

That most sorrowful band of players

*The English Class in Performance*

does with much wailing and tears present

the most lamentable tragedy of

# Romeo and Juliet

penned by that most affecting playwright

*Master William Shakespeare*

and edited by that inconsolable lacrimose

*Shawn Peters*

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

**Prologue:** speaks the opening (may be done by the prince, if desired)

*The Montagues:*

**Romeo:** a young man of Verona; only son of the house of Montague; in love with Rosaline. (props: sword, mask for the party, money to give to Apothecary, letter to give to Balthasar)

**Montague:** Romeo's father.

**Lady Montague:** Romeo's mother.

**Benvolio:** Romeo's cousin and friend. (props: sword, mask)

**Balthasar:** Montague servant. (props: sword, torch)

**Abraham:** Montague servant. (props: sword)

*The Capulets:*

**Juliet:** a young woman of Verona; only daughter of the house of Capulet; engaged to Paris. (props: knife)

**Capulet:** Juliet's father. (props: list to give to Peter)

**Lady Capulet:** Juliet's mother.

**The Nurse:** Juliet's nurse and friend.

**Tybalt:** Juliet's cousin. (props: sword)

**Peter:** Capulet servant. (props: fan to give to the Nurse)

**Sampson:** Capulet servant. (props: sword)

**Gregory:** Capulet servant. (props: sword)

*Of Verona:*

**Prince Escalus:** Ruler of Verona.

**Mercutio:** kinsman to the prince, and Romeo's friend. (props: sword, mask)

**Paris:** the County Anselme, also kinsman to the prince. (props: sword)

**The Page:** Paris' servant. (props: flowers and a torch to give to Paris)

**Friar Laurence:** priest; confessor and friend to both Romeo and Juliet. (props: basket and flowers for his first scene)

**Friar John:** Friar Laurence's messenger

*Of Mantua:*

**The Apothecary:** maker of drugs and poisons. (props: poison)

**Staging:** A balcony at upstage-left. The players must be able to enter and leave without descending the balcony, but it must be low enough that Romeo can climb up and down.

Also, a row of boxes to stage-right of centre, which will serve as Juliet's bed, her tomb, a bench for the street scenes, and the Capulets' garden wall.

The Prologue is included unedited. This version may be performed without it if desired.

## ACT I

### PROLOGUE

*The prologue enters and walks to centre-stage, addressing the audience directly, to introduce the story and perhaps to get their attention.*

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-cross'd lovers take their life;  
Whose misadventured piteous overthrows  
Do with their death bury their parents' strife.  
The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love,  
And the continuance of their parents' rage,  
Which, but their children's end, nought 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 Prologue*

### SCENE I. Verona. A public place.

*Enter SAMPSON and GREGORY, of the house of Capulet, armed with swords. Enter Abraham and Balthasar, of the house of Montague, from opposite. The two groups eye each other warily.*

**GREGORY:** Draw thy tool! Here comes two of the house of the Montagues.

*They both draw swords.*

**SAMPSON:** My naked weapon is out: *(pushes Gregory forward)*  
Quarrel, I will back thee.

**GREGORY:** *(pushes Sampson forward)* How? Turn thy back and run?

**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.

*He bites his thumb. Abraham steps forward.*

**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*) Is the law of our side, if I say ay?

**GREGORY:** No.

**SAMPSON:** (*to Abraham*) No, sir, I do not bite my thumb at you, sir... but I bite my thumb, sir.

*Abraham and Balthasar advance in anger.*

**GREGORY:** (*stepping forward*) Do you quarrel, sir?

**ABRAHAM:** Quarrel sir? no, sir.

**SAMPSON:** If you do, sir, I am for you: I serve as good a man as you.

**ABRAHAM:** You lie!

**SAMPSON:** Draw, if you be men! Gregory, remember thy swashing blow.

*They fight. Enter BENVOLIO, who draws his sword.*

**BENVOLIO:** Part, fools! Put up your swords; you know not what you do.

*Beats down their swords with his own. For the moment, the fight is on hold. Enter TYBALT, with sword drawn.*

**TYBALT:** (*to Benvolio*) Turn thee, Benvolio, look upon thy death.

**BENVOLIO:** I do but keep the peace.

**TYBALT:** (*points to Benvolio's sword*) What, drawn, and talk of peace?! I hate the word, as I hate hell... all Montagues... and *thee*!

*Tybalt attacks. Everyone fights. Enter CAPULET, and LADY CAPULET from one side, MONTAGUE and LADY MONTAGUE from the other. Capulet tries to rush into the fray and his wife holds him back.*

**CAPULET:** Give me my long sword, ho!

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

*Montague also tries to enter the fray, and his wife holds him back.*

**MONTAGUE:** Thou villain Capulet! (*to his wife*) Hold me not, let me go.

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

*Enter PRINCE ESCALUS, outraged that the two houses are fighting.*

**PRINCE:** Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace! (*waits a moment; they still fight*) Will they not hear? What, ho! You men, you beasts! On pain of torture, from those bloody hands throw your mistemper'd weapons to the ground, and hear the sentence of your movèd prince.

*At an urging from old Capulet and Montague, the fighters drop their swords. The prince lectures them.*

**PRINCE:** Three civil brawls, bred of an airy word, by thee, old Capulet, and Montague, have thrice disturb'd the quiet of our streets. If ever you disturb our streets again, your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace. For this time, on pain of death, all men depart!

*Exeunt all but MONTAGUE, LADY MONTAGUE, and BENVOLIO. The Capulet and Montague servants shoot dirty looks at each other as they go.*

**LADY MONTAGUE:** O, where is Romeo? Saw you him to-day?

**BENVOLIO:** Madam, an hour before the worshipp'd sun peer'd forth,

underneath the grove of sycamore did I see your son.

**MONTAGUE:** Many a morning hath he there been seen, with tears augmenting the fresh morning dew. Black and portentous must this humour prove, unless good counsel may the cause remove.

*Enter ROMEO, sad and lost in his thoughts.*

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

**MONTAGUE:** Come, madam, let's away.

*Exeunt MONTAGUE and LADY MONTAGUE*

**BENVOLIO:** Good-morrow, cousin.

**ROMEO:** *(sighs)* Is the day so young?

**BENVOLIO:** But new struck nine.

**ROMEO:** Ay me! sad hours seem long.

**BENVOLIO:** 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 favour, 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! *(waving Benvolio away)* 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 it that you love.

**ROMEO:** In sadness, cousin, I do love a woman. *(sighs)* She'll not be hit with Cupid's arrow. In strong proof of chastity well-arm'd, from love's weak, childish bow she lives unharm'd.

**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.

**BENVOLIO:** Be ruled by me, forget to think of her.

**ROMEO:** O, teach me how I should forget to think.

**BENVOLIO:** By giving liberty unto thine eyes. Examine other beauties.

**ROMEO:** *(giving up on the idea)* He that is stricken blind cannot forget the precious treasure of his eyesight lost. Farewell: thou canst not teach me to forget.

*Exit Romeo, sighing deeply.*

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

*Exit Benvolio, following.*

## **SCENE II. A street.**

*Enter CAPULET, with the guest list, PARIS, and PETER, following.*

**PARIS:** 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.

**PARIS:** Younger than she are happy mothers made.

**CAPULET:** And too soon marr'd are those so early made. The earth hath swallow'd all my hopes but she. Woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart, my will to her consent is but a part. This night I hold an old accustom'd feast, whereto I have invited many a guest.

