

# THE TRAGEDY OF ROMEO AND JULIET

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

## CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY

CHORUS

ESCALUS, *Prince of Verona*

PARIS, *a young nobleman, kinsman to the Prince*

MONTAGUE ] *heads of two houses at*

CAPULET ] *variance with each other*

*An Old Man, of the Capulet family*

ROMEO, *son to Montague*

MERCUTIO, *kinsman to the Prince, and friend to Romeo*

BENVOLIO, *nephew to Montague, and friend to Romeo*

TYBALT, *nephew to Lady Capulet*

PETRUCHIO, *a (mute) follower of Tybalt*

FRIAR LAWRENCE ] *Franciscans*

FRIAR JOHN ]

BALTHASAR, *servant to Romeo*

ABRAM, *servant to Montague*

SAMPSON ]

GREGORY ] *servants to Capulet*

CLOWN ]

PETER, *servant to Juliet's nurse*

PAGE *to Paris*

APOTHECARY

Three MUSICIANS

LADY MONTAGUE, *wife to Montague*

LADY CAPULET, *wife to Capulet*

JULIET, *daughter to Capulet*

NURSE *to Juliet*

CITIZENS *of Verona; several GENTLEMEN and*

*GENTLEWOMEN of both houses; MASKERS, TORCH-*

*BEARERS, PAGES, GUARDS, WATCHMEN, SERVANTS,*

*and ATTENDANTS*

## About *the* A U T H O R



**William Shakespeare** (1564–1616) is often called the greatest playwright who ever lived and is considered one of the greatest authors of any genre to write in the English language. Even now, nearly four hundred years after his death, audiences flock to see his plays. Despite the often-difficult Elizabethan English his characters speak, modern audiences enjoy his work because of his extraordinary skill in depicting human nature and the emotions and universal struggles all people face. Another reason for the enormous popularity of Shakespeare's plays is that they provide something for everyone. In his time, theater audiences included all segments of society with all levels of education, from the nobility to the poorest laborers. His plays include lyrical poetry expressing ideas about love; philosophical discourse on topics such as justice and fate; coarse, slapstick comedy; and swashbuckling sword fights.

Shakespeare was born to Mary Arden and John Shakespeare in Stratford-upon-Avon, a small English village on the banks of the river Avon. His father was a glove maker and local political figure. His mother was from a prosperous family who owned large amounts of land. William Shakespeare attended grammar school in Stratford, where he studied Latin, as was common for schoolchildren of his day. Little is known of his early life.

Stratford-upon-Avon was a rural town, and the plays that Shakespeare would grow up to write have many references to plants and animals of the woods and fields. As a young man, Shakespeare may have been a schoolteacher. He married Anne Hathaway, also of Stratford-upon-Avon, and had three children, Susanna, Hamnet, and Judith. By 1592, he was living and working in London, the largest city in England. There he became a successful actor, playwright, and theater owner. He also wrote magnificent poetry. His theater company, the Lord Chamberlain's Men (so called because the group's sponsor, or patron, was Lord Chamberlain, an official of the royal court), became the most popular troupe of actors in London. They performed at the Globe Theater and in a smaller indoor theater called Blackfriars. Shakespeare's company performed two plays before Queen Elizabeth I in 1594, and then, in 1603, the troupe became servants of King James I and changed their name to the King's Men. Shakespeare bought a large house in Stratford in 1597 called New Place, and it is believed that he divided his time thereafter between Stratford-upon-Avon and London. Increasingly, he devoted himself to writing rather than to acting. Altogether, he wrote at least thirty-six plays, including *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Julius Caesar*, *King Lear*, *Othello*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Tempest*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. During a performance of *Henry VIII* in 1613, a cannon fired as a sound effect accidentally burned down the Globe Theater. Following that incident, Shakespeare retired to Stratford-upon-Avon. He died at the age of fifty-two, but his plays have lived on to

## THE PROLOGUE

*Enter* CHORUS.

Two households, both alike in dignity,<sup>1</sup>  
In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,  
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,  
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.<sup>2</sup>  
5 From forth the fatal loins of these two foes  
A pair of star-cross'd<sup>3</sup> lovers take their life;  
Whose misadventur'd piteous overthrows  
Doth with their death bury their parents' strife.  
The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love,  
10 And the continuance of their parents' rage,  
Which, but their children's end, nought could remove,  
Is now the two hours' traffic<sup>4</sup> of our stage;  
The which if you with patient ears attend,  
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.<sup>5</sup>

What ends the long  
feud between the two  
families?

*Exit.*

## ACT 1

### SCENE 1: A PUBLIC PLACE IN VERONA

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

SAMPSON. Gregory, on my word, we'll not carry coals.<sup>6</sup>

GREGORY. No, for then we should be colliers.<sup>7</sup>

SAMPSON. I mean, and we be in cholera,<sup>8</sup> we'll draw.

GREGORY. Ay, while you live, draw your neck out of collar.<sup>9</sup>

5 SAMPSON. I strike quickly, being mov'd.

GREGORY. But thou art not quickly mov'd 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 mov'd, thou run'st away.

#### PROLOGUE / ACT 1, SCENE 1

1. **alike in dignity.** Of the same rank (both noble)
2. **civil blood . . . civil hands unclean.** Citizens are guilty of shedding one another's blood
3. **star-cross'd.** Opposed by the stars, which were believed to control fate
4. **traffic.** Business; action
5. **What here . . . to mend.** What we do not do well in tonight's performance, we shall correct in the future, based on your reactions.

