PROLOGUE

Enter **CHORUS**

**CHORUS**

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

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

Exit **CHORUS**

**MODERN TEXT**

The **CHORUS** enters.

**CHORUS**

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

The **CHORUS** exits.
ACT 1, SCENE 1

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

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

GREGORY
No, for then we should be colliers.

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

GREGORY
(teasing SAMPSON) No, because then we'd be garbagemen.

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

GREGORY
No, for then we should be colliers.

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

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

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

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

GREGORY
But thou art not quickly moved to strike.

SAMPSON
A dog of the house of Montague moves me.

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

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

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

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

SAMPSON
A dog from that house will make me angry enough to take a stand. If I pass one of them on the street, I'll take the side closer to the wall and let him walk in the gutter.
Romeo and Juliet, Act 1

**ORIGINAL TEXT**

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

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

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

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

GREGORY
The heads of the maids?

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

GREGORY
They must take it in sense that feel it.

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

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

Enter ABRAM and another SERVINGMAN

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

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

**MODERN TEXT**

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

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

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

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

GREGORY
Cut off their heads? You mean their maidenheads?

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

GREGORY
The women you rape are the ones who'll have to “sense” it.

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

GREGORY
It's a good thing you're not a piece of fish. You're dried and shriveled like salted fish.

ABRAM and another servant of the Montagues enter.

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

SAMPSON
I have my naked sword out. Fight, I'll back you up.
Romeo and Juliet, Act 1

GREGORY
How? Turn thy back and run?

SAMPSON
Fear me not.

GREGORY
No, marry. I fear thee.

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

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

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

ABRAM
Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

SAMPSON
I do bite my thumb, sir.

ABRAM
Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

SAMPSON
(aside to GREGORY)
Is the law of our side if I say “ay”?

GREGORY
(aside to SAMPSON)
No.

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

GREGORY
Do you quarrel, sir?

ABRAM
Quarrel? No, sir.
SAWPSON

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

ABRAM

No better.

SAWPSON

Well, sir.

Enter BENVOLIO

GREGORY

(aside to SAMPSON) Say "better." Here comes one of my master's kinsmen.

SAWPSON

(to ABRAM) Yes, better, sir.

ABRAM

You lie.

SAWPSON

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

BENVOLIO

Part, fools!

(puts up his sword) You know not what you do.

TYBALT

What, art thou drawn among these heartless hinds?

Turn thee, Benvolio. Look upon thy death.
BENVOLIO
I do but keep the peace. Put up thy sword,
Or manage it to part these men with me.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Enter old MONTAGUE and his wife, LADY MONTAGUE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

LADY MONTAGUE
You're not taking one step toward an enemy.
Enter PRINCE ESCALUS, with his train

PRINCE
Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace,
Profaners of this neighbor-stainèd 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
Throw your mistempered weapons to the ground,
And hear the sentence of your movèd prince.
Three civil brawls, bred of an airy word,

By thee, old Capulet, and Montague,
Have thrice disturbed the quiet of our streets
And made Verona's ancient citizens
Cast by their grave—beseeming ornaments,
To wield old partisans in hands as old,

Cankered with peace, to part your cankered hate.
If ever you disturb our streets again,
Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.
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,
To old Free-town, our common judgment-place.
Once more, on pain of death, all men depart.

Exeunt all but MONTAGUE, LADY MONTAGUE, and BENVOLIO

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

PRINCE (shouting at the rioters) You rebels! Enemies of the peace!
Men who turn their weapons against their own neighbors—
They won’t listen to me?—You there! You men, you beasts, who
satisfy your anger with fountains of each others' blood! I'll have
you tortured if you don't put down your swords and listen to
your angry prince. (MONTAGUE, CAPULET, and their
followers throw down their weapons) Three times now riots
have broken out in this city, all because of a casual word from
you, old Capulet and Montague. Three times the peace has
been disturbed in our streets, and Verona's old citizens have
had to take off their dress clothes and pick up rusty old spears
to part you. If you ever cause a disturbance on our streets
again, you'll pay for it with your lives. Everyone else, go away
for now. (to CAPULET) You, Capulet, come with me. (to
MONTAGUE) Montague, this afternoon come to old Free-
town, the court where I deliver judgments, and I'll tell you
what else I want from you. As for the rest of you, I'll say this
once more: go away or be put to death.