*To Peter, giving him the list a paper*

**CAPULET:** Go, sirrah. Find those persons out whose names are written there, and to them say, my house and welcome on their pleasure stay.

*Exeunt CAPULET and PARIS. Peter looks at the paper upside-down and sideways: he can't read.*

**PETER:** I must to the learned.

*Enter BENVOLIO and ROMEO*

**PETER:** *(to Romeo)* I pray, sir, can you read?

**ROMEO:** Ay, if I know the letters and the language.

**PETER:** Ye say honestly.

*Peter gives the list to Romeo, who reads it aloud.*

**ROMEO:** “Signior Martino and his wife and daughters; County Anselme and his beauteous sisters; the lady widow of Vitravio; Signior Placentio and his lovely nieces; Mercutio and his brother Valentine; mine uncle Capulet, his wife and daughters; my fair niece... *Rosaline!*”

*He points to Rosaline's name and cheers up considerably, then collects himself.*

**ROMEO:** A fair assembly: whither should they come?

**PETER:** Up.

**ROMEO:** Whither?

**PETER:** To supper; to our house.

**ROMEO:** *Whose* house?

**PETER:** My master's.

**ROMEO:** *(frustrated)* Indeed, I should have ask'd you that before.

**PETER:** Now I'll tell you without asking: my master is the great rich Capulet. If you be not of the house of Montagues, I pray, come and crush

a cup of wine. Rest you merry!

*He takes the list and exits*

**BENVOLIO:** At this same ancient feast of Capulet's sups the fair Rosaline whom thou so lovest. Compare her face with some that I shall show, and I will make thee think thy swan a crow.

**ROMEO:** One fairer than my love! The all-seeing sun ne'er saw her match since first the world begun.

**BENVOLIO:** Tut! You saw her fair, none else being by.

**ROMEO:** *(shurges)* I'll go along, no such sight to be shown, but to rejoice in splendor of mine own.

*Exeunt together.*

### **SCENE III. A room in Capulet's house.**

*Enter LADY CAPULET and Nurse*

**LADY CAPULET:** Nurse, where's my daughter?

**Nurse:** Now, by my maidenhead... at twelve-year old... I bade her come. What, lamb! what, ladybird! What, Juliet!

*Enter JULIET*

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

**LADY CAPULET:** Nurse, give leave awhile, we must talk in secret.

*The nurse bows and starts to leave. Lady Capulet reconsiders.*

**LADY CAPULET:** Nurse, come back again. 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 she is not fourteen. *(to Juliet)* 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:** *(shrugs)* It is an honour that I dream not of.

**LADY CAPULET:** Well, think of marriage now; younger than you, here in Verona, are made already mothers. Thus then in brief: the valiant Paris seeks you for his love.

**Nurse:** A man, young lady! He's a flower; in faith, a very flower.

**LADY CAPULET:** This night you shall behold him at our feast. Read o'er the volume of young Paris' face, and find delight writ there with beauty's pen. Speak briefly, can you like of Paris' love?

**JULIET:** I'll look to like, if looking liking move.

*Enter Peter*

**PETER:** *(rambling)* 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.

*Exeunt, following Peter.*

#### SCENE IV. A street.

*Enter ROMEO, MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO, with masks for the party.*

**ROMEO:** *(depressed)* Give me a torch. 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.

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

**ROMEO:** I am too sore enpierced with his shaft to soar with his light feathers.

**MERCUTIO:** Too great oppression for a tender thing.

**ROMEO:** Is love a tender thing? It is too rough, 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.

**ROMEO:** *(in despair)* A torch for me! I'll be a candle-holder, and look on.

**MERCUTIO:** We'll draw thee from this mire. Come, we burn daylight, ho!

**ROMEO:** I dream'd a dream to-night.

**MERCUTIO:** And so did I.

**ROMEO:** Well, what was yours?

**MERCUTIO:** That dreamers often lie.

**ROMEO:** *(completing Mercutio's sentence)* ...in bed asleep, while they do dream things true.

**MERCUTIO:** *(playful)* O, then, I see Queen Mab hath been with you. She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes in shape no bigger than an agate-stone, her wagon-spokes made of long spiders' legs, the cover of the wings of grasshoppers, her whip of cricket's bone, her wagoner a small grey-coated gnat. Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut made by the joiner squirrel or old grub, time out o' mind the fairies' coachmakers. And in this state she gallops night by night through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love. Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck, and then dreams he of cutting foreign throats. This is she---

**ROMEO:** (*cuts Mercutio off*) Peace, Mercutio! Thou talk'st of nothing.

**MERCUTIO:** I talk of dreams, which are the children of an idle brain, begot of nothing but vain fantasy.

**BENVOLIO:** 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. On, lusty gentlemen.

*Exeunt*

## SCENE V. A hall in Capulet's house.

*Enter CAPULET, with LADY CAPULET, the nurse, PARIS, TYBALT, PETER and other guests, who mill about the stage miming conversation. From the opposite side, enter BENVOLIO, MERCUTIO and ROMEO, wearing masks. During Capulet's speech, Benvolio is directing Romeo's gaze to the many pretty girls at the party.*

**CAPULET:** (*to his gentleman guests*) Welcome, gentlemen! Ladies that have their toes unplagued with corns will have a bout with you. (*to the ladies*) Ah ha, my mistresses! Which of you all will now deny to dance? She that makes dainty, she, I'll swear, hath corns!

*Everyone laughs.*

**CAPULET:** (*to Benvolio, Mercutio and Romeo*) Welcome, gentlemen! (*to the servants or musicians*) Come, musicians, play!

*Music plays, and people dance and talk. Paris holds Juliet's hand, making quiet conversation, while her expression tells how bored she is with his company. Romeo sees Juliet and is instantly smitten.*

**ROMEO:** (*To Benvolio, pointing at Juliet*) What lady is that, which doth enrich the hand of yonder knight?

**BENVOLIO:** (*with a knowing smile*) I know not.

**ROMEO:** O, 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! Did

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

*Benvolio looks quite pleased and leaves Romeo to circulate amongst the guests, where Mercutio is already hitting on any unattended ladies. Paris moves away from Juliet and speaks to Old Capulet. Tybalt notices Romeo.*

**TYBALT:** This, by his voice, should be a Montague. (*to Peter*) Fetch me my rapier, boy.

*Peter gives him a sword, and he approaches Romeo. Old Capulet intercepts him.*

**CAPULET:** Why, how now, kinsman! Wherefore storm you so?

**TYBALT:** (*Pointing to Romeo*) Uncle, this is a Montague, our foe.

**CAPULET:** Young Romeo is it?

**TYBALT:** 'Tis he, that villain Romeo.

**CAPULET:** Content thee, gentle coz, let him alone. To say truth, Verona brags of him to be a virtuous and well-govern'd youth. I would not for the wealth of all the town here in my house do him disparagement.

**TYBALT:** I'll not endure him!

**CAPULET:** (*angry*) He shall be endured! Am I the master here, or you? Go to!

**TYBALT:** Why, uncle, 'tis a shame.

**CAPULET:** Go to, go to. You are a saucy boy!

*He says this too loudly, and some guests start to take notice.*

**CAPULET:** (*to his guests*) Well said, my hearts! (*to Tybalt*) You are a princ Cox; go!

**TYBALT:** (*aside*) I will withdraw: but this intrusion shall, now seeming sweet, convert to bitter gall.

*Exit. Romeo approaches Juliet and grabs her hand, bowing before her.*

**ROMEO:** If I profane with my unworhiest hand this holy shrine, the gentle fine is this: my lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand to smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.

