort in. Now cruel Death
has stolen her from my sight!

NURSE

Oh misery! Oh miserable, miserable, miserable day! The
saddest day, most miserable day that I ever, ever saw! Oh
day! Oh day! Oh day! Oh hateful day! There has never been
a day as black as this one. Oh miserable day, Oh miserable
day!


PARIS

She was tricked, divorced, wronged, spited, killed!
Detestable Death tricked her. Cruel, cruel Death murdered
her. Oh love! Oh life! There is no life because my love is
dead.

CAPULET


Despised, distressed, hated, martyred, killed! Why did you
come now, Death, to murder, murder our joy? Oh child! Oh
child! My soul and not my child! You are dead! No! My child
is dead. My child will be buried together with my joy.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Quiet, for shame! Your outcries are no cure for confusion.
Both you and heaven played a part in giving you your child.
Now heaven has her, and she is better off. The part of her
that came from you could not stop her from dying, but the
part she got from heaven gives her eternal life. The most
you could hope for her was that she marry well. Your idea of
heaven for her was that she move up the social ladder. Yet
now you weep, even though she has risen up above the
clouds, all the way to heaven itself? Oh, by mourning her
death you love your child so poorly, going crazy even
though she is well and in heaven. It is better for a girl to die
young while her marriage is still fresh and loving than to be
married for a long time. Dry your tears, and place your
rosemary  on this beautiful corpse. And, as is the custom,
put her in her finest clothes and carry her to church. It's
human nature to shed tears, but reason says that we should
be joyful.

CAPULET

The things that we prepared for the wedding now will be
used instead for the funeral. Our musical instruments will
be exchanged for mourning bells. Our wedding banquet will
be a sad burial feast instead. Our celebratory hymns will
change to sad funeral dirges. Our bridal flowers will cover a
buried corpse. Everything will be used for the opposite
purpose than we expected.

 As we've seen before in this play,
rosemary was used to signify enduring
love and to memorialize the dead.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Sir, go you in, and, madam, go with him;
 And go, Sir Paris. Every one prepare
 To follow this fair corse unto her grave.
 The heavens do lour upon you for some ill.
 100 Move them no more by crossing their high will.

CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, PARIS, and FRIAR LAWRENCE exit.

FIRST MUSICIAN

Faith, we may put up our pipes and be gone.

NURSE

Honest good fellows, ah, put up, put up,
 For, well you know, this is a pitiful case.

The NURSE exits.

FIRST MUSICIAN

Ay, by my troth, the case may be amended.

PETER enters.

PETER

105 Musicians, O musicians, "Heart's Ease," "Heart's Ease."
 O, an you will have me live, play "Heart's Ease."

FIRST MUSICIAN

Why "Heart's ease?"

PETER

O musicians, because my heart itself plays "My Heart is
 Full." O, play me some merry dump to comfort me.

FIRST MUSICIAN

110 Not a dump, we. 'Tis no time to play now.

PETER

You will not then?

FIRST MUSICIAN

No.

PETER

I will then give it you soundly.

FIRST MUSICIAN

What will you give us?

PETER

115 No money, on my faith, but the gleek. I will give you
 the minstrel.

FIRST MUSICIAN

Then I will give you the serving creature.

PETER

120 Then will I lay the serving creature's dagger on your
 pate. I will carry no crotchets. I'll re you, I'll fa
 you. Do you note me?

FIRST MUSICIAN

An you re us and fa us, you note us.

SECOND MUSICIAN

Pray you, put up your dagger and put out your wit.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Sir, you go in. Madam, go with him. And you too, Sir Paris.
 Everyone prepare to follow this beautiful corpse to her
 grave. The heavens hang over you for some unknown
 reason. Stop fighting heaven's will, and it will no longer
 move against you.

CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, PARIS, and FRIAR LAWRENCE exit.

FIRST MUSICIAN


I guess we can put our pipes away and leave.


NURSE

Honest good men, yes. Put them away, away. As you know,
 this is a sad case.

The NURSE exits.

FIRST MUSICIAN

Yes, but this [case](#)  at least can be mended.

 Here, the First Musician is referring to the case for his flute, which is broken.

PETER enters.

PETER

Musicians, oh, musicians! Play "Heart's Ease," "Heart's
 Ease." Oh, if you want me to live, play "Heart's Ease."

FIRST MUSICIAN

Why "Heart's Ease?"

PETER

Oh, musicians, because my heart itself is playing "My Heart
 is Full of Woe." Oh, play me some happy mournful tune to
 comfort me.

FIRST MUSICIAN

No, we won't play a sad song. Now is not the time for it.

PETER

You won't, then?

FIRST MUSICIAN

No.

PETER

Then I'll give you something you won't forget.

FIRST MUSICIAN

What will you give us?

PETER

Not money, I swear. But I'll insult you, and call you rogues.

FIRST MUSICIAN

Then I'll call you a lowly servant.

PETER

Then I'll take my serving knife to smack you upside the
 head. I won't need to sing. I'll make you sing. Do you hear
 me?

FIRST MUSICIAN

If you make us sing, you'll hear us.

SECOND MUSICIAN

Please, put away your knife and show some wits.

PETER

125 Then have at you with my wit. I will dry-beat you with
an iron wit and put up my iron dagger. Answer me like
men.

[Sings]

*When griping grief the heart doth wound
And doleful dumps the mind oppress,
Then music with her silver sound—*

130 *[Speaks]* Why “silver sound”? Why “music with her silver
sound”? What say you, Simon Catling?

FIRST MUSICIAN

Marry, sir, because silver hath a sweet sound.

PETER

Pretty.—What say you, Hugh Rebeck?

SECOND MUSICIAN

135 I say, “silver sound” because musicians sound for
silver.

PETER

Pretty too.—What say you, James Soundpost?

THIRD MUSICIAN

Faith, I know not what to say.

PETER

140 Oh, I cry you mercy, you are the singer. I will say
for you. It is “music with her silver sound” because
musicians have no gold for sounding.

[Sings]

*Then music with her silver sound
With speedy help doth lend redress.*

PETER exits.

FIRST MUSICIAN

What a pestilent knave is this same!