6. **carry coals.** Perform menial work; figuratively, put up with insults
7. **colliers.** Coal miners
8. **be in cholera.** Be angry
9. **draw your neck . . . collar.** Keep from being hanged; note the play on words in "colliers," "cholera," and "collar"

- 10 **SAMPSON.** A dog of that house shall move me to stand! I will take the wall<sup>10</sup> of any man or maid of Montague's.
- GREGORY.** That shows thee a weak slave, for the weakest goes to the wall.<sup>11</sup>
- SAMPSON.** 'Tis true, and therefore women, being the weaker vessels, are ever thrust to the wall; therefore I will push Montague's men from the wall, and thrust his maids to the wall.
- 15 **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?
- 20 **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.
- 25 **GREGORY.** 'Tis well thou art not fish; if thou hadst, thou hadst been poor-John.<sup>12</sup> Draw thy tool, here comes two of the house of Montagues.
- Enter two other servingmen ABRAM and BALTHASAR.*
- SAMPSON.** My naked weapon is out. Quarrel, I will back thee.<sup>13</sup>
- GREGORY.** How, turn thy back and run?
- SAMPSON.** Fear me not.
- 30 **GREGORY.** No, marry, I fear thee!
- SAMPSON.** Let us take the law of our sides,<sup>14</sup> let them begin.
- GREGORY.** I will frown as I pass by, and let them take it as they list.<sup>15</sup>
- SAMPSON.** Nay, as they dare. I will bite my thumb<sup>16</sup> at them, which is disgrace to them if they bear it.
- 35 **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.
- 40 **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, sir? No, sir.

What is the cause of the fight predicted by Gregory and Sampson? Where does the real quarrel lie?

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

45 ABRAM. No better?

SAMPSON. Well, sir.

*Enter BENVOLIO.*

GREGORY. Say "better," here comes one of my master's kinsmen.

SAMPSON. Yes, better, sir.

ABRAM. You lie.

50 SAMPSON. Draw, if you be men. Gregory, remember thy washing<sup>17</sup> blow.

*They fight.*

BENVOLIO. Part, fools!  
Put up your swords, you know not what you do. *Beats down their swords.*

*Enter TYBALT.*

TYBALT. What, art thou drawn among these heartless hinds?<sup>18</sup>  
Turn thee, Benvolio, look upon thy death.

55 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.*<sup>19</sup>

60 CITIZENS. Clubs, bills,<sup>20</sup> 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?

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

*Enter old MONTAGUE and his wife LADY MONTAGUE.*

MONTAGUE. Thou villain Capulet!—Hold me not, let me go.

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

Who tries to stop the fighting?

What does Tybalt feel about peace?

17. washing. Slashing

18. heartless hinds. Cowardly creatures

19. partisans. Broad-bladed spears

20. bills. Hooked blades attached to long shafts

*Enter PRINCE ESCALUS with his TRAIN.*

**PRINCE.** Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace,  
Profaners of this neighbor-stained steel<sup>21</sup>—  
70 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<sup>22</sup> weapons to the ground,  
75 And hear the sentence of your moved prince.  
Three civil brawls, bred of an airy word,  
By thee, old Capulet, and Montague,  
Have thrice<sup>23</sup> disturb'd the quiet of our streets,  
And made Verona's ancient citizens  
80 Cast by their grave beseeming ornaments<sup>24</sup>  
To wield old partisans, in hands as old,  
Cank' red<sup>25</sup> with peace, to part your cank' red hate;  
If ever you disturb our streets again  
Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.  
85 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.  
90 Once more, on pain of death, all men depart.

*Exeunt all but MONTAGUE, LADY MONTAGUE, and BENVOLIO.*

**MONTAGUE.** Who set this ancient quarrel new abroad?<sup>26</sup>  
Speak, nephew, were you by when it began?  
**BENVOLIO.** Here were the servants of your adversary,  
And yours, close fighting ere<sup>27</sup> I did approach.  
95 I drew to part them. In the instant came  
The fiery Tybalt, with his sword prepar'd,  
Which, as he breath'd defiance to my ears,  
He swung about his head and cut the winds,

What are "purple fountains"? What fires do they put out?

Why does the fighting between Capulets and Montagues disturb Prince Escalus? What punishment will they face if they do not stop fighting?

21. **Profaners . . . steel.** People who profane, or make contemptible, their weapons by staining them with their neighbors' blood

22. **mistempered.** Hardened for an improper use

23. **thrice.** Three times

24. **Cast . . . ornaments.** Throw aside those objects, like canes, appropriate for old age

25. **Cank' red.** Malignant

26. **abroad.** Open and flowing freely

27. **ere.** Before

Who, nothing hurt withal,<sup>28</sup> hiss'd him in scorn.  
 100 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.** O, where is Romeo? Saw you him today?  
 Right glad I am he was not at this fray.

105 **BENVOLIO.** Madam, an hour before the worshipp'd sun  
 Peer'd forth the golden window of the east,  
 A troubled mind drive<sup>29</sup> me to walk abroad,  
 Where, underneath the grove of sycamore  
 That westward rooteth from this city side,  
 110 So early walking did I see your son.  
 Towards him I made, but he was ware<sup>30</sup> of me,  
 And stole into the covert<sup>31</sup> of the wood.  
 I, measuring his affections by my own,  
 Which then most sought where most might not be found,  
 115 Being one too many by my weary self,  
 Pursued my humor not pursuing his,<sup>32</sup>  
 And gladly shunn'd who gladly fled from me.

**MONTAGUE.** Many a morning hath he there been seen,  
 With tears augmenting the fresh morning's dew,  
 120 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<sup>33</sup> bed,  
 Away from light steals home my heavy son,  
 125 And private in his chamber pens himself,  
 Shuts up his windows, locks fair daylight out,  
 And makes himself an artificial night.  
 Black and portendous<sup>34</sup> must this humor<sup>35</sup> prove,  
 Unless good counsel may the cause remove.

130 **BENVOLIO.** My noble uncle, do you know the cause?  
**MONTAGUE.** I neither know it, nor can learn of him.  
**BENVOLIO.** Have you importun'd<sup>36</sup> him by any means?

*What happened when  
Benvolio saw Romeo?*

*According to his father,  
how does Romeo spend  
his nights and days?*

28. **nothing hurt withal.** Not harmed as a result

29. **drive.** Drove

30. **ware.** Wary

31. **covert.** Cover; hiding place

32. **Pursued . . . his.** Followed my own mood by not following him

33. **Aurora's.** Of the Roman goddess of dawn

34. **portendous.** Ominous; portentous

35. **humor.** Moody behavior

36. **importun'd.** Questioned

MONTAGUE. Both by myself and many other friends,  
But he, his own affections' counsellor,  
135 Is to himself (I will not say how true)  
But to himself so secret and so close,  
So far from sounding<sup>37</sup> and discovery,  
As is the bud bit with an envious<sup>38</sup> worm,  
Ere he can spread his sweet leaves to the air  
140 Or dedicate his beauty to the sun.  
Could we but learn from whence<sup>39</sup> his sorrows grow,  
We would as willingly give cure as know.