**JULIET:** (*giggling*) 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.

*She brings his hand up and they touch palm to palm.*

**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 kiss.*

**ROMEO:** Thus from my lips, by yours, 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.*

**JULIET:** (*giggling*) You kiss by the book.

*The nurse is the first to see the two of them together and runs over to separate them.*

**Nurse:** Madam, your mother craves a word with you.

*She shoves Juliet back towards her mother. Juliet goes, glancing over her shoulder at Romeo.*

**ROMEO:** (*to the nurse*) What is her mother?

**Nurse:** Marry, bachelor. Her mother is the lady of the house

*The Nurse drags Juliet away.*

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

*Benvolio comes back from the crowd to fetch Romeo.*

**BENVOLIO:** Away, begone; the sport is at the best.

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

*With Mercutio, they move to leave.*

**CAPULET:** (*to the three of them*) I thank you, honest gentlemen; good night!

*The guests begin to leave. Capulet follows them out. The last to leave are Meructio, Benvolio and Romeo. Juliet and the Nurse remain on stage, and speak as people are leaving.*

**JULIET:** Come hither, nurse. (*pointing to Romeo*) What's he that follows there, that would not dance? If he be married, my grave is like to be my wedding bed.

**Nurse:** His name is Romeo, and a Montague, the only son of your great enemy.

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

**LADY CAPULET:** (*offstage*) Juliet!

**Nurse:** Come, let's away.

*Exeunt*



## ACT II

### SCENE I. A lane by the wall of Capulet's orchard.

*Enter ROMEO. He climbs the wall (the boxes), and leaps down behind it, hiding there. Enter BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO*

**BENVOLIO:** Romeo! my cousin Romeo! Call, good Mercutio.

*Mercutio conjours Romeo, waving his sword like a magic wand.*

**MERCUTIO:** Nay, I'll conjure too. Romeo! Madman! Lover! Appear thou! Speak but one rhyme, and I am satisfied. Cry but 'Ay me!' Pronounce but 'love' and 'dove!' *(waits a moment. Romeo does not reply)* He heareth not, he stirreth not, he moveth not. The ape is dead!

**BENVOLIO:** Come. Blind is his love and best befits the dark.

**MERCUTIO:** If love be blind, love cannot hit the mark. Romeo! Good night!

*Exeunt*

### SCENE II. Capulet's orchard.

*ROMEO, already on stage, hides himself in the dark. The main light should be focused on Juliet's balcony. Romeo stays out of it for the time being.*

**ROMEO:** *(referring to Mercutio)* He jests at scars that never felt a wound.

*JULIET appears above on the balcony. They cannot hear each other for now.*

**ROMEO:** But, soft! What light through yonder window breaks? It is the east, and Juliet is the sun. Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon, who is already sick and pale with grief. It is my lady, O, it is my love!

*Juliet leans her hand upon her cheek.*

**ROMEO:** See how she leans her cheek upon her hand! O, that I were a glove upon that hand, that I might touch that cheek!

**JULIET:** Ay me!

**ROMEO:** She speaks! O, speak again, bright angel!

**JULIET:** O Romeo, Romeo! Wherefore art thou Romeo? Deny thy father and refuse thy name. Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love, and I'll no longer be a Capulet.

**ROMEO:** Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?

**JULIET:** 'Tis but thy name that is my enemy. What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet. Romeo, doff thy name, and for that name which is no part of thee take all myself.

**ROMEO:** *(jumping forward to reveal himself)* I take thee at thy word! Call me but love, and I'll be new-baptized. Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

**JULIET:** *(shocked)* My ears have not yet drunk a hundred words of that tongue's utterance, yet I know the sound. Art thou not Romeo and a Montague?

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

**JULIET:** How camest thou hither? The orchard walls are high and hard to climb, and the place death if any of my kinsmen find thee here.

**ROMEO:** With love's light wings did I o'er-perch these walls. Therefore thy kinsmen are no let to me.

**JULIET:** If they do see thee, they will murder thee!

**ROMEO:** I have night's cloak to hide me from their sight. 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:** *(finally relaxing)* Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say 'Ay,' yet if thou swear'st, thou mayst prove false. O gentle Romeo, if thou dost

love, pronounce it faithfully.

**ROMEO:** (*swearing*) Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear, that tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops--

**JULIET:** (*interrupting*) O, swear not by the moon, that monthly changes in her circled orb, lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

**ROMEO:** What shall I swear by?

**JULIET:** Do not swear at all. Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self, which is the god of my idolatry, and I'll believe thee.

**ROMEO:** If my heart's dear love--

**JULIET:** (*interrupting again*) Oh, do not swear! It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden. Sweet, good night! This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath, may prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.

**ROMEO:** O, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

**JULIET:** What satisfaction canst thou have to-night?

**ROMEO:** The exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.

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

**ROMEO:** Wouldst thou withdraw it? For what purpose, love?

**JULIET:** But to be frank, and give it thee again.

**Nurse:** (*offstage*) Juliet!

**JULIET:** (*to the nurse*) Anon, good nurse! (*to Romeo*) Sweet Montague, be true. Stay but a little, I will come again.

*Juliet exits*

**ROMEO:** O blessed, blessed night! I am afeard, being in night, all this is but a dream.

*Re-enter JULIET, above*

**JULIET:** Dear Romeo. If that thy bent of love be honourable, thy purpose marriage, send me word to-morrow, by one that I'll procure to come to thee.

**Nurse:** Madam!

**JULIET:** (*to the nurse*) By and by, I come! (*to Romeo*) A thousand times good night!

*Exit, above*

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

*Juliet returns.*

**JULIET:** Romeo!

**ROMEO:** My dear?

**JULIET:** At what o'clock to-morrow shall I send to thee?

**ROMEO:** At the hour of nine.

**JULIET:** I will not fail: 'tis twenty years till then. (*awkward pause*) I have forgot why I did call thee back.

**ROMEO:** Let me stand here till thou remember it.

**JULIET:** 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.

**JULIET:** Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing. Good night, good night! Parting is such sweet sorrow, that I shall say good night till it be morrow.

*Exit above*

**ROMEO:** Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast! Hence will I

to my ghostly father's cell, his help to crave, and my dear hap to tell.

*Exit*

### SCENE III. Friar Laurence's cell.

*Enter FRIAR LAURENCE, with a basket. He goes about gathering flowers and plants.*

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** *(looking at the sky)* The grey-eyed morn smiles on the frowning night, chequering the eastern clouds with streaks of light. Now, ere the sun advance his burning eye, I must up-fill this osier cage of ours with baleful weeds and precious-juiced flowers. *(Picks a few more, then stops and looks at a flower)* Within the infant rind of this small flower, poison hath residence and medicine power: For this, being *smelt*, with that part cheers each part -- being *tasted*, slays all senses with the heart.

*Enter ROMEO, shouting with enthusiasm.*

**ROMEO:** Good morrow, father.

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** *(startled)* Benedicite! Young son, it argues a distemper'd head so soon to bid good morrow to thy bed. *(Looks at Romeo's grin for a moment)* If not so, then here I hit it right, our Romeo hath not been in bed to-night.