SECOND MUSICIAN

145 Hang him, jack! Come, we'll in here, tarry for the
mourners, and stay dinner.

They exit.

PETER

I'll attack you with my wit! I'll put away my iron dagger and
thrash you with my wicked wit. Answer me like men.

[Singing]

*When grief wounds your heart,
And sadness presses on your mind,
Then music with her silver sound—*

[Speaking] Why “silver sound”? What does “music with her
silver sound” mean? What do you say, Simon Catling?

3 Here, Peter refers to a violin's
string.

FIRST MUSICIAN

Well, sir, because silver has a sweet sound.

PETER

A witty reply! What do you say, Hugh Rebeck?

4 A rebeck was a medieval
instrument similar to the fiddle.

SECOND MUSICIAN

I say “silver sound,” because musicians play music to earn
silver.

PETER

More wit! What do you say, James Soundpost?

5 The sound post is the part of the
violin that modifies its vibrations.

THIRD MUSICIAN

Well, I don't know what to say.

PETER

140 Oh, I beg your pardon. You're the singer. I'll answer for
you. It is “music with her silver sound,” because musicians
will never get rich.

[Singing]

*Then music with her silver sound
Quickly makes you feel all right.*

PETER exits.

6 Peter is making a joke at the
musician's expense, claiming that
singers are not intelligent.

FIRST MUSICIAN

What an annoying fool this man is!

SECOND MUSICIAN

Oh, let him hang, man! Come with me, we'll go in here, wait
for the mourners, and stay for dinner.

They exit.

Act 5, Scene 1

Shakespeare

ROMEO

If I may trust the flattering truth of sleep,
My dreams presage some joyful news at hand.
My bosom's lord sits lightly in his throne,
And all this day an unaccustomed spirit

5 Lifts me above the ground with cheerful thoughts.
I dreamt my lady came and found me dead—
Strange dream, that gives a dead man leave to think—
And breathed such life with kisses in my lips
That I revived and was an emperor.

10 Ah me! How sweet is love itself possessed
When but love's shadows are so rich in joy!

ROMEO's servant BALTHASAR enters.

News from Verona!—How now, Balthasar?
Dost thou not bring me letters from the friar?

Shakescleare Translation

ROMEO

If I can trust the favorable truth of sleep, then my dreams
foretell some joyful news is on the way. Love sits lightly in
my heart, and all day an odd feeling has seemed to lift me
up with cheerful thoughts. I had a dream that my lady came
and found me dead—what a strange dream, in which a dead
man is able to think. And she breathed life back into me by
kissing my lips. I revived and became an emperor. Oh! How
sweet it would be to be with my love, when my dreams of
love alone fill me with so much joy.

ROMEO's servant BALTHASAR enters.

News from Verona! How are you, Balthasar? Have you
brought me a letter from the friar? How is my wife? Is my

How doth my lady? Is my father well?
 15 How fares my Juliet? That I ask again,
 For nothing can be ill if she be well.

ROMEO enters.

BALTHASAR

Then she is well, and nothing can be ill.
 Her body sleeps in Capels' monument,
 And her immortal part with angels lives.
 20 I saw her laid low in her kindred's vault
 And presently took post to tell it you.
 O, pardon me for bringing these ill news,
 Since you did leave it for my office, sir.

ROMEO

Is it e'en so? Then I defy you, stars!
 25 Thou know'st my lodging. Get me ink and paper,
 And hire post horses. I will hence tonight.

BALTHASAR

I do beseech you, sir, have patience.
 Your looks are pale and wild, and do import
 Some misadventure.

ROMEO

30 Tush, thou art deceived.
 Leave me and do the thing I bid thee do.
 Hast thou no letters to me from the friar?

BALTHASAR

No, my good lord.

ROMEO

No matter. Get thee gone,
 35 And hire those horses. I'll be with thee straight.

BALTHASAR exits.

Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee tonight.
 Let's see for means. O mischief, thou art swift
 To enter in the thoughts of desperate men!
 I do remember an apothecary—
 40 And hereabouts he dwells—which late I noted
 In tattered weeds, with overwhelming brows,
 Culling of simples. Meager were his looks,
 Sharp misery had worn him to the bones,
 And in his needy shop a tortoise hung,
 45 An alligator stuffed, and other skins
 Of ill-shaped fishes; and about his shelves
 A beggarly account of empty boxes,
 Green earthen pots, bladders and musty seeds,
 Remnants of packthread and old cakes of roses,
 50 Were thinly scattered to make up a show.
 Noting this penury, to myself I said,
 "An if a man did need a poison now"—
 Whose sale is present death in Mantua—
 "Here lives a caitiff wretch would sell it him."
 55 Oh, this same thought did but forerun my need,
 And this same needy man must sell it me.
 As I remember, this should be the house.
 Being holiday, the beggar's shop is shut.
 What, ho! Apothecary!

APOTHECARY

60 Who calls so loud?

The APOTHECARY enters.

ROMEO

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

father well? How is my Juliet? I ask that again because
 nothing can be bad if she is well.

ROMEO enters.

BALTHASAR

Then she is well, and nothing is bad. Her body sleeps in the
 Capulet crypt, and her immortal soul lives with the angels. I
 saw her buried in her family's tomb, and rushed here to tell
 you the news. Oh, pardon me for bringing this bad news,
 but you told me it was my duty to do so, sir.

ROMEO

Is it true? Then I defy you, fate!

[To BALTHASAR] You know where I'm staying. Go there and
 get me some ink and paper, and hire some horses. I will
 leave here tonight.

BALTHASAR

I beg you, sir, have patience. You look pale and wild, as if
 you're about to do something reckless.

ROMEO

Come now, you're being silly. Leave me and do what I told
 you to do. Do you really not have a letter for me from the
 friar?

BALTHASAR

No, my good lord.

ROMEO

No matter. Get going, and hire those horses. I'll be with you
 soon.

BALTHASAR exits.