*Enter* ROMEO.

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

145 MONTAGUE. I would thou wert<sup>40</sup> so happy by thy stay  
To hear true shrift.<sup>41</sup> Come, madam, let's away.

*Exeunt* MONTAGUE and LADY.

BENVOLIO. Good morrow, cousin.

ROMEO. Is the day so young?

BENVOLIO. But new strook<sup>42</sup> nine.

ROMEO. Ay me, sad hours seem long.  
Was that my father that went hence<sup>43</sup> so fast?

150 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?

155 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,<sup>44</sup>  
Should, without eyes, see pathways to his will!  
160 Where shall we dine? O me! what fray was here?

What does Benvolio  
hope to learn?

What is the cause of  
Romeo's despair?

37. **sounding.** Being understood

38. **envious.** Vicious

39. **whence.** What place

40. **wert.** Were

41. **shrift.** Confession

42. **strook.** Struck

43. **hence.** From here

44. **whose view . . . still.** Love is conventionally  
pictured as blind.



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 any thing, of nothing first create!<sup>45</sup>  
 165 O heavy lightness, serious vanity,  
 Misshapen chaos of well-seeming forms,  
 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.<sup>46</sup>  
 Dost thou not laugh?  
 170 **BENVOLIO.** No, coz,<sup>47</sup> I rather weep.  
**ROMEO.** Good heart, at what?  
**BENVOLIO.** At thy good heart's oppression.  
**ROMEO.** Why, such is love's transgression.  
 Griefs of mine own lie heavy in my breast,  
 Which thou wilt propagate to have it press'd  
 175 With more of thine.<sup>48</sup> This love that thou hast shown  
 Doth add more grief to too much of mine own.  
 Love is a smoke made with the fume of sighs,  
 Being purg'd, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes,  
 Being vex'd, a sea nourish'd with loving tears.  
 180 What is it else? a madness most discreet,  
 A choking gall, and a preserving sweet.  
 Farewell, my coz.  
**BENVOLIO.** Soft,<sup>49</sup> I will go along;  
 And if you leave me so, you do me wrong.  
**ROMEO.** Tut, I have lost myself, I am not here:  
 185 This is not Romeo, he's some other where.  
**BENVOLIO.** Tell me in sadness,<sup>50</sup> who is that you love?  
**ROMEO.** What, shall I groan and tell thee?  
**BENVOLIO.** Groan? why, no;  
 But sadly tell me, who?  
**ROMEO.** Bid a sick man in sadness make his will—

*What makes Benvolio  
 sad? How does this  
 affect Romeo?*

45. O any thing . . . create! All things created (by God) out of nothing

46. O brawling love . . . no love in this. Romeo's string of contradictions shows the confused state he is in. He feels good because he is in love and also feels bad because his love is not returned. His language suggests that he is in love with love.

47. coz. Cousin (said of any relative)

48. Griefs of mine own . . . of thine. The grief in my heart will multiply if it feels the further weight of your grief.

49. Soft. One moment; used as an interjection

50. in sadness. With gravity or seriousness

190 A word ill urg'd to one that is so ill!  
 In sadness, cousin, I do love a woman.  
**BENVOLIO.** I aim'd so near when I suppos'd you lov'd.  
**ROMEO.** A right good mark-man!<sup>51</sup> And she's fair I love.  
**BENVOLIO.** A right fair mark,<sup>52</sup> fair coz, is soonest hit.  
 195 **ROMEO.** Well, in that hit you miss: she'll not be hit  
 With Cupid's arrow, she hath Dian's wit;<sup>53</sup>  
 And in strong proof<sup>54</sup> of chastity well arm'd,  
 From Love's weak childish bow she lives uncharm'd.<sup>55</sup>  
 She will not stay<sup>56</sup> the siege of loving terms,  
 200 Nor bide th' encounter of assailing eyes,  
 Nor ope her lap to saint-seducing gold.<sup>57</sup>  
 O, she is rich in beauty, only poor  
 That, when she dies, with beauty dies her store.<sup>58</sup>  
**BENVOLIO.** Then she hath sworn that she will still<sup>59</sup> live chaste?  
 205 **ROMEO.** She hath, and in that sparing<sup>60</sup> makes huge waste;  
 For beauty starv'd with her severity  
 Cuts beauty off from all posterity.  
 She is too fair, too wise, wisely too fair,  
 To merit bliss by making me despair.  
 210 She hath forsworn to love, and in that vow  
 Do I live dead that live to tell it now.  
**BENVOLIO.** Be rul'd by me, forget to think of her.  
**ROMEO.** O, teach me how I should forget to think.  
**BENVOLIO.** By giving liberty unto thine eyes:  
 215 Examine other beauties.  
**ROMEO.** 'Tis the way  
 To call hers, exquisite, in question more.<sup>61</sup>  
 These happy masks that kiss fair ladies' brows,  
 Being black, puts us in mind they hide the fair.  
 He that is strooken<sup>62</sup> blind cannot forget

*Why will Romeo's love, Rosaline, "not be hit with Cupid's arrow"?*

*What advice does Benvolio give to Romeo, who loves someone who does not love him?*

51. **mark-man.** Marksman, one who shoots well  
 52. **mark.** Target  
 53. **Dian's wit.** Ideas or beliefs of Diana, the Roman goddess of chastity and of the hunt  
 54. **proof.** Armor  
 55. **uncharm'd.** Not under the spell of  
 56. **stay.** Abide  
 57. **Nor ope . . . gold.** The reference is to Danaë, in Roman mythology, whom Jupiter visited in the form of a shower of gold.

58. **dies her store.** Her beauty will die with her, for she left no children.  
 59. **still.** Always  
 60. **sparing.** Thriftiness  
 61. **'Tis the way . . . more.** That's the way to make her great beauty even more evident.  
 62. **strooken.** Struck

220 The precious treasure of his eyesight lost.  
Show me a mistress that is passing<sup>63</sup> fair,  
What doth her beauty serve but as a note  
Where I may read who pass'd that passing fair?  
Farewell, thou canst not teach me to forget.