**ROMEO:** *(grinning)* That last is true.

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** *(shocked)* God pardon sin! Wast thou with Rosaline?

**ROMEO:** With Rosaline, my ghostly father? No, I have forgot that name, and that name's woe. I have been feasting with mine enemy, where on a sudden one hath wounded me, that's by me wounded.

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** Be plain, good son, and homely in thy drift; riddling confession finds but riddling shrift.

**ROMEO:** Then plainly know my heart's dear love is set on the fair daughter of rich Capulet. As mine on hers, so hers is set on mine, and all

combined, save what thou must combine by holy marriage.

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** Holy Saint Francis, what a change is here! Is Rosaline so soon forsaken? Young men's love then lies not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes.

**ROMEO:** Thou chid'st me oft for loving Rosaline.

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

**ROMEO:** I pray thee, chide not; she whom I love now doth grace for grace and love for love allow. The other did not so.

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** O, she knew well thy love did read by rote and could not spell. But come, young waverer. Go with me. In one respect I'll thy assistant be. *(making up his mind)* For this alliance may so happy prove, to turn your households' rancour to pure love.

**ROMEO:** *(trying to drag the friar off)* O, let us hence; I stand on sudden haste.

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

*Exeunt*

### SCENE IV. A street.

*Enter BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO*

**MERCUTIO:** Where the devil should this Romeo be? Came he not home to-night?

**BENVOLIO:** Not to his father's. I spoke with his man.

**MERCUTIO:** Ah, that same pale hard-hearted wench, that Rosaline, torments him so, that he will sure run mad.

**BENVOLIO:** Tybalt, the kinsman of old Capulet, hath sent a letter to his father's house.

**MERCUTIO:** A challenge, on my life.

**BENVOLIO:** Romeo will answer it.

**MERCUTIO:** Alas poor Romeo! He is already dead, shot through the ear with a love-song; the very pin of his heart cleft with the blind bow-boy's butt-shaft. And is he a man to encounter Tybalt?

**BENVOLIO:** Why, what is Tybalt?

*While talking about how Tybalt fights, Mercutio gives a demonstration by play-fighting.*

**MERCUTIO:** More than prince of cats, I can tell you. He fights as you sing prick-song -- keeps time, distance, and proportion: *(striking)* one, two, and the third in your bosom. A duellist! A gentleman of the very first house.

*Enter ROMEO*

**BENVOLIO:** Here comes Romeo.

**MERCUTIO:** Without his roe, like a dried herring: flesh, flesh, how art thou fishified! *(to Romeo)* You gave us the counterfeit fairly last night.

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

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

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

**MERCUTIO:** Well said! Now art thou sociable, now art thou Romeo

*Enter Nurse and PETER*

**Nurse:** My fan, Peter.

**MERCUTIO:** Good Peter, to hide her, for her fan's the fairer face.

**Nurse:** Out upon you! what a man are you!

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

**Nurse:** By my troth, it is well said. Gentlemen, can any of you tell me where I may find the young Romeo?

**ROMEO:** I am the youngest of that name.

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

**MERCUTIO:** A bawd, a bawd, a bawd! so ho!

*The nurse hits him. Mercutio laughs.*

**MERCUTIO:** Farewell, ancient lady; farewell,

*Exeunt MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO, laughing.*

**Nurse:** I pray you, sir, what saucy merchant was this?

**ROMEO:** A gentleman, nurse, that loves to hear himself talk.

**Nurse:** Scurvy knave!*(to Romeo)* Pray you, sir, a word. My young lady bade me inquire you out..

**ROMEO:** Bid her devise some means to come to shrift this afternoon. And there she shall at Friar Laurence' cell be shrived and married.

**Nurse:** This afternoon, sir? *(smiling)* Well, she shall be there.

*Exit Romeo*

**Nurse:** Peter!

**PETER:** Anon!

**Nurse:** Peter, take my fan, and go before and apace.

*Exeunt*

## **SCENE V. Capulet's orchard.**

*Enter JULIET. She sits on the boxes and fiddles with her hands.*

**JULIET:** The clock struck nine when I did send the nurse. In half an

hour she promised to return. Perchance she cannot meet him! O, she is lame! Love's heralds should be thoughts, which ten times faster glide than the sun's beams!

*Enter Nurse, staggering and pretending to be miserable.*

**JULIET:** O honey nurse, what news?

**Nurse:** I am a-weary. Fie, how my bones ache!

**JULIET:** I would thou hadst my bones, and I thy news.

**Nurse:** What haste? Do you not see that I am out of breath?

**JULIET:** (*angry*) How art thou out of breath, when thou hast breath to say to me that thou art out of breath? Is thy news good or bad?

**Nurse:** Lord, how my head aches!

*Juliet starts rubbing the nurse's head.*

**Nurse:** My back! (*Juliet rubs her back*) O' t'other side. (*Juliet rubs the other side of her back.*)

**JULIET:** (*sweetly*) I' faith, I am sorry that thou art not well. Sweet, sweet, sweet nurse, tell me, what says my love?

**Nurse:** Your love says, like an honest gentleman, and a courteous, and a kind, and, I warrant, a virtuous... (*pause*) Where is your mother?

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

**Nurse:** (*miffed*) Is this the poultice for my aching bones? Henceforward do your messages yourself.

**JULIET:** (*sweetly*) Come, what says Romeo?

**Nurse:** (*smiling*) Have you got leave to go to shrift to-day?

**JULIET:** I have.

**Nurse:** Then hie you hence to Friar Laurence' cell. There stays a husband to make you a wife.

**JULIET:** Hie to high fortune! Honest nurse, farewell.

*Exeunt separately.*

## **SCENE VI. Friar Laurence's cell.**

*Enter FRIAR LAURENCE and ROMEO*

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** So smile the heavens upon this holy act, that after hours with sorrow chide us not!

**ROMEO:** Amen, amen!

*Enter JULIET. They immediately stare at each other.*

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** Here comes the lady.

**JULIET:** Good even to my ghostly confessor.

*They run towards each other and clasp hands.*

**ROMEO:** Ah, Juliet, if the measure of thy joy be heap'd like mine then sweeten with thy breath this neighbour air.

**JULIET:** My true love is grown to such excess I cannot sum up sum of half my wealth.

*The friar gently pulls them apart*

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** Come with me, and we will make short work. You shall not stay alone till holy church incorporate two in one.

*Exeunt*

## ACT III

### SCENE I. A public place.

*Enter MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO. The day is hot and they lounge on the boxes.*

**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.

**MERCUTIO:** Come, come, thou art as hot a Jack in thy mood as any in Italy. Thou wilt quarrel with a man that hath a hair more, or a hair less, in his beard than thou hast and yet *thou* wilt tutor *me* from quarrelling?