Well, Juliet, I'll lie with you tonight. Let me think how. Evil
 acts are quick to enter the thoughts of desperate men! I
 remember a pharmacist who lives around here, and who I
 recently noted wears tattered clothes and has jutting
 brows. He knows his medicinal herbs. He looks poor, as if
 misery had worn him to the bone. A tortoise shell hung in
 his shabby shop, along with a stuffed alligator and the skins
 of odd-shaped fish. A few empty boxes sat on his shelves, as
 well as green clay pots, empty water skins, and some musty
 seeds. Old strands of string and rose petals pressed into
 cakes were displayed all scattered around. Seeing his
 poverty, I said to myself, "If a man needed some
 poison"—which is punishable by immediate death to sell in
 Mantua—"here is a miserable wretch who'd sell it to him."
 Oh, this idea came before I even knew I needed the poison.
 But this is the poor man who will sell it to me. As I
 remember, this is the house. Since today's a holiday, the
 beggar's shop is shut. Hey! Pharmacist!

APOTHECARY

Who's that calling so loudly?

The APOTHECARY enters.

ROMEO

Come here, man. I see that you are poor. Here's forty gold
 coins. Let me have a bit of poison, something that spreads

A dram of poison, such soon-speeding gear
As will disperse itself through all the veins
65 That the life-weary taker may fall dead,
And that the trunk may be discharged of breath
As violently as hasty powder fired
Doth hurry from the fatal cannon's womb.

APOTHECARY

Such mortal drugs I have, but Mantua's law
70 Is death to any he that utters them.

ROMEO

Art thou so bare and full of wretchedness,
And fear'st to die? Famine is in thy cheeks.
Need and oppression starveth in thine eyes.
Contempt and beggary hangs upon thy back.
75 The world is not thy friend nor the world's law.
The world affords no law to make thee rich.
Then be not poor, but break it, and take this.
[Holds out money]

APOTHECARY

My poverty, but not my will, consents.

ROMEO

80 I pay thy poverty and not thy will.

APOTHECARY

[Gives ROMEO poison] Put this in any liquid thing you
will
And drink it off; and, if you had the strength
Of twenty men, it would dispatch you straight.

ROMEO

85 *[Giving money]* There is they gold--worse poison to
men's souls,
Doing more murder in this loathsome world,
Than these poor compounds that thou mayst not sell.
I sell thee poison; thou hast sold me none.
90 Farewell, buy food, and get thyself in flesh.

Exit APOTHECARY.

Come, cordial and not poison, go with me
To Juliet's grave, for there must I use thee.

Exit ROMEO.

so fast through the veins that the tired-out person who
takes it will lose the breath of life as quickly as gunpowder
explodes from the inside of a cannon.

APOTHECARY

I have such deadly poisons. But those who sell poison
receive the death penalty in Mantua.

ROMEO

How can you be so poor and wretched and still be afraid to
die? Your cheeks are thin from hunger. Starvation and
oppression are visible in your eyes. Your poverty, and the
contempt of others for your situation, is like a monkey on
your back. The world is not your friend, and neither are the
world's laws. The world doesn't provide a law that will
make you rich. So don't be poor. Break the law, and take
this money. *[He holds out money]*

APOTHECARY

It is my poverty, not my morals, that forces me to agree.

ROMEO

I'm paying your poverty, not your morals, then.

APOTHECARY

[He gives ROMEO poison] Put this in any kind of liquid you
want, and drink it. Even if you had the strength of twenty
men, it would kill you quickly.

ROMEO

[Giving money to the APOTHECARY] There is your gold.
Money is a worse poison to men's souls, and commits more
murders in this awful world than these poor medicines you
aren't permitted to sell. I'm selling *you* poison; you haven't
sold me any. Goodbye. Buy yourself some food, and put on
some weight.

The APOTHECARY exits.

Come with me, medicine--you're no poison. We'll go to
Juliet's grave, where I must use you.

ROMEO exits.

Act 5, Scene 2

Shakespeare

FRIAR JOHN enters.

FRIAR JOHN

Holy Franciscan Friar! Brother, ho!

FRIAR LAWRENCE

This same should be the voice of Friar John.
Welcome from Mantua. What says Romeo?
Or, if his mind be writ, give me his letter.

FRIAR LAWRENCE enters.

FRIAR JOHN

5 Going to find a barefoot brother out,
One of our order, to associate me,
Here in this city visiting the sick,
And finding him, the searchers of the town,

Shakesclare Translation

FRIAR JOHN enters.

FRIAR JOHN

Holy Franciscan Friar! Brother, hey!

FRIAR LAWRENCE

That voice sounds like Friar John. Welcome back from
Mantua. What does Romeo say? Or, if he wrote down his
thoughts, give me his letter.

FRIAR LAWRENCE enters.

FRIAR JOHN

I went to find another poor friar from our order to
accompany me. He was in this city visiting the sick. I found
him, but the town health officials suspected that we had
both been in a house where people were infected with the

10 Suspecting that we both were in a house
ere the infectious pestilence did reign,
Sealed up the doors and would not let us forth.
So that my speed to Mantua there was stayed.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Who bare my letter, then, to Romeo?

FRIAR JOHN

15 I could not send it—here it is again—
[Gives FRIAR LAWRENCE a letter]
Nor get a messenger to bring it thee,
So fearful were they of infection.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

20 Unhappy fortune! By my brotherhood,
The letter was not nice but full of charge,
Of dear import, and the neglecting it
May do much danger. Friar John, go hence.
Get me an iron crow and bring it straight
Unto my cell.

FRIAR JOHN

Brother, I'll go and bring it thee.

FRIAR JOHN exits.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

25 Now must I to the monument alone.
Within this three hours will fair Juliet wake.
She will beshrew me much that Romeo
Hath had no notice of these accidents.
But I will write again to Mantua,
30 And keep her at my cell till Romeo come.
Poor living corpse, closed in a dead man's tomb!

Exit FRIAR LAWRENCE.

plague. They sealed up the house and refused to let us out.
So I was stuck, and couldn't go to Mantua.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Then who took my letter to Romeo?

FRIAR JOHN

I couldn't send it. Here it is. [He gives FRIAR LAWRENCE a letter] And I couldn't even get a messenger to bring it to you because they were scared of getting infected.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Terrible fate! By my brotherhood, the letter was not just a friendly greeting. It was full of important news. That it was never sent may result in great ruin. Friar John, go and get me an iron crowbar and bring it straight back to my cell.

FRIAR JOHN

Brother, I'll go and bring it to you.