225 **BENVOLIO.** I'll pay that doctrine, or else die in debt.<sup>64</sup>  
*Exeunt.*

SCENE 2: A STREET IN VERONA

*Enter* CAPULET, COUNTY PARIS, *and the Clown, Capulet's* 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<sup>1</sup> are you both,  
5 And pity 'tis you liv'd at odds so long.  
But now, my lord, what say you to my suit?<sup>2</sup>

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

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

**CAPULET.** And too soon marr'd are those so early made.  
Earth hath swallowed all my hopes but she;  
15 She's the hopeful lady of my earth.<sup>3</sup>  
But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart,  
My will to her consent is but a part;  
And she agreed, within her scope of choice  
Lies my consent and fair according voice.

20 This night I hold an old accustom'd feast,  
Whereto I have invited many a guest,  
Such as I love, and you, among the store  
One more, most welcome, makes my number more.  
At my poor house look to behold this night  
25 Earth-treading stars that make dark heaven light.  
Such comfort as do lusty young men feel  
When well-apparell'd April on the heel

How old is Juliet? What age does her father think appropriate for her marriage?

Who wishes to marry Juliet?

Of limping winter treads, even such delight  
 Among fresh fennel<sup>4</sup> buds shall you this night  
 30 Inherit<sup>5</sup> 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 reck'ning none.<sup>6</sup>  
 Come go with me. [To SERVANT.] Go, sirrah,<sup>7</sup> trudge about  
 35 Through fair Verona, find those persons out  
 Whose names are written there, and to them say,  
 My house and welcome on their pleasure stay.<sup>8</sup> *Exit with PARIS.*

What advice does Capulet give Paris? Who gave similar advice to Romeo?

SERVANT. 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  
 40 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!

What is the servant's problem?

*Enter BENVOLIO and ROMEO.*

BENVOLIO. Tut, man, one fire burns out another's burning,  
 One pain is less'ned by another's anguish;  
 45 Turn giddy, and be holp<sup>9</sup> by backward turning;  
 One desperate grief cures with another's languish.<sup>10</sup>  
 Take thou some new infection to thy eye,  
 And the rank poison of the old will die.

ROMEO. Your plantan leaf<sup>11</sup> is excellent for that.

50 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,  
 Whipt and tormented and—God-den,<sup>12</sup> good fellow.

55 SERVANT. God gi' god-den. I pray, sir, can you read?

ROMEO. Ay, mine own fortune in my misery.

SERVANT. Perhaps you have learn'd it without book.

4. **fennel.** Plant with yellow flowers and a sweet aroma

5. **Inherit.** Experience

6. **May stand . . . none.** She may be one of a number of women, but when you reckon, or make calculations, about which is the best, you will find that none compares to her.

7. **sirrah.** Form of address used by a person of higher rank when speaking to a person of a lesser social rank

8. **on their pleasure stay.** Wait to see what will be their pleasure

9. **holp.** Helped; cured

10. **languish.** State of depression

11. **plantan leaf.** Leaf of the plantain, applied to soothe minor wounds

12. **God-den.** Good evening

But I pray, can you read any thing you see?

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

60 **SERVANT.** Ye say honestly, rest you merry!

**ROMEO.** Stay, fellow, I can read.

(*He reads the letter.*) "Signior Martino and his wife and daughters; County Anselme and his beauteous sisters; the lady widow of Vitruvio; Signior Placentio and his lovely nieces; Mercutio and his brother Valentine; mine uncle Capulet, 65 his wife, and daughters; my fair niece Rosaline, and Livia; Signior Valentio and his cousin Tybalt; Lucio and the lively Helena." A fair assembly. Whither should they come?

**SERVANT.** Up.

**ROMEO.** Whither? to supper?

70 **SERVANT.** To our house.

**ROMEO.** Whose house?

**SERVANT.** My master's.

**ROMEO.** Indeed I should have ask'd thee that before.

**SERVANT.** Now I'll tell you without asking. My master is the great rich 75 Capulet, and if you be not of the house of Montagues, I pray come and crush<sup>13</sup> a cup of wine. Rest you merry! *Exit.*

**BENVOLIO.** At this same ancient feast of Capulet's  
Supps the fair Rosaline whom thou so loves,  
With all the admired beauties of Verona.  
80 Go thither,<sup>14</sup> and with unattainted<sup>15</sup> 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;  
85 And these,<sup>16</sup> who, often drown'd, could never die,  
Transparent heretics, be burnt for liars!  
One fairer than my love! The all-seeing sun  
Ne'er saw her match since first the world begun.

**BENVOLIO.** Tut, you saw her fair, none else being by,  
90 Herself pois'd with herself in either eye;  
But in that crystal scales let there be weigh'd  
Your lady's love against some other maid

13. **crush.** Drink

14. **thither.** There

15. **unattainted.** Untainted; not with preconceived ideas

16. **these.** These eyes

Whom does Romeo  
love? What advice does  
Benvolio give to Romeo?

That I will show you shining at this feast,  
And she shall scant show well that now seems best.  
95 **ROMEO.** I'll go along no such sight to be shown,  
But to rejoice in splendor of mine own.

*Exeunt.*

What does Romeo  
decide to do?

### SCENE 3: CAPULET'S HOUSE

*Enter* CAPULET'S WIFE, *and* NURSE.

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

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

*Enter* JULIET.