*Enter Tybalt, armed.*

**BENVOLIO:** By my head, here come the Capulets.

**MERCUTIO:** By my heel, I care not.

**TYBALT:** Gentlemen, a word with one of you.

**MERCUTIO:** *(rising)* And but one word with one of us? Couple it with something: make it a word and a blow.

**TYBALT:** You shall find me apt enough to that, sir. Mercutio, thou consort'st with Romeo,--

**MERCUTIO:** Consort! What, dost thou make us minstrels?

*Benvolio steps between the two with a raised hand.*

**BENVOLIO:** We talk here in the public haunt of men. Withdraw unto some private place.

**MERCUTIO:** I will not budge for no man's pleasure, I.

*Enter ROMEO, dreamy-eyed. Tybalt spots him immediately*

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

**MERCUTIO:** But I'll be hanged, sir, if he wear your livery:

**TYBALT:** Romeo, the hate I bear thee can afford no better term than this: thou art a *villain*.

**ROMEO:** Tybalt, the reason that I have to love thee doth much excuse the appertaining rage to such a greeting. Villain am I none, therefore farewell.

*Romeo turns and walks away.*

**TYBALT:** Boy, this shall not excuse the injuries that thou hast done me; therefore turn and draw.

**ROMEO:** *(turning around)* I do protest, I never injured thee, but love thee better than thou canst devise, and so, good Capulet, be satisfied.

**MERCUTIO:** *(enraged)* O calm, dishonourable, vile submission! *(Draws)* Tybalt, you rat-catcher, will you walk?

**TYBALT:** What wouldst thou have with me?

**MERCUTIO:** Good king of cats, nothing but one of your nine lives.

**TYBALT:** *(drawing his sword)* I am for you!

*They fight.*

**ROMEO:** Gentlemen, for shame, forbear this outrage! *(they still fight)* The prince expressly hath forbidden bandying in Verona streets.

*Romeo grabs Mercutio's sword arm. Tybalt takes advantage of the moment to stab Mercutio. Mercutio falls and Tybalt runs away.*

**MERCUTIO:** I am hurt. A plague o' both your houses!

**ROMEO:** Courage, man; the hurt cannot be much.

**MERCUTIO:** No, 'tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church-door; but 'tis enough, 'twill serve: ask for me to-morrow, and you shall find me a "grave" man. *(cringes with pain)* A plague o' both your houses! Why the devil came you between us? I was hurt under your arm.

**ROMEO:** I thought all for the best.

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

*Benvolio helps Mercutio to stand and they both stagger out.*

**ROMEO:** My very friend, hath got his mortal hurt in my behalf. O sweet Juliet, thy beauty hath made me effeminate!

*Re-enter BENVOLIO*

**BENVOLIO:** O Romeo, Romeo, brave Mercutio's dead!

**ROMEO:** (*anger rising*) This but begins the woe others must end.

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

*Re-enter Tybalt*

**ROMEO:** (*drawing his sword*) Now, Tybalt, take the villain back again, for Mercutio's soul is but a little way above our heads. Either thou, or I, or both, must go with him.

*They fight; TYBALT falls*

**BENVOLIO:** Romeo, away, be gone! The prince will doom thee death,

**ROMEO:** O, I am fortune's fool!

*Exit ROMEO. Enter the PRINCE, with CAPULET and LADY CAPULET with two servants (perhaps Sampson and Gregory).*

**PRINCE:** Where are the vile beginners of this fray?

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

*Lady Capulet rushes to her nephew's body and weeps.*

**LADY CAPULET:** Tybalt, my cousin! O my brother's child! Prince, as thou art true, for blood of ours, shed blood of Montague.

**PRINCE:** Benvolio, who began this bloody fray?

**BENVOLIO:** Tybalt, here slain, whom Romeo's hand did slay.

**LADY CAPULET:** I beg for justice, which thou, prince, must give. Romeo slew Tybalt, Romeo must not live.

*The prince considers the situation for a moment before making his proclamation*

**PRINCE:** And for that offence immediately we do exile him hence. Let Romeo hence in haste, else when he's found, that hour is his last. (*to servants*) Bear hence this body.

*Exeunt. The servants carry Tybalt's body offstage.*

## **SCENE II. Capulet's orchard.**

*Enter JULIET. She sits on the boxes and sighs deeply.*

**JULIET:** Come, gentle night, give me my Romeo... and when he shall die, take him and cut him out in little stars, and he will make the face of heaven so fine that all the world will be in love with night and pay no worship to the garish sun.

*Enter Nurse, crying.*

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

**Nurse:** Lady, we are undone! Alack the day! he's gone, he's kill'd, he's dead!

**JULIET:** (*thinking Romeo is dead*) Can heaven be so envious?

**Nurse:** I saw the wound, I saw it with mine eyes, (*points to her heart*) here on his manly breast.

**JULIET:** (*almost fainting*) O, break, my heart!

**Nurse:** Tybalt is gone, and Romeo banished -- Romeo that kill'd him, he is banished.

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

**Nurse:** It did, it did; alas the day, it did!

**JULIET:** O that deceit should dwell in such a gorgeous palace!

**Nurse:** There's no trust, no honesty in men. Shame come to Romeo!

**JULIET:** (*angry at her*) Blister'd be thy tongue for such a wish! Upon his brow shame is ashamed to sit. O, what a beast was I to chide at him!

**Nurse:** Will you speak well of him that kill'd your cousin?

**JULIET:** Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband? (*it suddenly dawns on her that she won't see Romeo again*) Banished! That one word 'banished,' hath slain ten thousand Tybalts.

*Juliet breaks down crying. The nurse rubs her back and comforts her.*

**Nurse:** Hie to your chamber: I'll find Romeo to comfort you. Hark ye, your Romeo will be here at night:

**JULIET:** O, find him and bid him come to take his last farewell.

*Exeunt, in opposite directions.*

### **SCENE III. Friar Laurence's cell.**

*Enter FRIAR LAURENCE*

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** Romeo, come forth, thou fearful man.

*Enter ROMEO*

**ROMEO:** Father, what news? What is the prince's doom?

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** Not body's death, but body's banishment.

**ROMEO:** (*shocked*) Banishment! Be merciful, say 'death,'

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

**ROMEO:** There is no world without Verona walls, but purgatory,

torture, hell itself!

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** O rude unthankfulness! The kind prince, taking thy part, hath turn'd that black word "death" to "banishment."

**ROMEO:** 'Tis torture, and not mercy: heaven is here, where Juliet lives; and every cat and dog and little mouse may look on her, but Romeo may not. O friar...

*Romeo breaks down crying. Sudden knocking at the door.*

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** Romeo, arise. Run to my study. (*to the visitor*) Who knocks so hard?

*Romeo runs to the boxes and hides opposite where the nurse will enter. The friar goes to the side of the stage and mimes opening a door. The nurse enters.*

**Nurse:** I come from Lady Juliet.

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** Welcome, then.

**Nurse:** Tell me, holy friar, where is my lady's lord? Where's Romeo?

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** There on the ground, with his own tears made drunk.

*The nurse sees Romeo and hauls him up.*

**Nurse:** Stand, and you be a man. For Juliet's sake, rise and stand.

**ROMEO:** Doth she not think me an old murderer? Where is she? and how doth she?

**Nurse:** O, she says nothing, sir, but weeps and weeps; then starts up, and Tybalt calls; and then on Romeo cries.

**ROMEO:** As if that name did murder her, as that name's cursed hand murder'd her kinsman. O, tell me, friar, tell me, in what vile part of this anatomy doth my name lodge?

*Romeo draws his sword and makes to stab himself in the chest. The friar*



*grabs his arm.*

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** Hold thy desperate hand. Art thou a man? Thy tears are womanish; thy wild acts denote the unreasonable fury of a beast!