FRIAR JOHN exits.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Now I must go alone to the tomb. Within three hours, beautiful Juliet will wake up. She will certainly curse me since Romeo has not received the latest news. But I will write again to him in Mantua, and keep Juliet at my cell until Romeo arrives. The poor living corpse, all closed up in a dead man's tomb!

FRIAR LAWRENCE exits.

Act 5, Scene 3

Shakespeare

PARIS enters with his PAGE.

PARIS

Give me thy torch, boy. Hence, and stand aloof.
Yet put it out, for I would not be seen.

The PAGE puts out the torch and gives flowers to PARIS.

Under yon yew trees lay thee all along,
Holding thine ear close to the hollow ground—
5 So shall no foot upon the churchyard tread,
Being loose, unfirm, with digging up of graves,
But thou shalt hear it. Whistle then to me,
As signal that thou hear'st something approach.
Give me those flowers. Do as I bid thee, go.

PAGE

10 [Aside] I am almost afraid to stand alone
Here in the churchyard. Yet I will adventure.

The PAGE moves away.

PARIS

[Scatters flowers around JULIET'S closed tomb]
Sweet flower, with flowers thy bridal bed I strew—
O woe! Thy canopy is dust and stones—
15 Which with sweet water nightly I will dew.

Shakescleare Translation

PARIS enters with his PAGE.

PARIS

Give me your torch, boy. Now go and stand far away from me. Actually, put out the torch so no one can see me.

The PAGE puts out the torch and gives flowers to PARIS.

Hide under the yew-trees over there, and put your ear against the ground so that you'll hear anyone walking through the graveyard. If you hear someone approach, signal me with a whistle. Give me those flowers. Do as I tell you. Go.

PAGE

[To himself] I am almost afraid to stand here alone in the graveyard, but I'll do it.

The PAGE moves away.

PARIS

[Scattering flowers at the door of JULIET'S closed tomb]
Sweet flower, I'm covering your bridal bed with flowers. Oh, misery! The canopy of your bed is dust and stones. Each night I'll water these flowers. Or, if I don't do that, the ritual

Or, wanting that, with tears distilled by moans,
The obsequies that I for thee will keep
Nightly shall be to strew thy grave and weep.

The PAGE whistles.

The boy gives warning something doth approach.
20 What cursèd foot wanders this way tonight
To cross my obsequies and true love's rite?

ROMEO and BALTHASAR enter carrying a torch, pickax, and crowbar.

What with a torch! Muffle me, night, awhile.

PARIS hides.

ROMEO

Give me that mattock and the wrenching iron.
[Takes them from BALTHASAR]
25 Hold, take this letter. Early in the morning
See thou deliver it to my lord and father.
[Gives letter to BALTHASAR]
Give me the light.
[Takes torch from BALTHASAR]
30 Upon thy life I charge thee,
Whate'er thou hear'st or seest, stand all aloof,
And do not interrupt me in my course.
Why I descend into this bed of death
Is partly to behold my lady's face,
35 But chiefly to take thence from her dead finger
A precious ring, a ring that I must use
In dear employment. Therefore hence, be gone.
But if thou, jealous, dost return to pry
In what I farther shall intend to do,
40 By heaven, I will tear thee joint by joint
And strew this hungry churchyard with thy limbs.
The time and my intents are savage, wild,
More fierce and more inexorable far
Than empty tigers or the roaring sea.

BALTHASAR

45 I will be gone, sir, and not trouble you.

ROMEO

So shalt thou show me friendship. Take thou that.
[He gives BALTHASAR money]
Live and be prosperous, and farewell, good fellow.

BALTHASAR

[Aside] For all this same, I'll hide me hereabout.
50 His looks I fear, and his intents I doubt.

BALTHASAR moves away and falls asleep.

ROMEO

Thou detestable maw, thou womb of death,
Gorged with the dearest morsel of the earth,
Thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to open,
And in despite I'll cram thee with more food!
55 *[Begins to open the tomb with his tools]*

PARIS

[Aside] This is that banished haughty Montague,
That murdered my love's cousin, with which grief,
It is supposed the fair creature died.
And here is come to do some villainous shame
60 To the dead bodies. I will apprehend him.
[To ROMEO] Stop thy unhallowed toil, vile Montague!
Can vengeance be pursued further than death?
Condemnèd villain, I do apprehend thee.
Obey and go with me, for thou must die.

I will keep for you each night will be to put flowers on your
grave and weep.

The PAGE whistles.

The boy warns that someone is approaching. What cursed
person would be wandering out here tonight, interfering
with my rituals of true love?

*ROMEO and BALTHASAR enter carrying a torch, pickax, and
crowbar.*

Whoever it is is carrying a torch! I'll hide in the darkness for
a while.

PARIS hides.

ROMEO

Give me the pickax and the crowbar. *[He takes them from
BALTHASAR]* Now, take this letter. Deliver it to my father
early in the morning. *[He gives the letter to BALTHASAR]*
Give me the torch. *[He takes the torch from BALTHASAR]* By
your life, I command that no matter what you hear or see,
you stay away, and do not interrupt me in my actions. I'm
going to go down into this tomb in part to look upon my
wife's face, but more importantly, to take a precious ring
from her dead finger. I must use the ring for urgent
business. So go, get out of here. And if you get suspicious
and return to spy on what I'm doing, I swear I'll tear you
limb from limb and throw your body parts around this
graveyard, which is so hungry for death. The times, and my
plan, are wild and savage, and I am more fierce and
unstoppable than a hungry tiger or the raging sea.

BALTHASAR

I'll go, sir, and not interfere.

ROMEO

That's how you will show me friendship. Take this. *[He gives
BALTHASAR money]* Live and be prosperous. Farewell, good
fellow.

BALTHASAR

[To himself] Despite everything I just said, I'll hide nearby.
The look on his face makes me nervous, and I have doubts
about his story of what he plans to do.

BALTHASAR moves away and falls asleep.

ROMEO

[Speaking to the door of the tomb] You hateful mouth, you
womb of death. You've feasted on the most precious girl on
earth. So now I'm going to force open your rotten jaws and
cram more food into you. *[ROMEO begins to open the tomb
with his tools]*

PARIS

[To himself] It's that arrogant Montague who was banished.
He's the one who murdered my love's cousin Tybalt, which
caused Juliet the grief that they think killed her. And here
he's come to do something terrible and shameful to the
dead bodies. I'll arrest him.