**JULIET.** How now, who calls?

**NURSE.** Your mother.

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

**LADY CAPULET.** This is the matter. Nurse, give leave<sup>1</sup> a while,  
We must talk in secret. Nurse, come back again,  
I have rememb' red me, thou s'<sup>2</sup> hear our counsel.  
10 Thou knowest 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<sup>3</sup> be it spoken, I have but four—  
She's not fourteen. How long is it now  
To Lammas-tide?<sup>4</sup>

15 **LADY CAPULET.** A fortnight<sup>5</sup> and 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,  
20 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 alevn<sup>6</sup> years,  
And<sup>7</sup> she was wean'd—I never shall forget it—

25 Of all the days of the year, upon that day;  
 For I had then laid wormwood to my dug,<sup>8</sup>  
 Sitting in the sun under the dove-house wall.  
 My lord and you were then at Mantua—  
 Nay, I do bear a brain—but as I said,  
 30 When it did taste the wormwood on the nipple  
 Of my dug and felt it bitter, pretty fool,  
 To see it teachy<sup>9</sup> and fall out wi' th' dug!  
 Shake, quoth the dove-house;<sup>10</sup> 'twas no need, I trow,<sup>11</sup>  
 To bid me trudge.  
 35 And since that time it is eleven years,  
 For then she could stand high-lone;<sup>12</sup> nay, by th' rood,<sup>13</sup>  
 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!  
 40 'A<sup>14</sup> was a merry man—took up the child.  
 "Yea," quoth he, "dost thou fall upon thy face?  
 Thou wilt fall backward when thou hast more wit,  
 Wilt thou not, Jule?" and by my holidam,<sup>15</sup>  
 The pretty wretch left crying and said, "Ay."<sup>16</sup>  
 45 To see now how a jest shall come about!<sup>17</sup>  
 I warrant,<sup>18</sup> and I should live a thousand years,  
 I never should forget it: "Wilt thou not, Jule?" quoth he;  
 And, pretty fool, it stinted<sup>19</sup> and said, "Ay."  
**LADY CAPULET.** Enough of this, I pray thee hold thy peace.  
 50 **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 it<sup>20</sup> brow  
 A bump as big as a young cock'rel's stone—<sup>21</sup>  
 A perilous knock—and it cried bitterly.  
 55 "Yea," quoth my husband, "fall'st upon thy face?  
 Thou wilt fall backward when thou comest to age,

8. **laid wormwood to my dug.** Applied the bitter herb called wormwood to her breast to wean the child

9. **teachy.** Touchy

10. **Shake . . . dove-house.** The dove house shook because of the earthquake.

11. **trow.** Believe

12. **stand high-lone.** Stand upright

13. **rood.** Cross

14. 'A. He

15. **holidam.** Holiness, sometimes referring to the Virgin Mary

16. **Ay.** Aye, or yes

17. **To see . . . about!** The nurse is expressing pleasure at seeing her husband's joke come true.

18. **warrant.** Swear or guarantee

19. **stinted.** Stopped (crying)

20. **it.** Its

21. **cock'rel's stone.** Part of a young male chicken

Wilt thou not, Jule?" It stinted and said, "Ay."

**JULIET.** And stint thou too, I pray thee, nurse, say I.

60 **NURSE.** Peace, I have done. God mark thee to his grace!<sup>22</sup>  
Thou wast the prettiest babe that e'er I nurs'd.  
And 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,  
65 How stands your dispositions 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 suck'd wisdom from thy teat.

**LADY CAPULET.** Well, think of marriage now; younger than you,  
70 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.

75 **NURSE.** A man, young lady! Lady, such a man  
As all the world—why, he's a man of wax.<sup>23</sup>

**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?  
80 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<sup>24</sup> lineament,  
And see how one another lends content;  
85 And what obscur'd in this fair volume lies  
Find written in the margent<sup>25</sup> of his eyes.  
This precious book of love, this unbound<sup>26</sup> lover,  
To beautify him, only lacks a cover.  
The fish lives in the sea, and 'tis much pride

*What does Juliet say she feels about getting married?*

*What do Lady Capulet and the Nurse think of Paris and his wish to marry Juliet?*

22. **God mark . . . grace!** God grant grace to you!

23. **he's a man of wax.** He is as handsome as a wax figure of a man. The nurse means this as a compliment, but a wax figure is less than a real person, so the compliment is unintentionally an insult.

24. **married.** Well-matched or put together; also a pun on the usual sense of the word

25. **margent.** Margin, as in a book

26. **unbound.** Like a book unbound, he is unbound by marriage.



90 For fair without the fair within to hide.<sup>27</sup>  
 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.

95 **NURSE.** No less! nay, bigger: women grow by men.  
**LADY CAPULET.** Speak briefly, can you like of Paris' love?<sup>28</sup>  
**JULIET.** I'll look to like, if looking liking move;  
 But no more deep will I endart<sup>29</sup> mine eye  
 Than your consent gives strength to make it fly.

What does Juliet say is important about her choice of a husband?

*Enter* **SERVINGMAN.**

100 **SERVINGMAN.** Madam, the guests are come, supper serv'd up, you call'd, my young lady ask'd for, the nurse curs'd in the pantry,<sup>30</sup> and every thing in extremity. I must hence to wait; I beseech you follow straight. *Exit.*

**LADY CAPULET.** We follow thee. Juliet, the County stays.<sup>31</sup>  
**NURSE.** Go, girl, seek happy nights to happy days. *Exeunt.*

#### SCENE 4: IN FRONT OF CAPULET'S HOUSE

*Enter* **ROMEO, MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO, with five or six other MASKERS,<sup>1</sup> TORCH-BEARERS.**

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

**BENVOLIO.** The date is out of such prolixity:<sup>2</sup>  
 We'll have no Cupid hoodwink'd with a scarf,<sup>3</sup>  
 5 Bearing a Tartar's painted bow of lath,<sup>4</sup>  
 Scaring the ladies like a crow-keeper,<sup>5</sup>  
 Nor no without-book prologue,<sup>6</sup> faintly spoke  
 After the prompter,<sup>7</sup> for our entrance;  
 But let them measure us by what they will,  
 10 We'll measure them a measure<sup>8</sup> and be gone.  
**ROMEO.** Give me a torch, I am not for this ambling;<sup>9</sup>  
 Being but heavy, I will bear the light.

27. **The fish . . . hide.** It is as appropriate for a good man to be handsome as it is for a fish to live in the sea.

28. **like of Paris' love.** Love someone like Paris

29. **endart.** Shoot like a dart

30. **the nurse . . . pantry.** The kitchen help are cursing because the nurse is not there to help.

31. **the County stays.** The Count (Paris) waits.