Everyone exits except MONTAGUE, LADY MONTAGUE, and
BENVOLIO.

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

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

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

MONTAGUE
Many a morning hath he there been seen,
With tears augmenting the fresh morning's dew,
Adding to clouds more clouds with his deep sighs.
But all so soon as the all-cheering sun
Should in the farthest east begin to draw
The shady curtains from Aurora's bed,
Away from light steals home my heavy son,
And private in his chamber pens himself,  
Shuts up his windows, locks fair daylight out,  
And makes himself an artificial night.  
Black and portentous must this humor prove  
Unless good counsel may the cause remove.

BENVOLIO
My noble uncle, do you know the cause?

MONTAGUE
I neither know it nor can learn of him.

BENVOLIO
Have you importuned him by any means?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ENTER ROMEO

ROMEO enters.

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

MONTAGUE
I hope you're lucky enough to hear the true story by sticking
To hear true shrift.—Come, madam, let’s away.

*Exeunt MONTAGUE and LADY MONTAGUE*

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**BENVOLIO**

150 Good morrow, cousin.

**ROMEO**

Is the day so young?

**BENVOLIO**

But new struck nine.

**ROMEO**

Ay me! Sad hours seem long.

Was that my father that went hence so fast?

**BENVOLIO**

It was. What sadness lengthens Romeo’s hours?

**ROMEO**

Not having that which, having, makes them short.

**BENVOLIO**

In love?

**ROMEO**

Out.

**BENVOLIO**

Of love?

**ROMEO**

Out of her favor, where I am in love.

**BENVOLIO**

Alas, that love, so gentle in his view,

Should 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.

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!

---

around. *(to his wife)* Come, madam, let’s go.

**MONTAGUE and LADY MONTAGUE exit.**

**BENVOLIO**

Good morning, cousin.

**ROMEO**

Is it that early in the day?

**BENVOLIO**

It’s only just now nine o’clock.

**ROMEO**

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

**BENVOLIO**

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

**ROMEO**

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

**BENVOLIO**

You’re in love?

**ROMEO**

Out.

**BENVOLIO**

Out of love?

**ROMEO**

I love someone. She doesn't love me.

**BENVOLIO**

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

**ROMEO**

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

BENVOLIO
At thy good heart's oppression.

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

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

ROMEO
Tut, I have lost myself. I am not here.
This is not Romeo. He's somewhere else.

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.

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

BENVOLIO
No, cousin, I'm crying.

ROMEO
Good man, why are you crying?

BENVOLIO
I'm crying because of how sad you are.

ROMEO
Yes, this is what love does. My sadness sits heavy in my chest,
and you want to add your own sadness to mine so there's even
more. I have too much sadness already, and now you're going
to make me sadder by feeling sorry for you. Here's what love is:
a smoke made out of lovers' sighs. When the smoke clears, love
is a fire burning in your lover's eyes. If you frustrate love, you
get an ocean made out of lovers' tears. What else is love? It's a
wise form of madness. It's a sweet lozenge that you choke on.
Goodbye, cousin.

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

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

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

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

BENVOLIO
Groan? No. But tell me seriously who it is.
Romeo and Juliet, Act 1

ROMEO
A sick man in sadness makes his will,
A word ill urged to one that is so ill.

195 In sadness, cousin, I do love a woman.

BENVOLIO
I aimed so near when I supposed you loved.

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

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

ROMEO
Well, in that hit you miss. She'll not be hit
With Cupid's arrow. She hath Dian's wit.

200 And, in strong proof of chastity well armed
From love's weak childish bow, she lives uncharmed.
She will not stay the siege of loving terms,
Nor bide th' encounter of assailing eyes,
Nor ope her lap to saint-seducing gold.

Oh, she is rich in beauty, only poor
That when she dies, with beauty dies her store.