[To ROMEO] Stop your sinful work, vile Montague! Would
you pursue vengeance even beyond death? Condemned

ROMEO

65 I must indeed, and therefore came I hither.
 Good gentle youth, tempt not a desperate man.
 Fly hence and leave me. Think upon these gone.
 Let them affright thee. I beseech thee, youth,
 Put not another sin upon my head
 70 By urging me to fury. O, be gone!
 By heaven, I love thee better than myself,
 For I come hither armed against myself.
 Stay not, be gone. Live, and hereafter say
 A madman's mercy bid thee run away.

PARIS

75 I do defy thy commination
 And apprehend thee for a felon here.

ROMEO

Wilt thou provoke me? Then have at thee, boy!

ROMEO and PARIS fight.

PAGE

O Lord, they fight! I will go call the watch.

PARIS

80 *[Falls]* Oh, I am slain! If thou be merciful,
 Open the tomb. Lay me with Juliet.

PARIS dies.

The PAGE exits.

ROMEO

In faith, I will.—Let me peruse this face.
 Mercutio's kinsman, noble County Paris.
 What said my man, when my betossed soul
 Did not attend him as we rode? I think
 85 He told me Paris should have married Juliet.
 Said he not so? Or did I dream it so?
 Or am I mad, hearing him talk of Juliet,
 To think it was so? —O, give me thy hand,
 One writ with me in sour misfortune's book.
 90 I'll bury thee in a triumphant grave.
[ROMEO opens the tomb to reveal JULIET inside]
 A grave? Oh, no. A lantern, slaughtered youth,
 For here lies Juliet, and her beauty makes
 This vault a feasting presence full of light.
 95 Death, lie thou there, by a dead man interred.
[Lays PARIS in the tomb]
 How oft when men are at the point of death
 Have they been merry, which their keepers call
 A lightning before death! Oh, how may I
 100 Call this a lightning?—O my love, my wife!
 Death, that hath sucked the honey of thy breath,
 Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty.
 Thou art not conquered. Beauty's ensign yet
 Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks,
 105 And death's pale flag is not advanced there.—
 Tybalt, liest thou there in thy bloody sheet?
 O, what more favor can I do to thee,
 Than with that hand that cut thy youth in twain
 To sunder his that was thine enemy?
 110 Forgive me, cousin.—Ah, dear Juliet,
 Why art thou yet so fair? Shall I believe
 That unsubstantial death is amorous,
 And that the lean abhorred monster keeps
 Thee here in dark to be his paramour?
 115 For fear of that, I still will stay with thee,
 And never from this palace of dim night
 Depart again. Here, here will I remain
 With worms that are thy chamber maids. Oh, here

villain, I arrest you. Obey and come with me, for you must die.

ROMEO

Indeed, I must die, which is why I came here. Good and noble young man, don't tempt a desperate man. Run from here and leave me alone. Think about the dead who rest here. Let them terrify you. I beg you, young man, don't make me so angry that I have to add another sin to those I already have committed. Oh, get out of here! I swear by God, I love you more than I love myself. For I've come here with weapons to use against myself. Don't stay here, go away. Live, and afterwards say that a merciful madman told you to run away.

PARIS

I defy your threats. I'm arresting you as a criminal.

ROMEO

You're really provoking me? Then let's fight, boy!

ROMEO and PARIS fight.

PAGE

Oh Lord, they're fighting! I'll go call the watch.

PARIS

[He falls] Oh, I've been killed! If you are merciful, open the tomb and lay me next to Juliet.

PARIS dies.

The PAGE exits.

ROMEO

I promise, I will. Let me look at this face. It's Mercutio's relative, noble Count Paris. What did my servant tell me while we were riding here? I was so upset I wasn't paying attention to him. I think he told me Paris was supposed to marry Juliet. Isn't that what he said? Or was I dreaming? Or am I crazy and, hearing him say something about Juliet, I jumped to the wrong conclusion? *[Speaking to Paris' body]* Oh, give me your hand. You and I both had equal measures of bad fortune! I'll bury you in a magnificent grave. *[ROMEO opens the tomb to reveal JULIET inside]* A grave? No! It is a cupola atop a tower, my dead young man. Juliet lies here, and her beauty fills this tomb like a festival chamber full of light. Dead man, lie down right there—another dead man is burying you. *[ROMEO lays PARIS in the tomb]* Men are often happy just before their death. Their nurses call it the lightness before death. Oh, how can I call this lightness? Oh, my love, my wife! Though death has sucked the honey from your breath, it has not yet had the power to ruin your beauty. You are not conquered. A beautiful banner of red still lingers on your lips and cheeks. The paleness of death has not yet reached them. Tybalt, are you lying there in your bloody shroud? Oh, what better favor can I do for you than to use the hand that cut short your youth to kill your murderer. Forgive me, cousin! Ah, dear Juliet, why are you still so beautiful? Should I believe that death itself loves you, and that the hungry, hated monster keeps you here in the dark to be his lover? To make sure that doesn't happen, I'll stay with you forever and never again leave this dark tomb. Here, here I'll remain with the worms that are your chamber-maids. Oh, I'll rest here forever and escape the control of the bad fortune that has plagued my body. Eyes, see for the last time! Arms, make your last embrace! And lips, you doors of breath, seal with a righteous kiss the infinite deal I have made with death. *[ROMEO kisses JULIET and takes out the poison]* Come, bitter transport. Come, unpleasant guide! You desperate pilot, crash this seasick and weary ship into the rocks. Here's to my love! *[He drinks*

Will I set up my everlasting rest,
 120 And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars
 From this world-wearied flesh. Eyes, look your last.
 Arms, take your last embrace. And, lips, O you
 The doors of breath, seal with a righteous kiss
 A dateless bargain to engrossing death.
 125 *[Kisses JULIET, takes out the poison]*
 Come, bitter conduct, come, unsavoury guide.
 Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on
 The dashing rocks thy seasick, weary bark.
 Here's to my love! *[Drinks the poison]* O true
 130 apothecary,
 Thy drugs are quick. Thus with a kiss I die.