To be hoodwinked meant, literally, to be blindfolded with a scarf tied around the head.

4. **Bearing . . . lath.** Carrying, like Cupid or like a Tartar, a small bow of painted strips of wood

5. **crow-keeper.** Scarecrow

6. **without-book prologue.** Memorized introduction

7. **After the prompter.** Repeating lines given by a prompter, a person whose job it is to help an actor who

- MERCUTIO.** Nay, gentle Romeo, we must have you dance.
- ROMEO.** Not I, believe me. You have dancing shoes  
 15 With nimble soles, I have a soul of lead  
 So stakes me to the ground I cannot move.
- MERCUTIO.** You are a lover, borrow Cupid's wings,  
 And soar with them above a common bound.<sup>10</sup>
- ROMEO.** I am too sore enpierced with his shaft  
 20 To soar with his light feathers, and so bound  
 I cannot bound a pitch above dull woe;  
 Under love's heavy burthen<sup>11</sup> do I sink.
- MERCUTIO.** And, to sink in it, should you burthen love—  
 Too great oppression for a tender thing.
- ROMEO.** Is love a tender thing? It is too rough,  
 25 Too rude, too boist'rous, and it pricks like thorn.
- MERCUTIO.** If love be rough with you, be rough with love;  
 Prick love for pricking, and you beat love down.  
 Give me a case to put my visage in, [*Puts on a mask.*]  
 30 A visor for a visor!<sup>12</sup> what care I  
 What curious eye doth cote<sup>13</sup> deformities?  
 Here are the beetle brows<sup>14</sup> shall blush for me.
- BENVOLIO.** Come knock and enter, and no sooner in,  
 But every man betake him to his legs.<sup>15</sup>
- ROMEO.** A torch for me. Let wantons light of heart  
 35 Tickle the senseless rushes<sup>16</sup> with their heels.  
 For I am proverb'd with a grandsire phrase,<sup>17</sup>  
 I'll be a candle-holder and look on:<sup>18</sup>  
 The game was ne'er so fair, and I am done.
- MERCUTIO.** Tut, dun's the mouse, the constable's own word.<sup>19</sup>  
 40 If thou art Dun, we'll draw thee from the mire  
 Of this sir-reverence love, wherein thou stickest  
 Up to the ears. Come, we burn daylight,<sup>20</sup> ho!

What is Mercutio's  
 attitude about Romeo's  
 heavy heart?

10. a **common bound**. Ordinary leap as might be made by an ordinary, untalented dancer

11. **burthen**. Burden

12. **visor for a visor!** A visor is a mask. Mercutio is suggesting that his face is also a mask, because he is a jester, one who hides his feelings behind his wit.

13. **cote**. See; notice

14. **beetle brows**. Bushy eyebrows

15. **betake him to his legs**. Begin dancing

16. **rushes**. Plants used as a floor covering

17. **grandsire phrase**. Proverb, or phrase known to our grandfathers

18. **I'll be . . . look on**. Romeo recalls the proverb, "A good candle-holder or spectator makes a good gamester."

19. **dun's . . . word**. A mouse is dun—a dull, grayish brown. Romeo has just suggested that he will be an onlooker, which makes Mercutio think of a hidden, quiet mouse. A constable, or police officer, might describe a stealthy criminal in that way.

20. **burn daylight**. Waste time

**ROMEO.** Nay, that's not so.  
**MERCUTIO.** I mean, sir, in delay  
 45 We waste our lights in vain, like lights by day!  
 Take our good meaning, for our judgment sits  
 Five times in that ere once in our five wits.  
**ROMEO.** 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.  
 50 **MERCUTIO.** And so did I.  
**ROMEO.** Well, what was yours?  
**MERCUTIO.** That dreamers often lie.<sup>21</sup>  
**ROMEO.** In bed asleep, while they do dream things true.  
**MERCUTIO.** O then I see Queen Mab<sup>22</sup> hath been with you.  
 She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes  
 55 In shape no bigger than an agot-stone<sup>23</sup>  
 On the forefinger of an alderman,  
 Drawn with a team of little atomi<sup>24</sup>  
 Over men's noses as they lie asleep.  
 Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut,  
 60 Made by the joiner squirrel or old grub,  
 Time out a' mind the fairies' coachmakers.  
 Her waggon-spokes made of long spinners' legs,  
 The cover of the wings of grasshoppers,  
 Her traces of the smallest spider web,  
 65 Her collars of the moonshine's wat'ry beams,  
 Her whip of cricket's bone, the lash of film,  
 Her waggoner a small grey-coated gnat,  
 Not half so big as a round little worm  
 Prick'd from the lazy finger of a maid.<sup>25</sup>  
 70 And in this state she gallops night by night  
 Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love;  
 O'er courtiers' knees, that dream on cur'sies<sup>26</sup> straight;  
 O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees;

Who is Queen Mab?

21. **lie.** Mercutio puns on the word *lie*, implying both "rest" and "tell falsehoods."

22. **Queen Mab.** Fairy creature

23. **agot-stone.** Agate used as a stone in a ring

24. **atomi.** Tiny beings

25. **Not half . . . maid.** According to a folk belief, worms grew in the fingers of lazy girls.

26. **on cur'sies.** Of curtsies, or bows

O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream,  
 75 Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,  
 Because their breath with sweetmeats tainted are.  
 Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,  
 And then dreams he of smelling out a suit;<sup>27</sup>  
 And sometime comes she with a tithe-pig's<sup>28</sup> tail  
 80 Tickling a parson's nose as 'a lies asleep,  
 Then he dreams of another benefice.<sup>29</sup>  
 Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,  
 And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,  
 Of breaches, ambuscadoes,<sup>30</sup> Spanish blades,  
 85 Of healths five fadom deep;<sup>31</sup> and then anon<sup>32</sup>  
 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 plats the manes of horses in the night,  
 90 And bakes the elf-locks in foul sluttish hairs,  
 Which, once untangled, much misfortune bodes.<sup>33</sup>  
 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.<sup>34</sup>  
 This is she—

95 **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,  
 100 And more inconstant than the wind, who woos  
 Even now the frozen bosom of the north,  
 And, being anger'd, puffs away from thence,  
 Turning his side to the dew-dropping south.