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

ROMEO
She hath, and in that sparing makes huge waste,
For beauty, starved with her severity,
Cuts beauty off from all posterity.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

BENVOLIO
Take my advice. Don't think about her.

ROMEO
Teach me to forget to think!
BENVOLIO
By giving liberty unto thine eyes.
Examine other beauties.

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

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

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

Exeunt

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

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

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

They exit.
Enter CAPULET, County PARIS, and PETER, a servant

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

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

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

PARIS
Younger than she are happy mothers made.

CAPULET
And too soon marred are those so early made.
Earth hath swallowed all my hopes but she.
She's the hopeful lady of my earth.
But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart.
My will to her consent is but a part.
An she agreed within her scope of choice,
Lies my consent and fair according voice.

This night I hold an old accustomed feast,
Whereto I have invited many a guest
Such as I love. And you among the store,
One more, most welcome, makes my number more.
At my poor house look to behold this night
Earth-treading stars that make dark heaven light.
Romeo and Juliet, Act 1

Such comfort as do lusty young men feel
When well-apparelled April on the heel
Of limping winter treads. Even such delight
Among fresh fennel buds shall you this night
Inherit at my house. Hear all, all see,
And like her most whose merit most shall be—
Which on more view of many, mine, being one,
May stand in number, though in reckoning none,
Come, go with me.

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

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

Exeunt CAPULET and PARIS

CAPULET and PARIS exit.

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

Enter BENVOLIO and ROMEO

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

BENVOLIO
(to ROMEO) Come on, man. You can put out one fire by starting another. A new pain will make the one you already have seem less. If you make yourself dizzy, you can cure yourself by spinning back around in the opposite direction. A new grief will put the old one out of your mind. Make yourself lovesick by gazing at some new girl, and your old lovesickness will be cured.
Romeo and Juliet, Act 1

ROMEO

Your plantain leaf is excellent for that.

BENVOLIO

For what, I pray thee?

ROMEO

For your broken shin.

BENVOLIO

Why Romeo, art thou mad?

ROMEO

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

PETER

God '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

Ye say honestly. Rest you merry.

ROMEO

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

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

Seigneur Valentio and his cousin
Tybalt;"
PETER
Up.

ROMEO
Whither? To supper?

PETER
To our house.

ROMEO
Whose house?

PETER
My master's.

ROMEO
Indeed, I should have asked thee that before.

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

Exit PETER

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

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

That's a nice group of people. Where are they supposed to come?

PETER
Up.

ROMEO
Where? To supper?

PETER
To our house.

ROMEO
Whose house?

PETER
My master's house.

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

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

PETER exits.

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

ROMEO
If my eyes ever lie to me like that, let my tears turn into flames and burn them for being such obvious liars! A woman more beautiful than the one I love? The sun itself has never seen anyone as beautiful since the world began.
BENVOLIO
Tut, you saw her fair, none else being by,
Herself poised with herself in either eye.
But in that crystal scales let there be weighed
Your lady's love against some other maid
That I will show you shining at the feast,
And she shall scant show well that now shows best.

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

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

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

Enter JULIET

JULIET
5 How now, who calls?

NURSE
Your mother.

JULIET
Madam, I am here. What is your will?

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

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

NURSE
Faith, I can tell her age unto an hour.

LADY CAPULET
She's not fourteen.

NURSE
I'll lay fourteen of my teeth—and yet, to my teen be it
spoken, I have but four—she is not fourteen. How long is it
now to Lammastide?

LADY CAPULET
A fortnight and odd days.

LADY CAPULET and the Nurse enter.

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

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

JULIET enters.

JULIET
What is it? Who's calling me?

NURSE
Your mother.

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

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

NURSE
Yes, I know her age down to the hour.

LADY CAPULET
She's not even fourteen.