*Romeo breaks down crying. Again.*

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** What, rouse thee, man! *(listing Romeo's reasons not to cry)* Thy Juliet is alive -- *there* art thou happy. Tybalt would kill thee, but thou slew'st Tybalt -- *there* are thou happy too. The law that threaten'd death becomes thy friend and turns it to exile -- *there* art thou happy. A pack of blessings lights up upon thy back! Go, get thee to thy love. Ascend her chamber, hence and comfort her. But look thou stay not till the watch be set, for then thou canst not pass to Mantua, where thou shalt live, till we can find a time to blaze your marriage, beg pardon of the prince, and call thee back with twenty hundred thousand times more joy than thou went'st forth in lamentation.

**ROMEO:** How well my comfort is revived by this!

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** Go hence.

*Romeo exits with the nurse, the Friar the opposite way.*

#### **SCENE IV. A room in Capulet's house.**

*Enter CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, and PARIS*

**CAPULET:** Look you, she loved her kinsman Tybalt dearly. 'Tis very late, she'll not come down to-night.

**PARIS:** These times of woe afford no time to woo.

**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. *(to Lady Capulet)* Wife, acquaint her here of my son Paris' love, and bid her, mark you me, on Wednesday next--- *(pause)* But, soft! what day is this?

**PARIS:** Monday, my lord.

**CAPULET:** Monday! ha, ha! Well, Wednesday is too soon! O' Thursday let it be. *(to his wife)* O' Thursday, tell her, she shall be married to this noble earl. *(to Paris)* But what say you to Thursday?

**PARIS:** My lord, I would that Thursday were to-morrow.

**CAPULET:** Thursday be it, then. *(to Lady Capulet)* Prepare her, wife, against this wedding-day. Farewell, my lord.

*Exeunt, Capulet and Lady Capulet together, Paris opposite.*

#### **SCENE V. Capulet's orchard.**

*Enter ROMEO and JULIET above, on Juliet's balcony*

**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.

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

**JULIET:** Yon light is not day-light, I know it. Therefore stay yet; thou need'st not to be gone.

**ROMEO:** Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death! I have more care to stay than will to go. Come, death, and welcome! Juliet wills it so.

**JULIET:** *(smartening up when she sees he's serious)* Hie hence, be gone, away! It is the lark that sings so out of tune. O, now be gone; more light and light it grows.

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

**Nurse:** *(offstage)* Madam! Your lady mother is coming to your chamber.

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

*They kiss. Romeo climbs down the balcony.*

**JULIET:** I must hear from thee every day in the hour, for in a minute there are many days. O, by this count I shall be much in years ere I again behold my Romeo! O 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:** *(has a sudden vision)* O God! Methinks I see thee as one dead in the bottom of a tomb. Either my eyesight fails, or thou look'st pale.

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

*Exit, vaulting the Capulet garden wall and running off the opposite side of the stage. LADY CAPULET enters at the front of the stage.*

**LADY CAPULET:** Ho, daughter! are you up?

*Juliet exits from the balcony and enters below. She is crying.*

**LADY CAPULET:** Why, how now, Juliet!

**JULIET:** Madam, I am not well.

**LADY CAPULET:** Evermore weeping for your cousin's death? *(takes her hand)* Now, I'll tell thee joyful tidings, girl.

**JULIET:** And joy comes well in such a needy time.

**LADY CAPULET:** Marry, my child, early next Thursday morn, the gallant, young and noble gentleman, the County Paris, at Saint Peter's Church, shall happily make thee there a joyful bride.

**JULIET:** *(outraged)* Now, by Saint Peter's Church and Peter too, he shall not make me there a joyful bride! I pray you, tell my lord and father, madam, I will not marry yet; and, when I do, I swear, it shall be Romeo, whom you know I hate, rather than Paris!

**LADY CAPULET:** *(furious)* Here comes your father; tell him so yourself!

*Enter CAPULET and Nurse*

**CAPULET:** What, still in tears? How now, wife! Have you deliver'd to her our decree?

**LADY CAPULET:** Ay, sir; but she will none. I would the fool were married to her grave!

**CAPULET:** Doth she not give us thanks? Doth she not count her blest, unworthy as she is, that we have wrought so worthy a gentleman to be her bridegroom?

**JULIET:** Proud can I never be of what I hate.

**CAPULET:** *(shocked)* What is this? Thank me no thankings, nor proud me no pouds, but fettle your fine joints 'gainst Thursday next, to go with Paris to Saint Peter's Church, or I will drag thee on a hurdle thither.

*Juliet falls to her knees.*

**JULIET:** Good father, I beseech you on my knees, hear me with patience.

**CAPULET:** *(Furious)* Hang thee, disobedient wretch! I tell thee what: get thee to church o' Thursday, or never after look me in the face! *(Juliet tries to speak and he cuts her off)* Speak not, reply not, do not answer me.

**LADY CAPULET:** *(trying to calm him down)* You are too hot.

**CAPULET:** God's bread, it makes me mad. *(to Juliet)* Thursday is near: an you be mine, I'll give you to my friend; and you be *not* -- hang, beg, starve, *die* in the streets, for, by my soul, I'll ne'er acknowledge thee!

*Juliet bursts into tears. Capulet storms offstage.*

**JULIET:** O, sweet my mother, cast me not away! Delay this marriage for a month, a week!

**LADY CAPULET:** Talk not to me, for I'll not speak a word. I have done with thee.

*Follows her husband.*

**JULIET:** O nurse, how shall this be prevented? Comfort me, counsel me.

**Nurse:** Faith, here it is. Romeo is banish'd. I think it best you married with the county. O, he's a lovely gentleman! Romeo's a dishclout to him. I think you are happy in this second match, for it excels your first.

**JULIET:** *(shocked at her turn of heart)* Speakest thou from thy heart?

**Nurse:** And from my soul too.

**JULIET:** *(sarcastic)* Well, thou hast comforted me marvellous much. Go in: and tell my lady I am gone, having displeased my father, to Laurence' cell, to make confession.

**Nurse:** Marry, I will; and this is wisely done.

*Exit*

**JULIET:** O most wicked counselor! I'll to the friar, to know his remedy. If all else fail, myself have power to die.

*Exit*

## ACT IV

### SCENE I. Friar Laurence's cell.

*Enter FRIAR LAURENCE and PARIS*

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** On Thursday, sir? The time is very short.

**PARIS:** My father Capulet will have it so.

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** You say you do not know the lady's mind... I like it not.

**PARIS:** Sir, her father counts it dangerous that she doth give her sorrow so much sway, and in his wisdom hastes our marriage to stop the inundation of her tears.

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** Look, sir, here comes the lady towards my cell.

*Enter JULIET, still upset. She stops instantly when she sees Paris.*

**PARIS:** Happily met, my lady and my wife!

**JULIET:** That may be, sir, when I may be a wife. *(completely dismissing Paris)* Are you at leisure, holy father, now?

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** *(to Paris)* My lord, we must entreat the time alone.

**PARIS:** God shield I should disturb devotion! Adieu.

*Exit. Juliet starts to cry.*

**JULIET:** Come weep with me; past hope, past cure, past help!

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** Ah, Juliet, I already know thy grief.

**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... *(she draws a knife and holds it to her heart)* with this knife I'll help it presently.