**BENVOLIO.** This wind you talk of blows us from ourselves:  
 105 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

What does Queen Mab  
 do by night?

27. **smelling out a suit.** Thinking of something to request for oneself of a high-born or noble person

28. **tithe-pig.** Pig given as payment of tithes, dues owed to a parish

29. **benefice.** Church office that provides a living for

31. **healths five fadom deep.** Drinks five fathoms deep. A fathom is a unit of measure of water equal to six feet in depth.

32. **anon.** At once

33. **bakes . . . bodes.** A folk belief was that elves mat-

110 With this night's revels, and expire the term  
Of a despised life clos'd 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.

What does Romeo fear?

*They march about the stage and stand to one side.*

#### SCENE 5: A HALL IN CAPULET'S HOUSE

*And SERVINGMEN come forth with napkins.*

1. **SERVINGMAN.** Where's Potpan, that he helps not to take away? He shift a trencher?<sup>1</sup> he scrape a trencher?

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

5 1. **SERVINGMAN.** Away with the join-stools,<sup>2</sup> remove the court-cupboard, look to the plate. Good thou, save me a piece of marchpane,<sup>3</sup> and, as thou loves me, let the porter let in Susan Grindstone and Nell. [*Exit Second Servant.*] Anthony and Potpan!

*Enter ANTHONY and POTPAN.*

**ANTHONY.** Ay, boy, ready.

10 1. **SERVINGMAN.** You are look'd for and call'd for, ask'd for and sought for, in the great chamber.

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

*Exeunt.*

*Enter CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, JULIET, TYBALT, NURSE, SERVINGMEN, and all the GUESTS and GENTLEWOMEN to the Maskers.*

15 **CAPULET.** Welcome, gentlemen! Ladies that have their toes  
Unplagu'd with corns will walk a bout with you.  
Ah, my mistresses, which of you all  
Will now deny to dance? She that makes dainty,<sup>4</sup>  
She I'll swear hath corns. Am I come near ye now?  
Welcome, gentlemen! I have seen the day  
20 That I have worn a visor and could tell  
A whispering tale in a fair lady's ear,

How does Capulet try to get the ladies to dance?

ACT 1, SCENE 5

1. **trencher.** Platter

2. **join-stools.** Wooden stools, made by carpenters called joiners

3. **marchpane.** Marzipan, a type of candy

4. **makes dainty.** Behaves shyly by refusing to dance

Such as would please; 'tis gone, 'tis gone, 'tis gone.  
You are welcome, gentlemen! Come, musicians, play.

*Music plays, and they dance.*

25 A hall, a hall! give room! and foot it, girls.  
More light, you knaves, and turn the tables up;  
And quench the fire, the room is grown too hot.  
Ah, sirrah, this unlook'd-for sport comes well.  
Nay, sit, nay, sit, good cousin Capulet,  
For you and I are past our dancing days.  
30 How long is't now since last yourself and I  
Were in a mask?

2. CAPULET. By'r lady, thirty years.

CAPULET. What, man? 'tis not so much, 'tis not so much:  
'Tis since the nuptial of Lucentio,  
Come Pentecost<sup>5</sup> as quickly as it will,  
35 Some five and twenty years, and then we mask'd.

2. CAPULET. 'Tis more, 'tis more. His son is elder,<sup>6</sup> sir;  
His son is thirty.

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

40 ROMEO. [*To a Servingman.*] What lady's that which doth enrich the hand  
Of yonder knight?

SERVINGMAN. I know not, sir.

ROMEEO. O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!  
It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night  
As a rich jewel in an Ethiop's<sup>7</sup> ear—  
45 Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear!  
So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows,  
As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows.  
The measure done, I'll watch her place of stand,  
And touching hers, make blessed my rude hand.  
50 Did my heart love till now? Forswear it, sight!  
For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.

*Is Romeo speaking of  
Rosaline?*

5. **Pentecost.** A Christian festival occurring on the seventh Sunday after Easter, marking the descent of the Holy Ghost on the disciples after the resurrection of Jesus

6. **elder.** Older

7. **Ethiop's.** Of a person from Ethiopia, a country in Africa

TYBALT. This, by his voice, should be a Montague.  
 Fetch me my rapier, boy. What dares the slave  
 Come hither, cover'd with an antic face,  
 55 To flear<sup>8</sup> 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;  
 60 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,  
 'A bears him like a portly gentleman;<sup>9</sup>  
 65 And to say truth, Verona brags of him  
 To be a virtuous and well-govern'd youth.  
 I would not for the wealth of all this town  
 Here in my house do him disparagement;  
 Therefore be patient, take no note of him;  
 70 It is my will, the which if thou respect,  
 Show a fair presence and put off these frowns,  
 An ill-beseeming semblance for a feast.  
 TYBALT. It fits when such a villain is a guest.  
 I'll not endure him.  
 CAPULET. He shall be endured.  
 75 What, goodman boy?<sup>10</sup> I say he shall, go to!  
 Am I the master here, or you? go to!  
 You'll not endure him! God shall mend my soul,  
 You'll make a mutiny among my guests!  
 You will set cock-a-hoop!<sup>11</sup> you'll be the man!  
 80 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 scath you,<sup>12</sup> I know what.  
 You must contrary me!<sup>13</sup> Marry, 'tis time.—  
 Well said, my hearts!—You are a princox,<sup>14</sup> go,  
 85 Be quiet, or—More light, more light!—For shame,  
 I'll make you quiet, what!—Cheerly, my hearts!

How does Capulet feel about Romeo's presence at the feast?

8. flear. Mock

9. portly gentleman. Well-mannered nobleman

10. goodman boy. The term *goodman* was used to address non-nobles. *Goodman boy* is an insult because Tybalt is being called both common and a boy.