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

LADY CAPULET
Two weeks and a few odd days.
NURSE
Even or odd, of all days in the year,
Come Lammas Eve at night shall she be fourteen.
Susan and she—God rest all Christian souls!—
Were of an age. Well, Susan is with God.
She was too good for me. But, as I said,
On Lammas Eve at night shall she be fourteen.
That shall she. Marry, I remember it well.
'Tis since the earthquake now eleven years,
And she was weaned—I never shall forget it—
Of all the days of the year, upon that day.
For I had then laid wormwood to my dug,
Sitting in the sun under the dovehouse wall.
My lord and you were then at Mantua.—
Nay, I do bear a brain.—But, as I said,
When it did taste the wormwood on the nipple
Of my dug and felt it bitter, pretty fool,
To see it tetchy and fall out with the dug!
“Shake!” quoth the dovehouse. ’Twas no need, I trow,
To bid me trudge.
And since that time it is eleven years,
For then she could stand alone. Nay, by the rood,
She could have run and waddled all about,
For even the day before, she broke her brow.
And then my husband—God be with his soul!
He was a merry man—took up the child.
“Yea,” quoth he, “Dost thou fall upon thy face?
Thou wilt fall backward when thou hast more wit,
The pretty wretch left crying and said “ay.”
To see now, how a jest shall come about!
I warrant, an I should live a thousand years,
I never should forget it. “Wilt thou not, Jule?” quoth he.
And, pretty fool, it stinted and said “ay.”

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

NURSE
Whether it's even or odd, of all the days in the year, on the
night of Lammas Eve, she'll be fourteen. She and Susan—God
rest her and all Christian souls—were born on the same day.
Well, Susan died and is with God. She was too good for me. But
like I said, on the night of Lammas Eve, she will be fourteen.
Yes, she will. Indeed, I remember it well. It's been eleven years
since the earthquake. She stopped nursing from my breast on
that very day. I'll never forget it. I had put bitter wormwood on
my breast as I was sitting in the sun, under the wall of the
dovehouse. You and your husband were in Mantua. Boy, do I
have some memory! But like I said, when she tasted the bitter
wormwood on my nipple, the pretty little babe got irritated and
started to quarrel with my breast. Then the dovehouse shook
with the earthquake. There was no need to tell me to get out of
there. That was eleven years ago. By then she could stand up all
by herself. No, I swear, by that time she could run and waddle
all around. I remember because she had cut her forehead just
the day before. My husband—God rest his soul, he was a happy
man—picked up the child. “Oh,” he said, “Did you fall on your
face? You’ll fall backward when you grow smarter. Won’t you,
Jule.” And I swear, the poor pretty thing stopped crying and
said, “Yes.” Oh, to watch a joke come true! I bet if I live a
thousand years, I'll never forget it. “Won’t you, Jule,” he said.
And the pretty fool stopped crying and said, “Yes.”

LADY CAPULET
Enough of this. Please be quiet.
Romeo and Juliet, Act 1

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

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

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

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

JULIET
It is an honor that I dream not of.

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

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

NURSE
A man, young lady! Lady, such a man
As all the world. Why, he’s a man of wax.
**LADY CAPULET**  
Verona’s summer hath not such a flower.

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

**LADY CAPULET**  
What say you? Can you love the gentleman?  
This night you shall behold him at our feast. 
Read o’er the volume of young Paris’ face 
And find delight writ there with beauty’s pen.

Examine every married lineament  
And see how one another lends content, 
And what obscured in this fair volume lies 
Find written in the margin of his eyes.

This precious book of love, this unbound lover,  
To beautify him only lacks a cover. 
The fish lives in the sea, and ’tis much pride 
For fair without the fair within to hide. 
That book in many’s eyes doth share the glory 
That in gold clasps locks in the golden story.

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

**NURSE**  

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

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

---

**LADY CAPULET**  
Summertime in Verona has no flower as fine as him.

**NURSE**  
No, he’s a fine flower, truly, a flower.

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

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

**LADY CAPULET**  
(to JULIET) Give us a quick answer. Can you accept Paris’s love?

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

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**PETER enters.**
Romeo and Juliet, Act 1

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

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

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

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

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

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

Exeunt

They all exit.
Enter ROMEO, MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO, with five or six other MASKERS and TORCHBEARERS

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

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

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

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

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

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

ROMEO
I am too sore enpiercèd with his shaft
To soar with his light feathers, and so bound,
I cannot bound a pitch above dull woe.
Under love's heavy burden do I sink.
ROMEO and Juliet, Act 1

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

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

MERCUTIO
If love be rough with you, be rough with love.
Prick love for prick ing, and you beat love down.—
Give me a case to put my visage in!