*The Friar grabs Juliet's arm and takes the knife away.*

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** Hold, daughter: I do spy a kind of hope.  
(*detailing his plan*) Go home, be merry, give consent to marry Paris.  
(*gives her the sleeping potion*) To-morrow night look that thou lie alone.  
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  
humour. No warmth, no breath, shall testify thou livest. In this borrow'd  
likeness of shrunk death thou shalt continue two and forty hours, and  
then awake as from a pleasant sleep. 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 shall Romeo bear thee hence to Mantua.

**JULIET:** Love give me strength! Farewell, dear father!

*Exeunt, separately*

## **SCENE II. Hall in Capulet's house.**

*Enter CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, Nurse.*

**CAPULET:** What, is my daughter gone to Friar Laurence?

**Nurse:** Ay, forsooth.

**CAPULET:** Well, he may chance to do some good on her.

**Nurse:** See where she comes from shrift with merry look.

*Enter JULIET.*

**CAPULET:** How now, my headstrong?

**JULIET:** (*lying to comfort him*) I have learn'd me to repent the sin of  
disobedient opposition to you. Pardon, I beseech you! Henceforward I  
am ever ruled by you.

**CAPULET:** (*much cheered up*) Send for the county! I'll have this knot  
knit up to-morrow morning.

**LADY CAPULET:** No, not till Thursday. There is time enough.

**CAPULET:** Go, nurse, go with her: we'll to church to-morrow.

*Exeunt JULIET and Nurse*

**LADY CAPULET:** We shall be short in our provision.

**CAPULET:** Tush, I will stir about, and all things shall be well. My heart  
is wondrous light, since this same wayward girl is so reclaim'd.

*Exeunt*

## **SCENE III. Juliet's chamber.**

*Enter JULIET, LADY CAPULET and Nurse. The boxes will act in this  
scene as Juliet's bed. Juliet sits herself there.*

**JULIET:** Gentle nurse, I pray thee, leave me to my self to-night. (*To her  
mother*) Madam, let me now be left alone, 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.

*Exeunt LADY CAPULET and Nurse*

**JULIET:** Farewell! God knows when we shall meet again.

*She takes out the potion and looks at it.*

**JULIET:** I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins, that almost  
freezes up the heat of life. My dismal scene I needs must act alone.  
Come, vial. (*she uncaps the mixture, and is struck by a sudden thought*)  
What if this mixture do not work at all? What if it be a poison, which the  
friar subtly hath minister'd to have me dead, lest in this marriage he  
should be dishonour'd? How if, when I am laid into the tomb, I wake  
before the time that Romeo come? Shall I not, then, be stifled in the  
vault, to whose foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in, and there die  
strangled? O, look! methinks I see my cousin's ghost seeking out Romeo!  
Stay, Tybalt, stay! Romeo, I come! This do I drink to thee.

*She drinks the potion and falls upon her bed, where she will remain until the final scene.*

#### **SCENE IV. Juliet's chamber.**

*Juliet is still lying there. Enter Nurse. She sees Juliet and assumes she's asleep.*

**Nurse:** Why, lamb! Why, lady! Fie, you slug-a-bed! *(shaking Juliet)*  
How sound is she asleep! *(pause, as she realizes Juliet is not breathing)*  
Help, help! my lady's dead!

*Enter LADY CAPULET*

**LADY CAPULET:** What noise is here?

**Nurse:** O lamentable day!

**LADY CAPULET:** What is the matter?

**Nurse:** Look, look!

**LADY CAPULET:** *(rushes to her daughter's side)* O me! My child, my only life!

*Enter CAPULET*

**CAPULET:** For shame, bring Juliet forth; her lord is come.

**Nurse:** She's dead; alack the day!

**LADY CAPULET:** Alack the day, she's dead, she's dead!

**CAPULET:** *(not believing them)* Ha! let me see her. *(touches Juliet)*  
She's cold. Her blood is settled, and her joints are stiff. Death lies on her like an untimely frost upon the sweetest flower of all the field.

**Nurse:** O lamentable day!

**LADY CAPULET:** O woeful time!

*Enter FRIAR LAURENCE and PARIS.*

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** Come, is the bride ready to go to church?

**CAPULET:** Ready to go, but never to return. Death is my son-in-law. My daughter he hath wedded.

**PARIS:** *(upset)* Most detestable Death!

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** Peace, ho, for shame! Heaven and yourself had part in this fair maid; now heaven hath all, and all the better is it for the maid. Dry up your tears, and, as the custom is, in all her best array bear her to church.

**CAPULET:** All things that we ordained festival, turn from their office to black funeral, our instruments to melancholy bells, our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change, our bridal flowers serve for a buried corse, and all things change them to the contrary.

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** Sir, go you in; and, madam, go with him. And go, Sir Paris; everyone prepare to follow this fair corse unto her grave.

*Exeunt. Friar Laurence stealthily takes the empty vial from Juliet's hand. Juliet remains on the boxes, which will be her tomb for the remainder of the play.*

## ACT V

### SCENE I. Mantua. A street.

*For this scene, the light should be down on Juliet, and the other characters cannot see her. Enter ROMEO.*

**ROMEO:** If I may trust the flattering truth of sleep, my dreams presage some joyful news at hand. I dreamt my lady came and found me dead, and breathed such life with kisses in my lips, that I revived, and was an emperor.

*Enter BALTHASAR.*

**ROMEO:** News from Verona!--How now, Balthasar! How doth my lady? Is my father well? How fares my Juliet? That I ask again, for nothing can be ill, if she be well.

**BALTHASAR:** *(sadly)* Then she is well, and nothing can be ill. Her body sleeps in Capel's monument, and her immortal part with angels lives. I saw her laid low in her kindred's vault.

**ROMEO:** *(shocked)* Is it even so? Then I defy you, stars! *(to Balthasar)* Hire post-horses; I will hence to-night.

**BALTHASAR:** I do beseech you, sir, have patience. Your looks are pale and wild.

**ROMEO:** 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.

*Exit BALTHASAR*

**ROMEO:** Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee to-night. Let's see for means... *(thinks)* I do remember an apothecary, and hereabouts he dwells. Meagre were his looks, sharp misery had worn him to the bones. And in his needy shop a tortoise hung, an alligator stuff'd, and other skins of ill-

shaped fishes. To myself I said 'An if a man did need a poison now, here lives a caitiff wretch would sell it him.' As I remember, this should be the house. What, ho! Apothecary!

*Enter Apothecary*

**Apothecary:** Who calls so loud?

**ROMEO:** Come hither, man. I see that thou art poor. *(holding up money)* There is forty ducats: let me have a dram of poison.

**Apothecary:** Such mortal drugs I have, but Mantua's law is death to any he that utters them.

**ROMEO:** *(shakes the money)* Famine is in thy cheeks, need and oppression starveth in thine eyes. The world affords no law to make thee rich. Then be not poor, but break it, and take this.

**Apothecary:** My poverty, but not my will, consents.

**ROMEO:** I pay thy poverty, and not thy will.

*He gives Romeo the poison.*

**Apothecary:** 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 pays the man.*

**ROMEO:** There is thy gold, worse poison to men's souls than these poor compounds that thou mayst not sell. Come, poison, go with me to Juliet's grave; for there must I use thee.

*Exeunt*

### SCENE II. Friar Laurence's cell.

*Enter FRIAR JOHN, in a panic*

**FRIAR JOHN:** Brother, ho!

*Enter FRIAR LAURENCE*

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** Welcome from Mantua: what says Romeo?