ROMEO dies.

FRIAR LAWRENCE enters carrying a lantern, crowbar, and shovel.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Saint Francis be my speed! How oft tonight
 Have my old feet stumbled at graves!—Who's there?

BALTHASAR

Here's one, a friend, and one that knows you well.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

135 Bliss be upon you! Tell me, good my friend,
 What torch is yond that vainly lends his light
 To grubs and eyeless skulls? As I discern,
 It burneth in the Capels' monument.

BALTHASAR

140 It doth so, holy sir, and there's my master,
 One that you love.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Who is it?

BALTHASAR

Romeo.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

How long hath he been there?

BALTHASAR

Full half an hour.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

145 Go with me to the vault.

BALTHASAR

I dare not, sir.
 My master knows not but I am gone hence,
 And fearfully did menace me with death
 If I did stay to look on his intents.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

150 Stay, then. I'll go alone. Fear comes upon me.
 Oh, much I fear some ill unthrifty thing.

BALTHASAR

As I did sleep under this yew tree here,
 I dreamt my master and another fought,
 And that my master slew him.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

155 *[Approaches the tomb]*
 Romeo!—
 Alack, alack, what blood is this, which stains
 The stony entrance of the sepulcher?
 What mean these masterless and gory swords
 160 To lie discolored by this place of peace?

the poison] Oh, honest pharmacist, your drugs work
 quickly. With this kiss, I die.

ROMEO dies.

FRIAR LAWRENCE enters carrying a lantern, crowbar, and shovel.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Saint Francis, speed my steps! How often tonight have my
 old feet stumbled on gravestones! Who's there?

BALTHASAR

I am a friend who knows you well.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

God bless you! Good friend, tell me why that torch is lying
 over there for no good reason? It's offering its light to no
 one but worms and eyeless skulls. As far as I can tell, it
 seems to be burning in the Capulet tomb.

BALTHASAR

Holy father, it is there along with my master, whom you
 love.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Who is it?

BALTHASAR

Romeo.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

How long has he been there?

BALTHASAR

For a full half hour.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Go with me to the tomb.

BALTHASAR

I don't dare, sir. My master thinks I've gone from here. He
 threatened to kill me if I stayed to watch his actions.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Stay, then. I'll go alone. Now I'm frightened. Oh, I'm very
 worried something terrible and unfortunate has happened.

BALTHASAR

As I slept under this yew-tree, I dreamed that my master
 fought someone else, and that my master killed him.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

[Approaching the tomb] Romeo! Oh no! What's this blood
 staining the stony entrance of this tomb? Why are these
 swords—discolored by gore and blood—lying abandoned
 here, in this place of peace? *[He looks inside the tomb]*
 Romeo! Oh, he's pale! Who else? What, Paris too? And

[Looks inside the tomb]

Romeo! O, pale!—Who else? What, Paris too?
And steeped in blood?—Ah, what an unkind hour
Is guilty of this lamentable chance!

165 The lady stirs.

JULIET wakes up.

JULIET

O comfortable Friar! Where is my lord?
I do remember well where I should be,
And there I am. Where is my Romeo?

A noise sounds from outside the tomb.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

I hear some noise. Lady, come from that nest
170 Of death, contagion, and unnatural sleep.
A greater power than we can contradict
Hath thwarted our intents. Come, come away.
Thy husband in thy bosom there lies dead,
And Paris too. Come, I'll dispose of thee
175 Among a sisterhood of holy nuns.
Stay not to question, for the watch is coming.
Come, go, good Juliet. I dare no longer stay.

FRIAR LAWRENCE exits.

JULIET

Go, get thee hence, for I will not away.—
180 What's here? A cup, closed in my true love's hand?
Poison, I see, hath been his timeless end.—
O churl, drunk all, and left no friendly drop
To help me after? I will kiss thy lips.
Haply some poison yet doth hang on them,
185 To make me die with a restorative.
[Kisses ROMEO]
Thy lips are warm.

WATCHMEN and PARIS' PAGE enter.

CHIEF WATCHMAN

[To PAGE] Lead, boy. Which way?

JULIET

Yea, noise? Then I'll be brief. O happy dagger,
190 This is thy sheath. There rust and let me die.
[Stabs herself with ROMEO's dagger and dies]

PAGE

This is the place. There, where the torch doth burn.

CHIEF WATCHMAN

The ground is bloody.—Search about the churchyard.
Go, some of you. Whoe'er you find, attach.

Some WATCHMEN exit.

195 Pitiful sight! Here lies the county slain,
And Juliet bleeding, warm and newly dead,
Who here hath lain these two days buried.—
Go, tell the Prince. Run to the Capulets.
Raise up the Montagues.
200 Some others search.

A few more WATCHMEN exit, in different directions.

We see the ground whereon these woes do lie,
But the true ground of all these piteous woes
We cannot without circumstance descry.

The SECOND WATCHMAN reenters with BALTHASAR.

covered in blood? Ah, during what cruel hour did this sad
turn of events occur? The lady moves.

JULIET wakes up.

JULIET

Oh comforting friar! Where is my husband? I remember well
where I should be, and here I am. Where is my Romeo?

A noise sounds from offstage.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

I hear a noise. Lady, come with me from this tomb of death,
sickness, and unnatural sleep. A power greater than us has
ruined our plans. Come, come away. Your husband lies
dead, resting against your chest. Paris is dead too. Come, I'll
bring you to join a sisterhood of holy nuns. Don't wait here
asking questions. The watch is coming. Come, come with
me, good Juliet. I dare not stay any longer.

FRIAR LAWRENCE exits.

JULIET

Go, go away. I'm not leaving.
What's this? A cup, held in my true love's hand? I see poison
has caused his death. How selfish, drinking it all, not
leaving a drop to help me follow after you. I'll kiss your lips.
Maybe I'll be lucky and there's still some poison on your
lips, a bit of medicine that will return me to my Romeo. *[She*
kisses ROMEO] Your lips are warm.

WATCHMEN and PARIS' PAGE enter.

CHIEF WATCHMAN

[To the PAGE] Lead on, boy. Which way?