A visor for a visor.—What care I
What curious eye doth cote deformities?
Here are the beetle brows shall blush for me.

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

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

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

ROMEO
Nay, that's not so.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ROMEO
No we're not—it's night.

MERCUTIO
I mean, we're wasting the light of our torches by delaying,
which is like wasting the sunshine during the day. Use your
common sense to figure out what I mean, instead of trying to
be clever or trusting your five senses.
ROMEO
And we mean well in going to this mask,
But 'tis no wit to go.
MERCUTIO
Why, may one ask?
ROMEO
I dreamt a dream tonight.
MERCUTIO
And so did I.
ROMEO
Well, what was yours?
MERCUTIO
That dreamers often lie.
ROMEO
In bed asleep while they do dream things true.
MERCUTIO
Oh, then, I see Queen Mab hath been with you.
BENVOLIO
Queen Mab, what's she
MERCUTIO
She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes
In shape no bigger than an agate stone
On the forefinger of an alderman,
Drawn with a team of little atomi
Over men's noses as they lie asleep.
Her wagon spokes made of long spinners' legs,
The cover of the wings of grasshoppers,
Her traces of the smallest spider's web,
Her collars of the moonshine's watery beams,
Her whip of cricket's bone, the lash of film,
Her wagoner a small gray-coated gnat,
Not half so big as a round little worm
Pricked from the lazy finger of a maid.
Romeo and Juliet, Act 1

Her chariot is an empty hazelnut
Made by the joiner squirrel or old grub,
And in this state she gallops night by night
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love;
On courtiers' knees, that dream on curtseys straight;
O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees;
O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream,
Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,
Because their breaths with sweetmeats tainted are.
Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,
And then dreams he of smelling out a suit.
And sometime comes she with a tithe-pig's tail
Tickling a parson's nose as he lies asleep,
Then he dreams of another benefice.
Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,
And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,
Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,
Of healths five fathom deep, and then anon
Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes,
And being thus frightened swears a prayer or two
And sleeps again. This is that very Mab
That plaits the manes of horses in the night
And bakes the elflocks in foul sluttish hairs,
Which once untangled, much misfortune bodes.
This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs,
That presses them and learns them first to bear,
Making them women of good carriage.

This is she—

ROMEO

Peace, peace, Mercutio, peace!
Thou talk'st of nothing.

MERCUTIO

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

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

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

BENVOLIO
Strike, drum.

March about the stage and exeunt

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

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

BENVOLIO
Beat the drum.

They march about the stage and exit.
**ACT 1, SCENE 5**

**PETER and other SERVINGMEN** come forth with napkins.

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

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

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

**SECOND SERVINGMAN**
Ay, boy, ready.

**PETER**
You are look'd for and called for, asked for and sought for, in the great chamber.

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

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

**CAPULET**
Welcome, gentlemen! Ladies that have their toes

Ah, my mistresses! Which of you all
Unplagued with corns will walk a bout with you.—
Will now deny to dance? She that makes dainty,
She, I'll swear, hath corns. Am I come near ye now?—
Welcome, gentlemen! I have seen the day
That I have worn a visor and could tell

---

**CAPULET**
Welcome, gentlemen. The ladies who don’t have corns on their toes will dance with you. Ha, my ladies, which of you will refuse to dance now? Whichever of you acts shy, I’ll swear she has corns. Does that hit close to home? Welcome, gentlemen. There was a time when I could wear a mask over my eyes and charm a lady by whispering a story in her ear. That time is gone, gone, gone. You are welcome gentlemen. Come on,
A whispering tale in a fair lady's ear
Such as would please. 'Tis gone, 'tis gone, 'tis gone.—
You are welcome, gentlemen.—Come, musicians, play.
*(music plays and they dance)*

A hall, a hall, give room!—And foot it, girls.—
More light, you knaves! And turn the tables up,
And quench the fire. The room is grown too hot.—
Ah, sirrah, this unlooked-for sport comes well.—
Nay, sit, nay, sit, good cousin Capulet,

For you and I are past our dancing days.
How long is 't now since last yourself and I
Were in a mask?