11. set cock-a-hoop. Act wildly

12. trick . . . you. Behavior will hurt you

13. contrary me. Go contrary to me, or contradict me

14. princox. Sassy boy

- TYBALT. Patience perforce with willful choler meeting  
 Makes my flesh tremble in their different greeting.  
 I will withdraw, but this intrusion shall,  
 90 Now seeming sweet, convert to bitt' rest gall.<sup>15</sup>
- ROMEO. [*To Juliet.*] If I profane with my unworhiest hand  
 This holy shrine, the gentle sin<sup>16</sup> is this,  
 My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand  
 To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.
- 95 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'<sup>17</sup> kiss.
- ROMEO. Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too?
- 100 JULIET. Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use in pray'r.  
 ROMEO. O then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do,  
 They pray—grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.  
 JULIET. Saints do not move, though grant for prayers' sake.  
 ROMEO. Then move not while my prayer's effect I take.  
 105 Thus from my lips, by thine, my sin is purg'd. *Kissing her.*
- JULIET. Then have my lips the sin that they have took.  
 ROMEO. Sin from my lips? O trespass sweetly urg'd!  
 Give me my sin again. *Kissing her again.*
- JULIET. You kiss by th' book.
- NURSE. Madam, your mother craves a word with you.  
 ROMEO. What is her mother?
- 110 NURSE. Marry, bachelor,  
 Her mother is the lady of the house,  
 And a good lady, and a wise and virtuous.  
 I nurs'd her daughter that you talk'd withal;<sup>18</sup>  
 I tell you, he that can lay hold of her  
 Shall have the chinks.<sup>19</sup>
- 115 ROMEO. Is she a Capulet?  
 O dear account! my life is my foe's debt.<sup>20</sup>
- BENVOLIO. Away, be gone, the sport is at the best.<sup>21</sup>
- ROMEO. Ay, so I fear, the more is my unrest.

What does Tybalt plan?

*Exit.*

*Kissing her.*

*Kissing her again.*

What does Romeo think  
 when he learns Juliet's  
 identity?

15. gall. Something bitter to endure

16. sin. Fine or penalty

17. palmers'. Of pilgrims

18. withal. With

19. chinks. Money

20. my foe's debt. Owed to my enemy; in that enemy's power

21. sport . . . best. Benvolio cautions Romeo to quit while he is ahead.



CAPULET. Nay, gentlemen, prepare not to be gone,  
 120 We have a trifling foolish banquet towards.<sup>22</sup> *They whisper in his ear.*  
 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.  
 [To Second Capulet.] Ah, sirrah, by my fay,<sup>23</sup> it waxes late,  
 125 I'll to my rest. *Exeunt all but JULIET and NURSE.*  
 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.  
 130 JULIET. What's he that follows here, that would not dance?  
 NURSE. I know not.  
 JULIET. Go ask his name.—If he be married,  
 My grave is like to be my wedding-bed.  
 NURSE. His name is Romeo, and a Montague,  
 135 The only son of your great enemy.  
 JULIET. My only love sprung from my only hate!  
 Too early seen unknown, and known too late!  
 Prodigious<sup>24</sup> birth of love it is to me  
 That I must love a loathed enemy.  
 NURSE. What's tis? what's tis!  
 140 JULIET. A rhyme I learnt even now  
 Of one I danc'd withal. *One calls within, "Juliet!"*  
 NURSE. Anon, anon!  
 Come let's away, the strangers all are gone. *Exeunt.*

How does Juliet learn Romeo's identity without letting the Nurse know of her interest?

22. towards. Coming

23. fay. Faith

24. Prodigious. Ominous

## Respond to the SELECTION

What do you predict will happen between the feuding Capulets and Montagues? between Romeo and Juliet?

# Investigate, *Inquire,* and

## **Recall: GATHERING FACTS**

- 1a. When Escalus, the prince of Verona, arrives on the scene at the beginning of the play, what does he break up? What does the prince say will happen if the peace of his city is again disturbed in this way?
- 2a. With whom is Romeo in love at the beginning of the play? Why does he go to the Capulet feast?
- 3a. Whom do Capulet and Lady Capulet want Juliet to marry?

## → **Interpret: FINDING MEANING**

- 1b. What "ancient grudge" is referred to in line 3 of the prologue? Who has a grudge against whom? What have been the consequences of this grudge, or feud, for the city of Verona? Why is the prince so upset in scene 1?
- 2b. What happens to Romeo at the Capulet feast? What becomes of the love that he felt at the beginning of the play? What does this tell you about Romeo?
- 3b. How does Juliet react when her mother first speaks of a possible marriage? What does Juliet's reaction reveal about her? Is she a dutiful daughter? In what way was marriage different in the time of this play than it usually is today?

## **Analyze: TAKING THINGS APART**

- 4a. What are Romeo's words and impressions on seeing Juliet for the first time? What is Juliet's first reaction to seeing Romeo? What mixed feelings do they have about each other at the end of act 1?

## → **Synthesize: BRINGING THINGS TOGETHER**

- 4b. What do the emotions Romeo and Juliet experience tell you about the two main characters? What struggle or conflict do you foresee for the two?

## **Evaluate: MAKING JUDGMENTS**

- 5a. Evaluate the effectiveness of Lady Capulet at convincing Juliet to love Paris. What factors are most important to Juliet in considering Paris as a husband?

## → **Extend: CONNECTING IDEAS**

- 5b. What do you think of the idea of arranged marriages? Would Mrs. Pan in "The Good Deed" agree with the Capulets? Why do you think this practice was used among noble families? What would you do if your parents told you whom to date or marry?

# Understanding *Literature*

**PLOT, CENTRAL CONFLICT, AND INCITING INCIDENT.** Review the definitions for **plot**, **central conflict**, and **inciting incident** in the Handbook of Literary Terms. What conflict is introduced at the end of act 1? What is the inciting incident in this play?

**MOTIF.** Review the definition for **motif** in the Handbook of Literary Terms. What is the significance of the motif of stars in the prologue and in scene 4? What is the playwright suggesting about the role of fate in people's lives? Do you agree that fate plays an important role in life? It is often said that "character is destiny." In other words, people's fates result from the sort of people they are. What sort of people are Romeo and Juliet? In what way do they act impulsively? What fate might result from their impulsiveness?

**OXY MORON.** Review the definition for **oxymoron** in the Handbook of Literary Terms. What oxymorons did you find in act 1, and who spoke them? What do these oxymorons indicate about the speaker's state of mind and his or her opinion of love?