JULIET

What's that noise? I'll act fast. Oh, what luck: here's a
dagger! I'll be your sheath. Rust inside my body, and let me
die. *[She stabs herself with ROMEO's dagger and dies]*

PAGE

This is the place. There, where that torch is burning.

CHIEF WATCHMAN

The ground is bloody. Search the graveyard. Go, a few of
you, and arrest anyone you find.

Some WATCHMEN exit.

What a pitiful sight! The count lies here, dead. And Juliet is
bleeding. Her body is still warm even though she has been
dead and buried for the last two days. Go, tell the Prince.
Run to the Capulets. Wake up the Montagues. Have some
others search.

A few more WATCHMEN exit, in different directions.

We see the ground on which these bodies lie, but we won't
be able to figure out the true cause of all these awful events
without an investigation.

The SECOND WATCHMAN reenters with BALTHASAR.

SECOND WATCHMAN

Here's Romeo's man. We found him in the churchyard.

CHIEF WATCHMAN

205 Hold him in safety till the Prince come hither.

The THIRD WATCHMAN reenters with FRIAR LAWRENCE.

THIRD WATCHMAN

Here is a friar that trembles, sighs and weeps.
We took this mattock and this spade from him
As he was coming from this churchyard's side.

CHIEF WATCHMAN

A great suspicion. Stay the friar too.

The PRINCE enters with his ATTENDANTS.

PRINCE

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

CAPULET

What should it be, that they shriek so abroad?

CAPULET and LADY CAPULET enter.

LADY CAPULET

215 Oh, the people in the street cry "Romeo,"
Some "Juliet," and some "Paris," and all run
With open outcry toward our monument.

PRINCE

What fear is this which startles in our ears?

CHIEF WATCHMAN

Sovereign, here lies the County Paris slain,
And Romeo dead, and Juliet, dead before,
Warm and new killed.

PRINCE

220 Search, seek, and know how this foul murder comes.

CHIEF WATCHMAN

Here is a friar, and slaughtered Romeo's man,
With instruments upon them fit to open
These dead men's tombs.

CAPULET

225 O heavens! O wife, look how our daughter bleeds!
This dagger hath mista'en —for, lo, his house
Is empty on the back of Montague,
And it mis-sheathed in my daughter's bosom.

LADY CAPULET

O me! This sight of death is as a bell,
That warns my old age to a sepulcher.

MONTAGUE enters.

PRINCE

230 Come, Montague, for thou art early up
To see thy son and heir now early down.

MONTAGUE

Alas, my liege, my wife is dead tonight.
Grief of my son's exile hath stopped her breath.
What further woe conspires against mine age?

PRINCE

235 Look, and thou shalt see.

SECOND WATCHMAN

Here's Romeo's servant. We found him in the churchyard.

CHIEF WATCHMAN

Hold him securely until the Prince arrives.

The THIRD WATCHMAN reenters with FRIAR LAWRENCE.

THIRD WATCHMAN

Here's a friar who's trembling, sighing, and weeping. We
took this pickax and this shovel from him as he was leaving
the graveyard.

CHIEF WATCHMAN

Very suspicious. Hold the friar too.

The PRINCE enters with his ATTENDANTS.

PRINCE

What disaster has occurred so early in the morning that it
forces me from my bed?

CAPULET

What has happened to cause everyone to start shrieking?

CAPULET and LADY CAPULET enter.

LADY CAPULET

Some people in the street are crying "Romeo." Others cry
"Juliet," and still others "Paris." They're all running and
screaming towards our tomb.

PRINCE

What terror has occurred to result in all this startling noise?

CHIEF WATCHMAN

Prince, here lies Count Paris, killed. And Romeo dead. And
Juliet, who was dead before, but is warm like someone
newly killed.

PRINCE

Find out how this foul murder came to happen.

CHIEF WATCHMAN

Here is a friar, and dead Romeo's servant. They're carrying
tools for opening a tomb.

CAPULET

Oh heavens! Oh, wife, look at how our daughter bleeds!
That dagger is in the wrong place. It should be in the empty
sheath on the back of that Montague, but instead is
misplaced, sheathed in my daughter's chest.

LADY CAPULET

Woe is me! Seeing my daughter dead is like a warning bell
of my own imminent death.

MONTAGUE enters.

PRINCE

Come, Montague. You're up early to see your son and heir
killed at too young an age.

MONTAGUE

My liege, my wife died tonight. Her sadness about my son's
exile stopped her breath. What further misery must I endure
in my old age?

PRINCE

Look, and you'll see.

MONTAGUE

[*To ROMEO*] O thou untaught! What manners is in this,
To press before thy father to a grave?

PRINCE

Seal up the mouth of outrage for a while,
Till we can clear these ambiguities
240 And know their spring, their head, their true descent,
And then will I be general of your woes,
And lead you even to death. Meantime forbear,
And let mischance be slave to patience.—
Bring forth the parties of suspicion.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

245 I am the greatest, able to do least,
Yet most suspected, as the time and place
Doth make against me, of this direful murder.
And here I stand, both to impeach and purge,
Myself condemnèd and myself excused.

PRINCE

250 Then say at once what thou dost know in this.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

I will be brief, for my short date of breath
Is not so long as is a tedious tale.
Romeo, there dead, was husband to that Juliet,
And she, there dead, that Romeo's faithful wife.
255 I married them, and their stol'n marriage day
Was Tybalt's doomsday, whose untimely death
Banished the new-made bridegroom from the city—
For whom, and not for Tybalt, Juliet pined.
You, to remove that siege of grief from her,
260 Betrothed and would have married her perforce
To County Paris. Then comes she to me,
And with wild looks bid me devise some mean
To rid her from this second marriage,
Or in my cell there would she kill herself.
265 Then gave I her, so tutored by my art,
A sleeping potion, which so took effect
As I intended, for it wrought on her
The form of death.
Meantime I writ to Romeo,
270 That he should hither come as this dire night,
To help to take her from her borrowed grave,
Being the time the potion's force should cease.
But he which bore my letter, Friar John,
Was stayed by accident, and yesternight
275 Returned my letter back. Then all alone
At the prefixed hour of her waking
Came I to take her from her kindred's vault,
Meaning to keep her closely at my cell
Till I conveniently could send to Romeo,
280 But when I came, some minute ere the time
Of her awakening, here untimely lay
The noble Paris and true Romeo dead.
She wakes, and I entreated her come forth,
And bear this work of heaven with patience.
285 But then a noise did scare me from the tomb,
And she, too desperate, would not go with me,
But, as it seems, did violence on herself.
All this I know, and to the marriage
Her Nurse is privy. And if aught in this
290 Miscarried by my fault, let my old life
Be sacrificed some hour before his time
Unto the rigor of severest law.