**CAPULETS' COUSIN**
By'r Lady, thirty years.

**CAPULET**
What, man, 'tis not so much, 'tis not so much.
'Tis since the nuptials of Lucentio,

Come Pentecost as quickly as it will,
Some five and twenty years, and then we masked.

**CAPULETS' COUSIN**
'Tis more, 'tis more. His son is elder, sir.
His son is thirty.

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

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

**SERVINGMAN**
I know not, sir.

**ROMEO**
Oh, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!
It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night
Like a rich jewel in an Ethiope's ear,

Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear.

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

**CAPULET'S COUSIN**
I swear, it must be thirty years.

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

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

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

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

**SERVINGMAN**
I don't know, sir.

**ROMEO**
Oh, she shows the torches how to burn bright! She stands out against the darkness like a jeweled earring hanging against the cheek of an African. Her beauty is too good for this world; she's too beautiful to die and be buried. She outshines the other...
So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows
As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows.
The measure done, I'll watch her place of stand,
And, touching hers, make blessed my rude hand.

Did my heart love till now? Forswear it, sight!
For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.

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

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

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

CAPULET
Young Romeo is it?

TYBALT
'Tis he, that villain Romeo.

CAPULET
Content thee, gentle coz. Let him alone.
He bears him like a portly gentleman,
And, to say truth, Verona brags of him
To be a virtuous and well-governed youth.
I would not for the wealth of all the town
Here in my house do him disparagement.
Therefore be patient. Take no note of him.
It is my will, the which if thou respect,
Show a fair presence and put off these frowns,
An ill-beseeming semblance for a feast.

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

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

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

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

CAPULET
Is it young Romeo?

TYBALT
That's him, that villain Romeo.

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

CAPULET
He shall be endured. What, goodman boy! I say, he shall. Go to.
Am I the master here, or you? Go to. You'll not endure him! God shall mend my soul, You'll make a mutiny among my guests.

TYBALT
You will set cock-a-hoop. You'll be the man!

TYBALT
Why, uncle, 'tis a shame.

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

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

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

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

TYBALT
But, uncle, we're being disrespected.

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

The music plays again, and the guests dance

TYBALT
The combination of forced patience and pure rage is making my body tremble. I'll leave here now, but Romeo's prank, which seems so sweet to him now, will turn bitter to him later.
Romeo and Juliet, Act 1

ROMEO

(taking JULIET’s hand) If I profane with my unworthiest hand
This holy shrine, the gentle sin is this:
My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand
To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.

JULIET

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

ROMEO

Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too?

JULIET

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

ROMEO

O, then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do.
They pray; grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.

JULIET

Saints do not move, though grant for prayers’ sake.

ROMEO

Then move not, while my prayer’s effect I take.
Kisses her

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

JULIET

Then have my lips the sin that they have took.

ROMEO

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

They kiss again

ROMEO

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

JULIET

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

ROMEO

Don’t saints and pilgrims have lips too?

JULIET

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

ROMEO

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

JULIET

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

ROMEO

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

Now my sin has been taken from my lips by yours.

JULIET

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

ROMEO

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

They kiss again
JULIET
You kiss by th' book.

NURSE
Madam, your mother craves a word with you.

JULIET moves away

ROMEO
What is her mother?

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

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

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

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

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

Everyone except JULIET and NURSE begins to exit.
Romeo and Juliet, Act 1

JULIET
Come hither, Nurse. What is yond gentleman?

NURSE
The son and heir of old Tiberio.

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

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

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

NURSE
I know not.

JULIET
Go ask his name.—If he be married.

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

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

NURSE
What's this? What's this?

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

NURSE
Anon, anon!

JULIET
One calls within “Juliet!”

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

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

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

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

NURSE
I don't know his name.

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

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

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

NURSE
What's this? What's this?

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

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

Exeunt

Somebody calls, “Juliet!” from offstage.