**FRIAR JOHN:** *(fumbling his explanation, he's so distressed)* One of our order, suspecting that we both were in a house where the infectious pestilence did reign, seal'd up the doors, and would not let us forth, so that my speed to Mantua there was stay'd!

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** Who bare my letter, then, to Romeo?

**FRIAR JOHN:** I could not send it, nor get a messenger to bring it thee, so fearful were they of infection.

*Laurence realizes that Juliet will now be trapped in the tomb*

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** Unhappy fortune!

*He runs off. John follows.*

### **SCENE III. A churchyard; in it a tomb belonging to the Capulets.**

*Enter PARIS, and his Page bearing flowers and a torch (or candle). As Juliet is a bit upstage, the region near her becomes the inside of the tomb, while the action outside is done at the front of the stage.*

**PARIS:** Give me thy torch, boy: hence, and stand aloof. Whistle to me, as signal that thou hear'st something approach.

*The page nods and retreats to the front of the stage, in front of the preceium if you have one, so the other characters cannot see him. Paris kneels at front-centre, as if the entrance to Juliet's tomb was there.*

**PARIS:** *(to Juliet)* Sweet flower, with flowers thy bridal bed I strew, which with sweet water nightly I will dew, or, wanting that, with tears distill'd by moans.

*Paris lays down the flowers. The page whistles.*

**PARIS:** What cursed foot wanders this way to-night, to cross my obsequies and true love's rite?

*He puts out the torch and retreats to the side of the stage. Enter ROMEO and BALTHASAR from the opposite side. Balthasar also carries a torch or candle which he lays down by the tomb.*

**ROMEO:** Take this letter. Early in the morning, see thou deliver it to my lord and father. *(gives letter)* Upon thy life, I charge thee, whate'er thou hear'st or seest, do not interrupt me in my course. If thou dost return to pry in what I further shall intend to do, by heaven, I will tear thee joint by joint and strew this hungry churchyard with thy limbs.

**BALTHASAR:** I will be gone, sir, and not trouble you.

**ROMEO:** Farewell, good fellow.

**BALTHASAR:** *(Aside)* For all this same, I'll hide me hereabout. His looks I fear, and his intents I doubt.

*Exit Balthasar. Romeo looks upon the doors of Juliet's tomb and pries at them with his fingers.*

**ROMEO:** Thou detestable maw of death! I'll cram thee with more food!

**PARIS:** This is that banish'd haughty Montague, that murder'd my love's cousin! *(He comes forward)* Condemned villain! Obey, and go with me; for thou must die.

**ROMEO:** Good gentle youth, tempt not a desperate man!

**PARIS:** I do apprehend thee for a felon here.

*He attacks. They fight*

**PAGE:** O Lord, they fight! I will go call the watch.

*Exit page. Romeo strikes Paris through the chest.*

**PARIS:** O, I am slain! *(falls)* If thou be merciful, open the tomb, lay me with Juliet.

*Paris dies*

**ROMEO:** *(he looks at Paris closely)* Mercutio's kinsman, noble County Paris! O, give me thy hand, one writ with me in sour misfortune's book!

*He enters the tomb at front-centre stage and sees Juliet.*

**ROMEO:** O my love! my wife! *(goes to her)* Death, that hath suck'd the honey of thy breath, hath had no power yet upon thy beauty. Beauty's ensign yet is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks, and Death's pale flag is not advanced there. I still will stay with thee, and never from this palace of dim night depart again. Eyes, look your last! Arms, take your last embrace! *(hugs her)* And, lips, O you the doors of breath, seal with a righteous kiss *(kisses her)* a dateless bargain to engrossing death. *(takes out poison and raises it)* Here's to my love!

*Romeo drinks the poison, and immediately begins to feel its effects.*

**ROMEO:** O true apothecary! Thy drugs are quick. Thus with a kiss I die.

*He kisses Juliet, then dies. Enter FRIAR LAURENCE*

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** Saint Francis be my speed!

*The Friar moves to front-centre*

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** Fear comes upon me! *(he sees swords strewn about)* Alack, alack, what blood is this? *(sees Romeo)* Romeo! O, pale! *(sees Paris)* What, Paris too? And steep'd in blood?

*Juliet begins to wake.*

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** The lady stirs.

*JULIET wakes and sees the friar.*

**JULIET:** O comfortable friar! I do remember well where I should be, and there I am. Where is my Romeo?

**Page:** *(offstage)* This is the place!

*The friar jumps at the sound of approaching footsteps.*

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** Lady, come from that nest of death. A greater power than we can contradict hath thwarted our intents. Thy husband there lies dead, and Paris too. Go, good Juliet. I dare no longer stay.

*Exit FRIAR LAURENCE. Juliet is horrified, seeing Romeo's body. She does not follow the friar, but kneels beside Romeo.*

**JULIET:** What's here? A cup, closed in my true love's hand? Poison, I see, hath been his timeless end. *(tries to drink the poison)* 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. *(kisses him)* Thy lips are warm!

**PRINCE:** *(offstage)* Lead, boy: which way?

**JULIET:** Yea, noise? Then I'll be brief. O happy dagger! *(snatching ROMEO's dagger and pointing it at herself)* This is thy sheath. There rust, and let me die. *(stabs herself, falls on ROMEO's body, and dies)*

*Enter PRINCE, CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, MONTAGUE, FRIAR LAURENCE, and BALTHASAR, all led by the page.*

**Page:** Sovereign, here lies the County Paris slain, and Romeo dead, and Juliet.

*Juliet's parents rush to her side.*

**CAPULET:** O wife, look how our daughter bleeds!

**LADY CAPULET:** O me!

**PRINCE:** Come, Montague.

*Montague steps forward.*

**MONTAGUE:** Alas, my liege, my wife is dead to-night. Grief of my son's exile hath stopp'd her breath. What further woe conspires against mine age?

**PRINCE:** *(points)* Look, and thou shalt see.



*Montague runs to Romeo's side and kneels, weeping.*

**MONTAGUE:** What manners is in this, to press before thy father to a grave?

**PRINCE:** *(to the page)* Bring forth the parties of suspicion.

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** *(voluntarily coming forward)* I am the greatest, able to do the least.

**PRINCE:** Then say at once what thou dost know in this.

**FRIAR LAURENCE:** I will be brief. Romeo, there dead, was husband to that Juliet. I married them, and their stol'n marriage-day was Tybalt's dooms-day. Then gave I her a sleeping potion which wrought on her the form of death. Meantime I writ to Romeo, but he which bore my letter was stay'd by accident. Then all alone came I to take her from her kindred's vault, but here untimely lay the noble Paris and true Romeo dead. She, too desperate, would not go with me.

**BALTHASAR:** *(also coming forward)* I brought my master news of Juliet's death, and then in post he came from Mantua to this same place.

**PRINCE:** Where be these enemies? Capulet! Montague! *(points to the lovers)* See, what a scourge is laid upon your hate, that heaven finds means to kill your joys with love.

**CAPULET:** O brother Montague, give me thy hand. This is my daughter's jointure, for no more can I demand.

*They shake hands.*

**MONTAGUE:** But I can give thee more, for I will raise her statue in pure gold, that while Verona by that name is known, there shall no figure at such rate be set as that of true and faithful Juliet.

**CAPULET:** 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. Some shall be pardon'd, and some punishèd, for never was a story of more woe than this of Juliet and her Romeo.

*Exeunt*