PRINCE

We still have known thee for a holy man.—
Where's Romeo's man? What can he say in this?

BALTHASAR

295 I brought my master news of Juliet's death,
And then in post he came from Mantua

MONTAGUE

[*Seeing ROMEO's body*] Oh, you rude boy! What terrible
manners to die before your father.

PRINCE

Quiet your outrage for a time, until we can clear up the
remaining uncertainties about the cause of all this. Once we
do know what happened, I will lead you in expressing our
pain, all the way to our deaths. In the meantime, hold on,
and let your patience control your desire to act. Bring forth
the men under suspicion.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

I am the most suspected, and least able to defend myself,
because I was here at the time of this terrible murder. Here I
stand, to be questioned and punished. I have already
condemned myself.

PRINCE

Then tell us immediately what you know about all this.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

I'll be brief, because the time I have left to live is not long
enough to tell a long story. Romeo, who lies there dead,
was Juliet's husband. And she, who lies there dead, was
Romeo's faithful wife. I married them. Their secret wedding
day was the same day Tybalt died. His untimely death led to
the banishment of the bridegroom. Juliet was distraught
not over Tybalt's death, but rather over Romeo's
banishment. To end her grief, you arranged for her to marry
Count Paris. At that point she came to me, and, looking
wild, threatened to kill herself unless I came up with a plan
to help her escape this second marriage. Then I gave her a
special sleeping potion that, as I had planned, made it
seem as if she had died. Meanwhile, I wrote to Romeo to tell
him to come here tonight, this awful night, to help get her
out of her temporary grave when the sleeping potion wore
off. But the man who carried my letter, Friar John, was
stopped by an accident, and returned my letter to me last
night. So at the time when Juliet was scheduled to wake up,
I came here alone to take her out of her family's tomb. My
plan was to hide her in my cell until I could get word to
Romeo. But when I arrived, just a few minutes before Juliet
awoke, Paris and Romeo were already here, lying dead. She
woke up, and I begged her to come out of the tomb with me
and bear this work of God with patience. But then a noise
frightened me, and I ran from the tomb. She was too
desperate to leave with me, and, it seems, she killed herself.
I know all of this. And her Nurse knows about the marriage.
If any of this misfortune is my fault, let me be sacrificed and
punished under the strictest law.

PRINCE

We have always known you to be a holy man. Where is
Romeo's servant? What does he say about all this?

BALTHASAR

I brought my master news of Juliet's death. And then with
great haste he rode from Mantua to this tomb. [*He shows a*

To this same place, to this same monument.
[Shows a letter] This letter he early bid me give his father,
 300 And threatened me with death, going in the vault,
 If I departed not and left him there.

PRINCE

Give me the letter. I will look on it.
[Takes letter from BALTHASAR]
 Where is the county's page, that raised the watch?—
 305 Sirrah, what made your master in this place?

PAGE

He came with flowers to strew his lady's grave,
 And bid me stand aloof, and so I did.
 Anon comes one with light to ope the tomb,
 And by and by my master drew on him,
 310 And then I ran away to call the watch.

PRINCE

[Skims the letter] This letter doth make good the friar's words,
 Their course of love, the tidings of her death.
 And here he writes that he did buy a poison
 315 Of a poor 'pothecary, and therewithal
 Came to this vault to die and lie with Juliet.
 Where be these enemies?—Capulet! Montague!
 See what a scourge is laid upon your hate,
 That heaven finds means to kill your joys with love!
 320 And I, for winking at your discords, too
 Have lost a brace of kinsmen. All are punished.

CAPULET

O brother Montague, give me thy hand.
 This is my daughter's jointure, for no more
 Can I demand.

MONTAGUE

But I can give thee more,
 For I will raise her statue in pure gold,
 That whiles Verona by that name is known,
 There shall no figure at such rate be set
 As that of true and faithful Juliet.

CAPULET

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

PRINCE

A glooming peace this morning with it brings.
 The sun for sorrow will not show his head.
 Go hence, to have more talk of these sad things;
 335 Some shall be pardoned, and some punishèd;
 For never was a story of more woe
 Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.

They all exit.

[letter] Early this morning he told me to give this letter to his father. Then he threatened to kill me if I did not leave when he went into the tomb.

PRINCE

Give me the letter. I'll read it. *[He takes the letter from BALTHASAR]* Where is the count's page, who called the watch? Boy, what was your master doing here?

PAGE

He came with flowers to put on his lady's grave. He asked me to stand apart from him, and so I did. Soon after someone with a torch came to open the tomb. One thing led to another, and my master drew his sword to fight him. That's when I ran away to call the watch.

PRINCE

[He skims the letter] This letter corroborates the friar's story. It describes the course of their love and how he heard of her death. Then he writes that he bought poison from a poor pharmacist and came to this tomb to die and lie with Juliet. Where are these enemies? Capulet! Montague! Do you see how your hate has cursed you? Heaven has in response conspired to kill your joys with love. And because I did not take a firm hand against your feud, I've lost two of my family members as well. Everyone is punished.

CAPULET

Oh, brother Montague, give me your hand. This handshake is my daughter's dowry. I can ask you for nothing more.

MONTAGUE

But I can give you more. I'll raise a golden statue of her. So long as this city is called Verona, there will be no figure praised more than that of true and faithful Juliet.

CAPULET

The statue of Romeo I'll make to lie beside Juliet will be just as rich. Our hate was not worth their sacrifice.

PRINCE

This morning brings a gloomy peace with it. The sun won't shine because of his sadness. Go forward, to talk more about these sad things. Some will be pardoned, and some will be punished. For there was never a sadder story than this one of Juliet and her Romeo.

They all exit.

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